

# UCARE 2004

Ukrainian Children's Aid and  
Relief Effort, Inc.

Volume 1, Issue 1

## INVESTING IN UKRAINE'S FUTURE --

### UCARE'S COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

*Life after the Orphanage*

#### **Peggy Lynch**

Member, UCARE Board of Directors

Many of us have heard of the thousands of children living in Ukrainian orphanages. When we think of these children, we often think of adoptable children -- babies, toddlers and young children, living without their families in large institutions. These young children often go to school right in their orphanages, receiving a sub-standard education and experiencing little or nothing of the outside world. At age 18, however, these children "age out." In other words, they become too old to stay in an orphanage and must leave, regardless of whether they have the ability to live independently in the outside world.

#### What does this mean for the Children?

What does that mean for an 18-year-old orphan? In many cases, it means a child must leave the only world he or she has ever known, without a home, a family, money or an adequate education. Although the Ukrainian government will pay for the tuition cost of

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## Summer Camp in Vorohota Ukraine

*Tabir 2004*

#### **Luba Petrusha**

Member, UCARE Board of Directors

In August of 2004, *Priyateli Ditey* once again held its annual summer camp for Ukrainian orphans. The volunteers came from Canada, Ukraine and the USA. Many of the Ukrainian volunteers were "*stipendiaty*," orphans who have completed high school and moved on to college and trade school (where they are supported by stipends through UCARE and Help Us Help the Children).

More than four hundred children traveled many miles to spend two weeks in the clean mountain air of the Carpathian Mountains. They came to the town of Vorohota, which is nestled in the mountains near Hoverla, the tallest mountain in Ukraine. They then were split among four sites; two for younger children (ages 12-15) were centered in buildings in sports bases in or near town, and two for older children (ages 16-18) were held in tent camps in the mountains.

The official language of camp was Ukrainian, and efforts were made to instill national pride in our camp participants. The program included Ukrainian crafts, music and traditions, and training in kozak martial arts ("hopak").

The theme of this year's camp was an international one. Every day the children awoke in a new country. At the morning *zbirka* they would raise the flag of that country (along with the Ukrainian one) and listen to its anthem. The *komanda* (camp leaders/staff) would dress in national costume, and tell the children a bit about that day's country. Before going to breakfast, all the camp participants would have to pass through the embassy to get their passports stamped with visas.

During the course of the day, during their *maysternyi* (workshops) and their free time, the children would learn more about each day's country.

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additional schooling, the government does not pay for their basic living and educational expenses. Orphans typically lack the financial support needed to get into or stay in school.

For many gifted and talented orphans, this means their dreams of a college education, meaningful work and the ability to support themselves and some day a family, remain only that -- dreams. For a fortunate few, however, UCARE provides the lifeline needed to help orphans enter college, giving them the means to succeed in college and in life.

### How does UCARE help?

The mission of the Ukrainian Children's Aid and Relief Effort ("UCARE") is to assist children living in Ukrainian orphanages. Through its scholarship program, UCARE supports orphans who go on to college or trade school, by paying for many of their daily living and school expenses. For example, UCARE pays for books and school supplies, medical assistance, clothing and shoes, as well as room and board. Since these students have no family with whom to stay, or anyone else to help them with the basic necessities of life, many would have no hope of staying in college, without their UCARE stipends.

### How do Students Qualify?

Because UCARE can only provide scholarships to a tiny minority of orphans aging out of Ukrainian orphanages, the children receiving UCARE scholarships are gifted and talented academically, and so most likely to put their scholarships to good use. To prepare for the coming school year, UCARE sends letters to Ukrainian orphanages in February, asking orphanage administrators if they have orphans who are about to "age out" and who have the potential to do well in college or trade school. Only children who the Ukrainian government certifies as orphans by age 16 qualify for a UCARE scholarship.

In April, students that qualify are invited to Kyiv to participate in Scholastic Aptitude Testing.

If his or her test results indicate the child is likely to succeed, both academically and psychologically, in college the child is placed on UCARE's scholarship waiting list.



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## UCARE- Chicago

*Fundraiser big success!*



**The Chicago Chapter of UCARE held their Second Annual Tea and Silent Auction on November 14, 2004. Close to 150 women and young ladies attended the event from around the Chicago area.**

The participants that came to the event enjoyed a traditional English Tea with a delectable selection of tea sandwiches, mini-pastries, scones and of course tea. At the event, a short video was shown from the last distribution route that UCARE did in October of 2003. The video gave the attendees an idea about what UCARE volunteers actually do when they travel to Ukraine to distribute humanitarian aid to the orphanages. There was also plenty of opportunity for everyone to chat, relax and bid on the many wonderful and unique items, like one of a kind prints and paintings, gift certificates and themed baskets filled with a variety of items to please any taste. In all, there were over 200 items to choose from.

The proceeds from the event will go towards many of the projects that UCARE is committed to and are continually working on. Our main goal still remains the same – improving the quality of life and the health of the children living in children's institutions throughout Ukraine, while at the same time creating opportunities for children to reach their maximum potential.

Our programs include Humanitarian Aid Distribution, Scholarship Program, Surgical and Prosthetic Program, Summer Camp and a new initiative that we hope to realize in the spring of 2005 – bringing awareness to the orphans concerning HIV/AIDS and Human Trafficking.

UCARE could not succeed without your help. So thank you all for your continued financial support. This support is a vote of confidence for an orphan living in Ukraine, which is an investment in changing a child's life through education, surgeries and helping to supply the basic necessities of life. Every dollar raised will help improve a child's chance to survive.

If an orphan does not do well enough on UCARE's scholastic aptitude test to immediately qualify for a scholarship, UCARE may place that child in UCARE's *Stipendiary Program*. This is a remedial program, giving orphans an additional year of tutoring to prepare for college. The *Stipendiary Program* helps these orphans compensate for their earlier poor educational experiences.

After one year in the stipendiary program, orphans re-take UCARE's scholastic aptitude test. If the child does well enough on this second examination, he or she then joins UCARE scholarship waiting list. If the child still does not do well on this examination, UCARE will often attempt to place the child in some alternative setting, such as an apprenticeship or entry level job, to maximize that child's future opportunities.

### Orphans' Responsibility

After gaining admission to college, UCARE's scholarship recipients must also stay in regular contact with UCARE and "give back" to UCARE's mission to help Ukrainian orphans. Every month, scholarship students must communicate with UCARE's Kyiv office, either in person or by notarized letter, telling UCARE they are still in school. Each student's school also sends UCARE the student's grades. Students must maintain passing grades, to continue receiving a UCARE scholarship.

Students are also required to meet several times a year at UCARE's office in Kyiv. This gives the UCARE staff and scholarship students an opportunity to meet each other, create a community atmosphere, and discuss the scholarship program's requirements and numerous other questions the students have. Students must also communicate with their sponsors during the school year.

Students do not receive their scholarships as a free handout, but must contribute their time to support UCARE's mission. Students must assist at summer camp, work in UCARE's Kyiv office, participate in one of UCARE's humanitarian aid distribution routes, or take on a leadership role, serving as a liaison between UCARE's Kyiv office and the student's region of Ukraine. As Ukraine's future leaders, UCARE believes these young adults should learn that leadership requires service to others.

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One of the most popular *maysternyi* was "Business", where our campers learned about starting and running a business.

Each group (*hurtok*) was given a loan, with which they started their own business. Some opened cafes; others started up hair and nail salons and laundry services. Others prepared and delivered *varenyky*, pizzas, coffee, tea and cappuccino. One group sold photo CDs of camp; this, with more than 1000 photos on a single CD, was the most labor intensive and most profitable project. Our campers learned how real business works; after paying for supplies, franchising fees, loan repayment (and, in one group, mismanagement of funds); the profits were much less than gross income. A few campers started their own freelance projects (water delivery from the *dzerelo* /spring and in-room massages) and made a tidy profit.

In health education the campers learned about hygiene, first aid, smoking, drug and alcohol addiction, and AIDS prevention. The latter is a particularly important topic, as Ukraine has the highest rate of AIDS infection in all of Europe. (There is currently a 1-% HIV infection rate, or about 500,000 cases, and this number is growing exponentially. If the current rate of growth continues unabated, the infection rate will be about 7% by 2010, similar to that in many hard-hit areas of Africa.)

The children's health was looked after in other ways. On the first day of camp, all of them underwent a medical exam, and acute medical problems were treated. Those with significant dental problems were sent, on a daily basis, to Ivano-Frankivsk, where a volunteer dentist treated them. Each base had at least one volunteer doctor to look after coughs, colds and other aches and pains, to stitch wounds and to provide TLC.

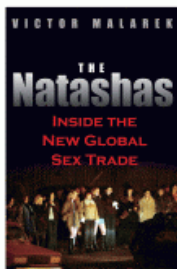
Overall the program provided the children with a variety of new life experiences and as they arrived the children left Vorozhka in the middle of the night on a train. There were many tears shed, as new friends bid each other goodbye...until next year.



## The Natashas

### Olga Liskiivskyi

Treasurer Detroit Chapter, UCARE Board of Directors



On October 31, 2004 UCARE, Inc.- Detroit, along with other organizations, had the honor of being a co-sponsor of a book presentation organized by the Ukrainian National Women's League of America, Inc. (Detroit Regional Council). *The Natashas – Inside the Global Sex Trade* was written by Victor

Malarek, a highly regarded Canadian investigative journalist and correspondent. He has worked as a moderator/host for the CBC program "The Fifth Estate" and has written extensively for the "Globe & Mail." In his own words, V. Malarek described *The Natashas* as a "brutal book about a brutal trade." Mr. Malarek emphasized that the trafficking of girls and women from all over Eastern Europe is the third most profitable commodity on the worldwide black market following illegal weapons and drugs. He underscored the fact that this is not prostitution, but modern day slavery. The women being targeted are from Eastern Europe, Ukraine, Estonia, Belarus, Romania, Russia -- countries undergoing economic hardships. This book explores the reasons for the explosion of this sex trade and provides actual accounts of women who have been sold into sexual slavery. V. Malarek contends that the extensive use of the internet has created an increased demand, while economic hardships in developing countries that resulted in the cutback or elimination of social safety nets make young women vulnerable to this "industry." We were especially interested in learning how this is impacting the lives of Ukrainian orphan girls. Without a doubt orphans are being targeted by the sex trade. As we know, the prospect for orphans leaving the *internat*-orphanage system at age 17-18 years is dire. Without the support of families, scholarships or jobs, their futures rarely include enrollment in universities or trade schools. Combine that with the prevailing attitude in Ukraine towards orphans as second-class citizens and you have easy prey for traffickers. Few orphanages have training in basic life skills which makes the girls "easy prey for exploiters lurking near the gates. Sometimes they're targeted even before they reach the gate – identified and sold by orphanage workers. Directors of several orphanages in Russia, Ukraine, Romania and the Czech Republic admit their girls are being preyed upon by sex traffickers but lament that they simply don't have the resources to deal with the situation." Mr. Malarek's book published in Canada, the United States, the UK, Australia, Ireland, and India has brought awareness to this topic resulting in a realization of a need for immediate strong action. *The Natashas* is currently being translated into Ukrainian.

The event also featured speakers such as Irena Soltys, a representative of the Canadian Help Us Help the Children – Anti Trafficking Initiative. Irena spoke about the work of this volunteer organization that interfaces with Ukrainian and Canadian governmental groups to bring awareness and inspire action into the trafficking of Ukrainian women and children. Along with Winrock International, they are distributing a handbook entitled "Working Abroad" aimed at young women in Ukraine explaining the risks of taking jobs outside of Ukraine and listing numbers of organizations that offer emergency help lines for women who find themselves in dangerous situations in various countries. The goal is to make this handbook readily available in orphanages-internats in Ukraine. Winrock International is a nonprofit organization that works with people around the world to increase economic opportunity, sustain natural resources, and protect the environment. Some of their completed and ongoing projects include work in Ukraine through the following initiatives: 1) Trafficking Prevention Project in Ukraine -Improving the ability of young rural women to find local jobs and to empower them to resist enticing and risky offers of employment abroad, 2) Women's Economic Empowerment - Increasing participation and advocacy of women in the Ukrainian transition to a market-based economy, and 3) Community Response to Domestic Violence & Trafficking II - Increase community approaches to protection, prosecution, and prevention of domestic violence and trafficking of women and children. To learn more about this organization please go to [www.winrock.org](http://www.winrock.org).

Angus Lowe, a special agent with the U.S.A. Immigration and Customs Enforcement explained the important distinctions between smuggling and trafficking. In smuggling aliens, there is a payment for transporting across borders and supplying documentation once this is accomplished, the illegal aliens are no longer under the smuggler's control. Trafficking always includes aspects of servitude, there is always coercion for labor (which may include sex, the garment industry, or work in agriculture). Women or children (or their families) are abducted or tricked by a scheme that promises honest employment. Many times the victim is a minor. Agent Lowe discussed the Trafficking Protection Act which allows investigators to follow the money trail and to confiscate the assets and proceeds of the traffickers. He asked for vigilance in the Ukrainian community and provided Tip Line information: 866.DHS-2ICE or 888-428-7581 (24 hour tip line).

## **A Scholarship Success Story**

Daria Turshkina – UCARE class of 2004

My world, since I was nine, has been the orphanage. It was a very difficult and endless time, I was prepared to view my “orphan hood” as my destiny in life. I felt empty and useless in society. But I knew how to be strong and trust myself. The orphanage was my “life” school, where I learned to never show my real feelings and to be hard as a stone. You hid your feelings so that others wouldn’t be able to hurt you. It was like a game. That world is a selfish one. I couldn’t tell whether it was bad or good, but I knew it was different and filled with harsh realities. I would not wish that life on anyone.

But then, one day I woke up and realized that somebody needs me – that was my first day in the Summer Camp (the *Tabir* organized by *Pryatelj Ditey (Help Us Help The Children)*). Ever since that time I believed that somebody, many people, cared about me and supported me. It didn’t matter how far away they lived. It was more that just a relationship between a charity and the orphans. I know that many children who have been supported by HUHTC (UCARE) agree with me. Living in an orphanage, being invited to come to the Carpathians was an unimaginable opportunity for me to enjoy the mountains and benefit from the programs, workshops and events at Summer Camp. It has been the greatest present for me because now, I have a huge

HUHTC & UCARE family around the world. I take part in almost all the projects of HUHTC (UCARE) and work to support the children who come from the same background as me. I truly believe that we can prevent bad things from happening to us if we care for each other. I plan on being involved in UCARE (HUHTC) every moment of my life because these people are very special not only to me but to all Ukrainian children in orphanages. We feel as though we are a part of a huge family, that has helped us learn to stand on our own in this world. I remember every moment of my life and I thank God for the people who supported me and believed in me. To forget about them and not try to help would be the same as my leaving my own family.

### About Daria Trushkina -

*Upon Graduating with a Masters degree in Economics, Daria took a position as a financial auditor with the Prudens Consulting Group\*. She divides her time between Kharkov, where her apartment is located and Kyiv, the headquarters of Prudens.*

*\*The Prudens Group includes firms which provide services in auditing, tax and management consulting and accounting based on National and International Standards. There are 140 specialists within the company - lawyers, auditors, financiers, economists, registrars of securities and estimators, analysts and arbitration managers. Prudens Consulting Group works with a great number of Ukrainian companies and foreign investors in areas of metallurgy, transport, electricity, heavy and medium machine building, light manufacturing and food processing, pharmaceuticals, insurance, securities, mass media.*

## **HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION OR SPONSOR A STUDENT?**

**In the 2003 / 2004 school year, UCARE received 121 applications from orphans. Eighty of these children received scholarships; 41 remain on UCARE’s waiting list, hoping for a sponsor.**

To get more information or to apply to sponsor a Ukrainian orphan, go to UCARE’s website, [www.ucareinc.org](http://www.ucareinc.org). You can also send an e-mail to: [ucarescholarship@aol.com](mailto:ucarescholarship@aol.com).

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

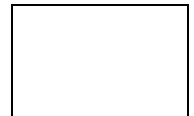
*Yes, I would like to donate, apply my donation to:*

- Scholarship Fund (\$1,000 USD per year)
- Summer Camp Sponsor (\$100 per camper)
- Medical Needs (surgery, hospital stay, prosthetics)
- Supplies for orphanage (shoes, clothing, school supplies, vitamins, toiletries)
- General Fund (subsidizing office in Ukraine, other administrative costs)
- I am not able to donate at this time, please keep me on your mailing list
- I am interested in volunteering, please contact me (Indicate best time to call):

**Ukrainian Children's Aid and Relief Effort, Inc. / Приятелі Дітей**  
**AN ORPHANAGE RELIEF PROGRAM. ПРОГРАМА ДОПОМОГА СИРОТИГЦЯМ.**

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**CHARITABLE NO. 38-3345588**

UCARE, Inc.  
 3704 Fernleigh Dr  
 Troy, MI 48083-5773



Many generous donations are given to UCARE from individuals wishing to commemorate a significant event in their lives, i.e. baptisms, weddings, adoptions, funerals. Following is a partial list of such donations made to the **Detroit Chapter** in 2004:

Name of Donor	Amount	
<b>St. Mary Student Parish (Ann Arbor, Michigan)</b>	<b>\$2,157</b>	Donation from college students who helped with packing for the distribution route.
<b>Sommers-Mykolayenko Wedding</b>	<b>\$3,035</b>	UCARE Board of Director member, Ken Sommers and his wife Marina Mykolayenko asked friends and families to make donations to UCARE in their name to honor their marriage in the fall of 2003.
<b>Smyk &amp; Kulyk Birthday</b>	<b>\$300</b>	In honor of Taisa Kulyk & Tatiana Smyk's Fourth Birthdays, their friends and family joined them for a party and made donations to UCARE in lieu of gifts.
<b>Andrew Vinci Adoption</b>	<b>\$75</b>	Michael, Janet and brother Nicholas Vinci adopted Andrew from Ukraine. In honor of this joyous event, his aunt, uncle and cousin (Janet, Jason & Jackson Wolf) made a donation to help orphaned Ukrainian children.
<b>Ivan Petrusha Memorial</b>	<b>\$3417</b>	In Memory of Ivan Petrusha who passed away on April 16, 2004. Mr. Petrusha was a tireless worker and supporter of the UCARE cause.
<b>Mykola Szwed Memorial</b>	<b>\$1,110</b>	In Memory of Mykola Szwed who passed away in Livonia, Michigan on January 12, 2004.
<b>Stefania Drobny Memorial</b>	<b>\$1,435</b>	In Memory of Stefania Drobny who passed away in March 15, 2004.
<b>Mykola Loutchko Memorial</b>	<b>\$2,075</b>	In Memory of Mykola Ksenophiovich Loutchko who passed away on January 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2004. Mr. Loutchko was orphaned during the 1933 Famine-Genocide in Ukraine. The sole survivor of a family of 11 boys and 1 girl, he lived in an orphanage from the ages of 6-13. From his family in Minnesota, we received the following: <i>"We hope that his life story and his memorial will help and inspire orphan children ..."</i>

Partial list of donations made to the **Chicago Chapter** in 2004:

Name of Donor	Amount	
<b>Michael Plishka</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	In Memory of the deceased members of the Plishka Family.
<b>Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian School in Washington DC</b>	<b>\$462.50</b>	Donations collected during <i>Sviatoho Mykolaya</i> (St. Nicholas Feastday) for the orphans at Skolivskiy Internat, Skole Village, Lvivska Oblast
<b>Wolodymyr Berezecky's Birthday</b>	<b>\$1,005</b>	In honor of Wolodymyr Berezecky's 80th Birthaday celebration, family and friends made donations to UCARE in lieu of gifts.
<b>Cardinal Health Foundation</b>	<b>\$4,0000</b>	A contribution in recognition of Mary Dahl's volunteer leadership role with UCARE.
<b>Pershi Stezi – Plast (Youth Organization)</b>	<b>\$300</b>	Donation for <i>Dobre Dilo</i> (Good Deed)

*Scholarship Fund details to follow in future issues of this newsletter.*