

## **Talloires Network Expands to Ukraine**

Update from Olexandr Pronkevych, Petro Mohyla Black Sea University

Talloires Network's principles are penetrating the former USSR countries. Ukrainian educators and professors, in spite of economic hardships, met together in Sevastopol at the international conference Olbian Forum 2012: "Strategies of Ukraine in the Geopolitical Space", which was held at Petro Mohyla Black Sea University on June 6-10, 2012. Among special guests was senior liaison Dr. Donald Wertlieb. In his presentation "Engaged University, Enhanced Education: the Talloires Network Opportunity" he explained to the Ukrainian colleagues the values, which unite many universities on all continents, and received the letters of commitment of the Ukrainian universities who decided to join the Network.

In 2006 Leonid Klymenko, rector of Petro Mohyla Black Sea University, and Vyacheslav Shebanin, rector of Mykolayiv Agrarian University, visited Boston and met Robert Hollister and Donald Wertlieb. It was the first time when the Ukrainian educators knew about the Talloires Network. Impressed by the project both universities quickly sent their letters of commitment to President Bacow, head of the Network Steering Committee, and were accepted to the global family of universities serving local communities. After a while Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University appeared on the list of members. Each university is developing its own model of contributing to social transformation and development in Ukraine.

The experience of Petro Mohyla Black Sea University was recognized of such importance that its profile was included into the book *The Engaged University. International Perspectives on Civic Engagement* (Routledge, 2011). It contains the definition of what a post-Soviet university should focus on if it strives to change the social climate in its country for better. The administrators, faculty, staff, and students of PMBSU share the belief that university must become "a leading edge open institution building civil society". For the last several years since joining the Talloires Network Petro Mohyla Black University has developed a number of successful student-centered and community-based service learning projects, among them designing and delivering summer camps, big sisters in the "orphanage" internat, HIV awareness project, children with disabilities on campus, European Youth Parliament, etc.

The idea of meeting in Yalta was generated as another Petro Mohyla Black Sea University initiative. Its rector Leonid Klymenko was invited to participate in the Talloires Network Conference "Building the Engaged University, Moving Beyond the Ivory Tower", which was held on June 14-16, 2011 at the Autonomous University of Madrid. There Dr. Leonid Klymenko spoke to Robert Hollister again and proposed a plan of expanding the Talloires Network representation in Ukraine. The annual international conference organized by PMBSU in Crimea was decided to be a proper site to do this with Donald Wertlieb, a known expert in Ukraine, invited as a key-speaker.

Dr. Wertlieb's presentation was very well received by participants in the June 2012 Sevastopol conference. Wertlieb communicated the main points of "The

Talloires Declaration on the Civic Roles and Social Responsibilities of Higher Education”. He explained the benefits and responsibilities of membership in the Network. In the final part of his presentation Dr. Donald Wertlieb outlined the first three steps, which the Ukrainian Talloires group could undertake in the future, among them: 1) increasing the number of members, 2) creating a Ukrainian civic society alliance, and 3) co-sponsoring joint activities.

A growing number of Ukrainian now are joining the Talloires Network. At present, members include: (insert names) In addition, Rector Klymenko and his colleagues at Petro Mohyla Black Sea University are continuing to encourage collaboration among Ukrainian universities on their civic engagement and social responsibility activities and plans.



Dr. Oleksandr Pronkevich (L), Dean of College of Foreign Languages at Petro Mohyla Black Sea University moderates spirited discussion of TN Liaison Donald Wertlieb’s (R) address to the Forum inviting broader participation by Ukrainian colleges and universities.



Colleagues gathered in Sevastopol at the international Olbian Forum 2012: “Strategies of Ukraine in the Geopolitical Space” where a special session launched the growing Ukrainian regional network of TN institutions.



Olexiy Chebykin, Rector of the South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K.D. Ushynsky, presents letter of commitment to TN Liaison Wertlieb in the ceremony launching the Ukrainian regional network.