

## **Fifteen Representatives from Russian Universities Tour the Boston Area to Learn about University-Community Engagement**

The Boston area has long been known as a global center of higher education. It now seems Boston's institutions of higher education can claim another achievement : a destination and resource for international visitors interested in seeing and learning about civic engagement programs in higher education

In early December 2012, the Talloires Network, with funding from The New Eurasia Foundation, collaborated with Massachusetts Campus Compact to lead a study tour for 15 representatives of Russian universities. The weeklong study tour entitled "The Entrepreneurial Strategies of U. S. Universities: Best Practice and Partnerships for Community Development" focused on the diverse array of community engagement programs underway in the Boston region. The primary goals of the visit were to establish a network of Russian Federal, National Research and Regional Universities committed to university-community engagement and to implement new university-community engagement programs in Russia.

Objectives for the week included:

- Exposing Russian university leaders to new and varied perspectives on university-community engagement programs;
- Sharing specific strategies and organizational structures for developing effective university-community engagement programs as well as ;
- inter-university cooperation and inter-sectoral collaboration among Russian universities;
- Strengthening relationships among study tour participants;
- Exploring opportunities for collaboration and potential joint projects between Russian and U.S. universities.

The planning team, made up of staff from the Talloires Network and Massachusetts Campus Compact, created a five-day program consisting of speakers, workshops, panel presentations and campus tours for the Russian educators. The goal was to immerse the delegation in the knowledge that the Talloires Network and Campus Compact collectively have accumulated on civic engagement programs. Throughout the week, Dr. Robert Hollister and Barbara Canyes (Executive Director of Massachusetts Campus Compact) met the visitors each morning to provide context for the day's goals.

Daily, participants were taken to a different Boston university or college where they met faculty, administrators, community leaders and students who focused on topics related to community engagement. Site visits included Tufts University, the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Bunker Hill Community College and the University of Massachusetts Boston.

The final day was spent in planning and evaluation sessions. At the end of the week, participants shared ideas for implementing such programs at their home campus in Russia and reflected on what they learned about the US system of higher education. The project team from Massachusetts Campus Compact and the Talloires Network will continue to work with the Russian educators and follow their progress in introducing university community engagement programs into the Russian higher education landscape.



Talloires Network Executive Director Rob Hollister presents on entrepreneurial strategies for community development.



Massachusetts Campus Compact Executive Director, Barbara Canyes, speaks about MACC's role in United States higher education.

For more photos from the week, please visit the Talloires Network Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/talloiresnetwork>.