

The Yegor Gaidar Summer Leadership Program – YGSLP 2013-2014 Narrative Report: August 2014

I. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The Yegor Gaidar Summer Leadership Program is a joint project between the Yegor Gaidar Foundation and U.S. Russian Foundation, implemented by Purdue University, Indiana. The program is designed to assist Russian undergraduate students with the knowledge, skills and practical experience in the area of economic and business development, with a focus on economics and entrepreneurship.

During a three-week course of study at Purdue University **in July - August 2014 ten students** from the Republic of Tatarstan, Novosibirsk and Tomsk regions of Russia worked in teams on a business case to commercialize a new or enhanced product. They determined the best way to establish a startup by developing a business plan, building a management team, identifying capital needs and creating a marketing strategy.

In addition to the educational course the students toured Purdue's research facilities, technology transfer offices and business incubators. Meetings were held to discuss potential collaborations with researchers as well as graduate students, faculty members from the university and entrepreneurs at Purdue Research Park.

The program culminated when the Russian students delivered business-plan presentations on their ideas at the end of the third week in Discovery Park's Burton D. Morgan Center for Entrepreneurship. Each student received a Certificate of Accomplishment of Entrepreneurship Training Program from Purdue University.

Each presentation covered the following aspects of a business idea, being of potential interest for future investors:

1. A real-life business problem
2. Current market situation
3. Solution to the problem
4. Market opportunities (competitors)
5. Potential customers
6. Market attack plan
7. Detailed product description
8. Path to market
9. Financial forecasts
10. "The Ask" - Investments required



Business idea presentations

II. ACTIVITIES COMPLEMENTING THE TRAINING

1. Visits to the Purdue Research Park and Discovery Park

This year students had an opportunity to see the work of high technology startups, tour the Discovery Park of Purdue University and see the research facilities. Russian students had an informal meeting at MatchBox, a co-working studio for young entrepreneurs at West Lafayette, Indiana. This was an invaluable experience for them in terms of getting familiar with job opportunities in Indiana, launching a start-up company, challenges start-ups face at early stages as well as learning more about American culture and networking.



**Meeting at MatchBox,
a co-working studio for entrepreneurs**

2. Introduction to American Culture and History

In 2014 Purdue University complemented the program with interactive lectures on "The Politics of Popular Culture in the 20th century US" held by Professor Michel A. Morrison, Department of History. This class goes beyond music to explore the way that genre and other aspects of popular culture (sports, film, literature) either challenge or are a reflection or extension of politics and social norms. The students attended the lectures with pleasure and watched the films with great interest. Prof. Morrison delivered his lectures in a very interactive and lively manner. He could make the students interested in the topic and inspired them for future studies of the American culture and U.S. – Russia relations in particular.

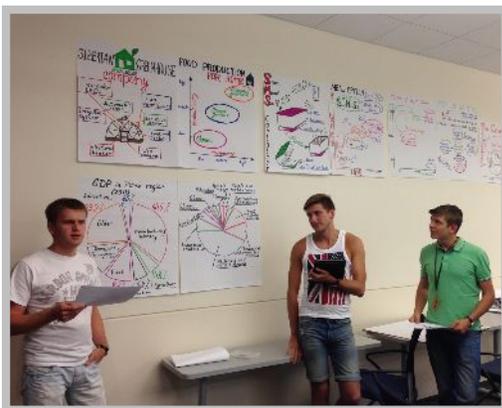
3. Lectures on International Business

Management professor Greg Hundley, associate dean for global programs and initiatives and director of the Purdue Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER), held sessions on international business throughout the third week. His lectures covered the following topics: doing business across cultures, development of global business by 2050, innovative entrepreneurship, etc.

4. Doing business in Russia workshop

By way of adjusting the program to the Russian business environment, USRF introduced a workshop on peculiarities of doing business in the regions of Russia as well as possibilities of establishing collaborative relations between Russian start-ups and foreign investors. Alfiya Mosalova delivered a presentation covering the following topics:

- Russia's strengths and areas for improvement in terms of attracting direct foreign investment
- SME development by sector in Russia
- Russia's WTO accession



Tomsk students presenting their region

The students discussed the problems of doing business in the Republic of Tatarstan, Novosibirsk and Tomsk regions during round table talks. They showed great interest in the problems of their home regions and what is being done in terms of innovative business development. Before the workshop they did some research and could actively contribute to the discussion and express their own viewpoints on such issues as: SME development and state support, overcoming administrative barriers and registration of a new company in Russia, increased financing on R&D, etc.

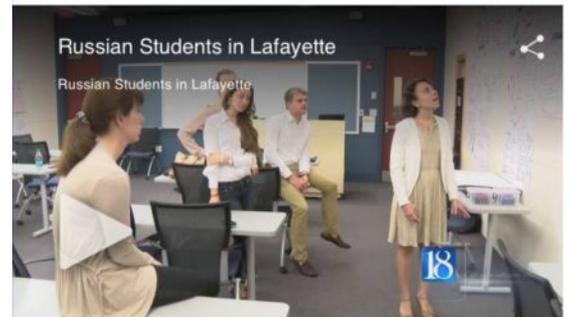
III. STUDENTS FEEDBACK

“Russians gain entrepreneurial skills at Purdue” by Chris Vizza in “Journal&Courier Online”, Lafayette, IN:

Sergey Siskovich from Chazhemto, Tomsk region said the Purdue seminars have given him confidence to manufacture his climate-controlled greenhouse system that can be operated by a mobile device. “The teachers here helped me look at the idea and change some small features,” he said. “I feel more self-confident in this business, and maybe I can communicate with investors more.”

Elena Sakharova from Tomsk has designed and built a plastic food container equipped with a heating system that can be activated by a text message from a cellphone. The device solves a problem common among her peers – not enough time between classes to wait in line to buy a nutritious meal. While at Purdue, she learned that her product could appeal not only to students but to the hospitals and nursing homes. “That’s why it is very important to me to know how to write a business plan to get investors to bring this product to market,” she said.

By Austin Miller
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WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. (WLF1) – A group Russian students were a Purdue to develop entrepreneurial skills.

The 10 students took part in a monthlong course, which is similar to Purdue Research Park’s Entrepreneurship Academy. On Friday, the students presented their business models as part of their final requirement for the course. Presentations included a cell phone app that tracks public transportation movement and food containers that can heat meals.

One students said the program also provided other educational experiences.

“The cultural part of our program is really important to understand American life, American lifestyle, American culture and I like it,” said [Nikita Sosnin, who attends Tomsk State University in Russia](#)

Media coverage of YGSLP 2014, TV Chanel 18

