



SUCCESS STORY

Community Connections

Alumna Wins \$25,000 in Grants to Aid Children with Disabilities



Natalya Yevteyeva

Training:

Rights of the Disabled

CCF Group From:

Khabarovskiy Krai

Dates:

January 18 – February 8, 2007

US Host Organization:

International Visitors Council of Los Angeles

Host Community:

Los Angeles, CA

Success

Natalya Yevteyeva, Director of the NGO Real Help, participated in a Community Connections exchange to the United States in early 2007. The purpose of Yevteyeva's professional program, entitled Rights of the Disabled, was to focus on effective ways to improve services to the disabled, primarily children. Following the program, she applied for and received four grants totaling more than \$25,000, to be used for projects to support children with severe disabilities. In addition, Yevteyeva garnered the backing of the Governor of the Khabarovsk Region for creation of the regional Children with Disabilities Program.

Overview

Natalya Yevteyeva was awarded her first grant in the spring of 2007 for the project entitled Sunshine for Us. The Public Chamber of the Russian Federation provided 173,000 rubles for the nine-month initiative aimed at changing attitudes towards families with mentally disabled children.

Because of the overwhelming success of the Sunshine for Us Project, funding was again awarded by the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation when Yevteyeva's initial grant ended. The program extension, First Rays, resulted in the opening of three school-based art studios in Khabarovsk for the disabled. Yevteyeva was inspired to create the art centers after her CC experience in Los Angeles, California, where she witnessed similar projects implemented by the Exceptional Children's Foundation.

In 2008, Yevteyeva won 120,000 rubles in a competition sponsored by the Khabarovsk Region Ministry of Social Protection. The grant funded the Gentle Sea Project, an initiative designed to provide disabled youth with summer trips to the sea, as well as swimming instruction. Through these funds, a training manual on swimming and water safety will also be created for use with other children.

In February 2008, Yevteyeva began the Protecting the Rights of Children with Mental Developmental Disabilities Program. This eleven-month program is being funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) with technical support from Management Systems International (MSI).

With Yevteyeva's tremendous success over the past two years, the Governor of the Khabarovsk Region has rewarded her efforts and her appeals by soliciting input from all Ministry and Commission directors for the creation of a Children with Disabilities Program. The program will take place from 2009-2011, supporting children with wide-ranging mental, physical and developmental disabilities.