

ACROSS CULTURES PROGRAM HISTORY

- May 2003** The first contact was made between 2 countries during the Baltic Mission 2003 a project initiated by the Center for Women & Democracy (CWD) at the University of Washington. CWD works to support, stimulate and foster women's effective participation and leadership in local, national and global affairs. More info:
<http://depts.washington.edu/cwd/baltic2003.shtml> <http://www.bpw-estonia.ee/konverents/>
- Sept 2003** USA representative Christina Bruning visited Estonia for the 2nd time to to learn more about the country and get to know YBPW-EST. During the visit she shared presentations about the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation US Library Program and WBE organization with YBPW Estonia. Participation in BPW ESTONIA regular council meeting on 20 of September. Company visits: Advertising agency Hunt www.hunt.ee and Kvadrum Ltd www.ziil.ee There was an article published in BPW Estonia newsletter about WBE-USA visit to Estonia: <http://www.bpw-estonia.ee/leht/index.php?nr=1&id=18> The preparation work started.
- Dec 2003** Christina Bruning, (WBE-USA) was selected by Women's eNews to be one of the 21 Leaders for the 21st Century. Christina is recognized as one of Seven Women Who Stretch Their Reach Across Cultures and will be honored at a gala dinner Benefiting Women's eNews in May 2004. Women's eNews is a non-profit independent news service covering issues of concern to women and their allies. More Info:
<http://womensenews.org/21leaders2004.cfm>
<http://womensenews.org/Article.cfm/dyn/aid/1637#Bruning>
- Jan 2004** Christina Bruning (WBE-USA) visited YBPW EST 3rd time. YBPW organized company visits to share an overview of how the firms operate in Estonian business field. During 19.-25. of Jan. there were 7 visits to following Estonian companies: Saku Brewery <http://www.saku.ee> - Estonian market leader on the Estonian beer market; Estonian Business School www.ebs.ee; Wuerth Estonia Ltd. www.wuerth.ee - The core business of the Würth Group is the worldwide sale of fixing and assembly materials; Sirbuka Dekoor - R&D Spandex and Avery Dennison distributor; Budget www.budget.ee - car rental company, Papyrus www.papyrus.com - Estonian 2nd biggest whole seller of different types of paper; ERKAS www.erkas.ee - Estonian Regional and local development agency. Most of the visited companies were those where YBPW members work themselves. Christina met the YBPW members and participated in BPW Estonia meetings.
- Feb 2004** The project was announced at a Synergy of Women meeting. The Synergy of Women is the leaders of the organizations supporting women in the Puget Sound.
- March 2004** On Monday, March 8th Women's Business Exchange (WBE www.wbex.org) hosted an Across Cultures reception to honor International Women's Day and introduce the program. The evening was an opportunity for Seattle based civic and business leaders to learn about the Center for Women & Democracy, WBE, Estonia, YBPW and the delegation. Among the attendees were representatives of the Seattle Estonian Community including and Paul Raidna, president, as well as board member of the UW Center for Women & Democracy, government officials, business leaders. The evening was a success and there were many offers for programs and homestays.

- April 2004** The Seattle Estonian Community newsletter announced Across Cultures and YBPW to host a gathering in July for Seattle based people interested in the program that will be in Estonia for the Song Festival. Across Cultures continues to be promoted at CWD and WBE activities. Christina was a member of the US delegation in South Africa as part of the Center for Women & Democracy (CWD) at the University of Washington. "I just returned home from the South Africa Mission and find the issues of human rights specifically HIV / AIDS to be sadly impacting. HIV / AIDS is a global problem that needs support in many ways. I have considered how one person may make a difference - one needs to become many. I truly believe that if we can reach the women we can reach the community. It is my vision that *Across Cultures* we will do just that. It is through education we learn, and through teaching we receive the greatest gifts of life."
- May 2004** Christina Bruning, (WBE-USA) was honored in NYC by Women's eNews to be one of the 21 Leaders of the 21st Century. Katrin Sulg acknowledged. Jurate Kazickas, president of her Lithuanian family foundation with offices in NY and in Vilnius inquired about strong interest in extending the invitation to women in Lithuania. Women's Business Exchange (WBE) and Across Cultures were shared in an interview with Paul Sladkus of Good News Corporation. <http://www.goodnewsbroadcast.com/>
- June 2004** On Tuesday, June 15th - Irina Gorbman, principal of Fine Art Vision Gallery (www.FineArtVision.com) hosts a Wine and Cheese Reception. Christina Bruning (WBE-USA) visits YBPW EST 4th time to meet with companies, the US Ambassador, and YBPW to discuss the program. Development including sponsorship, in-kind supporters, and programs is the focus.
- July 2004** Program development continues.
- Aug 2004** Program development / public relations continue.
- Sept 2004** Business mentorships announced and communication started. Delegates will be paired up with like businesses to observe trends, exchange ideas and share expertise. This is a hands-on opportunity to network with the partnership beginning prior to arrival to Seattle and continuing upon return. Public Relations continue. Christina Bruning and Katre Raidna present Across Cultures at the Kiwanis Club meeting in Issaquah WA.
- Oct 2004** Women's Business Exchange and the Emerald City community welcomes the Delegation from the Baltic States. *Across Cultures* will unite many women focusing on:
Human Rights: the trafficking of women, HIV, and reproductive health
Access to Information: the importance of increasing access to media, communications, technology and the Internet.
Economic Equity: Leadership training, business mentoring, sharing knowledge in case study seminars, site visits to organizations with environmental and sustainable practices. This will enhance the nation's growth and prosperity.
Cultural Experience: Experiencing "each others world" will increase mutual understanding and result in beneficial working relationships.