Until quite recently, the international community at the Bloomington campus of Indiana University included very few representatives from the countries of Central Asia. Contact with these peoples, their languages, and their cultural traditions had, for the most part, been filtered through the teaching and research activities of a small number of faculty in IU’s internationally recognized Department of Central Eurasian Studies and the Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center. Direct contact with members of these countries has been limited to short-term visitors—scholars, performing artists, diplomats, and perhaps an itinerant student or two.

The breakup of the Soviet Union and the independence of the former Soviet republics of Central Asia has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of students from these regions in Bloomington, currently at thirty for academic year 1994-95. The large increase this year is in the number of students from the Republic of Kazakhstan, of which fifteen arrived in August under the sponsorship of the government’s Bolashak Scholarship Program. The scholarship program was instituted by President Nursultan Nazarbayev to fund the country’s most promising undergraduate students, known as Bolashak Scholars, for study in the United States. In the Kazakh language, bolashak means “future.” The students’ scholarships are being administered by the American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR).

Kazakhstan is the largest of the Central Asian republics, one-third the size of the United States, with a population of sixteen million comprised of ethnic Kazakhs, ethnic Russians, and significant numbers of other peoples of European or Asian origins. William Fierman of the Department of Central Eurasian Studies, a frequent visitor to Kazakhstan, observes...
that "the presence of these students at IU is a vivid illustration of Kazakhstan's attempt to obtain the benefits of direct ties with countries throughout the world, especially those with the 'know-how' they need."

At the invitation of ACTR, Associate Dean of International Programs Kenneth Rogers traveled in mid-June to Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan, to participate in the final screening of candidates for Bolashak Program Scholarships. Dean Rogers and three other university representatives from the United States interviewed more than eighty potential recipients from all parts of the country. Most of the students interviewed and recommended by the U.S. university group were subsequently selected for the Program. The majority of the finalists placed by ACTR at IU Bloomington were among the students to whom the panel had given its highest ratings.

The vanguard of the more than one hundred Bolashak Scholars who have come to the United States to begin programs of study in 1994-95 have previously completed at least two years of course work at a university-level institution in Kazakhstan. Among them are a considerable number who hope to obtain U.S. degrees in business, international law, and international relations. Those now studying at IU are very promising future professionals, according to Dean Rogers. He adds, "they evince high motivation, outstanding potential for academic success, and exemplary commitment to the acquisition of knowledge and experience that will enable them to contribute significantly to their country's advancement."

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**Polish Studies Center Co-Sponsors Concert at Polish Embassy**

Indiana University's Polish Studies Center has joined with the American Center for Polish Culture in Washington, D.C., in bringing Polish music to U.S. audiences. In May, the two Centers collaborated in staging a symposium in the nation's capitol on modern Polish music.

Among the symposium speakers was noted opera performer and IU Professor of Voice Teresa Kubiak. A highlight of the gathering was a May 5 concert at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland that was arranged by Kaya Mirecka-Ploss, Executive Director of the American Center for Polish Culture. The program featured student artists from several major conservatories and schools of music. IU soprano Marnie Jones, a doctoral student in Voice and student of Teresa Kubiak, performed songs by Polish composer Karol Szymanowski.

The two Centers are also collaborating with IU's School of Music in staging a December 2 concert at the Polish Embassy which will be featuring Indiana University musicians. Over the coming year, IU Polish Studies Center director Timothy Wiles hopes to organize a series of benefit concerts for the Polish Studies Center to bring Polish music and IU's musical talent to various communities throughout Indiana.