2012 UMD Annual Report

I. Executive Summary
II. UMD Financial Statement
III. UMD Operations / Events
IV. Youth and Education
V. Promoting Macedonian Culture
VI. Charitable Activity
VII. A Voice for Macedonia
VIII. Macedonian Companions Program
I. Executive Summary

Founded in 2004, the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) is a leading international non-governmental and non-profit organization promoting the interests and needs of Macedonians and Macedonian communities worldwide.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., UMD has built a formidable operations network throughout the U.S., Australia, Canada, and Europe, with membership spanning six continents.

UMD Objectives

- Safeguarding the rights of Macedonians around the world
- Unifying the Macedonian diaspora
- Collaborating with the greater international community to promote the universal ideals of peace, freedom, self-determination, equality, and justice
- Promoting the Macedonian ethnic heritage and identity
- Preserving Macedonian traditions via educational, social, and charitable programs

UMD Policy Issues

- Supporting the Republic of Macedonia’s constitutional and rightful name
- Defending the Macedonian ethnic and national identity internationally
- Safeguarding the human rights of Macedonians everywhere
- Improving bilateral relations between Macedonia and the nations in which UMD operates
- Supporting the Republic of Macedonia’s membership in regional and international organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union

UMD recognizes that the success and well being of Macedonian communities worldwide is essential for the success and well being of Macedonia.

UMD’s efforts are undertaken by its professional staff, interns and volunteers, and coordinated from its international headquarters in Washington, D.C. along with regional offices and representatives serving Macedonian communities in: Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States and elsewhere.
2012 Executive Officers
UMD’s daily operations are carried out by its Executive Officers who tirelessly work to advance UMD’s efforts. Primarily all volunteers, the Executive Officers devote substantial time and their substantial professional expertise to UMD.

Stojan Nikolov, Chairman
Metodija A. Koloski, President
Aleksandar Mitreski, Vice President
Lidija Stojkoska, Treasurer
George Peters, Secretary
Ordan Andreevski, Director of Australian Operations
Jim Daikos, Director of Canadian Operations
Trajko Papuckoski, Director of U.S. Operations

UMD Board of Directors
The UMD Board of Directors is the highest authority within UMD. Several members of the Board have been with UMD since its earliest days and are responsible for setting UMD’s objectives and for ensuring that UMD has the resources to achieve its goals. The Board meets at least quarterly to review UMD operations and annually conducts its annual meeting where its members are elected from the UMD membership and where it charts UMD’s course.

2012 UMD Board of Directors
Stojan Nikolov
Metodija A. Koloski
Aleksandar Mitreski
George Peters
Lidija Stojkoska
Ordan Andreevski
Jim Daikos
Goran Saveski
Dame Krcoski
Trajko Papuckoski

UMD Regional Representatives
UMD Regional Representatives are at the core of UMD operations serving as liaisons between UMD and its members and Macedonian communities. UMD Regional Representatives provide a vital link between UMD and its members, keeping members updated on UMD efforts and activities and leading efforts to recruit new members into UMD. The Regional Representatives also work with the UMD Executive Officers to plan and hold UMD events in their respective regions.

2012 UMD Regional Representatives
Tanja Angelovski, Munich
Vera Arsova, New York City
Alexander Avramoski, Sydney/New South Wales
Argie N. Bellio, Indiana
Mark Branov, Toronto
Filip Altiparmakovski, Benelux
Natalia Burling-Betinski, Chicago
Nikola Cuculovski, Tennessee
Igor Danajlovski, Dusseldorf
Gjorgji Gjorgjievski, Seattle and Washington State
Mishko Josifov, Miami and Florida
Boris Kamchev, St. Petersburg, Russia
Kristijan Korunoski, Poland
Konstantin Nakovski, Cleveland, Northern Ohio
Dimitar Nasev, Los Angeles
Aleksandra Nasteska, Montreal
Eugenia Natsoulidou, Greece
Zhikica Pagovski, Washington, D.C.
Robert Pasquale, Australia Treasurer
Goce Peroski, Stuttgurt
Dejan Petkovski, Houston and Texas
Claude Zoran Spasevski, Paris, France
UMD Advisory Council

The UMD Advisory Council is a multi-sector advisory group. Membership on the Advisory Council comes by invitation from the UMD Board of Directors, and drawn from the worlds of the arts, business, and public service. UMD benefits greatly from the UMD Advisory Council members’ experiences in a variety of fields to further assist in our mission, particularly in the establishment of innovative partnerships with relevant institutions worldwide.

2012 UMD Advisory Council
Ambassador Ljubica Z. Acevska
Chris Antoniou
George Atanasoski
Tale Buling
Dana L. Klein
George Koroloff
George Markou
Mark B. Mitskovski
Jerry Naumoff
Elizabeth Naumovski
Jim Pavle
Chris Stanwyck
Thomas N. Taneff
Gligor Tashkovich
Nicholas Thaw
Lou Vlasho

UMD Voice

UMD Voice is UMD’s quarterly magazine and the premier publication for the Macedonian Diaspora. UMD Voice is distributed to UMD members in a printed edition; it can also be downloaded from the UMD website. Each issue of UMD Voice is generally downloaded approximately 25,000 times from the UMD website upon the publication of each issue.

The magazine reaches out to a very wide range of people, of all ages and professions, from all over the world. Aside from stories about Macedonia itself, UMD Voice is also your source of news about UMD events, as well as feature interviews with prominent Macedonians in the Diaspora, and features about Macedonia and the Balkans, including human rights, economic development, tourism, culture and many other topics of interest.

On the Web and Social Media
www.umdiaspora.org
www.facebook.com/UnitedMacedonianDiaspora
www.twitter.com/UMDiaspora
www.linkedin.com/groups/united-macedonian-diaspora

UMD OFFICES

UMD Headquarters
1510 H Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 350-9798
info@umdiaspora.org

UMD Canada
3555 St. Clair Avenue East
Toronto, ON, M1K 1L6
Phone: 1-800-UMD-9583
Canada@umdiaspora.org

UMD Australia
P.O. Box 3122
Hawthorn, VIC 3122
Phone: 0438 385 466
Australia@umdiaspora.org
## II. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### Statement of Activities - 2012 CONSOLIDATED

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<th>Revenue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>$70,010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership Dues</td>
<td>$77,331</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions and Sponsorship</td>
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<td><strong>Total Public Support and Other Revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>$263,800</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating Expenses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charitable and Educational Programs</td>
<td>$151,045</td>
<td>61%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Programs</td>
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<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management and Administrative</td>
<td>$26,357</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising and Special Events</td>
<td>$30,192</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$246,791</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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<th>Change in Net Assets</th>
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<td>$17,009</td>
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### UMD 2012 Operating Expenses

- Charitable & Educational: $26,357
- Cultural Programs: $39,196
- Management & Administrative: $26,357
- Fundraising & Special Events: $30,192
- Total Expenses: $246,791

### UMD 2012 Operating Income

- Contributions and Sponsorship: 44%
- Special Events: 27%
- Membership Dues and Donations: 29%
Statement of Activities - Retrospective Comparison

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<tr>
<td>Global Conference</td>
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<td>25%</td>
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<td>84%</td>
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<td>Contributions, Sponsorship and Grants</td>
<td>116,459</td>
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<td>44%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>474</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<td>Total Public Support and Other Revenue</td>
<td>$263,800</td>
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<td>$136,269</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Operating Expenses

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charitable and Educational Programs</td>
<td>$151,045</td>
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<td>$5,750</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<td>Cultural Programs</td>
<td>39,196</td>
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<td>19,757</td>
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<td>Management and Administrative</td>
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<td>33,380</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMD Voice</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<td>100%</td>
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Change in Net Assets

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<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tr>
<td>Global Conference</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$(22,042)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMD Voice</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$(22,042)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
III. UMD Operations & Events

A New Year in a New Office

At the beginning of 2012, UMD celebrated its move to 1510 H Street, NW, Washington D.C. The new office is in close proximity to the White House and the McPherson Square Metro Station and will enable UMD to conduct its operations more efficiently. In addition to two desks, UMD has access to space for its interns, a conference room for close to 70 people and about 120 standing room for receptions and gatherings. UMD is able to conduct roundtables, and panel discussions regularly in the facilities.

New Officers, Board Members and Volunteers

UMD further expanded its operations this year with the addition of several new officers and volunteers.

Natalia Buling-Betinski was selected as the first ever Chicago Regional Representative.

Eugenia Natsoulidou was designated as the first Regional Representative to Greece.

Zhikica Pagovski was elevated to the post of Regional Representative for Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia.

UMD applauded the service of outgoing Sydney/NSW representative Tony Joseski and welcomed the support of new representative Alexander Avramoski.

Aleksandra Nasteska was selected as the first regional representative for Montreal in late December.

Milka Trajkova, a 2012 summer intern, is now UMD’s Social Media Coordinator.

Prior to the end of the year, UMD appointed new representatives Nikola Cuculovski to the Tennessee Region, Gjorgji Gjorgjevski to the Seattle/Washington State Region, Mishko Josifov to the Miami/Florida Region, and Dejan Petkovski to the Houston/Texas Region.

In addition, UMD announced the appointment of two new members of the Board of Directors, Lidija Stojkoska and Trajko Papuckoski, who was later promoted to Director of U.S. Operations.
2012 UMD Awards

In 2012, UMD awarded its Macedonia Friendship Award to Major General Michael D. Dubie and Dr. Ahmet Davutoglu, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Turkey.

Major General Dubie has been a strong supporter of Macedonia’s NATO accession ever since he commanded eighty Macedonian soldiers fighting alongside Vermont’s 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team during a campaign in Afghanistan and he continues to be a leading advocate for Macedonian’s NATO membership and the enhancement of bilateral relations between the U.S. and Macedonia.

During the NATO Summit in Chicago in May 2012, UMD presents its Goce Delchev Award to Janez Jansa, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia in recognition of his leadership in solidifying Slovenia’s relations with Macedonia. The Award was presented at the Hilton Chicago before a private audience including Macedonia’s President and members of the Macedonian and Slovenian cabinets.

Foreign Minister Davutoglu has worked tirelessly to improve relations between Turkey and Macedonia from his position as Turkish Foreign Minister. Turkey has been a long-time ally of Macedonia and was one of the first countries to recognize Macedonia by its constitutional name. Under Mr. Davutoglu’s direction, the two nations have forged increased economic and military cooperation and worked towards mutual prosperity.

One of UMD’s more prestigious designations, the Lifetime Achievement Award, was given to James Saunders. Mr. Saunders founded the United Macedonians of Canada and served two terms as president of the organization. He laid the groundwork for Macedonian advocacy in Canada and exemplified a firm and resolute commitment to Macedonian rights long before the nation achieved independence.
UMD is heavily invested in the education of Macedonians worldwide and, throughout 2012, undertook efforts to improve Macedonians’ education as well as educate others about Macedonia and Macedonian issues.

UMD runs two Fellows programs in the areas of International Policy and Diplomacy and Public Relations and Communications.

These internship opportunities are designed for undergraduate and graduate students with an interest in Macedonia and Southeast Europe, and serves as an effective means to introduce and advance a career in: foreign policy, international relations, journalism, public relations, human rights, advocacy, government, or the non-profit sector.

The 2012 UMD International Policy and Diplomacy Fellows worked with UMD at its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Anania Ananievski  
Veronica Bishop  
Ana Donevska David  
Maria Elenski  
Milena Furnadziska  
Tamar Gzirishvili  
Milka Trajkova  
Zlata Unerkova

Rebecca Sherriffs worked as UMD’s Media/Public Relations Intern based in Perth and UMD’s Social Media Coordinator, Milka Trajkova, managed social media as well as the UMD website from Skopje.

UMD President Metodija A. Koloski has described the fellows as “the future leaders of our communities,” and UMD takes pride in investing in their professional development.
UMD also awarded five scholarships in 2012. The John L.N Bitove Macedonian Heritage Scholarship is named for the well-known philanthropist, businessman and pillar of the global Macedonian community, and it was established to assist Macedonians pursuing undergraduate degrees in Australia, Canada, Europe, and the United States.

Candidates write an essay about the importance of the role of their Macedonian heritage and scholarships are awarded based on academic achievement, commitment to civic leadership, and involvement in their Macedonian communities.

UMD has given out around $30,000 to Macedonian students of the Diaspora.

The recipients of UMD's 2012 John L. N. Bitove, C.M. Macedonian Heritage Scholarship Awards:

**Dragan Gjorgiev**  
Chicago  
Loyola University  
Double-Major in Political Science and Environmental Science

**Stefan Nicoloff**  
Toronto  
Christie’s Education  
Master’s in Modern and Contemporary Art

**Helen Jankovski**  
Toronto  
York University  
Bachelor of Arts Honors Degree Geography and Urban Studies

**Aleksandra Vuchkovska**  
Chicago  
Judson University  
Bachelor’s Degree in Biochemistry

**Filip Petkovski**  
Skopje  
Duquesne University  
Double Major in Theatre Direction and Multimedia
V. PROMOTING MACEDONIAN CULTURE

UMD worked throughout 2012 to facilitate events promoting and advancing Macedonian culture, including cross-cultural events so that Macedonian and non-Macedonian friends could participate in cultural exchanges, and learn about Macedonian culture.

On April 6, 2012, UMD’s Chicago Operations organized the U.S. launch of the book *Children of the Greek Civil War, Refugees and the Politics of Memory* at the Sts. Kiril and Metodij Macedonian Orthodox Church in Hinsdale, Illinois. The authors Loring M. Danforth and Riki Van Boeschoten participated and spoke at length about the interviews they conducted throughout the years in preparation for the book with Greek and Macedonian children refugees.

On April 19, 2012, UMD Australia and the Ethan Cowan University in Perth co-hosted the 2nd Annual International Food and Culture Festival. The event celebrated the rich confluence of cultures in Australia and featured cuisine prepared in the style of Macedonia, Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Poland, South Africa, Italy, China, India, Sweden and others. The event, which was attended by an estimated 900 guests including foreign dignitaries and distinguished academics, underscored the value of cultural collaboration.

On August 2, 2012, UMD celebrated the 109th Anniversary of the Ilinden Uprising, one of the most pivotal revolts against the late Ottoman Empire, by hosting a panel discussion at UMD’s Washington, D.C. Headquarters entitled *Macedonia’s Euro-Atlantic Prospects from Journalists’ Points of View*.

The panel consisted of Macedonian journalists *Voice of America’s* (Macedonian Language Service) *Vedran Andonovski*, the *Macedonian Information Agency’s* Cvetin Chilimanov, and *Macedonian TV’s* Irina Gelevska. The discussion highlighted three key issues: the evolving relationship of the United States and Macedonia, Macedonia’s European prospects in light of Greece’s obstruction of Macedonia’s EU membership, and Macedonia’s commitment to NATO-lead missions and eventual NATO membership.

On October 27, 2012, UMD Canada held its Annual Gala at St. Clement of Ohrid Macedonian Orthodox Cathedral in Toronto. The event speakers provided an overview of the efforts of UMD Canada over the past year, as well as the state of affairs of the organization and its mission worldwide.

Throughout the year, UMD also hosted social and networking events for members of the Macedonian diaspora and as friends of Macedonia fostering a sense of community in Washington, D.C., Chicago, and Toronto.
2012 NATO Gala
A day prior to the 2012 Chicago NATO Summit, the UMD held one of its most successful events on May 19, 2012 in Chicago, in support of Macedonia’s NATO membership and in honor of His Excellency Dr. Gjorge Ivanov, President of Macedonia.

In the backdrop of the Grand Ballroom of the historic Hilton Chicago, the Gala celebrated Macedonian culture, and emphasized the importance of building strong alliances with trusted allies, based on common values and principled defense of Macedonian issues. Attended by approximately 330 people, guests traveled from Canada, Macedonia, Turkey, and throughout the U.S., including Detroit, Florida, Houston, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. to take part in the evening.

At the Banquet, President Ivanov was presented with the UMD Public Service Award for his service to the Macedonian people and he thanked UMD for the event noting: “We are especially grateful to the United Macedonian Diaspora, the organizer of tonight’s event... Whether they live in the homeland or are part of the Diaspora, Macedonian patriots have always fought and advocated for freedom of Macedonia, just as today with unhidden enthusiasm they promote the truth about Macedonia, and the Macedonians.”

Turkish Foreign Minister Dr. Ahmet Davutoglu gave a moving speech affirming Turkey’s support Macedonia on the international scene and its recognition of Macedonia’s one and only constitutional name while accepting the UMD Macedonia Friendship Award for his strong support for Macedonia from UMD Advisory Council Member Mark Mitskovski.
Charity on behalf of the Macedonian people is one of the pillars of UMD’s mission and contributes significantly to the organization’s international reach. In 2012, UMD directed two major events that produced tangible aid for Macedonian children in need. Both events were made possible through the dedicated service and monetary donations of individuals and companies.

On September 9, 2012, UMD hosted the first annual Ajvar 5K Run and Walk in Bluemont Park of Arlington, Virginia. The event was co-sponsored by Ajvar, LLC and raised funds for needy children in Macedonia, and the date of the event commemorated the 21st anniversary of Macedonian independence.

Proceeds were donated to the Fund for Macedonian Children, a joint project of UMD and Splashes of Hope, a non-profit specializing in the artistic beautifications of childcare and community facilities. The Fund for Macedonian Children also assists in providing hygienic supplies, distributing clothing and shoes, and delivering education materials to disadvantaged Macedonian children and seeks to inculcate a strong sense of personal dignity by endowing a scholarship for Macedonian youth seeking post-secondary education.

The event was a success, attracting over 150 runners and walkers and raising over $6,000 in cash donations. Numerous local companies contributed financial donations including Euro Foods, Cosmopolitan Grill, Whole Foods, Gold’s Gym, Pencil 4 Kids International, Subway, Lutz Dommel European Affairs, Coco Fitness, Max Muscle, Nova Foot and Ankle Center, and Evermay.

On Friday, December 21, 2012, UMD paired with the United Macedonian-Americans of Detroit (UMAD), Ajvar LLC, and Pencils 4 Kids International to supply 25 beds and school supplies to Macedonian orphans. UMD’s Washington, D.C./Maryland/ Virginia Regional Representative Zhikica Pagovski delivered the materials to “11th October” Orphanage in Skopje, Macedonia, where he was greeted with joyous singing and dancing performances by the resident children and their staff.
VII. A VOICE FOR MACEDONIA
Global Macedonian Advocacy through Education

UMD serves as a leading voice for Macedonia and always works to educate the public, policy makers, and governmental officials around the world about Macedonia and Macedonian issues.

UMD has been and remains a leading voice in the on-going international efforts to secure Macedonia’s place within NATO, a place that it has already earned by its actions, and tirelessly works to counter the assault on Macedonia’s name, cultural identity and history by those who attempt to deny Macedonia and the Macedonian people their name, cultural identity and history.

A. Supporting Macedonia’s NATO Membership

Throughout 2012, UMD continued its support for Macedonia in its ongoing mission to join NATO, culminating at the May 20th-21st NATO Summit in Chicago.

On February 1, 2012, UMD published a report on Macedonia’s road to NATO membership titled *Unfinished Business: The Importance of NATO Membership for Macedonia*. The report details why Macedonia deserves to join NATO and why the Greek government’s ongoing objections to Macedonia’s membership are unfounded and dangerous to regional security. The report was distributed to policymakers worldwide. UMD also forwarded a petition with 11,753 signatures to President Barack Obama and all other NATO Heads of State, urging them to grant membership to Macedonia at the Chicago Summit.

In March 2012, UMD President Metodija A. Koloski and Vice President Aleksandar Mitreski hosted a delegation of *thirteen senior Congressional staff*, sponsored by Turkish Coalition of America, on a visit to Macedonia. The delegates visited the picturesque city Ohrid, referred to as the “Pearl of the Balkans,” and to witness the impressive development efforts underway in the capital Skopje. The group then met with U.S. Embassy representatives and senior Macedonian government officials, including Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, Foreign Minister Nikola Poposki, and Defense Minister Fatmir Besimi, to discuss the critical effect Macedonia’s membership to the European Union and NATO would have on this young nation’s future political and economic prosperity.

On March, 30, 2012, *fifty-four members* of the U.S. House of Representatives sent a bipartisan letter to President Barack Obama, strongly urging his Administration “to make sure that NATO finally offers the Republic of Macedonia its well-deserved formal invitation to join the Alliance during the Chicago Summit,” on May 20-21, 2012. The 54 signatures represent the most Congressional support for Macedonia’s NATO bid ever, almost three times more than leading up to the Lisbon Summit. This is not just a letter, but also a symbol of growing support for U.S. support for Macedonia and frustration with the status quo.
On April 3, 2012, UMD joined other member organizations of the Southeast Europe Coalition (SEEC) in calling on President Obama to show leadership on NATO enlargement at the upcoming NATO summit in Chicago, by promoting the NATO aspirations of aspirant nations based on their merits. In a letter to the President, the SEEC shared information about Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro, their respective NATO aspirations and the obstacles they face.

UMD and the Southeast Europe Coalition worked together with the Congressional Caucus on Macedonia and Macedonian-Americans to host its first-ever Congressional briefing regarding the Chicago Summit on April 2, 2012. The briefing was hosted by Representative Candice Miller and Representative Mike Turner and provided a look at the NATO Summit’s importance for Southeast Europe. The briefing also recognized Macedonia's fulfillment of every pre-requisite for NATO membership and sent a strong message to the Alliance that enlargement should be on the Chicago agenda.

Leading up to the summit on April 11, 2012, UMD launched a special website to promote “Macedonia in NATO”-www.macedoniannato.org as part of its social media campaign in the lead up to the NATO Summit in Chicago. Through images, an informative video, text and multimedia, the website makes the case for why Macedonia's NATO membership is long overdue. The site enumerates Macedonia's fulfillment of the NATO membership criteria and outlines the reforms Macedonia has undergone to fulfill such criteria. It also stresses the contributions Macedonia has made to the NATO Alliance in missions (such as ISAF in Afghanistan), and how Greek obstructionism on the issue is not in the interest of regional security.

On April 22, 2012, UMD President Metodija Koloski, hosted a UMD presentation entitled Preview to the Chicago NATO Summit 2012: Viewpoint from Washington, D.C., at St. Clement of Ohrid Macedonian Orthodox Cathedral, in Toronto, Canada.

In the months after the NATO Summit, on September 7, 2012, a delegation representing UMD met with His Excellency Dr. Gjorge Ivanov, President of the Republic of Macedonia, at the United Nations in New York City during the 67th Session of the UN General Assembly. The meeting's agenda consisted of a discussion of the on-going name dispute with Greece as well as Macedonia's EU and NATO membership aspirations.
C. Religious Freedom

On the eve of International Religious Freedom Day, UMD called on the international community to strongly condemn the Greek government’s ongoing denial of basic religious freedoms to all Greek citizens.

On October 23, 2012, Archimandrite Nikodim Tsarknias, the religious leader of the Macedonian Orthodox Church in Greece, met with Dr. Suzan Johnson Cook, the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom at the U.S. Department of State. Archimandrite Tsarknias brought to Ambassador Johnson Cook’s attention the challenges of the Macedonian Orthodox faith community in Greece and the Greek government’s long-standing policy of hampering down on faith-based communities. Archimandrite Tsarknias is the first clergyman of the Macedonian Orthodox Church to have such a high-level meeting with a U.S. Administration Official.

On October 23, 2012, UMD hosted a panel discussion in Washington, D.C. to address the rise of extremism in Greece and what impact it has had on non-Greek ethnic communities and religious minorities. Archimandrite Nikodim Tsarknias, leader of the Macedonian Orthodox Church in Greece, was joined by Sali Bollati, Secretary-General of the Albanian American Organization “Chameria”;
Eugenia Natsoulidou, UMD Greece Representative; and Sevin Elekdag, Research Fellow at the Turkish Coalition of America. The panelists discussed the problems their respective minority groups face in Greece on an everyday basis.

On November 6, 2012, The Hill newspaper published an op-ed piece entitled “The US can help end extremism in Greece” by UMD’s President Metodija A. Koloski and the Turkish Coalition of America’s Sevin Elekdag.

D. UMD Australia

On February 23, 2012, in Melbourne, Australia, members of UMD attended a public hearing given by the Parliament of Australia Joint Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs.

The three-year research project explored the broad dimensions of ties between the Italian, Macedonian, Tongan and the Vietnamese communities and their homelands. The research focused on trends in citizenship, identity and language use, personal ties and frequency of visits to the homeland, political and communal ties, caregiving, remittances and philanthropy and business and professional ties. The research makes important policy and practice recommendations relating to the role of diasporas in Australian bilateral relations.

The specific report dealing with Macedonians, “The Macedonian Diaspora in Australia: Current and Potential Links with the Homeland” was co-authored by UMD Australia Director Ordan Andreevski.

E. UMD Canada

Between February 24, 2012, and March 2, 2012, UMD representatives met with Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird and several Canadian parliamentarians in Ottawa and Toronto to discuss Canada-Macedonia bilateral relations, Macedonia’s NATO accession, and the need for Canada to lead human rights observance in Northern Greece.

Continuing its campaign to raise awareness of human rights violations of the Macedonian minority in Northern Greece, UMD representatives met with Canadian MPs in Ottawa on October 25-26, 2012. The delegation detailed the forced cessation of Macedonian language classes and the 20-year struggle to establish a Macedonian Orthodox Church in Northern Greece by Archimandrite Nikodim Tsarkinias.

A highlight of the Ottawa visit was a public seminar at the University of Ottawa’s Law Faculty, entitled “The Rise of Extremism in Greece and Its Impact on Minorities.” The event was generously sponsored and organized thanks to Canadian Lawyers Abroad. More than 60 guests attended, most of them aspiring lawyers in the field of human rights law.

The hearing addressed UMD’s recommendation that the Australian government expand diplomatic operations and increase staffing at its existing posts, Australia’s perceived underinvestment in diplomacy and its conflicted foreign policy regarding Macedonia. UMD encouraged Australia to finally recognize Macedonia by its constitutional name.

UMD was active in seeking for fair and non-discriminatory visa distribution by the Australian government in response to demands for greater visa allocation to Greece. The Australian government maintained that it would not modify its distribution pattern, citing the ethical ramifications of providing deferential treatment to a certain body of people, as well as the inherent divisiveness of the issue.

Over 50 prominent persons from the Australian Government, from all sides of the Australian Parliament, the Macedonian Parliament, the diplomatic corps, universities, the media and the Macedonian community attended the official launch of the Australian Research Council Linkage Project report on ‘Diasporas and Links with the Homeland’ on August 16, 2012 in the Australian Parliament.
Alluding to Alexander the Great’s famous Companions, the most effective cavalry unit of the ancient world, the Macedonian Companions Program enables those who wish to support UMD to play an active role in securing its prosperous future.

Companions play an integral role in the mission of UMD by preserving the name, identity, and culture of the Macedonian Republic, educating global policymakers about Macedonian issues, participating in charitable projects for or by Macedonians, and perpetuating the vitality and legitimacy of our historical and cultural legacies for generations to come.

UMD understands the essential role the Companions play in fulfilling our organizational mission. Companions are welcomed and honored guests at all nationwide and international UMD events and are critical in inspiring and mobilizing support for the UMD at a grass-roots level.

Companions pledge a tax-deductible donation of $1,000 (or more) annually for three years, thus guaranteeing the continued operative efficacy UMD and its efforts. By supporting UMD financially, Companions engage actively in the program’s campaign to provide a voice for Macedonian people worldwide.

In light of the attacks against the Macedonian identity, it is essential that we present an active and unified front that is financially equipped to effectively disseminate information about and on behalf of the Macedonian people. UMD is the Macedonian people’s answer to a history of international ambivalence and neglect and will continue to carry out this vital role through empowering contributions and support.

There are presently 110 active Macedonian Companions:

- Olga Aceska
- Ambassador Ljubica Z. Acevska
- Aleksandar Andreski
- Chris Antoniou
- Saso Arsovska
- George Atanasoski
- Stephanie Atseff
- Alexander Ballios
- Donco Bauloski
- Odyssey Belchevsky
- Jim Bilkas
- John L. N. Bitove, C.M.
- Jordan Bitove
- Thomas J. Bitove, O.Ont.
- Cane Carovski
- Snezana Carovska
- Srecko Cvetanov
- Dr. George Daicoff
- Jim Daikos
- Dr. Dragi Denkovski
- Slave Dimitrov
Evelyn Dinu
Irena Gapkovska
Boris Giourof
Katarina Giourof
Andy Givelas
Dr. Robert Givelas
Mike Grebovski
Alexander Ilitch
Carole Ilitch
Christina Ilitch
Denise Ilitch, Esq.
Marian Ilitch
Melanie Ilitch
Michael Ilitch
Michael Ilitch, Jr.
Michael Ilitch, III
Nick Ilitch
Noelle Ilitch
Tony Joseski
George Klas
Dana Klein
Metodija A. Koloski
Dame Krcoski
John Kuzev
Vlade Lembovski
Chris Malivos
Dr. C. Dan Mallin
Bob Mallinos
Jim Mangos
Dr. Lefter Mantse
George Markou
Peter Medichkov
Jason Miko
Mark Mitskovski
Dr. Anastas Mukoski
Glenn Murray
Lisa Ilitch Murray
Toby Murray
Troy Murray
Toby Murray
Dimitar Nasev
Thomas Nastoff
Jerry Naumoff
Lou Nestorovski
Marko Nikolovski
Boris Nitchoff
Constantine Nitchoff
Chris G. Paliare O.Ont., LSM, LL.B., LL.M.
Trajko Papuckoski
Robert Pasquale
Chris Pavlovski
George Peters
Elena Petroska
Gus Philippov
James Phillips
Steve Pliakas
Bosko Rajcovski
Olga Veloff Sandolowich
Rob Sandolowich
Donald Sazdanoff
Vlado Serdenkovski
Vlado Smilevski
Chris Stanwyck
Kosta Stanwyck
Chris Sterjovski
Eli I. Terpo
Nicholas Thaw
Stan Thomas
Celeste Benjamin Tracy
Stoian Trajkov & Dusanka Delovska-Trajkova
Marilyn Trentos
Dr. Kiril Trpkov
Dr. Biljana Trpkova
Ivan Trposki
Greg Tsanis
Lubi Uzunovski
George Vassos / Barry Kuretzky
Lou Vlasho
Mike Zaforeski
Anonymous (3)
UMD Headquarters
1510 H Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 350-9798
info@umdiaspora.org

UMD Canada
3555 St. Clair Avenue East
Toronto, ON, M1K 1L6
Phone: 1-800-UMD-9583
Canada@umdiaspora.org

UMD Australia
P.O. Box 3122
Hawthorn, VIC 3122
Phone: 0438 385 466
Australia@umdiaspora.org

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