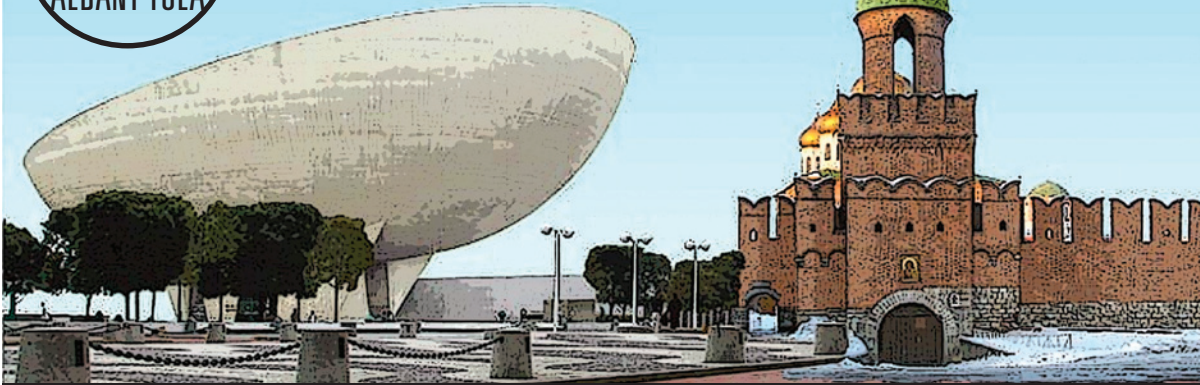




# Connections



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A newsletter of the Albany-Tula Alliance • A sister city program of Albany, New York and Tula, Russia • People to People, City to City

## Celebrating the Alliance's 20th Anniversary!



It's hard to believe all that has transpired between the Capital Region and Tula since the Alliance began in 1991. What started as a humanitarian effort to aid Tulans during the economic hardships that accompanied

the dissolution of the Soviet Union has blossomed through the years into rich exchanges of teenagers, college professors, environmentalists, musicians, teachers, medical doctors, government representatives, librarians, scientists, and businesspeople—in both directions. In recent years, a new generation of citizens is engaged and fostering outreach to young people through elementary and secondary schools.

### Through Others' Eyes

In these hard times, it takes a little extra dedication to invest oneself in friendships afar. But the process has never been more rewarding. To watch last summer's young essay winners speak with lighted faces of their stay with Tulans, or to listen to recent visitors here from Tula, is to know afresh why we work so hard at the Alliance.

We are energized to encourage ourselves and fellow citizens to become aware of the world as seen through the eyes of others far away. It is too easy to get swept up in our mediated daily lives and never really step out of ourselves to know our neighbors—be they close by or far away. The Alliance helps us do that stepping out. We are no longer dealing with stereotypes of Russians or Americans, respectively, but with individual human beings we have met ourselves, who are as intelligent, caring, good-humored and friendly as people in our own neighborhoods.

### Join the Celebration—Spread the Word!

We've planned a rich set of activities this year to celebrate the friendship of our two regions. Our goal is to spread the word to new friends, including young people, and to encourage them to become involved. Plans include:

- A transatlantic **musical collaboration** staged at The College of St. Rose
- The dedication of our beautiful **commemorative statue** in Tricentennial Park, Albany
- A **student essay contest** on space exploration, culminating in a visit by a famous Russian cosmonaut
- An **Olympiad competition** for area students to test their knowledge about Russia
- A **River Cruise and Tour** of St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Tula
- A new, Web-based **public health portal**
- A 5K and 1K **Run/Walk for Peace**
- Getting to Know You, a **retrospective exhibition** showcasing efforts in education, business, science and medicine, and the arts
- A special performance by members of the famed **Yasnaya Polyana Balalaika Orchestra**

For details and sign-ups, visit [www.albanytula.org/events](http://www.albanytula.org/events).

### Can We Email?

To save money on paper and to get information faster, sign up for email alerts!

Just visit our website [www.albany-tula.org](http://www.albany-tula.org) and scroll down to "Sign Up for E-News" on the home page.

## Act Fast to Join the Alliance Tour to Russia!



In celebration of our anniversary, The Alliance is offering a special **Russian Tour and Cruise, June 16 through July 4, 2011**. The tour is open to adults and to families with teenagers. It features luxury cruise accommodations in outside cabins, guided sightseeing tours, meetings with Russians, and numerous tourism stops along the route from St. Petersburg to Moscow.

After touring Moscow, the tour departs by bus to Tula, where we'll stay for three nights at the Ind Garnik Hotel, and enjoy guided tours of Polenova estate, Tula State University, City Tour including the Kremlin and samovar museum and arms museum, the Polenova Art School, the medieval museum and a staged medieval battle in Central Park, a children's camp, and

Yasnaya Polyana — Tolstoy's estate and burial place. We'll also enjoy an evening banya experience and musical entertainment. Not to mention seeing some of the many friends the Alliance has made through the years.

### **Act NOW!**

At press time, a group of 10 travelers are confirmed from the Capital Region. If you wish to join them, act now! Complete a reservation form and submit with their deposits (one for the Alliance and one for GCT) — to Charlotte Buchanan, 115 Van Wies Point Road, Glenmont, NY 12077. The full itinerary and all reservation information can be found at [www.albanytula.org/tourism](http://www.albanytula.org/tourism). Questions? Contact **Charlotte Buchanan** at (518) 434-3518, or [charlotte.buchanan@gmail.com](mailto:charlotte.buchanan@gmail.com).

## Contests for Albany Teens!

*Two contests this spring will reward students with trips to Tula.*

### **2nd Annual Essay Contest**

Capital Region high school students were recently invited to submit essays on the role that the space race might play in maintaining world peace and technological cooperation.

The winners will be announced at a special awards ceremony in Albany in May, where they will meet Russian Cosmo-

naut Sergey Zalyotin, who is coming to the Capital Region as part of the Albany-Tula Alliance's 20th Anniversary celebration. Captain Zalyotin, who was born and raised in the Capital Region's sister city, Tula, journeyed into space six times in his career and recently participated in Russia's 50th anniversary of its first manned space flight.

The winners will also receive a two-week all-expenses paid trip to Tula, in the summer of 2011.

## ALBANY-TULA Alliance presents **1st Olympiad in Russian Studies**

For Capital Region students ages 16  
through 1st year of college

Bone up on Russian culture,  
education, history, science, sports  
Demonstrate your knowledge in a  
**3-part contest March 15–April 18**

Download registration forms  
on March 1st at

[www.albanytula.org  
/Olympiad](http://www.albanytula.org/Olympiad)

All registrations due by  
March 15th



## Win a Trip to Tula The Capital Region's Russian Sister City!

A counterpart contest in Tula will bring two young Russians to the Capital Region for a visit. These four students will serve as ambassadors to help build a foundation of friendship between young people of these cities.

### **American Studies Olympiad**

Building on the success of last year's Russian Studies Olympiad at Tula State University, the Education Committee is sponsoring an American

*Continued on page 3*

## Welcome to New Board Members

*The Alliance is pleased to welcome three new members to the Board of Directors. The following people begin their terms in January 2011.*

**DAVID SMITH** is Founder and President of Cohoes-based LinguaLinx, Inc., a full-service translation agency



recognized by Inc. Magazine in 2008 as one America's fastest-growing companies for two years running. Smith has long loved the Russian language, which he began studying in middle school. He went on to major in Russian at the University at Albany and completed both a Masters in Russian Language and Literature and a Masters in Translation at UAlbany, as well. Smith established his first business, a Russian translation firm, in the 1990s while he completed his studies. He lived and worked as a translator in Moscow, serving as Director of State

University of New York's Moscow Exchange Program and holding a faculty position at Moscow State University. He founded LinguaLinx in 2002.

**CHARMAINE USHKOW** is Community Relations Manager for the Times Union, where she began her newspaper career in 2004. Prior to joining TU,



Charmaine worked in advertising sales and management in both broadcast and cable TV. She is past president and president-elect of The Syracuse Ad Club, past president and board member of The Albany Ad Club, and has chaired the advertising awards competition in Albany twice. She is also past president and board member of the Capital Region Chapter of the Alliance for Women in Media, and 2nd vice president of the New York Newspaper Advertising and Marketing Executives Executive Council.

She serves on the board of the Guilderland Chamber of Commerce, and actively supports the Red Cross for Local Disaster Relief, Gilda's Club, and Senior Services of Albany.

**JAY DEITCHMAN** is Coordinator of International Student Services for Hudson Valley Community College. He holds a Masters in Education and a B.A. in Psychology and is completing



his dissertation in educational administration and policy studies at the University at Albany. He has a particular interest in international student enrollment at public higher education institutions and his dissertation examines the factors influencing these students' adjustment. Jay and his family live in Maryland, New York. He also volunteers in Freemasonry and with Boy Scouts of America.

## Teen Contests (from page 2)



Studies Olympiad in the Capital Region this spring. Students will participate in a 3-part competition that includes an online study and test component, an essay, and a presentation in April when last year's Russian Studies winners will be here in Albany. For more information or to apply, visit [www.albanytula.org/olympiad](http://www.albanytula.org/olympiad).

## A Medical Tour of Albany

Dr. Vladimir Kuznetsov, a general surgeon from Tula visited the Capital Region at his own expense in December because he wanted to learn how medicine is practiced here. Alliance members first met him when he assisted one of our essay-contest winners who became ill during her trip to Tula last summer. He was working hard on learning English at the time. When he proposed his trip here, Alliance members arranged housing and planned his program.

Dean of the Albany Medical College **Dr. Vincent Verdile** and Chief of the Department of Surgery **Dr. Steven Stain** arranged for Dr. Kuznetsov to observe surgical procedures for several days at Albany Medical Center.

**Steven Boyle**, CEO of St. Peter's Health Care Services, arranged for Dr. Kuznetsov to observe surgery at St. Peter's Hospital on several days, and **Dr. John DiPreta** of the Bone and Joint Center also allowed Dr. Kuznetsov to observe his surgery one day. Dr. Kuznetsov was pleased and grateful for the valuable experiences.

**Dr. Mimi Bruce** and **Dr. David Ray** provided a home for him during his stay. According to Dr. Kuznetsov, the informal evening conversations they shared were invaluable and a great pleasure. **Our thanks to the many volunteers who generously gave time and talent to make Dr. Kuznetsov's visit rewarding and warm.**

## Hope Becomes Plans

By Edward F. Fitzgerald, Ph.D.

Associate Dean for Research and Professor, Departments of Environmental Health Sciences and Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Public Health, University at Albany, SUNY

In mid-November 2010, I was traveling light for a five-day visit to Tula State University. I had with me a gym bag containing lectures and some suggestions for joint research projects. At the end of the week, I left Tula for home carrying a big satchel. It was loaded with the good will and high spirits of new professional relationships, new plans for Russian and American students and professors, and outlines for research projects we would like to pursue together.

The first day, I delivered a lecture to about 75 medical students and several medical faculty. It introduced the principles and methods of epidemiology and how they can be used to address environmental health problems. These methods are not routinely taught or used in Russia. Instead, the Russians have developed considerable expertise in the mathematical modeling of various conditions. The next day's lecture was the same topic, but this time it was delivered to an audience of about 80 ecology students and faculty, including former Tula State Rector (University President) Edward Sokolov, a leading professor whose special interest lies in the health effects of air and water pollution. Former Rector Sokolov has visited Albany and met with a number of environmental specialists here; he has also mentored the development of environmental studies and students in Tula and Russia for a number of years.

There was one last lecture—this time a one-hour presentation on the third

day, which outlined my ongoing study of PCB exposure and nervous system effects among older men and women who reside in upper Hudson River communities. The audience was a small conference of professors and researchers in medicine and ecology, who made corresponding presentations about their own studies. I was presented with a plaque announcing my appointment to the European Academy for Natural Sciences.

The rest of my visit would have appeared, to an outsider, to be like a string of beads: one meeting, then another. The outsider would have thought this too dull for air, far from the adventure and cultural excitement one might seek in a foreign country.

*“The trip was a great success both professionally and personally. I remain incredibly impressed by how warm and friendly and welcoming my colleagues in Tula are.”*

Dr. Edward Fitzgerald,  
School of Public Health, UAlbany

But it was actually here that the real fun and inspiration of pushing ideas and connecting with like minds and asking questions and reaching results occurred. In spades.

The Tulans want to publish jointly some scientific and medical articles, in both English- and Russian-language journals. I was invited to serve on the editorial board of one of the Russian journals, and said I would be honored to do so. Tula State University Vice Rectors, Deans, and faculty had joined an earlier meeting, to discuss the business incubator they want to inaugurate for marketing some of their new tech-



From left: Interpreter Katya, Dr. Edward F. Fitzgerald of University at Albany School of Public Health and his host, Dr. Alexander Krupachev, Professor at Tula State University

nologies, as a number of American universities do. I said I would link them with RPI, UAlbany, Union, and other faculty who have experience in doing this. The Tulans want to host an international environmental health conference in Albany. They want to involve students and professors in exchanges with the School of Public Health.

It has long been an interest of the Alliance and former Rector Sokolov to find a research project that faculty at Tula State University and the UAlbany School of Public Health could pursue together. Despite several previous attempts to find both a topic and a way to conduct research on it, all we had uncovered together was one after another barrier—logistics, methodology, politics, laboratory capacity, data (or lack of it)—until now.

This time, we talked about studying air pollution and asthma among children. The Tulans have done considerable work in monitoring and modeling air pollutants, and recording health data and hospital and physician visits, for

the Tula region. Together we will look to see whether the districts with more air pollution are also the districts with more childhood asthma as expressed in physician and hospital visits. This brought us to two steps for immediate action: I would get translated and read through the documents and reports on the scientific work done so far, and Tula State would create a work group of medical and ecology faculty to work with me on a research proposal beginning in January. My Tula State host, Dr. Krupachev, said that if we could obtain \$50,000 from US sources for the research, he was confident that the Russian government would match it.

My satchel was now so full of ideas and possibilities that it had to travel home as checked baggage. The best part was, I could start bringing these treasures of possibility to life as soon as I unpacked. After writing thank-you notes to my host-colleagues, of course.

### We Need Your Help!

We need lots of help this spring from you and your friends to house, transport, and entertain the many visitors coming from Tula for 20th anniversary activities.

Can you help us with:

- Housing?
- Transportation around the Capital Region?
- Hosting a dinner or other meal?
- Suggesting and hosting an entertainment or touring activity for one or more of our guests?

If so, please contact our 20th Anniversary chairperson, Jan Smith at [518-312-3862](tel:518-312-3862), [contact@albanytula.org](mailto:contact@albanytula.org).

## Board Delegation to Tula Creates New Opportunities

*Jerry Shaye, Charlotte Buchanan, and Barbara Jancar-Webster visited Tula from October 21–November 2, 2010, to join in the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the founding of Tula State University and to enhance the Alliance’s work in a number of areas.*

### TULA STATE UNIVERSITY (TSU).

Jerry and Charlotte met with TSU leaders about the newly formed business incubator at the University. The Tulans want to learn in more detail about incubator operations, and asked to be linked to people here such as those at RPI and Union with relevant experience. TSU has won two grants totaling \$6 million, to be used for scientific innovation with practical applications. TSU would like Capital Region professors to lecture in Tula on environmental health issues, and was also pleased to accept the Alliance’s small grant to be used for collaboration among the Institute of Medicine and the Department of Environmental Protection and the UAlbany School of Public Health for research on environmentally caused health care problems.



*Left to Right: Charlotte Buchanan, Jerry Shaye, and Barbara Webster met with (from bottom right) Alexander Chebotarev, Deputy rector; Vladimir Pannarin, Director of the newly formed incubator at TSU, and Sergey Zioatia, Deputy Chair of the Faculty of Environmental Protection. October 2010*

Barbara, Jerry, and Charlotte met with TSU Rector (University President) Mikhail Gryazev, who was enthusiastic about visiting Albany in 2011 for the sculpture dedication and 20th Anniver-

sary celebration. They discussed various projects and exchanges and all expect to continue expanding relationships.



At the Polenova Art School in Tula, which has contributed hundreds of excellent art works to the Albany Tula Alliance, including themes of Russian fairy tales, American fairy tales, dance, and Tula City scenes. October 2010.

### POLENOVA ART SCHOOL.

Barbara and Charlotte met with Victor Dobrynin, director of the Polenova Art School, which is a competitive-entrance after-school center for children with talent in the fine arts. His students will create about 30 works of art for the 20th Anniversary celebration of the ATA. Charlotte supplied a stipend to be used for prizes and supplies for the project.

### YASNAYA POLYANA ORCHESTRA.

Victor Sinkovsky and his full balalaika orchestra performed in formal costumes for Barbara, Charlotte, and city officials. Victor and his quartet have played five times in the Capital Region, as soloists with the Albany Symphony Orchestra, and as visiting musicians in area schools. Barbara and Charlotte invited him to come again with up to 9 orchestra members for the 20th Anniversary celebration in 2011. The orchestra members will play in area schools, at the Arts Center of the Capital Region, and at the Buchanans’ home for “Songs at Sunset” in September.

*Continued on page 6*



Tula City Administration. From the left: Gerald Shaye, Mikhail Ivantsov, Head of the Tula City Administration, Charlotte Buchanan, and Mikhail Budenkov, Chairman of the Center for Russian Environmental Policy and Culture, Tula Regional Branch.

## CITY OF TULA ADMINISTRATION.

Jerry and Charlotte met with City Manager Mikhail Ivantsov, Deputy of the City Duma and businessman Dmitry Golomysov, and other officials, to discuss City initiatives and interests in housing, government efficiency, infrastructure, sustainable development, and environmental protection. They are eager for collaboration with the ATA and other groups in New York State. Jerry formally invited them to attend the dedication of the Alliance sculpture in downtown Albany and celebration of the 20th Anniversary in May.

## Connections

is a periodic publication of the **Albany-Tula Alliance, Inc.**

A 501 c (3) organization  
receiving mail at:

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518.768.1010**

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Please submit editorial  
contributions to:  
[contact@albanytula.org](mailto:contact@albanytula.org)

## TOLSTOY STATE PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY.

Before meeting with Rector Shaidenko and the Head of International Affairs, Zhanna Fomicheva, Jerry and Charlotte met with the new head of the Economics Faculty about the possibility of working together in a student business project. The Alliance has proposed that MBA students here build a comprehensive marketing plan for a business in Tula, including involvement in the US market. He is to follow up with Jerry.

Barbara led discussions of ongoing annual projects, especially the essay contest and the forthcoming visit to the Capital Region by last year's Olympiad winner.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MEETING.

Tulan business people attended a two-hour meeting hosted by LanArk Co., the translation services and language-teaching company, to explore business relationships between Tula and the Capital Region. Jerry offered internships of 1 to 2 months' duration for young business people who want to learn about business practices in this country: business planning, asset management, team-building, and so forth. The Alliance would match the interests of the intern with an appropriate company in the Capital Region, and together the intern and host company would develop the program that would benefit both.

The discussion also included presentations from Tulan business owners interested in marketing in the U.S. (crafts producer Lena Polyeskaya and film producer and teacher Mikhaeil Konev) or in sourcing goods from the U.S. (milk producer Constantin Storch). Mr. Storch is also interested in supporting exchanges for American and Russian teenagers.

## Russian Educators Visit to Study Business Incubators

Tula State University professor of ecology Vladimir Mikhailovich Panarin and business incubator director Yury Andreevich Chadaev visited our region from February 7th through February 14th as guests of the Alliance, in support of a new business incubator initiative at TSU.

Said Mel Chudzik, a member of the Alliance's Board of Directors, head of its Business Committee, and Dean Emeritus of the School of Management at Union Graduate College in Schenectady, "Union Graduate College (UGC) is excited to provide our Tula State University counterparts with an intensive program to understand the complexities of small business incubation. Entrepreneurship is one of the focus areas of UGC's business curriculum, so we have a number of UGC professors, alumni, and friends who enthusiastically contributed to the visit."

The visitors met with principals involved in the incubators at Union College and RPI, and with the Small Business Development Center, the Center for Economic Growth, and the Business Incubator Association of NY State in New York City.

They were hosted during their stay by volunteers from the Alliance, and given opportunities to experience Capital Region sights and entertainment.

# Globalism...No Longer Just a Word

By Jim Schneider

Schenectady High School School Library Media Specialist, and Teacher Leader, Team Information Explorers Program



Team Information Explorers Program students meet via Skype with high school students from Tula School #3.

In April 2010, two of my colleagues and I were fortunate to visit Tula, Russia as representatives of the Albany-Tula Alliance. While there, I had the opportunity to visit public schools. One particular school, School #3, was very interested in some form of collaborative venture that would connect our students. The opportunity presented itself in the fall term.

Through the efforts of teachers at School #3, and the Schenectady City School District's inaugural gifted and talented education program (Team Information Explorers or T.I.E.) for students in grades 4–7, we were able to introduce kids 6,000 miles apart to each other's lives and learning. It was Globalism in action.

## Seeing the World Village

The key was preparation. In Schenectady, TIE embarked on its first-quarter project — Globalism — in September. We began with a demographic research study of our own schools based on the book *If the World Were*

*a Village* by David J. Smith, in which the world is represented by a village of 100 people. Students constructed surveys to find out about each school's food, reading, entertainment, and daily life preferences.

Next, we expanded the research by asking our new friends at Tula School #3 similar questions. Each of our schools collaboratively took on domains of life for a total of 11 research areas: food, transportation, entertainment, technology, etc. All questions were collected onto one Google Form. With the terrific support provided by Vladimir Kuperman in Tula, the Google Form survey weblink was distributed to the students of School #3. Quickly, the survey responses began coming in. Our students were extremely excited.

Our culminating activities took place in November. Moscow native, Dr. Katya Midgette from The College of Saint Rose, visited the students of Mont Pleasant Middle School on Monday, November 22nd. Dr. Midgette cap-

## Watch the Movie

To see edited clips of the kids from Schenectady and Tula conversing over Skype, go to: <http://www.albanytula.org/our-programs/education-and-culture>.

For more on the TIE program and photos of the events of November 22 and 23, you can visit TIE's website: <https://sites.google.com/site/scsdtie/>

tivated the students with stories of daily life in Russia, videos, and a lesson on speaking, writing, and reading Russian. The next day at Zoller Elementary School, with the support of Vladimir Kuperman in Tula, we held a 45-minute Skype session with the students at School #3.

It was a very interesting experience. Students in each school had ample time to ask questions about life in their respective cities. Our Schenectady students — and perhaps many, if not all, of the Tula students — had never experienced anything like that before.

For these students, Globalism is no longer just a "word." I'm grateful to the Albany-Tula Alliance for helping to make this possible.

## More to Come

So what's next? Schenectady High School is an International Baccalaureate Programme World School. I am hoping to connect our 12th grade International Baccalaureate students with Tula students in a collaborative exploration with a history perspective. The Cold War might prove very interesting. This next project is in the planning stages and I hope to be reporting on it in a future issue of *Connections*.

# Online Tools Vital to Our Future

The new website up and running at [www.albanytula.org](http://www.albanytula.org) opens new doors for the Alliance. For the first time, we have a site that can:

- Be easily updated by Committee members
- Host Russian pages as well as English
- Accommodate multimedia
- Link to our social media sites in the U.S. and Russia
- Accept contributions via credit card
- Support event registrations and payments online
- Provide an e-commerce shop where site visitors can find and buy items from Tula and the Capital Region
- Create a password-protected area for Board members to view documents, such as Board minutes and reports.
- Support blogging (not active yet)

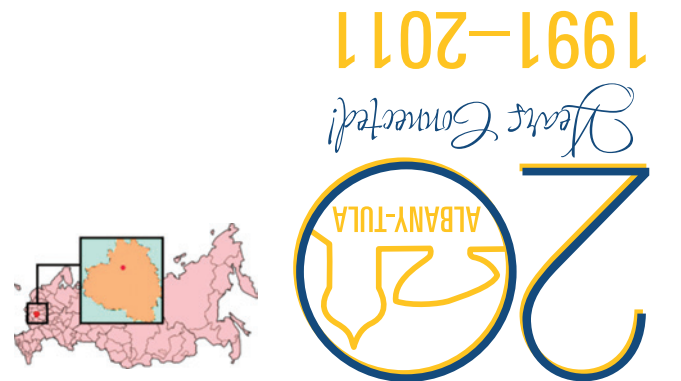
The site was created by the Social Media committee with extensive support volunteered by Elena Molchanova in Tula. It was built by Intellisites of Albany using a blogging platform called Wordpress. Because of this platform, it can be easily updated by non-technical users with a little bit of training.

The site accommodates the Cyrillic alphabet. Thanks to Elena, a click of the flag at the top of every page enables users to jump back and forth easily between the English and Russian versions of the site.



“We have needed this capability for a long time,” said long-time Alliance Board member and Vice Chair Peter Thomas. “Combined with our increasing outreach using social media sites in the U.S. and Russia, we hope to use this powerful Website to attract new generations to get involved in citizen diplomacy.”

PLEASE PROVIDE news updates for the Website to the Social Alliance Committee at [contact@albanytula.org](mailto:contact@albanytula.org).



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A Capital Region Alliance

ALBANY-TULA

