

TURKISH COALITION *of* AMERICA



Fostering Understanding of Turkish American Issues through Public Education



2014 Annual Report

Support TCA

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Executive Summary

Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) was founded in 2007 as an educational, charitable organization with a mission to:

- Foster friendship, understanding, and cooperation between the United States and Turkey.
- Expand Turkish American outreach to American public and private entities.
- Promote and advance the interests of the Turkish American community and Turks.
- Protect the character and ensure a realistic portrayal of Turkey and Turkish Americans in the media and the arts.
- Identify and recognize the achievements of Turkish Americans in academia, arts, business, education, government, public service, and science.

TCA's work is undertaken by a professional team, interns, and volunteers from offices in Boston, Washington, DC, and Istanbul.

TCA LEADERSHIP

YALCIN AYASLI, *Chairman*
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GULER KOKNAR, *Vice President*
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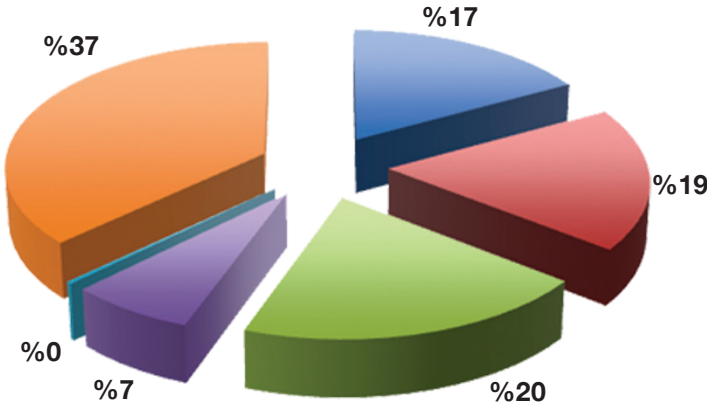
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Financial Statement

Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) invested a total of **\$1,393,421.12** in 2014 to pursue its mission and implement its programs. The following is a categorized breakdown of all TCA administrative and program expenses.

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| ■ PUBLIC EDUCATION | \$236,771.90 |
| Educational Awareness | \$139,990.34 |
| Media and Public Awareness | \$96,781.56 |
| ■ YOUTH AND EDUCATION | \$258,275.19 |
| Internships | \$65,368.10 |
| Scholarships | \$118,632.10 |
| Study Tour Grants | \$27,509.85 |
| Youth Congress | \$46,765.14 |
| ■ HERITAGE AND HUMANITARIAN GRANTS | \$279,290.35 |
| UMD & ACBH – Supplemental Office Grant | \$49,098.27 |
| Typhoon Haiyan Relief Grant | \$115,096.04 |
| Marshall Legacy Institute Grant | \$115,096.04 |
| ■ CIVIC ENGAGEMENT | \$98,958.25 |
| Council of Turkish Canadians | \$7,945.57 |
| Grassroots Grants | \$19,593.92 |
| Conference Series | \$39,644.85 |
| Community Sponsorships | \$31,773.91 |
| ■ SPECIAL PROJECTS | \$4,536.00 |
| Web Design | \$4,536.00 |
| ■ ADMINISTRATIVE | \$515,589.43 |



Educating the Public

Through outreach efforts and a proactive strategy, TCA works to ensure accurate and balanced media portrayals of Turkish Americans and Turkey.

Throughout 2014, TCA's professional team monitored American, Turkish, and international media. TCA staff engaged with journalists through in-person meetings and by providing fact sheets and information about both history and current events regarding Turkish Americans and Turkey.

TCA has held numerous background meetings with senior reporters, editors, and contributors from some of the world's largest publications and news agencies, including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg BusinessWeek, Associated Press, The Economist, Foreign Affairs, The Hill, and Al-Monitor. These meetings provide an open forum for reporters and editors to learn more about U.S.-Turkey relations, Turkey's role in global affairs, and current issues facing Turkey and Turkey's region. Through these dialogues, TCA also gives journalists information about TCA's initiatives and views on relevant issues.

[TCA Issue Papers](#) provide opinion leaders and members of Congress with information and analysis on current issues related to Turkey. In 2014, TCA issued 16 Issue Papers and statements that detailed current affairs related to Turkey and TCA's positions on relevant issues.

TCA received consistent coverage in U.S. media outlets in 2014 and was the primary reference for reporters to consult for a Turkish American perspective. TCA was quoted or featured in several press publications, including Turkish NY, Milliyet, Today's Zaman, the Global Nation Inquirer, Daily Sabah, Milwaukee Wisconsin Journal Sentinel, Native News Online, Native Max Magazine, and others in the U.S., Turkey, and worldwide.

Another source of information for the general public is the [TCA website](#), which features topical as well as in-depth information on issues concerning Turkish Americans and U.S.-Turkey relations. The website features an extensive compilation of reference materials, talking points, and resource and reading lists on Turkey. In 2014, the TCA website received 827,074 visitors.

In 2014, TCA continued its social media campaign to expand its online presence. In the last year, TCA's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) profiles reached thousands of people.



Investing in Youth and Education

TCA is proud of its pillar programs for youth that are designed to enrich Turkish American participation in public affairs and to foster future generations of Turkish American leaders.

TCA Washington Summer Internship Program

The **TCA Washington Summer Internship Program** provides Turkish American college students and recent graduates the opportunity to work in Washington, DC. TCA places program participants as interns in offices of members of the U.S. Congress and selected governmental and non-governmental organizations throughout DC. This program is designed to enhance the participation of young Turkish Americans in public affairs and to contribute to preparing future Turkish American political and community leaders.

In 2014, **15** Turkish American students completed internships through the TCA Washington Summer Internship Program. Participants learned firsthand about the U.S. political process and how Washington operates while gaining valuable career experience in the nation's capital. Over the course of their internships, these young Turkish Americans became great ambassadors for their communities and for Turkey on Capitol Hill and in the surrounding policy community.

"TCA's Summer Internship Program has allowed me to gain experience working in the United States Congress. I have built a strong network on the Hill and continue to benefit from this experience both academically and professionally. If one day I have the privilege and honor of serving as a public official, it will be in great part attributable to this experience." Deniz Irgi, 2014 TCA Washington Summer Intern, Congressman Jim McDermott (D-WA/7th)

"Thanks to TCA, I had a tremendous Washington experience that put me right in the middle of U.S.-Turkey relations. My time in D.C. would not have been possible without TCA's unremitting support to its summer interns. More importantly, the TCA Summer Intern Program helps young Turkish Americans gain valuable experience to become tomorrow's leaders." Mario Erpinar, 2014 TCA Washington Summer Intern, American Turkish Council



2014 TCA Summer Internship Program Participants at their orientation session

Investing in Youth and Education



TCA Summer Interns Dan Soyak (left) and Berk Ozmeral with Turkey Caucus Co-Chair Congresswoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC/5th)

The 2014 TCA interns were given the opportunity to work in the offices of Representatives Donna Edwards (D-MD/4th), Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY/8th), Jim McDermott (D-WA/7th), Todd Rokita (R-IN/4th), Gerry Connolly (D-VA/11th), Alcee Hastings (D-FL/20th), and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL/27th). Interns also worked at several organizations throughout Washington, D.C., including the American-Turkish Association of Washington, DC (ATA-DC); the American Turkish Council (ATC); the Assembly of Turkish American Associations (ATAA); the Turkish Coalition of America (TCA); the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD); and Voice of America's Turkish Service Desk, which hosted a TCA intern for the first time.

A total of **132** internship opportunities have been provided since the TCA Washington Summer Internship Program began in 2007.

“ I received an incredible experience in Washington, DC, walking the same halls as the most powerful men and women in America, sometimes alongside them. **Surrounded by such brilliant and hardworking people at every turn, this internship was a first-hand look at what it takes to succeed in Washington, DC.** Throughout the internship, I learned to act without being paralyzed about making a mistake. I completed my assignments by their deadline and learned the dynamics of working in a legislative office. From my first nerve-wracking phone call to writing memos to legislative staff, I gained confidence in my abilities, as well as a desire to learn and do more.”
Mary Jane Dumankaya, 2014 TCA Washington Summer Intern, Congressman Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY/8th)

“ Thanks to the events that I participated in this summer, **I became more familiar with the issues surrounding Turkey-U.S. relations.** Now I do believe that if I raise my voice about the issues I am concerned with, I can be an effective community member and a politically active U.S. citizen. This summer opened my eyes to what I would enjoy doing in my career. The next goal that I would like to accomplish is to obtain my graduate degree from an institution that is close to Washington, D.C. and to expand my networks.”
Gizem Korkmaz, 2014 TCA Washington Summer Intern, Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA/11th) and United Macedonia Diaspora

Investing in Youth and Education

TCAdvance & Robert C. Byrd Scholarship Programs

2014 marked the final year of the [TCAdvance Scholarship Program](#). TCA renewed one TCAdvance Scholarship to Zelda Elvan Elcin of New York, a third-year law student at the Northwestern University School of Law. She was selected as a TCAdvance Scholar and a Robert C. Byrd Memorial Scholar for the third year in a row.

Between 2007 and 2014, the TCAdvance Scholarship Program offered a \$5,000 annually renewable scholarship to Turkish American students who aspired to a career in public service, public relations, law, or the media. Awarded to graduating high school seniors and undergraduate and graduate collegiate students, the TCAdvance Scholarship aimed to recognize the academic achievements, leadership qualities, dedication to heritage, and community service of young Turkish Americans.

In the eight years of its duration, TCA granted a total of **114 scholarships to 70 Turkish American students**. After a comprehensive evaluation and survey, TCA decided to start a new phase for this youth program and established an annual **Turkish American Youth Leadership Congress in 2014**.

2014 also marked the fourth and final year of the [TCAdvance Robert C. Byrd Memorial Scholarship](#). Established to honor the legacy of West Virginia Senator Robert C. Byrd, the Byrd Scholarship was launched with the blessing of Senator Byrd's family to support Turkish American students hailing from the 13 states of the Appalachian region. The scholarship honors the late Senator's lifelong dedication to civil service and his commitment to building a strong U.S.-Turkey relationship.



2014 TCAdvance Scholar Zelda Elvan Elcin at her graduation from Northwestern University School of Law

"The TCAdvance Scholarship enabled me to finish my final year of law school without the extra burden of assuming additional graduate loans. As a scholarship recipient, I remained well attuned to the burgeoning topics involving Turkey and the ongoing global events that positively and negatively reflected the Turkish image. I also had the privilege of serving as an ambassador for the many study abroad scholarship opportunities that TCA offers to students from various ethnicities. These exciting opportunities introduce scholarship recipients to a semester of study at elite Turkish universities. Now, as a recent law graduate, I look forward to practicing law in New York and being an active member in the Turkish community."
Zelda Elvan Elcin, 2014 TCAdvance Scholarship Recipient

Investing in Youth and Education

TCA Turkish American Youth Leadership Congress

As a continuation of the TCA Advance Scholarship Program, in 2014, TCA inaugurated the First Annual Turkish American Youth Leadership Congress. This program offers college students, recent graduates, and young professionals of Turkish American heritage the opportunity to spend a weekend in Washington, DC learning about U.S.-Turkey relations, the political systems and current affairs of both countries, and the importance of political advocacy in their own lives.

Twenty-nine young Turkish American delegates from across the country were selected by TCA and invited to visit Washington, DC on October 9-12, 2014 for a program filled with meetings and networking opportunities.

"It was exciting to be part of TCA's first Youth Leadership Congress to understand how a minority group like Turkish Americans can effectively represent themselves in our country's system. More importantly, this Congress showed how we as youth can begin to make a difference. By listening to lobbyists, policymakers, and scholars speak on various topics regarding U.S.-Turkey relations, all participants were able to gain a deeper understanding and to be galvanized to take fair and balanced action." Leyla Amur, Madison, AL, 2014 Turkish American Youth Congress Delegate

"For me, the Youth Congress was an opportunity to learn new and interesting facts about Turkish American history, network with prominent Turkish Americans in politics, and meet other Turkish Americans attending the Congress. I did not want to leave after the 4 days because of the bonds we all made with each other. Meeting other Turkish Americans was one of the best things about the Congress and I know these are relationships I will keep for the rest of my life." Fatma Barkus, Ithaca, NY, 2014 Turkish American Youth Congress Delegate



2014 TCA Youth Congress delegates at the Turkish Ambassador's Residence

Investing in Youth and Education

Delegates were briefed by representatives from the U.S. government, the Turkish Embassy, Turkish American community organizations, and Washington, DC think tanks, giving them the chance to learn from leaders in U.S.-Turkey relations while networking with other young Turkish Americans. Delegates came away inspired to take a more active role in local and national politics and to become effective representatives of the Turkish American community.



2014 TCA Youth Congress delegate Leyla Amur (center) with her Congressman, Robert Aderholt (R-AL/4th) (left) and TCA President G. Lincoln McCurdy (right) at the U.S. Capitol after Congressman Aderholt addressed the group

*"The high standard was set from the start at the 2014 Youth Leadership Congress, which continued to impress. Waking well before the first rays of light, our knowledge of the American legislative system expanded exponentially over the course of multiple site tours, dozens of keynote speakers and a wide array of political experts, keeping us greatly entertained well into the evening. **Through the efforts of the Turkish Coalition of America, delegates meet like-minded, ambitious young Turkish Americans from around the nation and begin to understand the crucial balance maintained through bilateral relations in the ever-critical Middle East.**" **Kaan Peksenar, Raleigh, NC, 2014 TCA Turkish American Youth Congress Delegate***

*"The Youth Leadership Congress linked our ambition and heritage with the potential impact we can have as a united community. I also met others who I would have not met had it not been for TCA. As the saying goes, 'Surround yourself with people that reflect who you want to be and how you want to feel; energies are contagious.' I believe that I speak for all of us when I say that this opportunity allowed us to surround ourselves with the right people, right friendships, and right energy in order to pursue something bigger in uniting our community and generation as Turkish Americans." **Tara Demren, Miami, FL, 2014 TCA Turkish American Youth Congress Delegate***



2014 TCA Youth Congress delegates outside of the U.S. Capitol building

Investing in Youth and Education

TCA - University of Utah Turkish Studies Project

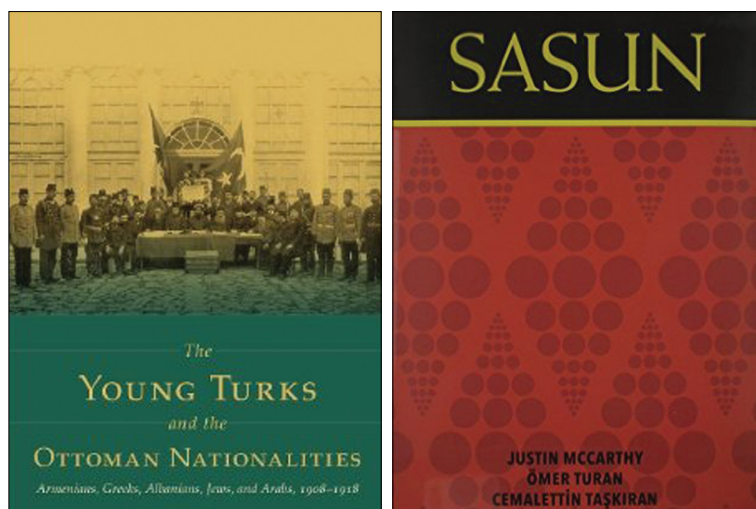
The [Turkish Studies Project](#) at the University of Utah, entitled “The Origins of Modern Ethnic Cleansing: The Collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the Emergence of Nation States in the Balkans and Caucasus,” entered its final year of the grant term in 2014. TCA provided this major [multi-year grant](#) to the University of Utah in 2009 to establish a multi-part academic program with particular focus on the origins of modern ethnic cleansing, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and the emergence of nation states in the Balkans and the Caucasus. Much of the work focuses on a series of traumatic and formative events including crises in the Balkans and Caucasus, the loss of major territories, and forced migrations that predated the establishment of the Turkish Republic.

The Turkish Studies Project, directed by University of Utah Professor Dr. Hakan Yavuz, advances scholarship on a critical period in a region that remains politically unsettled, partially due to the turbulent forces unleashed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The program also explores the shaping of modern Turkish identity through scholarly work, conferences, community participation, and support for new research.

The Turkish Studies Project provides fellowships to several graduate students and scholars who are undertaking research in several languages, including Turkish, Azeri-Turkish, Armenian, and Arabic. The program also provides support for them to attend conferences and to translate scholarly articles from Turkish to English for various academic publications. Additionally, the program has funded archival research projects in London and Moscow.

In 2014, two new books were published with support from the Turkish Studies Project. [Sasun: The History of an 1890s Armenian Revolt](#) by Justin McCarthy, Omer Turan, and Cemalettin Taskiran and [The Young Turks and the Ottoman Nationalities: Armenians, Greeks, Albanians, Jews, and Arabs, 1908-1918](#) by Feroz Ahmad were released by the University of Utah Press.

Discussions for a new academic grant also began with University of Utah at the end of 2014.



Investing in Youth and Education

Turkish Canadian Youth Congress

For the fourth year in a row, TCA provided a grant to support the Council of Turkish Canadians (CTC) Annual Turkish-Canadian Youth Congress. The 7th Annual Turkish Canadian Youth Congress was held on March 15 at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario.

Over 700 young Turkish Canadians have participated in the annual youth conferences thus far and the 2014 congress attracted 75 participants. The event provided a platform for young Turkish Canadians to meet each other and work towards a better understanding of Turkish heritage and history.

During the forum, participants gained guidance to make effective contributions to Canada and received tools and information necessary to address and resolve issues important to Turkish Canadians. TCA President G. Lincoln McCurdy spoke at the congress on a panel entitled “Action Plan for Future—What is Next for Youth Advocacy.”

Also on the panel with McCurdy was Belit Onay, a German politician of Turkish origin who is a member of the Lower Saxony Parliament in Germany, representing the Green Party.



Turkish Canadian students with the congress organizers, speakers, and TCA President G. Lincoln McCurdy

Building Bridges

TCA has enhanced its educational mission by sponsoring a diverse collection of scholarship programs.

Scholarships and Educational Exchanges

• TCA Study Abroad Scholarships for American Students of Minority and Heritage Communities

Through the [TCA Study Abroad Scholarships for American Students of Minority and Heritage Communities](#), TCA provides up to 100 scholarships per year for American students of African, Armenian, Bosnian, Filipino, Hispanic, Macedonian, and Native American descent who have been accepted to a study abroad program in Turkey, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, or Bosnia and Herzegovina.

"My study abroad in Turkey was without a doubt the best experience of my life. I have so many awesome memories with the people I met and I still keep in contact with them. I gained so much valuable knowledge about the world and experienced life lessons that I would never have learned in school. Being the first in my family to travel to Europe wouldn't have been possible without the financial help from the TCA Scholarship Program." Gabriel Guzman, San Diego State University, 2014 TCA Scholarship Recipient at Bahcesehir University

"Without support from TCA, I would not have been able to have this incredible experience. I will never forget the unique sights, smells, and tastes of Turkey. I look forward to my next visit." John Okemah, Williams College, 2014 TCA Scholarship Recipient at Bahcesehir University



2014 TCA Scholarship recipient Rosa Maria Pablo (center right) of San Diego State University with friends in Pamukkale during her semester at Bahcesehir University in Istanbul

Building Bridges

In 2014, 51 scholarships were awarded, bringing the total number of scholarships awarded to 378 since this program's inception in 2008. American minority students who receive the TCA Study Abroad Scholarship studied in subject areas ranging from engineering to art history, with the most popular subjects being business and international relations.

Scholarship recipients came from American colleges and universities across the country, the most widely represented institutions being Augsburg College, Duke University, San Diego State University, Syracuse University, the University of Southern California, the University of Texas at Austin, and Valdosta State University. Finally, the most common Turkish institutions chosen by the students for their study abroad program were Bahcesehir, Bogazici, and Yeditepe Universities in Istanbul.



2014 TCA Scholarship recipient Abigail Haile of the University of Texas-Austin on Istiklal Street in Istanbul, Turkey during her time studying abroad at Bogazici University

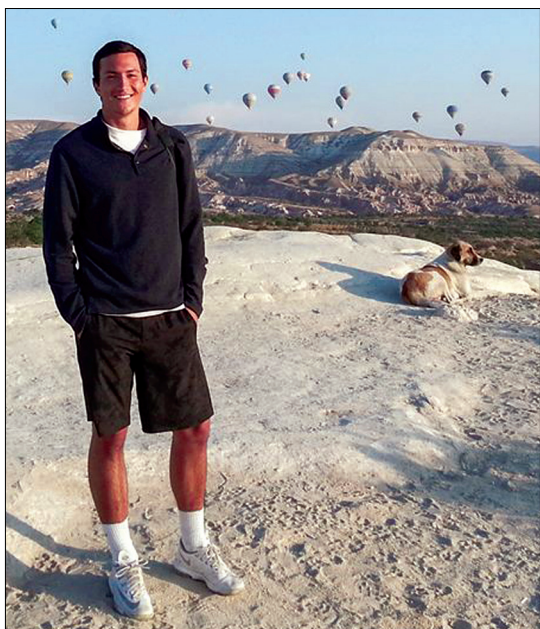
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I did not know much about Turkey when I chose to study there, but I knew it would be different than all of the other programs my university offered, and I was eager for a completely new and immersive experience. Istanbul cannot accurately be depicted in words or even pictures, but I think I speak for anybody when I say that this city is magic, from the sensational food, to the many different neighborhoods, to the lovely people, to the stunning landscapes. What I enjoyed most about my program that now I have friends in countries all over Europe and across the USA. I truly believe that Istanbul is the most underrated place to study abroad; she was nothing like I expected, everything I hoped for, and exactly what I needed. Thank you so much to TCA for your hospitality while I was in Istanbul, and for awarding me the scholarship." Abigail Haile, University of Texas at Austin, 2014 TCA Scholarship Recipient at Bogazici University



Arielle Bronson (right) of San Diego State University, TCA's first Filipino-American scholarship recipient, with friends in front of the Ayasofya in Istanbul while studying abroad at Bahcesehir University

Building Bridges



2014 TCA Scholarship recipient John Okemah of Williams College visits Cappadocia while studying abroad at Bahcesehir University in Istanbul

"As for my time in Turkey, it was incredible. **To be a foreigner in such a vibrant and exciting culture and still manage to feel so welcomed by the warm Turkish hospitality is something I'll never forget, to the extent where I feel comfortable enough to consider Turkey a second home.** The memories that I've made in Turkey span between the serene shores of Antalya, the breathtaking heights of Cappadocia, the rich flavors of Gaziantep, and of course the never-ending liveliness from the streets of Istanbul. I'm currently counting down the time until I not only return to relive my experiences, but also to embrace so much more of Turkey's beauty. Thank you again to TCA for making these wonderful moments possible!" **Alyssa Garcia, University of Southern California, 2014 TCA Scholarship Recipient at Bogazici University**

• TCA Study Tour Grant Program

The [TCA Study Tour Grant Program](#) was established in 2011 to support educational travel programs to Turkey by American universities and educational institutions. It subsidizes participation costs for students and provides a general incentive for institutions to choose Turkey as a study tour destination.

"The purpose of SUNY Buffalo State's Summer in Istanbul program was to give the professor and the students the occasion to combine close textual readings of Turkish literature with an exploration of the neighborhoods and sites that are the backdrop to the texts on the reading list. For instance, reading Orhan Pamuk's *Museum of Innocence in Istanbul* allowed the faculty member to guide students through each cultural reference while walking through the eighty-three chapters of the book; this already-engaging experience was capped with a visit to the corresponding Museum of Innocence, which is an actual museum that Pamuk conceived together with the novel (as well as other neighborhoods the novel references).

The TCA grant helped the students pay for learning opportunities (such as museum admission fees) to take their teaching beyond the classroom by using Istanbul as the vibrant backdrop to their courses on Turkish literature and culture. In fact, midway through the program, students took a three-day trip to the Izmir region where they were guided through the Ephesus ruins, visited the site of the Temple of Artemis, swam in the Aegean Sea, and visited Pamukkale. This additional side-trip would have been impossible for most students without the additional funding provided by TCA." **Dr. Barish Ali, Assistant Professor, English Department, SUNY Buffalo State**

Building Bridges

In 2014, TCA awarded four Study Tour Grants to Georgia State University, Alfred University, the Community College of Philadelphia, and the State University of New York-SUNY Buffalo. In total, 47 students from across the nation participated in these faculty-led study tours and learned about Turkey through various disciplines including literature, media, and business. This brings the total number of participants to 172 since the program began four years ago.



2014 TCA Study Tour Grant recipients from SUNY Buffalo State in Istanbul

“

*The study abroad trip this organization helped me attend was the experience of a lifetime. The vast, evolving culture Turkey offers is one that I could have never imagined before. **The people of Turkey are so welcoming and just as curious about our culture as we are about theirs.** The opportunities I was given on this trip were absolutely amazing. I met with professionals and improved confidence in myself and my work.” **Stefanie Laschuk, 2014 TCA Study Tour Participant, Georgia State University***

“

*The Turkish Coalition of America Scholarship was such a big help in funding my trip to Turkey! Through the scholarship, I was able to enjoy the beautiful country of Turkey without financial restraint. As a college student, this assistance meant the world to me. Thank you Turkish Coalition of America!” **Sarai Thompspon, 2014 TCA Study Tour Participant, Georgia State University***



2014 TCA Study Tour Grant recipients from Georgia State University on a Bosphorus boat tour in Istanbul

Building Bridges

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Thanks to the Turkish Coalition of America for the scholarships they offered to Alfred University students for the program Turkey: Crossroads of Civilization, I experienced one of my most memorable summers there. Learning about a culture by living in it for a month gave me so much insight into not only the information we learned from articles and books but also into Turkey from a tourist's point of view. Since we were in Turkey during part of Ramadan we saw what it was like to be in a country with a large Muslim population during that special period of the year and learned about cultural norms that were different from our own. We also learned a lot about the country's history and got to visit sites such as Assos, the ancient city of Troy, and the Topkapi Palace.” **Jae Kim, 2014 TCA Study Tour Participant, Alfred State University**

• Heritage Partnership

TCA established unique [partnerships](#) with the Bosniak and Macedonian communities in the United States to enhance the historical heritage and contemporary bonds of friendship that the Turkish people have with their neighbors and kin. TCA has provided support to the Advisory Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ACBH) and to the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) to help the two organizations hire professional staff, institute new programs and events, and build their memberships and donor bases.

UMD has grown into an influential voice in the U.S. and globally, representing the interests of Macedonians worldwide. Similarly, TCA's support to ACBH has allowed the organization to grow its presence in Washington, DC. TCA's partnership with ACBH has made it possible for young Bosnian Americans to intern in high profile offices in Washington, DC.

Both UMD and ACBH share offices at TCA's headquarters in Washington, DC. This close proximity allows for the organizations to continue to host joint programs and foster the partnership spirit that Turkish, Macedonian, and Bosnian Americans have developed over the years.

“

The dynamic relationship, in and outside of the office, between TCA, ACBH, and UMD is exemplary of the leadership TCA has taken to build relations between Turkish-Americans with Bosnian-Americans and Macedonian-Americans. Since 2007, UMD and TCA have had an excellent partnership and as a result ties between the U.S., Macedonia, and Turkey have significantly strengthened. We cannot be more grateful for TCA's friendship, mentorship, and strong support, especially for Macedonia's NATO membership.” **Meto Koloski, Co-Founder and President, United Macedonian Diaspora**

“

The Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina (ACBH) values the relationship with TCA and is deeply grateful for TCA's longstanding support and friendship. With TCA's help, ACBH has been able to provide Bosnian American students with internships and take two members of Congress and 43 Congressional staffers to BiH. These invaluable trips have helped highlight the importance of continued U.S. engagement in the region and we are thankful for TCA's involvement in fostering peace and economic development in Southeast Europe. ACBH is grateful to the generosity of TCA's leadership and its staff who have been instrumental in assisting in the continuing growth and development of ACBH.” **Mirzeta Hadzikadic, President, Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Building Bridges

• TCA – Native American Relations

The Turkish-Native American partnership began in 2008 with TCA's [scholarship programs](#) to Native American students, which TCA continued to promote in 2014. This partnership has been strengthened over the years as a result of several special projects, both economic and cultural, which TCA has spearheaded. Overall, TCA's Native American outreach aims to foster ties between Indian Country, Turkish Americans, and Turkey.

As part of this outreach, in early 2014 TCA co-sponsored a Capitol Hill special reception and film screening to call attention to the dire need for increased housing on Native lands. Organized by the Navajo Housing Authority (NHA) and the National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC), the event featured remarks by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), Turkish Ambassador to the U.S. Namik Tan, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, Navajo Housing Authority Chairman Edward T. Begaye, National American Indian Housing Council Chairwoman Cheryl Causley, TCA President G. Lincoln McCurdy, and others. Many of the Native American leaders at the event praised Ambassador Tan and TCA for their efforts in building bridges between Turkey and Indian Country.



Also in 2014, the completion of Oregon's Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (CTWS) water tank project, constructed with funding from the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) and spearheaded by TCA, was celebrated at a ceremony at the Turkish Embassy. The TIKA grant underwrote the cost of the water tank, which serves elementary school students and helps CTWS meet their water needs. This [\\$200,000 grant](#) was the first time that TIKA awarded a grant to an entity in the United States.



Turkish Embassy officials; Turkish Ambassador Serdar Kilic; TCA President G. Lincoln McCurdy; Congressional staff; and representatives from CTWS, other tribes, and Native American organizations at the ceremony celebrating the water tank's completion

Building Bridges

Humanitarian Partnerships

• Bosnia Aid Grant

In September 2014, TCA provided a major humanitarian grant of \$100,000 to the Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI) to aid flood relief and demining programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The TCA grant aimed to help BiH recover from devastating floods that not only caused substantial damage throughout much of the country, but also caused serious setbacks in demining efforts by displacing countless land mines and washing away mine warning signs. TCA's donation was matched by the U.S. State Department and was recognized at events hosted by The Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina (ACBH), the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and MLI at the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Department of State.

"Nineteen years after the war, BiH remains the most mine-contaminated country in Europe as landmines continue to threaten communities. MLI has worked in BiH since 2004, donating 28 lifesaving mine detection dogs and providing prosthetic limbs and vocational training to dozens of landmine survivors. We are extremely grateful to TCA for supporting this very important cause." H.E. Jadranka Negodic, BiH Ambassador to the United States

"TCA's generous gift will make a real difference in allowing thousands of Bosnians to reclaim their lives and their land, where children can play, parents work, and communities can grow without the fear of landmines." Perry Baltimore, President of the Marshall Legacy Institute



Perry F. Baltimore III, President of the Marshall Legacy Institute (left); Stanley Brown, Director of U.S. Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (center left); G. Lincoln McCurdy, TCA President (center); H.E. Jadranka Negodic, BiH Ambassador to the United States (center right); and Ajla Delkic, Executive Director of ACBH



(L-R) Ajla Delkic, Executive Director of ACBH, Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, Co-Chair of the Bosnia Caucus, G. Lincoln McCurdy, TCA President, H.E. Jadranka Negodic, Ambassador of BiH, Rep. Michael Turner, Member of the Bosnia Caucus, Rep. Steve Cohen, Co-Chair of the Turkey Caucus, Perry Baltimore, President, The Marshall Legacy Institute

Building Bridges

• Typhoon Haiyan Relief Efforts in the Philippines

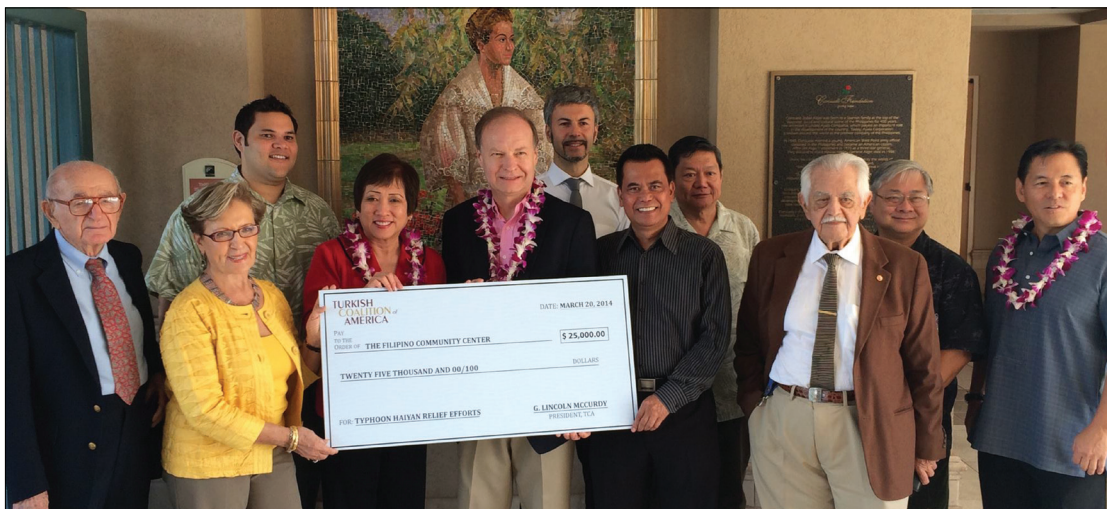
In 2014, TCA in collaboration with the Turkish Philanthropy Funds sponsored a national Turkish American donation drive and donated \$100,000 to help with the Typhoon Haiyan relief efforts after the typhoon hit the Philippines in November 2013. Four \$25,000 grants were given to Filipino American organizations in the United States—the Philippine Cultural Foundation of Maryland, [March 7](#); the Filipino Community Center in Waipahu, Hawaii, [March 20](#); the Filipino Community of Seattle, [April 23](#); and the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce Texas, [July 1](#). The Hawaii donation was matched by the Consuelo Foundation, a Hawaii-based nonprofit organization.

The funds contributed by TCA have been used for multifaceted relief efforts. They have been directed towards shipping medical supply containers, non-perishable food items, personal hygiene products, tarps, water, clothing, wheelchairs, and other goods.

Through NGO partners on the ground, volunteers have distributed relief goods directly to the typhoon victims. The donations also contributed to building clinics and day cares, constructing homes for hundreds of people and families, and repairing boats, schools, and roofs. Other infrastructure projects include power plant rebuilding and construction of a drinking water well. Additionally, donations contributed to the development of livelihood projects. These projects included training

"I was touched and deeply moved by the Turkish Coalition of America's contribution to assist in Typhoon Haiyan relief efforts. In today's world we reach out not only across borders, but across oceans to help those in crisis, compelled to act by our own memory of others who helped us in a time of need. I hope the generosity of the Turkish Coalition will inspire many others to lend a hand wherever challenges arise." Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa (D-HI/1st)

"Typhoon Haiyan has caused an epic humanitarian crisis. In times of crisis, the Philippines have friends willing to lend a helping hand. The Turkish Coalition of America saw a need and delivered with funds that will help continue the rebuilding efforts. Their gesture of compassion and support is a testament to basic human kindness – people helping people." Congressman Pete Olson (R-TX/22nd)



Rep. Colleen Hanabusa, TCA President G. Lincoln McCurdy, members of the Filipino Community Center, the Consuelo Foundation, the Turkish American community and local elected officials at the ceremony

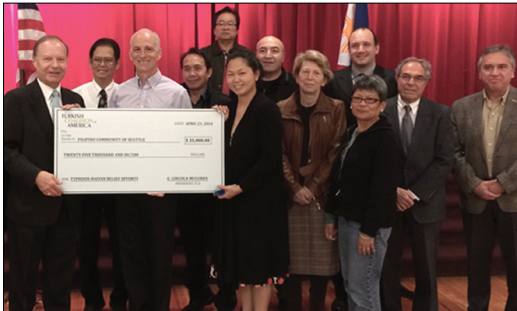
Building Bridges

programs and workshops in fields such as mechanics, agriculture, simple business planning, financial literacy, and stress debriefing. Overall, the funds supported both immediate relief efforts and projects working towards sustainable community development.

"We are very grateful to the Turkish Coalition of America for bringing our communities together with their thoughtful donation, which will be used strategically to rebuild Filipino communities stronger than they were before Typhoon Haiyan." Jon Matsuoka, President of the Consuelo Foundation

*"On behalf of the Filipino Community of Seattle and the victims of Typhoon Haiyan, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude for the support and financial donation your organization is extending to us. **The \$25,000 will help many of our countrymen and make a difference in the lives of those gravely affected by the typhoon.** I am deeply touched by the overwhelming response to our call for help. When Typhoon Haiyan touched down in Tacloban, Philippines, it devastated and shocked the country into a standstill. Our community and those that will benefit from your donation will be forever grateful." Sheila Burrus, Executive Director, Filipino Community of Seattle*

"We are very grateful for the TCA donation. It will help the efforts of the Federation of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce to rebuild another remote island that was devastated by the typhoon." Tess Tuazon-Chase, Region Chair of the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce Texas



TCA President G. Lincoln McCurdy presenting TCA donations to Filipino American organizations in Texas, Seattle and Maryland

In the Community

Since its founding, TCA has supported Turkish American and Turkish Canadian organizations in their efforts to strengthen the Turkish voice in North America through education and civic participation.

Supporting Community Growth and Civic Contributions

In 2014, TCA continued to support the Assembly of Turkish American Associations (ATAA), one of the leading Turkish American grassroots organizations. TCA provided a \$20,000 grant to sponsor the ATAA 34th National Leadership Conference (NLC) in Washington, DC on April 10-12, 2014. Hundreds of Turkish Americans from across the United States participated in the conference, which also included an opportunity for attendees to visit congressional offices.

The U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress (USAFMC) held its 17th Annual Statesmanship Awards dinner on April 2, 2014. TCA supported this event, which brought together hundreds of guests, including former and current members of Congress, ambassadors, corporate and think tank representatives, and Administration officials.

TCA continued its partnership with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) by supporting CHCI's 37th Annual Leadership Conference held in Washington, DC on September 30-October 2, 2014. CHCI's programs serve more than 1,500 Latinos annually. TCA has worked closely with CHCI for years to promote Turkey as a study abroad destination for Hispanic American students and to increase the number of Hispanic American recipients of TCA's Study Abroad in Turkey Scholarship Program.

TCA also supported the 3rd Annual Turkish Heritage Month in Washington DC, organized by the American Turkish Association of Washington, DC (ATA-DC). TCA sponsored a reception on Capitol Hill that served as the month's kick-off event. Throughout the month, ATA-DC organized a variety of events showcasing the rich cultural history of Turkey, Turkish cuisine, and fine arts. The TCA-sponsored reception was attended by representatives of the Turkish American community; members of Congress, including members of the Congressional Caucus on U.S.-Turkey relations and Turkish Americans; and other guests.

TCA continued to support the American Friends of Turkey (AFOT) in 2014 to assist in the organization's projects. AFOT is one of the oldest civic organizations in the United States and was established by former American diplomats and military officers to support U.S.-Turkey relations. TCA's support over the years is aimed at supporting the institutional growth and programs of the organization.

TCA also supported other groups in 2014, including the American Indian Housing Council, the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD), and the Ahiska Turkish community. TCA served as a partial sponsor of UMD's 10th Anniversary Gala. TCA also sponsored the reception for a photo exhibit on Capitol Hill organized by the Ahiska Turkish American Community Center (ATACC) in Dayton, Ohio to raise awareness of the Ahiska Turkish community's history and the ongoing discrimination against Ahiska Turks living in Russia. The reception was the Ahiska Turkish community's first ever event on Capitol Hill.

In Congress

Enhancing the understanding of the importance of U.S.–Turkey relations in Congress is a significant component of TCA’s mission.

Strengthening the Voice of Turkish Americans

TCA has made it a primary objective to strengthen the voice of Turkish Americans in public affairs. TCA works to monitor legislation and issues discussed in Congress that concern the community, and it activates the TCA Action Alert Center to prompt Turkish Americans to contact their members of Congress when necessary.

The [TCA Action Alert Center](#) is available free of charge to Turkish American organizations and partners of TCA. TCA also regularly provides information and analysis to members of Congress and their staff on issues related to Turkey and U.S.-Turkey relations through [TCA Issue Papers](#) sent via fax and email bulletins as well as through face-to-face meetings. In 2014, 16 TCA Issue Papers were published.

TURKISH COALITION of AMERICA
Fostering Understanding of Turkish-American Issues through Public Education

AMERIKA TÜRK KOALİSYONU HOME ABOUT US SUPPORT TCA CONTACT

MENU

- Scholarships
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- Grants
- TCA 2015 Youth Congress
- Issues & Information
- Turkish American Community
- U.S. Congress
- News & Events
 - News and Events
 - TCA Issue Papers
 - TCA Newsletters
- Media
- TCA RESOURCE CENTER
- TAKE ACTION
- LEGAL RIGHTS
- CULTURE

TCA EVENTS

TCA and Washington, DC Metropolitan Area Turkish Americans Aid Typhoon Haiyan Relief Efforts

Number 259 | March 7, 2014

Donations will go to rebuilding efforts on the ground.

At a reception on March 7 at the FBI-American Multicultural Center in Oton Hill, Maryland the Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) presented the National Philippine Cultural Foundation with a \$25,000 donation to aid the Typhoon Haiyan relief efforts.

Special guests at the reception included Congresswoman Rep. Donna Edwards (D-MD), H.E. Jose Lampe Cutisá, Jr., Ambassador of the Philippines to the United States, Aydan Karamanoglu, Counselor and Spokesman of the Turkish Embassy, Maryland Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, TCA Program Manager Jackie Byrnes, Maryland Delegate Kris Valderama, Congressman Donna Edwards (D-MD), Philippine Ambassador Jose L. Cutisá, Jr.

TCA spearheaded the effort and pledged up to \$ 100,000 for the relief campaign, which is organized in collaboration with Turkish Philanthropy Funds. Working with Filipino American organizations, donations will go directly to rebuilding efforts on the ground in the Philippines. The other three designated recipients include the Filipino Community Center of Hawaii, the Filipino Community Center of Seattle, and the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Texas in

TCA ISSUES & INFORMATION

TCA Issue Papers

The TCA Issue Papers are sent to each member of Congress and designed to inform lawmakers and policy-makers on pertinent issues related to US-Turkish relations, Turkey and the Turkish American community.

- TCA President’s “Turkey’s Safe Harbor” Op-Ed Published by The Hill
- TCA President Visits Refugee Camps in Southeastern Turkey
- Commemorating Ataturk: The Beginning of the Turkish War of National Liberation
- Remembering the Circassian Deportations and Massacres
- April 24th, 1915 Gallipoli Centenary:
- TCA Celebrates 91st Anniversary of the Republic of Turkey
- TCA Leads Business Roundtable for Speaker Boehner in Istanbul
- TCA Presents Second \$25,000 Donation to Aid Typhoon Haiyan Relief Efforts
- TCA Sponsors 7th Annual Turkish Canadian Youth Congress
- Turkish Embassy Ceremony Celebrates Turkish-Native American Ties and Mr. and Mrs. Tan’s Contribution
- TCA and Washington, DC Metropolitan Area Turkish Americans Aid Typhoon Haiyan Relief Efforts
- Capitol Hill Exhibit Highlights Ahiska Americans’ History
- TCA and Leading Native American Organizations Sponsor Capitol Hill Film Screening

In Congress

Supporting the Congressional Caucus on U.S.-Turkey Relations and Turkish Americans

TCA works with the Turkish American community to increase the membership of the Congressional Caucus on U.S.-Turkey Relations and Turkish Americans (the Turkey Caucus).

In 2014, the [Turkey Caucus](#) expanded its membership to 148, representing 42 U.S. states and all six territories. With members from both the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, it is the third largest bicameral ethnic/national caucus in Congress.

TCA engaged members of the Turkey Caucus on several occasions throughout the year. It sponsored numerous events relating to the mission of the Turkey Caucus, including facilitating the participation of Turkey Caucus members in Turkish American events, hosting meetings with members of the Turkish American community, promoting the work of its individual members, and integrating such TCA programs as its scholarship program and Washington Summer Internship Program into the members' own constituent services.

TCA also continued to publish a quarterly bulletin specifically for members of the Turkey Caucus, meant to inform them of important developments in the U.S.-Turkey agenda and on issues of significance to the Turkish American community.



Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA/8th) (left) with TCA President G. Lincoln McCurdy at the U.S. Capitol during TCA's 2014 Turkish American Youth Leadership Congress

In Congress

Congressional Outreach

In April 2014, TCA Chairman Dr. Yalcin Ayasli hosted Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives John A. Boehner at a round-table in Istanbul as part of Speaker Boehner's multi-country trip to the region. The round-table brought Speaker Boehner's delegation together with senior executives of American companies in Turkey and Turkish businesses with significant investments in the U.S. Discussion centered on American business activities in Turkey and the developing interests of Turkish companies investing in the U.S., as well as the potential for greater economic ties between the two countries, especially in the context of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

"It is our hope that Speaker Boehner's first formal visit to Turkey will play a constructive role in expanding U.S.-Turkey economic relations. We take this opportunity to once again thank the Speaker for his leadership in Congress in support of strong U.S.-Turkey relations." Dr. Yalcin Ayasli, TCA Chairman

The Speaker was accompanied by a high-level congressional delegation, which included Representatives David Camp (R-MI/4th), Chair, Committee on Ways and Means; Doc Hastings (R-WA/4th), Chair, Committee on Natural Resources; John Kline (R-MN/2nd), Chair, Education and the Workforce Committee; Greg Walden (R-OR/2nd), Chair, Subcommittee on Communication and Technology; Devin Nunes (R-CA/22nd), Chair, Subcommittee on Trade; Tom Latham (R-IA/3rd), Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development; and Steve Womack (R-AR/3rd), Appropriations Committee.

Among the companies represented at the meeting were GE, Ford Otosan, Goodyear, JP Morgan, the Walt Disney Corporation, Sabanci Holding, OYAK, and EA Group. Charles Hunter, U.S. Consul General in Istanbul, was also present at the meeting.



Standing, from left: Emin Ozkan-Goodyear, Koray Arikan-JP Morgan, Coskun Ulusoy-OYAK, Ekim Alptekin-EA Group, Dr. Yalcin Ayasli-TCA, Canan Ozsoy-GE Turkey, Sinan Ceylan-The Walt Disney Corporation, Oguz Toprakoglu-Ford Otosan, Lincoln McCurdy-TCA, Mehmet Pekarun-Sabanci Holding; Sitting, from left: Steve Womack (R-AR/3rd), David Camp (R-MI/4th), Doc Hastings (R-WA/4th), John Boehner (R-OH/8th), John Kline (R-MN/2nd), Tom Latham (R-IA/3rd), Devin Nunes (R-CA/22nd), Greg Walden (R-OR/2nd)



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