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BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

January 2023

Happy 2023 from American Spaces!

This month, we are highlighting numerous resources as we collectively plan for 2023 while also sharing a look back at several outstanding programs from 2022. As always, thank you for sending in your comments and suggestions; we hope you enjoy this issue!

With nearly 600 locations, ECA's Office of American Spaces engages people worldwide through programming and resources. American Spaces support U.S. foreign policy goals and strategically promote public diplomacy.

General Announcement:

Website Update & Box Retirement

The Office of American Spaces is currently in the process of updating its website and programming resources. The update will be ongoing for the next several months.

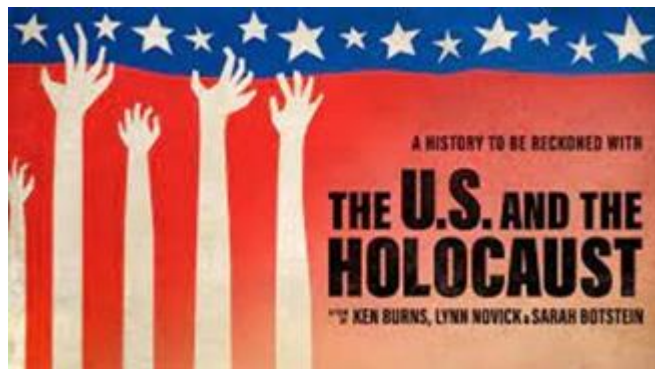
We appreciate your continued patience with this process as some bookmarks, links, and content may be temporarily inaccessible or disrupted during this time. We are also working to consolidate resources and are removing broken or lesser-used links.

As the Department retires the Box storage platform February 28, we are moving all website-resource content to an alternate storage platform and concurrently updating outdated materials and broken links, replacing them with refreshed content that provides more up-to-date, programming guidance and support.

If you notice a broken link or other issue, please alert scottbj@state.gov. We will continue to update you about the status of the website clean-up project as it continues. We invite you to visit our programming website at americanspaces.state.gov to check in on progress as well!

Resources Available:

January 27 is International Day of Commemoration of Victims of the Holocaust



To confront rising Holocaust distortion, the U.S. Department of State has partnered with American filmmakers Ken Burns (via WETA-TV) and Michael King (via the USC Shoah Foundation) to provide excerpts, educational materials and actual films to U.S. embassies and American Spaces and their trusted

partners around the world for use in programming for International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27, 2023.

Ken Burns' six-hour documentary film series, ***The U.S. and the Holocaust***, is available now to American Spaces via Kanopy. Posts and American Spaces may consider showing all or part of the series for more in-depth discussions. The documentary is split into three parts:

- [The Golden Door \(Beginnings-1938\)](#)
- [Yearning to Breathe Free \(1938-1942\)](#)
- [The Homeless, Tempest Tossed \(1942-\)](#)

There is also an [Educator Engagement and Discussion Guide](#), created by the WETA education outreach team for discussion and suggested lesson plans for student audiences and kindly made available by WETA and PBS Learning Media.

Thanks to special arrangements made with PBS Learning Media, American Spaces are welcome to show a shortened 44-minute overview/summary reel of the Ken Burns Holocaust series (which is not publicly available). If interested in showing this condensed version of the series, please email americanspaces@state.gov to request a password-protected link that can be streamed on Vimeo or downloaded via Dropbox.

[*The Rescuers: A Documentary About Diplomatic Courage During the Holocaust and Its Impact Today*](#) is also available for viewing and discussion at American Spaces.

Additionally, the Office of American Spaces has recently updated its [toolkit](#) concerning the Holocaust. American Spaces may also wish to use these materials in conjunction with Yom Hoshuah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) which takes place on April 18, 2023.

Special thanks to **Deborah Guido O'Grady**, Senior Advisor, **Office of the Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues (SEHI)**, for partnering with the Office of American Spaces to make these resources available.

Faces of American Spaces:

Celebrating Malika Oshurbekova



From left to right: Fred Boll, Director of American Spaces, and Lee Satterfield, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs Assistant Secretary, congratulate Malika Oshurbekova on December 7, 2022 in Washington.

Malika Oshurbekova, American Spaces Advisor at **Embassy Dushanbe** (Tajikistan), was the 2022 runner-up for the U.S. Department of State's Locally Employed Staff of the Year Award. She has served in this role since 2016. In Dushanabe, she oversees American Spaces across the country, and manages day-to-day programming that provides youth with educational, technological, and professional skills, building bridges between the people of Tajikistan and the United States. She also received the 2022 Foreign Service National of the Year Award at post.

In response to a dramatic rise of Afghan refugees in Tajikistan in 2021, Malika created an innovative strategy to deliver American Spaces educational programs to over 3,000 Afghan refugees on-site at Afghan community centers. She then secured \$95,000 in emergency funding from the Office of American Spaces and over \$200,000 from an American non-profit organization to renovate the community centers as an American Space extension and equip them with computers and internet.

Malika worked with Tajik trainers and American Fulbright scholars to design and deliver programming in the renovated centers, including programming focused on youth empowerment, leadership, robotics, vocational programs, and English language learning.

Thank you, Malika, for all your great work! Congratulations!

About American Spaces in Tajikistan:

Tajikistan has eight American Spaces; all are **American Corners** located in various partner institutions in **Bokhtar, Dushanbe, Gharm, Isfara, Khorugh, Khujand, Kulob, and Panjakent**. The Spaces focus on providing programs to promote economic growth and reduction of poverty through technology and skills-building programs. Further, the Spaces continue to foster regional cross-border “sister corner” relations, participating in the regional American Spaces Spelling Bee contest, and hosting a regional debate tournament.

In FY 2022, American Spaces in Tajikistan hosted 5,299 programs for 161,720 virtual and in-person attendees.

Featured Toolkits:

The 2023 thematic calendar shares many key dates over the next several months, and we have numerous toolkits available to help you develop programming around these subjects.

For February, we want to highlight [Black History Month](#). There are many sources on the official website, or you can consult the Office of American Spaces [toolkit](#).

Those American Spaces looking further ahead may consider these programming resources for March and April:

- Women’s History Month (March) - see [toolkit](#)
- World Wildlife Day (March 3) - see [simulation](#)
- World Water Day (March 22) - see [simulation](#)
- Arab American History Month (April) - see [toolkit](#)

Did You Know?

Africa Regional Services (ARS)

Africa Regional Services (ARS) is part of the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, in the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs, based in Paris. Founded in 1962, ARS supports public diplomacy efforts across Africa. ARS procures, translates and distributes books in French and Portuguese for free distribution to American Spaces in Africa, or for sale through bookshops. ARS also supplies original print and digital content (including curated webographies), offers suggestions for French-speaking experts, strategic advising services, and cultural performances for all Africa posts. Visit Africa Regional Services (ARS) at:

<https://fr.usembassy.gov/fr/ars-paris-fr/>



It's FarmCraft Season!

Farmcraft 2023 participants are challenged to think creatively, enhance their teamwork skills, be exposed to careers in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM), all while playing an on-line game using the Minecraft platform! Participants will focus on the importance of food security by sustainably growing crops in a virtual environment that mimics real-life agricultural problems, while also learning to move food from farm to market. Participants can learn more and register as teams sponsored by American Spaces @ [Farmcraft \(nasef.org\)](https://farmcraft.nasef.org)! The Farmcraft® 2023 Pre-Season Kickoff takes place via livestream ([link](#)) on February 2, 2023!

Artful Entrepreneurship

with American Spaces in Africa

When asked to share program highlights from 2022, the Regional Public Engagement Specialists (REPS) in Africa submitted several extraordinary examples of engaging new

audiences. May they inspire us all to think creatively and collaboratively as we plan new programs in 2023.



From Script to Skin:

Makeup for Entrepreneurs and Expression

In mid-November 2022, **American Spaces Kenya** held a showcase for its Makeup for Entrepreneurship & Expression program at **American Corner Moi**. Led by renowned makeup artist Suki, this six-month program trained more than 100 makeup artists in Nakuru, Nairobi, Lamu, and Mombasa. At the program's closing event, participants demonstrated their work by sharing testimonies and the program's impact personally and professionally. Many graduates are expanding their makeup businesses and beauty product lines. Others found work on reality TV shows, including the County 49 TV series, the Ms. President reality show, and Treater Stage Plays at Sarakasi Dome. One participant was invited to do makeup for Kenya's greatest marathoner, Eliud Kipchoge, in advance of an interview. Another beneficiary went to the World Cup in Qatar to showcase face painting and body art with visitors and sports fans at the event.

In line with the new Skills Building Pillar for American Spaces, this innovative makeup program brought new audiences to (and through) American Spaces Kenya, as well as success for many young entrepreneurs in creative industries.

Promoting Regional Networks for Entrepreneurs

During Global Entrepreneurship Week 2022, **American Spaces in West and Central Africa** led two regional virtual programs. These programs demonstrated the great interest in entrepreneurship skills training, and also a strong appetite for forming networks among entrepreneurs in the region.

Embassy Kinshasa led #AllTogether4One, a Francophone event that brought together approximately 450 female entrepreneurs from nine countries – Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Kinshasa, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Mali, and Togo – for an interactive virtual speaker program with Togolese-American entrepreneur Claude Grunitzky, who joined from New York.

Meanwhile, **Mission Nigeria** led a week of panel discussions in partnership with **American Spaces in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Cameroon, and Gabon** that featured USG program alumni speaking about entrepreneurship opportunities for youth in specific sectors.

Speakers and moderators joined virtually and interacted in real time with over 1,800 participants attending watch parties in American Spaces in the five participating countries.

By working with the large network of American Spaces in the region and leveraging other public diplomacy resources, including an Africa Regional Services (ARS) Speaker Program and USG program alumni, especially Mandela Washington Fellowship alumni, American Spaces demonstrated how they provide unique platforms to convene and build programming networks in the region. Both programs created a blueprint for future regional collaborative programming to better connect American Spaces audiences.

Taking Innovation & Entrepreneurship on the Road in Ghana

The **American Spaces Ghana** team traveled to Tamale and Bolgatanga in northern Ghana to bring EducationUSA and American Spaces programs and resources to new audiences late in 2022.

The American Spaces-Education USA team “popped up” at two local innovation hubs to present a two-day entrepreneurship bootcamp led by a U.S. Fulbright scholar. This American Spaces Entrepreneurship roadshow also included two panel discussions featuring USG alumni entrepreneurs, a Green Pitch Competition, and screenings of the film *“She Did That”* about African-American female entrepreneurs.

EducationUSA general presentations, small group advising sessions, and an academic essay writing workshop led by two Fulbright English Teaching Assistants rounded out the two-day experience for participants.

Embassy staff conducted English and local-language interviews on several radio and TV stations about the program.

In only four days, these programs and workshops reached an audience of over 2,000 participants, increased post’s following in northern Ghana, and provided a low-cost model for future engagements in areas without easy access to the **American Center and American Corner in Accra**.

(Roadshow participants in Tamale featured in the photo below.)



Calendar of Events

Please feel free to access these resources now as you plan ahead!

The comprehensive 2023 calendar is [here](#)!

The dates included below (and on the calendar) provide opportunities and suggestions to engage audiences of different ages, stages, and types. We have selected months, weeks, and specific dates that have direct links to the six pillars of American Spaces. These include US Holidays and dates recognized by the United Nations. American Spaces programming should primarily focus on these themes.

We also offer a few additional dates that might be considered of interest or fun ways to attract different audiences through film, activity, or discussions about U.S. Culture, which can be used to augment core programming. For example, March 14th (314) is recognized as Pi Day after the mathematical constant Pi (π). It is a fun day to highlight math, celebrate with a bit of culinary diplomacy (with pie), or potentially have an English Language Club meeting which discusses words with similar sounds and different meanings.

January: Human Trafficking Awareness Month – see [toolkit](#)

January 2: Science Fiction Day

January 4: World Braille Day - see [official site](#)

January 11: Human Trafficking Awareness Day - see [toolkit](#)

January 16: Martin Luther King Jr., Day - [Kanopy Film](#) & [toolkit](#)

January 16: National Religious Freedom Day - see [toolkit](#)

January 19: Popcorn Day - see [site](#)

January 24: International Day of Education - see [official site](#)

January 25: Opposite Day - see [site](#)

January 27: International Day of Commemoration of Victims of the Holocaust - see [official site](#)

January 29: Puzzle Day - see [official site](#)

February Black History Month - see [official site](#) and [toolkit](#)

February 1: World Interfaith Harmony Week - see [official site](#)

February 2: World Wetlands Day - see [official site](#)

February 4: World Cancer Day - see [site](#)

February 6: International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation - see [official site](#)

February 11: International Day of Women and Girls in Science - see [official site](#)

February 13: World Radio Day - see [official site](#)

February 17: Random Act of Kindness Day - [see site](#)

February 20: Presidents Day - see [toolkit](#)

February 20: World Day of Social Justice - - see [official site](#)

February 21: International Mother Language Day - see [official site](#)

March: Women's History Month - see [toolkit](#)

March 1: Zero Discrimination Day - see [official site](#)

March 3: World Wildlife Day - see [official site](#)

March 8: International Women's Day - see [official site](#)

March 14: Pi Day -- see [video](#)

March 20: International Day of Happiness -- see [official site](#)

March 21: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - - see [official site](#)

March 21: International Day of Forests - see [official site](#)

March 21: World Down Syndrome Day - see [official site](#)

March 22: World Water Day - see [official site](#)

March 23: World Meteorological Day - see [official site](#)

March 24: World Tuberculosis Day - see [official site](#)

March 25: International Day of Remembrance for the Victims Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade - see [official site](#)

Thanks to all of you who have shared your programming ideas and highlights with your colleagues through our American Spaces FB page. You can continue to share your news and information by emailing us at AmericanSpaces@state.gov. If you have any questions or content to add, email Karlene Noel Jennings at JenningsKN@state.gov.

To add someone to this newsletter, email us at AmericanSpaces@state.gov.





American Spaces

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