

203 SECOND AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10003
TEL: (212) 228-6840
WWW.UCCA.ORG



UCCA BULLETIN

August 2019... Our 79th Year of Service to the Community

UKRAINE PROVES ITS COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY

In response to the announcement that Ukraine will be conducting snap parliamentary elections, the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA), the largest representation of Ukrainians in America, once again turned to the Ukrainian-American community for volunteers for its Election Observer Mission (EOM). As a result, Ukraine's Central Election Commission (CEC) registered 32 International Observers from UCCA, one of the few non-governmental organizations, and the only Ukrainian-American community organization, to monitor the July 21st snap parliamentary elections in Ukraine. UCCA's EOM was headed by UCCA President, Andriy Futey. Michael Sawkiw, Jr. served as Deputy Chair and Tamara Olexy was the Mission Coordinator. Long-time UCCA International Election Monitor, Reno Domenico, was UCCA's Chief Observer.

Following the conclusion of the July 21 vote, UCCA released a statement. "The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America's (UCCA) International Election Observer Mission (EOM), which observed the elections in every region of Ukraine, as well as at the diplomatic posts in the United States – affirms that the July 21st parliamentary elections met international standards for free and fair elections that accurately reflects the will of the electorate."

UCCA's short-term observers were its primary resource for assessing the July 21st snap parliamentary elections. Its election observation methodology, which provides for a contribution by each observer, is designed to achieve an overall picture of Ukraine's election-day proceedings. UCCA's concluding statement was based on the collective experience of the EOM and after reviewing UCCA's one-of-a-kind electronic questionnaire that provides an overall profile of polling-station activity throughout the country and at diplomatic posts.

In visiting over 150 polling stations on Election Day, UCCA's EOM witnessed the following minor infractions: the inability of a few PECs to open the polling station at 8:00am as required by law and in a few precincts information displayed for the voters was not correct or complete. And, as reported in all of UCCA's previous election observation missions, physical access to the polling stations remains problematic. UCCA observers noted that over 13% of the time, access to the polling stations was difficult.

Despite these minor infractions, which were not systemic in nature, UCCA's 32 registered International Election Observers reported that the voting process was conducted in a peaceful and democratic manner, in conformance with international democratic standards – rating the elections as "good" to "very good" 93% of the time.

Moreover, although only 49.84% of the electorate voiced their vote, down considerably from the over 62% of the electorate that cast their ballots during the recent presidential elections, Ukraine's electorate has proven that they take their democratic civic duty seriously.

The 2019 snap parliamentary elections marked an important step in consolidating Ukraine's democracy. Given that these elections took place in a challenging political and security environment, the CEC made every effort to hold elections throughout the country. However, due to the illegal annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, and the ongoing hostilities in Donbas, fueled by Russia, voting did not take place in large parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts and in the illegally occupied Crimean peninsula.

UCCA lauds Ukraine's Central Elections Commission's impartial and efficient efforts to mobilize in such a short period of time, ensuring that the July 21st snap parliamentary elections took place.

UCCA stands with the people of Ukraine in their desire for a democratic, territorial whole and united Ukraine and wishes the newly elected parliament the fortitude to put the interests of its citizens first and pass key reforms to secure its territorial integrity, strengthen democracy, fight imbedded corruption and bring Ukraine closer to the EuroAtlantic community.

Lastly, UCCA expresses its sincere gratitude to its International Election Observers, many of whom for the third time this year volunteered their time and money to participate as members of our Election Observation Mission – their commitment to democracy and Ukraine must be commended."

MANOR COLLEGE JOINS UCCA

The Executive Board of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) is pleased to announce that Manor College is now a member organization of UCCA's National Council.

Representatives of national Ukrainian-American organizations and local UCCA branches gathered on June 15th for the biannual meeting the National Council, UCCA's highest ruling body. Presided over by Stefan Kaczaraj, UNA President and National Council Chair, the Council voted unanimously to admit Manor College on the recommendation of UCCA's Membership Committee, which is authorized and required to review each applicant for membership.

In 1947, the Sisters of St. Basil the Great founded Manor with the primary purpose of educating Ukrainian emigrant children after WWII. Originally chartered as a Junior College, today's Manor College offers associate's and bachelor's degrees for those pursuing a liberal arts career-oriented education, reflecting its growth, expansion, and place in the Philadelphia suburban community.

UCCA PRESIDENT VISITS OREGON COMMUNITY

On July 9-10, 2019, UCCA's President Andriy Futey, traveled to Oregon State to meet with representatives of the Ukrainian American community. During his two-day visit, Futey met with the leadership and members of the Ukrainian American Cultural Association of Oregon and Southwest Washington (UACA), a non-profit, educational & cultural organization that promotes Ukrainian heritage and traditions in the Pacific NW, and provides assistance to Ukrainians in the greater Portland metropolitan area as well as Ukraine. During their discussions, Futey outlined the work of the UCCA, emphasized the importance of unity within our community and encouraged them to join UCCA's national umbrella organization.

UCCA's President also held with the management and employees of two branches of the Ukrainian Federal Credit Union located in Portland Oregon and Federal Way (please confirm locations), Washington, during which they discussed UCCA's cooperation with the Ukrainian National Federal Credit Union Association, as well as how important it is for the community to bank at our Ukrainian credit unions as the money is reinvested into community projects and initiatives.

Over the course of his two day visit, Futey also held two live radio shows on "Nashe Radio", underscoring the importance of unity within our Ukrainian American community. During the radio call-in portion of the show, Futey addressed the various ways UCCA supports the community and their issues of concern.

On the final evening UCCA President addressed the parishioners of the Ukrainian Bible Church, a large Ukrainian Pentecostal Church located in Fairview, Oregon. During his remarks, Futey outlined the historical role UCCA played in advocating for religious freedom in Ukraine, and how UCCA continues work with the various religious denominations in Ukraine, specifically the Christian community.



"It was an honor to meet so many members of this active and vibrant Northwest hromada. I hope UCCA will be able to strengthen its cooperation with this 80,000-strong community, because together we can wield much more influence on the United States political process, and have a greater ability to assist our brethren in Ukraine" remarked Futey. "I'm grateful to the Ukrainian American Cultural Association of Oregon and Southwest Washington UACA for inviting me to Oregon, and I look forward to a fruitful relationship going forward" concluded UCCA's President.

UCCA DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS VISITS BUFFALO COMMUNITY

Andrij Dobriansky, UCCA's Director of Communications and Media, traveled to Buffalo, NY, on July 10-11 to meet with representatives of the Ukrainian-American community. At the Ukrainian-American Civic Center, Buffalo's oldest Narodnij Dim, Mr. Dobriansky and Yuri Hreshchysyn, the President of UCCA's Buffalo chapter, recounted their travels to Zakarpattia, during the first round of Ukraine's Presidential elections earlier this year. Following the presentation to a packed audience, a prolonged question-and-answer session to discuss Ukraine's upcoming parliamentary elections ensued.

The following day, Mr. Dobriansky toured the greater Buffalo area, visiting the Euro Deli and Gifts in Amherst, the Dnipro Ukrainian Cultural Center in Downtown Buffalo, and the historic Adam Mickiewicz Library and Dramatic Circle, where both Mr. Dobriansky and Mr. Hreshchysyn met up with several elected local officials who had joined them in Zakarpattia as election observers. During his visit, Mr. Dobriansky was able to sit in on local planning for Ukrainian-American Day, the community's largest annual gathering, which will take place at the Dnipro Ukrainian Cultural Center on Sunday, August 25.

28TH ANNIVERSARY OF UKRAINE'S RENEWED INDEPENDENCE

In honor of the 28th anniversary of Ukraine's renewed Independence, UCCA issued a statement, which reads in part:

"August 24th marks 28 years since the people of Ukraine proclaimed an end to centuries of bondage, and resolutely vowed to protect their new democracy, while charting a future course towards closer European integration. Sadly, this historic anniversary is overshadowed by the knowledge that for over 6 years the people of Ukraine have been fighting to defend their nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity... May the Lord give the Ukrainian nation the strength and fortitude to resist Russia's continuous war in Eastern Ukraine and their illegal occupation of Crimea, and may He grant eternal rest to the heroes who have given their lives in the struggle for an independent and sovereign Ukraine!

UCCA's Statement can be read in its entirety on the UCCA's website at www.ucca.org