UCCA Illinois Division Marks January 22nd - Unity Day

Ukraine's legendary general Mykhailo Zabrodskyi, U.S. military expert Phillip Karber, Bishop Venedyk of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, Consul General of Ukraine in Chicago Larya Gerasko, Congressman Danny Davis, Congressman Mike Quigley, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, Congressman Sean Casten, Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas, Cook County Commissioner Dan Patlak, representatives of the Polish, Hungarian, Lithuanian, and Azerbaijani communities, and Chicago's Ukrainian American community marked Ukrainian Unity Day on Sunday, January 26th at the Ukrainian Cultural Center.

The event, organized by UCCA’s Illinois Division — representing one of the largest Ukrainian communities in the U.S. — celebrated January 22, 1919, when all Ukrainian lands united in a declaration for independence. This historic date, which was banned during Soviet times, is now celebrated as a national holiday in Ukraine. It was fitting that on Ukraine's Unity Day, in rebuttal to a recent statement by Secretary of State Pompeo asking "Who Cares About Ukraine," the entire 250 guests at the Chicago event stood up with signs "We Care About Ukraine." Suddenly there was an expressive silence of dismay and disappointment in anticipation of Mr. Pompeo's upcoming trip to Ukraine to meet President Zelensky. This concern was shared by many of the speakers, and there was unanimous agreement by the members of Congress that the security of Ukraine and the United States are linked, that Americans should care about Ukraine because it stands for democracy and freedom in the face of Russia's aggressive invasion and cyber warfare that is aimed not only at Ukraine but at all of Europe.

The program also included the participation of Ukrainian American Veterans Post 32, the extraordinary and exciting performance of Ukrainian and American military marches by SUM Choir, awards for community service, and an award of appreciation to the Consul General of Ukraine Larya Gerasko, who is returning to Kyiv after a five-year post in Chicago. Indeed, this year's event raised the bar of community activity and left an unforgettable impression for all.

January 21st – 30th Anniversary of Ukraine’s Human Chain

This January 21 marked 30 years since half a million smiling, flag-waving and independence-seeking people joined hands across the 300 miles between Kyiv and Lviv. Organized by Narodnyi Rukh Ukrayiny (the People’s Movement of Ukraine) when the country still suffered under the yoke of Soviet oppression, Ukrainian activists from across this largest country in Europe managed to inspire enough of their countrymen to come out for a peaceful demonstration of national unity and pride to demonstrate the national will “for a united, independent Ukraine.” At one end of the chain, Kyiv residents began their section from St. Sophia's Square; winding for kilometers out of the city and westward, thousands of youth and elderly, Catholics and Orthodox, ethnic Ukrainians, Jews, Poles and others linked themselves through the streets of Zhytomyr, Rivne, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankivsk. In the end, these activists managed to physically link Lviv, capital of the Western Ukrainian People’s Republic (ZUNR) and Kyiv, capital of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR), on the 71st anniversary of the 1919 “Act of Union” (Akt Zluky), when Ukrainians last united as a single sovereign and independent state.

Inspired by the highly successful Baltic Way human chain of 1989, 1990’s zhyvyi lantsiuh (human chain) was also marked by the widespread use of Ukrainian national symbolism by the participants: waving the blue and yellow flag, proudly displaying the banned tryzub, and singing Ukrainian songs.

Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, the largest representation of Americans of Ukrainian descent, continues the decades-long Ukrainian-American legacy of marking the 1919 “Act of Union” (Akt Zluky) along with this significant moment in history – Unity Day – recognized in 1999 as a national holiday in Ukraine. UCCA honors the activism of those everyday citizens whose simple act of handholding came to symbolize the democratic ideal Ukrainians continue to fight for to this day.
UCCA Extends its Gratitude for Generous Donations

UCCA would like to acknowledge the generous donations received in December 2019 & January 2020 in response to our 2019 End of Year Appeal to support the work of UCCA.*

$5,000 – SUMA Yonkers FCU,
$1,000 – Anna Kalynych, Walter Pastusczyn, Taras Szmagala
$750 – Bishop Basil Losten

$200 – $499

$100-$199
Borys & Irene Antonovych Mary Antonyshyn, Bohdan & Linda Bilocerkowycz, Bohdan Bodnaruk, John Butry, Walter Clebowicz, Orysia Dail, Nicholas Dobrykewych, Adrian & Larissa Dolinsky, Taras Drozd, Peter & Oksana Duda, Daria Dykyj, Marta Faron, Peter Fedynsky, Jaroslava Franczenko, Larissa Hogan, Andrew & Daria Horbachewsky, Roman & Alexandra Horodyskyj, Mark Howansky, Aurelia Hrab, Eugenia Hrynczynys, Taras Hunczak, Helen Karachewski, Maria Kiciuk, Ihor & Maria Kihiczak, Bohdan Kopynec, Bohdan & Myroslaw Michalesky, Zoreslava Mysko, Irene Nestor, George Nesterczuk, Anthony Oleksyn, Marta Pereyma, Pawel Perun, Nestor & Oksana Popovych, Orest Popovych, Helen Pytuky, Nicholas Skirka Living Trust, John Sultzbaugh, Nadia Trojan, Marianna & Wictoria Wakulowska, Lydia Woloshy.

Up to $99

UCCA would also like to thank all those that donated through our UCCA Facebook Page and through Network for Good.

*Donations received as of January 28, 2019

The Healing Power of Art in Times of Conflict

UCCA was honored to play host on January 11th of a two city Public Panel Discussion live streamed between The Revolution of Dignity Museum in Kyiv and WBX Harlem on “The Healing Power of Art in Times of Conflict.”

Congratulations to artist Ola Rondiak for her tireless efforts and creative talent.

If you missed the discussion, you can view it here:
https://www.facebook.com/whiteboxny/videos/58142464025884/UzpfSTY0Mzc3MTgyNTk0OjEwMTU2NTk1NTEyNzcyNTk1/

On October 2-4, UCCA will be holding its quadrennial convention, the XXIII Congress of Ukrainians in America, at Soyuzivka Heritage Center in Kerhonkson, NY. Below please find some preliminary information to prepare for the upcoming convention:

UNF - To participate in the upcoming Convention, your Ukrainian National Fund (UNF) dues must be up to date/paid through 2020.

UCCA Bylaws - According to UCCA’s bylaws, all members have the right to propose changes to the Charter until six months prior to the Convention – all proposals must be received no later than April 4th at the National Office.

Additional information regarding the XXIII Congress will be in next month’s bulletin.