

## PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE MEETS WITH UKRAINIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

While on a working visit in New York City to attend the 76th United Nations General Assembly, Ukraine's Head of State, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, took time to meet with organizational leaders of the Ukrainian American community.

Warmly addressing those in attendance at the Ukrainian Institute of America, President Zelenskyy opened his remarks by stating, "I think you are our best ambassadors... You are defending our state, our sovereignty and territorial integrity abroad." Stressing that the Ukrainian American community is very active, Zelenskyy suggested that dual citizenship for Ukrainians living abroad may be granted but underscored that this issue must be carefully considered given that it is impossible to grant such status to people who live in unfriendly states.

In noting that this year Ukraine is celebrating its 30th anniversary of renewed Independence, President Zelenskyy emphasized the importance of restoring respect for Ukraine and Ukrainian history, but also stressed the importance of restoring peace.



Following his remarks, President Zelenskyy bestowed state awards to several members of the Ukrainian American community including: executive director of Winner Group Ukraine, John Hynnansky; Honorary President of the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee, Dr. Larissa Kyj; National Commander of the Ukrainian American Veterans, Ihor Rudko; and President of Revived Soldiers Ukraine, Iryna Vashchuk Discipio. President Zelenskyy also bestowed the title of 'Honored Artist of Ukraine' to composer, conductor, and bandurist, Julian Kytasty.

Following the bestowing of awards, UCCA President Andriy Futey took to the podium to thank the president for his candidness. Mr. Futey assured Ukraine that the united Ukrainian American community is working hard to strengthen US-Ukraine relations, stating, "Gathered today are representatives of our national and community organizations and churches. These are individuals who consistently dedicate a lot of work and effort, not only for our community here in the United States but also with all of their effort and hard work for the benefit of their homeland Ukraine..." In closing, Mr. Futey underscored that UCCA continues to advocate for the implementation of Ukraine's strategic course towards NATO and EU membership, while working to restore Ukraine's territorial integrity, as well as to halt the Nord Stream 2 project.

The evening concluded with brief remarks by the President of the Ukrainian Institute of America, a, Kathy Nalywajko, who thanked all those in attendance and wished President Zelenskyy godspeed in his work to secure Ukraine's

## 'UKRAINE AT 30' FORUM SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDES

On Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, UCCA in conjunction with the Center for US-Ukrainian Relations, the Ukrainian Institute of America and the American Foreign Policy Council, held their first in-person event of such magnitude since March 2020. Regardless of covid protocols of social distancing, all the seats at the Ukrainian Institute of America were held by those that came to hear the almost 2 dozen speakers reminisce about Ukraine's 30 years of renewed independence.



The full-day conference recollected the myriad of circumstances that led to the declaration of an independent Ukraine in 1991 and shaped Ukraine's present course as an aspiring member of the Euro-Atlantic community. The forum also highlighted the three great manifestations of popular will, known as the 'Maidans' – the Revolution on Granite, The Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity - as well as Ukraine's unwanted conflict with its northern neighbor simply labelled 'the War' as focal points in the discussions.



The conference can be watched in its entirety online: <https://bit.ly/3BqfUdo>

## UCCA MEETS WITH CEC DELEGATION IN NYC

On September 8, members of Ukraine's Central Election Commission (CEC) met with representatives of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA), in New York City. This was the first time a delegation from the CEC had the opportunity to visit with UCCA in the United States.

The visiting delegation – CEC Chairman Oleh Didenko, CEC Vice-Chairman, Vitalii Plukar, CEC Secretary Olena Hataullina, CEC member Oksana Boyarchuk and CEC Head International Cooperation Department Oksana Kostiv – traveled to the United States with the goal of forming cooperative relationships with international partners and foreign electoral commissions, as well as to further research best practices of election processes and election delegation management. During their brief stay before traveling to Washington, D.C., the delegation made time to sit down with two of UCCA's experienced Election Observers: UCCA's Executive Director Tamara Olexy and UCCA's Director of Communications and Media, Andrij Dobriansky. UCCA remains one of the few non-governmental organizations, and the only Ukrainian American community organization having registered an Election Observer Mission (EOM) with Ukraine's CEC for every election in Ukraine – presidential, parliamentary and local – since 1994.

When meeting with UCCA representatives in New York City, the CEC delegation was able to have a Ukrainian language conversation to discuss both sides' respective understanding of American and Ukrainian election practices, the effects of pandemic restrictions on voting in both countries in 2020, and the efforts and mobilizations needed to enfranchise Ukrainian citizens to vote outside of Ukraine. "It was pleasure to visit with member of Ukraine's CEC in the United States. Not having the time restrictions that election cycles pose, we were able to freely exchange ideas and address several recommendations our Elections Missions have proposed over the years and discuss how the CEC is acting upon many of our suggestions," stated Ms. Olexy.

"UCCA unites nearly 30 fraternal, educational, veterans, religious, humanitarian and youth organizations under one umbrella, the UCCA National Council. Because of this incredible level of community dialogue, UCCA representatives can assist future CEC visits, or virtual sessions, by connecting the CEC directly with those organizations and community representatives across the United States," related Mr. Dobriansky.

During the delegation's stay in Washington, D.C., they planned to meet with a variety of stakeholders and election experts including local election administration bodies, representatives of U.S. government agencies and international organizations. The CEC delegation hopes to focus on such key areas as: the use of information technology in elections and cybersecurity, countering misinformation and foreign influence in the election process, and sharing experiences in the field of election administration.

## PRESIDENT ZELENSKY Y VISITS WASHINGTON, DC ON OFFICIAL WORKING VISIT

On August 31-September 3<sup>rd</sup>, Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, visited Washington, D.C., on a working visit that included the much-anticipated White House meeting with President Joe Biden. In addition to the 2-hour meeting with the U.S. President, Zelenskyy met with: Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin; Secretary of Energy, Jennifer Granholm; President of the World Bank Group, David Malpass; Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Bill Nelson, and representatives of U.S. business circles, among others.



UCCA President Andriy Futey and UCCA Vice President Michael Sawkiw, Jr., were invited to participate at the meeting of President Zelenskyy with members of Congressional Ukrainian Caucus. They also took part in President Zelenskyy's visit to pay his respects at the Holocaust Memorial to Victims of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide of 1932–1933 in the nation's capital.

## SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 21 XXII ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE

UCCA is pleased to announce that the 22nd annual *Ukraine's Quest for Mature Nation Statehood Conference* will take place on Thursday, October 21<sup>st</sup>.

The forum, which will discuss "*Forging a Strong Yet Forbearing National Identity – Past Endeavors*" will be held at The University Club in Washington, D.C.

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