

*75 Years of  
Serving the  
Ukrainian American Community*

2015  
ANNUAL REPORT



of the  
Ukrainian Congress  
Committee of America

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## **UCCA: 75 YEARS REPRESENTING AND SERVING THE COMMUNITY**

The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) is a non-profit, community-based organization that for 75 years has been representing the interests of the Ukrainian community in the United States. Since its founding in 1940, the UCCA has been instrumental in disseminating information about the history and plight of the Ukrainian nation by actively implementing both local and international programs and educating U.S. legislators about issues important to Ukraine and the Ukrainian American community.

Working through its various committees, the UCCA coordinates the Educational Council that maintains the Ukrainian Saturday School System in the United States, publishes *The Ukrainian Quarterly*, the only English-language scholarly journal, provides assistance to Ukrainians in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through its Council on Aid to Ukrainians, and produces feature films on Ukrainian themes, particularly historical topics once banned by Soviet authorities.

Since Ukraine's renewed independence almost 25 years ago, the UCCA has taken an active role in the events unfolding in Ukraine. It has successfully carried out multiple civic education programs and organized dozens of delegations of international election observers to monitor presidential, parliamentary and local elections to help secure a democratic foundation for the future of the Ukrainian nation. The UCCA has remained at the forefront of current events in Ukraine and has been instrumental in raising awareness in the U.S. government and throughout the American community about the ongoing war in Ukraine. Through the work of its branches and member organizations, the UCCA has also been successful in raising funds and humanitarian aid to help the soldiers and their families in Ukraine who have suffered at the hands of Russian-sponsored terrorist aggression.

The UCCA has a National Office in New York City, a public relations bureau in Washington, DC and dozens of branches throughout the United States. Together with its staff and hundreds of volunteers nationwide, the UCCA successfully accomplishes many dynamic and multifaceted projects. With this annual report we would like highlight some of our achievements in 2015.

### **A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT...**

**"IF INDEPENDENCE FOR UKRAINE REPRESENTED THE UCCA'S CHALLENGE OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY – MAINTAINING UKRAINE'S SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY ARE THE DEFINING CHALLENGES OF TODAY."**

Since its founding in 1940, the UCCA has worked to ensure that Ukraine becomes an independent, democratic and equal partner within the family of Euro-Atlantic nations, while acting as a coordinator for our vibrant Ukrainian American community.

In our 75<sup>th</sup> year of service to the Ukrainian American community, the UCCA continues to remain the vanguard umbrella organization representing the interests of our community and supporting Ukraine's fledgling democracy. During this perilous time when Ukraine is defending its independence and territorial integrity against Russian-sponsored terrorists, the UCCA has maintained its position as a vigilant proponent of Ukraine's democratic development. In 2015, we focused on forging closer relationships with other ethnic communities; maintaining constant contact with Members of Congress and the Administration in order to garner support for Ukraine; providing humanitarian assistance; and bringing to the forefront the current situation in Ukraine by widely publicizing statements in the mass media; organizing advocacy campaigns and protests; and utilizing social media. All of our efforts have been aimed at helping Ukraine secure its sovereignty, territorial integrity and democracy. At no other time in Ukraine's recent history has its existence as a sovereign nation been under as severe a threat as now.

Looking back on 2015, we are extremely proud of the work that the UCCA was able to accomplish, and I hope this Annual Report will help to highlight some of our greatest achievements this year, as well as emphasize the critical role our community has played, and continues to play, in securing Ukraine's democratic future. The Annual Report showcases some of the UCCA's achievements in 2015. However, much work still lies ahead. On the eve of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence, the Ukrainian nation continues to fight for its independence and territorial integrity, and the Ukrainian American community must continue to rally in Ukraine's defense.

On behalf of the UCCA, I would like to thank all those who have generously contributed, both financially, physically and morally to our work throughout this past year. Without your support many of the projects outlined in this report could not have been realized. Your continued assistance, active participation, and generous donations have helped make 2015 an unprecedented year for the UCCA.

In closing, I encourage your continued input, support and cooperation. The challenges faced by Ukraine, as well as our community, are real. I believe that together, we can build and strengthen our vibrant community and make a true difference in Ukraine's future. I call upon all members of our community to actively participate in the Ukrainian American community by supporting the work of the UCCA, be it financially, morally or physically.

As my term as UCCA President comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank everyone for your continued cooperation and support over the past 7 ½ years. I assure you that I will continue doing my utmost to responsibly serve the UCCA and community, and I urge you to join us in September for the UCCA's XXII Congress of Ukrainians in America. Let's make our collective voices heard! Our united efforts are needed now more than ever! Carpe Diem!

**SLAVA UKRAINYII!**

## **BUILDING STRATEGIC ALLIANCES**

During 2015, the UCCA strengthened old, as well as, established new relationships with diverse ethnic communities, both conventional and non-conventional, to bolster support in areas of mutual interest and common concern, and to help build bridges in an effort to garner greater support for Ukraine's fledging democracy. Through such efforts, the UCCA is helping to create a greater understanding of and greater advocacy for Ukraine.

One such partnership was with the **AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE (AJC)**. In April, following a series of discussions with the AJC, the UCCA initiated a joint letter, signed by Executive officers of 13 national ethnic organizations, to underscore the fact that the risks for the "United States and the wider democratic world could not be higher in the ongoing aggression by the Russian Federation and its proxies against Ukraine's territorial integrity." The letter, addressed to President Barack Obama, underscored the conviction that "the United States must prevail in defending the rights of Ukraine and other nations in the region to live free of unwanted outside involvement, to protect their sovereignty and independence." The signatories also urged the President to consider further measures to demonstrate U.S. support for Ukraine by providing additional financial assistance, lethal defensive military equipment to help Ukrainians defend themselves, and multilateral sanctions against Russia to raise the price for its unjustifiable behavior against Ukraine.

Thanks to our ties with the AJC, the UCCA was invited to participate in the AJC's Global Forum, during which Ukraine's Prime Minister, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, delivered a heartfelt address to more than 2,000 participants, including diplomats from 30 countries, representatives of Jewish communities from across the U.S. and more than 70 countries around the world, including fifty Ukrainian Jews. Following the Global Forum, UCCA's President, Tamara Olexy, was invited to a private, off-the-record, dinner hosted by AJC for Prime Minister, Arseniy Yatseniuk and Finance Minister, Natalie Jaresko.

The UCCA has also strengthened its ties with the **CRIMEAN TATAR COMMUNITY**, a natural ally and partner of our community, by jointly participating in various protests and briefings. We are also working together with the indigenous Tatar community to promote the territorial integrity of Crimea, and advocating Congress to garner support for House Resolution 5241 - the Crimea Annexation Non-Recognition Act. As a result of our growing cooperation with the Crimean Tatar community, the UCCA was invited to address the Second World Crimean Tatar Congress - *Dünya Qırım Tatar Kongresi* - on August 1-2, as the sole representative of the Ukrainian Diaspora. Because their indigenous homeland is currently under Russian

occupation, the Congress took place in Ankara, Turkey, the location of the largest Crimean Tatar Diaspora population. This World Congress, only the second in history, attracted 184 Tatar groups from 12 countries, representing some 200 Crimean Tatar organizations. The total of 410 registered delegates, 80 invited guests and 110 additional attendees, while smaller in number than the first Congress, certainly defied the expectations of even the organizers, as Russia had mobilized all of its best efforts to prevent the World Congress from taking place.

The UCCA also cooperated with the **FREE RUSSIA FOUNDATION**, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental U.S.-based organization led by Russians abroad that seeks to be a voice for those who are silenced by the repression of the current Russian regime. The Free Russia Foundation translated into English “Putin.War” – a lengthy report based on materials from Boris Nemtsov. Together, we organized several presentations of “Putin.War” to inform the wider public audience of Russia’s military involvement in Ukraine.



*Andrij Dobriansky, UCCA Executive Board Member, addressing the Crimean Tatar Congress; Prime Minister Yatseniuk addressing the AJC Global Forum; Free Russia Foundation presenting “Putin.War.”*

Throughout 2015, UNIS continued to work hand-in-hand with the **CENTRAL EAST EUROPEAN COALITION (CEEC)**, an alliance of U.S.-based ethnic organizations representing over 20 million such Americans, by regularly issuing Policy Papers to share concerns and ideas with the United States Congress and Administration, as well as meeting with numerous congressional leaders during two “Ukrainian Day” advocacy events and a joint UNIS/CEEC advocacy event in April 2015. A joint letter from the CEEC, the AJC, and the UCCA was sent to President Obama in early 2015 to apprise the President of the communities’ concern about Russian aggression in the region, in particular the invasion of Ukraine. Together with other Washington-based organizations, additional letters of support for Ukraine were sent to prominent congressional committees during the appropriations process. Ukraine was fortunate to attain higher levels of assistance in fiscal year 2016.



*L to R: Co-chairs of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus with Minister of Finance Natalie Jaresko at a reception for the Ukrainian Days participants; CEEC Advocacy Event – April 2015 representatives of the Ukrainian, Georgian, Latvian, Estonian, and Hungarian communities; Lithuanian Ambassador supporting Ukraine.*

## LEADING A U.S. ADVOCACY AGENDA TO ADVANCE UKRAINE’S RIGHT TO SECURITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY

In 2015, UCCA remained at the forefront of garnering assistance for Ukraine and ensuring that all levels of government were supporting Ukraine’s territorial integrity. The UCCA’s Washington, DC public affairs office, the Ukrainian National Information Service (UNIS), worked diligently in advocating a variety of issues and organizing a series of “Ukrainian Days” advocacy events in our nation’s capital. By meeting with members of Congress on a regular basis, UNIS was instrumental in helping to build Congressional support for Ukraine against mounting Russian aggression. Through ongoing dialogue with elected officials and leading opinion makers, UCCA/UNIS has been successful in bringing the real situation in Ukraine to the fore.



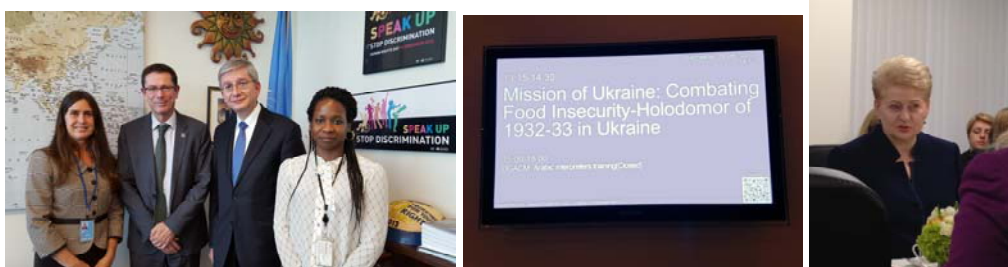
During [month] Ukraine’s Finance Minister, Natalie Jaresko (center), joined dozens of “Ukrainian Days” participants.

In an effort to show our community’s appreciation to those who showed leadership and steadfast support for Ukraine, UCCA/UNIS bestowed the “**FRIENDS OF UNIS**” Award to several members of Congress, the diplomatic corps, and community leaders, including: Senator John McCain (R-AZ); Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ); Senator Menendez (D-NJ); H.E. Zygimantis Pavilionis, Lithuania’s ambassador to the U.S.; (not pictured) - the Central and East European Coalition (CEEC); and Rep. Bill Pascrell (D-NJ).



L to R: Bestowing “Friend of UNIS” award to Sen. McCain, Rep. Frelinghuysen, Ambassador Pavilionis, and Sen. Menendez

The challenges currently facing the Ukrainian nation are global in nature and require a **GLOBAL RESPONSE**. Therefore, in 2015, to address the Ukrainian cause, the UCCA engaged in high-level international meetings, participated in a number of global forums and met with the members of the UN Diplomatic Corps.



*L to R: Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović (2<sup>nd</sup> from left); UN Holodomor Conference; President of the Republic of Lithuania HE Ms Dalia Grybauskaitė during the High level women discussion she hosted on the “Future of Eastern Europe: Empowerment of Women”.*

Throughout the year, the UCCA organized an unprecedented amount of **HIGH-LEVEL EXCHANGES** with top Ukrainian political and NGO leaders, ranging from Ministers, to Members of Parliament as well as non-government organizations, and community leaders.



*L to R: Ukraine’s Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin (center); Ukraine’s Minister of Youth and Sport, Ihor Zhdanov (center); former Head of the Security Service of Ukraine, Valentyn Nalaivaychenko;*



*L to R: former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko; H.E. Zygimantis Pavilionis, Lithuania’s ambassador to the U.S*

During his first visit to the United States for the opening of the 70<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly, UCCA hosted a community event for His Excellency Petro Poroshenko, **PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE**, and Maryna Poroshenko, the First Lady of Ukraine. The President thanked the Ukrainian American community for its contribution to the development of the Ukrainian army, noting "We are fighting for the freedom of the world, democracy in the world. That's why we will win." The President remarked that it would be a "good tradition" to begin every foreign visit with a meeting with the Diaspora, stating, "They are true heroes who made a significant contribution to Ukraine's struggle for freedom and are now making a vital contribution to the reformation of the country." The President noted that the Diaspora contributes greatly to the international support for Ukraine, and "such support is the key to our victory."



*L to R: T. Olexy moderating community event with President Poroshenko; Leaders of the community attending event.*

To keep our community apprised of the latest developments in Ukraine, the UCCA also hosted a variety of **COMMUNITY EVENTS** with leaders from Ukraine.



*L to R: Kyiv's Mayor, Vitaliy Klitchko; Vice President of the Congress of Ethnic Communities in Ukraine, Josef Zissels; Dr. Olena Prystayko, Executive Director of Ukrainian Think Tanks Liaison Office in Brussels; MP Yuri Derevyanko*

## **RAISING THE AWARENESS...UKRAINIAN HOLODOMOR MEMORIAL DEDICATED**

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, thousands of Ukrainian Americans gathered in our nation's capital to witness the official unveiling of the Memorial to the Victims of the Holodomor - Ukraine's Genocide of 1932-1933. After over a decade of work, and years in the making, the Memorial was officially blessed and unveiled by the His Holiness Filaret, His Beatitude Patriarch Sviatoslav, and Metropolitan Antony.

The 3-day series of events commenced with a benefit reception/exhibit opening on Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup> in Union Station's opulent Columbus Room. A special Holodomor exhibit was also displayed in the halls of Union Station from November 1-15, 2015, where thousands of commuters and visitors received information about the genocidal acts of the Stalin regime.

On Saturday, November 7, 2015, the official unveiling and dedication of the Ukrainian Holodomor Memorial began at 2pm. Remarks were delivered by numerous guests of honor, including the First Lady of Ukraine Maryna Poroshenko, who introduced the President of Ukraine in a video message to those assembled; Rep. Sander Levin (D-MI), sponsor of the Ukraine Holodomor Memorial bill; Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), co-chair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus; Charles Kupchan with a greeting from the White House; Paula Dobriansky with a greeting from President George W. Bush, who signed the Holodomor memorial bill in 2006; two Holodomor survivors with their riveting account of the savagery of the genocide; Eugene Czolij, President of the Ukrainian World Congress; Tamara Olexy, President of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America; Larysa Kurylas, designer of the Holodomor memorial; representatives from the Clinton and Bush campaigns; and, a representative from the National Park Service.

A commemorative concert was also held at George Washington University's Lisner Auditorium on Sunday, November 8, 2015 at 2pm to pay tribute to the victims of the Ukrainian Holodomor. The artistic tribute to the Holodomor was performed by the Ukrainian Bandurist Choir, Ukrainian Chorus Dumka, Soprano Marta Zaliznyak-Derzhko, Baritone Oleh Chmyr, Kobzarska Sich Ensemble, Violinist Solomiya Ivakhiv, Pianist Angelina Gadeliya and Hromovytsia Ukrainian Dance Ensemble.





## LENDING A HELPING HAND...HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE ABOUNDS

Through its humanitarian aid contributions, the UCCA demonstrated its commitment to helping our freedom fighters and the innocent victims of Russian-supported terrorism in Ukraine.

The enormous amount of charity and goodwill from our community has greatly helped to support our brethren and freedom fighters in Ukraine. UCCA Branches, member organizations, including the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee, and individuals, have sent massive shipments of assistance and have donated an extraordinary amount to help Ukraine during this critical time. The UCCA is profoundly grateful to our community for its generosity! We have demonstrated our commitment to help Ukraine in its time of desperate need! We urge our community to continue donating generously to the various humanitarian and fundraising efforts.

## ENGAGING IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Ukraine's image differs markedly from the on-the-ground reality. In an effort to dispel the slanderous lies propagated by Russian propaganda, the UCCA initiated a focused social media strategy during the second half of 2015. Appointing a Director of Communications has enabled UCCA to broadcast a clear message on the dangers of Russian aggression not only through our mass media campaign but also via outlets such as the International Business Times, Newsweek, United Press International, and televised appearances on MSNBC, Al Jazeera and Voice of America. Due to our social media and electronic updates, the UCCA's online presence has experienced the highest level of social engagement among Ukrainian American organizations, handling a steady stream of requests for information, sharing of community events and mobilizing of community-wide action items.

### UCCA FACEBOOK POSTS REACH TENS OF THOUSANDS EACH WEEK ENGAGING THOUSANDS WEEKLY

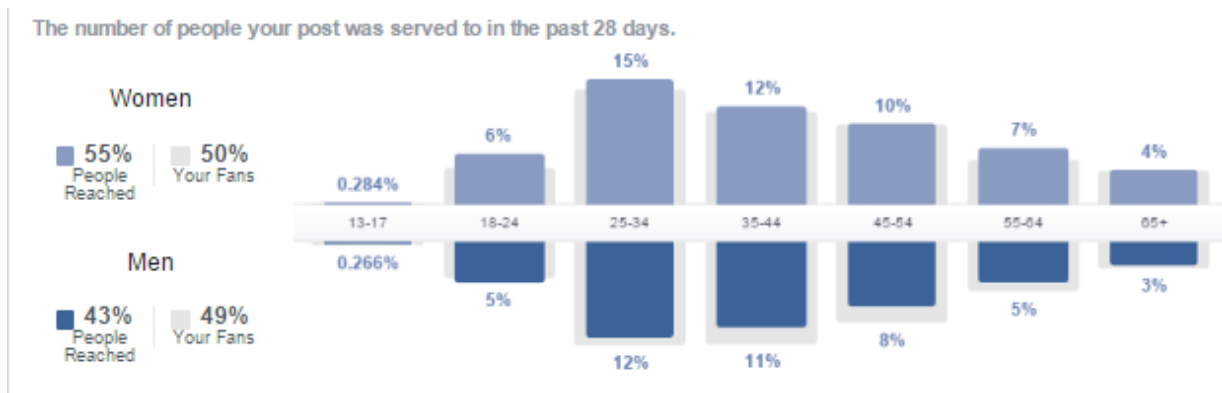
UCCA's social media outreach in 2015 increased dramatically in the second half of the year, as the shown below.





Published	Post	Reach	Engagement
12/30/2015 11:48 pm	 Timeline Photos	13K 	5% 
12/15/2015 1:48 am	 Ukrainian government returns To rabs confiscated by Communists	10.8K 	3% 
12/09/2015 11:11 am	 The figures are conservative, sai d Gianni Magazzeni, a senior Un	5.2K 	3% 
12/24/2015 1:51 pm	 The Sviata Vecheria - NYTimes.c om	4.7K 	5% 
02/06/2016 7:42 pm	 Crimean Tatar singer Jamala ha s made it to the semifinal round t	4.6K 	6% 

By raising public awareness through social media, coupled with our access to and cooperation with leaders of other ethnic organizations, UCCA is positioned to make a difference for years to come!



Please visit us at: UCCA Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/UCCA.org> and our UNIS Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ukrainian-National-Information-Service-UNIS/198575390157933>

Through our multimedia communications program and advocacy campaigns, UCCA reaches more people than any other Ukrainian American organization.

*Please look forward to our new and improved UCCA Website which will be unveiled in the first half of 2016.*

## HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY

Russia's transnational abduction and subsequent unlawful detention of **NADIYA SAVCHENKO**, former Ukrainian Air Force pilot, Iraq War Veteran, Member of Ukraine's Parliament and delegate to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, was a major concern for the UCCA. Her illegal

detention, and those of other illegally imprisoned Ukrainians, continued to play a key role in the UCCA's 2015 community campaigns to secure public and government support for their immediate release.

The UCCA took several steps to raise awareness about illegally imprisoned Ukrainians in the Russian Federation.

From organizing protests...



**stand with us:**

Sunday, 9/27 10:00a-12:00p 47 <sup>th</sup> & 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave	Sunday, 9/27 2:30p-4:30p 67 <sup>th</sup> & Lex Ave	Monday, 9/28 10:00a-12:00p 47 <sup>th</sup> & 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave
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#PutinKills #RussianInvadedUkraine #FreeSavchenko #FreeSentsov #MH17 #PutinatWar



L to R: Congresswoman Maloney at #FreeSavchenko Rally; Vera Savchenko (center); Rally in support of Savchenko

to initiating letters of support from our elected officials...



to advocating for legislation.

In early 2015, Congressional Ukrainian Caucus co-chair Rep. Sander Levin (D-MI) introduced H.Res.50 in support of the release of imprisoned Ukrainian POW - Lt. Nadiya Savchenko. Lt. Savchenko has been detained in Russian prisons since her capture and illegal transfer from Ukrainian territory to the Russian Federation. H.Res.50 urges the U.S. Administration to raise the profile of the Savchenko case and thus condemn publicly the illegal detainment of Savchenko and request her immediate release.

H.Res.50 passed the House of Representatives by unanimous consent on September 22, 2015. UNIS worked diligently on this issue and informed the Ukrainian community to advocate support and passage of the resolution.

## **DEVOTION TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT...MONITORING UKRAINE'S LOCAL ELECTIONS**

Deeming that International Election Observers play a critical role in enhancing the transparency of the election process, and understating that elections are crucial in helping to secure a democratic foundation for the future of the Ukrainian nation, the UCCA once again organized an Election Observation Mission (EOM) in 2015, continuing its record of training and accrediting international volunteers for every election held in Ukraine during its 24 years of independence [including Ukraine's very first democratic elections in 1991, as well as the largest EOM ever registered by Ukraine's Central Election Commission, with over 2400 observers in 2004].

The UCCA EOM deployed 72 international observers to monitor the October 25<sup>th</sup> local elections in 9 oblasts of Ukraine. The UCCA's Observer Mission distinguished itself by developing and utilizing the first ever on-line reporting system. The day after the elections, UCCA Co-Mission Heads, Tamara Olexy and Andriy Futey, issued a preliminary statement of the UCCA International Election Observer Mission, *which reads in part:*

"The UCCA, the nation's largest representation of Americans of Ukrainian descent, affirms that although Ukraine's nation-wide elections of more than 10,000 mayoral positions and 160,000 members of municipal councils on October 25<sup>th</sup> were marred by some incidents, the voting process by and large was conducted in a transparent and democratic manner, complied with Ukrainian law and met international election standards. With more than 130 parties fielding candidates, the voter turnout in the local elections was between 46 and 47%, nearly equaling the 52% turnout in the 2014 parliamentary elections. Complete results are expected to be released on November 4.

... Given that 1.4 million Ukrainians have been internally displaced due to Russia's military invasion, as well as the predicted complications due to the reformed election laws, our EOM teams were distributed on a priority basis throughout nine oblasts of Ukraine, including Kyiv, L'viv, Odesa, Kharkiv, Zhytomyr, Zaporizhzhya, Dnipropetrovs'k, Poltava and Rivne. The UCCA-EOM visited over 200 polling stations on Election Day, tabulating their observations using a real-time, cloud-based system pioneered by the Sterling Business School in Kyiv exclusively for the UCCA. The minor infractions noted by the UCCA-EOM included: instances of inaccurate voter rolls in a handful of precincts; voter frustration with the lack of information about candidates and voting processes; and accusations of possible "voter carouseling" in the Odesa and Zhytomyr oblasts

Reports of the ongoing humanitarian disaster in Crimea and the Donetsk and Luhans'k Oblasts, brought upon by Russia's military invasion, continue to worsen because of the lack of an adequate response from the international community. The UCCA is very concerned by the reported cancellation of elections in cities and towns bordering the conflict zone, including the elections in Mariupol', Krasnoarmiys'k, and Svatove, and urges the Ukrainian government to move quickly and decisively to reschedule the elections in those municipalities.

The UCCA would like to extend our congratulations to the newly elected mayors and municipal councils across Ukraine, and wishes them strength in normalizing and stabilizing the situation in Ukraine for the furtherance of democracy. The UCCA stands together with the Ukrainian people in their desire for real reforms, including first and foremost an end to endemic corruption, which will ensure the further development of Ukraine's economy, democratic institutions, and Euro-integration."



*L to R: Election Commissioner dropping the protocol into the urn; UCCA Observers; Voters in Odesa*

The UCCA expresses its sincere gratitude to its volunteer Election Observers and everyone who contributed to the success of this EOM. Their commitment to democracy must be commended.

*The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) – is one of the few non-governmental organizations, and the only Ukrainian American community organizations, registered with Ukraine’s Central Election Commission. The UCCA has been actively involved in hosting delegations of International Election Observers to Ukraine since 1991.*

## **CULTIVATING A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS**

Over the years, the UCCA has worked closely with the youth to actively cultivate future leaders and activists within our community. We place a great emphasis on educating young people about Ukraine’s unique culture, long history, and current events unfolding today.

To engage the youth, the National Office maintains a successful internship program providing university and high school students with the opportunity to participate in the day-to-day activities of our office and gain valuable work experience in a non-profit environment. University level participants of the internship program become better acquainted with issues important to Ukraine and the Ukrainian American community while earning college credit. The National Office has had interns from several national and international universities throughout the years.

In addition to our university internship program, the UCCA has forged a strong working relationship with our local Ukrainian Catholic high school, Saint George Academy (SGA), and has offered 12 graders the unique opportunity to serve as volunteers in our office in order to fulfill their mandatory 60 hour community service requirement for graduation. The UCCA takes great care to tailor each internship or community service hour to the student's interests and skills in an effort to provide the best work experience possible, as well as to interest/engage the student in current events in Ukraine.

This year, the UCCA NYC Branch, under the leadership of Branch President, Ivanka Zajac, has been working closely with SGA's new principal, Andrij Stasiw, to bring real time information to students about the ongoing war in Ukraine by engaging them in various fundraising efforts for the volunteer battalions in Ukraine. So far the students have raised \$1,000 for the 59th Brigade-Medical platoon in Ukraine. The students were also given the unique opportunity to communicate via Skype with one of the members of the brigade and ask questions about the war as well as relay their best wishes to the soldiers.

The UCCA NYC Branch also organized a screening at SGA for an upcoming film by Damian Kolody about the war in Ukraine. The students were given the opportunity to talk with the filmmaker about his experiences. Students were also informed by Ms. Zajac about how their \$1,000 donation was spent in helping the 59<sup>th</sup> brigade in Ukraine. Plans were made for future meetings between the branch and school.

The strong relationship between the UCCA NYC Branch and SGA has encouraged both Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian SGA students to participate in numerous UCCA national events including, the unveiling of the Holodomor memorial in Washington, DC, the annual Holodomor commemoration at Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, the Holodomor commemorative program at the United Nations as well as numerous local UCCA organized protests and projects.

## **RECOGNIZING UCCA LEADERS**

In 2015, the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America was twice honored for its leadership. In September, during his visit to participate in the United Nations 70<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, President Petro Poroshenko granted the Order of Princess Olha of the III grade to UCCA’s President, Tamara Olexy. In November, on behalf of Ukraine’s President Petro Poroshenko, Ukraine’s Ambassador to the U.S., Valeriy Chaly, presented Michael Sawkiw, Chair of the National Holodomor Committee and former UCCA President, with a Commemorative Holodomor Coin in recognition of all the work that was done to bring the Holodomor Memorial to fruition. Mr. Sawkiw was also bestowed a Metropolitan Sheptytsky Medal by His Beatitude Patriarch Sviatoslav, as an expression of gratitude for his service in making the monument to the victims of the Holodomor in Washington, DC a reality.



*L to R: President Poroshenko bestowing the Order of Princess Olha of the III grade to T. Olexy; M. Sawkiw, receiving Commemorative Holodomor Coin from Amb. Chaly, Mrs. Chaly.*

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UCCA effects change because of our committed staff and leadership and the trust and engagement of our supporters who help make UCCA's mission a reality.

*A sincere Thank You goes out to all the members of the UCCA Executive Board, National Council and UCCA Branches, for their continued guidance and cooperation. Without their support and hard work, various UCCA projects outlined in this Annual Report could never have been so successful. Let us continue to work together for the greater good of our community and Ukraine!  
Thank you for being a part of the UCCA Family!*

**Slava Ukrainyi!**

The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization as defined under Section 501 C (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

All donations to the UCCA and its various committees are tax deductible.

For more information about the work of the UCCA, please visit our website at [www.ucca.org](http://www.ucca.org)

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UNIS on Facebook –  
<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Ukrainian-National-Information-Service-UNIS/198575390157933>