

TURKISH COALITION *of* AMERICA



Fostering Understanding of Turkish American Issues through Public Education

2013 Annual Report



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Executive Summary

Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) was founded in 2007 as an educational, charitable organization and works to:

- Foster friendship, understanding and cooperation between the United States and Turkey.
- Expand Turkish American outreach to American public and private entities.
- Promote and advance the interests of the Turkish American community and Turks.
- Protect the character and ensure a realistic portrayal of Turkey and Turkish Americans in the media and the arts.
- Identify and recognize the achievements of Turkish Americans in academia, arts, business, education, government, public service and science.

TCA's work is undertaken by a professional team, interns and volunteers from offices in Boston, Washington, DC and Istanbul.

TCA Leadership

YALCIN AYASLI, *Chairman*
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BASAK KIZILDEMIR, *Vice President, Turkey Representative*

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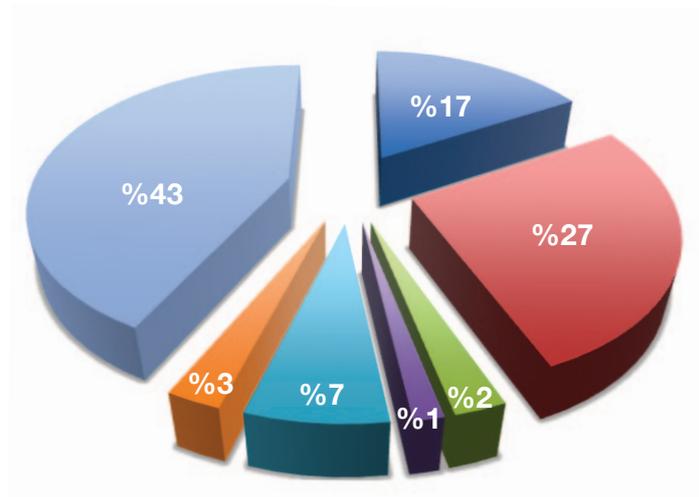
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Financial Statement

Turkish Coalition of America invested **\$1,666,674.85** in 2013 to pursue its mission and programs. The following is a breakdown of all TCA administrative and program expenses:

PUBLIC EDUCATION	\$278,859.74
Educational Awareness	\$67,829.45
Media and Public Awareness	\$211,030.29
YOUTH AND EDUCATION	\$452,130.20
Internships	\$71,469.20
Scholarships	\$111,000.00
University of Utah Program	\$231,161.00
Study Tour Grants	\$13,500.00
Individual Institutional Grants	\$25,000.00
HERITAGE AND HUMANITARIAN GRANTS	\$42,809.24
UMD & ACBH – Supplemental Office Grant	\$42,809.24
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT	\$25,031.34
Council of Turkish Canadians	\$5,000.00
Grassroots Grants	\$6,770.00
Conference Series	\$13,261.34
OFFICIAL DELEGATIONS	\$115,277.93
NAAG Delegation	\$25,687.31
Congressional Delegation	\$89,590.62
SPECIAL PROJECTS	\$44,886.40
Web design	\$10,886.40
Individual Institutions/Sponsorships	\$34,000.00
ADMINISTRATIVE	\$713,680.00



Educating the Public

TCA contributes to the accurate and balanced portrayal of Turkish Americans and Turkey through a proactive media strategy.

Throughout the year, TCA's professional team monitors American and international media, and engages with journalists through face-to-face meetings and by providing background information, including fact sheets on current issues.

TCA held numerous background meetings with senior reporters, editors, and contributors from some of the world's largest and most prestigious publications and news agencies, including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg BusinessWeek, Associated Press, The Economist, Foreign Affairs, and The Hill. These meetings provide an open forum for reporters and editors to learn more about U.S.-Turkey relations, the role Turkey plays in global affairs, and current issues Turkey faces. Through these meetings, journalists are provided information on TCA's initiatives.

TCA officers and experts are regularly featured in electronic and print media on issues of concern to Turkish Americans. Periodically, **TCA Issue Papers** are sent to members of Congress. In 2013, TCA issued 30 Issue Papers and statements that provided information and analysis on current affairs related to Turkey and amplified the position of TCA on relevant issues.

TCA received consistent coverage in U.S. media outlets in 2013, and was the primary reference for reporters to consult for a Turkish American perspective. TCA was quoted or featured in several press publications, including Roll Call, The Hill, National Journal, Eurasia Review, Indian Country Today, Oregonian, and others throughout the U.S., Turkey, and the world.

Another source of information for the general public is **TCA's website**, which features topical as well as in-depth information on issues concerning Turkish Americans and U.S.-Turkey relations. The website features an extensive compilation of reference materials, talking points, and a comprehensive resource and reading list on Turkey. In 2013, the TCA website received 656,272 visitors.

In 2013, TCA continued its robust social media campaign to expand its presence online. In the last year, TCA's **Twitter** and **Facebook** profiles reached thousands of people.



Investing in Youth and Education

TCA is proud of its two pillar programs for youth that are designed to enrich Turkish American participation in public affairs and to foster future generations of Turkish American leaders.

TCA Washington Summer Internship Program

The **TCA Washington Summer Internship Program** provides an opportunity for Turkish American college students and recent graduates to work in Washington, DC. TCA places program participants as interns in offices of members of the U.S. Congress and select governmental and non-governmental organizations in Washington, DC. This program is designed to cultivate the participation of young Turkish Americans in political life through a professional Washington experience and encourage the development of future Turkish American political leaders.

In 2013, **17** Turkish American students took part in the TCA Washington Summer Internship Program. The participating young Turkish Americans gained valuable knowledge of the U.S. political process and learned firsthand how Washington operates. Equally as valuable, these young Turkish Americans became great ambassadors for their community and for Turkey on Capitol Hill and in the surrounding policy community.

The 2013 TCA Interns were given the opportunity to work in the offices of Congresspersons Tim Bishop (D-NY), Doug Collins (R-GA), Alan Grayson (D-FL), Alcee Hastings (D-FL), Jim Moran (D-VA), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), and Ed Whitfield (R-KY). Interns also worked at several non-governmental organizations including the Aspen Institute, the Center for International Private Enterprise, and the National Association of Attorneys General.

A total of **115** internship opportunities have been provided since the TCA Washington Summer Internship Program began in 2007.

“The TCA internship was a unique experience that I will never forget. This program provided an opportunity for me to live and work in Washington, DC, and learn about the American political process. I had the opportunity to acquire a working knowledge of the day-to-day operations of Congress. The meetings, conferences, and hearings I attended have broadened my horizon and I believe they will be useful in my education. I would encourage every student to consider applying for this internship.” **Eray Aktepe, 2013 TCA Washington Summer Intern, Houston, TX, Congressman Ed Whitfield (R-KY)**



2013 TCA Washington Summer Internship Program participants at their orientation session.

Investing in Youth and Education

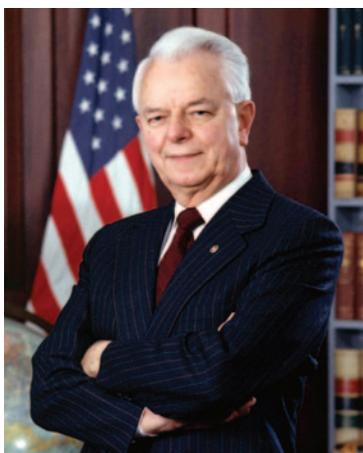
“Thanks to TCA, I had a great internship experience at the Center for International Private Enterprise. This is definitely something that will stick with me for a very long time, and I am glad that I had the opportunity to participate. Thanks again to TCA for giving me these amazing experiences and opportunities.” Ersin Aydin, 2013 TCA Washington Summer Intern, Des Plaines, IL, Center for International Private Enterprise

“Aside from all of the professional work I completed, I met a lot of interesting people at TCA. Just being in Washington, DC is an experience shared by everyone in the city. I truly believe this connection creates stronger ties and friends for life. Interning in DC was an experience I will never forget. Now, I am going to start interning at a law firm while continuing to pursue lobby work for STEM education before I take the LSAT.” Artun Ereren, 2013 TCA Washington Summer Intern, Fullerton, CA, National Association of Attorneys General

“I would like to extend my deepest thanks to TCA for placing me in the office of Congressman Alan Grayson this summer. As the only bilingual speaker of Spanish in the office, I did spot translations of Spanish reports, letters, and phone calls for the Congressman’s legislative staff. I also had the opportunity to further my own academic interests through this internship. Specifically, as a student studying urban planning, I was proud to translate a Puerto Rican expert’s report on the carcinogenic toxins found in local seafood.” Aysba Cohen, 2013 TCA Washington Summer Intern, Irvine, CA, Congressman Alan Grayson (D-FL)

TCAdvance & Robert C. Byrd Scholarship Programs

The **TCAdvance Scholarship Program** offers a \$5,000 annually renewable scholarship to Turkish American students who aspire to a career in public service, public relations, law, or the media. Awarded to graduating high school seniors and undergraduate and graduate collegiate students, the TCAdvance Scholarship aims to recognize the academic achievements and leadership of young Turkish Americans and to cultivate a new generation of leaders.



Senator Robert C. Byrd

Since the program began in 2007, TCA has granted **113 scholarships to 70 Turkish Americans**. TCAdvance scholars hail from leading U.S. colleges and stand out not only for their scholastic and personal achievements, but also for their dedication to their heritage and to community service.

In 2013, TCA provided **seven** TCAdvance Scholarships to Turkish American students from prestigious schools from across the United States. To mark the fifth year of the TCAdvance Scholarships Program, TCA also conducted an evaluation of the program and surveyed previous recipients to chart its future course.

2013 also marked the third year of the **TCAdvance - Robert C. Byrd Memorial Scholarship**. Established to honor the legacy of West Virginia Senator Robert C. Byrd, the Byrd Scholarship was launched with the blessing of Senator Byrd’s family to support Turkish American students hailing from the 13 states

Investing in Youth and Education

of the Appalachian region. The scholarship honors the late Senator's lifelong dedication to civil service and his commitment to building a strong U.S.-Turkey relationship. In 2013, **Zelda Elvan Elcin** of New York, a second-year law student at the Northwestern University School of Law, was selected as the 2013 Robert C. Byrd Memorial Scholar for the second year in a row.

"While fulfilling my duties as a scholar, I truly felt that I was able to develop my leadership skills, and I was able to empower the youth in my society. TCA has played a large role in showing me why it is so important to stand up for the Turkish American community, and I plan to bring that with me in my future endeavors." **Kubra Kalkan, TCA Advance Scholar, American University, BA Candidate in International Business**

"I have realized that the support I got from members of the Turkish American community, who have tirelessly been there for me and all the other students from day one, allowed me to grow in my leadership capabilities. As a result of my involvement, I want to pursue a career in public policy where I can better represent the Turkish American community. This scholarship has set the foundation for becoming a spokesperson in whatever career I choose." **Gizem Tunca, TCA Advance Scholar, George Washington University, BA Candidate in International Affairs**

"The TCA Advance Program has been successful in teaching its ambassadors how to take action in situations involving Turkey and encourages its ambassadors to act in a proactive manner." **Sibel Ilksoy, TCA Advance Scholar, Emory University, BA Candidate in Psychology and Public Relations**

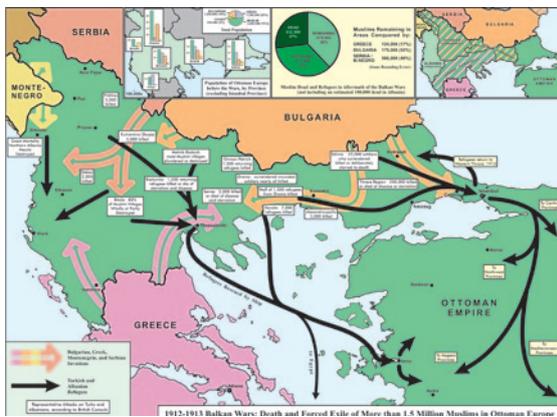


Some of the more than 250 attendees of Philly Turkish Night, an event co-organized by TCA Advance scholar Ceren Kesici from Drexel University, pose together with the Turkish flag.

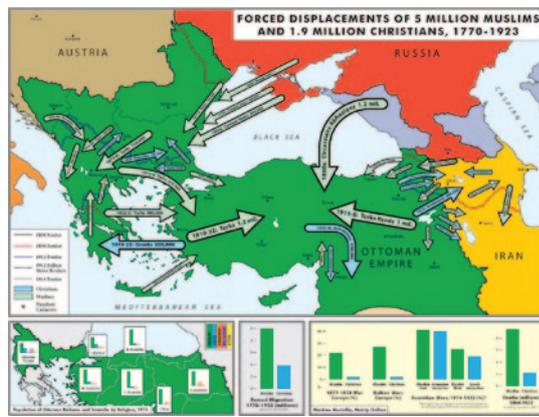
Investing in Youth and Education

TCA Academic Grants

In 2013, TCA awarded a research grant to support the ongoing work of Justin McCarthy, Professor of History at the University of Louisville. The grant supported research into the population movements in the late Ottoman Empire, specifically during the Balkan Wars. The grant helped the publication of two **annotated maps** on forced migrations and mortality in the Ottoman Empire. The annotated maps, published by Prof. McCarthy, are available on the TCA website.



Death and forced exile of more than 1.5 million Muslims in Ottoman Europe as a consequence of the Balkan Wars.



Forced Displacements of 5 Million Muslims and 1.9 Million Christians, 1770-1923

TCA-University of Utah Turkish Studies Project

The **Turkish Studies Project** at the University of Utah, titled “The Origins of Modern Ethnic Cleansing: The Collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the Emergence of Nation States in the Balkans and Caucasus,” entered its fifth year in 2013. TCA provided this major **multi-year grant** to the University of Utah in 2009 to establish a new academic program with particular focus on the origins of modern ethnic cleansing, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and the emergence of nation states in the Balkans and in the Caucasus.

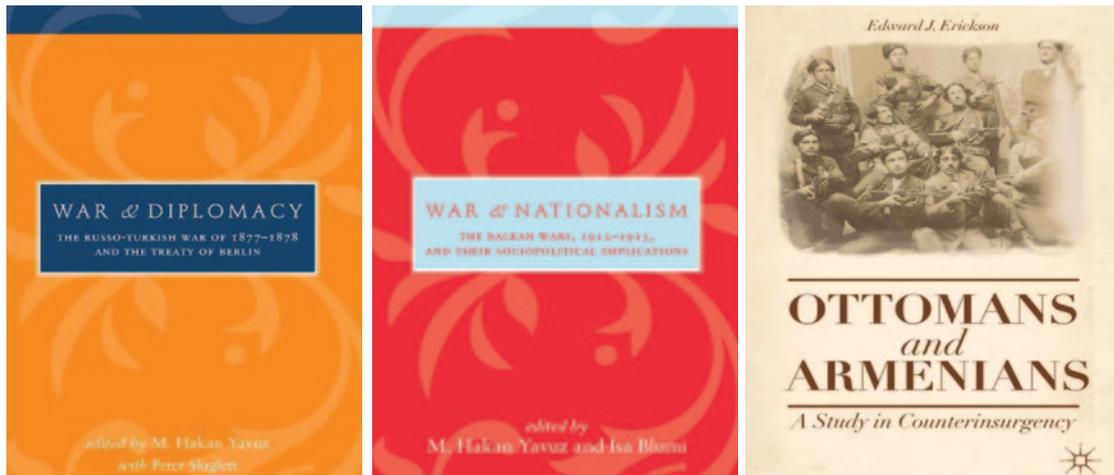
The Turkish Studies Project, directed by University of Utah Professor Dr. Hakan Yavuz, aims to advance scholarship on a critical period in a region that remains politically unsettled, partially due to the turbulent forces unleashed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The program also explores the shaping of modern Turkish identity through scholarly work, conferences, community participation, and support for new research. Much of the work focuses on a series of traumatic and formative events including crises in the Balkans and the Caucasus, the loss of major territories, and forced migrations that predated the establishment of the Turkish Republic.

The Turkish Studies Project continues to provide fellowships to several graduate students and scholars researching topics such as the expulsion of Ottoman Muslims in the 19th century. The program also provides support for them to attend conferences on the Balkan Wars and to translate scholarly articles from Turkish into English for various academic publications.

In 2010-2011, the TCA grant assisted with the publication of *War & Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 and the Treaty of Berlin*, a 600-page book that is the collection of proceedings for a conference organized by the Turkish Studies Project in 2010 on the Treaty of Berlin. A second book, *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and Their Sociopolitical Implications*,

Investing in Youth and Education

a compilation of conference papers that were delivered in May 2010 at the University of Utah, was published in November 2013 with support from TCA. TCA's support to the Turkish Studies Project also helped with the publication of Edward J Erickson's book, *Ottomans and Armenians: A Study in Counterinsurgency* in 2013.



In June 2013, the Turkish Studies Project organized a conference titled “The Caucasus at the Imperial Twilight: Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Nation Building, from 1870s to 1920s.” This conference, held in Tbilisi, Georgia, examined the formation and evolution of ethnic and national identities in the Caucasus. It was the fourth conference series that the Turkish Studies Project has organized.

In October 2013, the Turkish Studies Project participated in the Middle Eastern Studies Association's (MESA) annual meeting, organizing on a panel titled “Rethinking Nationalism in the Late Ottoman World” to share and discuss its research on the late Ottoman Empire.

Turkish Canadian Youth Congress

For the third year in a row, TCA provided a grant to support the Council of Turkish Canadians (CTC) Annual Turkish-Canadian Youth Congress. The sixth annual conference took place in 2013 in Halifax, NS, Canada. CTC hosted 100 participants at the three-day conference, titled “Leadership for Social Change.” Several distinguished guests attended, including Turkey's Ambassador to Canada, H.E. Tuncay Babali, members of the Canadian Parliament, and Nova Scotia Halifax City Mayor Mike Savage. TCA President G. Lincoln McCurdy was a keynote speaker at the event.

Building Bridges

TCA has enhanced its educational mission by sponsoring a diverse collection of scholarship programs.

Scholarships and Educational Exchanges

TCA Minority Scholarship Programs

The **TCA Minority Scholarship Program** offers up to 100 scholarships per calendar year to **American minority collegiate students, and recent graduates, of African, Armenian, Bosnian, Hispanic, Macedonian, and Native American descent** who have been accepted to a study abroad program in Turkey, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, or Bosnia and Herzegovina. The program was established in 2008.

In 2013, **70** scholarships were awarded, increasing the total number of Study Abroad scholarships awarded by TCA to 319 since the program's inception. American minority students who received the TCA Minority Student Scholarship studied in subject areas ranging from political science to studio arts, with the most popular subjects being engineering and international relations. The most common Turkish institutions chosen by the students for their study abroad program were Bogazici and Bahcesehir Universities in Istanbul and the Middle East Technical University in Ankara.

TCA continued its efforts to create academic bridges between Turkish Universities and their U.S. counterparts. Bahcesehir University in Istanbul renewed its partnership with TCA for the fifth consecutive year, offering full or partial **tuition scholarships** to exchange students of African American, Hispanic American, and Native American heritage.

In 2013, Brittany Robles, Tibusay Escobedo, and Victoria Murrieta took advantage of the Bahcesehir-TCA tuition scholarship program to pursue their studies in international relations, sociology, and political science, respectively. Since its inception in 2009, a total of 15 students have received these scholarships. Additionally, the second recipient of the 10 **comprehensive scholarships** (tuition, room and monthly stipend) offered by Istanbul Technical University (ITU) to Native American students was also selected in 2013. Chad Auginash (Chippewa), an electrical engineering major at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, received an ITU scholarship in 2013 to spend his spring 2014 semester in Istanbul.

*"I was lucky to study in Istanbul during the 2013 fall semester. Over the course of the semester, I traveled to Ankara, Kars, Trabzon, and Kapadokya. I met and became acquainted with my fellow Turkish students even better as I was able to lead an English conversation circle. Most exciting was my opportunity to visit the Turkish Parliament in Ankara. I enjoyed getting to know the Turkish people and studying Turkish politics, culture, and language more intimately. Thank you so much for the opportunity!" **Madeleine Herr, the George Washington University, 2013 TCA Minority Scholarship Program, Koc University***

*"Turkey is beautiful! I haven't been in the U.S. for more than a decade, and I am finding myself pointing out the similarities. Istanbul is a thriving and booming city that never seems to run out of food, clothing, or trams. I am adjusting to the way of life smoother than I expected." **Ariam Frezghi, 2013 TCA Minority Scholarship Program, SUNY Stony Brook, Bahcesehir University***

*"Turkey has definitely impacted my life in a positive way. This was my first time experiencing a foreign country. Although I have never studied the Turkish language, I managed to find wonderful people who were willing to help me. I must say that I have never experienced such wonderful, warm-hearted people in my life. Through my study abroad experience, I can definitely recommend Turkey as a safe, people-friendly, and amazing country for study abroad. I am very thankful for the help the Turkish Coalition of America gave me. I will never forget the amazing memories and the incredible people I met." **Ivan Marin, 2013 TCA Minority Scholarship Program, University of Arizona, Bogazici University***

Building Bridges



Students from the University of Texas (top) and Howard University (bottom) visit Basak Kizildemir, TCA Vice President and Turkey Representative at the TCA Istanbul office, while on their study tours.

Building Bridges



Students from the Grand Valley State University pose in front of the Gallipoli Memorial at Anzac Cove, Turkey.

TCA Study Tour Grant Program

The **TCA Study Tour Grant Program** was established in 2011 to highlight Turkey as a college study tour destination. The program is designed to encourage more American educational institutions to choose Turkey as a study tour destination by subsidizing student participation costs.

In 2013, TCA awarded four Study Tour Grants to the George Washington University, Georgia State University, Grand Valley State University, and Virginia Commonwealth University. The TCA grants supported the participation of 45 students on the study tours to Turkey.

“Studying abroad in Turkey has been a great opportunity to expand my understanding of other societies. The opportunity I’ve been given has been one of the most important things I have done in my life so far. In the future, I hope I return to Turkey and explore the regions of this vast nation that I have not been able to visit during the past five weeks. Thank you so much for the grant you have given to our group!” **Kyle Meppelink, 2013 TCA Study Tour Participant, Grand Valley State University**

Building Bridges

“I have found Turkey to be an amazingly diverse culture that has offered me new and exciting ways to expand my horizons. I feel as if I have grown as a person by being allowed to participate in this program, and I want to return for the centennial celebrations in the future to share in the anniversary of the Republic.” **Matthew Darnell, 2013 TCA Study Tour Participant, Grand Valley State University**

“Within this fascinating journey made possible by this innovative course, my own learning journey is equally remarkable. We’ve traveled so many miles to learn about a different country, a different culture, and even a different way of conducting business. I’ll never forget the lovely Turkish people, their delicious food, the views of the Bosphorus, and the poetry in the characters and streets of Istanbul.” **Daniela Almeida, 2013 TCA Study Tour Participant, Georgia State University**

Heritage Partnerships

TCA established unique **partnerships** with the Bosniak and Macedonian communities in the United States to enhance the historical heritage and contemporary bonds of friendship that the Turkish people have with their neighbors and kin. TCA has provided support to the Advisory Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ACBH) and to the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) to help the two organizations hire professional staff, institute new programs and events, and build their membership and donor base.

UMD has grown into an influential voice in the U.S. and globally, representing the interests of Macedonians worldwide. Similarly, TCA’s support to ACBH has allowed the organization to grow its presence in Washington, DC. TCA’s partnership with ACBH has made it possible for young Bosnian Americans to intern in high profile offices in Washington, DC, and in 2013, one student received an internship opportunity with the Helsinki Commission.

Both UMD and ACBH share offices at TCA’s headquarters in Washington, DC. This close proximity allows for the organizations to continue to host joint programs and foster the partnership spirit developed among Turkish, Macedonian, and Bosnian Americans over the years.

“Since 2007, the special collaboration between UMD and TCA has been based on mutual respect, carrying on the vision of Ataturk, who we are proud had roots in Macedonia. It is a clear example of building bridges between two different ethnic groups, which has helped benefit and strengthen U.S. engagement with the region, as well as relations between the respective homelands of Macedonia and Turkey.” **Metodija A. Koloski, President, United Macedonian Diaspora**

“The Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina (ACBH) is very grateful to TCA for their longstanding support and friendship. With TCA’s generous help, ACBH has been able to provide Bosnian American students with internships and take 35 Congressional staffers to BiH, which enabled these staffers to learn more about BiH, the importance of continued U.S. engagement and Turkey’s involvement in fostering peace and economic development in Southeast Europe. I am grateful to the generosity of TCA’s leadership and to the staff who have been instrumental in assisting in the continuing growth of ACBH.” **Ajla Delkic, Executive Director, Advisory Council for Bosnia & Herzegovina**

Building Bridges

TCA - Native American Relations

The Turkish-Native American partnership began in 2008 with TCA's [scholarship programs](#) to Native American students. This partnership has been strengthened over the years as a result of several special projects, both economic and cultural, which were spearheaded by TCA. Collectively, TCA's Native American Outreach aims to foster ties between Indian Country, Turkish Americans, and Turkey.

Throughout 2013, TCA continued to promote its scholarship opportunities for Native American students by collaborating with like-minded programs such as the Washington Internships for Native Students at American University and the NANA Development Corporation in Alaska.

In May 2013, TCA facilitated a significant grant from the Turkish American Business Association, an American Chamber of Commerce in Turkey, to help train 750 future leaders of the American Indian housing sector. The goal of this grant is to empower American Indian leaders to stabilize their communities and build capacity for economic development through the National American Indian Housing Council's (NAIHC) yearlong Leadership Institute.

In September 2013, on the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the Republic of Turkey, the National Congress of American Indians passed a resolution congratulating Turkey on this anniversary and commending Turkey and Turkish Americans for the continued efforts to further relations between Native Nations and Turkey – the first time this symbolic gesture has taken place.

After a yearlong collaboration led by TCA with the support of the NAIHC, a [\\$200,000 grant](#) was awarded by the Republic of Turkey to Oregon's Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (CTWS) in November 2013. Given by the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), the grant serves the purpose of helping the CTWS build a water tank for an ongoing elementary school construction project, which will meet the CTWS's water storage needs throughout the next decade. This was the first time TIKA awarded a grant to an entity in the United States.



TIKA Award ceremony at the Embassy of Turkey, with Ambassador Namik Tan and TIKA President Serdar Cam.

Building Bridges

Humanitarian Partnerships

Chaldean Iraqi Refugees Grant

In an effort to alleviate the suffering of thousands of Iraq's displaced Chaldean Christians who have found refuge in Turkey, TCA distributed the final funds of the **\$100,000 TCA grant** awarded to the Chaldean Federation of America (CFA) in 2009. The funds were dispersed through an aid program administered by the Chaldean-Assyrian Association in Turkey, which provides humanitarian aid, particularly goods and medicine, to Christian and other refugees from Iraq who reside in Turkey.

There are currently an estimated 6,500 Iraqi Christian refugees in Turkey, and the TCA grant helped provide aid to nearly 3,850 refugee families and 2,150 young refugees.

Alleviating Rural Poverty in Latin America

TCA facilitated the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) **grant of \$150,000** to Strategies for International Development (SID), a Washington, DC-based not-for-profit organization that helps alleviate rural poverty in Central and South America. This is the first time TIKA has awarded a grant to an organization in Latin America and the first time SID has received assistance from a Turkish organization.

The grant will provide direct assistance to local farmers in Bolivia, Guatemala, and Peru. TCA was pleased to bring these two organizations together to help reduce rural poverty and empower farmers to increase productivity through smart, systematic improvements and training.



(L-R) Paul Moorehead, President of the Board of Directors – SID; Harun Tuncer, Deputy President – TIKA; Turkish Ambassador H.E. Namik Tan; Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; Congressman Jim Moran; G. Lincoln McCurdy; Charles Patterson, Executive Director – SID at Capital Hill Reception for the TIKA Grant.

In the Community

Since its founding, TCA has supported Turkish American and Turkish Canadian organizations in their efforts to strengthen the Turkish voice in North America through education and civic participation.

Supporting Community Growth and Civic Contributions

In 2013, TCA continued to support the Assembly of Turkish American Associations (ATAA). TCA provided a \$20,000 grant to sponsor the ATAA 33rd National Leadership Conference (NLC) in Washington, DC on April 25-27. Over 300 Turkish Americans from across the United States participated in the conference, which also included an opportunity for attendees to visit congressional offices.

The U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress held its 16th Annual Statesmanship Awards dinner on March 19, 2013 and honored Senators Richard Lugar and Sam Nunn for their outstanding political careers and public service. TCA supported this event, which brought together more than 500 guests, including former and current members of Congress, more than 30 ambassadors, corporate and thinktank representatives and officials from the Obama administration.

TCA continued its partnership with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) by supporting CHCI's 36th Annual Leadership Conference held in Washington, DC on October 2, 2013. Over the years, TCA has worked closely with CHCI, whose programs serve more than 1,500 young Latinos annually, to promote Turkey as a study abroad destination to Hispanic American students and increase the number of Hispanic American recipients of TCA's Study Abroad in Turkey Minority Scholarship program.

TCA also supported the 11th Annual Turkish Festival held in Washington, DC on September 29, 2013, which is hosted by the American Turkish Association of Washington, DC. Through numerous activities and examples of traditional Turkish cuisine, music, art and culture, the Turkish Festival educates guests about Turkey's unique ties with the Balkans, the Caucuses, the Mediterranean, Central Asia, and the Middle East.

TCA continued to support the American Friends of Turkey (AFOT) in 2013, to assist the organization's sustainable growth and becoming an active grassroots organization. AFOT is one of the oldest civic organizations in the United States and was established by former American diplomats and military officers to support U.S.-Turkey relations. TCA's support over the years is aimed at supporting the institutional growth and programs of the organization by providing funding for a professional staff and instituting a speakers program under AFOT.

"The 2013 ATAA Conference was a tremendous success, thanks in no small part to TCA, which not only supported this annual ATAA national conference of Turkish Americans with a generous grant but also organized a full day of activities involving visits and meetings with our elected officials on Capitol Hill. I believe in institutionalization, cooperation, and professionalism where smart organizations focus on what they do best: ATAA advocacy and mobilization, TCA education and congressional advocacy, TPF fundraising and charitable giving, and so on. I am truly excited about the possibilities this brilliant example of harmonization promises for the future. Thank you TCA!" **Ergun Kirlikovali, President, Assembly of Turkish American Associations**

"The American Friends of Turkey is grateful for the continuing support TCA has given us through a one-year challenge grant, matching dollar-for-dollar the funds we raise through new memberships in our organization. It has given us a wonderful "kick-start" as an incentive to increase our membership -- and it has accomplished just that! This kind of assistance programs to help us learn how to help ourselves is one of the great strengths of TCA. We are pleased to have this kind of valuable support from TCA. We look forward to continuing our close ties with TCA in the coming years. With TCA's help, our programs to strengthen people-to-people relations between Turkey and America are growing and spreading." **Dr. Elizabeth W. Shelton, Executive Director, American Friends of Turkey**

In Congress

Enhancing the understanding of the importance of U.S.-Turkey relations in Congress is a significant component of TCA's mission.

Strengthening the Voice of Turkish Americans

TCA has made it a primary objective to strengthen the voice of Turkish Americans in public affairs. TCA works to monitor legislation and issues discussed in Congress that concern the community, and it activates the [TCA Action Alert Center](#) to prompt Turkish Americans to contact their members of Congress when necessary.

The TCA Action Alert Center is available free of charge to Turkish American organizations and partners of TCA. TCA also regularly provides information and analysis to members of Congress and their staff on issues related to Turkey and U.S.-Turkey relations through TCA issue papers sent via fax and e-mail bulletins as well as, through face-to-face meetings. In 2013, 30 [TCA Issue Papers](#) were published.

Supporting the Turkey Caucus on U.S.-Turkey Relations and Turkish Americans

TCA works with the Turkish American community to increase the membership of the Congressional Caucus on U.S.-Turkey Relations and Turkish Americans (the Turkey Caucus).

In 2013, the [Turkey Caucus](#) expanded its membership to include members of the U.S. Senate alongside members of the U.S. House of Representatives, making it the third largest bicameral, ethnic/national caucus in Congress. Membership reached 144 in 2013, representing 42 U.S. states and all six territories.

TCA engaged members of the Turkey Caucus on several occasions throughout the year. TCA sponsored numerous events relating to the mission of the Turkey Caucus, including facilitating the participation of Turkey Caucus members in Turkish American events, hosting meetings with members of the Turkish American community, promoting the work of its individual members, and integrating such TCA programs as its minority scholarships and Washington Summer Internship Program into the members' own constituent services.

TCA also continued to publish a quarterly bulletin specifically for members of the Turkey Caucus, meant to inform them of important developments in the U.S.-Turkey agenda and on issues of significance to the Turkish American community.



(L-R) Enver Yucel, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Bahcesehir University, Yalcin Ayasli, Chairman, TCA, Rep. Virginia Foxx, Co-chair of Turkey Caucus, Lincoln McCurdy, President, TCA with faculty and students at the opening of Bahcesehir University's Washington, DC campus, sharing the same building with TCA.

Delegation Visits

TCA has organized and worked with other organizations to sponsor 16 congressional delegations to Turkey, totaling 169 participants.

Congressional Delegations to Turkey

As of 2013, TCA has organized and worked with other organizations to sponsor 16 congressional delegations to Turkey, totaling 169 participants. In January 2013, TCA was listed as one of the top five sponsors of congressional travel by Roll Call, a Washington, DC publication covering Congress.

The 2013 congressional delegation took place in February. The delegation participated in high-level meetings with U.S. and Turkish officials, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy, members of Parliament, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), and the U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission. Through these meetings, the participants engaged in dialogue on the current state of U.S.-Turkey relations and Turkey's foreign policy. Prior to departing for Istanbul, the delegation met with members of the Ankara office of the German Marshall Fund and the Eurasian Research Center.

While in Istanbul, the group met with leaders of the Turkish American Business Association (TABA) and the Turkish American Business Council (TAIK), as well as with think tank organizations and members of the media and religious minority communities. The delegation also visited Kadir Has University and Robert College, which as the first U.S. education institution established abroad, is celebrating its 150th anniversary.

The delegation had a unique opportunity to learn about Turkey's economic and foreign policy relations with Syria during a trip to Gaziantep, which is a major economic hub between Turkey and Syria. During this one-day visit, the delegation met with the Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce and learned about the condition of neighboring refugee camps and the impact of Syrian refugees on the local economy.



TCA's 16th Congressional delegation at Anitkabir, Ataturk's Mausoleum, in Ankara, Turkey

Delegation Visits

“TCA’s congressional delegation trip to Turkey provided valuable insight into Turkish issues including the contemporary domestic political situation, Turkey’s efforts to grow as an economic power, and Turkey’s delicate efforts to be a stabilizing force in the region. The trip mixed highly valuable cultural excursions with a packed schedule of worthwhile policy discussions involving a wide array of stakeholders. I do not believe there is a more effective way for a congressional staffer to learn as much about Turkey in such a short time.” **Kevin Klein, Deputy Chief of Staff, Congressman Mark Meadows (R-NC)**

“Without question, Turkey has arrived at an important juncture in its history. Whether it is discussing the trajectory of Turkey’s democracy, the future of the bilateral relationship with the United States, or the grave consequences of the Syrian Civil War, TCA’s congressional staff delegation trip provided me with a perspective and understanding of these complex issues only gained by on-the-ground interaction. TCA’s staff constructed an itinerary that combined a blend of official meetings and cultural activities that provided me with a complete view of Turkey, its rich history, and its people which has proved invaluable working for a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.” **Kris Denzel, Senior Legislative Assistant, Congressman George Holding (R-NC)**

“TCA helps members of Congress and their staff gain a better understanding of Turkey, its strategic importance, its economic strength, and its cultural and historical influence in a critical part of the world.” **Tim Aiken, Legislative Director, Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA)**

“Traveling to Turkey with TCA was an excellent opportunity to spend time in meetings and discussions with government officials and political leaders in Turkey. The trip was both informative and enjoyable and gave participants a better, more complete understanding of the complex dynamics of U.S.-Turkey relations. The experience, knowledge, and relationships gained will help me give informed counsel on these issues.” **Josh Massingill, Legislative Council, Congresswoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC)**

State Attorneys General Delegations

In June 2013, TCA **hosted** the second delegation of U.S. State Attorneys General in cooperation with the National Association of Attorneys General and the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Comprised of nine Attorneys General, the delegation was led by Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen (Wisconsin). The delegation participated in discussions with prominent Turkish columnists, professors of Turkish law faculties, and Turkish business leaders on subjects varying from constitutional issues, civil liberties, press freedoms, comparison of Turkish and U.S. legal systems, and the rule of law. The delegation also met with the President of Turkey, H.E. Abdullah Gul, government officials, members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly from different parties, and officials from the U.S. Embassy.

“I remain very grateful I had the honor and pleasure to visit Turkey during a time when so many people across the world were focused on the dramatic happenings within the country. I now have much more appreciation for the history and culture of Turkey and its inhabitants, and I continue to follow the news with informed interest.” **William Sorrell, Attorney General, Vermont**

International Events

April 30 was officially designated as “International Jazz Day” by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2011, in recognition of the role jazz music has played in uniting people from around the world.

Istanbul was host of the 2nd International Jazz Day in 2013, which was celebrated with a series of concerts, exhibitions, and educational programs throughout the city, culminating in an evening concert at the St. Irene church (Aya Irini) in the courtyard of the Topkapi Palace.

TCA participated in the celebrations and met with a visiting congressional delegation of U.S. House of Representatives, which also visited Turkey on the occasion of the International Jazz Day celebrations.



Support TCA

The Turkish Coalition of America is a US tax exempt public charitable organization and your contributions are US tax deductible. TCA is supported entirely by private donations. Checks can be mailed to: Turkish Coalition of America, 1510 H St. NW Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005.

