

**Days of Bosnian Herzegovinian American
Academy of Arts & Sciences (BHAAAS) in St. Louis
September 15 – 18, 2011**



Members and guests at the 2011 Annual Meeting in St. Louis

Since the Academy founding in 2007, the strength and reach of our membership has continued to grow, as has the success of our annual meetings. The 2011 annual meeting, held in St. Louis, Missouri – now home to more than 50,000 members of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Diaspora – provided us with a special opportunity to build bridges of relationship with younger Bosnians in one of the largest BiH immigrant communities in the United States.

Bridges to Success: A Mentoring Program for Young Bosnians

Before the Annual Meeting, a two-day program was organized called **Bridges to Success: a Mentoring Program for Young Bosnians**, which highlighted professional and educational opportunities for high school age Bosnians and their parents in St. Louis. Academy **President Djenita Pasic, Esq.**, led the opening program, which included success story presentations from Academy Members **Ira Herenda, JD**, and **Adnan Cutuk, MD**, who shared the challenges they faced in attaining their professional goals as young people uprooted by the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

As inspiring examples of professional success, Ira and Adnan related specific, practical advice to the assembled audience of Bosnian high school students and their parents. They both emphasized the importance of perseverance and the value of learning from mistakes along the way. Academy Past President and celebrated writer, **Aleksandar Hemon**, closed the program with a literary reading from his work.



Djenita Pasic, Esq.



Ira Herenda, JD



Adnan Cutuk, MD

The following day, Academy members returned to Mehlville High School to provide advice and guidance to a small group of Bosnian high school students. The panel of Bosnian experts included **Aleksandar Hemon, Djenita Pasic, Esq., Azra Blazevic, DVM, Adnan Cutuk, MD, Ira Herenda, JD, Alma Imsirevic, JD,** & Academy guests **Ljliljana Cvijanovic, MBA, and Asmir Selimovic.**

Bosnian Students and Parents at Building Bridges to Success Mentoring Event



Adnan Cutuk Encourages Bosnian Students and Parents to Set Ambitious Career Goals

Annual Meeting Highlights

The Annual Meeting was held at Fontbonne University and opened with an official welcome from University Academic Vice-President, **John Bruno, Ph.D.**, who noted the important presence on the campus of the *Bosnia Memory Project* (www.fontbonne.edu/bosnia), dedicated to establishing a permanent record of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian community in St. Louis.

The group later viewed excerpts from a documentary film on the musical group Bijelo Dugme, followed by a lively discussion on popular culture in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the former Yugoslavia moderated by **Aleksandar Hemon** and **Snjezana Buzov**.



Aleksandar Hemon and Snjezana Buzov lead a discussion about Bijelo Dugme and popular culture

Emir Hodzic, DVM, PhD, opened the breakout sessions with a description of the One Health Initiative, after which members were invited to take part in one of several section meetings:

One Health Initiative (Medicine, Science, & Research Section)

- **Senad Divanovic, PhD, MSc**: The role of innate immune responses in development and progression of obesity.
- **Nikolina Babic, PhD**: Clinical Pharmacogenetics.
- **Almasa Bass, PharmD**: Urgent Medical Technology Needs (BT1500 bioanalyzer) for Dom Zdravlja in Donji Vakuf.
- **Ajlina Karamehic-Muratovic, PhD & Azra Blazevic, DVM, MSPH**: A pilot study: A cross-national and cross-continental study of well being in a refugee community.
- **Emir Hodzic, DVM, PhD**: The perfect storm: Lyme disease epidemic.

Technical Sciences and Humanities Section

- **Mirsad Hadzikadic, PhD**
- **Ali Akansu, PhD**
- **Tea Temim, PhD**
- **Aleksandar Hemon**

Law, Business, and Other Professions Section

- **Djenita Pasic, Esq.**
- **Dino Kujundzic, JD**
- **Ira Herenda, JD**
- **Alma Imsirevic, JD**
- **Milad Hadziabdic, MSc**
- **Igor Lemajic, MBA**
- **Adnan Sulejmanpasic, MSc**



Dr. Tea Temim speaking in the combined technical sciences / humanities & social sciences session

Arts Programming, Presidential Report, Presentations, and Guest Speaker



Gallery talk by artist Jesenko Kurbasic

The afternoon programs began with an exhibit opening and gallery talk featuring the beautiful artwork of **Jesenko Kurbasic** and concluded with a concert by *AlmaNova* – **Almer Imamovic** and **Jessica Pierce**, whose extraordinary benefit performances for BHAAAS have become a signature highlight of our Academy gatherings.



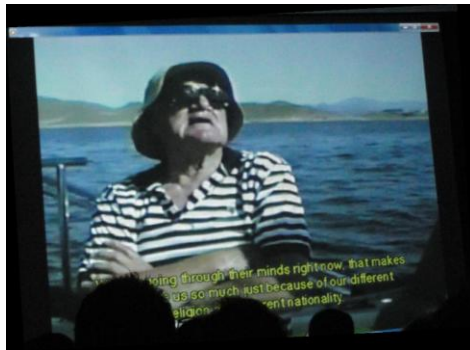
AlmaNova performers Almer Imamovic and Jessica Pierce

Outgoing Academy President **Kenan Arnautovic, MD**, reported on past year activities and plans for next.

Incoming President **Djenita Pasic, Esq.**, was officially installed, while **Almer Imamovic** was recognized with a certificate of appreciation for his outstanding contributions to the Academy during the previous year.



An afternoon screening of the somber and enlightening film, *From Auschwitz to Dretelj* – directed by **Timur Boskailo** and featuring Academy members **Dr. Esad Boskailo** and renowned Bosnian journalist **Mugdim Karabeg** – provided chilling testimony as these two survivors of the Dretelj concentration camp shed light on the resilience of victims, the psychology of the perpetrators, and how one could and should resist taking part in mass madness and cruelty.



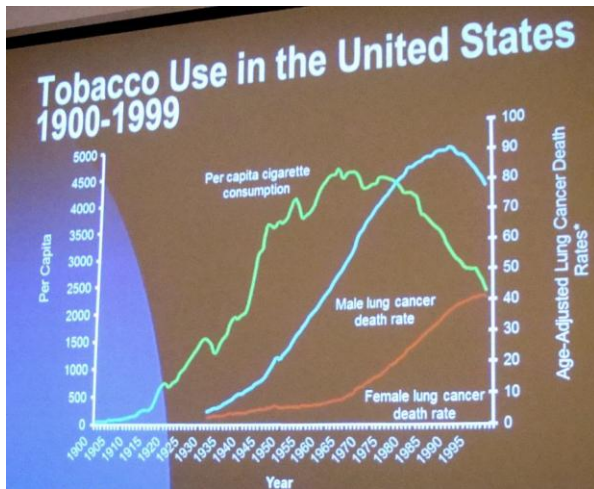
Mugdim Karabeg



Esad Boskailo



Gordan Srkalovic, MD, provided an illuminating look at the progress made in the treatment of cancer in his presentation, "Cancer in the 21 Century: Plague or Discomfort?"



Presidential Guest Speaker **Benjamin Moore, PhD**, Director of the Bosnia Memory Project at Fontbonne University, described the work behind the creation of the multi-media exhibition, *Prijedor: Lives from the Bosnian Genocide*, a collaboration between students and faculty at Fontbonne University and members of the local Bosnian community.



We closed the meeting with a dinner gathering at Grbic Bosnian Restaurant and music by new international member **Mary Sherhart**, a renowned Sevdah performer, with accompaniment from **Almer Imamovic** and **Mensur Hatic**. As has become our tradition, we celebrated our time together into the late hours of the evening with song, dance, and community. As we look forward to our sixth annual gathering in Jacksonville, Florida, we will carry the memories of an enjoyable and informative gathering in St. Louis.

Reported by Patrick McCarthy, St. Louis Meeting Organizer, Honorary Academy Member, and Current Board Member.