



**bulgarian
creative
writing
competition**

REVIEW



Regional judges worked hard to read nearly 1000 essays in Silistra.

BCWC 2013 a Success!

The end of April marked the successful conclusion of the third annual Bulgarian Creative Writing Competition in English. This year's contest began in December, when registration was opened to all state-run public schools. At the same time, CorPlus, the BCWC's host organization, undertook an online fundraising campaign via the Global Giving Foundation. Thanks to generous donations from various friends of the U.S. Peace Corps in Bulgaria (including current and past staff and volunteers, as well as their friends and families), CorPlus was able to use the funds raised to accommodate the fantastic number of registered schools—137 in total!

From these schools, over 3000 motivated students from grades 6 to 12 partook in the writing of English-language essays from February 13th to 20th. Local teachers collaborated to make the organization and running of these sessions a success,

helping not only with the administration of the essay writing, but also serving to encourage and inspire students to develop both their English and creative writing abilities.

After these sessions, regional and national judging sessions were held with the help of dedicated volunteers, teachers, specialists, and native speakers. In the end, of 105

finalists, 21 national winners (3 from each grade level) were selected for their imaginative works, and invited to the national awards ceremony in Sofia on April 27th.

We at CorPlus would like to congratulate all students for their participation in the 2013 Bulgarian Creative Writing Competition, and we look forward to reading your works again next year!

BCWC 2013 in Numbers

3rd year of competition

5 judging regions

21 national winners

77 judges

105 national finalists

137 schools registered

3018 essays written



This year's national winners and their teachers pose with their awards in Sofia.

Winners Recognized at National Awards Ceremony

On 27 April, this year's winners and their teachers gathered in the Park Hotel Moskva (Sofia) to celebrate their achievements in the 2013 Bulgarian Creative Writing Competition. Of the 21 finalists, 20 were able to attend, each accompanied by his or her English teacher. Students and teachers alike were treated to afternoon writing workshops with Professors Rossitza Ivanova (University of Veliko Tarnovo/University of Wisconsin-Whitewater) and Michael Cohen (American University in Bulgaria—Blagoevgrad), where they learned some new writing and teaching techniques.

During the awards ceremony

dinner, students were presented with their awards packages. These included:

- Creative writing materials and books, supplied by the U.S. Embassy in Sofia and Express Publishing (all winners)
- 1 full scholarship to the AUBG summer camp in Blagoevgrad (awarded to Ivelina Numerova from Karlovo)
- 1 autographed copy of "Cold Snap: Bulgaria Stories" by author Cynthia Phoel, plus 50 leva (the recipient, Desislava Stoeva from Stara Zagora, was selected by Ms. Phoel herself)

- Scholarship for a 3-week SAT course at AUBG (winner selected by AUBG, awarded to Desislava Stoeva of Stara Zagora)
- English-teaching resources and books, also supplied by Express Publishing (for all attending teachers)

It was a great pleasure to gather such a group of talented young people together to give them the recognition they deserve. It is our hope that these prizes and this ceremony will encourage all students to see that thinking "outside the box" is a valuable skill.

Bravo!



Professor Michael Cohen of the American University in Bulgaria led a session for the winning students and their teachers.

Local Writing Sessions



Above: SOU Vasil Levski, Sevlievo
Right: SOU Kliment Ohridski, Plovdiv
Below: SOU Kiril i Metodii, Yakoruda



Above: SOU Hristo Botev, Vratsa



Above: OU Dimitar Talev, Plovdiv



Above: SOU Otets Paisii, Smolyan
Right: SOU Sava Dobroplodni, Shumen
Below: SUCHEM Ivan Vazov, Sofia



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Right: SOU
Bratya
Kanazirevi,
Razlog



Above: An announcement encouraging students to participate in BCWC at SOU Otets Paisii, Samokov



Above: PG Maria Luiza, Sofia
Right: PG Hristo Botev, Botevgrad
Left: OU Ivan Vazov, Silistra



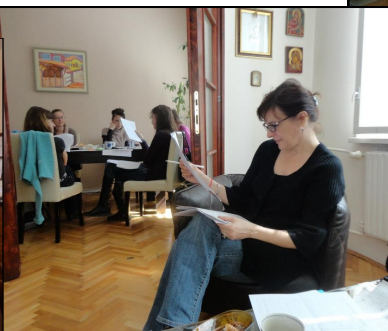
Regional and National Judging



Above: Sofia judges enjoy an entertaining passage from an essay.



Above: National judges read aloud the final selection of winning essays.



Above: National judges in action.
Right: Plovdiv regional judges at work.
Left: Silistra regional judges tackle their region's impressive entries.



Notable quotes from this year's winners...

"You don't need to know how to calculate $2x + 1$ if you understand the world around you."

- Stanka Veselinova Georgieva,
Burgas



"The real beauty of a person is not his or her face but is hidden under one's skin."

- Sezen Hodzha, Sevlievo

"I would never let go of home; And the smell of homemade cookies, baked with so much sugar and love.

And those warm hugs, warm even when I shaved half of my hair and wore ripped tights...

And even the quarrels—because they show that someone cares.*

*Sorry I ripped all of my jeans, Mum."

-Ana-Maria Stefanova Mihailova, Smolyan

"*"Twahe endobko!"* Actually, I meant to say, 'Explain yourself!', but it was obvious I looked a lot less intimidating while speaking nonsense, even if I held a baseball bat in my hands."

- Antoni Konstantinov Apolostov,
Plovdiv

To read all of the essays from this year's winners, visit BCWC's new website: creativewriting-bg.com

National Awards Ceremony



Above and right: Students and teachers break the ice at the workshops.



Above: Prof. Rossitza Ivanova leads a session for teachers.



Left: 11th grade winners pose with their awards.

Right: Winners and their teachers join together for a group photo.



Special thanks to...

- Participating schools and local contact teachers, for their coordination and enthusiasm
- BCWC's donors on Global Giving, for their support and financial contributions
- Regional and national judges, for their long hours of hard work reading thousands of essays
- The Bulgarian Ministry of Education, for their support and promotion of BCWC 2013
- The U.S. Embassy in Sofia, Express Publishing, and the American University of Blagoevgrad, for providing such a vast array of quality, useful prizes for the winners
- Professors Michael Cohen (AUBG) and Rositsa Ivanova (University of Wisconsin-Whitewater), for facilitating the winners' writing workshops
- All participating students, for their imaginative, humorous contributions!

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