



Get your deel on! Check out Mongol Mondays on Page 3 to learn more.

#### Friends of Mongolia

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December 2011

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Volume XII, Issue 2

# Friends of Mongolia<sup>TM</sup>

*A National Peace Corps Association Affiliated Organization*



## Friends of Mongolia Awards 20 Scholarships for 2012

*Jess Lampe*

There were 20 recipients of Friends of Mongolia Scholarships this year. It was a competitive field, with over 42 applications. Recipients of the scholarships are pursuing a range of focuses in their studies at university, from Economics to Dentistry. The scholarships go towards covering the tuition fees as well as basic living expenses of students.

Two of the scholarships were made possible by the generous donations of the Croft family. These scholarships went to Vanchinsuren and Lhaasuren, studying Banking Management and International Economic Relations respectively.

"The scholarship is a very big investment for my future," said Vanchinsuren.

One scholarship was made possible by Zadrozny family. The recipient was T. Elberel, a student studying Social Work.

"My future goals are to successfully complete University, to be recognized by my accomplishments, and to establish 'Youth Development Center' in Mongolia," said Elberel.



Finally, 10 scholarship were made possible by the Girvin Scholarship. These scholarships target students pursuing studies in social work, in honor of Matthew Girvin, a UNICEF Programme Officer whose life was cut tragically short in 2001 while on a research assignment in Uvs Aimag. Mr. Girvin's efforts worked towards creating a better Mongolia

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## TEDxUB

Travis Hellstrom, M-20

If you've ever been to TED.com I don't have to tell you how inspiring those videos there can be. Every year speakers come from around the world to the prestigious TED conference with a common mission: Ideas Worth Sharing. Topics range from human rights to scientific exploration, happiness to architecture.

On August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011 we brought this same spirit to the other side of the world in Mongolia and created the first TEDx conference in the land of blue sky. TEDx events are licensed by TED.com but independently organized so they can reflect the unique needs of their intended community. At TEDx-Ulaanbaatar our team, made up of Mongolians and Americans (including dozens of PCVs and RPCVs), decided that our TEDx conference would be organized around the theme *Legacy: Honoring Tradition and Designing the Future*. Hundreds of people came from Mongolia and around the world to attend the conference where more than 100 attendees, 50 speakers and performers, and 50 volunteers and organizers joined together. Our performers included traditional musicians and throat-singers, contortionists, and modern bands like Altan Urag, Tumen Ekh

and hip hop artist Quiza. Our speakers included members of parliament like Oyun who created the Zorig Foundation, famous author Jack Weatherford who wrote *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*, and head lamas from the Gandan Monastery who even got to read a letter written especially for us by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.



The conference took almost a year to organize, with the talented organizing team giving every Saturday to work the project for months, but it was all worth it. We are completely humbled by the positive response we have received from the event and can't wait to host the conference again next year.

Creating TEDxUlaanbaatar as the first TEDx event in Mongolian history has given us a great start and, more importantly, has encouraged others to dream. Christa, the wife of one of our awesome organizing team members Joe, mentioned that in our audience one of the young Mongolian men next to her said that he now dreams about speaking at TEDx-Ulaanbaatar in the future. By creating this event together the volunteers, speakers, organizers, and attendants encouraged each other to dream about

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# Introducing - the Friends of Mongolia Mongol Mondays Challenge!

## *FOM Officers*

As we welcome the M-20s back to the US and head into the stateside version of "winter," Friends of Mongolia wanted to find a way to hear more from our members across the country and the globe. We put our heads together and the Friends of Mongolia Mongol Monday Challenge was born! Here's the deal:

On the first Monday of every new season (Winter: December 26; Spring: March 26; Summer: June 25th; and Fall: September 24th) we encourage you to find other folks in your community interested in Mongolia (Mongolians, RPCVs, friends and family who want to learn more), meet somewhere, and share a piece of Mongolian culture. Send us documentation of your meetup and FOM staff will select one per Mongol Monday to highlight on our website and shower prizes on (Okay, drip prizes on. We are a non-profit after all). No one around in your community? Not to worry, we have some web-based challenges too.

So here's your chance to show us what kind of Friend of Mongolia you are! If you're interested in being a Challenge Leader for your city or town and finding places for area folks to meet up, [let us know](#) and we'll help you spread the word about your meet up location to FOM members in your area. Want to know if there's a Mongol Monday event in your area? [Ask us!](#)

The next two Mongol Monday Challenges and dates are listed below. We encourage Americans, Mongolians and all interested others to get involved and send us your photos and stories.

## **December 5th - Get your Deel on**

**Meet Up:** Find a meetup location in your area and show up wearing Mongolian clothing (think malgai, deel, gutal). Take a photo of your group and send it to us.

-or-

**Web-based:** Send us one photo of a Shine Jil experience in Mongolia and your comparable holiday tradition you've had back in the US. Extra credit for showing us how each has influenced the other.

## **March 26th - The Tsagaan Sar Edition**

**Meet Up:** Gather your friends and neighbors and start making some buuz. This challenge goes out to the team that captures the most impressive number of buuz and sends us the photo.

-or-

**Web-based:** Tell us a story about a time when you shared Mongolian food with friends and family in the States. Include any modifications (cinnamon-apple xuushuur?) you may have made. Be sure to include how your guests enjoyed the experience in addition to the taste.

We'll keep posting Challenges throughout the year, so stay tuned!



*(Continued from page 1)*

and the scholarships will enable the students to do the same.

*[Ed. Selections from applicants follow:]*

**Badamtsetseg Tumurhuyag**

*Physics, Electronics, and Geophysics  
National University of Mongolia*

I truly and sincerely thank the people of FOM for helping us and the other students to pursue their goals with no worries. When my parents renovated our house by taking the one-year helping money from government, they were the happiest people in their warm home. Because of this expense, there wasn't any money left for my tuition. But the scholarship from FOM did help me and my family enormously, and I was able to study well. My goal is to become a geologist who is well-qualified in the field and will be contributing to the development of mining and economy.

**Bayrbaatar Narangerel**

*Dancing  
National University of art and culture*

The scholarship helped me to take a one big step of achieving my purpose. If I didn't get the scholarship, all my attentions would be on school tuition other than the studies. I am really fortunate to have this scholarship, and I will not waste it in vain. My future goal is to become the best dancer of my country.

**Beibetgul Consbai**

*Social work*

...Every person wants to be successful. But whether they'll succeed or fail depends on their goal. My future aim is to work as a social worker after successfully graduating my university. I am very fortunate to be a student of FOM scholarship, which does help enormously for my goal. Thank you so much for helping me.

**Bolorerdene Boldbaatar**

*Accountant  
University of Economics and Finance*

If you have found your dream and purpose with the determination and bravery, you will become an achiever. My goal is to expand my knowledge by studying abroad and use what I will be learning as a way of contributing to the development of my country. To do so, I need the support from FOM financially and inspirationally.

**Buynbogto Tumenbayr**

*General medical science  
University of medicine and health*

The doctor cures everyone with all his or her energy and expects nothing in return. When I saw my father aching in his bed because of violent accident, I thought about becoming a doctor. I studied both Biology and Chemistry really hard and got into the school I wanted most. I thank the people of FOM for supporting me to achieve my goal of curing and saving the sick people. My main goal is to specialize in the field of spine and, more or less, decrease the number of people who suffer because of spine accident as my daddy painfully did in front of my eyes.

**Tovchinsuren Delgermaa**

*Linguistic  
Orkhon University of Mongolia*

...I am the senior student here at Orkhon University. My future goal is to dedicate myself to the development of my country by teaching and communicating what I will be learning from the well-developed country Japan. Reasonably, there will be much to learn from the developed countries like Japan. This is the reason why I've been studying the Japanese language for four years. Furthermore, I will spread the culture and tradition of Mongolia in Japan, so I will be, more or less, a bridge between the two countries' friendship.

**Elberel Tumenjargal**

*Social work  
National University of Mongolia*

This scholarship is helping in many ways. Without this scholarship, I would be having a part-time job to earn my tuition. Fortunately enough, I had this scholarship and was released from my burden, and was able to pay enough attention on my lessons and to spend my free time building professional skills as well as volunteering. After I got this

scholarship, I was able to volunteer in professional care center. And, I've been gaining the professional knowledge in depth during my extra time. Hence, the scholarship gave me many chances and the zest to finish my University with a considerable success...

**Enhlkhagva Galsanjamts**

*Economic and Finance  
National University of Mongolia*

The scholarship itself bestowed me a lot of chances to do anything I want. After getting the scholarship, I did a few researches and published the mathematics book I wrote. Also, I bought what ones call the most important tool the computer. If I didn't get the scholarship, these things would be undone. My goals are finding their places in reality, so I am truly grateful for the helps.

**Enkhjargal Gantumur**

*Dentist  
The school of dentistry of Health science university*

...My future goal is to become a good dentist and make others happy. I've always wanted to heal people and release them from their stresses and burdens as you guys did. My dream is about to enliven in reality. I will be the best dentist in my country.

**Gerelkhuu Khashhuu**

*Lawyer  
National University of Mongolia*

I was always taught that people should be well-disciplined and act in accordance with the laws. But when I saw the inmate, who had stolen the life of my dad, got out of prison, I doubted about the stability of our country's law. Hence, I wanted to dedicate my life to the loyalty and law by protesting against, if any, the corruption and the bureaucracy. To do so, the scholarship from FOM will clearly help and inspire me to do more and more.

**Khazbec Seiphullin**

*General Command of Army  
Defence University of Mongolia*

I was ecstatic when I knew that I got the scholarship from FOM. The thought that a lot of people would be just relying on

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me promoted me to study well and try even harder. After getting the scholarship, I and my family saved the human resource's money from government for future usage; I bought a photo camera. The scholarship has had a huge effect on me by psychologically promoting me to do my best and inspirationally supporting me to keep my dreams higher.

**Baasanjav Lkhasuren**

*International economic relation  
National University of Mongolia*

...The achievement of my life depends on how hard I try and how much I want. My future goals are to graduate from university with good points, to study at Moscow state institute of international relation for master degree, and to have good jobs for my career. My major is well connected to the Mongolian future as well as globalization. Thus, working in my desired place will be a way of ensuring the stability of economics and mining of my country...Most importantly, the biggest goal I have is to create my history, the manuscript that is only for me.

**Maamhuuhen Tsedev**

*Social Work  
National Educational University of Mongolia*

After I got the scholarship, I began participating in a lot of social works including working in special kindergarten and the companies that protect the rights of disabled people and children. My goal is to continue working as a social worker and contribute to the activity that protects and ensures the rights of misfortunate ones.

**Munkhtulga Gantulga**

*Medical science  
University of medicine and health*

I love people. I love to see them smile and be happy. That's the reason why I choice to be a doctor and heal the sick people. The scholarship helped me to study hard and follow my dream of becoming the best doctor ever known. But the main goal I have in mind is to cure the people throughout the world and make the breakthrough in the field of medicine.

**Nyamerdene Batgerel**

*National University of Mongolia  
Teacher in Biology*

I've always believed in the axiom that says "The fate is in your hand". The scholarship really helped me to follow my proverb without ever worrying about any financial burden. I am truly gratefully thankful for that. My goal is to teach the students, to study the biology and to contribute to the development of my country by preparing the future leaders.

**Nyamjargal Uuganbayr**

*Dentist  
The school of dentistry of Health science university*

The happiest day of my life was to choose my profession, the dentist. To achieve my purpose, the scholarship from FOM will definitely help me so much. The reason why I choice to be a dentist is that the temporary teeth of children are so susceptible to any harm, and there are a very few number of dentists available in countryside. My goal is to establish my own hospital in my native countryside and heals the pains of others.

**Pagmadulam Nemekhbaatar**

*Economics Management  
National University of Mongolia*

I think, the economists are really important people, considering that they not only make decisions in the area of their company but also directly or indirectly affect the society. So, it brings with itself a responsibility that demands the well-qualified economists. My goal is to graduate from the National University of Mongolia, get my graduate degree from the school that is well-known in the field of economy and ensure the stability and the safety of our economy. To achieve this specific goal, the scholarship from FOM will definitely be helping me financially and inspirationally.

**B. Sain-Yuruult**

*Social worker  
Mongolian State University of Education*

...I always intend on creating the life of my own that is great in every perspective. And I'll help people who have the problems. I wish to exert all my power for them. In future, I'll be working with chil-

dren as a social worker. Because more than often their children's right is devalued, I want to ensure that they have the same chances as any other children have. Moreover, their children's right is truly fulfilled in practice, so my prospective goal is to work with them.

**Tserentogtoh Jargalbayr**

*Political Science  
National University of Mongolia*

I was the best student at my school, but all the things I did would be in vain, if I didn't get this scholarship. I appreciate all the helps and will exert all my power to contribute to the development of my country...My future goal is to study the political science at my school and stand out from the students. The main goal I have is to become a well-known and effective politician in my country. That way I will improve the society and help the people.

**Vanchinsuren.A**

*Banking management  
National University of Mongolia and  
"School of Economic"*

...My dream rises up above the sun rising. When I was a little daughter, I chose the profession of bank and used to dream of becoming a female director in any bank. My dream led me to reach the selection of bank class of Mongolian national university. One part of my goal is to become the best female banker of Mongolia and emerge as an outstanding leader by adding my little effort and knowledge to the sector of Bank and by dedicating my full power in increasing the cash flow of Mongolia from foreign countries. My biggest goal is to be an economist who is well known worldwide, meaning a gift and appreciation for my mother who worked for my future and for my education during her life. My biggest dream is to have a word to say for generation and involve in economical development based on knowledge, meaning the more knowledge the better the development.

## FOM at Peace Corps 50th and Arlington, VA 2011 Naadam

Friends of Mongolia celebrated two great events in the National Capital Area on July 10, 2010. The first was the country reunion for Mongolia RPCVs hosted by the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA), and held on the National Mall as part of the 50th Anniversary of Peace Corps celebration highlighted – and as part of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival.

There were about two dozen volunteers in attendance on that hot sunny Sunday afternoon on “the mall,” with M-groups ranging from M-9 through M-19. RPCVs exchanged stories of their times in Peace Corps, took photographs, and even exchanged some Mongolian snacks including aral (milk/yogurt curds), kvas (soft-drink derived from bread), and yeven (cookies). It was nice to see everyone in attendance.

About a half-dozen of our hearty Mongolia RPCVs then continued to brave the unrelenting sun and heat to attend the 10th annual Washington, DC area Mongol Naadam in Arlington’s Barcroft Park. This event, hosted by the Washington, DC Area Mongolian Community Association (WAMCA) and sponsored in part by MCS Corporation was also the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Mongolian liberation from the Man-

chus – who ruled both Mongolia and China for nearly 300 years until 1911.

Naadam was amazing! It began with a dedication of a huge Mongolian flag, which was later hung from the side of the Barcroft parking structure and the singing of the Mongolian anthem, led by the excellent opera singer Bolormaa Jugdersuren. Naadam also featured songs, dancing, horse-head fiddle and throat singing/homii performances, as well Tsam dancing. The Tsam are multicolored masked and costumed dancers that represent various deities of the Buddhist pantheon with swords, skulls, beads, and depicting various images of the afterlife.

The main event of the day, of course, was the bokh – or Mongolian wrestling. Mongolian men came from cities across the U.S. to participate in the Washington, DC area Naadam wrestling competition. The ultimate winner this year, Sodnomdarjaa, a participant from Mongolia. He walked away with a prize of \$1000! Towards the end of the day, various members of FOM were also interviewed for MongolTV ([www.mongoltv.us](http://www.mongoltv.us)), a local Arlington, VA news show for the Mongolia Community.

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## Comings and goings...

Friends of Mongolia is actively seeking a Mongolia-based Co-director. Due to unforeseen circumstances, our recently elected Co-Director, Jess Lampe, will have to step down this winter as he will soon be leaving Mongolia. We thank Jess for his contributions and would like to announce that we are accepting nominations to fill the Co-Director position from January 2012 until July 2012, with possibility of extension. Inquires about the position can be directed to [jlampe@friendsofmongolia.org](mailto:jlampe@friendsofmongolia.org).

At the same time, we would like to announce the departure of another member of the FOM team, former In-Country Representative Badruun Gardi,. Badruun served FOM well and we will miss him as he steps into his new position as Director of the Zorig Foundation.

With Badruun’s departure though, we happily welcome Bayartsengel Damdinjav (Bayaraa) to Friends of Mongolia as our new In Country Representative! Bayaraa graduated from Akita International University (Japan) April, 2011 and started working as a project officer at Zorig Foundation NGO. At the Foundation, his main projects include the youth and community development programs. He was chosen as a Fulbright Scholarship Student and is planning to seek his M.A in the US coming September this year

## 2011 Friends of Mongolia Holiday Donations Drive for Orphans

Ariel Wyckoff, M-11, FOM board member

As the holiday season approaches, it is time once again for the annual Friends of Mongolia holiday donations drive for some children going through difficult times in Mongolia, and we hope we can count on your charity and generosity again this year. Between now and Dec 1, 2011 Friends of Mongolia will be working in partnership with a caring group of friends and parents to organize our third annual collection of books, clothes, and toys for children facing difficult circumstances. This year's donations will go to **Save the Children** and the **Chuluunkhoroot Middle School** – both located in Dornod, Mongolia.

Dornod province, located in Mongolia's far northeast, is one of the poorest provinces in Mongolia, with very high levels of poverty, unemployment, alcoholism, and deaths due to preventable illnesses (TB, influenza, diarrhea, etc). The children there often go without the basic necessities, including warm winter clothing, hats, and shoes.



Specifications: all donations are welcome, but please do not send items that are broken or in a significant state of disrepair. **Please send to us by December 1, 2011**

### Toys

Gently used or new, in working condition, and with no missing parts please.

### Books and School Supplies

Books for any age, fiction, nonfiction, children's books, coloring books, educational books, dictionaries.

Unused coloring pencils, watercolor sets, markers, etc. are greatly appreciated!

### Clothes and Hygiene Supplies

Gently used/new clothes for children aged 6 months to 18 years, either gender, for all seasons. (Mongolian winters are very cold!!) No large stains or tears/rips.

New and unopened: shampoo, conditioner, combs, and brushes

School bags and warm blankets are greatly appreciated!

**Please send all items to either of these two addresses below, by December 1, 2011:**

West Coast of the U.S.  
Friends of Mongolia,  
c/o **Sarnai Gantumur**  
**2587 South Park Lane**  
**Santa Clara, CA 95051**  
Phone: (408)329-2832, cell  
[Princessfrog9@gmail.com](mailto:Princessfrog9@gmail.com)

East Coast of the U.S.  
Friends of Mongolia  
c/o **Ariel Wyckoff**  
**3701 5<sup>th</sup> Street South, #304**  
**Arlington, VA 22204**  
Phone: (202) 294-6465, cell  
[AWyckoff@friendsofmongolia.org](mailto:AWyckoff@friendsofmongolia.org)



## Mongol Rally Journey concludes in Serbia

This year, Friends of Mongolia partnered with Go Help UK to support the Silk Road Warriors, the first U.S.-based team to join the Mongol Charity Rally. The Rally is organized yearly by “Go Help,” a UK registered charity, to raise funds and resources for various public health programs in Mongolia. As part of this year’s Rally, 30 teams raised money to purchase ambulances and other vehicle, which will be used to create Mongolia’s first Emergency Medical Service and provide a much needed and lacking service there.

Silk Road Warriors was one of two U.S. based teams to enter the Rally this year and was comprised of two attorneys at Patton Boggs, Matthew Oresman and Martin Goggins Campos. Friends of Mongolia assisted the Warriors by accepting donations on their behalf and promoting their journey to its members and other interested parties. In addition, Friends of Mongolia assisted the team in accepting two donated ambulances that Go Help will use in their future work. The Silk Road Warriors and their supporters donated \$1500 to the FOM scholarship fund, funds which were awarded this summer (See page 1).

But what about the Warriors journey? Alas, it was not meant to be. On July 28th, the team reported that after a mere two days, their journey was cut short. As their blog post stated:

“Friends, I am sad to report some very bad news. We've had to stop the journey after only two days. We had an accident yesterday in Serbia and Pandora cannot continue the journey. Fortunately, David and I are safe and no one was hurt, but the car was damaged in such a way that makes repair impractical, if not impossible.”

The team later posted, “It wasn’t the adventure we had planned, but we still drove 1100 miles through 4 and half countries in 28 hours, got to spend an exciting day and night in Serbia, and were able to cross the Bosphorus to reach Asia (though on foot). And we know there is still plenty more adventure in store for all of us.”

We thank Go Help and the Silk Road Warriors for their partnership and look forward to more adventures next year.

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what is possible.

On October 15<sup>th</sup> we led a [TEDx Organizer's Workshop](#) which already has almost 100 people signed up to hear about how we can create more TEDx events around Mongolia. We are also working with RPCVs like Chris DeBruyen and Kevin Johnstone to create TEDx events in Iraq as well. We aren’t experts on [how to start your own TEDx event](#), and we couldn’t have done it without an incredibly talented team, but we certainly learned a lot of things over last few months that we think are worth sharing.

I hope, no matter if your dream is something like creating a TEDx event or not, that you know it's possible to create anything that you imagine. You aren't

alone and the magic is that people come from all around to help you create something valuable for others. TEDxUlaanbaatar is just the beginning of many great things in Mongolia thanks to some really incredible people that I'm honored to have met.

As one of our youngest audience members, a teenager named Bolortuya, told us, *"To believe in the heroic make heroes. Let's all become heroes."*

To see more please visit [TEDxUlaanbaatar.com](http://TEDxUlaanbaatar.com) and tell us what you think on [YouTube](#), [Flickr](#) and [Facebook](#). Thank you!



## Friends of Mongolia as Outreach Partner for Asia Society: Dinner for Mongolian President Elbegdorj

*Ariel Wyckoff, M-11, FOM board member*

On June 15, 2011, Officers and Board Members of Friends of Mongolia (FOM) attended the Asia Society's 2011 Annual Awards Dinner at the Ritz Carlton hotel in Washington, DC.

One of the honorees that night was Mongolian President, Tsakhia Elbegdorj, who was presented with a Distinguished Statesman Award by Asia Society President Vishakha Desai. The Asia Society presented other awards that night as well, including a jointly granted International Business Award to Jim Rogers, chairman and CEO of Duke Energy, and Wang Yusuo, chairman of Chinese energy producer ENN Group.



This event was attended by over 1,000 guests, and FOM contributed \$1,000 to the Asia Society to help sponsor this dinner, and promote the event among our members as an Outreach Partner. We were listed as an Outreach partner, among other sponsors, on all the night's materials. In addition to our sponsorship of this event, FOM also facilitated the performance of the Khuree Tsam 108 dance performance group as part of the night's entertainment. Khuree Tsam 108 perform the traditional religious mask dances of Mongolia that are meant to represent visitations of Buddhist and pre-Buddhist deities to the Earth. This group is run by Mr. Ganhuyag Natsag. The Asia Society dinner and awards event that night also featured speeches by Asia Society Co-Chair. Henrietta Fore, and Lael Brainard, Undersecretary of International Affairs at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, as well as an interactive Question and Answer session between Nobel laureate and former U.S. Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger and Orville Schell.

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### Membership updates

Dear Fellow Friends of Mongolia,

Happy November to us all. I would like to quickly thank everyone for their continued support of our cultural exchange with the U.S. and Mongolia. Additionally, I want to take this opportunity to discuss one of my favorite aspects of Mongolian culture- the fact that everyone knows everyone. Remember those times in Mongolia where your friends halfway across the steppe knew about your sickness? Do you still feel like you are in that network? I returned to Colorado a little over a year ago and have been pleasantly surprised on numerous occasions to come in contact with friends of friends of friends, both Mongolian and American. You just need to talk with them long enough and you will find a connection; whether that be as strong as someone who lived in the same soum or a fellow traveler who wants to compare stories. When you have these chance meetings and conversations with your new friends, let them know about Friends of Mongolia and how they can continue their cultural exchange and help support our causes. Encourage them to come to our [website](http://www.friendsofmongolia.org) or our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/friendsofmongolia) and check us out.

Bayarlaa,

Greg Miller (M18)

[gmliller@friendsofmongolia.org](mailto:gmliller@friendsofmongolia.org)

Membership Coordinator

## Mongolia in the Movies

There are several new multimedia projects about Mongolia written about in this newsletter. Here's a few more...

### Mongolia: Mining Challenges a Civilization



Mongolia is at the cusp of incredible growth, as its enormous mineral wealth is suddenly discovered and exploited by the western world. It was been called the Kuwait of East Asia. Billions of dollars are pouring into this land of less than three million people, whose population until recently was largely nomad. Can this traditional rural civilization, with a love for the land, withstand the muscle of the mining industry, as it tears up the countryside in a helter-skelter effort to maximize its sales, largely to China? Is Mongolia selling its birthright and future to the Chinese market? Greed, graft and corruption are lurking dangers - and yet, no one can deny that if properly managed Mongolia's future has much to gain.

### Mongolian Bling

Mongolian Bling is an exploration of modern Mongolia. Based in the country's thriving capital Ulaanbaatar, the film follows hip hop superstar Quiza, underground rapper Gee and the country's first female rapper, Gennie.

Joining them are traditional musicians, shamans and youth seeking an identity in hip hop, all of whom help weave an intriguing story about this emerging democracy.



[Mongolian Bling Facebook Page](#)

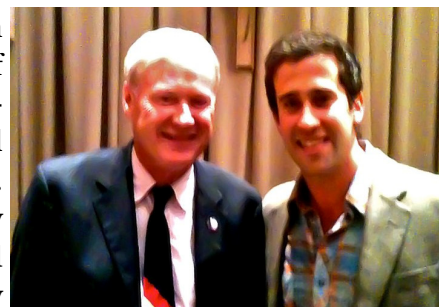
[Mongolian Bling Website](#)

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## Postcards From Peace Corps

*Rob Shore, Communications Coordinator*

The Peace Corps 50th Anniversary celebration kicked into high gear in September. Among all of meetings, readings, and galas, the screening of Peace Corps 50th Anniversary Video Project stood out as particularly special. Officers Sunaree Marshall and Rob Shore, and board member Ariel Wykoff represented FOM at the Motion Picture Association of America. The event was put together to promote three short videos on the history and impact of Peace Corps and a series of video "postcards," that showed the daily lives and impressive work of five current volunteers with vastly different assignments and experiences – among them, a Peace Corps Mongolia volunteer.



Communications Coordinator Rob Shore, posing with MSNBC's Chris Matthews after the event.

The screenings were bookended by panel discussions with Peace Corps "celebrities," like MSNBC's Chris Matthews (Swaziland, 1968-1970), former senator and current president of the MPAA Chris Dodd (Columbia, 1966-1968), Congressman Sam Farr (Columbia, 1964-1966), and Peace Corps Director Aaron Williams (Dominican Republic, 1967-1970). The event was put together by Maureen Orth (Columbia, 1964-1966).

Check out the video postcard from Peace Corps Morocco [here](#), and keep an eye out for the other post cards on CNN.

# Interview with Timothy Foley, director of “Last Man Standing: Wrestling Roots”

Ariel Wyckoff, M-11, FOM board member



*Timothy Foley is directing “Last Man Standing: Wrestling Roots,” a firsthand research and wrestling project, with the aim to document and protect traditional wrestling styles from around the world, including Mongol “bokh.”*

**Tim, where are you from in the States, and what is your professional or academic background?**

My father was a Marine so we grew up all over the country, but I'd call Virginia home because I went to high school and college in the commonwealth. I was an All-American wrestler at the University of Virginia and after college spent four years as a Division I college wrestling coach. I took an interest in journalism in 2007 and started attending classes, graduating in 2009 from the Graduate School of Journalism in 2009 with a focus on magazine journalism. I've been freelancing ever since and my work has ap-

peared in Men's Journal, Bicycling, FIGHT! Magazine and ESPN.

**Let's dive into this project. How did this all begin?**

I was traveling in Viet Nam last summer when I came across traditional wrestling in a village outside of Hanoi. The editors at a wrestling site asked me to write an article about the adventure. After the article was published I had dozens of emails from traditional wrestling groups around the world. From there I started researching traditional wrestling and saw that it's woefully researched and almost wholly ignored by academia.

**Do you have a Greco-Roman wrestling background? Or maybe Jiu-jitsu?**

No Greco or Judo, both of which would have been a big help to my cause in Mongolia! I am a blue belt in jiu-jitsu.

**Why start with Mongolia?**

There are several Mongolians currently wrestling in American colleges and after interviewing them...I thought that readers would be interested in a country that exists outside of most people's life. I'm sure you know that most people have very few ideas about what Mongolia, absent Chinggis Khan. It's the same way with wrestling. People know very little and they are going to be surprised with some of the theories I

float in the book. They'll hopefully be convinced as well.

**Is it just you out there doing the wrestling, or are you out there with a team?**

Just me. I showed up solo and acquired Mongolian support along the way. Anyone who has been to Mongolia knows what I mean when I say acquired – the individuals I met were absolutely loyal and helpful. I only hope I can portray my thanks fully in the book.

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*“I want my readers to see these cultures as not just “exotic” lands to be explored, but countries with traditions that are sustainable and meaningful.”*

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**How are you documenting your efforts?**

[Through] [WrestlingRoots.org](http://WrestlingRoots.org) and I also had a filmmaker who helped with video and photos for a few weeks. You can also find more pictures and information on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/WrestlingRoots).

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**Is this something that's building on others' earlier work, or are you basically trailblazing out there?**

Mostly trailblazing. I'm picking up on Mongolian history, physiological studies and travel narratives to help me construct the book...nobody else has really attempted to wrestle in Naadams and then write about the experience for an American audience.

**How did your friends and family respond when you told them you'd be heading off literally to Outer Mongolia?**

Haha. My mother is use to these yearly trips to far-off lands, but there are always people who need to be reminded that Mongolia is an independent country and that it's not a land of barbarians. Many of my friends just give me a slap on the ass and ask me to upload photos to Facebook.

**What is your online following like so far, and how are people responding?**

Incredible feedback from around the world. As readers grasp the entire message – that physical traditions like wrestling NEED to be preserved and promoted – I'm finding that readership is increasing. I'm also getting emails from friendly voices in other wrestling communities like India, Russia and Georgia.



**What are the main differences between Mongol bokh and the wrestling you may have done before arriving in-country?**

American folkstyle wrestling combines takedowns and mat wrestling – as a traditional form it is arguably the most complete. Bokh is only takedowns which created several problems for my wrestling style. People are creatures of habit and memory, when the rules of wrestling change the adaptation process can be painful. Not to mention the outfits...

**How have Mongolians responded to seeing a blond American guy entering their national sporting event? Are they impressed, surprised, offended – what's the local reaction been like?**

There's a book in that answer! Overall they were incredibly welcoming and warm. To a person the fans were always generous and made a point to thank and congratulate me on my effort... [For one of my matches] the refs awarded the win to my opponent

but the fans started jeering and yelling that they wanted to see more action! [They] put us back on our feet...I eventually lost the match but that moment was probably the highlight of the trip. That said, I later beat a 310 lb wrestler who was essentially placed in the tournament to embarrass me. After I fell him, the tournament organizers weren't pleased. But hey, that's what happens in wrestling sometimes.

**How many competitions have you entered, and where, and are you winning?**

I entered three tournaments. The Tsetserleg soum tournament, the Arkhangai aimag Naadam and the Khovsgol Naadam. My overall record was 2-3, earning a win a piece in the first two tournaments.

Wrestling was the main attraction at each of the festivals I attended...[Bokh is] totally and undeniably the biggest sport in the country. Sports like soccer are becoming more popular, but

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those games will never compete with bokh in terms of cultural value.

**Mongolian wrestling involves a type of call and response before the two wrestlers actually begin the match. Have you ever seen or heard of something like this before anywhere else?**

No and it was incredible to watch, almost reminded me of being in the Catholic Church when my dad would take us to Latin mass.

**Did you have a Mongolian coach who represented you? What did he say?**

He might say a lot, but I didn't understand a lick. I was given an on-the-field coach/minder like any other wrestler and to a man they all represented me in refereeing disputes w full support. It's an oddly flattering gesture of service.



**What's next on the agenda? You mentioned a book...**

Typing, a lot of typing. The book is now my full-time job and I'm hoping for a May 2012 release and (fingers crossed) a release in Mongolia.

**What about plans to return to Mongolia?**

September 14th to cover the Guinness record-setting tournament in UB! The Mongolian government is hosting a 4096 man tournament in UB! The current record for largest Mongolian wrestling tournament belongs to Inner Mongolia, China at 2048 – something the Outer Mongolians do NOT appreciate. I'll be writing a magazine piece about the experience [prior to] the book release.

**How will your work in Mongolia be presented in contrast to similar research you do in other countries – and what other countries are on your list?**

I'll discuss the other experiences to help build context for why Mongolian wrestling is so unique and powerful. The book and online blog already set this project apart from the others. As for what's next I'm still in discussions with some contacts in the Middle East and Africa....Regardless I'm heading into the next trip like I did this trip, with the focus on learning about the people and culture, not coming in trying to teach anyone about the American way, or boasting of my personal achievements. I want my readers to see these cultures as not just "exotic" lands to be explored, but countries with traditions that are sustainable and meaningful. I hope to continue these projects for several more years and increase understanding among the wrestling community and general readers.

**If our members are interested in supporting this, how can they help contribute to your project?**

PayPal is attached to the [WrestlingRoots.Org](http://WrestlingRoots.Org) site and there are a list of gifts that supporters receive. I'm hoping to establish myself as a non-profit this year, but the process can take some time – kinda like the immigration office at the airport in Ulaanbaatar!

**Thanks for your time and good luck!**

Thanks to you and I hope to hear more from the Friends of Mongolia!

**Amjilt khusiye!**



## Selected Mongolia newswire bits

### ***Elbegdorj calls for end to citizen allowances***

The president made the announcement during his tour through Darkhan-Uul and Selenge Aimag, where he won the vote by a wide margin in the 2008 election. The president met with local residents and listened as they voiced their opinions in Selenge.

“That we allowed such a great amount of money to be issued to citizens was a mistake,” he said. “It was bad for the economy and encouraged people to be lazy,” said Elbegdorj.

He added that he still supports tuition allowances for students as well as programs for children because they are the most “fragile” group in society.

The distribution of money to citizens has been cited by analysts as source for rising inflation in Mongolia.

Source: News.mn

### ***Mongolia's high plains herders warily eye coal truck***

Carved into the Gobi by the Hong Kong-listed Mongolian Mining Corporation (MMC), the 147-mile (245-km), two-lane road is due to open next month, allowing the company to speed up cargoes of coal to China from its expanding Ukhaa Khudag mine.

Ukhaa Khudag is not well-known but is situated on the northwest corner of Mongolia's Erdenes-Tavan Tolgoi, the world's biggest untapped coal mine with as much as 7.5 billion tons of reserves. Some bankers say plans for an IPO in 2012 to develop the prospect could fetch as much as \$15 billion.

The freshly paved highway is one of the first glimpses of a mining boom that will transform Mongolia's fortunes. But many, including President Tsakhia Elbegdorj, are worried that mining has already put the country's fragile pastoral economy under strain and left a million nomads behind.

([read more](#))

Source: Reuters

### ***Government to expand its social welfare***

The Mongolian government plans to implement a variety of programs and benefits for Mongolian citizens....The government identified four priorities for dealing with the economic boom in the mining industry: maintaining steady revenues; ensuring equal benefits to all citizens; supporting economic development programs; and increasing investment in the health care and education sectors.

The government will raise the salaries and pensions of state workers by 53 percent next year. If passed, state workers' salaries will have doubled since 2008. The proposed budget maintains the monthly allowance of MNT 2 1,000 to every citizen through the first half of this year. Women 55 and older, men 60 and older, and disabled citizens will receive payments of MNT 1 million, and the government will pay students MNT 500,000 each towards tuition fees. The government has also proposed implementing a “100,000 Homes” program to provide MNT 100 billion as down payments for 100,000 citizens who want to purchase a home.

Source: [MAD Mongolia](#)

### ***MCA Mongolia Launches New Public Health Master's Degree Program With an Eye to the Future***

“...With the help of a 15-month grant, the Health Sciences University of Mongolia (HSUM) has launched a partnership with George Washington University to establish a new master's of public health program, which will improve HSUM's public health curriculum. HSUM has also established a one-year intensive public health training program for 36 physicians. The new training program includes classroom work and time spent performing research and public health improvement projects in the physicians' home regions.”

([read more](#))

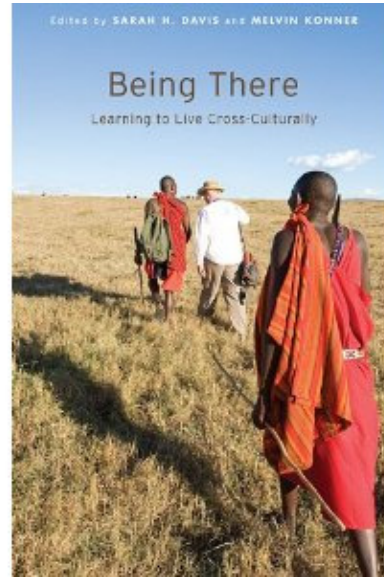
Source: Millenium Challenge Corporation



## Mongolia travel diaries

In November, FOM Communications Coordinator **Rob Shore** had two essays about his experience in Mongolia published in books. In [\*Being There: Learning to Live Cross Culturally\*](#) (Harvard University Press, 2011), Rob (Mongolia, 2006-2008) and his father, Bradd Shore (Samoa, 1969-1971), contrast and intertwine their experiences adjusting to different cultural notions of time, while living in far-off places.

In [\*A Small Key Opens Big Doors: 50 Years of Amazing Peace Corps Stories\*](#) (Travelers' Tales, 2011), Rob and other RPCVMs share stories about what it's like being a volunteer. In Rob's case, he writes about the experience of butchering a chicken in front of his entire village.



Davis, Sarah and Konner, Melvin. *Being There: Learning to Live Cross Culturally* (Harvard University Press, 2011).



Chen, Jay. *A Small Key Opens Big Doors: 50 Years of Amazing Peace Corps Stories* (Travelers' Tales, 2011).

The [\*Peace Corps Mongolia 20th Anniversary Book\*](#) is in development, as well.

“This book is a beautiful compilation of memories and reflections about being a Peace Corps Volunteer in Mongolia,” writes Peace Corps Mongolia Country Director, Ellen Paquette. Peace Corps Mongolia Celebrates 20 Years, a commemorative 20th anniversary book, is due to premier on Monday, November 28, 2011. Peace Corps Volunteers Angelica Saavedra and Alexandria Hill and RPCV Travis Hellstrom joined forces to produce a 100+ page photo book, “stories and experiences to come,” on [www.blurb.com](http://www.blurb.com) (search: Mongolia20).

# Friends of Mongolia Membership and Donation Form

## Your contact information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Why Membership?

Membership Dues are an important source of funds. Your membership dues are what make FOM possible. In addition, membership allows you to stay directly connected to Mongolia and PCVs.

You can also join FOM and donate online at [www.friendsofmongolia.org](http://www.friendsofmongolia.org).

## Membership options

- ☐ FOM Individual (\$25)
- ☐ FOM Family (2 individuals; \$45)
- ☐ FOM/NPCA Joint Individual (\$50)
- ☐ FOM/Mongolia Society Joint Individual (\$50)

## Donation options

### General donation

- ☐ \$10
- ☐ \$20
- ☐ \$50
- ☐ \$100
- ☐ \$250
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

### Community grant donation

- ☐ \$10
- ☐ \$20
- ☐ \$50
- ☐ \$100
- ☐ \$250
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

### Scholarship fund donation

- ☐ \$10
- ☐ \$20
- ☐ \$50
- ☐ \$100
- ☐ \$250
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total amount enclosed \$**\_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks out to Friends of Mongolia and mail to:

Friends of Mongolia  
PO Box 53314  
Washington, DC 20009

**Thank you for your contribution!**

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