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Something you never thought about ABAY AMANTAYEV

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INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

#1 (116), APRIL 2015

Since 1995

KIMEP Times

KSA: Whispers and promises

Students want more contribution from their representatives in KSA; KSA representatives want more trust and contribution from students.

Safiya Sadyr

ON JANUARY 27, KIMEP Student Association (KSA) invited all students to meet at Great Hall and discuss topical issues of university life and respond to criticism. In their turn, elected representatives of the student body were also preparing to reproach their constituency for inertness and passiveness. Ironically, organizers had to delay the start of the event for 20 minutes due to scarcity of the audience. The waiting did not improve the numbers much. Nearly 50 students—out of 2400 currently registered at KIMEP—came to the meeting, confirming the KSA's concerns.

The principal student association within KIMEP University, designed

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Students' opinions split: some want more parties and entertainment while others daydream about more intellectuality in student life of KIMEP. Daniyar Zhakulinov

Young blood 115 donors may save 115 lives

The annual Donor Day campaign has been taking place at the Medical Center of KIMEP University on January 19–21. In three days 115 donors, including 12 staff members and 103 students, volunteered to donate their blood.

Kristina Nikulina

IT COMES AS A GOOD NEWS for the Blood Center of Almaty. Forty liters of blood, donated by the KIMEP community, can save up to 115 lives in cases of surgery or accidents, when patients require a transfusion, says Natalya Ussorokh, KIMEP Medical Center doctor.

Such cases occur every day, and the city hospitals are in constant need of blood. The Blood Center supplies blood to all clinics and maternity hospitals of Almaty, and experiences permanent shortage of donors.

"According to regulations, we cannot reject their request to organize a Donor Day in our university," says Ussorokh, citing the Kazakhstani legislation which makes it obligatory for all legal entities to cooperate with health care bodies and facilitate blood donorship. (Code on People's Health and Health Care System, article 168).

The turnout for participation in donation has increased this time, compared to last year's count of 78 donors. Many students who wished to contribute their blood were not allowed to do so because of underweight, anaemia or foreign citizenship. Ω



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Demise of the machines

With the removal of all vending machines from the campus, students are having less budget options for a snack, but administration promises to bring food dispensers and coffee machines back.

Zhuldyz Sanbayeva

GETTING A QUICK BITE OR a cup of coffee on-the-go used to be easier—and cheaper—with the vending machines that were installed here and there on campus. No more such devices can be found all over KIMEP after the winter break.

Students have been having conflicting feelings about the automats—especially when the machines were acting up. Some users have been complaining that a machine could "swallow" their cash without giving

away the purchase or "forget" to return change. Others may recollect "happy hours" when mechanic salesman would recover from the earlier "faint" and please an incidental buyer with a free snack.

Yet, those were exceptions rather than rules. Assel Khalidulina, a sophomore majoring in accounting, says students are particularly missing food automats during their evening studies at the library. "When Grill, Panini and Canteen are closed, it means there is no more way you can get any refreshments," she says.

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Dr. Bang will not sacrifice quality for price

"One thing that every KIMEP student should understand is that for the tuition students pay at KIMEP they buy the best institutional program," says Dr. Bang, the president of KIMEP University.

Kristina Nikulina

Dr. Bang, KIMEP University is an academic institution and the primary focus should always be on education. Can you please tell me what is currently being done in order to ensure that the quality of education is at its highest level?

Some people say that the quality of education is deteriorating or that KIMEP is not making good progress. However, such speculations are groundless. There are a number of specific areas where improvements will be made in the academic year 2015–2016 and over the next two or three years. For example, we are going to introduce a Distance Learning Center. A tender has already been announced to find a construction company capable of building such a facility. After the renovations are complete, we are going to cooperate with Seoul Cyber University, a leading online university in South Korea.

What are some other plans for the future improvement of the education provided at KIMEP?

Unfortunately, last year, KIMEP lost six professors due to the expiration of their work permits. However, there was no impact in the quality of teaching for our students, as we ensured proper coverage for our classes. We have so far hired nine new professors—five that started teaching in the Fall of 2014 (two in the Law School and three in the College of Social Sciences); and four that will start in the Fall of 2015 (all in the Bang College of Business). The focus is on hiring professors that are highly qualified academically and professionally, that will challenge and engage the students, and emphasize the important skills of critical thinking and analytical reasoning.

It is important to know that at KIMEP University, we recruit based on talent and merit. There is absolutely no discrimination of any form based on religion, nationality, or gender. This policy ensures the recruitment of the very best professors in the international market. KIMEP University's compensation scale is competitive enough to be considered by qualified professionals. Our faculty consists of representatives of many different countries, including Kazakhstan.

Sometimes, though, we have to pay a high price for complying with the law, yet we still focus our attention on excellence. Last year, we had some major difficulties because some of our professors came from countries which do not have so-called bilateral agreements with Kazakhstan, and we could not retain them when their work permits expired. We were, thus, forced to move away from hiring faculty from such countries.

We are continuing to focus our recruitment efforts on professors who were educated at Western universities, and employ the latest, most effective, teaching methodologies and are armed with the latest research in their respective fields.

Is there a threat that we could lose more professors?

Another challenge that we faced last year was the tenge depreciation. The tenge depreciation had a very adverse impact on the well-being,



All the expenses for Family Day were entirely covered from Dr. Bang's own pocket to create a friendly environment where students can actively socialize and enjoy their studies.

Photo courtesy Marketing, Communications and Public Relations Office
Photo on page one courtesy The President's Office of KIMEP

Recently hired faculty members

From Fall 2014

- **Nicolás Zambrana Tévar** (Law School) from Spain, Ph.D. in Law from the University of Navarra School of Law, Spain
- **Sergey Sayapin** (Law School) from Uzbekistan, J.D. from Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany
- **Gautam Bhattacharya** (College of Social Sciences—Economics) from the U.S., Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Rochester, U.S.
- **Gulnara Karimova** (College of Social Sciences—Media & Communications) from Russia, Ph.D. in Media & Communications from Eastern Mediterranean University, Northern Cyprus
- **Adilzhan Nurmakov** (College of Social Sciences—Media & Communications) from Kazakhstan, Candidate of Sciences in Political Science from Abay Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Kazakhstan

To begin in Fall 2015

- **Hany Elbadran** (Bang College of Business—Accounting) from Egypt, Ph.D. from Brunel University, U.K.
- **Antonis Constantinou Simitras** (Bang College of Business—Marketing) from the U.K./Greece, Ph.D. from the University of Huddersfield, U.K.
- **Bilal Omar** (Bang College of Business—Accounting) from Jordan, Ph.D. in Accounting from the University of Hull, U.K.
- **Dilip Ghosh** (Bang College of Business—Finance) from the U.S., Ph.D. from the State University of New York—Buffalo, U.S.

To begin in Spring 2016

- **Gavin Kretschmar** (Bang College of Business—Accounting) from the U.K., Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh, U.K. (expected)

particularly of foreign employees, because many of them send their salaries to their families in dollars or euros. This is why last year we increased faculty members' salaries more than 10% on average. This was for all faculty, not just foreign faculty, because we treat all faculty the same.

This year, I invited faculty members to a general assembly and I told them that KIMEP is going to increase their salaries on average by approximately 15%. Someone might say that's crazy. Well, I am afraid that the tenge is going to depreciate again and we should take proactive—not only reactive—measures to avoid losing our best professors.

How does KIMEP measure and monitor the educational services being delivered once faculty members are hired to ensure the best-quality education?

In order to create a favorable environment where faculty can excel while being motivated to do their best, one initiative we introduced, among others, is a teaching and research excellence campaign. The top faculty members will be awarded with certificates, cash payments and public recognition. We are doing this to make sure that KIMEP is a challenging and stimulating learning environment for students, where the professors are constantly helping them to build their critical thinking and analytical reasoning skills. To reward the best professors, we need the students to participate. We need honest feedback regarding the quality of education they are receiving. This is where the surveys conducted among students, for example, play a critical role.

What else can influence and improve the educational environment at KIMEP?

There are some other related issues, which are not purely academic. In order to maintain a world-class university, we have to ensure the best quality of services. In the past, some of our staff, including faculty, have not treated our students with respect. Now, we are working to improve the

quality of our services by collaborating with the KIMEP Student Association. The quality of student services is not limited to academic affairs; it includes the entire organization. This is a large number of people. For instance, when students go to the Learning Support Center, we expect that these administrative employees will provide very kind, knowledgeable, and respectable service to these students. This is just one additional way to create a conducive environment where students receive respectful treatment from the people who are currently affiliated with this university.

We also organized a number of events that are not directly related to the education, such as the Presidential Ping Pong Tournament or KIMEP Family Day. I gave approximately 30,000 dollars from my own pocket to invite five thousand students, parents, alumni and friends to KIMEP University. I want to continue this tradition so that all our stakeholders can come, socialize and make meaningful connections.

One of the most frequently raised questions among students is why does the tuition rise each year?

This is a complicated topic and has to do a lot with economics. If inflation is 10% and tuition increases by 10%, then, in real terms, the tuition increment is zero. What does inflation mean? Inflation at 10% means that the cost of electricity that we pay and the paper that we buy has also increased by 10%. So if the tuition increases by 10%, then, in real terms, it means that the tuition has not increased. In addition to this, when the economy grows 5% per capita, the income also increases by 5%. Therefore, all workers of any company would expect their income to increase. If this increase does not happen, their relative income diminishes and they might consider leaving. This is why we carefully observe the inflationary impact and then add two or three percent to obtain real terms. All members of the Board of Trustees approved this policy. Don't forget, KIMEP is a world-class

university and competes globally for the best professorial talent. This costs money. Also, KIMEP is committed to improving the University's physical infrastructure. This also costs money.

Sometimes there are exceptional situations, such as the tenge depreciation which is a problem. Because about 40% of our faculty members are foreigners, the tenge depreciation, unless we introduce some kind of corrective measure, might force them to leave. We have to increase their salaries; otherwise, we will lose them, and we will not be able to attract other outstanding professors.

Are there any possibilities to reduce the tuition fee?

Three years ago, our students expressed concern about the tuition increases. We suggested to them that we could hire exclusively local professors, pay lower salaries or hire professors without Ph.D.'s. Then we could probably reduce our salary expenses by one-third. I asked students if they would like to support such a policy. They refused because they wanted to be taught by highly-qualified professors. High quality costs money.

However, one thing that every KIMEP student should understand is that for the tuition students pay at KIMEP, they buy the best education. In the U.S., to pay for such an education, students pay approximately 30,000 to 40,000 dollars per year. How do we keep KIMEP affordable? We try to meticulously save every cent.

Transparency and zero tolerance against any kind of corruption are the main policies that help us to establish the best conditions for our students. To ensure transparency, we have the Tender Committee with 30% of its members consisting of students. We want to make absolutely sure that nobody on the committee will either receive a bribe or make their selection based on personal connections. The Budget Committee also consists of 30% students. They have a chance to review the budget and contribute to the decision-making. We invite

a world-renown accounting firm to conduct an audit every year and then we share this financial data with our students.

Some people think that I take millions of dollars every year right into my pocket, but that is not the case. KIMEP is a non-profit organization and all the money students pay goes right to the university. No profit goes to the University's owners: the State and me.

You've already mentioned several initiatives for the improvement of the quality of education. However, what we often hear around campus is that the number of students applying to study at KIMEP is decreasing. How is KIMEP management addressing this issue?

That's true. The total number of freshman students coming to KIMEP University is closely connected to the overall economic well-being of the country. So when the GDP increases 1%, the number of students usually also increases by 1% and vice versa. In 2013, I assigned a task to Dr. Leon Taylor. I wanted him to conduct an analysis to predict the total number of students that will apply to KIMEP in the next three years. After analyzing all of the data, he concluded that the total student body will register for a total of approximately 34,000 credit units in the Fall 2014 semester. He was remarkably on point for the Fall semester. We had a deviation of about 1%. This projection was based on the poor economic conditions that were expected, among other factors. In the upcoming year, we predict that we might face a 6–7% decrease in the total number of credits taken by students. Because of the decreasing number of students last year, we decided to focus on controlling costs in order to ensure that we have a budget surplus.

So despite the fact that we may encounter a 6–7% decrease in the number of students, we project that the deficit will be only about 800,000 dollars. Can we absorb this deficit? Yes, we can, because we have more than 11 million dollars in cash reserves. To maintain financial stability, we have to always have more than 10 million dollars of cash balances. This is prudent planning.

As the major management unit of this university, the President's Cabinet cannot manage KIMEP based on its imagination. We analyze data very objectively and always base our decisions on research—trying to avoid any kinds of miscalculations. I believe in discussion, consultation and analysis, and making decisions by consensus based on good data.

Please tell about the actions KIMEP takes in order to address the growing competition on the market of education in Kazakhstan?

Pretend that you have a very nice restaurant and you serve very nice food there. And I also have a nice restaurant. However I provide food free of charge. Can you compete with me? The only way we can compete with this free of charge restaurant, or the free of charge education in our situation, is to provide better quality. That is our strength. This has been validated by the job market. Many companies tell us KIMEP graduates are prepared for the work environment, above graduates from other universities. We believe in educating students not only to do well in the classroom but to excel after they graduate. We are preparing them to be successful in the business sphere, in the government sphere and in the academic sphere. In other words, the investment being made with a KIMEP education will pay multiple dividends in the future. Ω



Kerim Nurlan Uulu,
the president of KSA



Gibrat Kurmanov, the vice president
of sports and culture of KSA



Azat Assanov,
the president of KIMEP PIE



Dauren Satybaldiyev,
the vice president of KSA



Ramazan Slamkhan, the vice
president of finance of KSA

Daniyar Zhakulinov

Whispers and promises

KSA, continued from page one

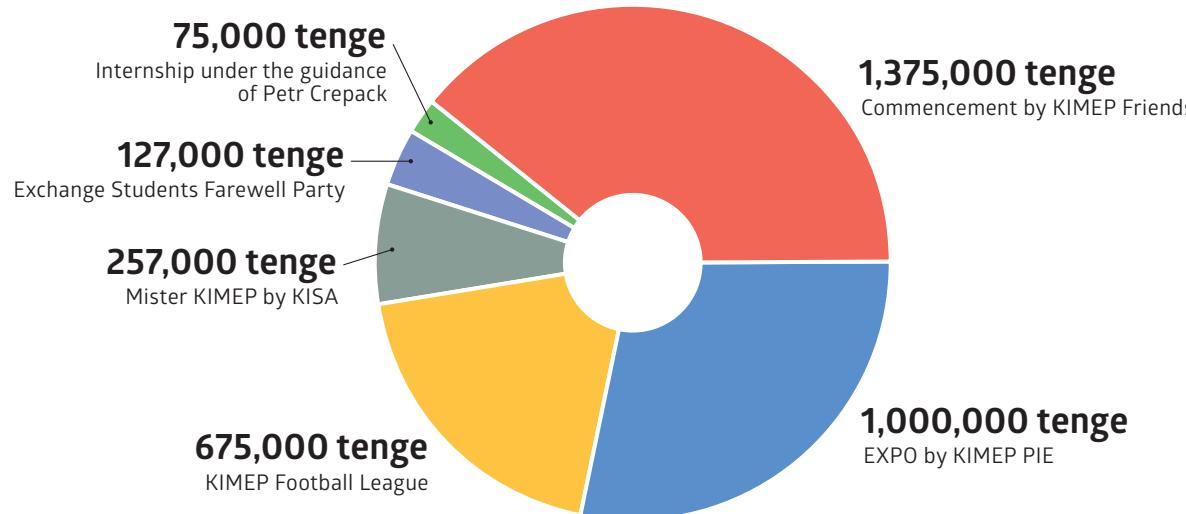
to supervise activities of other student organizations and act as a mediator between its voters and KIMEP administration, has been facing numerous negative comments about their performance. Anonymous critics have been posting allegations of theft, broken promises, and overall incompetence of KSA on KIMEP community's discussion boards in social media, "Whispering" (in VK) and "Podslushano" (in VK).

The meeting was to begin with the cabinet members presenting a detailed report on its work in the Fall semester and plans for Spring 2015, but KSA president Kerim Nurlan Uulu promptly launched a counter-offensive by declaring that "student life of our university has died out." He referred to Catering Survey, conducted by KSA in Fall 2014, as one of the examples of this extinction. Many students had been complaining about the quality of catering services in KIMEP, but only 300 KIMEPians bothered to voice their concerns by partaking in the survey. At least 500 votes are necessary to push complaints of the student body up to the administration's notice. If students want their request to be submitted directly for Dr. Bang's consideration, they need to collect at least 1000 votes. Such apathy may signal the lack of trust or belief in KSA's authority, but existing procedures make it impossible for KSA to solve major problems by itself. "We need support of the students," Nurlan Uulu says.

Many students enrolled in 2013–2014 faced problems with the Physical Education course (PE). Its classes are rigidly scheduled for Monday and Thursday or Tuesday and Friday—and both options often conflict with other classes. Nurlan Uulu wrote an official request to introduce changes in the schedule and raised the issue with Dr. David Landis, vice-president of academic affairs. Still, the problem remains. KSA insists that it cannot succeed if students themselves show little interest in protecting their own interests.

Late last year, KSA was set to redirect the flow of criticism and turn anonymous grievances into formal complaints. Dauren Satybaldiyev, vice-president of KSA, says that the student government is willing to listen. Starting this academic year, it created accounts in popular social media, including Instagram and Ask.fm, as well as a dedicated e-mail address for student feedback, ksa2014@kimep.kz. In another attempt to promote its openness, KSA established office hours to receive students every Tuesday and Thursday from 2:30 to

KSA expenses in Fall 2014



4:00 p.m. Yet again, these novelties have not been appreciated. "Nobody has emailed us so far, only the administration of KIMEP," Satybaldiyev sighs. The KSA office has seen no visitors, too. "Is it a sign of disrespect to the student government as a whole?" Nurlan Uulu exclaimed at the meeting. "What do we spend our time for? For reading complaints about us not working on 'Whispering' or 'Podslushano'?"

In demonstration of results of actual work that KSA has carried out since inauguration, Ramazan Slamkhan, vice-president of finance, provided a report on the budget expenditures in fall 2014. A total of 2345 students signed up for courses, but almost 5% of them managed to skip paying the student fee, an obligatory payment that constitutes the KSA budget, which made up nearly

5 million tenge this time, including VAT.

Most part of the funds was spent to hold traditional events for the KIMEP community, but there were two new entries in the budget. The football team of KIMEP University traveled to Spain and participated in the international football competition—KIMEP Football League trip to Madrid, Spain. One of the two KIMEP teams made it to the semi-final, but was defeated by the hosts. Also, 75,000 tenge went to support academic endeavors within the internship, led by Petr Crepack.

As a result, 1.5 million tenge was left by the end of the Fall semester. Together with 5 million tenge prescribed to Spring 2015, it will amount to 6.5 million tenge, while KIMEP student organizations have already requested 8 million tenge of funding.

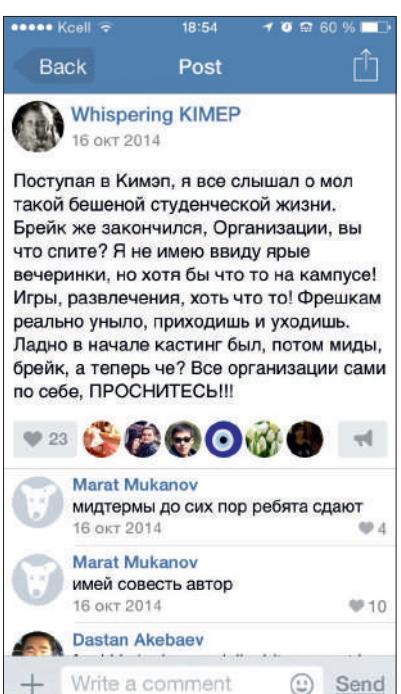
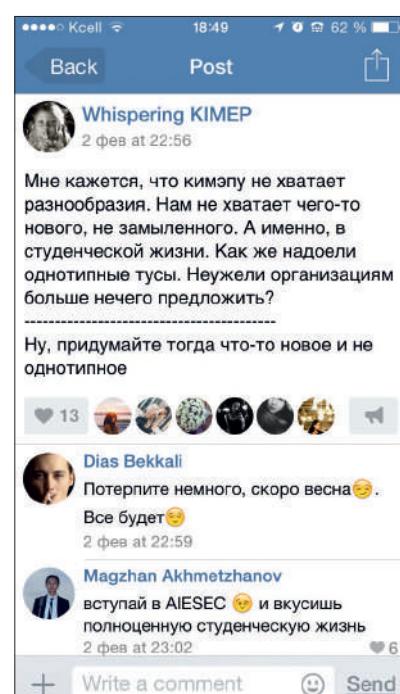
- Miss KIMEP to be organized by Elite
- KVN to be organized by KIMEP Events
- In his presentation, Kurmanov urged the students to support "intellectual events" and take part in them more enthusiastically. For example, soon the Accounting Financial Club will hold their annual "Case Competition" which usually brings together at best up to 30 students. However, Kurmanov believes it is because KIMEP students "prefer parties."

Even though students tend to be more eager about having fun, not everyone is happy about the parties they visit. According to Azat Assanov, the president of KIMEP PIE, student organization that is famous for throwing spectacular parties and publishing university's annual magazine, many students voice their complaints about "degradation of parties" at KIMEP. Assanov rejects the accusations. "Our university is famous for its parties and active student life," he said at the meeting, in some dissonance with the keynote speech of president Nurlan Uulu. But they both were in agreement to blame the students back. The problem is not in the quality of parties, but in party-goers, Assanov stated, labeling the current KIMEPians a "generation of critics," who are having nice time at parties and enough time to pursue good GPA in classes.

"Such attacks are offensive for organizers of parties. We dedicate our efforts, sometimes sacrifice our own GPA, and even take loans to stage some festivities," he said, adding: "Shall we just stop organizing parties to make students miss them and appreciate this hard work?" What to do while everyone else would be longing for parties? Assanov proposes an abrupt change—turning student organizations into intellectual clubs.

KIMEP PIE, which was initially created as a magazine, is going to be a pioneer in doing so and prioritize publishing activities in the next semesters.

In general, parties and monies are not the only issues that KSA is bothered with. They try to claim their authority in resolving more earthly and pressing problems. It's not only about catering and schedule—they are also looking into the issue of replacing obsolete library computers, for example. But the broader involvement in such dealings KSA seeks, the more institutionalized it has to become. According to Nurlan Uulu, recently they had a collision with the university administration exactly because KSA lacks a Code of Conduct specifying policies, procedures and responsibilities of the student organizations. This document is currently in development; it will be emailed to students. Ω



"Whispering KIMEP" is a VK community where students share thoughts, gossips, and announcements anonymously.

Zero waste

Challenge to live with no piles of trash

Lauren Singer, 23-year-old girl from New York lives a “zero waste” life. Three years ago she started out by reducing plastic and now she produces absolutely no waste. Moreover, she runs her own business of selling hand-made products, The Simply Co.

Zarrina Mulloboeva

IT DOESN'T SEEM SO HARD to live and leave no waste after you. But if you think about it carefully, it seems rather impossible. Whatever we do and wherever we go we leave waste behind. When I first read a blog post on www.mindbodygreen.com about Lauren Singer, a college student like myself, who said “no” to plastic, I was inspired. It seemed doable at first, but then when I gave it a thought I realized how difficult it was. Everything I use from my toothbrush to food containers are all made from plastic.

During one week whenever possible I gave up using items made of plastic such as water bottles and plastic bags. I used a travel mug to bring my own tea. I took my eco-bag to the stores and bazaars. I was disappointed in getting groceries because as much as I tried to avoid plastic, it was everywhere.

Another challenge for me was eating out. It was not convenient to bring lunch and I had no time to eat in the cafeteria. Whenever I bought a slice of pie, it was either wrapped in a plastic bag or put on a plastic plate. Even when I had a glass jar with me I was not able to take food in it. My solution was to refuse to take the plastic products and used paper towel instead. I also failed to replace such products as shampoo and shower gel but I committed myself to recycle.

People were confused when I refused to take a plastic bag or to buy certain things because of its packaging. In a world where almost no one thinks about the negative effects of plastic, a person doing this might seem out of the ordinary. But it is not hard to start making changes to one's lifestyle by start using eco-bags or glass jars instead of plastic products.

It took Lauren a year to give up all plastic in her life, so I decided just reducing plastic in a week would be still a good result. Now I don't take free plastic bags from stores and put things in my own bag instead. Another way to reduce plastic is to go grocery shopping in bazaars. There groceries are not in the plastic package when you pick them out. You can bring your own bag and buy vegetables and grains.

Even after a week of Zero-waste challenge I was disappointed to realize that at times I use plastic by accident. Once you do it there is no way you'd want to go back to your normal lifestyle, and would be more aware of your shopping choices.



Photo: Lauriza Abildayeva

Lauriza Abildayeva

IT TOOK ME SEVERAL DAYS to digest the information concerning zero waste lifestyle. I read blogs of zero waste followers, how they cope with difficulties. It is one thing to read about some extraordinary people who change their lifestyle and hit the maximum score on your scale of coolness. However, it is completely different when you actually attempt to live a week without producing any waste that could possibly harm nature in the process of utilization.

I would not say that this week was an extraordinary one with hardships and changes that I had to adapt to because I failed to meet all requirements of zero waste lifestyle, as I bought milk and sour cream in plastic containers.

But I also started to think about things that I did not take into consideration before. For instance, how much paper is wasted to produce the receipt when you buy a single bottle of water in the supermarket. On average, I throw out ten plastic bottles per week. So instead of buying bottles of water each day, I used a water filter and a thermos that I received as a New Year gift.

I also cut on unnecessary expenses. In shops I could spontaneously buy a chocolate bar at the cashier, but after the zero waste experience I now think before buying. One easy thing is that almost all junk food is plastic-packed, so I cut on unhealthy food as well. I took my plastic bags from home when I went shopping. When I refused bags in shops and bazaars and put products in my own bags, sellers looked at me like I meant to offend them by doing so, even though I tried to be as polite as possible.

Following the advice of one green blogger, I replaced floor cleaner to a laundry soap. My cat definitely liked this change because some floor cleaners caused her to have allergic reactions, so I had to use one specific cleaner in order to satisfy

the well-being of both my cat and myself. I used soap when cleaning baths and kitchen as well. It was an advice that I am going to continue using.

There were no places near home where I could buy beans sold by weight, so I bought ones that were available in shops. While homemade shampoo and toothpaste required a lot of ingredients that one could buy in “specialized shops” for “specialized prices but definitely worthy, 100% organic... blah-blah-blah,” which is not really affordable for student's budget no matter how green it is.

I came to the conclusion that the easiest way to follow zero waste lifestyle is to consume less unnecessary goods and therefore produce less waste. Ω

Kabul to KIMEP: The first student from Afghanistan

After years of dreaming for a better life, Atal Ahmadzai was finally able to leave his war-torn homeland in pursuit of a university degree and has become KIMEP's first student from Afghanistan.

Chris Fiore



responded, “It is not good to skip class. I want to make sure I study hard and learn.”

It was because of his many years of English lessons that he wanted to study in a Western-style university. After doing research online and talking to family friends, he discovered KIMEP.

The director of KIMEP Admissions, Natalya Miltseva, says it was Ahmadzai's uncompromising persistence that led to his acceptance.

“At first we denied his request in the financial aid office because Afghanistan is not in Central Asia. But then he wrote back to the president's office, and we were able to make an exception and grant him the opportunity to study at KIMEP,” says Miltseva.

It is Ahmadzai's hope that he will be able to take his educational opportunity at KIMEP and transform it into a career in international relations. He says his goal is to work for the United Nations after graduating.

“Atal is a model international student,” says his international student buddy Sherkan Jantaliyev. “He is

kind, giving, and loves to spend time learning from his friends of different nationalities.”

Jantaliyev says Ahmadzai's open mind and friendly nature have already made a name for him on campus. “His willingness to interact with other students is helping to spread a positive message about a country that is perceived as a place of war and terror,” says Jantaliyev.

With one semester completed at KIMEP, Ahmadzai looks forward to studying abroad in the United States or Europe. He says he is looking for a chance to practice English and learn from people around the world.

“I grew up surrounded by violence and fear. Since 2001, you cannot go outside in Kabul without having to worry about your safety,” says Ahmadzai. “By traveling to new places, I hope to spread a message of peace and understanding. In my time at KIMEP I want to spread my message through education and inspiration,” he says. “I'm just thankful that the university gave me an opportunity to chase my dream.” Ω

NOW IT IS VERY IMPORTANT to have a higher education beyond just a high school degree. You should not waste your time. It is important to work hard and serve not only your family but also all of humanity. I think education is the key to progress,” says Ahmadzai.

His parents, grandfather, and uncle inspired him through their actions, he says. They are educated individuals who constantly instilled in him the value of hard work.

“My parents are my heroes. They told me when I was young to chase after a life of peace. In 2004 they

bought me a computer and told me to not take part in violence, drugs and terror. They told me to be a son that they would be proud to talk about.”

Their guidance fueled Ahmadzai's interest in learning English. For years

he walked hours every day to attend an English-language school. He recounts having to walk through the freezing rain one time to get to class. When the teacher asked why he chose to come instead of staying home, he

Abay Amantayev: “I go beyond my limits when I am on stage”

A second-year KIMEP marketing major student talks about his acting experience, personal life, and *The Suicide*.

Karimkhon Bukhadurov

Why did you decide to study at KIMEP?

Because I failed to enter Nazarbayev University (*laughs*). To be honest, I planned to study abroad. Unfortunately, I am the only son in my family and my sisters are already married, therefore I decided to stay close to my parents, as it's my obligation not to leave them alone. Moreover, I joined KIMEP for two main reasons: an English-speaking atmosphere and a colorful student life.

You are an actor in the Kazakhstan English-Language Theatre (KELT). Have you done any acting before joining this organization?

I have, not in this large amount though. I was very active at school and participated in every event that required talent. I used to sing, be a host of school assemblies and captain of Comedy Club. I just liked being on stage and entertaining people.

How you became a member of KELT?

During my freshman year I was trying to join every single student organization in KIMEP. I got into KISA, KIMEP SWAG, and went to casting for Elite KIMEP, and they didn't take me into their team, and I am sure that they regret now (*laughs*), and auditioned for KELT. KELT had a really serious audition, but it didn't scare me and I had a confidence that they were going to give me a role, and I was chosen to play Barber Johnson in *Three Prince Charming*.

You had a main role in *The Suicide*. Was it hard to get Semyon Semyonovich Podsekalnikov's role? I am sure there were many candidates who auditioned to play him?

I auditioned for two roles: Podsekalnikov and Aristarkh Dominikovich Grand-Skubik, who was a representative of Russian intelligentsia. At the casting, I thought I played Aristarkh better and was very surprised and happy when I received an email from our director—Laura Pacini—that I would be playing the main role.

Describe *The Suicide* for someone



I give 100 percent of myself when I play, push and go beyond my limits in order to make people thrilled. Sometimes I feel embarrassed when doing certain things in theatre, but when I go out of my comfort zone, that embarrassment turns out to be a talent. Once at a rehearsal I started shouting and doing crazy things that I wasn't aware I could do, and Laura told me the work I did was great. Each time I discover new sides of me, and that is the biggest joy.

What are the three things we don't know about you?

First, I write poems. From aside, I would not say that I am a grumpy guy but my poems are very depressive. When something hits me, I try to find inspiration in that. When I am done with writing, I feel revealed. In addition, when I have a conflict with my friend or my family members I try to make my anger go away by words and poems.

Second, I hate reading, in my lifetime I have only read a few books.

And last, I keep a diary of my aims in life and I have written my code that I try to follow every day, which is to be the enemy of dishonesty. I try not to lie and be as close as being fully honest.

Have you found really close friends in KIMEP?

Yes, I have. His name is Nurzhan, he is a dancer from KADA. We met in my tenth grade at the IELTS Preparation course, organized in KIMEP, and actually we didn't really talk to each other. I remember the first day at KIMEP at the Kazakh History class where everyone knew each other from foundation courses, and I was sitting there alone, and I saw Nurzhan and started talking to him, and we became true friends.

Are you in a relationship?

I am single. To be honest, I have never been in a relationship. I feel a little embarrassed and proud at the same time. Most guys at my age have already been in several relationships, but I preserve my heart for one and only girl.

What do you look for in a girl?

Caring and honesty.

Is there anything you would like to share with KIMEP students?

I want to spread honesty. I want everyone to believe and trust in themselves. One thing I have noticed about our students is that it is hard to approach them, and it is becoming a culture in our university, and it scares me. I want everyone to be simple, take off their masks and be true to themselves. ☺

who has never seen it in three words?

Capitalism versus socialism. If it is to be described in adjectives, then: comic, provocative, and interesting.

How did you manage to learn all of your scripts for the role?

To be honest, my script was the size of a book. Until the last rehearsal, I haven't remembered all of it. At the beginning, director Laura Jennifer Pacini made some concessions, and as we got closer to the production day, I sat with Jessica Aaron Lewis, who played Raissa Filippovna in *The Suicide*, for five hours straight and two days and learned the technique to remember it all. The technique we used involved physical motion. I would say the line and attach a certain gesture to it. Sometimes I just remembered the tone, in which I said the line and it helped me to memorize certain parts.

How was it working with Laura Jennifer Pacini as a director?

It was wonderful. Laura has

a wide directing background, she has directed many plays for KELT like *Wait Until Dark*, etc. We worked on understanding my character, his feelings, and she showed directions how to connect and play him, rather than just learn the scripts.

Your rehearsals probably lasted for a couple hours every day. Did that affect your performance at your classes?

We had rehearsals every day from 7 p.m. to 10–11 p.m., and there have been times that I stayed longer. I live very far from KIMEP, so I would get home around 1 a.m., and directly would go to bed. I didn't do my homework at home because of the lack of time, even though I tried my best for my acting not to affect my GPA, it still did, not very much though.

Do your parents support your acting?

My parents are very liberal and support me in everything I do.

Although they want me to come home earlier sometime and have dinner and spend more time with them, they are not making me leave this path.

Have there been times when you thought of acting as a future profession and leaving studies at KIMEP?

There have been. I thought about this idea for several months. There are a few people at KELT who had studied at KIMEP, and after received scholarships to pursue their acting dreams at American universities, aspired to do so. I told my parents about my wish, and my mom told me to graduate and get a degree first, and I actually support that decision.

Which type of roles do you prefer playing: good or evil?

I have never played an evil role, but in future I want. I don't know why, but I always play gawky, silly, naïve characters, and maybe because I actually am like this.

What is the biggest joy for you when you act?



Altynai Yegemberdiyeva, Nazira Berdibayeva, and Assel Bakhtan found a place to express their talent and develop skills together.

Here is the art. Where is the revolution?

A group of students headed by Balzhan Bekenova and Aigerim Tanatar initiated a new organization with a name that speaks for itself—Art Revolution.

The Revolution introduced me to art, and in turn, art introduced me to the Revolution!

— Albert Einstein

Kristina Nikulina

INITIATORS have an intention to unite talented artists, photographers, and choir singers who want to develop their interests, organize art exhibitions and choir performances at KIMEP.

The new-born club marked its birthday with a wonderful performance of the choir. Mashing up the most popular songs of the year 2014, the singers entertained the KIMEP

community in the middle of the busy Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2015.

“The purpose of the organization is to unite like-minded people of various arts and to provide them with an opportunity to develop and promote their interests together,” says Balzhan Bekenova, the president of Art Revolution.

Another reason to create the organization was the fact that one of the initiators, Bekenova was not accepted to the KIMEP Art and Dance Association (KADA). “It is not a secret that I couldn’t pass the KADA casting. Nevertheless I wanted to have a place to develop my skills in guitar and singing,” says Bekenova. “I wanted to provide that opportunity to myself and other talented people.” ☺

To rent or not to rent?

Knowledge is free. However, students still need to purchase textbooks and pay library deposits. KIMEP students often complain about the rising fees and library deposit.

Zarrina Mulloboeva

FOR THE CURRENT academic year, textbook rental fee deposit at KIMEP library is 20,600 tenge. Last year the price was 18,070 tenge, the year before 16,500 tenge. According to Olga Zaitseva, director of the library, the initial deposit was set by library and was 15,000 tenge. Every year the fee rises as tuition fees increase.

Textbook rental fee for a semester is 25% of its original price plus shipping. Textbooks that we use at KIMEP are usually ordered from the USA. The library makes orders two times per year. Instructors request textbooks according to the number of enrolled students for a course.

Many students complain that books are expensive but "the library does not earn any profit by rent," says Zaitseva. All of the collected money goes toward the initial price of the textbook, shipping, and purchasing new textbooks and electronic databases such as Paragraph, EBSCOhost and JStor.

Textbooks are given for rent for the whole semester only if there is enough to supply the majority of students enrolled in the course. Reserved copies can be given to anyone during semester for a day for a fixed fee. Fee is subtracted from students' library deposit which is returned upon graduation. For those textbooks that are not distributed for the whole semester, students can rent them overnight for free. Ω

Photo: Daniyar Zhakulinov



Olga Zaitseva

According to Olga Zaitseva, director of the library, the initial deposit was set by library and was 15,000 tenge. Every year the fee rises as tuition fees increase.

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Photo: Daniyar Zhakulinov

The change of priorities—"Don't have parties on your mind"

Starting from Spring 2015 semester, KIMEP Student Association (KSA) supports and urges organizations to hold more intellectual, sporting, and cultural events.

Lauriza Abildayeva

KSA Budget Committee headed by the Vice President of Finance—Ramazan Slamkhan, a forth-year student majoring in public administration, conducted the distribution of budget composed of KIMEP students' fees.

The Budget Committee consists of three KSA members and four student volunteers with GPA higher than 3.5, who are not members of any student organization. All members of the committee are chosen by the vice president of finance.

"Although the policy requires the students to not have membership in organizations," says Slamkhan, "they still need to be experienced in the field and have good general understanding of the inner work of organizations."

Budgets for six events were approved for Fall 2014 semester. "KIMEP PIE insisted that KIMEP Expo was more than an entertaining event and that it carried out cultural values," comments Slamkhan. He also stresses the importance of

the Football League trips organized by KIMEP Sport Center for talented football players mainly on their first or second year of study. KZT 675,000 was spent on the accommodation in Madrid, Spain for KIMEP Football League players.

KIMEP University doesn't charge any fee for the usage of its facilities such as rooms and equipment. Therefore if the event is held on the campus, nobody expects to pay an entrance fee when going to an event. However, for the case of Mr. KIMEP 2015, Slamkhan justifies the entrance fee to be a necessity for KIMEP International Student Association (KISA) to cover the cost of gifts for the participants as well as extra expenses on upgraded lighting equipment.

Slamkhan says, budget for spring semester 2015 is more balanced and well distributed between various cultural, intellectual, entertainment, sporting and other events. "Me and other members of Budget Committee are open to new initiatives of active students. That is why we are willing to support newly-born organizations such as Art Revolution and KIMEP Fly, so they have access to resources in order to organize their events and to be known by KIMEP society," says Slamkhan.

"I hope that tickets for KADA Concert 2015 will be free," says vice president of finance. "We

gave them the opportunity to hold their annual concert in philharmonic because they wanted to move up to a new level, to show to a broader audience including people who are not part of the KIMEP community that our university has a lot of talented people."

While KSA claims that they provide best opportunities for realization of organizations' potential, students demand more precise and available information on student fee spendings. "I

pay student fee to go to KIMEP events for free, not to satisfy ambitions of student organizations," says a student who preferred to remain anonymous.

What works for one organization, might not work with another. "I was strongly against providing KSA budget for the participation of other universities in Legal Clinic Case Competition. I am a KIMEP student who pays the student fee. Do I want to cover expenses of non-KIMEP students associated with their participation in the event? Definitely not," says Slamkhan. The same line of argumentation was given for KIMEP Intellectual Debate Club (IDC) budget for KIMEP Cup. However, the representative of IDC has a different opinion.

"It is an event of great importance not only for KIMEP debaters but for overall portrayal of KIMEP in the eyes of a progressive youth. Ω

Get "sick," or how to make up for missed exams

In Fall 2014 semester, KIMEP University Medical Center (MC) received an increased number of falsified certificates from students as an excuse for missed classes and unsubmitted assignments.

Zarrina Mulloboeva

ACCORDING to the doctor of the MC, Natalya Ussorokh, they receive lots of falsified medical certificates every semester. Students usually

use services of the Raden and SANA medical centers of Almaty for getting fake "spravkas." Therefore, certificates from these centers won't be considered credible and accepted by MC anymore.

Many professors allow students to make up for exams if they missed them because of health problems and have a medical certificate approved by MC. According to Ussorokh, during midterm and final examinations number of sick students dramatically increases.

All certificates that come to MC are examined by doctors. If certificates contain any mistakes or inconsistencies, doctors send requests to the medical institutions which released those certificates. If the fact of falsification is revealed, students who brought fake documents are sent to the Disciplinary Committee.

The MC itself also provides medical certificates to students but only in electronic form. The MC staff send them by email to professors directly in order to prevent students from making fake copies. Ω

Photo courtesy Marketing, Communications and Public Relations Office

Oddfish finds his niche

There stands a man on the bus stop opposite the KIMEP Grill who acts like a traffic cop. His job is no joke. Every day he is there, shaking a red stick to the passing cars. Many of us saw him, but only a few know his real personality. So, what's behind this odd person's behavior?

Safon Issak-zade

THERE ARE many bus stops in Almaty. But the one at the intersection of Dostyk and Abay avenues is a special one. It has an own "host": a man with a red stick in his hands stands there from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. every day. What is he doing there? Difficult to answer, but there is no doubt that nobody needs him at this bus stop. Although a man with some sort of disorder became famous for his activities, only a few people know his inner character.

His name is Aset. Or that is what Ulzhan, the woman from a nearby newspaper shop, says.

"He is like that since he was born," says Ulzhan. "He doesn't like

to sit at home, always moves, at work."

Aset is harmless and never wishes anything bad to others. He likes eating samsa and drinking Coke.

"Sometimes he buys hot dogs instead of samsa, but mainly these two things," says another woman. Even though he likes eating samsa, his real love is her, Sholpan, a bus dispatcher at this bus stop. "He becomes jealous and feels sad when someone is talking to her," says Ulzhan. Aset gives her small gifts from time to time and hugs her friendly everyday.

According to local bus drivers, Aset works without holidays in his calendar. "As long as I have been a bus driver," says Nurlan. "I see him here permanently for 14 years. He

shows us parking directions at the bus stop, sometimes even by whistling. He is a kind man."

Some people laugh at him. While interviewing people at the bus stop, I saw two bus drivers who were rudely laughing at Aset. Some drivers in the contrary give him 50 or 100 tenge for which he then buys his favorite samsa and Coke for lunch.

Aset is a specific, but definitely a very hard-working man. Neither Almaty's freezing winter, nor its sizzling heat can prevent him from coming to his place of duty. Every day he takes his red stick, puts on his distinctive cap and goes to the place of his "work". He is an example of a man who is devoted to and passionate about his job. Even though this job is about shaking a red stick that nobody needs. Ω



Welcome to KIMEP on Google+! KIMEP University+ is a new social media network launched especially for our students. Modern Google tools and great opportunities allow users to build simple and interesting pages and online communities. Google Hangouts give the users a possibility to engage in group project in a comfortable way. Learn more on Google and follow KIMEP University+ :)

Photo: Shirinkhon Fayziyeva

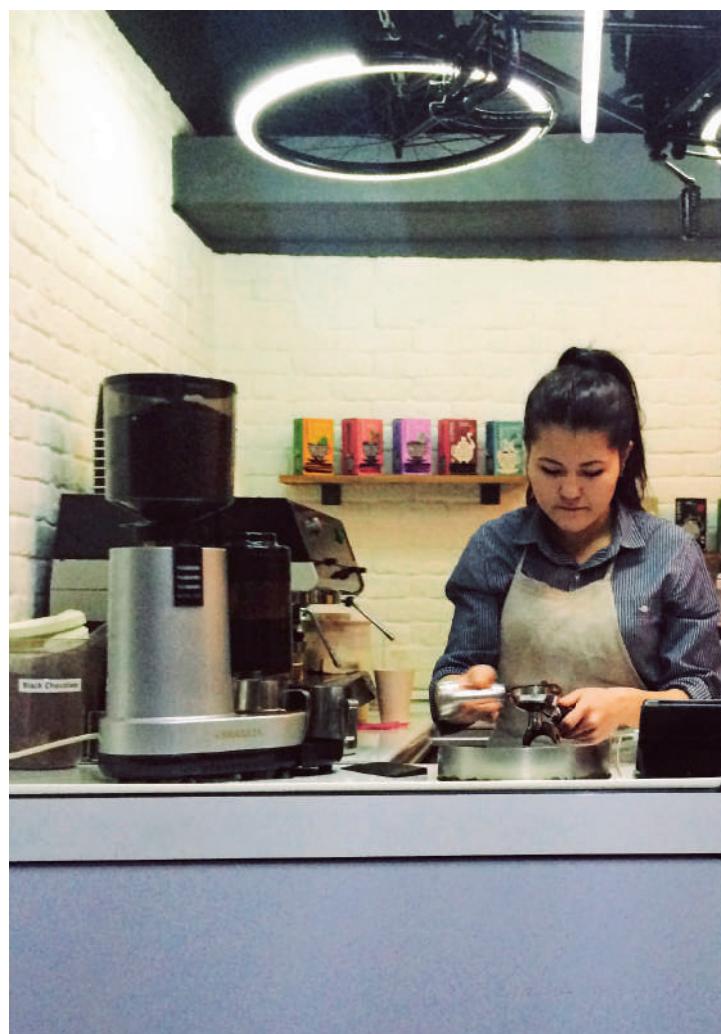


Natalya Ussorokh

KZT 700,000 was the minimum budget required to conduct a city-scale tournament with the best debaters of Kazakhstan and near abroad. KIMEP Cup would provide them with the platform where students from different universities and countries could meet and exchange experience," says Shyrin Abaykhanova, a third year accounting student and president of IDC. "Nazarbayev University, for instance, sends its students to World University Debating Championships, one of the most prestigious international debating championships, while KIMEP students look for new ways of entertainment."

According to Slamkhan, it is not that bad and things are getting better. 66% of the Fall 2014 budget was devoted to entertainment and the leftover resources to sport-related events. None of the intellectual or cultural event were supported financially. For Spring 2015, KSA implemented a new policy—no budget for parties. And 47% of the Spring 2015 budget is given to cultural events, and 14% devoted to intellectual ones.

"Some of the policies do not make much sense," says Zhansaya Akberdiyeva, a second-year law student and the organizer of Poetry Evenings with KIMEP Times. "KSA at first approved our budget for food and non-alcoholic beverages for coffee breaks, and then prohibited all organizations to spend budget on snacks and drinks. We ended up buying them out of our own pockets and collecting donations from our visitors." Ω



When dedicated barista Ainur has a bad day, she still tries to give her best smile to light up the mood of her customers.



Nessie Kozhakmetova

Coffee stories

If you ever entered the “podzemka” (underground) at the intersection of Abay and Dostyk avenues, you surely have noticed the shop which stands out against all those tiny convenience stores. And most likely you have not been able to resist the smile of the pretty young barista and let yourself have a cup of coffee.

Nessie Kozhakmetova

DOUBLE A COFFEE has come quite a long way since opening in 2012, from planning to open on KIMEP’s campus to totally renovating the interior design. Double A stands for Argyn and Azamat—names of the owners. Having only experience in their pockets, two friends decided to open the take-away coffee shop from scratch.

Now they have widened range of coffees and teas and hired two lovely baristas. Ainur, one of them, warmly hosts every customer and seems to be at perfect ease in her little space. Being very open and communicative, she enjoys the interaction with all those different people. However she says that her job is not always as easy as it might seem to be at first glance.

“Even when you had a bad day and you try to give your best smile to light up the mood of your customers, and do not receive anything back it upsets you a little.” Accompanied by the smooth sound of coffee machine Ainur continues to serve her diverse customers.

Caution—glass!

While waiting for their hot chocolate, a young woman and her son search through



This new coffee machine from Italy recently replaced an older one.

Nessie Kozhakmetova

of the many KIMEP professors who visit us to order cup of coffee and share their story. “Unfortunately my English is not sufficient enough to engage in long conversations, but I learn and try to teach them too. It works both ways,” says Ainur. The other barista, Gulnar, speaks Korean, and exchange students in KIMEP get very excited when ordering coffee in their native language.

Cappuccino, Will Smith and friendship

“I meet many incredible people every day and each of them has their own story. Some just make an order and rush by; others come to have warm conversation.” One of the regular customers came up with a game: naming a movie with Will Smith when making an order. The other student has been constantly having cappuccino. “For four month I have been beating the foam for the perfect cappuccino and during one of the conversations I found out that she would just blow away the foam as she never liked it,” laughs Ainur.

Warming cappuccino, soothing latte and vivifying espresso seasoned with hospitality of baristas from Double A Coffee which helped the students to survive cold winter have become a bedrock for a long-lasting friendly relationship. Ω

Found in translation

“My first order is always from Dr. William Callahan—americano without sugar. He is one

Summer schools Don't screw up your summer again

Thinking of studying abroad? Summer schools may be a great opportunity for you! While KIMEP does not offer many summer school programs, there are plenty of options on the Internet, if you do a careful research. Though you will not necessarily be able to transfer credits to your home university, you will get a valuable experience related to your college major or areas of interest, and familiarize yourself with the country you would go to.

The Clinton International Summer School

The 2015 Clinton International Summer School, in partnership with the INCORE Summer School at Ulster University, is a one-week intensive scholarship program for university students from post-conflict and developing regions. The curriculum is designed to promote entrepreneurship, leadership and community engagement, and prepare the students to advance positive change and economic development in their home communities. The program provides the participants with a unique opportunity to experience first-hand Northern Ireland’s historical conflict and that region’s continuing road to reconciliation, peace, and prosperity.

- **Deadline:** May 1, 2015
- Open to undergraduate and graduate students between the ages of 20 and 26 years old
- June 22–26, 2015, Ulster University, Northern Ireland, UK

Bucharest Summer University 2015

Bucharest Summer University is an official international summer school organized by the Bucharest University of Economic Studies that tackles mainly with economic problems (subjects and themes belonging to other fields and disciplines may also be approached) and its main purpose is to promote academic values common among students from around world. The participants of Bucharest Summer University are students currently enrolled in a bachelor’s degree program, a master’s degree program or a Ph.D. degree program from both Romania and all over the world.

• Deadlines:

- **June 12, 2015** for full scholarship application
- **June 26, 2015** for standard and partial scholarship application
- Open to students from all over the world
- **August 9–23, 2015, Bucharest, Romania**

Demise of the machines

VENDING, continued from page one

In addition to on-campus cafes and canteens, students buy snacks at K-Store or in the underground, but the vending machines had lower prices. For instance, a small Snickers bar would cost 110 tenge there against 150 tenge in K-store.

According to Rassim Karibov, director of Support Services Division (SSD), vending machines were eliminated from KIMEP due to frequent complaints from students, faculty, and staff members regarding poor performance of the automats during last year. He also cited cases when money transactions were not properly completed by the devices and added that the operating company started increasing prices. Complaints can come in via three channels: letters from security guards, emails from professors, and submissions on the Students Portal.

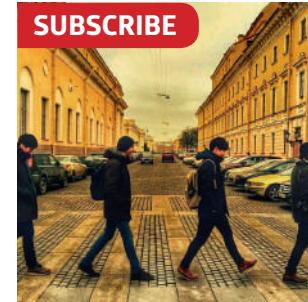
Natalya Kozmina, SSD project manager, could not name the exact number of registered complaints. She said there were two vending companies: Desart.Ei and ALA VEND.

Karibov denied the widespread allegation that vending machines were expelled from the university because KIMEP increased rent rates, and the operating company terminated the contract. “Everything is being done solely for the benefit of students,” the head of SSD stresses, adding that sometimes the machines’ malfunctioning was caused by angry students inflicting punches and kicks on devices—for good reason or not.

Aigana Bekpossanova, a sophomore doing her bachelor’s in auditing, was a frequent client of the automats, yet she is not distressed about their disappearance. “This way I won’t gain weight because chocolate bars are not so accessible any more. But it’s bad that water is gone together with the sweets,” she says. Alexandra Korenkova, a fourth-year student majoring in international relations, likes having healthier food in Grill instead of cookies and chocolates, but she is also concerned about water. “It would be good to have automats with drinks only,” she says.

The KIMEP Tender Committee decided to discontinue the contract with the operating company in September 2014, but it has come as a total surprise for students and faculty alike. According to Karibov, the committee is currently preparing to run another tender for the services of vending automats—possibly, with better functionality and lower prices. But if they are really doing everything for the sake of students, then why this procedure has not been under way during the fall semester? Ω

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Thinking out loud

Text and photos by Tomiris Orozoeva

With approximately 100,000 thoughts per day, it is amazing how some of them are just stuck in one's head. Have you ever wanted to read someone's mind? Look at the photos of KIMEP international students, without reading their quotes, and try to guess what they shared.



**SHOHIMSULTON
DODEKHOJEOVA**
FROM TAJIKISTAN SAYS,
"Positive attitude may not solve all your problems, but it can annoy others so it's worth to try"

FLUENT IN KAZAKH TAEYONG PARK SAYS,
"I will not come back to Korea because there children of rich and powerful people will find the best job. I know that in Kazakhstan connections also play a big role, but I receive different attitude as a foreigner"



**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FROM KYRGYZSTAN
AIKE ISMAILOVA SAYS, "I could make a difference in chemistry. I had big potential. But I found myself studying accounting in KIMEP"**



"At home among strangers, stranger at home—that's what I feel being Kazakh from Uzbekistan,"
SAYS BATYR YULDASHEV

The fruits of unsurpassable boredom

Text and photos by Safon Issak-zade



A tedious lecture. A monotonously speaking teacher. Unsociable people nearby. While arrows on your watches lazily count the remaining time of the lesson and the phone's battery is dead, you give up to the despair of idleness.

Some students are more inventive in entertaining themselves. They turn into "artists" that use the table as a canvas for their pictures. Less sophisticated vandals inscribe their birthplaces or names (or maybe the names of their loved ones?) on table tops. Check out some of the "masterpieces."

KIMEP Times

#1 (116), APRIL 2015

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in the previous issue,
KIMEP Times #6 (115),
December 2014 is
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