AMERICAN SOUTHEAST EUROPE
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Am SECC

CONNECT. TRADE. PROGRESS

The vision and inspiration for the American Southeast European Chamber of Commerce (AmSECC) is to facilitate the cooperation of businesses in Chicago and the United States (U.S.) with businesses in Southeast Europe. An important part of AmSECC's goal is also to establish and strengthen cultural ties between the U.S. and Southeast Europe. Connecting business and culture will foster an exchange of ideas, experiences, and services, create new jobs – in one word, *progress*.

From its inception (January 2009), AmSECC has received an overwhelmingly positive response. Today, this non-profit is made up of 13 extraordinary individuals who helped establish the organization and currently function as the Board of Directors. These founding members include: Bojan Glamochak, Una Pipic, Emir Zubovic, M. Scott Leonard, Aida Zubovic, Matija Biljeskovic, Lila S. Jokanovic, Tanja Boskovic and Igor Jokanovic. Dimitar Tchalakov, Stevco Nikolov, Josip Soldo, and Aleksandar Bojanic joined the board in the summer.

Some Southeast European countries, such as Romania, Bulgaria and Greece, belong to the European Union (E.U.). Others, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, and Turkey, continue to pursue membership. One of the conditions for entry into the E.U. is the establishment of better conditions for international investment.

As mentioned, AmSECC's mission is to promote projects in the above regions, and to connect investors from the United States with entrepreneurs and companies in the Southeast Europe. AmSECC's long-term vision is to establish a fund to help small companies and to fund humanitarian activities. Meetings and programs hosted by this organization serve cultural information to guests and members and provide information pertinent to investment opportunities in Southeast Europe. AmSECC cooperates with local organizations in Chicago, such as the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, International Visitors Center of Chicago, Illinois Institute of Technology, Tuta Theatre, and many others.

AmSECC has hosted seven events in its eleven months of operation.
Over seventy guests attended AmSECC's Inauguration on January 22nd, 2009. In attendance were Consul General of Bosnia and Herzegovia, Honorable Eldin Kajevic; Croatian Consul General, Honorable Renee Pea; Austrian Trade Commissioner for the United States, Mr. Franz Roessler; Program Director for the World Trade Center of Illinois, Ms. Shufen Zhao, and many other members of the business and local communities. Two satellite television channels, TV Bijeljina and Television Hayat, covered the event and provided an opportunity for viewers around the world to get acquainted with AmSECC's vision.

In March, AmSECC and the World Trade Center of Illinois held its first official event. Over eighty (80) guests were present for the presentations of two successful businesses that bridge Chicago and Southeastern Europe. Bosko Popovic of Ascendant Technologies and Mirna Sugar of Adriatic Sunshine Travel headlined the event. A number of Consul Generals from the region attended this event: Hon. Eldin Kajevic, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Hon. Renee Pea, Croatia; Hon. Desko Nikitovic, Serbia; Hon. Jovica Palashevski, Macedonia; Consul for Economic Affairs of Romania, Mr. Gabriel Dutu. Chicago's own *Twisted Pigeons* entertained guests with the sounds of The Beatles, Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, and many others.

AmSECC and Xippo Lounge invited guests for a business card exchange in May. At Xippo, guests mingled while listening to contemporary rock from the territory of Southeast Europe.
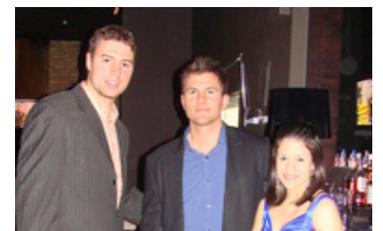
Also in May, AmSECC, in partnership with International Visitors Center Chicago, hosted a Young Internationals dinner at Restaurant Sarajevo. U.S. diplomat for the Foreign Services of the State Department, Mr. Brian Flora, spoke to 65 guests about the possibility of pursuing a career in Foreign Service.

A cultural experience was enjoyed by AmSECC guests on June 26th when Tuta Theatre Chicago performed Anton Chekov's Uncle Vanya. While the director, Zeljko Djukic was out of town that weekend, the audience had the opportunity to meet with and ask questions of the theatre company.

On October 27th, AmSECC in partnership with the Consulate General of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a well-attended event titled, "Investment Opportunities in Bosnia and Herzegovina's Developing Sectors." Consul General of Bosnia, Hon. Eldin Kajevic, introduced guests to the economic indicators and the general economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Dr. Ibrahim Vajzovic and Mr. John Freeborn of Freeborn Development Group presented on their investment experiences in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as with the huge potential for capital investment in the development industry. American guests were pleasantly surprised by the image presented of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and showed great interest.

 On November 12th AmSECC, in partnership with the Illinois Institute of Technology, organized an event titled, "Renewable Energies in Emerging Economies." Mr. Igor Stamenkovic and Mr. Nikola Milivojevic discussed their ground-breaking work on wind turbines as well as the largely untapped potential of renewable energies in the region of Southeast Europe. Mr. Russell Gilchrist, Project Leader with the one of the world's most famous architectural firms - Skidmore, Owings & Merrill presented the firm's work on China's first energy-independent skyscraper.

Today AmSECC has 37 members, of which two are Corporate Members. AmSECC has seven members on the Honorary Board. The majority of registered members are from Illinois, but AmSECC has recently begun registering members throughout Southeast Europe. AmSECC hopes that many entrepreneurs from Southeast Europe wishing to achieve contact in the United States will join them on the road to success.

 For more information about meetings AmSECC a www.amsecc.org visit the website or send e-mail to info@amsecc.org

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