

AMBASSADOR RETURNS TO SERBIA

Honorary Reception for H.E. Djerdj Matkovic Serbian Ambassador to the United States of America

by Milos Rastovic

WASHINGTON, DC - On July 29, 2020, the Serbian-American Leadership Conference (SALC) sponsored a virtual reception to honor His Excellency Djerdj Matkovic, Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to the United States. After serving for five years, he finished his term and will return to Belgrade, Serbia.

The event began with both anthems of the United States and the Republic of Serbia performed on guitar by Nemanja Ostojic, Associate Adjunct Professor of Guitar at the University of Indianapolis. John Buffalini, Treasurer of the SALC and moderator of the event, thanked all participants for celebrating Serbian-American friendship and friendship with H.E. Matkovic. He talked about Ambassador Matkovic and his wife Vera's support of St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church in Washington, D.C. during the last five years.

Aleksandar Djuricic, President of the SALC, thanked H.E. Matkovic for his support of the SALC from the beginning of the founding of the organization, for successfully serving Serbia and the Serbian-American community, and expressed hope that his successor continues the great work.

Lt. Col. John Cappello, Founder of the Halyard Mission Foundation, congratulated H.E. Matkovic for supporting the Foundation's efforts. On behalf of the Serb National Federation, Milos Rastovic emphasized the successful cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia over the last five years, which included sponsoring Serbian Movie Festivals, promotion of the movie "Tesla Nation" and other cultural events. Milan Varadinovic, Acting Consul at the Consulate General of the Republic of Serbia in Chicago, IL, said that he has known



H.E. Matkovic for 22 years. "He was one of the special people because he supported young apprentices," in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and encouraged them in their challenging careers.

Rev. Vasilije Vranic of St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church in Washington, D.C., expressed the opinion of all his parishioners that it was a great privilege to have H.E. Matkovic and his wife, Vera, as members of their Serbian-American community. "We are very grateful for your kindness and generosity of spirit. You and your wife have always supported our community in our joys and celebration and stood with us in troubling turmoil." He also thanked him for everything that he did for the Serbian-American community and for Serbia. Neno Djordjevic of the SALC stressed H.E. Matkovic's support to the St. Sava Academy including helping teachers and children was remarkable.

His Grace Bishop IRINEJ, Eastern American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church, highlighted the moments which they shared such as His enthronement as Bishop of Eastern Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Pittsburgh in 2016; the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Serbian flag flying over the White House in 2018; H.E. Matkovic's presence at every Liturgy at the St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church whenever His Grace Bishop IRINEJ was there; and in the Boston celebration of the 800th Anniversary of the Autocephaly of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

On behalf of HRH Crown Prince Alexander Karadjordjevic and Princess Katherine Karadjordjevic, the Honorable Branko Terzic expressed gratitude to H.E. Matkovic for all his professional courtesies when the Royal Family came to Washington, D.C. Branko Mikasinovic, novelist, translator, and Slavist, accentuated in an emotional way that of all the Serbian and Yugoslav ambassa-

dors he has known, H.E. Matkovic was the only one who regularly came to the Serbian Orthodox Church for different occasions either Liturgy, Slava or Diaspora gatherings.

Many other participants at the event, such as Jelena Vranic, Popadija at St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church, and Milan Visnick, President of the St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church, also expressed their gratitude to H.E. Matkovic for serving as Serbian Ambassador in Washington, D.C.

The Ambassador thanked all participants at the event. He said that he returns to Belgrade richer because he gained many friendships and met good people in the United States. After this assignment, he plans to retire there. He grew up in Subotica, the northwest part of Serbia, in a multiethnic environment. Later, he moved to Belgrade with his family in 1971. He graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Belgrade specializing in international law and international relations. He has been in the diplomatic service for almost 40 years. He served under 11 different Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia in Canada, Zimbabwe, Hungary, and twice in the United States. Serving in the United States as an Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia was the crown jewel of his career. He concluded with the following words: "My entire career was dedicated to representing my country in a humble, but decisive way... If I had to choose a career again, I would choose the same one again."

On behalf of the Serb National Federation, we thank H.E. Matkovic for his service and wish him an enjoyable retirement to spend more time with his family.



EARLY HISTORY OF SERBIAN LODGES IN USA & CANADA, see page 10

Serbian Lovchen Lodge No. 57 of the SOF Srbobran, Douglas, Alaska, celebrating Christmas in 1905

Miss Serbian Diaspora USA 2020 Selection Underway

*An initiative in support of the Serbian youth diaspora in North America.
Enroll now through August 31*

American Serbian Association for Prosperity (A.S.A.P.) is mobilizing our diaspora to join forces in finding the best and brightest possible candidates for Miss Serbian Diaspora USA 2020. This is a highly visible role that comes with an exceptional prize – the opportunity to represent our diaspora in the Miss Serbia 2020 finals to be held in late October in Belgrade, organized by the seasoned team of Miss YU.

The Miss Serbian Diaspora USA winner will also receive an academic scholarship, complimentary air travel and a two-week training session at the Hotel Lux in Thassos, Greece. Many other valuable prizes will also be awarded to a selected few runners-up.

How to apply

Simply contact through Facebook Messenger @missserbiandiaspora to become a candidate or recommend a candidate for this fully online and corona-free competition. Be reminded that the entire process will take place online with finals to be broadcast across the Zoom platform on September 12, 2020. The deadline for the application is August 31st.

A.S.A.P. is proud to be leading the initiative to use the Miss Serbian Diaspora USA competition to launch a life-long networking vehicle dedicated to empowering a growing community of young women of Serbian ancestry throughout the North American diaspora.

Register now, or, if you wish to share the good news, please forward this email to every young Serbian woman you know! We are accepting applicants through August 31.

To learn more, please view our Facebook page and visit our website <https://www.facebook.com/missserbiandiasporausa/> or at website www.missserbiandiaspora.com

*A.S.A.P. is a 501(c)3 in support of the Serbian Diaspora
Miss Serbian Diaspora USA, 400 N. Oakhurst, Beverly Hills, CA 90210*

ARE YOU THE
NEXT MISS SERBIAN
DIASPORA USA 2020
OR DO YOU KNOW
SOMEONE WHO
COULD BE?

Miss Serbian Diaspora USA 2020

MEDIJSKI SPONZORI



Sva desavanja u Cikagu i
okolini na jednom mestu!



Najpozitivniji radio u
Americi



Samo odabrane vesti

WWW.MISSSERBIANDIASPORA.COM

NEW SERBIA DESK OFFICER Welcome Reception for Emily Armitage at U.S. Department of State

by Milos Rastovic

On July 30, 2020, the Serbian-American Leadership Conference (SALC) sponsored a virtual welcome reception for Emily Armitage, the new Serbia Desk Officer at the U.S. Department of State. She replaced Stacie Bishop, who moved to the Office of Nordic, Baltic, and Arctic Affairs.

Neno Djordjevic, Representative of the SALC for Strategic Partnership, moderated the event which began with Armitage's introduction. She stressed that the relationship between the United States and Serbia are going in positive trajectories. Aleksandar Djuricic, President of the SALC, was optimistic about the current relations between the United States and Serbia compared to the last 30 years. There are many Serbian values which lined with American interests: "I hope that will continue in that way. Obviously, there will be some issues because of different nations, cultures, and interests. But, if you agree with somebody 80 percent, it does not mean that 20 percent of disagreement has to hurt the relationship."

Rev. Vasilije Vranic of St. Luke Serbian Orthodox in Washington, D.C., highlighted the improvement of relationships between the Serbian-American community and the U.S. Government. "Many prominent Serbs contributed to developing this country." He stressed that Serbian-Americans, Serbia, and the United States could overcome disagreements over time through dialogue and work together toward specific goals.

On behalf of the Serb National Federation (SNF), Milos Rastovic, Cultural Outreach Coordinator, spoke about the cultural program and possible cooperation with the U.S. Department of State. "Founded in 1901, the SNF is the oldest Serbian-American Fraternal organization in the United States. The SNF has historically benefited the Serbian people, especially young ones through Scholarship Program, by supporting Serbian Orthodox Churches, church children's camps, athletic, cultural, and social events to perpetuate our ethnic tradition, culture, and heritage," he said. Rastovic mentioned cultural and athletic events the SNF has sponsored throughout the years from the oldest Serbian-American basketball and other tournaments since 1936 to Three-Day, Serbian Movie Festivals, and promotion of the movie "Tesla Nation," as examples.

Nenad Milosevic, Member of the SALC and President of the Board of the St. Simeon Serbian Orthodox Church in Miami, Florida, talked about the new airport that will be built in Pranjani, Serbia where General Draza Mihailovic saved over 500 American pilots in the famous Halyard Mission in 1944. In February, he visited Kosovo and Metohija, and got the impression that U.S. aid is not beneficial to the whole community: "The aid is going in one way," he said, adding that if you go to the Albanian part, 80 percent of houses are new, but when you go where Serbs live, everything is old.

John Buffalini, Treasurer of the SALC, expressed his wish for strengthening the relationships between the Serbian-Americans, the United States, and Serbia. Some other participants represented their organizations as well as distinguished Serbian-American individuals.

The Serb National Federation wishes great professional success to Emily Armitage on her new position, and hopes that we will develop excellent and fruitful cooperation during her term.