



PROJECT YOUTH FOR YOUTH

Short description of project

We believe that one of the biggest issues that Roma students and youth in general face is the lack of access to Social Rights, mainly education, as well as lack of opportunities for academic growth and development of leadership skills. This project has multiple groups that will benefit as it creates a platform for youth to learn from other youth, while building networks and mentorship-bonds.

YOUTH FOR YOUTH is a project that is targeting several groups of beneficiaries. The target groups involved in this project are **Roma College students, Roma middle school students and mentors.**

YOUTH FOR YOUTH consist of **two main activities**, the **first being**, forming a group of young Roma students - **mentees**. For this purpose seminar in Red Cross Vrsac resort was conducted, with 27 participants - Roma High School students and College students and students who are studying abroad.

Second activity is going to be **series of networking events** and finding adequate **mentors** for mentees according to their particular needs.

Third activity is connecting mentors and mentees with one main goal to support Roma students in education.

After a 5 month of mentorship program, we have active 13 mentorship pears. As we are living in 21st centuries, it is possible for people to connect all over the world, so some of our mentors are abroad, and one pear (mentor-mentee) are in Vienna on a same College.



PROGRAM ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW

Communication and preparation activities realized meetings were with: Roma students at the University of Belgrade (from the list of Belgrade Roma student organization); Roma middle school students from Deponija and their parents; College for teachers (only one in Serbia that have Department for studying in Roma language); A-SMYLE Alumni, IACBG Alumni and other college educated students, mainly those who are studying or studied in USA and abroad; International Academic Center Belgrade IACBG and American Council; Roma National Council, City of Belgrade and Ministry of Education of Serbia;

The first list count 31 students who are informed and invited to participate in program, 27 confirmed participation on seminar in Resort of Red Cross Vrsac in Vrsacki breg.

Five-day seminar was realized from 10th to 15th of June 2014, in Vrsac for Roma middle school and College students. There were 27 participants and six lecturers.

Seminar and networking activities

The seminar focused on providing Roma students and high school students with access to information about higher education and education abroad. One of the goals of this seminar was to create a cohesive group of students that can work together in future on their path to becoming upcoming Roma educated elite in Serbia. Furthermore, this seminar focused on providing necessary knowledge and "how-to's" for studying and applying to exchanges and universities in USA. Additionally, Roma students learned about writing resumes as well as tricks and tips for interviews, essays and motivation letters, as well as debate skills and public speaking tips.

Mentors and mentees

After seminar all interested Roma students (19 of them) wrote the letter of interest for mentorship program. With carefully analyze of letters of interests, students future goals and need they are connected with mentors who most match their needs.

We end up with 15 pairs of mentor-mentee.

We organized mentor orientation meeting (some mentors participated via skype). Mentors get the instructions of tasks and goals in their future work with mentees.

Online form for tracking and reports are developed both for mentors and for mentee. Contact will be conducted once a week via internet: mail, facebook or skype. Reporting is conducted after every contact in a beginning, than once a week and now in once a month.

The goals of the mentoring program where established

The goals of student mentorship program and expectations from mentors are provided in next table:

Goals	Expectations
For a student to have support outside of their close proximity.	It is mentor responsibility to be their support outside of their community the best way you can.
Cultural exchange.	Meeting, communication, being friends/friendly, cooperation.
Support in current education as well as help in continuing education.	Help with creating and reaching individual goals and plans – educational as well as professional. Help in creating timeline for those goals as well as continuing monitoring and support in reaching these goals (step by step). Help in searching for opportunities for continuing education (programs, stipends, scholarships, ...)
Support in broadening social and cultural capital	Through access to information and attending seminars, workshops, conferences, exchanges and all other happenings that are of importance for your mentee's future.
Professional support	Help in writing cv, preparation for the interviews, searching for jobs, ...
Creating safe environment	Asking questions, building a close relationship
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1h a week minimum spent with your mentee • Developing goals • Getting to know your mentee really well • Creating deadlines for the goals of your mentee • Monitoring and paying attention to the development of the goals, as well as to deadlines

What do we need next is support for our peers mentor/mentee meetings and further development of mentoring program through trainings and workshops and web site platform to share communication and information.

We all are ready and eager for the next steps on our journey.

