

# Annual Report

# 2023



Philip II of Macedon in Bitola, North Macedonia. Photo by Arnulfo Acedo.

**2023 has been a transformative year, fueled by our 2022 designation and funding as a Title VI National Resource Center. New staff and faculty affiliates have injected energy as we've offered increased scholarship support, and expanded our engagement with partners and publics.**



**Keith Brown**  
*Melikian Center Director*





## The Melikian Center Team

**Clockwise from top left:** Victor Johnson [New], Keith Brown, Jaik Havlick, Jafar Zadeh [New], Marina Akins, Jamie Edmonds, Theresa Zimm

**Not pictured:** David Brokaw

## Impact Highlights

2023 was our first full year of operations as a Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center - one of 12 nation-wide for Russian, Eurasian and East European Studies. Key lines of effort include supporting students to increase their foreign language and area studies proficiency; and increasing US public understanding of the region's significance.

### In 2023

**100+ students** participated in either immersive language study or faculty-led programs in Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, Poland and Uzbekistan.

ASU Students and faculty won over **30 national awards** including one Pickering Fellowship, 2 Critical Language Scholarships, 7 Fulbright teaching or research awards, and 8 Title VI FLAS fellowships.

**35 students** pursued in-depth research on the region through certificate capstones, senior thesis projects, internships or undergraduate fellowship programs.



Macedonian film-maker Milcho Manchevski leads a directing masterclass.

The Melikian Center hosted or co-hosted over **40 public events**, reaching over **2,100 attendees**, and featuring in-person presenters from **12 countries** of the region, including Kosovo, North Macedonia, Ukraine, Romania, Latvia, Hungary, Belarus, Armenia, Serbia, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Russia.



## Global Connections

ASU student **Arnulfo Acedo** was selected to attend the Young Bled Strategic Forum in Slovenia in August. The Forum brings together young leaders from Central and East Europe, and Arnulfo is the first-ever delegate from the United States. His participation was part of a larger collaboration between ASU and the European Digital Diplomacy Exchange, initiated by ASU Alum **Matt Jacobs** (CLI 2007), which includes a new Spring course, Democratic Resilience in the Digital Age. Arnulfo will take the course, building on his Gilman-funded study abroad experience in Macedonia in the summer, and his ongoing internship with Phoenix Committee on Foreign Relations.

# Faculty Accomplishments

With 11 colleagues joining in Fall 2023, the Center can now draw on the expertise of 94 faculty affiliates across multiple fields. Among the newest affiliates are **Julia Melkers**, Professor of Public Policy and Management and regular contributor to the World Congress of Latvian Scientists, and **Tanvir Ahmed**, Mellon post-doctoral fellow and scholar of early modern protest movements in Central Asia.

Former Interim Director and New Advisory Board member **Craig Calhoun** was presented with the Altruism, Morality and Social Solidarity Distinguished Career Award by the American Sociological Association.

Among faculty affiliate publications were scholarly monographs by **Danko Sipka**, **Brian Goodman** and **Jennifer Keahey** spanning Linguistics, Literary Criticism and Development Studies.

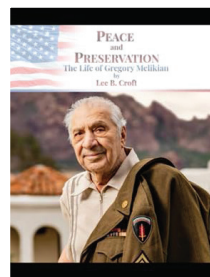
**Iveta Silova (Education)** and **Peter Schmelz (Musicology)** won Fulbright awards to work with colleagues in Finland and Georgia.

## A Tribute to Service

### *Peace and Preservation*

*The Life of Gregory Melikian*

In April, Advisory Board member, CLI Founder, and Emeritus Professor **Lee Croft** published a life history of **Gregory Melikian**. Drawing on written sources and a series of interviews, *Peace and Preservation* narrates a remarkable and accomplished life, which included distinguished military service with General Eisenhower in World War II, and a continued commitment to philanthropy and global engagement.



# Critical Languages Institute



CLI Students participating in Yakut Stick Wrestling

ASU's Critical Languages Institute has offered high-quality, high-impact instruction for over 30 years, with over 2,000 learners enrolled since 1991. Following three years of adjustments to COVID-19, CLI 2023 reconfirmed the value of classroom camaraderie, mutual support and human connection in the intense and transformative work of learning foreign languages and cultures.

In addition to established federal funding sources for ROTC cadets through Project Global Officer and graduate students through Title VIII, 2023 added FLAS fellowships for undergraduate students, providing an additional \$200,000 in funding to 14 recipients.

## By the Numbers

**119**  
students studied

Scholarships Totaling  
**\$606,250**

**11+**  
critical languages

**85**  
scholarships awarded

**19** online students  
**59** in-person students  
**61** studied abroad

Learn More:  
[cli.asu.edu](https://cli.asu.edu)

**FLAS funding from the Department of Education takes the Critical Languages Institute to the next level. It expands present opportunities for ASU students while paving a future pathway to national scholarships and career opportunities.**

**- Jamie Edmonds**  
CLI Director

# Public Programming and Partnerships

## Creative Horizons



Together with University partners in Ohio and Florida, the Melikian Center organized events and created digital content to showcase the role of art in bearing witness to violence, and celebrating human resilience. These included an exhibit of Felix Lembersky's Babyn Yar paintings, and a documentary short featuring his grand-daughter Yelena.

## GIST Innovates the Balkans



Advancing ASU's expertise in entrepreneurship and innovation, Melikian Faculty Affiliate **Visar Berisha** co-led the Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST) program in the Western Balkans, providing guidance and know-how to start up businesses in the region.

## Arizona Global



The Melikian Center was recognized by the Phoenix Committee on Foreign Relations as 2023 Corporate Sponsor of the Year. The collaboration extends beyond public events to connect ASU students with PCFR members through a new course, in which they generate oral histories of international experience.

## American Studies in Armenia



As part of Yerevan State University's new master's program in American Studies, faculty affiliates **Claudia Sadowski-Smith**, **Matthew Slaboch** and **Claudia Mesch** taught three 2-week modules. The foci for these interdisciplinary online courses were U.S. Migration; American Founding Principles, and Art and Politics in the U.S. Since 1945.

## Kosovo Ambassador Visits



The Melikian Center hosted campus visitors from several Embassies, including in November, **Ilir Dugolli**, Ambassador of Kosovo to the United States (pictured above with David Brokaw). He spoke about the positive impacts of ASU's knowledge-sharing over two decades, especially in establishing sustainability studies and industry partnerships.

## In Memoriam

**Walter "Walt" Winus, Jr.**  
1928 - 2023

**Gabriel "Gabe" Reuben**  
1925 - 2023

**Sanford "Sandy" Couch**  
1929 - 2023

## Fund-raising totals

In 2023, the Melikian Center received:

**\$1,606,321**

in Federal grants

**\$155,896**

in Private Foundation awards

**\$158,000**

in philanthropic gifts from **30 donors**

## Want more information?



**Melikian Center**  
[melikian.asu.edu](https://melikian.asu.edu)



**Critical Languages  
Institute**  
[cli.asu.edu](https://cli.asu.edu)