

Tcell Lauds Executive Education Programme at UCA



Tcell executives unmask for a group photo at UCA's Khorog campus. Ozodkhon Davlatshoev, CEO of Tcell (fourth from left).

"We all know that there is a revolution taking place in the telecom industry, per se, the internet industry. For us to sustain our growth and to remain competitive as one of the leading digital players in the world, we need an institution that does a lot of research and analysis," said Ozod-

khon Davlatshoev, Chief Executive Officer of Tcell Tajikistan, emphasizing the significance of the UCA-Tcell partnership.

To help Tcell position for growth in a post-pandemic environment, the University of Central Asia (UCA) custom designed

an Executive Education Programme on 'Thought Leadership' for Tcell executives to evaluate opportunities across the telecommunications ecosystem in Tajikistan. Thirty three senior and mid-level executives from Tcell participated in the programme at UCA's Khorog campus in July.

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New SPCE Learning Centre Opens in Almaty



Staff of SPCE keep their distance at the opening of the new learning centre in Almaty. The Director of SPCE, Diloar Butabekov (left).

UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education launched its 16th learning centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on July 1, 2021. The opening commemorates an ongoing effort of SPCE to advance the socio-economic development of the mountain regions of Central Asia through its unique academic programmes and preparatory training courses designed for schoolchildren, teenagers, and adults in Kazakhstan.

"Since the founding of SPCE in 2006, more than 20,000 students have attended courses at SPCE Kazakhstan. We have trained students in various programmes, and most of have had a positive impact on their lives from increasing their income to improving their careers and qualifications," said Kuandyk Tleuzhanuly, Head of SPCE in Kazakhstan.

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Executive Education Programme at UCA



Tcell executives work on specific assignments at the Executive Education Programme.

The Executive Education programme was created to address areas of improvement in management practices, prepare the team to analyse critically, lead confidently and articulate strategically as they move forward. As more businesses 'go digital' and the pressure increases on telecommunication providers to expand their services, the programme aimed to empower business leaders with the necessary tools and techniques to stay competitive and work as change agents in their communities.

"This team is special for us because we included our senior leaders...they are the fu-

ture of this company. This programme will have a huge impact on the digital transformation of the company," said Firuza Nabieva, Director of Human Resources at Tcell.

Based on themes of digital disruption, leadership and culture, and innovation management, participants worked on application tasks each day. The programme also exposed participants to case studies employing global practices through UCA's partner universities, enabling them to implement the lessons learned within their business environments. At the end of the programme, participants were given a chance to showcase their learnings

Former UCA Lecturer Cycling Around the World

Cycling from Bristol to Beijing, a young Oxford graduate is raising funds for cancer charities.

Luke Grenfell-Shaw, a former Geography lecturer at the University of Central Asia, started his journey on 1st January 2020. At a young age of 24, Luke was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of cancer. Instead of giving up on his plans, he went ahead and graduated with an MSc in Water Science, Policy and Management from the University of Oxford while undergoing chemotherapy.

"The dream I had in the back of my mind was to one day cycle around the world. I thought I would work for a few years, climb up the career ladder, and then cycle. However, when I was diagnosed with cancer, that future took on a new urgency."

Though the cancer is still present in his body,

Luke continues to cycle and raise money to support cancer charities in both developed and under-developed regions of the world. He has successfully raised over £100,000, and hopes to reach his goal of £300,000 by the time he has completed his ride.

While raising funds and living his dream, Luke is also inspiring people with his experiences, reflections, and determination. He writes blogs to capture the essence of his travel, and records podcasts to share stories of other people overcoming life's unexpected challenges.

"It's my firm belief that we can all live richly and fully, even with cancer. It's up to us to proactively create our own opportunities to live our best lives today, tomorrow, and every day."

Learn more about [Luke's journey](#).

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SPCE Learning Centre Opens in Almaty

Altogether, over 173,000 students have taken SPCE courses in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan.

During the opening ceremony, among other achievements, Tleizhanaly also highlighted the recent success of the Science Journalism Project supported by the US Mission in Kazakhstan. The programme trained 24 journalists in reporting science-based news. The new learning centre in Almaty plans to offer courses in the areas of Data Science, English, Information Technology, and Accounting.

Watch the LIVE opening ceremony on UCA's [Facebook](#).

through a CEO Challenge and propose a way forward for Tcell by evaluating the telecommunications ecosystem in different regions of Tajikistan.

Moving forward, Tcell and UCA have several collaborations under discussion with a focus on continued research relevant to the industry, human resource development, and up-grading the skills of employees to adapt to fast moving global trends.



Luke Grenfell-Shaw arrives in Kyrgyzstan on his way to Beijing.

UCA Graduates on the Road to Leadership



Anisa Abibulloeva



Firuzai Muzaffar



Parvina Sultonmamadova

Recent graduates from the Class of 2021 at UCA's School of Arts and Sciences (SAS), Anisa Abibulloeva, Firuzai Muzaffar, and Parvina Sultonmamadova, are participating in a Study of U.S. Institutes (SUSI) for Student Leaders on Women's Leadership 2021.

"I was excited to attend SUSI as this year's agenda is partly dedicated to the environment," said Abibulloeva. She initiated the Green Community Club at UCA's Khorog campus, and is also the author of a children's book, "Keep the Environment Clean."

SUSI encourages women to actively participate in civil society and politics to become influential leaders. "I studied Global Economics, and want to pursue development in international relations. Economic equality means including women. For any country to succeed, women's leadership and participation are important in making economic decisions, and SUSI will help me to contribute in making Central Asia a better place for women," shared Sultanmamadova.

"SUSI encourages women from developing countries to use their voices in vari-

ous mediums of media and improve their leadership skills while learning from case studies of diverse countries," said Muzaffar, who is a Communications and Media graduate aspiring to be a socially conscious filmmaker.

SUSI offers a mini-grant of \$800 to promote women's entrepreneurship and leadership at the end of the training. The programme is currently being held online, and the participants are scheduled to meet in the United States in January 2022 for interactive seminars.

Climbing a Mountain to Learn English

Regardless of the challenges faced by Assad Wakhani, he cherishes the idea of accessing knowledge remotely, and is passionate about learning English. He hails from one of the remotest area of Badakhshan – the Wakhan Corridor of Afghanistan, and is currently attending online English classes by UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education in Faizabad, Afghanistan.

Wakhan Corridor is located near the Pamir Mountains bordering Tajikistan. The region has no mobile connections except an emergency network available at the top of the mountains. Wakhani walks an hour and a half every day to access the cell network so he can attend classes.



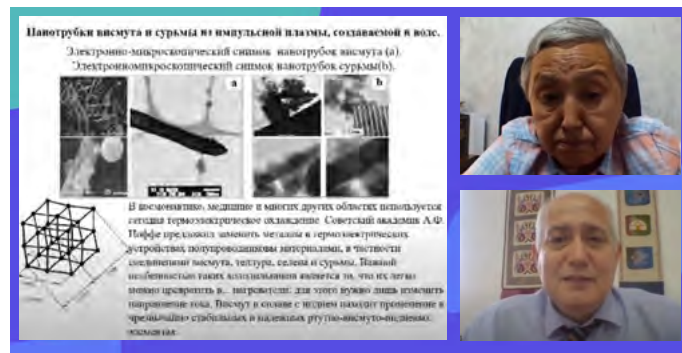
Assad Wakhani climbs the Pamir mountains on the border of Afghanistan and Tajikistan to attend his online class.

Prospects for Nanotechnology in Central Asia

UCA's Aga Khan Humanities Project conducted a Public Lecture on the Prospects of Nanotechnology in Central Asia on July 6, 2021.

Prof. Saadat Sulaimankulova, Head of the Nanotechnology Laboratory at the Institute of Chemistry and Phytotechnology at the Kyrgyz Academy of Sciences, presented an overview of opportunities and prospects for the development of nanotechnology in Kyrgyzstan.

"We have very limited resources which must be efficiently utilized and conserved. To accomplish this objective, nanotechnology can play an important role to efficiently utilize energy and material resources. A sustainable way of using energy is possible due to the unique properties of nanotechnology which can help boost the economy of Kyrgyzstan and also serve as a model for other developing countries," stated Prof. Sulaimankulova. He focused on the methods of producing nano-



structures using low-temperature plasma and cavitation, and highlighted the results of testing silver and gold nanostructures in surgery and dentistry.

Watch the full public lecture [here](#).

CHHU Promotes Cultural Heritage Along the Silk Road



CHHU Fellows discuss their visit to Pakistan with their colleagues at the Resilience Silk Route Network Project.



A resident of Chon-Alai in Kyrgyzstan preparing traditional bread.

Research Fellows from UCA's Cultural Heritage and Humanities Unit (CHHU) visited local communities living in the highlands of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Pakistan during June-July 2021 as part of the Resilience Silk Route Network. The project is funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund and initiated by Laajverd NGO (Pakistan) in co-operation with UCA and Durham University.

The project aims to work through threats and opportunities presented by the transit corridor development in the Northern Himalayas and build a lasting communication channel between South-South countries. It links local organizations and academic institutions in Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan to help develop resilient local economies and sustainable mountain societies.

Among the places the CHHU team visited were Chon-Alai in Kyrgyzstan, the Pamir region in Tajikistan, and Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan.

"For me as an artist, the trip made a huge impact in terms of experiencing the rich cultural diversity and many similarities between the indigenous cultures of Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan. It gave me a new perspective on the meaning of cultural heritage, which always gives a strong impetus in developing and generating new ideas," said Cholpon Alamanova, Artist and Art Designer.

Research fellows evaluated problems faced by local communities based on the historic Silk Road, and modern-day international highways. The team studied the

impact of newly built routes on cultural heritage preservation, and socio-economic relationships among the communities.

"The trip was an important part of the project to establish communication. These cultural practices have proved to be of universal value along the Silk Road, offering us an opportunity to revive old cultural practices into new forms of effective cooperation to support cultural interactions," says Aibek Baiymbetov, Junior Research Fellow, CHHU.

The project goals include building a Network of initiatives, which will help preserve the heritage of these communities and popularize it. CHHU fellows conducted flash studies and will exhibit their findings in the Fall of 2021.

New Mental Math Graduates in Afghanistan



Young graduates hold signs to convey their gratitude to SPCE.

The School of Professional and Continuing Education's learning center in Ishkashim, Afghanistan, graduated the first batch of 25 children in Mental Math on 16th August 2021. The course, consisting of 10 modules, was designed in January 2020 for children ranging from 7-14 years of age. They trained and learned four simple mathematics operations with the help of an abacus, flash cards, imagination, and Tablet PCs. Now they can mentally calculate several numbers in a combination of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division with high speed and accuracy. Educators agree that mental math skills give a clear advantage to students pursuing secondary and higher education, and these children are well on their way to a bright future thanks to the University of Central Asia's SPCE programmes.

The Journey Continues...



Saif-ur-Rehman Mughal at the UCA graduation ceremony in Khorog, Tajikistan, in June 2021.

Saif-Ur-Rehman Mughal, a graduate of UCA's School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) has been invited to pursue his MSc in Environment and Sustainability at the University of Michigan in the United States.

Mughal hails from a small village in Chitral, North Pakistan. He says, "I always wanted to serve humankind, and now our planet is at risk. When I moved from the mountainous beauty of Chitral to the cosmopolitan city of Karachi, I was struck by the degraded environment people were living in. When Pakistan gained independence in 1947, Karachi was a fishing village. Today it has a population of 17 million, with an infrastructure that was not designed for such population growth." Given these circumstances, it is important to create broad-based awareness about environmental issues, including pollution, to enhance the quality of life.

Graduating Magna Cum Laude in Earth and Environmental Sciences from SAS, Mughal believes that his education at UCA has prepared him to further expand his horizon in the world of academic research.

Mughal is excited to begin his new journey at the graduate school in Michigan, "My two broader interests include the utilization of available resources on earth and climate change adaptation. Of course, the focal point of my work will remain human welfare. We are all responsible for our actions, and have to come up with ways to promote the sustainable development of humankind."

Role of Cooperative Education in Navigating Career Goals

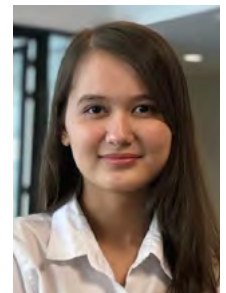
As part of the UCA's undergraduate degree requirements, students at the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) are required to complete 1,440 hours of internship as part of the Cooperative Education Programme (Co-op).

The Co-op Programme at UCA involves work-integrated learning, where students are encouraged to apply their theoretical knowledge to gain professional experience within a field of study across private, public, and community-based sectors.

"In today's challenging world, it is not easy to find internships, especially one that prepares you for your future challenges and endeavours" says Aqila Hassanzada, Class of 2022

Hassanzada is pursuing Communications and Media at SAS, and has completed seven different internships during the past four years. "I have focused my academic research on non-profit organizations and tried to gain relevant field experience through my internships. I have worked with several NGOs such as the Aga Khan University, Rural Support Programmes Network, Wedu, and Save & Nurture Child Care Foundation."

Hassanzada is currently interning at the British Broadcasting Corporation (Kyrgyzstan), Kut-Bilim, and Ololo. "I try to diversify my choices for organizations to help me make a sound decision for my graduate degree or work plans. Meanwhile, the Co-op Programme is giving me broad based experience."



Aqila Hassanzada, a Communications and Media student at UCA.

Second Cycle of the Executive Entrepreneurship Training Starts



Participants attending the Executive Entrepreneurship Training at UCA's Naryn campus.

On July 5, 2021, UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) launched the second cycle of its Executive Entrepreneurship Training for small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) owners and managers from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan.

The programme has been designed to encourage business linkages, formal part-

nerships, and the development of joint ventures, to facilitate export capacity and access to new markets for SMEs in the region.

The training is being conducted at UCA's campuses in Naryn, Kyrgyzstan, and Khorog, Tajikistan. During the first week, the participants studied accounting and finance for SMEs in agribusiness under

the guidance of expert trainer Dr. Abdul Rauf, a Fellow Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan.

Agribusiness is one of the four sectors of the Executive Entrepreneurship Programme, which is being implemented within the Accelerate Prosperity (AP) Central and South Asia Project, funded by the European Union.

SPCE Now Provides Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults

UCA's SPCE is an authorized Cambridge Assessment English Centre, and is now also providing the Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA).

SPCE Kyrgyzstan provided its first online part-time training with the support of CELTA trainers from the United Kingdom, Neil McCutcheon and Gary Steven, to a group of trainees including SPCE instructors.

CELTA is one of the world's leading qualifications for professional English teachers issued by the University of Cambridge, which enables teachers to apply international educational standards in the classroom.



Participants get a thumbs up from the teachers as SPCE Kyrgyzstan concludes the first online CELTA training.

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