



THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SOFIA ANNUAL GIVING REPORT 2022-2023




ACCREDITED BY



The American College of Sofia integrates the values and best practices of American pedagogy with the rich educational traditions of Bulgaria and Europe. We seek to develop critical thinking, lifelong intellectual curiosity, leadership, and collaboration among multi-talented students of various social, cultural, economic, and geographical backgrounds.

The American College of Sofia provides an outstanding private education to 953 Bulgarian and international students. Accredited by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, and International Baccalaureate®, ACS offers a rigorous academic program and an impressive variety of extra-curricular activities.

The American College of Sofia (ACS) is operated and funded by Sofia American Schools, Inc. (SAS), a non-profit, educational corporation chartered in 1926 in the United States by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 873, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria

The American College of Sofia
Emily Sargent Beasley, President
Maria Angelova, Deputy Director

Tel: (359-2) 434-1008 (359-2) 434-1010
E-mail: acs@acsbg.org
Website: www.acs.bg



CONTENTS

Message from the Chair of the Board.....	4
Message from the President.....	5
A Year of Accomplishments Worth Remembering.....	6
Special Gifts.....	8
The Abbott Giving Circle Generosity Report.....	10
Strong Partnership with ASHA.....	12
Giving Tuesday 2022	13
Return to ACS.....	14
The Alumni Impact.....	16
Parent Ambassadors.....	17
Student Activities Fund.....	18
Student Achievements.....	19
Arts Fest 2023.....	27
List of Donors.....	28
ACS Board of Trustees.....	31
ACS Leadership.....	31
Advancement Team.....	31

FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Greetings!

This year's celebrations of ACS's 30th anniversary since the reopening provided many opportunities to connect with friends, observe ACS's impact on its graduates, and begin to chart our path for the next thirty years. The anniversary was also a vivid reminder of the debt we owe to long-ago donors who enabled the school's reopening and of the cross-generational links that exist for all of us.

After the school's doors were shut in 1942, ACS friends and graduates established a series of educational funds in gratitude for their education and in hopes that the College would one day reopen. Fifty years later, these donations helped fund building renovations, teacher salaries, desks, and textbooks. Thanks to these donors, students who came to campus in 1992 paid virtually no tuition. These long-ago donors didn't know us – never met us – yet they gave us a remarkable gift: an ACS education.

Donating to support a future student's education is a powerful way to acknowledge one's own education. Two alumni have generously created full scholarships, the Sunrise Scholarship and the Robin Mittenenthal Scholarship, each covering the full five years of a student's ACS education. Another alumnus is supporting the ACS studies of four students from single-parent households. These graduates' leadership is inspiring, and I am proud that one of them is a friend from that first ACS class.

The families of current and graduated ACS students have also demonstrated remarkable, lasting support of the College through financial scholarships, like the Theodora and Darina Spasov Scholarship and the Boris Lozanov Scholarship. Alumni and friends of ACS are initiating focused giving, such as the Abbott Giving Circle assisting out-of-Sofia ACS women. Alumni are also using different methods of giving – Facebook fundraisers, monthly contributions, employer matching programs. We are grateful for it all!

To all of our alumni: please make ACS your philanthropic priority. The College needs donor support more than ever to face the ever-growing costs of high-quality education. ACS students and graduates remain crucial changemakers in a world where critical thinking, diversity of viewpoints, and human kindness are under severe duress. We need you so we can educate more future yours!

Thank you.

Theodora Konetsovska '97

Chair of the Board of Trustees, American College of Sofia

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends of ACS,

If you were to ask anyone at ACS what might be our source of inspiration, I have no doubt at all that their response would be consistent: our students. Each is tasked with the responsibility to master the curriculum and equally tasked to pursue personal goals that challenge current perceptions and invite exploration. They do so within a context that requires a level of commitment and discipline that consistently surpasses expectations. And as much as these responsibilities are experienced, they are witnessed.

This report that you are currently reading is an expression of our commitment to these talented students. The Class of 2023 joins a group of more than 3,200 alumni who have made all parts of the world home. They are ready for whatever challenges await them. Our newest class, the Class of '28, equally reflects an exceptionally strong cohort of students. This class continues to represent the highest proportions of invited students who have chosen ACS. This is exceptional and is a statistic that reflects

our longstanding commitment to investing in the student experience through rigor and relevance.

In addition to our newest alumni, we are proud to serve a student body of 953 students. Our attrition continues to remain at a historic low. We provide more than 2 million leva annually in financial assistance. The number of students who are active recipients of full scholarships continues to increase. This year, this number grew by two. We are proud to share that 24 of our students are fully supported and equally proud that each scholarship carries the legacy of longstanding tradition in a culture of giving. This culture is supported by service, generous donations, grants, and recurring gifts in support of teaching and learning, special projects, and financial assistance.

I will close this year's opening to the Giving Report as I did last year, by drawing attention to our mission. It would be remiss of me not to do so. The sentiment experienced through our indefatigable efforts to ensure our mission's relevance persists: our mission is our purpose.

The American College of Sofia integrates the values and best practices of American pedagogy with the rich educational traditions of Bulgaria and Europe. We seek to develop critical thinking, lifelong intellectual curiosity, leadership, and collaboration among multi-talented students of various social, cultural, economic, and geographic backgrounds.

Our pursuit of excellence presents great responsibility. Thank you for your continued pride in this special school. I hope you are inspired by this year's Annual Report. Your role is as important now as it has ever been. It is a role that ensures our capacity to realize our mission with an effort that continues to increase our students' potential to thrive.

With kind regards,

Emily Sargent Beasley

President, American College of Sofia

A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS WORTH REMEMBERING

Dear reader,

Philanthropic giving is an essential part of ACS's finances. Giving helps us as we continue to strive for providing an outstanding education to every deserving student regardless of their family's ability to pay tuition. Giving makes everything we achieve at the College possible.



In the academic year 2022-2023, we were fortunate again to be able to count on the unwavering support of the many friends of the College, near and far. Once again, we increased the number of scholarships – full and partial – offered to deserving students. A new scholarship, the **Robin Mittenthal Scholarship**, was founded by alumna of the first graduating class of the reopened College Daniella Molle '97. Other full scholarships include our longest serving **Polansky Scholarship** (two per year and grade level) and **Oberbauer Scholarship**, established in 2008, and the **Gipson Scholarship**, established in 2018, all funded by the **Tianaderrah Foundation** of New York, and the first alum-founded scholarship the **Sunrise Scholarship**, established in 2021. This means that for the first time in recent history, we have 6 recipients of full scholarships in a class, the incoming 8th graders, Class of 2028.

Every year, **The Frank Bauer Fund** for Financial Aid for out-of-Sofia students enables us to offer sufficient tuition reduction to the families of deserving students. The board-initiated **Inez Abbott Giving Circle** (2021) that supports out-of-Sofia female students with leadership potential raised over 100,000 USD to date towards its important cause and ambitious goal of 250,000 USD. Other partial scholarships include the **Theodora and Darina Spasov Scholarship**, providing tuition reduction to the girl in every class who has the keenest financial need, the **Boris Lozanov Scholarship**, and the alumnus-initiated support for tuition reduction for students from a single-parent household, that in the 2022-2023 academic year was awarded to now totaling four students.

Inspired and empowered by the critical support of our generous benefactors, all within the community rolled up their sleeves and did their best. Students took part in diverse academic and extracurricular exchanges and engaged in various community service projects. Notably, one fifth of those distinguished students are from outside of Sofia, representing towns such as Harmanli, Dospat, Kazanlak, Pleven, Dobrich, Veliko Tarnovo, Blagoevgrad, Plovdiv, Varna, and Burgas (p.19-26).

In May, we sent off the Class of 2023, the 27th class to graduate ACS, to join the now more than 3,200 American College alumni. Founding ACS President Dr. Roger Whitaker, Board Chair Theodora Konetsovska '97, US Ambassador Kenneth Merten, and keynote speaker esteemed stage and film director Javor Gardev were there and addressed the exceptional group of human beings that make up the Class of 2023 in the special year of the 30th Anniversary since the school reopened.



In June 2023, we held our largest fundraising and community-outreach event of the year, Arts Fest. It was fitting that in the year of our Anniversary it was more successful than ever before. Over 70,000 leva were raised towards needbased financial aid and sports facilities improvements. Parents helped through all stages of the planning and execution of this successful event (p.27).



We hosted summer school in July and August, a 20+ year tradition. Nearly 400 children spent part of their summer with us, learned English while playing in the ACS park, brought life to the summer empty classrooms and promised to return next summer or perhaps one day as ACS students. In July and August, we also held our traditional summer fundraising campaign. This year's motto **Return to ACS** inspired alumni, trustees, and friends of the school to raise nearly 100,000 leva for scholarships (p.27).

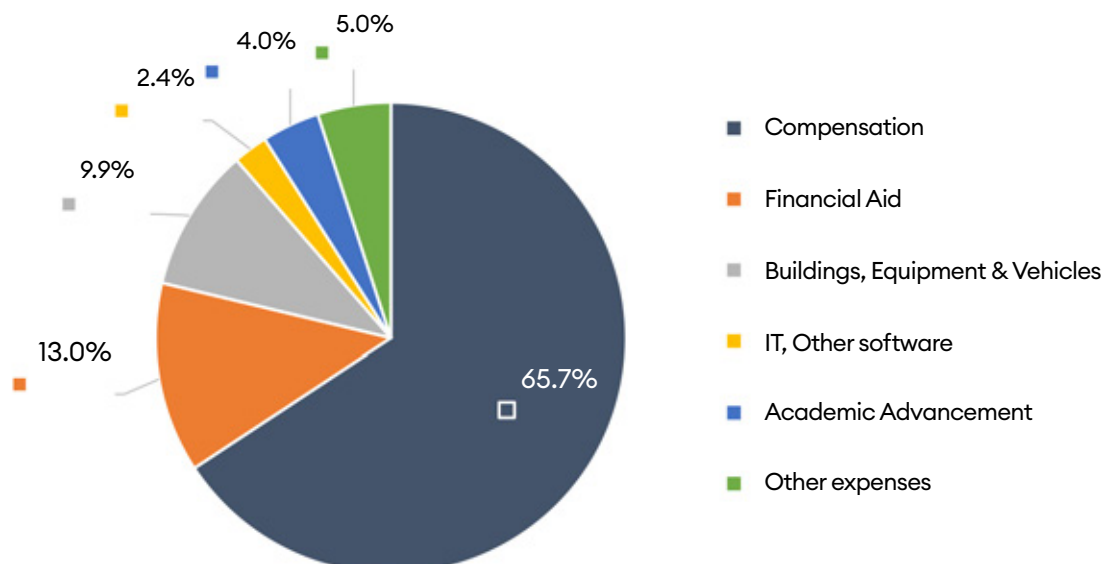
Alumni of the Classes of 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013, and 2018 had another opportunity to return to ACS for the traditional summer alumni reunion in July that brought together 150 for their respective 25th, 20th, 15th, 10th, and 5th Anniversary reunion (p.15). There was plenty to reminisce about, plenty to be proud of, and plenty to celebrate on that occasion and throughout the academic year 2022-2023.

Thank you to all who contributed to 2022-2023 becoming another year filled with accomplishments worth remembering!

The ACS Advancement Team

Operational Budget for the 2022-2023 School Year

Total Expenses: **16,541,356 leva**



SPECIAL GIFTS

Gifts over 10,000 leva

Arts Fest Proceeds
Ben Stoltzfus
Daniella Molle '97
Frank Bauer
Gipson Family Foundation
Karen Collias
Nikolay Valkanov
Roger Whitaker

Rossen Georgiev '00
Samuel Seymour
Technopolis
The Tianaderrah Foundation
Theodora Konetsovska '97
Valerie Brackett & Nikolaos Monoyios
William J. Williams

The Robin Mittenthal Scholarship Founded by Daniella Molle '97



Daniella Molle '97

The newest ACS scholarship, the Robin Mittenthal full scholarship, was established by ACS alumna Daniella Molle, Class of 1997, in the summer of 2023 in the name of her late husband. Following the Sunrise Scholarship, established in 2021 and awarded to three students, this is the second full scholarship founded by an ACS graduate – an amazing testament to the culture of giving that the College strives to foster and its graduates embody.

The Robin Mittenthal scholarship supports the full tuition fee for the education of one Bulgarian student for the complete five-year term of education; the first recipient of the scholarship being an incoming 8th grade student in the school year 2023-24 at the American College of Sofia. The Robin Mittenthal scholarship is offered with preference to a student from a minority, from a single-parent household or residing outside of Sofia, whose family has high financial needs. Recipients of the Robin Mittenthal scholarship coming to ACS from outside of Sofia would have the opportunity to be accommodated for free at the dormitory of the American College of Sofia.

Why Daniella Gives Back

“Sometimes we are privileged enough to be in a position to pass forward an opportunity. This year, the privilege was mine,” Daniella shared upon establishing the scholarship. “I have been wanting to give back to ACS since I left this remarkable school. There are so many threads that connect the person I am becoming every day to my experience at the College.

“I’ve always felt that my time at the College was transformative. At ACS, I learned that I as an individual have thoughts and ideas that matter. And that I’m allowed to - and not even allowed but encouraged - to ask questions. I feel like there hasn’t been anything more transformative than that: feeling seen as an individual as a very young scholar and encouraged to ask questions. And so I’ve always wanted to give back as a way to acknowledge the transformative power of education at this particular institution and pass it forward.

“And this summer, I was able to establish a scholarship in the name of my late partner, Robin Mittenthal. He was the kindest person I had ever known and someone who dedicated their life to serving others.



"I myself have benefited from scholarships a lot. While at ACS, I spent my junior year in California through the Soros Foundation. After I finished my Master's at the Sofia University, I wouldn't have been able to come to the US without the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign funding me and giving me a job as a teaching assistant. This experience showed me that there is power in individuals supporting other individuals and that each of our lives is precious and even changing one life is a good cause.

"My hope is that the scholarship would be a launching pad for this year's student recipient, like it was for me, that whatever his goals are, this experience brings him closer to achieving them. And even if he is not aware of his goals yet, I hope that he has a high quality education, because as a parent, I think that's what we want for our kids: an education that they can do with whatever they wish going forward.

"It gives me great joy to think that while my personal life is removed from Bulgaria and ACS, I can make it possible for a Bulgarian child who dreams of coming to ACS to realize that dream. As a parent of school-age children, I know that a child's flourishing impacts their whole family and not just them."

Gifts of 10,000 – 5,000 leva

Anonymous Donor
America for Bulgaria Foundation
Chuni Stanoeva
John Dougherty
Ivan Manolov '01
Katherine Georgiev and Ilian Georgiev '03
Lilia Flower Boutique

Lyubomir Lozanov
Marcie Ries
Nedko Kyuchukov '03
Temcov Foundation
Soft Group AD
Stanislav Tsanev '04
Svilen Spassov

Parents Shine in Support of ACS

Proud ACS parents, Stela and Boyan Naydenovi, have supported the ACS Parent Ambassadors Initiative since its inception in the fall of 2022, designed to foster stronger collaboration between parents and the school in service of student learning. This unwavering commitment included a generous contribution of 10,000 leva in support of the Anniversary edition of Arts Fest.

Additionally, our graduating class and the greater community benefited from their generosity at the Graduation Ceremony of the Class of 2023 in May. Our stage was adorned with floral arrangements by their company, Lilia Flower Boutique, in the spirit and colors of ACS, adding to the elegance and sophistication of this event.

As we express our heartfelt gratitude to Stela and Boyan Naydenovi, we extend our appreciation to all parents who actively participate in initiatives enhancing the school's educational environment and the student experience in support of our mission.



The Inez Abbott Giving Circle Generosity Report: 2022-2023



The Inez Abbott Giving Circle honors Inez Louise Abbott and her dedication to the education of Bulgarian children. Abbott's remarkable legacy began with her arrival in Bulgaria in 1907. She was an educator and principal of The Girls School in Samokov and in 1926 was instrumental in the consolidation of the Girls School and the Boys School into the American College of Sofia.

Just as Abbott Hall on the ACS campus proudly honors Inez Abbott's memory, so do the members of The Inez Abbott Giving Circle honor Abbott by starting where she started — supporting the ACS education of young women from outside of Sofia.

This Generosity Report offers current and prospective donors a summary of fundraising efforts to date and The Giving Circle's impact on the lives of ACS students.

"I give because others first gave to me."

- A member of The Inez Abbott Giving Circle

2022-2023 Financials

Total Raised to Date:

\$101,000



Number of donors:

13

Total Spent to Date:

\$7,000



Alumni donors:

5

Total Impact:

2

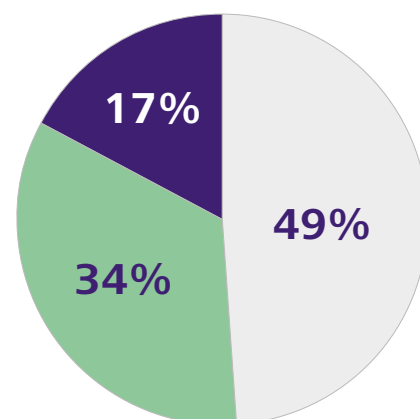
The number of young women supported in their ACS educational journey.

"I give because all students deserve an ACS education, regardless of their family's circumstances."

- A member of The Inez Abbott Giving Circle

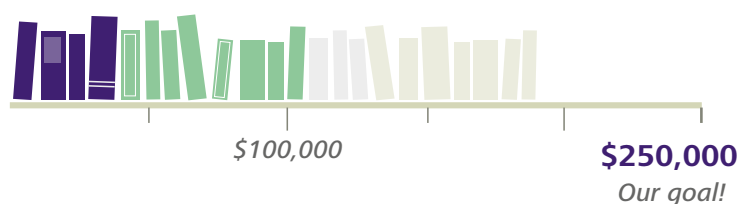
Our Progress

The Giving Circle began in 2021 with two trustee donors and has grown every year since. We continue to work to reach our \$250,000 goal.

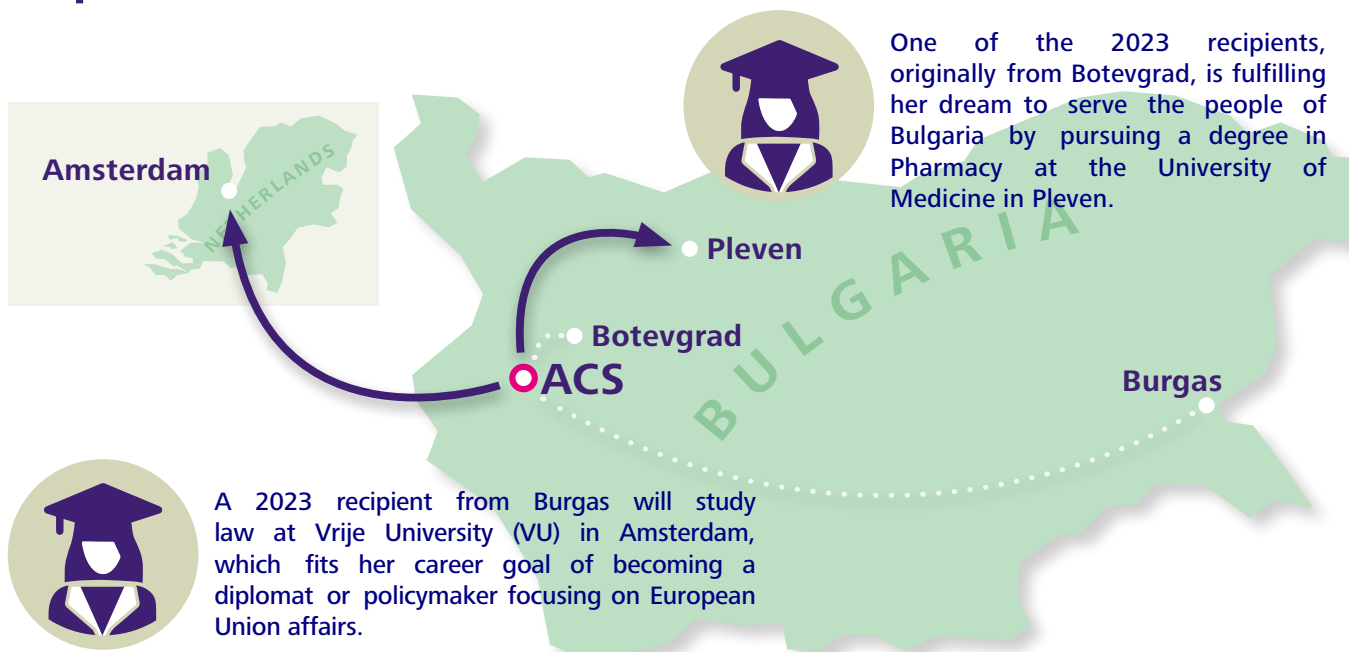


● 2021 ● 2022 ● 2023
% of funds raised per year

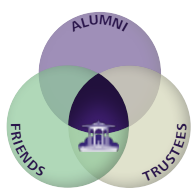
Our Goal



Impact of The Circle



Supporters of The Circle



The Circle began with the support of two donors and has grown with the further support of ACS trustees, alumni and friends of ACS.

We thank all who have given during the giving year 2022-2023. The generous giving enabled The Circle to support the first two recipients in the completion of their ACS education.

Your continued support will help additional ACS students in 2023-2024 and beyond.

We start where she started – supporting the education of young women from outside Sofia.

Contact Information

The Inez Abbott Giving Circle is being led by current ACS Trustees. Both Theodora Konetsovska '97 (t.konetsovska@acsbg.org) and Karen Collias (karen.collias@gmail.com) welcome your email to learn more or join The Giving Circle.

What's Ahead

Our goal is to expand The Circle and our fund so that we can continue to honor both the ACS mission of affordability and the dedication of Inez Louise Abbott to educating Bulgarian children. Our current priority is to support existing students wherever they may need financial support – whether through a full scholarship or a smaller scholarship to “fill a gap” – so that their studies at ACS can continue uninterrupted. Through volunteers giving the gift of time or money, the Inez Abbott Giving Circle will have a life-changing impact on young women from outside of Sofia who are studying at ACS. As the Circle expands, we will host presentations, networking events and a speaker series to inspire student interest for careers in leadership and public service.

STRONG PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICAN SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS ABROAD

The partnership between the American College of Sofia and American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA), a division of the U.S. Federal Agency USAID, has existed since the reopening of the College in 1992. USAID and ASHA investments help ACS make capital improvements and modernize the campus where the next generation of Bulgaria's leaders are educated through values such as integrity, self-reliance, and democratic practices, combined with a high level of personal achievement.

In 2019, ACS was awarded a grant from ASHA for the renovation of Abbott Hall. This iconic, nearly century-old ACS school building, home to several academic departments and classrooms of the Liberal and Fine Arts Department, computer labs, academic offices, and sports halls, and also a favorite student location for extracurricular activities, club meetings, and events, had not previously undergone a complete makeover. The award amounting to \$721,160 and a substantial matching of funds on behalf of ACS covered the full cost of the renovation.



In 2023, the renovations were complete and new life had been given to one of the most beautiful and inspiring school buildings on campus. Abbott Hall is now a modern, environmentally resilient building with elevator access for people with limited mobility to all floors, and state-of-the-art safety systems. Together, ASHA and ACS have made a huge investment in the improvement of the learning experience of our students and the development of ACS.



The official opening ceremony of the renovated Abbott Hall took place in June 2023 on the steps of the building. ACS President Emily Sargent Beasley opened the celebration by highlighting the importance of Abbott Hall for the educational process at the College, as well as for the work of the many student clubs and electives. Jeffrey Weinshenker, Counselor for Public Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Sofia, also addressed the audience and acknowledged the importance of the partnership between ACS and USAID/ASHA. The ceremony was attended by many ACS students, faculty, and friends of the school, including the ACS team who worked tirelessly over several years for the fruition of this project.



In 2023, we began the implementation of a second USAID/ASHA funded project: "Promoting Digital Skills in Bulgaria through U.S. Best Practices." Its aim is to provide ACS students with the best technological solutions to create, to learn, and to collaborate with peers from all over Bulgaria and the region. Funding for this project is \$280,060 and ACS has invested \$39,159 of its own funds. In August 2023, we purchased 380 Dell Chromebook computers for our students ensuring that the whole ACS student body has access to modern computer hardware.

The next phase of the project includes advocacy and educational activities that would showcase innovative US educational practices. In the words of Chair of the Liberal and Fine Arts Department Zornitsa Semkova, "our teaching philosophy concentrates on critical thinking, analysis, questioning, comparing of facts, independent research, and teamwork, the aim being that upon graduation students have acquired a basic set of skills and habits for research and a critical approach to reality supported by enough socio-political knowledge about this environment."



These projects were made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this article are the responsibility of the American College of Sofia and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

GIVING TUESDAY 2022

Giving Tuesday is arguably the biggest current philanthropic movement and a global event inspiring giving for value causes. As a firm believer in education being a vital priority always and especially in troubled times, ACS joined the movement in 2019.

In 2022, the year of the 30th Anniversary since the reopening, on Tuesday, November 29, the College held the fourth edition of Giving Tuesday. As world benefactors were joining together to do good, The American College of Sofia set the goal to raise enough funds to support the tuition fee of one additional outstanding student for the next school year.

Thinking that we set an ambitious goal, we were in for a wonderful, humbling surprise when together, ACS parents, alumni, and friends raised triple the amount: **46,471 leva** for financial aid. On behalf of the students, faculty and staff at The American College of Sofia, we are deeply grateful to all who contributed.

And these were the heartfelt messages by ACS teachers Jessica Coates and Ivaylo Lozanchev and alumna Nikol Kralimarkova '17, instrumental to the success of Giving Tuesday 2022!



Jessica Coates, ELL Teacher at ACS since 2020:

Hello everybody, my name is Jessica Coates and it's my third year at the College teaching English literature. As we look towards the future, it doesn't take long to see that the world is changing at a faster pace than we've ever seen before. We are set for an unprecedented future and it has never been more important that we foster a new generation who leads with responsibility, integrity, and respect. These are the core values not only of our school, but of so many students who call ACS home. Please consider helping to shape a future that we can all be proud of by giving on this Giving Tuesday. Thank you very much.



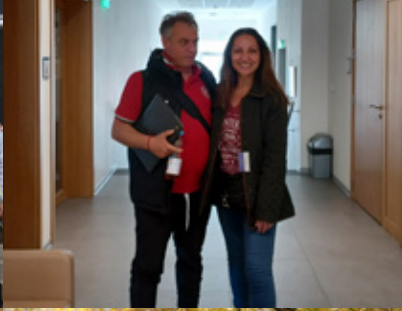
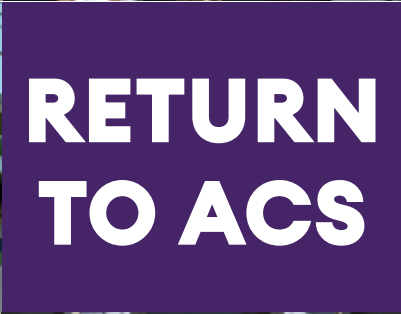
Ivaylo Lozanchev, History Teacher at ACS since 2017:

During my five years here, I have witnessed young kids flourish into well-rounded, capable, curious, honest individuals. This was made possible thanks to the efforts of the College in providing need-based financial aid and also in maintenance and modernization of the College facilities. These facilities give students the opportunity to develop and practice their skills and talents and even find new skills and talents in many fields such as robotics, engineering, music, art, theatre, movie-making. You can help the College to continue to provide these opportunities to the kids by participating in this year's Giving Tuesday. Thank you.



Nikol Kralimarkova, Class of 2017:

I owe a lot to ACS and I know I'm speaking on behalf of many current students and alumni. The College has provided me with such a great foundation both as an academic institution and a community. Being among the best schools in the country, ACS is also committed to supporting its students. Many of them rely on financial aid to receive the education they prove they deserved by being accepted at ACS. I myself was one of these students and a recipient of the Polansky Sholarship throughout my five years at ACS, which allowed me to grow and pursue my endeavors. Today, I'm a medical student at a top UK university and a recent graduate from a top US university. And I think that says a lot about how much ACS has given me and many others throughout the 30 years since its reopening. So please, consider supporting ACS and its students this Giving Tuesday. You'll be investing in the bright minds of tomorrow. And on their behalf, I can say thank you.



RETURN TO ACS

Every school year ACS fundraises in order to distribute **more than one million dollars of financial aid to students in need**. These funds are donated by generous alumni, ACS board members, parents, and friends of our school. Economic hardships take a toll on many ACS families. Each year, ACS continues to receive a very high number of applications for financial aid. During the summer, we at ACS have the privilege and responsibility of supporting our families who seek necessary financial assistance. This is why the ACS summer fundraising initiative has been a tradition since 2020.

In the months of July and August 2023, we appealed once again across the ACS community to ACS parents, trustees, alumni, faculty and staff to join in the effort within the **Return to ACS** campaign.

President Emily Sargent Beasley introduced the campaign to potential benefactors like this:

“Recognizing the importance of financial support has deep historical roots; it is a privilege and a responsibility that is shared across a community. It is a feature of our identity that is well understood; one that contributes to the continued merit of our student body. It is also a feature that supported many of you who read this message or supported your peers, your friends, while at the College. It is in this spirit that I reach out to seek your support on behalf of this remarkable community. It is an invitation to in some way, albeit figurative, return to ACS.”

“Your return to ACS through the support of a future generation of graduates ensures that a group of well deserving, talented students have the opportunity to attend the College and engage in a community that cares deeply about their academic accomplishments and personal goals. These five years enable big dreams. For many of our students, this experience is untenable without financial support; for some, this need is small; for others, the need mirrors that of a full tuition. Regardless of demonstrated need, however, the relative impact is significant.”

Once more the members of this community rose to prove that the ACS family stays strong and united and that we can rely on each other, always. Alumni who cherished their experiences at ACS or felt grateful to have been supported along the way readily joined in. Both alumni and trustees gave in record amounts. Many of those who had given in the past increased the amount of their gift, and new donors joined for the first time. The word resounded everywhere where members of our community keep our mission at heart.

By the end of the campaign on August 31, 2023, **96,838 leva had been raised**, one of the contributions inspired by the Return to ACS campaign notably being the Robin Mittenthal Scholarship.

On behalf of the families of current students, we humbly thank every donor in this impactful campaign.

Emiliya Stefcheva, parent:

I am grateful for the high academic standards of education my daughter received at ACS. My daughter was awarded funding by the College when we didn't have the means to afford the full tuition. Now I am in the position to return the gesture, and I will gladly give in the future. I hope more children have the opportunity to receive education in this prestigious school which to me and my daughter is the best in Bulgaria.

Gergana Vassileva, Class of 1998, parent of Class of 2028 ACS student

I am extremely grateful to our school for everything I am in life. For me, and I believe for most of my classmates, our time at ACS was a unique opportunity. The College taught us to strive for knowledge, to seek the truth, not to stop until we overcome the difficulties in our way and find the solution to the problem. It made us unbelievably good at test-taking, too. It gave us so much that we can only wish other young people shall have the opportunity to get – the campus environment with its fresh air, all that space, the sense of security, the feeling that this place is ours; these are all things that one realizes much later in life. I loved the great extracurricular activities, as well as the competitive environment where being better or the best was not something to be ashamed of, on the contrary. Overall, we developed a different attitude towards education as a process, which in my opinion, few in Bulgaria had the opportunity to develop.

That is why now, when I am able to donate to ACS, I do it with great satisfaction, knowing that other Bulgarian young people will have these opportunities. I myself received a 50% tuition fee reduction throughout my ACS years, and in my last school year (of hyperinflation) that was even increased to 75%, so that I could graduate. I am grateful and want to give back at least some of what I received. Giving back is a great initiative which I think all alumni should consider.

THE ALUMNI IMPACT

Alumni play a crucial role as ambassadors, mentors, and benefactors. Alumni enthusiastically return to campus for traditional events like the Christmas alumni reception and the summer anniversary reunion, and stay connected to the College, to our current students and faculty.

Alumni support the College's work and mission through donations to ensure that every deserving student can enjoy the ACS experience and that every exceptional ACS teacher feels appreciated and motivated to continue inspiring students.

In school year 2022-2023 the total contributions from alumni* amounted to **126,285 leva**. Compared to last year's 97,525 leva this is an impressive 30% increase in the total amount donated by alums.

87 alumni out of 3,101 alumni donated or **2.7%** of all ACS graduates from the Classes 1997-2022.

This year, the champion class with largest sum of donations* was the **Class of 1997** with an impressive 39,554 leva, followed by the **Class of 2000** with 19,759 leva, and third was the **Class of 2004** with 14,472 leva. The **Class of 2001** almost made the Top 3 with 14,376 leva.

The **Class of 1997** won at participation rate, as well, with 14.4%. The **Class of 2001** came in second with 13.6% and the traditional winners of this feature, the **Class of 2002**, were third this time with 13.3%.

These statistics do not include gifts made by alumni who are also trustees and are listed as such; in 2022-2023, 6 alumni served on the Board of Trustees. Including gifts by alumni trustees, total gifts from alumni would amount to **154,075 leva.*

ALUMNI REUNIONS IN JULY

This summer, the College welcomed Classes 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013, and 2018 for their respective 25th, 20th, 15th, 10th, and 5th Anniversary reunion since graduation. Over 150 alumni returned to campus to celebrate. The shared spirit and deep connection alumni had to each other and to the College were unmistakable at the friendly get-together on a lush summer campus.

Alumni reminisced about their College years, met up with old friends, and added new members to their networks. They enjoyed conversations about old times at the College, their paths afterwards, and their future plans. As per tradition, the graduates took a tour of the campus to catch up on things that are new and improved since "their years." The connection concluded to recreate the photo they took "that many years ago" as preps. The event was marked by smiling faces, precious memories, and adventurous plans. As a keepsake of the fun evening, everyone took home the traditional Reunion T-shirt.

Alumni, regardless of whether they graduated yesterday or over 25 years ago, have plenty to be proud of and celebrate. As President Emily Sargent Beasley emphasized, "this pride and this celebration reflect what continues to be a remarkable experience and while this experience has evolved over the years, its impression in its truest sense remains active and relevant."



PARENT AMBASSADORS

During the academic year 2022-2023, an effort was established to highlight the importance of a strong home/school partnership. This effort gave rise to the Parent Ambassadors Initiative. This group of parents, administration, and faculty took on a responsibility to set meaningful goals and actively support our community. These goals and this support reflected the ambitions of our Strategic Plan:

- To build strong and supportive networks, strengthen communication and support the success of existing events, such as Arts Fest, Career Fair, FISSION International Science Fair, and students participating on prestigious forums.
- To engage lecturers and influencers, both within and outside the ACS community, to share inspiring career experiences and success stories and to foster support for student entrepreneurship projects and ideas, as well as promote extracurricular and curricular events.
- To celebrate faculty achievements and to foster a diverse and inclusive community by expanding scholarship opportunities, supporting service initiatives, and helping to create flexible and inspiring spaces on the ACS campus.



In the 2022-2023 school year, much was accomplished as a result of this collaboration. These results required a strong commitment to meet regularly, both online and in person, host social opportunities that celebrated accomplishments, volunteer as participants in a number of different student activities, like that of engaging in mock interviews with students for internships and serving as career representatives for the student-organized Career Fair (p.19), and lead in the success of Arts Fest. Each effort elevated the power of parent engagement in the experience of our students. The result of such efforts contributed to raising over 70,000 leva within Arts Fest 2023 (p.27-28) in support of the Tuition Reduction Program and the restoration and enhancement of the College sports facilities. Of particular significance, thanks to these funds, the Green Field was transformed over the summer.

In this 2023-2024 academic year, ACS has hosted a Parent Ambassador Evening and an Annual General Meeting, both open to all parents. We look forward to carrying forward the traditions of the Parent Ambassadors and to having more parents join this important group in the upcoming academic year. In just a few short months, the activity of the group will become even more evident as the student events that now include parent participation are scheduled and as Arts Fest 2024 draws near. Great appreciation is extended to all our parents for their dedication, time, and effort in contributing to the success of these initiatives and collaborations, shaping a thriving school community.



STUDENT ACTIVITIES FUND

History

The Students Activities Fund (SAF) started as an alumni initiative back in the spring of 2014. Nineteen funding rounds have been held since then. **The mission** of SAF is to support student-led projects and initiatives by providing financial help of up to 500 leva per project, project development guidance, and mentoring throughout the full project cycle. **The aim** is to build a community of committed alumni, parents, and ACS staff members and encourage students to explore their interests outside of the classroom. By supporting SAF, individual donors and organizations empower student projects and exchanges outside the classroom within and beyond the ACS community.

SAF in SY2022-23

SAF held one funding round in the 2022-23 school year, in December 2022, at which 23 projects were presented. Twenty projects were approved for funding and fifteen projects were successfully implemented, totaling **5,710 leva** of investment - well received and well executed investment!

These fifteen student teams presented their experience of developing, implementing, and completing those projects – from inception to conclusion – at the final SAF session in June 2023. Among the projects: the now traditional ACS Debate Open Tournament, the ACS Model UN Conference (Edition 3), the international Science Fair FISSION (Edition 8), the spring Career Fair, the 30th Anniversary-themed ScavHunt, the Green Business Plan Competition, and the ACS Rock Band & Friends Music Jam. Much thanks goes to student-run initiatives. As a result, climbing, ice-skating, and international debate became accessible to all members of the ACS community, regardless of their financial means. Initiatives, such as art and local clean-ups, brought together our community with our neighbors. A student-built hobby rocket was launched and a hologram pyramid is being made down in the SCIFI lab. What more can one ask for? New costumes for the cheerleading squad, perhaps! SAF was there to help them out, too!



ACS Rock Band & Friends Music Jam



The ACS Cheerleading Squad in their new uniforms on Arts Fest



ACS on ICE



Career Fair

Join the SAF Team!

Dear Parents and Alumni, our students would love for you to share your expertise and some of your valuable time and help them develop their initiatives into successful projects. Give us a shout at studentactivitiesfund@acsborg.org if you want to get involved.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, ACS students continued to excel in various aspects of academic and extracurricular life, both within the College and beyond, in Bulgaria and internationally. Whether in foreign languages, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), social sciences, public speaking, or sports, ACS students actively participated in these fields, attending competitions, and leaving a lasting impression with their skills.



For the celebration of 30 years since the reopening of ACS, the school leadership decided to do an Anniversary Logo Design Student Competition. Many student submissions were impressive with their ingenuity, thoughtfulness, and passion, and the artwork of senior **Vladimir Pashov '23** was selected to adorn the celebrations of this significant milestone.

Boris Petrunyashev '23 became one of 16 Bulgarian students to receive the Ministry of Education and Science's National Diploma on August 10. The distinction is awarded to high school seniors who have scored the maximum Grade Point Average (GPA) on their high school diploma and the State Matriculation Exams.



LANGUAGES & WRITING

ACS 9th grader **Ilia Iliev '26** qualified for the final round of the "In the Bulgarian Scientists' Steps" essay competition, part of the European Scientists' Night initiative. Ilia's work was dedicated to world-class Bulgarian psychoanalyst, linguist, and novelist Julia Kristeva. Ilia presented his essay in the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" Aula.



"Who is the dragon that stops us, and how do we defeat it? What aspects of our culture and perceptions of the world hinder our development as a nation and as individuals?" ACS 10th grader **Gabriela Panova '25** answered these questions in her essay, which was awarded first place in the Citizens for Bulgaria's Dragon competition.

In June, ACS 11th grader **Yoanna Laleva '24** published her first original illustrated poetry collection *The Ego's Path*. In Yoanna's words printed on the cover, "*the nice thing about roads is that you only have to take one step forward to start. And if you take a step back, this doesn't end the road, just changes its direction ...*"



At the end of 2022 several German-studying students at ACS took part in a contest, organized by DAAD (the German Academic Exchange Service), presenting Bulgarian and German holiday traditions in various creative formats. **Svetoslav Ivanov '25**, **Diana Dimitrow '24**, **Adriana Ovcharova '24**, and **Ana-Maria Krusteva '24** submitted unique pieces of work and won awards from DAAD.



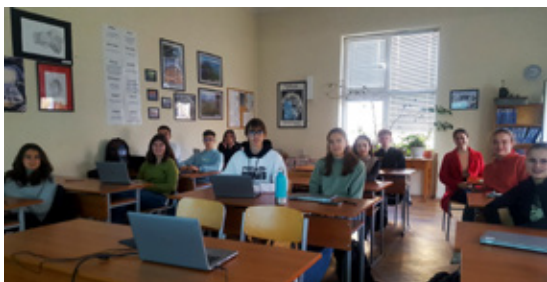
The art of translation entails much more than merely knowing the words for the same thing in two different languages and it seems like ACS senior **Valerie Kamberova '23** has mastered this art. Valerie won the Juvenes Translatores Translation Contest, competing against 239 students from all over the country. Pictured are all ACS students who took part in the contest and received their certificates from EC Translator/Language Officer Mrs. Svilena Georgieva-Podlaszewska.

At this year's edition of the "Défi lecture" arranged by the French Institute of Bulgaria teams from all around Bulgaria demonstrated their mastery in both French and Geography through an investigation of Stéphanie Trouillard's novel *Si je reviens un jour*, documenting the life of a Jewish family during WWII. ACS 11th graders **Maya Diakova '24**, **Emma Yordanova '24**, **Stephanie Dimova '24**, **Emma Tabachka '24**, **Eva Bachvarova '24**, and **Mirela Draganova '24** answered 61 questions related to the novel's content and earned silver medal for their efforts, reaching the same score as the winning team, merely 2 seconds later.

STEM

In October, 11th graders from the Natural Sciences Profile participated in a seminar led by ACS Biology and Health Studies Teacher Dr. Ganka Dineva and guest lecturer Dr. Yordan Manasiev. The topic of the workshop was "Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) and Electrophoresis for Identification and Detection of Bacteria." During the 6-hour seminar, ACS students gained hands-on experience on proper and safe handling of equipment to separate a DNA molecule in an electric field, as well as on amplifying the number of specific DNA molecules by Polymerase Chain Reaction.





For a second year in a row the students from the Particle Physics Club at ACS took part in the Large Hadron Collider World Wide Data Day, whereby students from around the world have the opportunity to analyze data from the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in CERN, Switzerland, the largest accelerator of particles in the world used by physicists to study the birth of the Universe and the early stages of its expansion.

On the W2D2, November 10, 2022, our students worked with data from ATLAS, the largest detector in CERN, and discussed their results in a video conference with the physicists-moderators K. Cecire and Dr. R. Hadjiyska, BAS, together with peers from Australia and Algeria.

ACS students scored high up in the rankings of the Fall National Competition in Physics, a prestigious competition featuring challenging problems beyond the high school Physics curriculum, this time around held in Sliven on November 12-13. Circa 250 students from all over the country met to compete in five different groups according to grade level.

ACS 12th graders ranked first as a team and were recognized individually as follows: **Victor Velichkov '23** - 2nd place, **Ivan Gyulev '23** - 3rd place, **Teodora Marinova '23** - 2nd award, **Ivaylo Kamburov '23** - 2nd award. ACS 11th graders ranked third as a team and **Yoana Ilcheva '24** got 2nd place individually. ACS 9th grader **Boyan Roujenov '26** received the 3rd place individual award.





Eleven ACS students took part in the 14th annual Autumn Mathematical Competition "Stefan Dodunekov" in Veliko Tarnovo in November 2022. Competing amongst 280 high schoolers from predominantly mathematics schools in Bulgaria, 8th graders **Yana Vutova '27**, **Elena Kirova '27**, and **Alexander Guenov '27** earned 3rd place and received honorable certificates. **Teresa Lambova '23** and **Vladislav Skrinski '26** ended up just 1 point short of the bronze medal. In the team rankings, the 8th and 10th graders finished within the top 5 teams in Bulgaria.



Early in February 2024, two teams of ACS students competed in Kyustendil in the state round of the International Young Physicists Tournament (IYPT). Team "Gacrux" with members **Nikoleta Stoyanova '25**, **Teodora Daskalova '24** and **Yoana Ilcheva '24** won bronze medals and competed at the final. **Martin Lozanov '23** won 2nd place, Nikoleta 3rd, and Teodora 6th in the individual ranking. Nikoleta, Teodora and Martin also added their names to the extended national team, where they joined nine other people from all over the country. Five of them would get to represent Bulgaria internationally.

Four ACS student team projects took part in and impressed at the regional round for Sofia of the IT Olympiad in February. In the area of software and multimedia applications, **Maria Baldzhieva '27** and **Elitsa Dekova '27** presented an application called *Yashoo*, suitable for learning key phrases in foreign languages when traveling. In the area of distributed applications, modern visual information systems, and big data, **Ivan Dimov '24** and **Ivan Bliznakov '24** presented their project *Dollary*, a working application for Android, that is a comprehensive fund management app, offering a wide range of financial management tools, including investments, loans, and money transfer options, allowing users to buy products online, track their shopping activity, and have a better understanding of their personal finances.

Eric Adam '24 and **Todor Nedev '24** presented a mobile app called *Varcho*, which uses augmented reality to help users make design choices for the floor covering of an unfinished space. The application detects the ground surface of a room and gives users the option to visualize it with various materials and textures, thus saving time and money.

Yasen Horozov '24 and **Mihaela Tzvetkova '24** developed a *Braille Reader & Writer* application, which has the potential to significantly improve the lives of visually impaired people by providing them with a simple and intuitive way to read and write on their mobile devices. The app reads users' input of Braille characters and uses haptic feedback to provide vibrations that correspond to the Braille characters, enabling users to read what they've written through touch. The keyboard also translates the Braille input into standard text.

In February, ten ACS students from the Particle Physics Club representing all grade levels took part in the Particle Therapy Masterclass, 2023, organized by IPOGG (CERN), Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and Sofia University. The event was held with the kind hospitality of Sofia Tech Park.

These ten ACS-ers, along with students from several cities and schools in Sofia, listened to the lecture on the use of beams for cancer treatment by Prof. Leander Litov (Sofia University, CERN), to get familiar with the ENLIGHT Virtual Particle Therapy Center and did a hands-on session on the use of the specialized software lead by Associate Prof. Borislav Pavlov (Sofia University, CERN). Then, the students had the opportunity to do a virtual visit round the ALICE detector with the help of Ms. Despina Hatzifotiadou who took them more than 50 m underground and showed them the facilities of the experiment.

In the afternoon, the students applied data from the ALICE experiment. The last part of the Masterclass included a video conference with other student participants from other countries, a fun kahoot game, and a summary discussion of the data results by several scientists at CERN.



An ACS team of three students – **Desislava Markova '24**, **Meriem Fereva '24**, and **Valeria Topalova '27** – took part in the European Conference in Mathematics & Science Euromath & Euroscience on March 11-15 in Krakow, Poland, along with hundreds of science and math enthusiasts from both Europe and Asia. ACS representatives competed in two categories, Science Presentation Competition and Science Poster Design Competition, and performed outstandingly well. Their research on hydrogen planes and their promising potential for an environmentally friendly aviation industry in the future got them the Second Prize in the Science Presentation category and an Honorable Mention for their creative poster design.



The love for science and the hard work of ACS students paid off at this year's Spring Physics competition. They won two Best Team in Bulgaria awards and three prizes in the individual ranking. As representatives of the only non-science and non-math school, the ACS teams from Grades 11 and 12 both worthily finished third. From Grade 10, **Kaloyan Dimitrov '25** triumphed with the second prize, followed by **Lyudmila Kaneva '25** who was third. **Viktor Velichkov '23** from Grade 12 also won third place in his age group.

Robo Days '23 at the Technical University of Sofia at the end of April saw and distinguished many ACS student projects designed and constructed in the Student Computer Innovation and Fabrication Institute (SCIFI). Robo Days is the biggest robotics competition in Bulgaria for high school and university students. Participating robots competed in four categories: Line following, LEGO line following, Mini sumo, 3D maze, and Freestyle.

The famous robotic dog Sharo by **Momchil Kolev '24** and **Kaloyan Dimitrov '25** won first place in the Freestyle category, while the robotics team ACS Phoenix, represented by **Ivan Gyulev '23**, **Momchil Kolev '24**, **Kaloyan Dimitrov '25**, and **Dimitar Samokovski '24** won a special award by the industrial automatization company Ekhaton. Robot Omniplantus by **Mario Berov '25** and **Boris Topalov '24** won a special award from Bosch Engineering, while Beep-boop101 by **Kaloyan Slavkov '25**, **Eren Aksoy '25**, and **Konstantin Boyadzhiev '25** received a special prize from Liebherr Bulgaria. In addition to them, many other ACS students won places at the top of the competition, including fourth place in the category "Mini Sumo", won by **Alexander Arabadjiev '26** and **Yan Yordanov '26**.





Earlier in March, robot Stamat came to life at the FIRST Robotics Competition international event in Istanbul. FIRST is one of the biggest international forums for high school students. The year-round preparation for the competition includes recruitment, creating a brand image, and acquiring funding. Less than three months before the date of the event, the theme is revealed, and the team, with the support of its mentors, is expected to build an industrial-sized robot to complete the task. ACS students **Ivan Gyulev '23**, **Valerie Kamberova '23**, **Ema Doneva '23**, **Momchil Kolev '24**, **Dimitar Samokovski '24**, **Viktor Ivanov '24**, **Eva Vladimirova '24**, **Boris Topalov '24**, and **Kaloyan Dimitrov '25**, alongside their mentors, fought tremendous obstacles before successfully completing the task. ACS Phoenix became the first Bulgarian team to participate in this competition, thanks to sponsors Ocado Technology and Festo, and the students are hopeful this was the first of many.

Students from the College once again achieved astounding success at the annual Vienna International Science & Engineering Fair this year. The revered robot dog SHARO by **Kaloyan Dimitrov '25** and **Momchil Kolev '24** won a Gold Ribbon for superior performance, an award for best in the Physics and Engineering category, as well as a special award for the best project in the senior division. The project by **Nikoleta Stoyanova '25** *Agrophotovoltaic Systems* received a Gold Ribbon for superior performance and an award for best in the Biological and Environmental Sciences category. The robot Omniplantus by **Mario Berov '25** and **Boris Topalov '24** received an honorable mention with a Red Ribbon in the category Physics and Engineering.





ACS 9th graders and aspiring game developers **Boyan Roujenov '26**, **Teodor Ivanov '26**, and **Spas Stoimenov '26** won gold at the National Competition in Information Technology, Informatics and Visual Arts. Featuring about 300 students from around the country, the *I Can - Here and Now Competition*, took place in Devin at the beginning of June.

10th grader **Georgi Pachnikov '25**, represented the school at the National Round of the Chemistry and Environmental Protection Olympiad earlier this year and ranked 13th.





We usually associate **Deyan Bozhkov '25** with success in local and international Taekwondo tournaments. At the beginning of July, however, Deyan returned from participating in the 1st International Mathematics Summer Camp in Beijing. As part of the intensive math preparation for the International Olympiad in Tokyo, the camp provided the participants with the opportunity to attend thematic lectures by some of the world's best instructors and alumni of prestigious universities such as Princeton, MIT, Stanford and others. At the end of the 20-day experience, participants measured their skills by sitting for an International Olympiad-style test consisting of solving 3 problems within 4.5 hours over the course of 2 days. 30 teams from all over the world participated in the camp, and Deyan was one of the 6 members of the Bulgarian team.

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

On 18-20 November 2022, the ACS Model United Nations team took part in the annual Deutsche Schule Sofia MUN Conference. The ACS delegation of 15 students engaged in active debate and discussion in the MUN General Assembly on the topic of "Leveraging Action against Global Food Shortages". During the three days of the conference, our delegates collaborated with students from multiple schools in Sofia as well as with international high school and university students from Cologne and Munich, Germany. Members of the ACS delegation were among the sponsors of the only resolution successfully passed by the Assembly. **Zahari Pavlov '24**, received the Best Delegate distinction and **Velislav Vaglev '24** was awarded an honorable mention.





Over the first weekend of December, ACS hosted the ACS Open 2022 Debates Tournament. Organized by seniors **Alek Selveliev '23** and **Maria Matcheva '23**, the contest was attended by more than 120 students from all over the country.

The Grand Final was won by **Spas Stoimenov '26** and **Zahari Pavlov '24**, while **Valentin Katzarov '26** won the Best Speaker prize. The Novice Final pitted 4 ACS teams against one another and the victory went to **Raya Hadzhiyska '26** and **Polina Trifonova '26** while **Mia Dimitrova '27** won Best Speaker in the individual novice ranking.

ACS senior **Martin Lozanov '23** served as Head Organizer for BRight - the Second Digital Session of the European Youth Parliament (EYP). He was entrusted by the Board of the National Committee to come up with a theme, write a vision, and select a team of 40 Officials (Media Team, Jury Team, Academic Team, and Organizing Team). Topics related were covering human rights, corruption, equality, social justice, and the war in Ukraine, among others. ACS 11th graders **Alexandra** and **Teodora Daskalovi '24** were part of Martin's participant support team, while **Nikola KraleV '24**, also 11th Grade, chaired a committee whose resolution passed the General Assembly with the impressive outcome of 51 votes for and only 3 against.



'24 (Finland), **Yoana Vladimirova '23** (Mexico), **Ryland Ivanov '25** (India), and **Yoana Hristanova '24** (Kazakhstan); and Environment Assembly - **Adrian Doerfler '25** (Bangladesh), **Ema Yordanova '24** (Italy), and **Svetlozar Dimitrov '25** (Senegal).

The ACS delegation engaged in active discussions in the three committees of the conference, which managed to pass two resolutions each. During the three days of the conference the delegates collaborated with students from AUBG majoring in studies in the fields of International Relations and Politics, as well as with representatives of the First English Language School in Sofia.

The third edition of the ACS Model United Nations Conference was a Senior Independent Honors Project (SIHP) of **Denitsa Boykova '23**, **Anna Hatchikian '23**, and **Valerie Kamberova '23**, advised by Dr. Zornitsa Semkova. The April event welcomed 45 participants from Deutsche Schule Sofia, the First English Language School, the 91 German Language School, and the hosts from the College. President Sargent Beasley and Dr. Velislava Petrova, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, addressed the students during the Opening Ceremony. Participants then set out for two days of debate in the GA3 and Historical Crisis committees on the following topics: "Addressing the Ramifications of the Prolonged Conflict in Yemen," "The State of Human Rights in Iran," and "The Soviet-Afghan war in 1982" respectively.



The GA3 committee passed a resolution on the first topic, and the Historical Crisis was successful in drafting up a peace treaty. All delegates deserve congratulations for their efforts, however, six distinguished themselves and were awarded the following awards: **Zachary Pavlov '24**: Best Delegate in the Historical Crisis, Maxim Todorov from Deutsche Schule Sofia: Honorable Mention in the Historical Crisis, **Velislav Vaglev '24**: Best Position Paper in the Historical Crisis, **Yoana Vladimirova '23**: Best Delegate in GA3, **Adrian Doerfler '25**: Honorable Mention in GA3, and Gergana Petrova from Deutsche Schule Sofia: Best Position Paper in GA3.

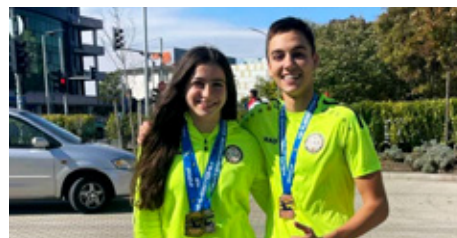
ACS junior **Emma Tabachka '24** was selected by the US Embassy to represent Bulgaria and join 54 other fellows from across the globe in the 2023 edition of the Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellowship, hosted by Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. It included a stay with a host family and field trips to large cities and finished off with a tour of the U.S. Capitol. The fellowship inspired Emma in her community project work.

SPORTS



It has become a tradition for the ACS community to be well represented at the Wizz Air Sofia Marathon, and such was the case again in the 2023 edition. A total of 12 ACS-ers, 8 students and 4 teachers testing their endurance, resilience, and grit, gave their all, and crossed that finish line.

ACS swimmers **Mariyana Shalamanova '26** and **Valentin Petkov '25** had an excellent performance at the International Burgas Swimming Open Tournament in October. Nearly 600 competitors from 27 teams in 5 countries participated. In their respective age groups, Valentin won a bronze medal in the 400 m medley while Mariyana won three medals: gold for 50 m butterfly and two silver ones - 50 m freestyle (crawl) and 100 m freestyle (crawl).





Aleksandar Georgiev '25 of the Class of 2025 won a gold medal in 50 m backstroke, silver in 200 m butterfly, and bronze in the 50 m butterfly at the 24th International Swimming Tournament "Stefan Popov - Zamorata" in November.

ACS 9th grader **Katrin Petrova '26** earned a gold medal at this year's edition of the International Academic Cup Rhythmic Gymnastics Tournament in December 2022. With her grace and precision, Katrin dominated in the competition within her age category.

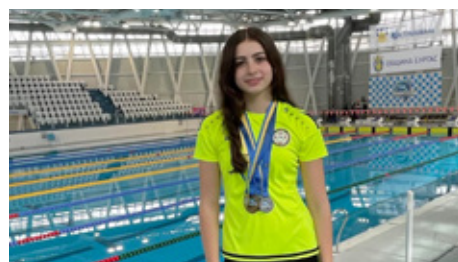


ACS 11th grader **Simona Berova '24** won the silver medal in the Aesthetic Group Gymnastics World Championships in Graz, along with the Bulgarian National Junior Team she is a part of.



ACS 10th grader **Boryana Mitova '25** won a silver medal with the épée at the European Fencing Cup in Thessaloniki at the end of January. The cadets' team of Fencing Club Sofia, where Boryana competes, earned the third place after a contested game with the strong Israeli team.

The international contest Sharks Swimming Cup Burgas 2023 took place at the end of February and, as expected, ACS "shark" **Mariyana Shalamanova '26** won the gold at 50 m and 100 m freestyle (her preference is crawl), silver in the 200 m crawl and 50 m butterfly and bronze in the mixed relay. Additionally, Mariyana's results in this tournament outperform her previous achievements in these disciplines.





The ACS Sports Bridge Club had only been meeting since the beginning of the school year when its members got to celebrate their first success from the Spring Youth Bridge Tournament in Koshov village, near Ruse, March 2-5.

In the Beginners category of the competition ACS 9th graders **Yoan Denev '26** and **Emma Petkova '26** won third place. **Matilda Lorér '27** and **David Lorér '27** won first place in the Advanced category of the Matchpoints competition.

Additionally, the following ACS 8th graders were recognized for their overall performance in their age group: second place - girls - **Anna Rashkova '27**; second place - boys - **Lior Mayer '27**; third place - girls - **Nadezhda Tihova '26**; third place - boys - **Mateya Krastev '26**.

In the team competition that took place over the last two days of the tournament, the ACS team ranked 5th overall, playing against both Beginner and Advanced teams. ACS Sports Bridge Club presidents David and Matilda Lorér, aside from being stellar players, have also been amazing Bridge coaches to the rest of the ACS students.



ACS 10th grader **Deyan Bozhkov '25** won both the men's and juniors titles in the 10th edition of the Ramus Sofia Open Olympic Taekwondo tournament at Arena Asics Hall. After his impressive performance in both categories, Deyan also grabbed the trophy for the most-exceptionally skilled contestant in the tournament, standing out among competitors of all ages and categories.

ACS senior **Dimitar Gospodinov '23** became Bulgaria's Champion in judo up to 73 kg in the State Individual Judo Championship for young men and women up to 21 years of age.





The two ACS Boys Football Teams took first and second place in the 50th edition of the Private Schools Tournament in May.

At the end of May the ACS boys' basketball team faced the teams of the English School "Prof. Ivan Apostolov" and Britannica Park School. Our athletes fought fiercely against worthy opponents, showed unbreakable spirit, resilience, and precision on the court throughout the games and won first place in the tournament.





Deyan Bozhkov '25 won a bronze medal in Taekwondo at Nis Open following his defeat over contenders from North Macedonia and the current European champion from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Next, after overcoming competitors from Greece and Serbia, Deyan won a silver medal at the Hereya Open tournament in Sofia. The two medals brought him further up the World Taekwondo Federation ranking.

Kristian Milushev '24 and the national kickboxing team of Bulgaria of which he is a member took part in the 8th Turkish Open WAKO World Cup in Istanbul. Kristian got silver in his age group, silver in the men's group, individually, and bronze as part of the Bulgarian national team. Bulgaria finished second overall.



ARTS FEST 2023

This year's Arts Fest, which took place on June 10, 2023, was a special one – aside from showcasing the talents of our students and celebrating the ACS community, it took on the additional significance of celebrating the 30th Anniversary since the reopening of the school. The fundraising effort in this year's event was dedicated to two specific goals – need-based financial aid and support for the first phase of the campus sports facilities renovations, specifically the Green Field. **Over 70,000 leva were raised** towards these causes, thanks to generous sponsors and all enthusiastic students, parents, faculty, and staff who got involved and gave their best.



Thirty student clubs took part in the Fest, intriguing the guests with their activities and creations, among which were the newest issue of The Fountain Magazine, robots made by the Robotics Club, spectacular demonstrations by the Chemistry Club, personalized poetry by the Dead Poets Society, a Student Art Auction, as well as a big collaborative painting hosted by the Sketch Club which all visitors were invited to participate in. The list of clubs that presented their work throughout the year, as well as sold souvenirs or refreshments for guests at Arts Fest includes the Art Club, GSA, MUN, TEDx, The Cheerleading Club, ACS on ICE, Time Heroes, the Science Club, FISSION, College Life, the Korean Culture Club, the Arabic Culture Club, the Creative Writing Club, etc. The total contribution of student clubs towards the funds raised by Arts Fest amounted to 4,037 leva.

The day started out with a Classical Spotlight, which presented a dynamic program for classical music lovers, followed by the Performing Arts Showcase, which included excerpts from several on-stage productions from the school year: "Shakespeare in Love" in English, "A Midsummer's Night Dream" in Bulgarian, the ACS Vocabella performance, the Dance Program, as well as the much celebrated production of the musical "In the Heights." The event had Whitaker Auditorium filled to the brim, both with talent and spectators. The tickets sold for both of these concerts amounted to 1,880 leva towards the causes of Arts Fest.



The traditional Arts Fest raffle offered a number of really exciting prizes, raising a total of 7,774 leva, 3,432 of which were raised by raffle tickets sold before the event by 8th graders.

For the first time ever, Arts Fest guests had the opportunity to participate in a charity Cake Walk game, kindly prepared and hosted by parents of current students, as well as bid on artwork and an individual plan for personal development.

We extend our gratitude again to our sponsors without whom the 2023 Arts Fest could not have been such a success: our Platinum sponsor Technopolis, as well as sponsors Mondelez Bulgaria, Primo Plus Real Estate, Arbu Cosmetics, Mahala Bookstore, Gelateria Diana, Gabol Bulgaria, Lilia Flower Boutique, Smart Organic, Ernst & Young Bulgaria, Albena and Darina Djokovi, New Estates, Domino's Pizza, EM Design Furniture, Dermal Lase Center, Sofia International Film Festival, Knigomania Publishing House, Foot Care, Britos, Elizabeth Filipova-Alexieva, Boryana Ganeva, and Miron & Genoveva Ivanovi.



We are especially grateful to our Parent Ambassadors, who went above and beyond, both in helping us out with their ideas and expertise prior to the event, and in being hands on and operating several coffee and refreshment stations during the event. Their involvement, as well as the help of all faculty and staff and student volunteers, is an evidence of the kind of community spirit that this event is all about!

LIST OF DONORS

Gifts of 4,999–1,000 leva

Anonymous (3)
Vesselin Arnaudov '01
Avis Bohlen
Lilyana Boneva '07
Pavel Constantinov '04
S Consult
Christopher Dell
Andrey Evtimov '02
Richard T. & Jane Ewing
Issidor Iliev '98
Radoslav Iliev '97
Stanka Ilkova '97

Paul K. Johnson & Teresa M. Monicken
Svilen Karaivanov '98
Nikola Kouzmanov '02
Ivan Krastev
Dimitar Kyurkchiev '00
Thomas Marshall
Zori Miltcheva '97
Todor Penev '02
Mariyan Petkov
Primo Plus
Festo Proizvodstvo
Milena Rizova

Dee Robarts
Emily Sargent Beasley
Boris Statev '03
Borislav Stefanov '97
Joel Studebaker
Ocado Technology
Milko Todorov '97
Kapka Troeva
New Bulgarian University
David Wilson
Ernst & Young



Nikola Kouzmanov, Class of 2002:

"I want to help kids with the skills and drive, but without the required finances, have the chance to experience and achieve the high-quality education – academic and personal – that I believe ACS provides and has certainly provided me."

Gifts of 999–500 leva

Anonymous (1)
PineRock Capital
Yordan Cenov '02
Jonathan B. Clayton
Lilia Dobрева '04

Modern Education Foundation
Valentin Georgiev
Maria Ivanova-Encheva
Mariyana Ivanova
Anna Ladjeva

Knigomania Ltd.
Youlian Petkov '97
Lina Vulcheva

Anonymous parent:

"I'm so glad that my family and I took part in the ACS Giving Tuesday campaign and helped to ensure that kids who want to develop themselves and their talents have this opportunity to study at the College."



Kalina Manova, Class of 1998:

"I have only fond memories and boundless gratitude and pride for ACS, so it is a delight to be able to support its mission going forward."

Gifts of 499–200 leva

Anonymous (4)
Lyudmila Cholakova
Berta Darakchieva '05
Svetoslav Dimitrov
Ilka Dimova
Peter Djalaliev '01
Ivan Enchev '04
Violeta Foss '12
Ellina Foutekova '02
Elena Gerasimova '03

Lyubitsa Gerasimova '01
Evelina Hobson '98
Borislav Ignatov
Georgi Iliev
Alexander Khasymiski '03
Georgi Klissurski '10
Tihomir Kostadinov '98
Kenneth Lefkowitz
Kalina Manova '98
Anna Ruscheva-Dimitrova

Daniela Simova '02
Andriana Sterling '02
Desislava Stoyneva
Alexander Tomov '04
Vassi Tomova '02
Gergana Vassileva '98
Joan Wilson
Boryana Yurukova '97



Georgi Klissurski '10

"I love ACS for its people and the moments of growth and happiness that I continue sharing with them. I donate because I want to make sure ACS keeps attracting the most incredible individuals, and preparing Bulgaria's most capable students for a life of significant impact."

Gifts of 199–1 lev

Anonymous (18)
Dimitriyka Adova
Ekaterina Anguelova '11
Tatiana Batalaska '98
Maria Boshnacova '10
Snezhana Brankova
Phillip Cherganski '20
Nediyana Daskalova '10
Yana Doneva '12
Alexandra Draganova '15
Victor Genev '03
Bron Grabert

Didi Hatcher '03
Jordan Hlebarov '02
Nadejda Ilcheva
Svetoslav Icherenski
Alexander Kanov '12
Desislava Karakoleva '11
Susan Ko
Mariya Manahova '10
Simeona Manova '02
Georgi Metodiev
Maria Mircheva '97
Marina Miteva '01

Kristina Mitova '08
Vlado Nedkov '02
Kristian Nikolov '12
Milko Pavlov '02
Yana Peeva '21
Maria Pencheva '02
Hristo Popov '01
Peter Simov '04
Vladislav Stoynev
Lora Tchekoratova
Nadezhda Zhelyazkova '09



Maria Mircheva '97:

"Studying at the College expanded my horizons. I donate to ACS every year to help provide this opportunity to other students. As an Executive Director of an environmental non-profit organization, I understand the importance of donations and volunteer support. I know that planting seeds in people's minds is even more important than planting seeds in the ground."



ACS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Theodora Konetsovska '97, Chair
Vesselin Arnaudov '01
Frank Bauer
Avis T. Bohlen
Karen Collias
Christopher Dell
Nellie Gencheva-Gipson
Katherine Georgiev
Valentin Georgiev
Nedko Kyuchukov '03
Thomas Marshall

Marcie Ries
Sam Seymour
Boris Statev '03
Borislav Stefanov '97
Joel F. Studebaker
Trayan Trayanov '01
Roger Whitaker
William J. Williams, Jr.
David Bliss Wilson

ACS LEADERSHIP

Emily Sargent Beasley,
President

Maria Angelova,
Deputy Director

Stephen Morison,
Dean of Faculty and Student Experience

Slaveja Milanova,
Director of Accounting and Business

Tanya Assenova,
Registrar

Rehema Allen,
Dean of Faculty and Staff Development

ADVANCEMENT TEAM

Georgi Metodiev,
Director of Planning and
Institutional Advancement
Petia Ivanova '97,
Director of Communications
Maria Ilieva,
Director of Event Planning

© 2023 American College of Sofia

Campus Address: Floyd Black Lane, Mladost 2
1799 Sofia, Bulgaria

Mailing address: P.O. Box 873 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria
www.acs.bg / acs@acsbg.org / (3592) 434-1008

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/
americancollegeofsofia/](https://www.facebook.com/americancollegeofsofia/)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/
americancollegeofsofia/](https://www.instagram.com/americancollegeofsofia/)

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/school/american-
college-of-sofia](https://www.linkedin.com/school/american-college-of-sofia)

This report was published by the ACS Advancement Office and includes gifts received between September 1, 2022 and August 31, 2023. We have made every effort to list all donors. We regret any errors or omissions, and request that you report corrections to the Advancement Office.



**THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SOFIA
ANNUAL GIVING REPORT**

2022-2023

www.acs.bg