

The Harry T. Fultz Albanian American Educational Foundation

USAID Project Number 180-002, Grant Number EUR-G-94-00035-00

The Business Development Center/Community College

The Fultz Technical School, Tirana, Albania

Calendar Year 2001, First Quarter

This report covers the period from January 1 to March 31, 2001

Overview

January 1, 2001 started the Fultz Technical School (FTS) on a new trajectory as a private institution. To promote growth and flexibility, the Business Development Center has become a Community College for technical instruction at various levels. Through its marketing efforts, enrolments are expected to pick up next quarter. An annex to the gymnasium was completed and the foundation poured for the gym floor.

Program Manager David Hansen, who was also Interim Administrator during the transition to private status, and the FTS Transition Management Team prepared their reports for presentation at the initial meeting of the Board of Directors of the new Fultz Foundation, Tirana, held March 27-29. Seven members participated. Organizational issues claimed priority. Officers were elected and four standing committees named. A second meeting will convene on a date to be determined between October 29 and November 9, 2001.

Negotiations have begun with the office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) on a grant proposal for renovations and equipment at FTS in the amount of \$403,000.

Community College

The Community College (CC) opened in January 2001. The CC continues but expands the plan of the Business Development Center (BDC). The BDC provided short-term classes for adults and customized training programs contracted with businesses or agencies. The CC will continue these forms, adding new technical courses for adults. The CC also expects to attract some Fultz Technical School (FTS) graduates for a sixth specialized year to culminate in a Certificate of technical competency. Four-year graduates of academic high schools could receive the same technical training as fifth year FTS students and complete a sixth year to earn a Technical Certificate. Thereby students who do not go on to a university can add skills better equipping them for employment. This will fill a niche not otherwise available in Albania. The flexibility of CC programs will enable the college to meet labor market demands as the economy changes.

During this first quarter, eight courses at four levels of English were taught to a total of 80 students. The textbook series used by the BDC since 1994 have been replaced by a

new one—New Interchange—which is an American-oriented English method considered successful in the Albanian market. Fewer courses than last year but, because fees were increased, revenues were higher. The increase permitted better teaching salaries and classes reduced in size from 17 per class to 8-12 students per class. A TOEFL test preparation class of six persons was also held. Three computer courses were given for 23 students. Nine students participated in the driving school. In sum, there were 118 participants. Beginning in April, the CC will add courses in automobile maintenance, computer architecture, German, and will augment computer offerings with classes in Access, AutoCad 1 and 2.

The CC contracted no tailored training courses this quarter. But, it has been approached to provide computer skills and office management training to staff of the Election Commission—elections are scheduled for June, 2001. Korca's Chamber of Commerce requests training for engineers in Korca on Computer Assisted Drafting (CAD). The American Chamber of Commerce, whose office is located on the Fultz campus, and FTS have begun plans to launch a Job Fair for high school and university students next quarter—a first in Albania. Fultz staff assisted Junior Achievement to prepare a USAID grant proposal—which was awarded. The CC is working also with UNICEF to help train the staff of a new Courier Company, created by UNICEF, for persons with disabilities.

The Fultz Technical School

An annex of the gymnasium, which contains showers, changing area, exercise room, and coach's office, was completed this quarter through the combined resources of an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Soros funds. The latter also were used to prepare the concrete foundation of the gymnasium floor. The gym's renovation has been piecemeal as funds became available and there remains a way to go.

The three-story "electrical school" building, located on the FTS campus and deeded to the new Fultz Foundation/Tirana, was to be available by February. Now scheduled to vacate at the close of the school year in July, FTS staff can only then fully assess essential renovations. The Ministry of Education fairly recently replaced the building's roof and windows, applied stucco and paint to exterior walls. The interior spaces received no attention.

Tirana Foundation Board Meeting

The FTS Transition Team devoted considerable time to preparing the reports and budgets required of a private school for presentation to its board of overseers, namely that of the Tirana Foundation. The new Board held its organizational meeting in Tirana on March 27-29, 2001. Seven voting members attended, designated by their respective organizations. By the Fultz Foundation/VA, Joan Kontos, and three technical education specialists: Doug Ledgerwood, former Program Manager in Tirana; Dennis Herschbach, Educational and Program Consultant; David Hansen, current resident Program Manager. By the US Embassy/Tirana, Economic Officer Chuck Levesque; by the American Farm School, Asst to the President Barry Freckman; by the Ministry of Education, Isuf

Bogdani. Elira Sakiqi of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) came one morning but the IFC has not appointed a representative as yet. The Ministry of Labor and UNDP have yet to make appointments. Election by the Board of a business community member was postponed to the next official meeting. FTS General Director Arian Kapedani attended as an ex officio member and members of the Transition Team were sometimes present as resource persons.

The Board elected four officers: Chairman Dr. Herschbach, Vice Chairman Mr. Bogdani, Treasurer Mr. Freckman, Secretary Ms. Kontos--and organized four Standing Committees for Policy, Finance, Personnel, and Physical Resources. A fifth Standing Committee to deal with Educational Issues was proposed but referred to the next meeting.

The group defined the relationship between the two Boards, some of whose members overlap, as one of mutual support. The FTS General Director is appointed by the Tirana Board and reports directly to it. He is responsible for maintaining the standards and activities of high school and college as well as recruiting new staff and referring candidates for management positions to the Personnel Committee for approval. The General Director is ultimately responsible for FTS funds earned by the institution through fees or contracts. He has signature authority over this money but may delegate to staff members as appropriate, e.g. to the Community College and High School directors.

The VA Board's Program Manager continues to hold responsibility for US grant or other funds sent through the VA Board and for implementation of the projects entailed. He occupies a mentoring role toward FTS and assists the institution's development and outreach programs.

In sum, the Fultz Technical School and College is operating as a private, non-profit entity under the aegis of the new Foundation Board whose organizational structure is now in place and functioning. The Foundation owns 4.5+ hectares of land and buildings. These facilities are improving and will continue to do so. A local firm prepared an architectural drawing of the campus that shows existing buildings and future expansion. Two other plans were drawn up to indicate water/sewerage lines and connections and the electrical system.

The Fultz Foundation Board, Virginia, elected three new members this quarter. They are: Mr. Cafo Boga, Executive Vice President & CEO, LBS Bank – New York; Mr. Thomas England, President, Mendez England & Associates and Executive Vice President, Albanian-American Trade & Development Advisory; Ambassador William Harrop, (ret.)

ASHA

On March 30th Sue Parks of ASHA toured the FTS campus, talked with Tirana Board members and FTS staff, the American Chamber of Commerce people (as well as two visiting Albanian government Ministers), the Junior Achievement staff, the school newspaper staff, and checked out the student-run fast food business during a class break when most of the 681 students congregated in the courtyard. Shortly thereafter, the Fultz

Foundation office in Virginia received a letter of invitation from ASHA to negotiate on our 2001-2002 grant proposal of \$403,000.

The proposal requests funding for the following:

- Repair/replace water & sewerage lines
- Upgrade electrical system & relocate transformers
- Improve security by repair and/or replacement of walls, fences, and gateway
- Community College Support—renovate one floor of “electrical school” (acquired with privatization) for electronics lab and CC classrooms
- Electronic equipment
- Library resource materials