



УКРАЇНСЬКА
АКАДЕМІЯ ЛІДЕРСТВА

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Future Presidents are Raised Here: A New Academic Year Started at the Ukrainian Leadership Academy



September 13, 2017, Kyiv, Ukraine. Today, 200 talented young people between the ages of 16 and 21 from all over Ukraine will embark on a new and exciting journey towards becoming the leaders of Ukraine. The 10-month program includes climbing mountain tops and studying the basics of state formation in the EU countries, running social projects for Ukrainian regions and taking multiple disciplines ranging from political science up to the English language. Participation is free of charge — each student receives a grant from the Western NIS Enterprise Fund funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

For three years the ULA has been molding the country's new elite through an intensive program designed to develop the students' physical, emotional and intellectual capabilities based on common values. It follows the successful example of Israel, which has been preparing future leaders for 20 years. As of now, the graduates of similar academies in Israel account for up to 30% of the country's political elite. Erez Eshel, the founder of the Leadership Academy in Israel, is now a strategic consulting mentor for the Academy in Ukraine.

"I was impressed with the personal story of Erez Eshel, which I first heard in the winter of 2015," says **Roman Tychkivskyy, Co-Founder and CEO of the ULA.** "After the assassination of the Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995, Israel faced a challenging task: to motivate young people to stay in the country which is at permanent war, in a difficult environment to live in, while still raising them as patriots

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and inculcating in them the sense of confidence in country, the sense of love. To achieve that goal, a group of activists headed by Eshel established the first Leadership Academy. Today, the Academy has 60 institutions. Actually, the graduates hold the highest posts in the country ranging from top managers of the largest companies up to governmental leaders. It took me several months to convince Eshel that Ukraine needs a similar academy. He eventually gave in, and the Western NIS Enterprise Fund supported the initiative both administratively and financially. And we — a group of visionary Ukrainian leaders passionate about the idea — started to look for the first students. As of now, we have completed the third round of admissions. Imagine that in a decade we will have thousands of young people united by the concept of leadership, and of crafting the state of Ukraine. I am confident that one of them is a future president of Ukraine."

Admission comprises three steps. The first one is to fill in the application on the Internet explaining one's motivation, and describing personal experience and the future state of Ukraine in 2030. The second stage is regional, at which applicants are tested in action. And the third one is the national stage, which is a 2-day trial in the Carpathians and interviews with the Academy's team.

*"The Board of Directors of our Fund which has been investing in Ukraine for over 20 years does realize the impact of education on the companies in our portfolio. We eagerly supported the idea of establishing the Ukrainian Leadership Academy," says **Jaroslawa Zelinsky Johnson, President and CEO of Western NIS Enterprise Fund.** "We are confident that Ukraine can only change if the new generation of responsible citizens gets properly educated. We do believe that the graduates will become proud citizens of Ukraine, leaders in our society and role models for others, and will already start shaping the future of Ukraine in the next years."*

Apart from attending classes and meetings with the country's leaders on a daily basis, all students will take two educational trips abroad: one to Israel at the beginning of the year to learn the history of the country's formation; and one to several EU countries as young ambassadors of Ukraine with the mission of leadership and cultural diplomacy. Moreover, the students will research various regions around Ukraine and their needs, participate in volunteer projects, and together climb the Carpathian tops.

While still at the Academy, they will already start some social and cultural projects. *"With friends, we assessed the project of Vilnoteka in Mykolayiv, and created QR libraries in all trams and trolleybuses of the city. You only need a smartphone to scan the code — and you can read any book you like," says **Stanislav Kinaschuk, 18-year-old graduate of the last year's Academy, who is now a student of Yury Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University.** "I intend to become a politician and will start from the local level; but first I need to get my degree."* Khrystia Zaiats, 20-year-old student of the Lviv National Academy of Arts and the graduate of the first Academy, is launching an eco-project aiming to reduce wastes and garbage at educational establishments.

Moreover, the graduates enter the most prestigious universities around the world to later come back to Ukraine and develop the country from a new prospective. Oles Dobriansky was admitted to the Yale University, one of the oldest universities in the US, and Ivanka Grebeniak is now a student of the University of the Arts London.

The Academies are established in five Ukrainian cities, including Kyiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Poltava and Kharkiv. And over the next decade the Western NIS Enterprise Fund team plans to set up Academies in all regional cities of Ukraine.

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