

Douglas Burton wins International Journalists Prize for Reporting on Kazakhstan

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"I am a little surprised but very honored to be recognized. The Kazakh people and their huge country deserve far more coverage than they currently get from western media. Their tradition of religious tolerance is worth studying even while their process of full democratization is a work in progress."
Doug Burton

Winners of Third Contest Among Int'l Journalists Reporting on Kazakhstan Announced. We send the congratulations to our dearest friend Douglas Burton, who writes for The Washington Times and won for his article "Kazakh Studying Abroad in Ambitious 'Future' Programme Aims to Lift Former Soviet Republic."

The Kazakh Foreign Ministry and Kazakhstan's Chief Editors Club announced the winners of their third international journalism contest, "Kazakhstan through the Eyes of Foreign Media."

The contest attracted 60 entries from 29 countries, with five regional prizes awarded to journalists representing the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Europe, the Americas, Asia and Oceania and the Middle East and Africa.

Among entrants from the Americas, Douglas Burton, who writes for The Washington Times, won for his article "Kazakh Studying Abroad in Ambitious 'Future' Programme Aims to Lift Former Soviet Republic." He wrote about Bolashak Presidential Scholarship Programme student Shalkar Nursetov, who studied at George Washington University to pursue a Master's degree in media and public affairs. The author chose an interesting approach for his article, because the Bolashak programme is a source of pride for the nation.

The winners are awarded a trip to Kazakhstan in September, which includes visits to Astana, Almaty and the Borovoye resort area, as well as an extensive cultural programme. In addition to the winners, authors with outstanding publications will receive certificates of gratitude on behalf of the jury.

The contest was made possible through partnerships with Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, the Kazakh National Olympic Committee, Rixos President Astana and Rixos Borovoye hotels and Argymak Transport Company, as well as the KLM Royal Dutch Airlines which, as the Foreign Ministry's press release reminded, presented its brand new four-times-a-week Amsterdam – Astana connection earlier in May this year.

Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov noted the quality of the applications this year and continued growing interest in Kazakhstan's dynamic development and upcoming major events, such as the international specialised exhibition EXPO 2017 in Astana and Winter Universiade in Almaty.

"This year we were pleased to note an increase in numbers and, most importantly, quality of applications coming from all over the world. We are witnessing the constantly growing interest from foreign media in the socio-economic and political development of Kazakhstan and its international relations," he said, according to the press release.