

Public Institution, Secondary mixed school "Bećo Bašić" – Plav, Montenegro

Report from the award trip to New York

The award trip from the competition *"IMAGINE 2023" - Ideas and Award Competition of active young citizens for sustainable development in Central European Initiative (CEI) and Adriatic Ionian Initiative (AI)*, was realized in the period from April 18 to 29, 2024. Given that we live in a cold mountain area, we've waited for spring to fully enjoy the charms and beauties of New York.

A team of three teachers, six female students, and the school principal went on the trip. After the procedure for obtaining a visa in Podgorica and booking plane tickets, the trip was made on a Turkish Airlines flight, on the route Podgorica - Istanbul - New York.



Given that the costs of such a trip from our country are quite high, we had the support of our diaspora friend, Dino Redžić, a businessman

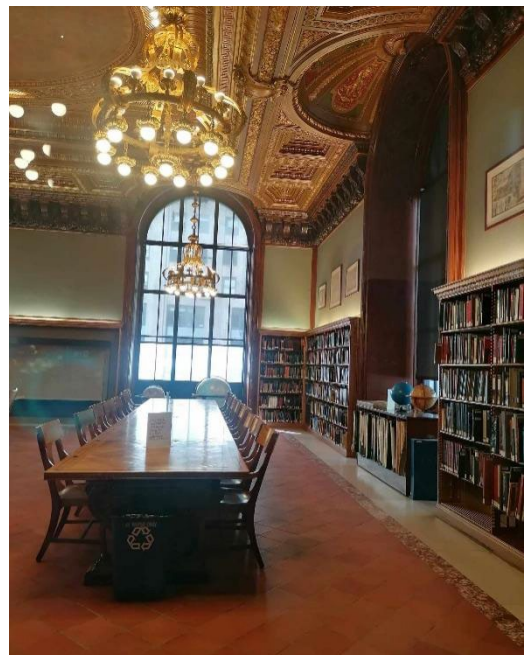
who has lived and worked in New York for years, engaged in catering, and who provided us with accommodation and meals in one of his hotel, the Hilton Garden Inn in Manhattan. As the hotel is located in the very center of Manhattan, on Times Square, we were able to visit many of the city's attractions on foot. We were on the 35th floor, and the view of New York from the room window was astonishing.



According to the agenda we all made together, we visited many objects and points of interest.



The New York Public Library (the third oldest library in the world)





The 9/11 Memorial Center



Grand Central Terminal is one of the most-visited destinations in NYC for a reason: history, architecture, dining, and shopping, all under one magnificent roof.



The most famous districts of Manhattan are exquisite:

Little Italy

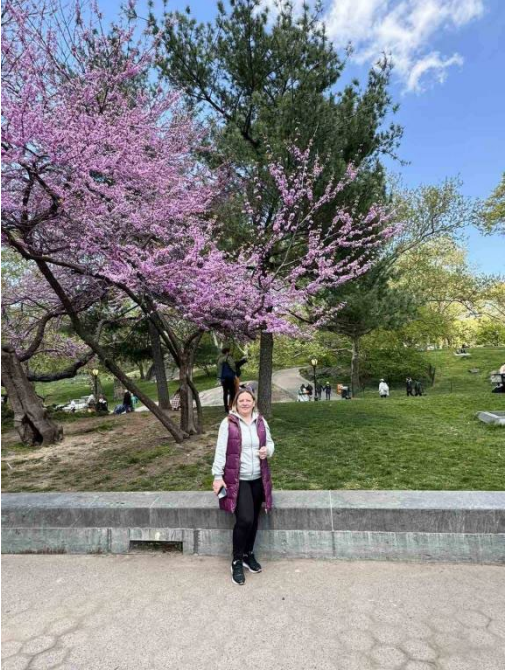


When Italian immigrants moved to this Manhattan neighborhood in the late 1800s, they brought their customs, food, and language. That heritage remains evident today as Little Italy, streets lined with restaurants serving Italian food.

Wall Street (home to the world's largest Stock Exchange)



Central Park with attractions and surrounding museums and buildings





City Hall

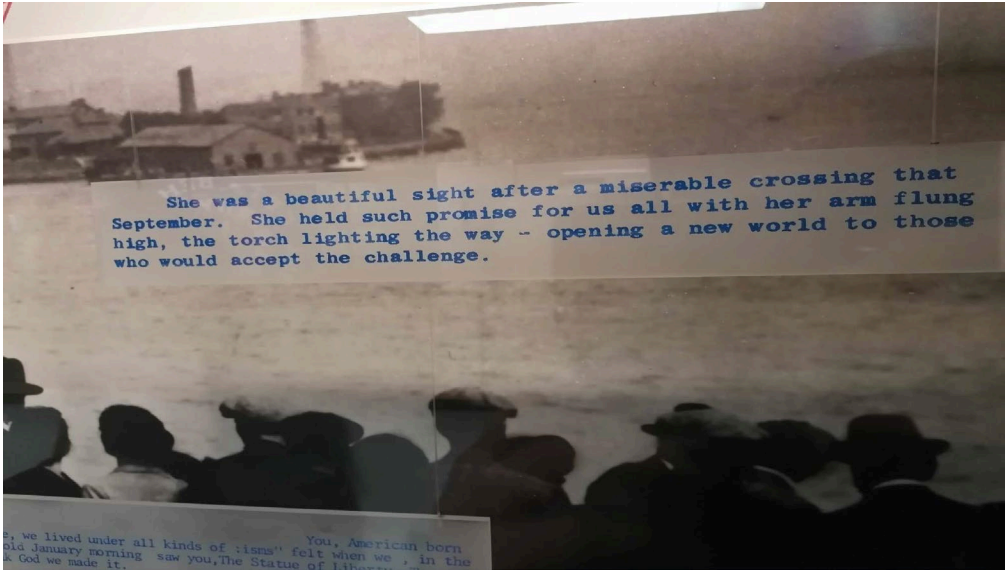


Madame Tussauds Museum and The Brooklyn Bridge

The shopping was a part of a New York spirit (Oculus trade center, Macy's ...)



The Statue of Liberty, and the sad immigrant stories



Our local community has an extremely large diaspora in New York, and considering that this is the first time since the existence of our high school its representatives are staying in New York with the students, we aroused great interest among all of them. We were hosted by various associations and foundations of our emigrants in this city, in recognition of our success at the CEI competition and all other results within the school. The students received gifts and cash prizes, with the most sincere wishes that they continue to achieve success.

Bosniac Islamic Culture Center



BANA (Bosniac American National Association)



BANA awarded us a plaque for decades of continuous work in the education and training of young staff, intellectuals and the future strong academic community of Plav and Gusinje, and cash gifts for each of us.



Plav and Gusinje diaspora association



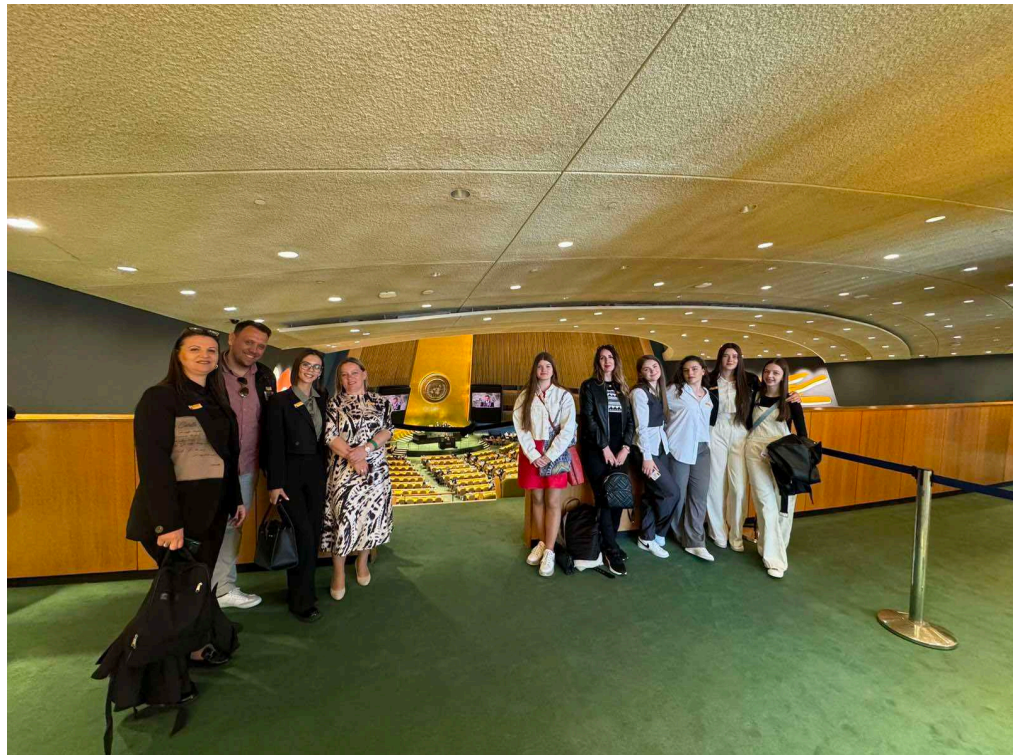
We also had a special reception from the Consul of Montenegro in New York, Mr. Amer Cikotić, who arranged for us to visit our consulate with an unforgettable gathering with all of us at an organized lunch.



The greatest emphasis of our trip was on the visit to the UN headquarters in New York, which was the main item of our visit to this city. We got an excellent guide (originating from Uzbekistan) who introduced us to the way the United Nations functions, its origin, and its mission, as an organization that primarily aims to maintain international peace and security. The conversation with the guide was extremely useful and he answered many questions that were of interest to all team members. The students were praised for their knowledge of the way the United Nations functions, its bodies, agencies, funds, and programs, and they were especially praised for their excellent knowledge of the English language.







After the wars we witnessed in the region (and some of us survived them), by visiting the United Nations in New York, we realized the importance of their existence and the slogan they have - Peace is our choice.



Peace Is Our Choice



And so we came back to the word from which this whole story started, which is IMAGINE, and that famous song by John Lennon - Imagine all the people, living life in peace.



On behalf of all of us, thank you for the opportunity and this wonderful and unforgettable experience.

Best regards,
Bašić Elvira, mentor
Plav, May 2024.

