

# ARETE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2014 ISSUE



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Editorial.....   | 3     |
| Vagelis Alexandrakis   |       |
| The IOAPA Reunion in Sochi.....  | 4-6   |
| Anfisa Kasyanova   |       |
| An Insider’s Perspective of Sochi 2014.....  | 7-9   |
| William Lindsay  |       |
| Hot. Cool. Ours. – Two incredible weeks with the German Olympic Youth Camp Sochi 2014..... | 10-12 |
| Tobias Bürger  |       |
| My experience in the Sochi Paralympic Games.....   | 13-14 |
| Lea Van Breukelen  |       |
| Being a Young Ambassador at the Youth Olympics!.....                                       | 15-17 |
| Stefan Yanisch   |       |
| United States Olympic Academy 2014.....  | 18-26 |
| Laurel Brassey Iversen, Elizabeth Hanley, Naghmeh Maryan                                   |       |
| News & Opportunities.....  | 27-31 |
| Vagelis Alexandrakis   |       |

## Editorial

By: Vagelis Alexandrakis (GRE)

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the Spring Issue of the Arete Newsletter!



The Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics is probably long finished, but its memory will definitely stay! In this Issue of the *Arete*, we pay a fitting tribute to the Winter Games and, thanks to the Olympic experiences we include, we can get a very good flavour of the atmosphere of the Russian city during the Games. Most importantly, read about the successful IOAPA Reunion at the Games, that took place on 15 February in Sochi.

Having recently celebrated the International Day on Sport for Development (6 April), we remind you that the Olympics Games was not the only mega sporting event that took place in Sochi. Just after the Olympics, the Paralympics took place in Sochi as well. Read a very interesting article which explains how the perception of a whole nation towards disability changed within 30 years.

With the Youth Olympics being just around the corner, read the experience of a past IOA participant who takes part in the Young Ambassadors programme of the YOG. We also celebrate the re-creation of the US Olympic Academy, bringing you a report of the opening event of the new USOA.

As always, in the news & opportunities, find out some Olympic-related news, including the Hellenic Olympic Education Day and stay updated with all significant opportunities in the field, like the new edition of Olympism4Humanity Programme in Olympia this summer.

Finally, as the “IOA sessions” period begins, we wish IOA best of luck and all the success with all the sessions to be organised this summer and all their activities!

A great summer to all of you!!

Enjoy your reading!

**Vagelis**

Arete Newsletter Editor

Sochi 2014 IOAPA Reunion  
By: Anfisa Kasyanova (Belarus)



IOAPA could not be absent from the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games and of course could not miss the chance to have a reunion there as organising a reunion during all editions of the Olympics has already become an important tradition of almost 20 years!

#### Preparations

In December 2013 I got a job at the project related to Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games and at the first onset I thought whether IOAPA Reunion was going to take place in Sochi. Being Russian-speaking, with Sochi city experience and enthusiastic, I took the responsibility to organize this meeting. As it was my 1st Olympics I have started very optimistically in terms of numbers of reunion's participants although Winter Games reunions are traditionally smaller compared to the Summer Olympics ones.

## HOT.COOL. YOURS – 15th Feb 2014 has proved it!



After lots of preparations on a sunny day – 15th of February – old and new IOAPA members met at a comfy restaurant near the Adler Hub of Olympic Sochi. In total fifteen people joined to celebrate the get-together. Here they are, heroes who changed working shifts, skipped existing competitions tickets, missed sport events and sacrificed hours to come and just simply hang out, keeping IOAPA movement alive by active attitude: Ansen Siglar, Denis Kruzhkov, Kamil Khoury, Natasa Jankovic, Bryan Fautley, William Lindsay, Elia

Morgulev, Maria Koreneva, Hanna Sarkeala and myself, Anfisa Kasyanova. In addition, in our company we had some Olympic-oriented guests: a Panos Trikaliotis' friend, a Virgin Island NOC assistant (assistant of Ansen Siglar) and Denis Kruzhkov's wife and son.

The place was actually an old train station building – very easy to reach by train 'Lastochka' or by accredited bus from any Olympic venue (Olympic Park, Mountain Cluster, Olympic Village, Volunteer Village) as well as from other Sochi districts. By entering old building and seeing new innovative Adler train station on the right hand everyone can understand well how much Sochi has been improved thanks to the Games and how many enormous projects and things have been done so far in the Olympic city and wider area.



Unfortunately, there were no IOAPA board members but we felt their full support throughout the organizing process. Indeed a friend of Panos Trikaliotis (IOAPA ExCommittee Member), Wade Jordan – Canadian journalist, who is covering social and cultural areas, including the Olympics was present. We were lucky to be interviewed and appear in his blog as well.

Those that attended were treated by special Caucasian food and wine as well as by welcoming atmosphere with watching a significant ice hockey match USA–RUS on the TV screen. People were exchanging stories as well as their Olympic and Sochi impressions. Indeed, the participants were involved in the Sochi Olympic Games in many different ways, so they had lots of experiences, ideas and plans to share. The major discussion themes included: unforgettable days in the Academy, the successful IOA Master Programme which is already in its 5th edition, the famous Canadian House in the Olympic Park and the unexpectedly positive Sochi Games image.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank IOAPA President Akhry Ameer and Vice-President Vagelis Alexandrakis for their consulting on Reunion organizational tasks. My best regards to every participant who came and contributed to the IOAPA alumni spirit and development. I believe all participants of traditional IOAPA Reunion can prove that the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi 2014 has been definitely HOT.COOL.YOURS!



*IOAPA Executive Committee would like to warmly thank Anfisa for having organised this wonderful reunion. We would also like to thank all participants who attended the reunion and all those who even though did not make it, wished that they could have made it and hope that will make it to join the IOAPA reunion in the next edition of the Olympics!!*

## An Insider's Perspective of Sochi 2014

By: William Lindsay, Canada



Beginning when I applied to volunteer, until the time my feet hit the ground, I cannot explain the amount of hoops I had to go through to get there. From visa applications, to securing accommodations, and registering with the FSB/KGB, this was a completely new experience for me. It seemed like rules and regulations changed daily, and we had to keep up on the newest protocol. I am very lucky to have gone to two previous Olympics where I did not need to go through any of this red tape (Vancouver and London).

As in my previous Games, I was selected to volunteer with the Canadian Olympic Committee at Canada Olympic House (COH). My main duty was to bartend. As volunteers, we were financially responsible for all aspects related to our travel, hotels, food, and necessary governmental documents. For the first time ever, COH was located inside the Olympic Park, just steps away from the Fisht Stadium. Being inside the Olympic Park each day was a very cool experience.

With its close proximity to the sporting venues, Canada House was very busy. COH is a place for the athletes and their families and friends to congregate. It is generally not open to the public; although, we did have one day when Canadian passport holders could see what we had to offer. Inside of COH, we had meals, snacks, a bar, Internet, and other services available. The most popular attraction was the Molson Canadian Passport fridge. A Canadian passport was all that was needed to open this fridge and find the treasure hidden behind its door.



I was very fortunate in my past Games to see four ticketed events each time. In Sochi, I saw ten! The amount of tickets available, after the Games started, surprised me. It was definitely not like this at the other Olympics. I remember trying each day in London to get a ticket for any event in their Olympic Park and it was a hopeless cause. In Sochi, I really enjoyed all of the events but especially ski jumping. The area of Canada I live in is full of extremely flat farmland, so seeing skiers fling themselves into the air on a pair of skis was an awesome experience. I was able to see four figure skating events too. As a former competitor and current judge and technical specialist, these events were really great.

Sochi provided me with the opportunity to see friends from the IOA and to make new ones. Before leaving home, I met Marie Helene Cayer (Canada) for dinner, and during the Games, I saw Michelle Brown (USA), Kristina Koch (Austria), and Kate Moorehouse (Canada). Also volunteering at COH were Bryan Faultey (Canada) and Brooke Lenser (Canada), who are currently in the Master's programme at the IOA. I took an afternoon off and joined the IOAPA Reunion. Anfisa Kasyanova (Belarus) found a great spot for the twelve of us to gather. She had been a coordinator during my session and other than Bryan, was the only one I knew. I thoroughly enjoyed learning why everyone else was in Sochi and hearing about their experiences at the Games.

Communication is a major part of any event, let alone an Olympic Games. Within the Olympic Park, Russian and English were easily spoken and you could find your way around with the various signs. Outside of the park was a completely different story. Navigating the roads of Adler was a challenge. Street signs, such as those found in North America, were non-existent. Getting into a taxicab was a great concern because none of the drivers, whom I met, spoke any English. You had to hope that you would get somewhere close to your destination. On the way to our hotel from the airport, I gave our taxi driver the address of our hotel written in English, and he had no idea where it was. I had to dig to find it written in Russian and even then he had trouble finding it. Buying items in stores involved relying on a calculator to find out how much was owed. I was even in one store holding my purchases and the cashier looked at me wondering what I was doing. I tried to explain that I wanted to buy the items and a friendly Russian man stepped in to translate. It is quite an isolating feeling not being able to communicate.

The unilingual manager of our hotel did a fantastic job of communicating with the 30 Canadians staying in his place. He had downloaded an app on his phone and tablet that allowed us to speak English into it and it would translate our words into Russian for him. The opposite also worked. I was pleasantly surprised at the accuracy of the app.



There was much concern in the North American media about the security of guests at the Games. There were times in the lead-up to the Games that I questioned why I was going. I am happy to report that I had no problems while in Sochi. We went through extensive security screening to get into the park or ride a train each day. My only complaint about the screenings is that they lacked consistency. One day you could bring water bottles into the park, and the next day you could not. Communicating with the security guards was also challenging. When they wanted to see something from my backpack, it was a guessing game about what they wanted. They never seemed to like my metal glasses case or my bag of pins to trade.

While I had many reservations about going to these Olympics, I am glad I went. It is an experience I will never forget. I even got to spend a few hours wandering around Red Square in Moscow. Settling back into life after the Games is always an adjustment. I have completed my studies and am now looking for my next opportunity. With any luck, I will see you all in Rio!



# Hot. Cool. Ours. - Two incredible weeks with the German Olympic Youth Camp Sochi 2014

By: Tobias Bürger (GER)



Frankfurt Airport, February 19th: Tired, exhausted, but somehow happy I stepped off the plane. Thousands of memories were twirling around in my head: I was looking back on a very special Olympic adventure as a coordinator of the German Olympic Youth Camp at the Sochi Winter Games 2014. Two exciting weeks preceded by approximately 15 months of preliminary work like advertisement and applications, search for accommodation, applications

for visas and the organisation of preparatory meetings, I have been directly involved in my position as officer at the German Olympic Academy (DOA).

The main task of me and the other nine coordinators was to take care of 40 junior sportsmen and sportswomen aged between sixteen and nineteen. Since my participation at the 52<sup>nd</sup> IOA Young Participants Session and my private trip to the London Olympic Games in 2012, it is one of my main personal aims to share the enthusiasm for the Olympic Idea with young people. This means on the one hand to encourage them in their journey as future top-level athletes so that they might be Olympians as well one day - or on the other hand to motivate them for voluntary engagements in sport in general



Accommodated on the enormous cruise ship "MS Louis Olympia" at the Black Sea Coast next to the Olympic Park the 40 youngsters experienced a spectacular and extensive programme. In few words: Each of them attended six competitions and took part in seminars on important sportive aspects and cultural trips. They got together with major politicians such as the German Secretary of State, Thomas de Maizière, and they enjoyed daily trips,

talks and workouts with famous German athletes like Rosi-Mittermaier-Neureuther (two-times Olympic champion in Alpine Skiing in 1976), André Lange (most successful bobsled-der of all times, 4 times Olympic champion) or speed-skater Jenny Wolf (multiple world champion).

And they got in contact with what I consider as one core part of the Olympic Idea: celebrating diversity – intercultural exchange and friendship with fans and Olympians from all over the world. It was really touching when the youngsters traded pins with Russians and Americans so that all of them became a huge colourful bunch of young people which took innumerable photos of each other. Together they celebrated sport and all the athletes – needless to say that our youth camp got even louder and more hilarious when it came to hail medals of the German Olympic team.



In between we had time for deep discussions. As we aimed to foster fascination, we wanted to raise critical topics as well. Winter Olympic Games with temperatures of 23°C next to the sea and 14°C in the mountains, about 50 billion dollars in investments for the venues and the infrastructure, apparent damage to nature, newspaper reports about exploitation of workers and discrimination... I think that it is important to let the teenagers gain their own impression – altogether a mainly colourful picture of happy, open-minded and well-deserved proud Russian people.



Of course the Sochi Games contained a lot of highlights for me personally. Firstly, I had the chance to be host of a talk of the youth camp with former biathlete Magdalena Neuner, without doubt one of the most impressive and successful sportswomen in recent years. Secondly, I was among the German fans at the Sanki Sliding Center cheering for Natalie Geisenberger und Tatjana Hüfner, both former participants of the German Olympic Youth Camp, who eventually won the gold and silver medal. And finally, one of my life-time dreams became true: I was allowed to enter the Olympic village with a group of our participants of our youth camp. It is funny but I was much more excited than the youngsters when we walked through the huge “secret” area and saw all the famous athletes. And what an incredible moment when I met So, my IOA 2012 roomy from Korea, totally by accident in the dining hall!



This is what I was thinking about on February 19th after being back in Germany... Fortunately the adventure, the German Olympic Youth Camp Sochi 2014, has not come to an end yet. In August there will be a huge reunion. Until then we will have compiled a documentation, a colourful mosaic containing two incredible weeks at the Sochi 2014 Winter Games.

## My experience in the Sochi Paralympic Games by Lea Van Breukelen (NED)



The 1980 Summer Olympic Games took place in Moscow and the Soviet Union refused to organize the Paralympic Games: "In our country, there are no disabled people." said Soviet communist party leader Leonid Breschnev. 34 years later IPC president Sir Philips Craven closed the Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games saying: "I thank you all and say with great pleasure – Sochi 2014 – the best Paralympic Winter Games ever – a Games that showed mira-

cles know no borders." What a change in 30 years, this proves that sport has the power to educate people and that the Olympic and Paralympic Movement have an important role.

The Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games took place from 7 – 16 March with 72 medal events across five sports – alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, ice sledge hockey and wheelchair curling. Over 600 athletes from 45 countries competed in Sochi where Brazil, Turkey and Uzbekistan made their Paralympic Winter Games debut.

In total 316,200 tickets were sold, 86,200 more than Vancouver 2010, a great result and it shows the increasing popularity of the Paralympic Games. The Russian fans were fantastic, especially during the ice sledge hockey matches. The Russian ice sledge hockey team won a silver medal, just five years after starting with an ice sledge hockey programme. Supported by the home crowd, Russia topped the medals table with 30 golds and 80 total medals.

The most hyped event of the Sochi Games was the snowboard-cross discipline, as it made its Paralympic Winter Games debut with one medal event for men and one for women. Many of the snowboarders are former X-Games medallist. Only athletes with leg impairments, such as amputations above the ankle, stiffness of the ankle or knee joint or muscle weakness could compete.

The Opening and especially the Closing ceremony were amazing. The Closing Ceremony, with the theme “Reaching the Impossible”, showed how dreams can be achieved through strength and passion to change the perception of “impossible” to “I’m possible.”

During the Closing Ceremony gold medallists Australian alpine skier Toby Kane and Dutch snowboarder Bibian Mentel were awarded with the Whang Young Dai Award for exemplifying the spirit of the Games by inspiring and exciting the world. Mentel was a successful able-bodied snowboarder and on her way to qualify for the Olympic Winter Games in 2002 before losing her leg to cancer. Mentel campaigned to include snowboard as a sport at the Winter Paralympics. With her Mentelity Foundation, Mentel supports young people with impairments to get into sport and started a snowboard team for athletes between the ages of 14–23. Kane has been skiing since he was five-years-old following a car accident which led to the amputation of his lower right leg at just the age of two. Since the age of 17 Kane has been on the Australian Paralympic Team. Kane studies medicine and is an ambassador the Australian Paralympic Committee to promote the Paralympic Movement in his country.

Over 8,000 volunteers contributed to make the Sochi Games the best Paralympic Winter Games ever. The majority of the volunteers were from Russia and worked at the Games to gain valuable work experience. Besides my work for the International Paralympic Committee, I was very lucky to have a little reunion with Anfisa, Taro and Sanja in Sochi, three fellow IOA Master students from the third year.

The Sochi Games were my first Paralympic Games, it was fantastic to be a part of it. I was amazed and surprised every single day by the spirit of the athletes, the volunteers and the Russian fans. Spasiba Sochi!



## Being a Young Ambassador at the Youth Olympics! by Stefan Janisch (AUT)



Two years ago I had the privilege to attend the IOA Session for young Participants at the International Olympic Academy. This year I was selected as the Young Ambassador for Austria for the Summer Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing. When I got selected I was extremely happy and proud but I didn't really know what to expect. Well of course I did some research beforehand and I knew basically what it was all about.

The Youth Olympics are an international multi-sport event organized by the IOC and are held every four years. After Singapore 2010 and Innsbruck 2012 (Winter) it's only the third time they are held, this time in Nanjing (China). Although many people think that the Youth Olympics are a small version of the Olympic Games, this is not the case. The Youth Olympic Games are for athletes between the ages of 15–18 years and are not just about competing. These games also have a strong cultural and educational component. Athletes should be inspired to live by the Olympic values and become true ambassadors of Olympism. Consequently the Cultural and Education Program (CEP) has been implemented within the YOG to ensure that participants gain a unique and inspirational experience. This is where the Young Ambassador (YA) comes into play. The role of a YA is to promote the YOG and CEP among the athletes and help them to interact with other athletes from around the world to make the most out of their YOG Experience.





Sounds nice and like a really cool concept? Yes it is but honestly, I wasn't really satisfied with this basic level of information. I still had so many questions and I couldn't identify myself with this role just yet. Gladly, this all changed when I spent a week in Nanjing at the Young Ambassador's Seminar. It was one of the most educational, cultural, capti-

vating, motivating, and inspiring weeks of my life. I'm still fascinated by the fact that I made so many new friends from so many new countries. In the beginning we were 104 individuals from 104 different countries. This means 104 different persons from all different back-



grounds, cultures, dreams and motivation. At the end of the week it felt that we were all unified, not only because of this experience but also because we all share a common goal now. That is to Rock the YOG! This may sound funny and I also was kind of skeptical at the beginning, but throughout the week I began to understand more and more what Rocking the YOG is all about. The main part of the seminar was to try and

participate in the Cultural and Education Program (CEP) activities which are central to mission and core of the Youth Olympic Games. These CEP included a diverse set of activities, from getting to know the Chinese culture, team-building challenges, healthy cooking, eco-friendly-agriculture to life skills like career planning, fair play or even time management. To describe all these activities would go beyond the boundaries of this article, but to cite Jess a fellow YA from the USA, we were definitely having fun, learning about other cultures, challenging ourselves, and creating friendships. It became clear to us what it really means to Rock the YOG.

Additionally we had a rehearsal for the Welcome Session of the Games. We got to see a traditional Chinese dragon performance and afterwards we got told that we had to perform this routine at the opening of the Olympic Games in August. Even though no one had ever done this before everyone tried hard and it was amazing to have the support from teachers, volunteers and interested pedestrians. During this week there were plenty occasions, where we had to step out of our own comfort zones. Whether it was to taste expired tofu (“stinky tofu”) at a traditional Chinese dinner or to learn how to move like a monkey at the music for stress relief workshop; to let oneself in for something what you have never done before definitely helps you to broaden your mind. I hope that I can “inspower” (combination of inspired & empowered) my athletes to that same experience, to challenge themselves, to get to know other cultures, to become great ambassadors of sport, of Olympic values, of a healthy lifestyle and most important to learn something for life. These young athletes may be the role models for the next generation that’s why I believe in the crucial role of the CEP in the Youth Olympic Games. I also learned once again that Sport has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. Like a well-known person once said: It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Now there is only one thing for me to say....Can’t wait for the Games to begin. Let’s Rock the YOG and make the most out of it!



## United States Olympic Academy 2014! by Laurel Brassey Iversen, Elizabeth Hanley, Naghmeh Maryan

First of all, we want to congratulate the USOC and LA84 on the organization of the US Olympic Academy in Los Angeles. The one-day seminar on Athlete Development was well organized and informative. The speakers were well prepared and very professional. The caliber of the participants was impressive and the facility was beautiful. Fortunately, Director of the IOA, Mr. Dionyssidis Gangas was a guest speaker and we enjoyed taking him to dinner and offering our hospitality for his first visit to Los Angeles.



LA Dinner – L to R: Naghmeh Maryan, Elizabeth Hanley, Mr. Gangas, Laurel Brassey Iversen

About 100 people attended the seminar, including many US Olympians, Paralympians, NBC executives, USOC staff and LA84 staff, which was held at the LA84 Foundation. LA84 was founded at the conclusion of the 1984 Olympic Games as the lasting legacy of those Games to the host city of Los Angeles. Forty percent of the profit from the Games provided the endowment that provides grants to numerous community sports and fitness programs. The event was co-sponsored by Mr. Gordon Crawford, chairman of the USOC Olympic and Paralympic Foundation and the facilitator was US Olympian John Naber (Swimming). The turnout and caliber of the attendees was impressive



United States Olympians and Paralympians

The one-day event featured the following speakers:

The one-day event featured the following speakers:

1. Anita DeFrantz – President LA84 and IOC Executive Board Member  
*Athlete Development and Olympic Values*
2. Scott Blackmun – USOC Chief Executive Officer  
*The U.S. Olympic Endowment and Athlete Development: A 30-Year Perspective*
3. Alan Ashley – USOC Chief of Sport Performance  
*Team USA: Performance Review: London & Sochi*
4. Kristen Dieffenbach (West Virginia Univ.) and Wade Gilbert (California State Univ. Fresno)  
*Athlete Talent Development: Current Status and Future Directions*
5. Dionyssi Gangas – Director, IOA  
*The International Olympic Academy*
6. Tom Farray – Executive Director, Aspen Institute’s Sports and Society Program and Benita Fitzgerald Mosely – USOC Chief of Organizational Excellence  
*Elite Athlete Development and Positive Youth Sports: Are They Compatible?*
7. Ken Martel – USA Ice Hockey, Technical Director  
*Case Study: How USA Ice Hockey Does It*

## 8. Panel Discussion – *Becoming an Elite Athlete*

Jarryd Wallace – Paralympian (Athletics), Dotsie Bausch – Olympian (Track Cycling), Brenda Villa – Olympian (Waterpolo), Alan Abrahamson – USC/Journalist/Moderator of session

There were several people in attendance that had been to the IOA’s various sessions: Anita DeFrantz, Elizabeth Hanley, John McAloon, Naghmeh Maryan, Alicia McConnell, Gary Moy, Cindy Stinger, John Gleaves and myself.



Seated– L to R: Jarryd Wallace, Laurel Brassey Iversen, Mr. Gangas, Cindy Stinger  
Standing – L to R: Naghmeh Maryan, Gary Moy, Elizabeth Hanley

At the conclusion to the seminar, a large group of Olympians and IOAPA members were invited to dinner where we sat “Zorba’s Style” at a great Mexican Restaurant. We stayed for four hours where John Naber and Mr. Gangas grilled us on Olympic trivia and we contrived on how to get our impressive Paralympian, Jarred Wallace, to the IOA. We think it just might be in a possibility, if not for this year, then next.



John Naber testing us on Olympic Trivia

We offered the following evaluation with suggestions to the organizers.

Many people have been waiting for our Academy to make its comeback and we, as well as others, are excited and hopeful that this is the beginning of a long and successful National Olympic Academy. The mission statement of the IOA says that: “The IOA also assists NOCs in establishing National Olympic Academies, with the aim to inspire people and promote the Olympic Philosophy and Ideals. It provides guidelines for the promotion of the Olympic Programmes of the IOA taking into consideration the fact that educational systems differ among different countries and that the structure and operation of NOCs and NOAs reflect those differences”.

The values of Olympism and its ethical principles could have easily been incorporated into the topic of Athlete Development. It is very important, especially for Olympians, to be familiar with Olympic values before taking part in the Olympic Games. Surely, this could have a tremendous effect on their development and preparation for the Olympic stage. It could give them the opportunity to experience both the physical, mental and emotional dimensions of the Olympic Games and Olympic Movement. As a two-time Olympian in Indoor Volleyball, I wish that my federation had given my teammates more information about the IOC, USOC and some history and tradition of our rich Olympic past as well as possibilities for the future. Fortunately for me, by the time I competed, I had already attended the IOA.



Olympic Flame at LA84

Here are some suggestions and comments for future.

- Consider at least a two-day conference. May we suggest a Friday/Saturday format with arrivals on Thursday and departures on Sunday? At the breaks we were hustling to network with all of the amazing folks in attendance. It would be fantastic to have more time, especially when many are travelling across country (or ocean) to attend. Mid-week is very difficult due to work constraints.
- Add more interactive sessions to enable discussion of the presentations and other business of the Academy. Allow time to prepare suggestions and ideas that can be applied in future decision-making and strategic planning.
- Encompass more of the mission of the IOA as it pertains to the dissemination of Olympic Values and Olympic Education.
- Call for papers in order to give researchers and interested persons in collegiate sport the opportunity to attend.
- Will future sessions be held in Los Angeles or other sites?

Mrs. Elizabeth Hanley and Miss Naghmeh Maryan also contributed to this evaluation. I have included some background information on each of us below.

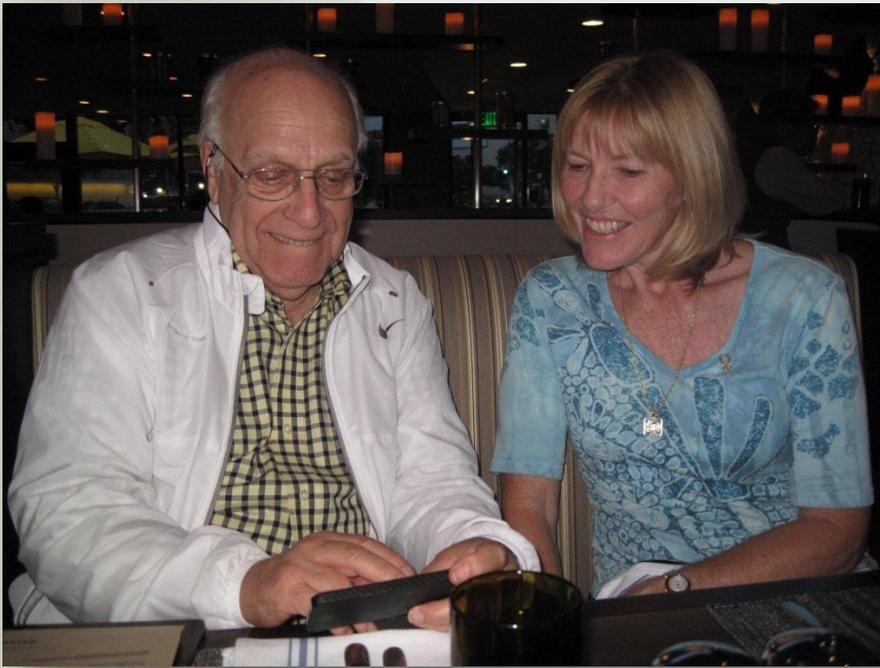
**Laurel Brassey Iversen** attended the IOA in 1986 at the suggestion of Anita DeFrantz during an AAC meeting. She attended many sessions of the International Olympic Academy in Greece in various capacities since 1986 until the present as a participant, a coordinator during the Young Participant's Session 1997–2007, and as President and member of the Alumni Association (IOAPA) that will celebrate 25 years of existence next year during its 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Session in Ancient Olympia. She was a staff member for the USOC's most recent attempt to revive the USOA, the US Olympic Academy focused on Leadership 1996–1999. Laurel is an Olympian in Indoor Volleyball – 1980 and 1988.



IOAPA Group at Luncheon

**Elizabeth Hanley** attended the inaugural USOA at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle, in 1977, and subsequent USOA meetings until its demise after 1991. At that time, the USOA was a requirement for those chosen to attend the IOA in Ancient Olympia, Greece. The USOC Education Council., which no longer exists, chose the delegates. Attending the USOA prior to the IOA provided participants with pertinent information regarding the IOA and its mission. Hanley also attended many of the IOA sessions (1977 through 2004) as Dance Workshop Coordinator, lecturer, discussion group leader, and guest. In 2008 she was chosen to attend the IOA Education Session, together with Dr. Mick Lynch from Florida Southern College. As a founding member of IOAPA, Hanley participated in several meetings from 1991 through 2013.

**Naghmeh Maryan** worked for the NOC of Iran specializing in Olympic Solidarity Programs and attended the IOA as a participant, coordinator and member of IOAPA.



Mr. Gangas and Laurel posting to Facebook!

NOTE: In response to our evaluation we received this information from the USOC that we were pleased to know. We have asked for more about the Ambassador Program

*"We did want to share that all members of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Teams since 2008 have had exposure to Olympism and its values prior to taking part in the Games through the USOC's successful and mandatory Team USA Ambassador Program. Thousands of athletes have attended sessions over the past 7 years that give them a wide education in the movement and preparation for the Games. It's one of the USOC's marquee programs and something that other NOAs are have been quite interested in when we've presented at the IOA."*

**Information on the USA Ambassador Programme (the programme was presented in the 2013 IOA Directors' session and the full article can be retrieved in the proceedings of the session)**

U.S. athletes serve as the USOC's greatest representatives of the Olympic Movement and Olympic values. By developing those values in elite athletes, and through the sharing of their stories, the USOC aims to inspire others to seek the highest levels of excellence and to have respect for all, regardless of nationality, religion, race or background.

Started prior to Beijing 2008, the goal of the Olympic Ambassador Program is to expose U.S. Olympians, Paralympians and hopefuls to the expectations, roles and responsibilities of representing the United States and the entire Olympic Movement at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. This extensive program educates athletes on being ambassadors for their sport and country, embracing and maximizing their position as a role model, and creating a lasting legacy.

The multi-phase program includes presentations, inspirational speakers and small group activities to cover specific topics:

- What it means to be an Olympian/Paralympian
- The athlete's role as an ambassador
- The Olympic Ideals and why they matter
- Interview and media preparedness
- Leadership
- Leaving a lasting legacy through sport and Olympism
- Challenges all Olympians and Paralympians face

The program is primarily delivered by iconic U.S. Olympians and Paralympians who have demonstrated sportsmanship and perseverance on and off the field of play in their own careers. The Olympic facilitators have included the likes of speedskaters Bonnie Blair, Eric Heiden and Dan Jansen; football player Brandi Chastain; softball player Jessica Mendoza; skier Picabo Street; and decathlete Dan O'Brien.

### **Positive Outcomes**

- The program was first administered in 2008, followed by programs in 2010 and 2012. All three Games resulted in the vast majority of U.S. athletes handling themselves with grace, composure and awareness. The overall feedback from the American public was pride in the athletes' performances on the field of play, but also their conduct off the field as good representatives of the U.S. and members of the Olympic Movement.
- In 2012, the OAP consisted of 55 trainings in 28 cities, servicing 1,000+ athletes over a 13-month timespan.
- Athlete feedback on the program has been overwhelmingly positive. All athletes who complete the program are surveyed and rank program elements on a five-point scale (five being the best). For the 2010 OAP, the average score ranged from 4.0 to 4.4. In

In 2012, that score improved to 4.5.

- The program has been a successful case study in bringing together cross-functional teams consisting of staff members throughout the National Olympic Committee and National Federations, as well as alumni, coaches and athletes.
- Central to the program is a desire to make improvements for each Games. In addition to enhanced in-person training for the 2014 Olympic Ambassador Program, planning is well underway for the inclusion of an interactive online tutorial and exhaustive resource library.

Not only have Team USA athletes represented themselves well on and off the field of play, but a nation and beyond have been inspired by their demonstration of the Olympic values. With a global audience numbering in the billions, and an eager fan base following through traditional and social media, this program has the opportunity to disseminate elements of Olympism on a global level.

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Find here the filmed version of the event: <http://www.teamusa.org/academy>

## News and opportunities!

### IOC and UN Secretariat agree historic deal to work together to use sport to build a better world

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach and United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon signed a historic agreement in April at the UN Headquarters in New York aimed at strengthening collaboration between the two organisations at the highest level.

The agreement underlined that the IOC and the UN “share the same values of contributing to a better and peaceful world through sport.”

The IOC, which was granted UN Observer Status in 2009, has long enjoyed strong ties with individual UN agencies, working with them globally on a number of initiatives that use sport as a tool for development and peace. Today’s agreement means the IOC will now work with the UN Secretariat on a range of projects around the world.

Speaking at the announcement, IOC President Thomas Bach said, “Sport can change the world, but it cannot change the world alone. When placing sport at the service of humankind, we need and we want partnerships with other players in society. The Olympic Movement is willing and ready to make its contribution to the most laudable efforts of the United Nations to maintain and build peace and to bring along social change.”

Source: IOC website

### Fair Play educational event in Athens

On Wednesday May 14, 2014 at 9 pm, the educational project “Fair Play” of the Hellenic Olympic Academy (HOA), that travels across Greece successfully, returned to Athens and made a stop at “Georgios Karaiskakis” stadium, to welcome thousands students who arrived accompanied by their educators.

It’s about an alternative way of teaching the Olympic Values, framed by some special projects, conducted throughout Greece. Each project is divided into two pillars, the racing and the educational, this time with the participation of ten Olympic sports, such as football, fencing, archery, trampolining, rhythmic gymnastics, handball, weightlifting, taekwondo, athletics and water polo (theory).

Source: Website of the Hellenic Olympic Academy

## News and opportunities!

### Olympic education Day in Athens

More than 45,000 pupils from schools across the country sent on April 11 at the Panathenaic Stadium, the universal and timeless messages of peace, friendship, cooperation, solidarity and friendship among people, at a great event organized by the Hellenic Olympic Academy (HOA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs under the auspices of the Greek Olympic Committee .

The messages have been transferred around the world by a giant white dove created by kids with awesome zeal and enthusiasm, putting on a special substrate thousand white paper boats brought from their schools . Achievement that became the World Guinness Record.

Source: Website of the Hellenic Olympic Academy

### IOTC's Project "Respect Diversity" in full swing

The IOTC goes on visiting schools throughout Greece in order to promote a peaceful lifestyle among young students.

The programme relates to bullying and conflict resolution and aspires to educate children on how we can avoid such behaviors by implementing Olympic values and Olympic Truce ideals to our everyday life. The program is addressed at students aged 10 - 15 years and is organised around 4 thematic areas, which represent the Olympic Olympic Truce ideals:

1. Recognizing diversity
2. Equality of opportunity
3. Social inclusion
4. Conflict resolution

## News and opportunities!

The program involves workshops in schools designed by the British Council educators involving modern teaching methods and activities, aiming at increasing children's interactivity and engagement.

The workshops are organised throughout Greece, in both the Greek and English language. Teachers are encouraged to further engage into the different issues of bullying, and discuss them with the children.

For this purpose, a detailed teachers' guide has been created. The programme is expected to reach more than 5.000 kids throughout Greece and more than 300 educators.

Other partners of the program are Samsung, Greek Winners Olympic Association and the Hellenic Olympic Academy.

Visit the website of the IOTC to find out more about the programme: [www.olympictruce.org](http://www.olympictruce.org)

### **Olympism4Humanity 2014 programmes— Registrations open!**

Under the patronage of Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou, Member of the European Commission, the International Olympic Academy, the Georgetown University, the International Olympic Truce Center and the O4H Alliance, proudly announce two events that will take place at the birthplace of the ancient Olympic spirit: The 2014 O4H Summit and the 2014 O4H Praxis Summer Program.

The first program is a 5-day O4H Summit, which will take place in Athens and Ancient Olympia on June 28th– July 2nd, 2014, titled "O4H inspirations and bridges across time, disciplines, policy and practice". This summit will serve as a platform for introspection– and another step towards the establishment of a global consortium of academics, policymakers and practitioners in which the power of sport and Olympism, will be further explored to advance scholarship, educational programs, training and mobility.

For more information about the 2014 O4H Summit and to apply: <http://olympism4humanity.com/2014-olympism4humanity-praxis-summit/>

## News and opportunities!

### IOC OSC PhD Students Research Grant programme

The IOC OSC has released the rules and the application form for the 2015 edition of the IOC OSC PhD Students Research Grant programme on the IOC website.

As from this year, the grants will be allocated to candidates whose applications are submitted under two differentiated categories and objectives:

#### Category A: Open Subject

Objective: Encourage PhD students to undertake doctoral research with a humanities or social sciences perspective on any aspect of the Olympic phenomena. All projects dealing with the Olympic Movement and/or the Olympic Games will be considered.

#### Category B: National Olympic Committees' Policy Priority (organised in collaboration with Olympic Solidarity)

Objective: Encourage PhD students to undertake doctoral research with a humanities or social sciences perspective on topics of interest to the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) of their country.

The eligibility criteria, application procedures and deadline (26 September 2014) remain the same for both categories but for applications in the NOCs' Policy Priority category, the OSC should also receive a letter of support written and signed by the President or Secretary General of the NOC explaining the significance of the research proposal for the NOC's activities and projects.

Applications and all supporting documentation can be submitted in either French or English, the two official languages of the Olympic Movement.

Visit the website of the IOC for more information: <http://www.olympic.org/content/the-olympic-studies-centre/categories-container/academic-activities-and-network/?subcat=129534>

## News and opportunities!

The second program is the 2014 O4H Praxis Summer Program, building on the great success of the first Olympism, Sport for Peace and Development professional training that took place in ancient Olympia last summer. O4H will offer the an 11-day residential professional development program.

The 2014 O4H Praxis Summer Program (June 28th–July 8th, 2014), will provide extensive training on applied skills and competencies related to: (a) applied Olympic Education and Olympism in Action foundations, (b) evidence-based and inclusive program design and delivery, (c) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), (d) non-profit and special event management, (e) fundraising strategies and grant proposal writing, (f) curriculum development for formal and non-formal educational systems (e.g. community and after school programs, primary secondary and tertiary education), (h) Olympic and Paralympic Games & Mega Event Human-centered Legacies.

Visit the O4H website to find out more and apply: <http://olympism4humanity.com/olympia-praxis-summer-program/>

## Contribute to ARETE NewsLetter!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! !

Is anything interesting related to sport happening in your country? Has something exciting happened in your life that you would like to share with your IOAPA friends? Did you take part in any relevant conference or event? Would you like to reflect on a recent sport-related development?

All you need to do is contact Vagelis, the Arete NewsLetter Editor at [vagelis@ioapa.org](mailto:vagelis@ioapa.org) and discuss your ideas with him!

