As a founding [Fulbright Grantee](https://eca.state.gov/fulbright/fulbright-impact/fulbright-grantees?field_state_value=All&field_fulbrights_program_value=All&field_field_of_study_value=All&field_country_tid=All&page=270&order=field_state&sort=asc) for the Lithuania program, I had the opportunity to spend two years living and working in Lithuania as an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) and partner of the [U.S. Embassy in Lithuania](https://lt.usembassy.gov/25576/) and the [U.S. Department of State](https://www.state.gov/).

Based in Visaginas, a predominately Russian district of strategic importance to the U.S. Embassy’s mission, my initial assignment was instructing 2nd to 8th grade English at the Gerosios Vilties School. After accepting an invitation to serve a second term, I returned to teach at the Visaginas Technical High School. Throughout the two years, I also led English lessons for the Lithuanian State Border Guard Service at the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant, local administrators and leaders, senior citizens from the University of the Third Age, and other interested community members.

In addition to teaching, I also launched the city’s first annual Spelling Bee in affiliation with the Lithuanian National Spelling Bee, founded the Visaginas Voices English choir, and organized town events to strengthen both English language skills and the relationship between citizens of our countries. Similarly, I participated in a variety of Lithuanian activities including the Krusnė Folklore Ensemble, the church choir, and Lithuanian language lessons.

Over the course of my two terms with Fulbright, I developed a presentation titled “Finding Treasure” which I gave at several speaking events. While in Europe, I was also invited to guest lecture in multiple countries, judge national English essay and video competitions, attend international media literacy conferences, and sometimes serve as a plenary speaker.

Since returning home, I have stayed involved with Fulbright as a program alumna by mentoring new grantees and presenting at conferences, including the [2019 Fulbright Association Conference](https://fulbright.org/2019-conference-speakers/) where I shared a poster version of my “Finding Treasure” talk and hosted a roundtable discussion.

facilitate cultural exchange in the community of over forty nationalities