



# BHeart Foundation: Annual Report (2020-2022)

January 2023

## A Message from the Board

Dear Friends & Supporters,

As 2023 kicks off, we wanted to highlight several projects BHeart has been working on over the past few years.

Although we were forced to greatly limit activities during the pandemic, we nevertheless **continued the work of our school and successfully transitioned to a fully online operation**. We also expanded our curriculum and delighted students by offering a **new course on Bosnian and Herzegovinian history** – taught in both Bosnian and English – with renowned professors from the University of Sarajevo. After the easing of pandemic restrictions, we were eager to host an in-person event to **celebrate the 30th anniversary of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Independence** in March 2022, and were thrilled to see many of our generous supporters in person after so long. Finally, we **piloted a successful new summer travel program** in 2022, which we plan to offer again this summer.

Please read more about each of these projects below. We look forward to your continued support in 2023!

Sincerely,  
BHeart Board of Directors



## **BHeart School of Language and Cultural Heritage**

### **Continuation of Programming & Transition to Online Learning**

Now in its seventh year of operation, the BHeart School of Language and Cultural Heritage continues to offer small group classes for children and adults at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. We successfully transitioned to a fully remote curriculum and now offer services to students worldwide. We have something for students of all ages, from children as young as 4 years old through adults.

The interactive, project-based curriculum developed in cooperation with Creativus, the Sarajevo-based early childhood education center, delights our young students by teaching through games, art, and creative projects.

For our older students, we offer a customized program including private and group classes for middle-school and high-school students as well as adult learners.

### **New Classes on Bosnian-Herzegovinian History**

Over the course of five classes, Professors Katz and Duranovic provided an overview of Bosnian-Herzegovinian history including medieval Bosnia, the influences of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, Bosnia within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and Socialist Yugoslavia, through present day independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. We received excellent feedback from all students who participated, along with encouragement to offer more courses in the future, which we are actively planning.

## Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Independence

In March 2022, BHeart organized a celebration of the 30th anniversary of Bosnia and Herzegovina's independence at the O Street Museum in Washington, DC. More than 150 dignitaries attended the reception, including representatives of the State Department, the World Bank, and the diplomatic corps, several former American ambassadors to Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as representatives of other Bosnian diaspora organizations. Amna Fazlić Handabak, the first secretary of the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Washington, also attended the event.

Those present at the celebration were addressed by long-time friends of our country, Bob Hand, senior adviser of the US Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and Kurt Bassuener, co-founder of the Berlin-based Council for Democratization Policy. Both speakers pointed out that the "Bosnian issue" is one with which all Americans can identify, and emphasized that this explains their commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina. They added that this both justifies and requires a strong American presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the broader region.

Finally, as a sign of our support for the people of Ukraine, BHeart presented a reading of the "Letter from Sarajevo," written by the well-known Sarajevo journalist, Aida Čerkez.

The event was picked up by media outlets in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including Radio Sarajevo: [U Washingtonu obilježena 30. godišnjica nezavisnosti: Snažno uz BiH](#)

## Pilot Program: Travel Study Experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina

BHeart, in partnership with [Green Visions](#), organized an unforgettable travel-study program in Bosnia and Herzegovina this past summer. This pilot program was specially designed for young adults (17-27) looking to experience a uniquely immersive program that challenged and expanded their understanding of politics, economics, society, and the environment through the lens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the world.

Participants included members of the Bosnian-American youth diaspora, several American high-school-aged students, as well as local Bosnian-Herzegovinian students. Participants visited 6 beautiful cities (Sarajevo, Mostar, Jajce, Travnik, Banja Luka, and Bihać), several mountains and villages, and some of the country's most stunning rivers. The program was highlighted by Radio Sarajevo in [Mladi Bosanci i njihovi američki prijatelji istražuju BiH](#)

It was an eye-opening experience for all, and the definite highlight of each of their summers. After the overwhelmingly positive feedback we received from all participants, we look forward to offering a similar program again this summer.



## About the BHeart Foundation

### Our Mission

BHeart is a volunteer organization that focuses on issues and supports projects that are important to Bosnian women and their families. BHeart garners the talents, experiences, and abilities of Bosnians and Herzegovinians and their friends living outside Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Working in partnership with people in the country, we aim to

- Foster educational, social, cultural, environmental and other positive changes
- Help disadvantaged segments of the Bosnian society
- Support projects that help create a progressive and forward-looking BiH
- Preserve connections with BiH: sustain heritage, culture, and the identity of Bosnians and Herzegovinians in the diaspora; promote BiH in the US; encourage the Bosnian diaspora youth to reconnect with BiH

### Who We Are

We are a group of volunteers originally from Bosnia and Herzegovina who share a tremendous love for our country and an extraordinary motivation to contribute to humanitarian and other activities that will move it forward and reach its potential. BHeart's board members are the organization's principal volunteers:

- Nevena Bosnic
- Lejla Celebic Jusufbegovic
- Sabina Djutovic-Alivodic
- Adelhaida Hatibovic
- Dzenita Mehic Saracevic
- Mirna Mekic
- Gorana Neskovic

### Get Involved or Donate

We would like to inspire friends of BiH to join our BHeart community and share their time and talents as volunteers and supporters. We are always looking for new ways to support our mission, so if you have a great idea for a project that you would like to share with us, please let us know by contacting us at [bheartdc@gmail.com](mailto:bheartdc@gmail.com).

You can make a difference! Your contributions will help change lives and give momentum for a better future in Bosnia and Herzegovina. [Donate here](#).