Gulya Agayeva, J.E.E.M. Scholar 2010

Gulya Agayeva is an EFL Teacher from Turkmenistan. She describes her country as a land with a glorious history including: the Parthian Kingdom with Nisa as one of its capitals; Ancient Merv, a part of Margiana that is now recognized to be the fifth center of the earliest civilizations (after Mesopotamia, Egypt, India and China). The Great Silk Road and the legendary Ahalteke horses have always been the pride of Turkmens. Gorgeous carpets, with unique ornamentation and high quality, emerged from the heart of Turkmen women.

Gulya lives in Ashgabat—the capital city of Turkmenistan. It is called a white marble beauty for its amazing buildings that glitter under the sun with a lot of rainbow colors. The city is charming with the unique beauty of its architecture, museums, theatres, high-class hotels, and parks with amazing cascades of fountains and palm trees, green squares full of flowers, magnificent monuments, and many other wonders of unusual architectural ensemble.

Presently, she works in the Business School under the Union of Entrepreneurs and Industrialists of Turkmenistan. The main mission of the School is to provide professional training to entrepreneurs of small and medium businesses in compliance with the requirements of market economy, and to young people who are planning to start their own business. Her duties include teaching business & conversational English to young entrepreneurs, economists, and interested community members.

Recently, she has also been involved in the GAP project, sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Turkmenistan. There she has taught English to young people who have some gaps after leaving school and have not been able to enter any higher institution or get a job.

Gulya says, “My motto is learn yourself and teach others. Education is a life-long process and there is always much more to learn as life goes on bringing some new changes.” This belief has inspired her to learn as much as possible using every opportunity that turns up. Thus, in 2008/2009 she conducted an Intermediate English Course for businessmen on a voluntary basis, incorporating innovative tools and techniques of teaching English obtained through various teacher trainings. In addition she has taught English at “Soltan Dag” and “Intec” Educational Centers. Recently she has been inspired by professional development and interaction with POET (Professional Organization of English Teachers).

“I am still energetic, lively, and eager to learn and share in spite of my middle age. My participation in the JEEM Scholarship Program is good proof of my incredible energy and a tremendous desire to grow professionally.” Gulya feels it is very important as a teacher of English to visit America and learn about the culture of this great nation personally, not from books or any other sources. She would like to learn from other professionals working in the same field and she is hoping to learn innovative techniques and gather teaching tools to share with her colleagues in Turkmenistan.

“Finally, I would like to use this opportunity to present my beloved country with its colorful culture representing the history, hopes and dreams of the Turkmen nation.” Gulya is looking forward to learning about American culture while here in Montana. When she returns to her home, she will have wonderful memories and lasting friendships.