

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL Monterey, California



THESIS

**MAKING THE CONNECTION: TRANSNATIONAL
CIVILIAN-TO-CIVILIAN PARTNERSHIPS**

by

Albert Gorman

December 2002

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

Robert Looney
Lois Roberts

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**MAKING THE CONNECTION: CIVILIAN-TO-CIVILIAN INITIATIVES IN
THE NATIONAL GUARD STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

Albert T. Gorman
Captain, Army National Guard
B.S., Excelsior College, 1998
B.S., Michigan State University, 2001

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requirements for the degree of

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December 2002**

Author: Albert T. Gorman

Approved by: Robert Looney
Thesis Advisor

Lois Roberts
Second Reader/Co-Advisor

James Wirtz
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs

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ABSTRACT

The National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP), a partnership between a State National Guard and another country, is now in its tenth year. Many of these relationships have moved beyond military-to-military engagement activities and into civilian-to-civilian initiatives. These civilian led initiatives seek to leverage the assets of a particular State in support of the partner country. As the SPP matures, it is the goal of most states to realize this lifecycle of the partnership culminating in civilian-to-civilian programs. How the states can get there is the purpose of this thesis. This thesis assesses the tenets of success that have made economic development (ED) and social development (SD) initiatives within the Maryland and Estonian relationship successful. It also studies how the Sister Cities International relationship of La Crosse, Wisconsin, and Dubna, Russia has achieved a level of success that many partnerships in that program seek as a goal. Additionally, this thesis creates a “road map” for states contemplating ED/SD projects. Finally, it assesses the SPP’s ability to create social capital, which, in turn, contributes to an increase in the economic and/or social “bottom line” of the partners.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Relations that began as simple military-to-military contacts within the State Partnership Program have blossomed into associations encompassing nearly every facet of society – unit partnerships, sister cities, student exchanges, scientific collaborations and business ties.¹

This statement, given by Gen. Joseph W. Ralston, Commander, United States European Command, to the House Armed Services Committee in the spring of 2002, bodes well for the National Guard's State Partnership Program (SPP). The SPP is a Defense Department sponsored program that links the National Guard of a given state with the military of a developing nation. Gen. Ralston gives the SPP program a resounding "thumbs-up" for its ability to embody elements of partnership not likely imagined during the program's inception in 1992. In fact Ralston's quote indicates that the pinnacle of most SPP relationships would be moving the connection from military-to-military contact into civilian-to-civilian partnerships. This is the case for two main reasons.

First, the connections made at the civilian-to-civilian level could help states in dissolving their military-to-military connections with the partner country, thus shifting the bulk of the SPP tasks to a state's non-military organization. By doing this, it would allow the Guard to begin the SPP military and civilian process anew with another nation. As of the summer of 2002, 34 states participate in the SPP. There are more countries that are searching for states than states searching for countries. The demand of nations that wish to participate clearly indicates a need to move older programs into civilian-to-civilian relations.

The National Guard's State Partnership Program is now 10 years old, with the first SPP between Latvia-Michigan having commenced in 1992. During this time, many

¹ Gen. Joseph Ralston, "Defending Freedom, Fostering Cooperation and Promoting Stability" (testimony given by EUCOM Combatant Commander Ralston to The House Armed Services Committee, Washington, D.C., 20 March 2002), available from <http://www.house.gov/hasc/openingstatementsandpressreleases/107thcongress/02-03-20ralston.html>; Internet; site accessed 29 May 2002.

of the SPP programs have made great strides in military-to-military relationships, some have made strides in military-to-civilian relationships, and others have made strides in civilian-to-civilian relationships. When speaking to senior National Guard leadership, proud talk of successes made in many of the partner programs is commonplace. Almost certain to be addressed by senior leaders is success made by states in creating business-to-business and social contacts between states and SPP countries.

Second, the National Guard, through established and growing partnerships, is creating social networks that can serve as launching points for economic and social development initiatives. There is an initiative taking place in international development circles that seeks to foster relationships, like those found in the SPP, as a precursor to effective economic and social development. These connections are generally referred to in development literature as social networks. The networks create, again from the development literature, social capital. From this capital, nations can draw benefits that aid in economic and social development.

A. PURPOSE OF THESIS

Taking a partnership, built on a foundation of military-to-military contacts, between a United State's National Guard State Headquarters with the military of an emerging or growing democracy, to a partnership of the National Guard's home state's civilian population partnered with that emerging democracy's civilian population is no small feat. How a state's National Guard and a partner country accomplish this critical civilian-to-civilian linkage is at the foundation of this thesis that seeks to:

- Assess the tenets of success that have made some economic development (ED) and social development (SD) initiatives within the SPP successful.
- Create a "road map" for states contemplating an ED/SD project to follow.
- Assess the State Partnership Program's ability to create social capital that, in turn, contributes to an increase in the economic and/or social "bottom line" of the partners. The creation of social capital in the program will aid states in turning over the SPP from military leadership to civilian leadership, leaving the Guard free to start the important SPP anew.

B. METHODOLOGY

To understand how the SPP carried out ED and SD projects, I will be using a case study of a State Partnership Program, focusing on interviews with business, not-for-profit, and National Guard leaders who have been instrumental in making ED/SD a focal point of their SPP. I will also contact partner country leadership (social/business/military) to solicit their impression of the ED/SD project. Additionally, I will interview personnel who were serving on Military Liaison Teams (MLT) in the partner country when the initiative was started. The MLT team serves as a conduit of information between the state and the partner country. In a sense, they are the “eyes, ears, and voice” for the state in the partner country.

Additionally, I will draw experiences from the Sister-Cities International program. Here I will use the same interview methodology to solicit comments from a U.S. municipality that has been/are involved in an exchange program with another foreign municipality. The experiences of the Sister-City International program and the State Partnership Program are very similar in that they seek to make social or economic in-roads into the partnered city or nation. The Sister-Cities program, established in 1956 as an initiative from President Eisenhower to connect people across the globe, has had many years to hone their program and offers valuable insight into making “connections” worthwhile.²

C. THESIS ORGANIZATION

The second chapter of this thesis provides historical insight into the creation of the State Partnership Program and the program’s goal of leveraging a state’s assets as a tool of U.S. strategic shaping. I will discuss social capital as it is referenced in contemporary literature, and put the SPP in the context of developing social capital, which in part, has at its roots the growth of partnerships and connections that can serve to inspire economic and social development. This chapter will also define economic development (ED) and social development (SD) within the SPP framework. Next, I will show how I chose my cases for comparison. I then will explain how I generated data for

² Sister Cities International, “History,” available from <http://www.sister-cities.org/sci/aboutsci/history>; Internet, site accessed 30 May 2002.

the case comparison and explain the methodology I used for examining ED/SD projects carried out by the partners.

The third chapter of this thesis will be the first of my case studies; the municipal relationship between La Crosse, Wisconsin and Dubna, Russia. In the fourth chapter of this thesis, Maryland's partnership with Estonia will be studied. The last chapter will make will offer similarities and differences between the two cases, and suggestions for future research.

II. SETTING THE STAGE FOR CIVILIAN-TO-CIVILIAN CONNECTIONS

A. THE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The State Partnership Program grew from the fertile ashes of the breakup of the Soviet Union. As the communist regime retreated from her satellites, she left a military leadership void and an opportunity for the U.S. to purposefully shape the region. The United States European Command (EUCOM) began strategically shaping the region after the breakup of the Warsaw Pact by creating Military Liaison Teams in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, staffed with United States reserve personnel. Reserve soldiers were used, as opposed to U.S. active personnel, to send a less provoking signal to the Russian Federation.³ The National Guard seized this unique opportunity as well, and submitted a proposal to EUCOM in which it offered to partner a state National Guard entity with a partner country that was transitioning from authoritarianism into democracy. In this, the Guard would pair the unique talents of its citizen soldiers, soldiers who work in almost every facet of American economic life, and the command structure of the National Guard with the military leadership of the partner nation.

Soon after the first partnering of Latvia and Michigan, Estonia was partnered with Maryland and Lithuania with Pennsylvania. The National Guard, over time, created an operational definition for the State Partnership Program, as it came to be known. For states participating in the program the following guidelines were established:

The primary objective of the National Guard's cooperative efforts with other nations is to support the National Security Strategy of the United States. The National Security Strategy in 1997 is aimed at advancing our national interests in an era of unique opportunities and dangers. It is premised on the belief that both our domestic strength and our leadership abroad are essential to advancing our goal of a safer, more prosperous America. Building upon America's unmatched strengths, the strategy's three core objectives are:

³ National Guard Bureau Homepage, "SPP Information Paper National Guard State Partnership Program," available from http://www.ngb.dtic.mil/staff/ia/spp_info_paper.shtml; Internet, site accessed 31 May 2002.

- To enhance our security with effective diplomacy and with military forces that are ready to fight and win.
- To bolster America's economic prosperity.
- To promote democracy and human rights abroad.⁴

From this mission statement, the National Guard created five objectives for the State Partnership Program:⁵

1. Demonstrate military subordination to civilian authority.
2. Demonstrate military support to civilian authorities.
3. Assist in the development of democratic institutions.
4. Foster open market economies to help bring stability.
5. Project and represent U.S. humanitarian values.

It was reasoned that the Guard was uniquely positioned to meet these five objectives because of the distinctive dual missioning of the National Guard, having both a federal and state mission. During peacetime, the Guard is subordinate to the command of a state's governor, and during a federal emergency the Guard becomes a federal military asset. The Guard's training thus encompasses responding to state and federal contingencies. During a state mission the National Guard is instrumental in coordinating emergency support to civilian authorities and aiding the authorities in mitigating the consequences of emergencies. Learning this skill is of particular interest to most SPP nations.

Additionally, the Guard has the ability to leverage a state's assets in helping to meet these objectives. Many guardsmen are involved in occupations outside of their military responsibilities in which they could bring those skills to bear in meeting the objectives. Guardsmen may have business and social connections that enable them to

⁴ National Guard Bureau, International Affairs Division, "Doctrine for National Guard Cooperative Efforts With Other Nations," April 1998, p 7.

⁵ John Groves, Jr., PfP and the State Partnership Program: Fostering Engagement and Progress, *Parameters*, Spring 1999, [magazine on-line]; available from <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/99spring/groves.htm>; Internet, site accessed 4 June 2002.

bring resources to the program outside of what might be thought of as traditional military assets.

B. EXAMPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

At the disposal of the State Partnership Program are three types of engagement methods: military-to-military, military-to-civilian, and civilian-to-civilian. Within each of these methods, the Guard and the partner country work together to plan and coordinate the activity encompassed in each event. Since its inception, the SPP always had as its focal point military-to-military contact. This contact has, at its roots, troop exchanges between the partner countries and the state. In 1993, I experienced this exchange process first hand as a Michigan Army National Guard soldier. While an infantry platoon leader, six members of the Latvian Defense Force filled the ranks of my platoon. Latvian soldiers “shadowed” my soldiers throughout the annual training period and participated in after action reviews. These troop exchanges have been replicated throughout the National Guard, and while still unique, they have become more routine. The small unit exchanges, as in my example, do not constitute training, but merely seek to facilitate the flow of information, and a shared military experience between the two groups, thus solidifying the connection.

The SPP has grown from small unit exchanges to larger, more involved military exchanges. In 2000, the Maryland National Guard, along with U.S. Marine engineers and Navy Seabees, conducted engineering exercises with soldiers from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In addition to the benefits of the exchange, which involved hundreds of soldiers, sailors, Marines, and foreign troops, participants in the exercise in Estonia renovated a soup kitchen in Tallinn, built a covered play area at an orphanage in Viljandi, and erected a bridge over a river at Poltsamaa.⁶

These small unit contacts began to serve as a precursor for more senior level military exchanges. These senior level military-to-military contacts within the SPP have focused, in large part, on reinforcing the idea of civilian control of the military, the

⁶ National Guard Bureau Homepage, “SPP Information Paper National Guard State Partnership Program,” available from http://www.ngb.dtic.mil/staff/ia/spp_info_paper.shtml; Internet, site accessed 31 May 2002.

democratization process, the establishment of a vibrant non-commissioned officer corps, and military support of civilian authorities (MSCA).

Military-to-civilian contact is a key component of military support to civilian authorities' instruction, and is a widely used engagement method in the SPP. Kentucky's partnership with Ecuador shows the creativity that can be used in military-to-civilian contacts. After the signing of a peace treaty in 1998 between neighbors Peru and Ecuador, Kentucky arranged for their partner Ecuador and West Virginia's partner Peru, to come together at a conference in Cincinnati, Ohio to discuss emergency preparedness. Civilian emergency planners from both countries attended the regional disaster preparedness seminar and discussed areas of common concern in relation to the "formerly disputed border area."⁷ This cooperative effort, supported in part by the SPP, has continued to enhance the growth of relations in the region. In February 2000, representatives from Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, and West Virginia attended the first Andean Region Conference on Disasters in Quito, Ecuador. This event brought together Andean Ridge region neighbors, United Nations officials, and non-governmental organizations. At the conclusion of the event, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia signed an historical disaster cooperation agreement.⁸

Civilian-to-civilian engagement within the SPP very often represents a mature relationship. As such, examples of this type of engagement can be seen in older partnerships. Maryland and Estonia have made strides in educational initiatives. Maryland has obtained scholarships for Estonian students to attend universities in Maryland. Additionally, Maryland state educators have worked with their Estonian counterparts to create distance-learning programs in Estonia.⁹

North Carolina and Moldova have also made great strides in civilian-to-civilian contact. The activities between the partners have been economic, humanitarian, and culturally focused. After a severe insulin shortage in Moldova, North Carolina physician

⁷ John Groves, Jr., Effective Engagement, The Case of Ecuador, *Joint forces Quarterly*, Autumn (2000): p 48 [journal on-line], available from http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/1026.pdf; Internet, site accessed 25 May 2002.

⁸ National Guard Bureau Homepage, "International Affairs Directorate FY00 Annual Review," available from http://www.ngb.dtic.mil/staff/ia/fy00_review.shtml; Internet, site accessed 31 May 2002.

⁹ Ibid.

Dr. Mort Metzger sought assistance from pharmaceutical manufacturer E. I. Lilly. Lilly, in turn, donated \$77,000 worth of insulin to the country.¹⁰ Many other humanitarian efforts have been carried out by North Carolinians. For example, Moldavians have come to North Carolina for surgery, and fundraisers in North Carolina have raised funds and solicited for donations of equipment to furnish a health clinic. North Carolina has also embraced business opportunities in Moldova. The state has established a business commission that seeks to identify opportunities in Moldova for North Carolina companies; in turn Moldavian companies have found a home for some of their goods in North Carolina.¹¹

C. PROCESS FOR PARTNERING AND CURRENT PARTNERSHIPS

The partner country seeks out a State Partnership through the U.S. Embassy located in their country; the National Guard Bureau (NGB) does not solicit relationships with partner countries. The process for initiating a new relationship involves seven steps.¹²

- Nation initiates State Partnership Program (SPP) request through U.S. Embassy.
- U.S. Ambassador approves and forwards to Combatant Commander.
- Combatant Commander approves and forwards through Joint Staff to Interagency Working Group (IWG).
- IWG approves and forwards to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau for concurrence and assignment of a partner state.
- NGB International Affairs (NGB-IA) identifies potential partner states, conducts a thorough analysis, and recommends best match.
- The Chief of the National Guard Bureau selects a partner state and returns approved partnership through IWG, Joint Staff, and Combatant Commander to the U.S. Ambassador.
- SPP activities are initiated, as will be discussed below.

Following a request to partner a nation with a state, the National Guard Bureau (NGB) uses the following criteria to ensure the partner nation is a “right fit” for

¹⁰ North Carolina - Moldova Partnership, “Humanitarian Projects,” available from <http://www.secretary.state.nc.us/Partnership/humanitarian.htm>; Internet, site accessed 9 June 2002.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² The National Guard Bureau State Partnership Program, (National Guard Bureau Briefing, January 2002) PowerPoint presentation.

partnering. The optimum SPP partnership is one in which: the Host Nation professes genuine interest in Partnership; U.S. and theater engagement objectives are satisfied; the Force Protection risk is low; a minimum of additional resources is required to execute engagement; and National Guard core engagement competencies, particularly military support to civil authority (MSCA), are heavily incorporated.¹³In addition to finding the “right fit” for a partner country, NGB seeks to create the “right fit” for the state. There is an attempt to partner states along ethnic or geographic similarities. For example, Michigan was partnered with Latvia because Michigan has a large Latvian-American population. Colorado was linked with Slovenia because of similar topography and the significant Slovene population within the state. Around the end of the 19th Century, there were many Slovenes in the mines, smelters, and other industries throughout Colorado. Slovene churches were established in Leadville and Pueblo, Colorado. Additionally, a significant number of Slovenes settled in the Denver area.¹⁴

From the first SPP relationship established between Michigan and Latvia in 1992, 33 additional relationships have been formed.¹⁵

The 17 State Partnerships in the USEUCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) are:

Alabama - Romania	California - Ukraine
Colorado - Slovenia	Georgia - Republic of Georgia
Illinois - Poland	Indiana - Slovakia
Maryland - Estonia	Michigan - Latvia
Minnesota - Croatia	North Carolina - Moldova
Ohio - Hungary	Pennsylvania - Lithuania
New Jersey - Albania	Tennessee - Bulgaria
Texas & Nebraska - Czech Republic	Utah - Belarus
Vermont - Macedonia	

The four State Partnerships in the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) AOR are:

Arizona - Kazakhstan	Louisiana - Uzbekistan
----------------------	------------------------

¹³ National Guard, *Information Paper*.

¹⁴ The Society for Slovene Studies, “Slovenia-Colorado State Partnership,” <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~ljubljan/bulletin/colorado.html>; Internet, site accessed 9 June 2002.

¹⁵ National Guard, *Information Paper*.

Montana - Kyrgyzstan

Nevada - Turkmenistan

The eleven State Partnerships in the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) AOR are:

Connecticut - Uruguay

Massachusetts - Paraguay

Puerto Rico - Honduras

Florida - Venezuela

Mississippi - Bolivia

Washington DC - Jamaica

Kentucky - Ecuador

Louisiana - Belize

Missouri - Panama

New Hampshire - El Salvador

West Virginia - Peru

The two State Partnerships in the U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) AOR are:

Hawaii & Guam - Philippines

Washington - Thailand

Table 1. State Partnerships as of 1 November 2002

In addition to the 34 partnerships listed above, there is currently work being done to partner South Africa, Tunisia, Morocco, and Mongolia with states.

D. THE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM LIFECYCLE MODEL

With 34 states already partnered and four additional partnerships under consideration, it is easy to ascertain that the SPP has a need to create a State Partnership lifecycle. This lifecycle would set forth guidelines for states to follow, offering them goals to take their relationships from inception to maturation. The desire to establish a lifecycle is under serious consideration by the Combatant Commander of EUCOM. The European Command has embraced the SPP and wishes to see it extend its area of operation with three of the four proposed partnerships in EUCOM. In cooperation with the National Guard Bureau, they have created a lifecycle model. The goal of the lifecycle model is to expand the program in the theatre. It is sensitive to the realization that there is limited funding available for “engagement” efforts, and the model seeks to move the SPP in a direction where it will rest firmly on the foundation of civilian-to-civilian relationships. The SPP Lifecycle plan has been staffed by NGB and EUCOM, and the Deputy Combatant Commander of EUCOM has approved the draft document. The next step for the approval of the model is to brief to, and receive from, National Guard

Adjutant's Generals whose states are partnered with EUCOM countries. The model below depicts the three phases envisioned by EUCOM and NGB.¹⁶

EUCOM SPP Lifecycle

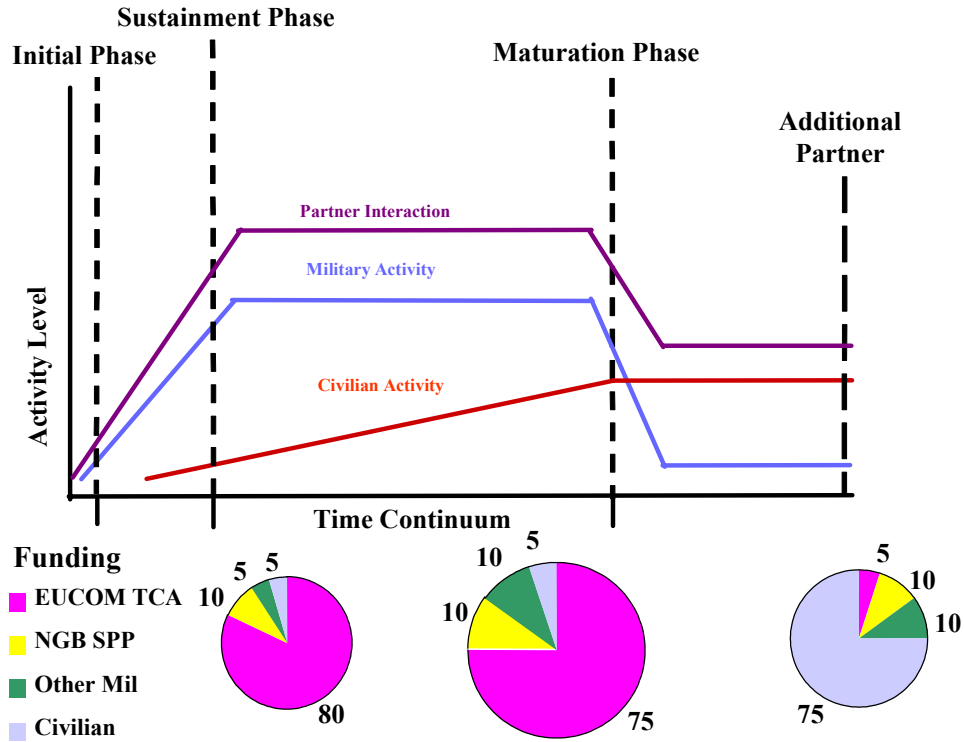


Figure 1. Proposed State Partnership Lifecycle Model

The three-phased model depicts who has primary financial responsibility for the SPP and it illustrates, the plan to move the partnership from military-to-military contact to military-to-civilian, and eventually to as close as possible a civilian-to-civilian partnership.

Phase one, or the initial phase, is characterized as the gradual introduction and development of a mutually beneficial relationship between a designated U.S. state and its designated partner nation.¹⁷ In the case of EUCOM, the initial relationship is financed largely by traditional Combatant Command activity (TCA) funds. Planning during this early phase is coordinated between the partners, NGB-International Affairs, EUCOM,

¹⁶ "Lifecycle of the National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) in the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) (U)" (draft recommendation signed by Deputy, CINC EUCOM, proposal waiting NGB approval), 2 March 2002.

¹⁷ Ibid.

and the Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC). Activities at this early stage are generally planned ahead three years. This planning cycle permits budget planners to program for SPP activities ahead of time. During this phase, activities in the SPP are centered on military-to-military functions. Events such as small unit exchanges and initial military support to civilian authorities (MSCA) are common during this phase. Also, during this phase, it is common for state government and civilian officials to be introduced to partner government and civilian officials.¹⁸

The chart above indicated that the majority, 80 percent, of financing for SPP activities during this initial phase comes from the CINC TCA funds. The National Guard SPP funds, partner country funds, and civilian generated funds would encompass the remaining 20 percent.

Phase two, or the sustainment phase, is characterized as the active growth phase and flowering of the relationship between the partners in a respective SPP to achieve maximum, positive impact on United States Government (USG) and EUCOM objectives.¹⁹ During this phase it would be common to see relationships progressing because of the growing comfort level felt between the two partners. During phase two, EUCOM security cooperation campaign activities are implemented with the partner. Because of an increased emphasis by EUCOM to pursue USG objectives, there is a funding increase to support the partnership. During this phase of military-to-military contact increases, as demonstrated by unit exchanges and combined exercises between partners. Other activities that were set as goals by the partners are, typically, expanded. The percentages of funding are generally the same, but partner countries are asked to contribute more. Civilian relationships should be fostered during this time, as they serve as the key component of the relationship during the maturity phase.

Phase three, or the maturity phase, is characterized as a maturation of the partnership that allows transition from a relationship based upon military oriented activities to one based upon civilian activities.²⁰ Additionally, during this phase, USG and EUCOM objectives are characterized as secure, and the partner country maintains a

¹⁸ Ibid., 2.

¹⁹ Ibid., 3.

²⁰ Ibid.

stable relation with the U.S. Another indicator of a mature relationship is manifested in a preponderance of partnership interaction being facilitated through civilian agencies and oriented around civilian activities. Additionally, funding for these activities comes from sources other than EUCOM such as other USG agencies, state partner state government sources, or non-governmental organizations. Activities during this phase are not entirely focused on civilian-to-civilian exchanges: military-to-military events that focus on interoperability issues or opportunities that improve partner access would be pursued also. These types of military events would still be facilitated via military channels.

Funding during this phase shifts mainly from TCA funds to the majority of funding being supplied by civilian agencies. Shifting the majority of financial support to civilian agencies during the maturity phase would free up TCA funds to be used to create other partnerships in the theatre. The EUCOM Lifecycle Plan does not call for the complete severing of long-established connections. Instead, it seeks to grow the relationship from an engagement and shaping tool carried out by the National Guard, to one carried out, mostly, by agencies, individuals, and organizations within a state.

It is seemingly difficult for a state National Guard to let go of a relationship that they have nurtured and grown for years.²¹ In addition to states not wanting to let go for nostalgic reasons, many National Guard units believe that the goal of transferring the majority of financial burden in the maturity phase to civilian agencies is unattainable. They fear that failure at this stage would undermine the previous accomplishments of the program.²² It is thus important to understand how this transition can be carried out successfully. There is a moving list of countries that wish to participate in the SPP; unfortunately with every nation that joins, there is one less state that can participate. The lifecycle model offers states a goal for growing their relationships to a point where the sustainment of the program can be carried out by the civilian agencies within the partnership.

E. CREATING STRONG AND LASTING CIVILIAN CONNECTIONS, THE HEART OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

²¹ LTC Kashi Yatto, NGB-IA EUCOM Chief, interview by author, paper, Monterey, Calif., 30 May 2002.

²² Ibid.

The reluctance of states to let go of relationships built with hard work and based on mutual trust and respect in order to start new ones, offers indications that the conditions to begin shifting partnerships to other non-military organizations within the state may be just right. Partnerships that have sought to expand relationships beyond military-to-military contacts and into civilian-to-civilian contacts are perhaps the best candidates for realizing the goals of the lifecycle model. The strength of lasting ties between state and partner civilian agencies and organizations that have been realized in mature relationships, has the potential for offering both partners even longer lasting and beneficial relations, without relying on the military ties that once bound the partnership.

The State Partnership Program is not only performing important U.S. strategic shaping, as attested to by Gen. Ralston, but also creating a network of people that spans national boundaries. Just as global economic connectivity has proven itself to contribute to a strong and stable state,²³ so to has connectivity between diverse groups. The existence of relationships between associations, with a voluntary connection, has proven itself in promoting democratic stability. Also, it has been shown that associations that are connected to the larger community have a positive effect on fostering democratic tolerance, while isolated associations have a negative effect.²⁴

Within contemporary development circles, this idea of forging relationships between people as a way of fostering economic and social development is widely held as a key component to successful development initiatives. The idea of development being fostered through relationship building is often referred to as social capital. Perhaps the simplest way of looking at social capital is as networking without nepotism. The State Partnership Program, from its very inception, began creating social capital, as will be defined later, between partners. This type of capital, if fostered and developed between

²³ The CIA's *Task Force on State Failure*, stated that the openness of a state's economy, along with democracy and adequate health care all contributed to the vitality of a state. That the presence of an adequate amount of these three things assists in keeping states from failing is shown in Jeffery Sachs, "American Foreign Aid," *The Economist*, 14 Jul 2001, 32.

²⁴ Mildred Warner argued that groups that "cross-cut" or bridged social boundaries are more connected to other associations and to the larger community. This bridging increases social contact and increases a group members' tolerance of others because of the contact. Groups that remain isolated, she argues, reduce exposure to new ideas and fuel the creation of social cleavages. Therefore, she states, associations connected to a larger community view democracy more favorably than those groups that remain isolated. See Mildred Warner, "Social capital construction and the role of the local state," *Journal of Rural Sociology* (Sep 1999).

partners, is a major component of helping states realize the lifecycle model, thus allowing the military to start a new relationship. I would like to introduce the concept of social capital by offering definitions from some of the major authors and institutions that study and apply social capital.

While social capital is an old idea, it hadn't become known as such until 1916. In one of its first known uses, West Virginian State School Supervisor L.J. Hanifan wrote about community involvement in creating successful schools:²⁵

...If he comes into contact with his neighbor, and they with other neighbors, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy his social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole community. The community as a whole will benefit by the cooperation of all its parts, while the individual will find in his association the advantages of the help, the sympathy, and the fellowship of his neighbors.²⁶

Education social scientist James S. Coleman broadened the idea of social capital and applied it to an educational setting. He used the baseline ideas of social capital to identify factors of successful students. Coleman, through his research, developed the following operational definition of social capital:

Just as physical capital is created by making changes in materials so as to form tools that facilitate production, human capital is created by changing persons so as to give them skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways.

Social capital, in turn, is created when relations among persons change in ways that facilitate action. Physical capital is wholly tangible, being embodied in observable material form; human capital is less tangible, being embodied in the skills and knowledge acquired by an individual; social capital is even less tangible, for it is embodied in the relations among persons. Physical capital and human capital facilitate production, and social capital does so as well. For example, a group whose members manifest trustworthiness and place extensive trust in one another will be

²⁵ Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 19.

²⁶ Lyda Judson Hanifan, "The Rural School Community Center," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 67 (1916): 130, quoted in Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 19.

able to accomplish much more than a comparable group lacking that trustworthiness and trust.²⁷

Coleman cited many cases where social capital has been created. However, for it to be created, he suggests two conditions must be present: the level of trustworthiness of the social environment, which means that obligations will be repaid, and the actual extent of obligations held.²⁸

An example of trustworthiness within a given organization can be seen in what some Belizean women do when they are involved in “syndicate” lending. In syndicate lending, a group of women get together, and each month the women all deposit an equal share of a predetermined amount of money. Every month one of the women in the group collects all the money and is free to use the money as she sees fit. The next month the women again all deposit the same amount of money, and another woman collects the pot. Without a high degree of trustworthiness among group members, syndicate lending like this could not work. The collective saving and lending practice works because the women all agree to complete the cycle. If one dissents, she would face social sanctions that could bear a price higher than the amount of money she was to contribute each month.

Individuals who are owed a high degree of obligations are said to be banking social capital. Coleman cites farming communities to make his point. A farmer who has his hay bailed by another, and where his farm tools are extensively borrowed and lent has created social capital (favors owed to the farmer). Using this created social capital will allow each farmer to get his work done with less physical capital.²⁹ Such a social structure allows the farmer to bank debts owed him and perhaps use them at a later day. This banking of social capital would not exist without norms of reciprocity and effective sanctions against persons who defect from the system. Coleman’s work parallels many of the conditions seen in everyday life. People, generally, want to help their neighbor, and in return they would feel comfortable seeking out help from that same neighbor in the future.

²⁷ James S. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 304

²⁸ Coleman, *Foundations*, 306.

²⁹ Coleman, *Foundations*, 309.

Robert D. Putnam, in his book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, cited declining social capital, as manifested in waning participation in bowling leagues, as a factor in deteriorating communities in America. He cites powerful movements of association that developed in the first two thirds of the last century in American communities. Record numbers of Americans were joining groups like the Elks, Masons, and the Knights of Columbus. However, in the later one third of the century, America's associational tide began to wane. This, Putnam argues, has at its roots many variables, from overwork to suburban sprawl. His work is perhaps the most comprehensive in contemporary social capital research.

Important for placing the State Partnership Program into the social capital creation vein is Putnam's definition of bonding and bridging social capital. Within these two types of social capital, most relations between people can be seen. In bonding (or exclusive), social capital tends to look inward, and is best exemplified by ethnic fraternal organizations or fashionable country clubs. This type of social capital tends to reinforce exclusive identities and homogenous grouping.³⁰ Juxtaposed to bonding social capital is bridging (or inclusive) social capital. In bridging, social capital encompasses networks that are outward looking and gather together people from a wide and diverse social cleavage.³¹

Bonding social capital, Putnam argues, is better for mobilizing solidarity among group members, offering support to less fortunate members of the group, and offering financial support and access to markets to members. However bonding social capital may offer a dark side, in that it has the potential to create strong in-group identification, while at the same time creating animosity towards out-groups. Thus, this type of social capital has the ability to offer negative external effects. Bridging social capital is better for linking members to external assets and for diffusing information throughout the community. Putnam offers that bonding social capital is a kind of sociological superglue, whereas bridging social capital is a kind of sociological WD-40.³²

³⁰ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 22.

³¹ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 22.

³² *Ibid.*, 23.

Under many circumstances both bridging and bonding social capital have powerful positive social effects. Many groups simultaneously bond along some social dimension and bridge across others. The black church, for example, brings together people of the same race and religion across class lines. The Knights of Columbus was created to bridge cleavages among different ethnic communities while bonding along religious and gender lines. Internet chat groups may bridge across geography, gender, age, and religion, while being tightly homogenous in education and ideology. In short, bonding and bridging are not “either-or” categories into which social networks can be tightly divided, but “more or less” dimensions along which we can compare different forms of social capital.³³

The successful State Partnership Program fits extremely well within Putnam’s description of bridging social capital. The SPP that has made civilian-to-civilian connections a focal point of the program seeks to bring together civilians from both a state and a partner nation. Citizens of North Carolina and citizens of Moldova, with an interest in children’s health care, have come together to provide material and financial assistance to Moldavian children, thus bonding together with an interest in health and bridging people together across the globe. Californian dairy farmers have aided their dairy-farming brethren in the Ukraine, again bridging people together across geographic and ethnic lines.

Sociologist Alejandro Portes, when writing about transnational communities, captured the essence of bridging social capital. When the residents of a small farming community in the Mixteca region of Mexico wanted a clean water supply, they turned to a private civic group for support. The committee delivered, raising \$50,000 to help the village purchase needed supplies.

This story, reported by the sociologist Robert C. Smith, might seem to be an unremarkable tale of civic cooperation. The water committee, however, wasn’t in Ticuani or even in Mexico. It was in Brooklyn, New York. Nor was this just a case of immigrants sending money back home; thanks to modern telecommunications and air travel, the committee was directly involved. After learning that the tubes had arrived, the committee members flew from JFK Airport on a Friday, conferred with contractors and authorities over the weekend, and returned in time for work Monday morning.³⁴

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Alejandro Portes, “Global Villagers: The Rise of Transnational Communities, *The American* 19

This type of transnational relationship, reports Portes, is a growing phenomenon. The relationships are growing due to better communication infrastructure, transportation, and the liberalization of free trade laws. Portes believes that these types of transnational relationships rely on assets of shared information, trust, and contacts.³⁵

Fostering this type of social connectivity has gained popular support in the delivery and implementation of governmental and non-governmental aid. The World Bank is currently sponsoring research that seeks to investigate how to cultivate social capital in developing nations. This foundation of social capital in the international development context will lay the groundwork for the successful implementation of aid programs.

The World Bank offers a simple definition of social capital: social capital refers to the norms and networks that enable collective action.³⁶ Before social capital can be created outside borders, it starts to be created within groups, communities, and nations. The World Bank is keenly interested in fostering social capital development in countries that receive Bank funds. The Bank has undertaken a major research initiative into finding ways to create and sustain social capital. In so doing, the Bank believes, the poor whom the Bank is trying to help will have a better opportunity to be stakeholders in the development process. Research sponsored by the Bank has brought Dr. Robert Bates and his work in ethnic conflict studies to the following conclusion:³⁷

There is growing empirical evidence that social capital contributes significantly to sustainable development. Sustainability is to leave future generations as many, or more, opportunities as we ourselves have had. Growing opportunity requires an expanding stock of capital. The traditional composition of natural capital, physical or produced capital, and human capital needs to be broadened to include social capital. Social

Prospect, vol. 7 no. 25 (2000): [journal on-line], available from <http://www.prospect.org/print/V7/25/portes-a.html>; Internet, site accessed 12 April 2002.

³⁵ Portes, *Global*.

³⁶ The World Bank Poverty Net, "Social Capital for Development," available from <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/scapital/index.htm>; Internet, site accessed 9 June 2002.

³⁷ Ismail Serageldin, forward to *Ethnicity, Capital Formation, and Conflict*, by Robert Bates, (The World Bank Working Papers, 1999), available from <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/scapital/wkrpwr/sciwp12.pdf>; Internet, site accessed 19 August 2002.

capital refers to the internal social and cultural coherence of society, the norms and values that govern interactions among people and the institutions in which they are embedded. Social capital is the glue that holds societies together and without which there can be no economic growth or human well-being.

The Bank and its sponsored research has taken hold of Putnam's idea of bridging social capital as a way for the poor to become linked to additional resources and networks. The availability of these new "tools" gained through accumulation of bridging social capital will, the Bank argues, help to alleviate their poverty. The Bank has implemented a policy to integrate social capital goals into its development efforts. They have established a policy that seeks to integrate social capital initiatives into Bank business in the following ways:

- Identify existing pockets of social capital and take care not to destroy them by disabling partnerships and breaking down social cohesion (during the development process).
- Use local-level social capital and participation to deliver projects. For example, a cooperative credit system may function more smoothly among women who already have relationships and a history of networking together to reach common goals.
- Create an environment that enables social capital to thrive by providing infrastructure that helps people to communicate better and promoting rule of law that provides opportunities for recourse if partnerships or associations go awry.
- Invest in social capital directly and indirectly through participatory project design and implementation and fostering cross-sectoral partnerships for development.
- Promote social capital research and learning.³⁸

Running parallel with the work of the World Bank is the work of Michigan State University's Social Capital Initiative. Their research into poverty reduction in the developing world cites many of the ill-fated development schemes of past decades. These

³⁸ The World Bank Group, "Social Capital and the World Bank," available from <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/scapital/bank2.htm#part>; Internet, site accessed 25 June 2002.

schemes that did little to lift the bottom line of average citizens from developing nations, failed to take into account the construction and maintenance of social capital. This failure shows that access to physical and human capital without the creation of social capital has been insufficient in the reduction of poverty.³⁹ Further, the researchers state that the well-being of citizens of the developing world depends not only on access to adequate supplies of physical goods and services, but also on access to socio-emotional goods which are derived primarily from one's stock of social capital.⁴⁰ These socio-emotional goods, in a relationship characterized by social capital, are produced by acts of cooperation, gift giving, information sharing, exchange of supportive information, and shared resources.⁴¹ The researchers argue that when someone receives a socio-emotional good they are more likely to remain loyal to and cooperate with the giver or seller of the good.

F. MEASURING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE SPP AND SISTER CITY PROGRAM

The State Partnership Program, a program that seeks to connect people across borders, creates social capital. The creation of this social capital has the power to cement civilian ties within the program. These ties, if maintained by the civilians who have become the conduit of connections within the SPP, have the potential to sustain the partnership post-military involvement. In later chapters I will show how social capital has been created within a specified SPP, and in a specific Sister-Cities International relationship. Within the specific case studies, I will show how the programs have fostered what Coleman uses in his definition of social capital as creating trustworthiness of the social environment, and the creation of obligations between group members. Additionally, I will show that the relationships have created what Putnam refers to as bonding social capital in the case of the Sister-Cities, and bridging social capital in both the SCI and SPP. The definition of social capital, given at the Poverty Reduction Conference, will closely parallel the type of cooperative behavior being exhibited in my case studies.

³⁹ Lindon J. Robinson, Marcelo E. Siles, A. Allan Schmid, *Social Capital and Poverty Reduction: Toward a Mature Paradigm*, (paper presented at the International Invitational Conference: "Social Capital and Poverty Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean: Toward a New Paradigm, Santiago de Chile, 24-26 September 2001), 2

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 7

Social capital is a living and breathing thing. It must be kept alive by the people of the community in which it was created. If motivation to continue the relationship wanes so too will the accumulated stock of social capital. I hope to offer states a guide that will enhance their ability, and more importantly define the tools needed, to move their relationship to the civilian-to-civilian level. These tools will help states foster the kind of relationships that enables General Ralston to proclaim the following in reference to the State Partnership Program:

When delegations from Tennessee, Minnesota, Indiana, Alabama, Vermont, Illinois, Kansas, and California conducted civic leader visits to SPP counterpart countries, the long-term vision for SPP had been realized moving beyond military-to-military contacts into other important elements of society. Through these activities, state civilian officials, in the realms of education, commerce, agriculture, medical emergency services, and disaster response exchange their considerable knowledge and expertise with their partner-nation counterparts.⁴²

G. DEFINING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Just as there are many similar definitions of social capital, so too are there of economic and social development. Generally, all of these definitions have at their core the same basic principles. In the case of social development, common to all is: development that seeks to improve the standards in which people live. And in the case of economic development, common to all is: raising the economic “bottom line” of those that the process is directed towards. When observing the SPP process I would like to define actions within the program using the following definitions of economic and social development:

Economic Development: Economic development, within the SPP and Sister-Cities programs, seeks to fulfill the following objective: create policies and programs explicitly directed at improving the business climate through specific efforts, business

⁴² Gen. Joseph Ralston, “Protecting our Nation, Preserving Stability, and Seizing Strategic Opportunities” (written testimony given by EUCOM Combatant Commander Ralston to The Senate Appropriations Committee, Washington, D.C., 20 March 2002), available from <http://www.senate.gov/~appropriations/defense/testimony/Ralston.htm> ; Internet; site accessed 29 May 2002.

finance, marketing, neighborhood development, business retention and expansion, and technology transfer.⁴³

Social Development: The goal of social development is to support the empowerment of people by increasing their social assets and capacities and to promote inclusive institutions, thereby increasing peoples' opportunities for more secure livelihoods. Therefore, social development tools and approaches work to improve social processes and institutions, at all levels, to enhance the impact of interventions and encourage equitable and sustainable growth and poverty reduction.⁴⁴

Using these two definitions, I can capture many of the initiatives attempted and completed between the partners, both in the SPP and in the Sister-Cities cases.

H. CASE STUDY SIMILARITIES AND SELECTION

I will include two case studies in this thesis. The first case study will be the State Partnership relationship between the State of Maryland and the Republic of Estonia. The second case study will look at the relationship that has developed between the City of La Crosse, Wisconsin and the City of Dubna, Russia. The relationship between the two cities waves a banner of success within the Sister-Cities International (SCI) partnership program, and again can serve as a guide for effective civilian-to-civilian partnerships. In 2001, CNN and the NY Times illustrated the people-to-people impact when the Dubna, Russia-La Crosse, Wisconsin partnership was cited as a "textbook" example of how Russia can heal itself.⁴⁵ The relationship has made great inroads into aiding a failing health care system in Dubna. Likewise, the relationship has developed numerous educational and business ties. Success stories from the SCI program, like those of La

⁴³ This definition of economic development is inspired by the definition used by the International Economic Development Council. Their expanded definition can be seen at International Economic Development Council, "Economic Development Reference Guide," available at <http://www.iedconline.org/hotlinks/whtecodev.html>; Internet, site accessed 26 June 2002.

⁴⁴ This definition is inspired by the World Bank's definition of social development. As the SPP is a two way process, social development is felt by both the partner state and the partner nation. I have deleted the Bank's use of poor and poverty in my definition because some in the program may, in fact, not be poor at all, as shown in The World Bank Group, "Issue Paper for a World Bank Social Development Strategy," available from [http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/essd/essd.nsf/ed184c367402e19e85256a4f00766cac/0274179f6be6e35785256bbb0063eda6/\\$FILE/SDV-SSP-IssuesNote-Ext.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/essd/essd.nsf/ed184c367402e19e85256a4f00766cac/0274179f6be6e35785256bbb0063eda6/$FILE/SDV-SSP-IssuesNote-Ext.pdf); Internet, site accessed 26 June 2002.

⁴⁵ USAID Homepage, "Eurasia Regional Activities," available from http://www.usaid.gov/country/ee/eurasia_reg/110-0320.html; Internet, site accessed 27 June 2002.

Crosse and Dubna, abound. Equally, success stories from the SPP are frequently highlighted. The civilian connections generated by the two programs, which build trust and a greater understanding amongst participants in the program, I feel, warrant a close comparison.

If SPP partners realize phase three of the EUCOM lifecycle model, then what the SPP is doing by creating civilian-to-civilian linkages closely parallels the goals of the Sister-Cities International (SCI) program. The SCI's mission statement and goals emphasizes that it is the average citizen that can create a successful exchange,⁴⁶

Sister-Cities International (SCI) is described as:

Sister Cities International (SCI) is a nonprofit citizen diplomacy network creating and strengthening partnerships between U.S. and international communities in an effort to increase global cooperation at the municipal level, to promote cultural understanding and to stimulate economic development. SCI leads the movement for local community development and volunteer action by motivating and empowering private citizens, municipal officials and business leaders to conduct long-term programs of mutual benefit.

The Goals of Sister-Cities International are to:

- Develop municipal partnerships between U.S. cities, counties, and states, and similar jurisdictions in other nations.
- Provide opportunities for city officials and citizens to experience and explore other cultures through long-term community partnerships.
- Create an atmosphere in which economic and community development can be implemented and strengthened.
- Stimulate environments through which communities will creatively learn, work, and solve problems together through reciprocal cultural, educational, municipal, business, professional, and technical exchanges and projects.
- Collaborate with organizations in the United States and other countries which share similar goals.

⁴⁶ Sister Cities International, "SCI Mission Statement and Goals," available from <http://www.sister-cities.org/sci/aboutsci/mission>; Internet, site accessed 22 June 2002.

The similarities between Gen. Ralston's description of a mature State Partnership Program and the work of SCI are numerous. Chief among these similarities are the SCI goals to stimulate environments in which reciprocal exchange is present and in developing a connection among governments. In the case of the SCI, government connections would be based on municipality connectivity, and in the case of the SPP, connections would be a state government to a partner's national government. An additional similarity with SCI includes the SPP goals of building long-standing institutional affiliations and people-to-people relationships.⁴⁷ Also, the SPP seeks to expand cooperation in the areas of civil emergency operations, expansion of markets, cultural, scientific and academic exchanges, and the coordination of humanitarian efforts of many governmental and non-governmental organizations. Sister-Cities relationships are not simply random pairings. Much like the aims of SPP partnering, they are paired on historical connections and shared cultural, recreational, geographic, or economic concerns.⁴⁸ Thus, they are grouped much like in the SPP partnering process.

Of course, these two programs differ in the way in which they are initiated. The SPP is generally initiated by the partner nation's military via the U.S. Embassy. The SCI relationship is established when both cities' governmental bodies sign a proclamation establishing the relationship. Upon receipt of the signed document, the SCI headquarters officially recognizes the relationship. The SCI will not accept a relationship between any U.S. city and a partner if the partner city is in a country that does not have diplomatic relations with the U.S.

I. CASE SELECTION

Understanding that the SPP and the SCI, because of their similar goals, are worth comparing, and that accurately examining the courses the two cases traveled offers a rich "road map" for SPP states to follow, I chose the Estonia-Maryland SPP and LaCrosse-Dubna SCI. Estonia and Maryland were among the first established partnerships in the

⁴⁷ National Guard, "Cooperative Efforts"

⁴⁸ W. Zelinsky, "The Twinning of the World: Sister Cities in Geographic and Historical Perspectives," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 81 (1991): quoted in Rolf D. Cremer, A. de Bruin, A. Dupuis, "International Sister Cities: Bridging the Global-Local Divide," *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, Jan. 2001, [journal on-line], article available from http://www.findarticles.com/cf_0/m0254/1_60/74643772/p1/article.jhtml?term=international+sister+cities+%3A+bridging+the+global+laocal+divide; Internet, site accessed 28 April 2002.

SPP. The relationship has endured not only the test of time, but also the test of a change in bureaucracies that administers the program. The program started out as a way to fill the vacuum left by the demise of the Warsaw Pact, and has since developed into a relationship with civilian-to-civilian participation at its center. Because of the active civic participation, and the fact that the relationship can serve as a benchmark for others, it was chosen as my SPP case study.

In a simple search of Sister-Cities relationships on the Internet, one relationship seems to recur repeatedly: the LaCrosse-Dubna SCI. This relationship, like the Estonia-Maryland SPP, has made inroads into improving the economic and social “bottom lines” of the partners. The program has organized an extensive healthcare association between healthcare providers in Wisconsin and in Russia, and it has had numerous cultural and business exchanges. The program has also successfully lobbied for grants for many of its programs. The program is dynamic and represents well the successful SCI partnership.

J. METHODOLOGY/INTERVIEWS

Within both of my case studies I would like to assess the tenets of success that have made some economic development (ED) and social development (SD) initiatives within the SPP and SCI successful. I would also like to give equal weight in my analysis to examining any barriers that have made some ED/SD projects unsuccessful. To conduct this investigation, I will rely mainly on interviews with participants of the respective programs.

Pursuing this line of questioning, which focuses on civilian-to-civilian connectivity in both case studies, has accomplished two goals. First, it has allowed me, in the case of the SPP, to accurately chart the course the partnership took as it sought out civilian-to-civilian opportunities. Secondly, these questions have allowed me to assess the level of connectivity between the two partner’s populations, and they have borne an adequate amount of data to draw conclusions regarding the creation of social capital. For both case studies, the Estonia-Maryland SPP and LaCrosse-Dubna SCI, I used the following questions as a way to begin the investigation:⁴⁹

- **Who was involved in the project outside of the partner coordinators?** The significance of this question is to assess the acceptance of the program outside of those whose designated job is the maintenance of the relationship.
- **Of those who were involved, who has stayed involved, and why?** The significance of this question is to address the “success is contagious” factor. I believe any program that shows significant successes is going to be easier to “sell”. Thus, it would be much easier to get voluntary support of the relationship.
- **What were the partner's expectations for the SPP/SCI?** The purpose of this question is to understand if all of the participants in the program knew what was to come from the relationship. For example: one partner state was to help a partner nation build a health clinic, the partner nation was expecting a “Walter Reed” like facility; obviously their expectations were not satisfied.⁵⁰ This is important because unfulfilled expectations can lead to a lack of long-term involvement.
- **How was SPP and SCI marketed to people outside of the Maryland National Guard or Estonia Military, or the core La Cross/Dubna group?** The purpose of this question is to assess the local media coverage, both in Maryland and Estonia. Adequate coverage of significant relationship events is necessary for a program to gain a wider acceptance among the State’s and Nation’s population.
- **What were the reasons people became involved, what inspired them to participate?** Understanding participant motivation for becoming involved in the program could offer opportunities to garner future participation from those who have never been associated.
- **What have the measurable effects of projects been, initiated via civilian-to-civilian relations?** The purpose of this question is to investigate what benefits have been achieved for the individuals who do not work directly with the SPP. Understanding this will help gauge bridging social capital.
- **What things have happened that were outside the intended objectives (good or bad)?** Just as these questions led me to many other questions, so to have the achieved or attempted projects. Starting one project often led to starting others, or encountering non-anticipated problems.
- **Are the people of Estonia more aware of Marylanders, and vice versa?** In talking with Moldavian Army Major Valeriu Mija,

⁵⁰ Groves, “Fostering Engagement”

an NPS student, it was clear that in the North Carolinian and Moldavian partnership, the people of Moldova were aware of the connection. Maj. Valeriu told me about the extensive media coverage the relationship had gotten as a result of the delivery of the needed insulin for the children of Chisinau, as well as other frequent contacts between the partners.⁵¹ The success of generating familiarity, as described by Maj. Valeriu, is important for me to measure in understanding the generation of social capital in the partnership.

- **Are the connections made by University of Maryland, or other civilian-to-civilian arrangements, growing? If growing, how? If stagnating, why?** The purpose of this question is simple; if the project is growing, perhaps it can be emulated in other projects initiated by other states. Likewise, if the project is stagnating, perhaps understanding the pitfalls of the project can help others avoid the same situation.
- **How have the Maryland National Guard and the U.S. European Command determined if the partnership is successful? How was the success measured?** The importance of understanding the successfulness of a partnership is important for developing a strategy for moving relationships into one represented in the phase three lifecycle model.

⁵¹ Maj. Valeriu Mija, Moldavian Army, interview by author, paper, Monterey, California., 10 June 2002

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III. THE SISTER CITIES RELATIONSHIP OF LA CROSSE AND DUBNA

The pairing of La Crosse, Wisconsin and Dubna, Russia, seems a natural connection, a connection which is based on water. La Crosse sits along the banks of the Mississippi River in southwestern Wisconsin. Dubna is situated where the Moscow Canal merges with the great Volga River. La Crosse is a town of hard working people, whose Norwegian and Germanic heritage lies in the fertile farm fields along the Mississippi. Today, La Crosse, population 51,818, is a city with a vibrant health care and educational industry.⁵² Two major regional hospitals, one university, and two colleges are located in the town.

Dubna is a new city. The city, founded in 1956, was once a Soviet "Secret City," built to support Soviet nuclear research. Because of the "hi-tech" base of the community, many Russian scientists made their homes there. For that reason, the city has accumulated a great deal of intellectual capital. Military-industrial enterprises related to the nuclear research field were also started in the area.⁵³ Since the demise of the Soviet Union, and the related reduction in funding for nuclear and military research, Dubna has had to find alternative economic development opportunities. Today, Dubna boasts over 1,500 large and medium-sized firms, the largest being the Dubna Machine-Building Factory. Others include: the Machinery Engineering Company, the "Atoll" Scientific Research Institute, and a Russian Government space communication center.⁵⁴

The pairing of these two cities began when the threats of a nuclear war between the Soviet Union and the United States were still a concern. In 1988, the people of Dubna sent a letter to the Mayor of La Crosse, which proposed the idea of partnering the two cities. The people of Dubna had learned about the city of La Crosse through a peace

⁵² Vital Statistics for the City of La Crosse, available from: <http://www.lacrosselibrary.org/vital.htm>, Internet, site accessed 28 September 2002.

⁵³ Charles Hanson, Attorney and former President of the La Crosse/Dubna Friendship Association, interview by author, paper, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 5 September 2002.

⁵⁴ About Dubna, "*Business*," available from: <http://www.dubna.ru/english/business.htm>, Internet, site accessed 28 September 2002.

lantern project, where lanterns made by school children in the United States were sent to children throughout the world. One of those lanterns made its way to Dubna. The people of Dubna, led by U.S. ex-patriot Dave Bell, a resident of Dubna, pitched the idea of building a bridge of friendship between the two cities.

The Mayor of La Crosse called a meeting; among those in attendance was local attorney Charles Hanson. Hanson had had some experience with Sister Cities International in the past, having visited the Soviet Union in 1985 with a group of people from Tucson, Arizona, were seeking a partnership with a city in Siberia. Hanson was excited about starting a similar project with Dubna, despite the realities of the Cold War.

The La Crosse group, which began with six members, continued dialogue with Dave Bell and others in Dubna. The group in La Crosse slowly expanded as the core group sought greater membership from the community, increasing in size to 12 citizens. Hanson, as the leader of the group, wanted to gather together people who truly wanted to pursue an active relationship with their new partner city, without turning the relationship into a platform for any member's personal agenda.⁵⁵ A goal of the La Crosse group was to get endorsements from local institutions. The reasoning was that receiving the endorsement of local organizations would be a precursor to greater community involvement. The group received a nod of approval from the local Chamber of Commerce, the two local universities, and the one college, as well as the two major hospitals in the area.⁵⁶

Throughout this process, the group's primary goal was to create an affiliation of people and groups that was apolitical and broad-based in its nature, not only from La Crosse, but from surrounding communities as well.⁵⁷ Additionally, the group sought and received non-profit status, allowing them to receive tax-free contributions. In 1989, with the endorsement of local organizations secured and with non-profit status established, the La Crosse/Dubna Friendship Association was born. The incorporated association's board elected officers from among the association membership.

⁵⁵ Hanson, Interview.

⁵⁶ Charles E. Hanson, *Reflection on a Sister-City Odyssey: La Crosse and Dubna*, Author's personal memoir.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

A. KEY LESSONS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GROUP

- Generate and solicit broad based support within the community, seek endorsements even where an institution may not have an immediate interest in the partnership. An endorsement from a group may be just as valuable as active participation from a group. Institutions, by adding their endorsement, add credibility for the project within the larger community, and can help open doors in the future. Use the endorsement in promotional materials for the organization.
- Look to all local industries and organizations for an endorsement of the group. Even if an organization's activities are far removed from anything the partnership would attempt, they may have members or associates who are interested in some aspect of the partnership.
- Find out who the "movers and shakers" are in the community, and solicit their advice, endorsement, or participation. Get buy-in among local groups.
- Keep the group apolitical and encompassing of a wide variety of ideas. Do not allow members to use their membership in the group as a platform for their own agenda by allowing them to dominate the agenda or the actions of the group.

In 1989, a delegation of five Dubnans visited La Crosse. Among the delegation were three musicians. The musicians were quickly dubbed "The Dubna Trio" by the local media. The threesome was warmly welcomed throughout the city where they performed for audiences. The group received much local media attention. The media's ability to gain access to the group was aided by the La Crosse-Dubna Friendship Association, and was facilitated by the English speaking ability of Russian, Dave Bell. The group's visit was a great public relations success and set the relationship off on the right foot in La Crosse. Between 1989 and 1990 the two groups maintained their relationship via the mail. However, with the slow moving mail, keeping the group's focus on future endeavors was difficult to maintain. Hanson and the others continued to push themselves, realizing there was always something to get done in the meantime.⁵⁸

In 1990, the first official delegation from La Crosse traveled to Dubna. The group of 20 made careful preparations before the trip; their goal was to duplicate the public relations success that the earlier Dubnan delegation had in La Crosse so as to engage the

⁵⁸ Hanson, Interview.

larger Dubnan community. They met frequently to study Russian culture and customs. Additionally, according to Chuck Hanson, part of the purpose of having the group meet so frequently prior to traveling was to ensure that group members weren't simply going along simply for the trip.⁵⁹ Despite the fact that all were paying their own way to Russia, the group members wanted to make certain that those traveling had a vested interest in developing connectivity between the two towns. The frequent meetings were one way the core group could guarantee this. Moreover, the first delegation's composition was thought out, Hanson wanted the first delegation to include people who could explore project opportunities that could serve as linkages between the two cities in the future. Among this first group from La Crosse visiting Dubna was: the Chief Executive of the city's Lutheran Hospital, a local endocrinologist, a veterinarian, a nurse, and Charles Hanson. Their Dubnan counterparts received the group warmly, and all signed the protocol officially establishing the cities partnering.

B. KEY LESSONS FROM THE INITIAL VISITS OF THE PARTNERSHIP

- Include an English speaker in the group visiting the U.S. Hanson noted that Dave Bell's ability to speak English greatly helped endear the visiting Dubnans to the community and to the local media.
- Seek out local media to cover the first visits, and give them something significant to cover.
- Be inclusive of initial groups traveling to the partner country. The first La Crosse group included a cross section of community members. Do not simply include community or group elites. Bring people who can either explore partnering possibilities, or who upon their return, can promote the relationship within their home community.
- Of the members who will be traveling with the groups, ensure there is a significant commitment on their part. Reinforce the magnitude of their visit by meeting frequently to discuss topics pertinent to the group's visit.
- Be open to exploring all kinds of linkages between the two cities; do not limit partnering opportunities to the cities major institutions or businesses.

The group returned from Dubna charged with energy and excitement. Among the first of Hanson's efforts was to partner his church with a Russian Orthodox Church in

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Dubna. His church raised \$700 through bake sales, using the money to purchase the Russian church's main chandelier.⁶⁰ The newly formed board of the La Crosse-Dubna Friendship Association took their mandate even further by creating a newsletter about the new relationship with Dubna. The newsletter was sent to those organizations and individuals who endorsed the group, as well as to others who might one day want to lend their support to the relationship. Non-board membership was extended to interested groups and individuals in the area. Those who joined were offered memberships based on their giving level to the group. Various levels of giving meant different titles associated with the membership. For example, those who gave \$15 a year were considered diplomats, and those who gave \$100 were considered ambassadors in the group. Hanson believed the circulation of the newsletter to those outside the support chain was critical in getting greater inclusion from the La Crosse community, hence, a broader base of support for future endeavors.⁶¹

As the connections between the two cities grew, many unique similarities were discovered. For example, La Crosse, lying on the wide Mississippi, is a water-skier's paradise. From an America-centric perspective, it is hard to believe that such a sport would be popular outside the U.S., but, like La Crosse, Dubna is also a water-skier's paradise because of its location on the Volga. A Russian delegation of water-skiers made its way to La Crosse to display their talents on the Mississippi. Additionally, La Crosse's rich agriculture heritage also lent itself well in the relationship. A gentleman from the Dubna area bred horses, and he wished to show these horses in the U.S. Through a connection made via the La Crosse/Dubna partnership, he was able to ship several of his stock to the La Crosse area for display. This undertaking grew into a business, allowing him to sell his horses in the U.S. Hanson points out that it was simply by talking to people that similarities between the two cities were discovered. From simple conversations about hobbies and interests, some of the partnership's successes came.⁶²

⁶⁰ Hanson, *Reflection*.

⁶¹ Hanson, Interview.

⁶² Ibid.

C. KEY LESSONS FROM THE FIRST EFFORTS OF THE PARTNERSHIP

- Hanson summed it up the best when he stated that some of the group's most pleasant and memorable experiences and exchanges were a result of simply talking to the people and discovering similar interests. From this dialogue came exchanges between water-ski teams, hot air balloon enthusiasts, ham radio operators, and those with an interest in horses, as well as from educational and health institutions.
- Most traveling to Russia, and Russians traveling to La Crosse, stayed in one another's homes. Staying in the homes of each other quickly gave the partners a greater appreciation for the customs, culture, and perspective of the one another.

D. THE LA CROSSE COMMUNITY UNITES: "HANDS ACROSS THE HEARTLAND"

In the early 1990s, the relationship between the two cities began to bear fruit. Partnerships in health and education began to take root. These relationships will be discussed in detail within this chapter. But, let it be noted that despite the Dubna Trio's success and the inroads that were being made in health and education partnerships, the La Crosse community as a whole had yet to get involved. This would soon change.

February 1992 transformed the La Crosse community's relationship with Dubna, as a harsh Russian winter began to bear down on the people of Dubna. The U.S. Congress reacted to the harsh Russian winter by authorizing the shipment of humanitarian goods to Russia. Hanson and the board quickly took note of the opportunity and began to organize. They had to organize quickly if they wanted to take advantage of limited congressional funding for the shipment of the goods. Recognizing that the scope of the project was beyond the means of the La Crosse-Dubna Association, Hanson, with board approval, expanded the effort. The Hands Across the Heartland Committee was formed whose membership now included numerous community leaders. With Hanson acting as Chair, they formed sub-committees which would lead different facets of the project; some working with grocery stores and churches, others working with hospitals or publicity, and others working on the storage and shipment of the donated goods. In-kind contributions, to help in the collection and storage of the goods, came from within the community. The

use of warehouse space and tractor-trailers were given to the group to help them in their efforts. With the infrastructure in place, the group set to work.

Among those who became involved early on was local television anchorman William Hoel. Hoel had thought he had seen efforts like this in the past, however, when he saw the number of people involved and the effort that was taking place, he realized this was different and agreed to help the group market their story. The veteran anchorman knew a softball when he saw one, referring to the good news story of the “Hands” campaign, and he euphemistically stated that this one could be “hit out of the park.”⁶³ Hoel assisted the group in developing a media strategy, making certain that he remained neutral in the campaign, so as not to create a sense that it was his TV station’s exclusive story. To this end, he did not use his name on any of the promotional or press materials.⁶⁴

The campaign to collect goods to be donated directly to the Dubna community, a success in itself given that this was a huge effort involving many cities and organizations, took on a life of its own. Within six weeks, the group, which now included 5,000 local volunteers, collected over 400,000 pounds of food, clothing, and medicine.⁶⁵ Hoel commented that he had not seen the community of La Crosse united like this in its efforts since the 1965 floods, which reeked havoc on the community.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, at the receiving end of the donated goods, many people in Dubna were feverishly organizing the receipts of the goods. Hanson and Hoel were using an email connection at the nuclear research facility in Dubna to get messages to the Mayor’s office and to Dave Bell. The group in Dubna was arranging for storage and distribution of the donated goods. The Mayor of Dubna, Valery Prokh, had been instrumental in developing the relationship from the very beginning. Prokh, a dynamic individual, constantly pushed through initiatives of the relationship, with this occasion being no exception.⁶⁷

⁶³ William Hoel, interview with author, telephone, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 4 September 2002.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Hanson, *Reflections*.

⁶⁶ Hoel, Interview.

⁶⁷ Hanson, Interview.

The group in La Crosse, which included a retired Air Force Logistics Officer, palletized the goods and prepared them for shipment. Hanson, through constant perseverance, was able to secure the shipment of half the goods on an Air Force C-5A cargo plane. Because of the Air Force logistician's involvement, this experience was expedited, as the goods were prepared according to Air Force regulations. Hanson and the others had heard rumors of donated goods being misdirected once in the recipient country, so they secured an agreement to allow civilians to accompany the C-5A directly to Dubna, ensuring the goods made it there safely.⁶⁸ Upon the group's arrival, a convoy of vehicles of every size and shape greeted them ready to transport the goods. The La Crosse volunteers aided their Russian counterparts in the repackaging and shipment of the goods. Hanson reflected that he and the others felt this was not charity on the part of the Wisconsinites, rather, it felt like they were helping family. To this, Hanson felt that the true spirit of the Hands campaign was people helping people, not government helping government.⁶⁹ The whole arrival and equitable distribution of the goods was caught on tape by Hoel, and made for great stories upon the group's return to La Crosse.⁷⁰ Additionally, the Dubnan media had covered the donations extensively and gave the event highly complimentary press.⁷¹ The Hands campaign galvanized the La Crosse community, involving thousands of volunteers, the Chamber of Commerce, and local government. With the success of that campaign, the fate of the La Crosse/Dubna relationship was favorably sealed.

The Hands Across the Heartland campaign was a resounding success. But, Hanson noted that the people of Dubna wanted to make it clear they were not seeking handouts, as was told to him by leaders of the Dubna board. The people of Dubna are a proud people and wanted an opportunity to do things for themselves.⁷² Hanson and the board never questioned this, because it was the La Crosse board's goal to simply

⁶⁸ Hanson, *Reflections*.

⁶⁹ Hanson, Interview.

⁷⁰ Hanson, *Reflections*, additionally, Hoel stated that the group's endeavor was a great success in the local media.

⁷¹ Natalia Semenova, resident of Dubna, and currently attends graduate school at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, interview with author, paper, 5 September 2002.

⁷² Hanson, Interview.

introduce ideas to Dubna and let the Dubnans decide for themselves what they wanted from the relationship.⁷³

E. KEY LESSONS FROM HANDS ACROSS THE HEARTLAND

- William Hoel was instrumental in helping the group achieve the public relations success that it did. Hoel believes that groups like Hands should solicit the help of someone from the local media. This marketing help aids in getting local media buy-in. However, he cautions, when soliciting the media's assistance, the project should have a no-brainer hook – instant media appeal to viewers. Hands, he believes, did just this.
- Opportunities may arise for broad and active community participation, as in the Hands case. Creating a broad-based community response with a focused goal and a limited duration, allowed many community members to become involved, this helped lead to success in the Hands Campaign.
- Get local media excited about efforts. Hands allowed the media to get involved in something benefiting the community of La Crosse and Dubna, which, according to Hoel, was exciting to the outlets.
- According to Hanson, the group operated on the principal that just because something had never been done, doesn't mean that it can't be done. A small group like that in La Crosse, soliciting the use of a C-5A, is an example of how the group thought "outside the box."

F. EDUCATION INITIATIVES

La Crosse, being a city of higher education, hoped they could collaborate with Dubna on educational projects. La Crosse Public Schools (LCPS) Superintendent Dr. Richard Swantz remembered visiting a Dubna elementary school and being impressed by what he saw: children were neatly dressed, at lunch they ate with ceramic plates and metal silverware, and most of all, the children seemed driven in the classroom. Pick-up time for students was flexible, allowing working parents to pick-up their children long after school was out, and the teachers of Dubna, he felt, were incredibly professional, despite their low pay.⁷⁴ He saw potential to take what was good from Dubna schools and apply it to the La Crosse schools.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Dr. Richard Swantz, former Superintendent of La Crosse Public Schools, interview by author, telephone, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 5 September 2002.

Mr. Swantz returned to La Crosse energized by the possibilities of what the relationship between the schools could bring to both communities. He set in motion an infrastructure within La Crosse Public Schools that could facilitate exchange between the two cities. The then Supervisor of Secondary Studies for LCPS, Karen Murray, helped develop a program that would send teachers from La Crosse to study in Dubna. Initially, 10 teachers traveled to Dubna for three months. Teachers stayed with families and worked at the schools in Dubna. Additionally, La Crosse had several exchange programs between administrators from the two cities. Funding for the program was provided by the LCPS. The school board allowed teachers to travel to Dubna for three months and still receive their regular salary. The board also authorized the hiring of substitute teachers while the teachers were away. Russian teachers who came to La Crosse were paid \$3,000, stayed with community host families, and had jobs working as teaching assistants.⁷⁵

As the La Crosse Public Schools were embracing the Dubna relationship, so too was the La Crosse area collegiate system. The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (UWLC), Viterbo College, a private liberal arts college, and Western Wisconsin Technical College (WWTC) partnered with academics in Dubna. This partnership, which began informally in 1989 when Chuck Hanson received the endorsement from the three La Crosse schools, began to take on an official relationship in 1992. The well-educated scientists and engineers of Dubna had created an abundance of inventions they envisioned manufacturing in Dubna, and then selling to the world. However, under the command economy of the Soviet system, they had the technical expertise to design the goods, but not the business skills to do the rest.⁷⁶

In 1991, the then Dean of Viterbo College, Bill Jensen, traveled to Dubna to research how his school might become involved in the Sister Cities partnership. He found that the people of Dubna were very receptive to the idea of the development of a business curriculum.⁷⁷ Soon after Jensen returned to Wisconsin, he began to meet with the

⁷⁵ Karen Murray, former Supervisor of Secondary Studies for the La Crosse Public Schools, interview by author, telephone, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 5 September 2002.

⁷⁶ Hanson, *Reflections*.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Chancellor of UWLC and the President of WWTC to see if there was a common approach the La Crosse colleges could take in helping the Russians develop a business curriculum.

The International University of Nature, Society, and Man, also known as “Dubna University,” began its growth out of the La Crosse/Dubna relationship. The Mayor of Dubna was able to secure a Soviet military academy to house the university. The mayor, and others from Dubna, secured an affiliation with the Moscow State University. This brought the new school into a formal, and existing, educational system. For their part, Dubna agreed to provide housing, food, and in-country transportation to visiting faculty and consultants, and to provide office infrastructure to allow the visitors to work.⁷⁸

Since Dubna University has begun operation, the exchanges between the two city’s academic institutions have flourished. Dr. Lee Rasch, President of WWTC, has been instrumental in starting the relationship between Dubna and his college. Rasch was able to secure, from the WWTC Foundation, funds which sponsored the travel of faculty to Dubna to participate in the development of the University. Additionally, personnel from WWTC were encouraged to participate in the partnership. Professors were allowed to travel, funding dependent, and not use any personal or vacation time. Like many early participants in the partnership, Rasch remembers approaching the Russians with “open eyes,” letting the Russians tell him what assistance they wanted from his school.⁷⁹

Many of the early faculty exchanges between La Crosse and Dubna concentrated on the development of Dubna University’s curriculum. Specialists from UWLC helped in the development of the business curriculum. Additionally, there were exchanges between people researching the Mississippi and Volga Rivers, and numerous musician exchanges.⁸⁰ The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse has continued to encourage faculty to conduct exchanges or collaborate on research with their Dubnan counterparts. The

⁷⁸ Kathy Cobb, “*La Crosse school trio and Russian sister city sign pact*,” Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Fedgazette, available from <http://www.minneapolisfed.org/pubs/fedgaz/92-10/rou9210.cfm#wisco>; Internet, site accessed 5 October 2002.

⁷⁹ Dr. Lee Rasch, President, Western Wisconsin Technical College, interview by author, paper, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 4 September 2002.

⁸⁰ Jay Lokken, Director, Office of International Education, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, interview by author, paper, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 4 September 2002.

University created a \$75,000 fund that professional staff can draw from to conduct research or present papers abroad. Many have drawn from these funds for projects in Dubna.⁸¹

Like many in La Crosse, the UWLC has embraced the Sister Cities relationship with Dubna. This relationship between the UWLC and Dubna University has not stopped, even given the growth and success of Dubna University. The UWLC also continues to sponsor students from Dubna to attend school in La Crosse. Dmitviy Vasenin is a 21-year-old Dubnan student at UWLC who is participating in a scholarship program set up by the school. He will attend UWLC for four years, with his tuition paid for by UWLC. However, he will work for the University while he attends school, much like many of his American student peers.⁸²

G. KEY LESSONS FROM THE EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

- After his first visit to Dubna, Richard Swantz knew that his teachers could learn something from Dubna. He also knew La Crosse had something to offer elementary education in Dubna. He was instrumental in getting administrators from La Crosse to visit Russia. This, he felt, helped create buy-in among staff.
- In addition to creating excitement about the possibilities within the La Crosse community, Jay Lokken points out that creating linkage between professors, teachers, and administrators helped expand the relationship and sustain it during early development stages.
- Elementary education projects were built on creative funding arrangements. Russian teachers worked in Wisconsin and were paid as school aids, and both La Crosse and Dubnan teachers stayed with host families. Both of these things helped reduce the cost of the exchanges.
- The people of Dubna stated what they wanted from the educational relationship with La Crosse. Officials in Dubna were irreplaceable in that they found the funding for the University; they had a vested interest in seeing the school succeed.
- Continuing faculty exchanges help in keeping the relationship between the schools thriving.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Dmitviy Vasenin, Student at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, interview by author, paper, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 5 September 2002.

- Both the La Crosse Public Schools and the area colleges required visiting staff to attend training on Russian culture and customs. Upon their return, staff was asked to submit a detailed report on their trip. Also, Rasch encouraged returning staff to participate in speaker bureaus.
- Jay Lokken and Lee Rasch both commented on how important it was to get their school's alumni association and/or foundation involved in the relationship. These organizations present opportunities for getting a greater degree of participation in the program, as well as serving as a source of additional funds.

H. HEALTHCARE INITIATIVES

A quick internet search of “Dubna La Crosse” will almost certainly yield results which pay witness to one of the greatest successes of the partnership between the two cities: health care. The partnership between the two cities has been so successful that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) uses highlights from the program to teach others about successful partnering. In the USAID manual on transnational partnering, they bring to light the following successes:

In the past decade, thousands of exchanges have occurred between the two small cities of Dubna, Russia, and La Crosse, Wisconsin. The partnership has transformed Dubna's medical care system. The town has a new maternity hospital, a kidney dialysis center, women's wellness clinics, and a rehabilitation center for disabled children and adults. In addition, streamlined medical procedures have eliminated nearly one third of the city's hospital beds, a contraception program has reduced the city's abortion rate to two thirds of the national level, and there has been a dramatic rise in residents' satisfaction with medical care.⁸³

The success touted by USAID regarding the Dubna/La Crosse relationship is also highlighted by many other organizations. On December 31st, 2000, the *New York Times* cover story chronicled the healthcare initiatives within the relationship, and illustrated what good can come from partnerships like that between the two cities.⁸⁴ But the key question is; how did all of these great things, which have happened in Dubna, stem from

⁸³ United States Agency for International Development (USAID), “*Designing and Managing Partnerships Between U.S. And Host-Country Entities*,” May 2001, available from <http://www.aed.org/democracy/publications/partnerships.pdf>, Internet, site accessed 9 October 2002.

⁸⁴ Michael Wines, A Fit City Offers Russia a Self-Help Model, *New York Times*, 31 December 2000, A1.

a Sister Cities relationship with La Crosse? As mentioned earlier, La Crosse is a city engaged in healthcare. Approximately 8,000 people of the La Crosse area are employed by Franciscan Skemp Medical Center and La Crosse Gundersen Lutheran Hospital. This sector of the local economy employs the greatest percentage of the population in the area.⁸⁵ Given the importance of the healthcare industry in La Crosse, it would seem a natural evolution for the partnership to include medical projects. From the beginning of the La Crosse/Dubna relationship, there have been people involved who have been professionals in the healthcare industry. Utilizing personal contacts Hanson recruited key health care professionals into the Association, and as part of the first delegation to Dubna. Among the first members of the La Crosse community to visit Dubna were several doctors and Gundersen Lutheran Hospital President Jack Schwem. When visiting Dubnan hospitals, Schwem and the other La Crosse doctors sensed apprehension on the part of the Russian doctors to open up about the state of Russian medicine.⁸⁶ Despite their apprehension to talk about the state of medical care in Dubna, the ice with the visiting doctors was finally broken, and the physicians began to dialogue about potential areas of collaboration. The partnership began small, concentrating on simple things like hospital sanitation, prevention of contracting infections once admitted into the hospital, and hospital administration. From the relatively simple successes generated from these collaborations, greater projects could come.⁸⁷

Early successes in the relationship generated a greater enthusiasm within the La Crosse healthcare community. Gundersen and Skemp Hospitals decided to collaborate on a greater undertaking that which was presently underway, and decided to partner and form what became known as the La Crosse International Health Partnership.⁸⁸ In 1992, the newly formed partnership began soliciting financial assistance to grow healthcare initiatives in Dubna. Gundersen gave the responsibility of securing funding for projects to

⁸⁵ Sandy McCormick, President, World Services of La Crosse, interview by author, paper, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 3 September 2002.

⁸⁶ Hanson, Interview.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Sandra J. McCormick, "*La Crosse-Dubna: A Decade Of Partnering for Better Health, Initiative for Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia*," available from <http://www.isar.org/isar/archive/GT/GT14mccormick.html>, Internet, site accessed 9 October 2002.

Sandy McCormick, who was skilled in the art of grant writing. She found support from the American International Health Alliance, a Washington, DC based non-profit which works in cooperation with USAID and the U.S. Department of Energy. The Alliance, which seeks to grow community health through partnerships, provided initial funding to the La Crosse group for travel, program, and administration expenses for their projects.

The initial successes from the seemingly simple health projects before 1992, helped build the confidence of funding organizations in the ability of the La Crosse group to execute projects.⁸⁹ Funding to support the projects between the two cities began to take hold. The La Crosse area hospitals encouraged their staff members to participate in the projects. Gundersen allowed its workers flexibility if they were to travel to Dubna. Workers who took a two-week trip to Russia were paid for one week, having to take only one week of vacation time. The volunteers who went on the trip were asked to make both a time and a monetary commitment to the partnership. This ensured they were not interested in a free trip, but in an opportunity to help. The time and financial commitment did not hamper the efforts of the projects; over the years more than 400 people have traveled from La Crosse to support healthcare initiatives begun by the La Crosse International Health Partnership.⁹⁰

The healthcare partnership between the two cities was exactly that, a partnership. In addition to highlighting the gains of the partnership, the USAID book on effective partnerships also highlights the hard work of the people of Dubna to make the program a reality. It reads:

The success of the partnership is in part due to the chemistry between the cities and their early agreement that the relationship was not that of an American mentor and Russian protégé, but of equals. The success is also attributable to the determination of the leaders of Dubna to make the partnership work. For example, under Russian government formulas that base hospital aid on the number of patients, promoting home care meant a huge drop in subsidies for Dubna. Battling Russian bureaucracy, managers of Dubna and La Crosse argued that the city should not be punished for gaining greater efficiencies and

⁸⁹ Hanson, Interview.

⁹⁰ McCormick, Interview.

managed to get a new formula to calculate assistance. The mayor of Dubna is described as a visionary who was intolerant of obstacles to change. He surrounded himself with people who would remain committed to a project—not only until the money ran out but until it made life better for the townspeople.⁹¹

Relationships built between La Crosse and Dubnan health professionals in the Sister Cities partnership laid the groundwork for greater collaboration on health programs. In 2002, the activity level of the program carried out by the La Crosse area hospitals has almost stopped, however, a new organization in La Crosse, run by Sandy McCormick and called World Services of La Crosse, has picked up where the earlier relationship left off. McCormick has secured funding to bring a cross-section of Russians to Wisconsin to understand how Wisconsin runs various facets of their social services. Women who were victims of domestic violence have traveled to Wisconsin as a group to learn how the State deals with that issue. Recovered alcoholics have come to Wisconsin to understand how alcoholism is treated in the United States. The groups travel throughout Wisconsin for a short time and gather an understanding for the treatment programs; they return to La Crosse and devise a plan for how they will implement a similar program in their communities. They return home to Russia and begin their work. Russian experts on the various projects then travel to the various communities, paid for by a World Services solicited grant, to help the groups with the implementation of their programs.

The people of Dubna are seeing tangible results in their medical “bottom-lines,” materializing because of their relationship with La Crosse. The medical professionals of La Crosse, along with their counterparts in Dubna, entered a partnership that concentrated on accomplishing things that were attainable. The La Crosse group avoided extending aid to Dubna that would be non-sustainable. For example, offering used magnetic resonance imaging machines was not a realistic idea, because Dubna didn’t have the knowledge base for the use or maintenance of the machine.⁹² The careful selection of projects by the partners helped ensure success.

⁹¹ USAID, *Partnering*.

⁹² Hanson, Interview.

I. KEY LESSONS FROM THE HEALTHCARE INITIATIVES

- Gundersen President Schwem understood that if projects were going to be successful, healthcare practitioners in the two cities had to become partners. To this, he steered the health initiative into one of collaboration, not one where it appeared La Crosse was dictating what it was Dubna had to do.
- The project, even before there was grant money, concentrated on things that, from a La Crosse perspective, seemed relatively easy to solve. Success in projects like increasing hospital sanitation and reducing in-hospital infection rates paved the way for larger and better-financed projects.
- Gundersen and Skemp Hospitals allowed those employees who participated in the program some degree of flexibility in terms of pay and vacation time.
- The initial, and subsequent, delegations of La Crosse visitors to Dubna almost certainly included healthcare professionals who were committed to the partnership.
- The citizens of Dubna, including the mayor and several key physicians, “pushed the envelope” of what could be accomplished in Russian healthcare. They were unwavering in instituting change in their healthcare system. Equally important was the commitment of their resources to support the program.
- The La Crosse group avoided medical “nepotism.” They steered clear of helping individuals with medical needs, instead concentrating on the entire system. This, according to McCormick, helped them avoid pitfalls that the favoritism could have created.
- Community participation in, and acceptance of the La Crosse-Dubna Friendship Participation was key to the active involvement of health care institutions. Institutions can use their support of the partnership in marketing themselves to the local community. They look good for supporting the La Crosse/Dubna partnership.

J. SOCIAL CAPITAL CREATION

Chuck Hanson recalls fondly his visits to Russia. Most memorable to him are his stays in the homes of people in Dubna. Through nightly gatherings around the table of his counterparts, breaking bread, and sharing a toast, he learned the most about Russian life. Equally important to him were the stays of Russians in his home, where he was able to

share some American traditions with them.⁹³ These home stays were repeated hundreds of times, as people traveled back and forth between the two cities. Hanson, and roughly 1,000 residents from La Crosse who have traveled to Dubna, and the several hundred Dubnans who have come to La Crosse over the years, have developed a kinship with one another. This kinship began to bear fruit as trust between the two groups grew. The successes of simple projects between the two groups, showed the cities the possibilities of the relationship, in turn, from those successes more ambitious programs grew.

When using the operational definition of social capital, put forth by James Coleman, it is clear that currents of social capital can be detected in the cities' relationship. Coleman's definition states:

Social capital, in turn, is created when relations among persons change in ways that facilitate action...Physical capital and human capital facilitate production, and social capital does so as well...For example, a group whose members manifest trustworthiness and place extensive trust in one another will be able to accomplish much more than a comparable group lacking that trustworthiness and trust. ⁹⁴

There is no question that the thousands of personal exchanges between the two cities have increased the level of trust. The Mayor of Dubna knew, after several years of continuing relations with La Crosse, that the level of commitment by the Wisconsinites to the partnership was high, and if those in La Crosse said they were going to do something he could be assured that they would give it their all. Sandy McCormick, Chuck Hanson, and Lee Rasch all had the same general comment regarding the leadership in Dubna: The Mayor, along with other leaders of the partnership, would push to get things done; they were driven and committed to the relationship.

The level of trust is created on a personal or micro level, but perhaps the most measurable successes of this La Crosse/Dubna relationship have been at the macro level. The Hands campaign and the educational and healthcare initiatives were targeted to help all in Dubna. The level of activity between the two cities fits well the early definition of

⁹³ Hanson, Interview.

⁹⁴ Coleman, *Foundations*, 304.

social capital created by West Virginian State School Supervisor L.J. Hanifan, when he wrote what it took to create successful schools:⁹⁵

...If he comes into contact with his neighbor, and they with other neighbors, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy his social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole community. The community as a whole will benefit by the cooperation of all its parts, while the individual will find in his association the advantages of the help, the sympathy, and the fellowship of his neighbors.

The La Crosse/Dubna partnership, at least from the La Crosse perspective, has never been an exclusive club. Since the beginning, a cross-section of the community has been involved. In addition to medical and educational professionals traveling between the two cities, so too have social workers, policemen, business people, and public transportation workers.

Dr. Walter Vallejo, an endocrinologist at Franciscan Skemp Clinic in La Crosse, went to Dubna on one of the first La Crosse delegations. Vallejo was instrumental in the ensuing health partnership. Years later, after the death of Vallejo, the Dubna Diabetes Center, which Vallejo helped shape, was dedicated to his memory.⁹⁶ Perhaps the naming of a Russian clinic in honor of a citizen of La Crosse shows just how much trust was created between the two cities.

⁹⁵ Putnam, *Bowling*, 19.

⁹⁶ Barbara Ruben, "*Fortunate Son: Dubna-La Crosse Sister City Founder David Bell*," American International Health Alliance-Common Health, Summer 1996: Volume 4, Issue 3, available from: <http://www.aiha.com/english/pubs/sum96/index.cfm>, Internet, site accessed 9 October 2002.

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IV. THE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM OF MARYLAND AND ESTONIA

Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), addressed the Estonian-American National Council in July of 2002 and praised the connections that were taking place between her state and Estonia. “I am proud of the partnerships Maryland had built with Estonia through our National Guard and their Armed Forces, and the trade between our great cities and ports,” she stated.⁹⁷ This praise from Mikulski did not come without much hard work on the part of the Maryland National Guard, the Maryland community at-large, the Estonian-Americans in Maryland, and the Estonians themselves. It is praise that comes after many years of toil on the part of the participants. The partnership between Maryland and Estonia, which began on a purely military engagement level, has blossomed into a partnership characterized by civilian-to-civilian connections, to which Mikulski can give praise.

The partnership between Maryland and Estonia would seem a “natural” fit. Maryland, and Baltimore in particular, is home to a well-established and burgeoning Estonian-American population. The Estonian population in Baltimore maintains the “Estonian House;” a place where Estonian cultural events are frequently held. Thus, the cultural heritage of Maryland helped to establish the relationship along population demographic lines. The formal relationship began in 1993, and since has resulted in hundreds of exchanges between military and civilian entities. During the mid 1990s the Maryland Guard was conducting 40 to 50 engagements a year with Estonia.⁹⁸

These engagements were exchanges, mainly comprised of military personnel, to conduct familiarity exercises in Estonia or Maryland. These military exchanges laid a solid footing for subsequent civilian driven exchanges, as they helped solidify the fact Maryland was committed to the partnership.⁹⁹ According to LTC Randy Everett, a

⁹⁷ The Congressional Record, Statement By Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-MD) July 19, 2002, available from: <http://www.estosite.org/eng/index.html>, Internet, site accessed 5 November 2002.

⁹⁸ COL Robert Finn, Maryland Army National Guard, interview by author, paper, Baltimore, Maryland, 10 September 2002.

⁹⁹ COL Richard Schnell, Maryland Military Department Chief of Staff, interview by author, paper, Baltimore, Maryland, 10 September 2002.

former coordinator of the partnership, the visiting Estonian military personnel in the U.S. were treated as equals to the Maryland soldier. Doing this, Everett believes, helped cement the connection between Maryland and Estonia.¹⁰⁰ The soldiers of his own infantry unit included the visiting Estonian soldiers in all of their activities, giving the Estonians a true feel of what it was like to be in the Maryland National Guard. These early engagements led to, and included military support to civilian authorities' exchanges. Maryland first responders and emergency management personnel visited Estonia and shared with their counterpart's methods for mitigating disasters.

Beginning in 1998, the partnership began to take a decidedly "civilian" turn. This turn in engagement methods was a result of a maturing Estonian Military, which was requiring less input from Maryland.¹⁰¹ In 1998, the Maryland Guard coordinated a dinner at the Estonian Embassy in Washington D.C. Influential Estonian-Americans from Maryland and several educational and business leaders were invited to the event. At the dinner the participants discussed possible civilian exchange opportunities. From this event the Maryland Guard decided to concentrate on facilitating exchange efforts in the educational, business, and medical arenas.¹⁰² Later, a partner-cities initiative was added; and in this program select towns from Maryland were partnered with towns in Estonia. Throughout the partnership, the leadership, both Estonian and Maryland's, used feedback generated from the after-action review (AAR) process to tailor future efforts. This, in combination with setting clear goals and objectives for the partnership, helped create an atmosphere of fluidity in the relationship.

A. KEY LESSONS FROM THE INITIAL PARTNERING TO COMMENCEMENT OF CIVILIAN EXCHANGES

- Prior to civilian-to-civilian exchanges, the Maryland Guard had conducted hundreds of military-to-military and civilian-to-military events. These coordinated events proved to Estonia that Maryland was committed to the relationship, thus paving the way for civilian-to-civilian exchanges.

¹⁰⁰ LTC Randy Everett, Maryland Army National Guard, interview by author, paper, FT Meade, Maryland, 9 September 2002.

¹⁰¹ Finn, Interview.

¹⁰² Ibid.

- Get buy-in from local groups with a similar heritage as the partner. Inclusion of the Estonian-American population provided a natural conduit for vetting ideas, and for providing a vehicle for future civilian opportunities.
- During interviews with Maryland Guard officials they emphasized that they used the AARs from all of the visits to tailor subsequent exchanges.
- Throughout the lifecycle of the partnership, efforts were constantly reevaluated as to their effectiveness. This method of reviewing programs proved its value in establishing civilian efforts. This point will be reemphasized when economic development initiatives are discussed.

B. MEDICAL INITIATIVES

During the early stages of the partnership, which emphasized military-to-military engagements, medical exchanges were common. Medical specialists from Maryland and Estonia collaborated frequently during military exercises. However, during this time, the groundwork was being laid for civilian medical exchanges, and as early as 1994 Maryland personnel were making familiarity visits to medical institutions in Estonia.¹⁰³ In 1995 a team of Maryland National Guard medical personnel traveled to Estonia and worked with the Estonian Defense Forces on military medical issues. These events ranged from establishing field water distribution points and organizing triages, to movement of the injured to the next echelon of care. Throughout these efforts, Maryland Army National Guard State Surgeon Dr. (COL) James Flynn was instrumental in working with senior level Estonian military counterparts in planning training events. Flynn's involvement in the scheduling and execution of the training insured the program was vetted and approved at the highest levels of the Maryland Guard and in the Estonian military.

Flynn, during his visits to Estonia, developed relationships with healthcare professionals in Estonia, both military and civilian. From these relationships grew more and more collaborations on health issues. Flynn, in his civilian position as Vice President for Medical Affairs at the University of Maryland Specialty Hospitals, was uniquely

¹⁰³ COL Grant Hayden, Maryland-Estonia State Partnership Program, Training Year 2002, (Maryland National Guard Briefing, 2002) PowerPoint presentation.

positioned to meld together what the Guard and private/public healthcare institutions could do in fostering exchanges.

The two partners organized numerous exchanges. Estonians traveled to Maryland to study such diverse subjects as: how the state regulates and enforces vegetable transportation and slaughterhouses to how hospital triage rooms are administered.¹⁰⁴ Maryland health technicians traveled to Estonia to work with their counterparts on projects as varied as conducting training for radiation oncologists, to first responders' training on treating heart attacks. Both military and civilian medical professionals carried out these events; and as such, funding for travel came from a variety of sources. If training was carried out by civilians, Minuteman Fellows funding sources were frequently solicited to provide funding. These frequent and focused trainings and collaborations reinforced the idea of partnership, and they in turn aided in setting the stage for purely civilian initiatives.

Dr. (COL) Flynn and his Estonian colleagues identified the fact that great benefit could be gained from partnering on issues pertaining to the training of nurses. Throughout the partnership, nurses from the Maryland National Guard, most of whom worked in civilian capacities in that field, favorably impressed their counterparts and senior healthcare professionals in Estonia. Flynn, acting in his civilian capacity, decided along with his Estonian peers that much could be gained by focusing their efforts on nursing education.

This collaboration on nursing education, which is now only in its infancy, will hopefully develop into a partnership between the University of Maryland, major hospitals, and the nursing association in Estonia. Within this relationship, the University of Maryland would aid the Tartu University Hospital, Estonia, with curriculum development. This collaboration would create the first Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing in Estonia.¹⁰⁵ Additionally, several fellowships are being planned which will

¹⁰⁴ Dr. (COL) James Flynn, Maryland Army National Guard State Surgeon, interview by author, phone, 15 October 2002.

¹⁰⁵ MAJ George Spence, *After Action Review (AAR), Maryland National Guard, Minuteman Fellows Program Fiscal Year 2002*, (draft document), 1 October 2002.

involve nurses and nursing educators from Maryland working in Estonian hospitals. Likewise, several nurses from Estonia would travel to Maryland to work in the University of Maryland health system.¹⁰⁶ There are several additional proposals that seek to partner other sectors of the health industry, pending. However, at present, the nursing education project is receiving the most attention.¹⁰⁷

C. KEY LESSONS FROM THE HEALTH INITIATIVES

- Dr. (COL) Flynn’s unique position of both being a high ranking Maryland Army National Guard officer and a senior executive in the University of Maryland Hospital system, made possible many aspects of the health initiatives. He provided senior Guard leadership with a clear understanding of what was taking place in the health arena; this helped create buy-in at senior levels. Additionally, he was able to connect subject matter experts from Maryland with Estonian counterparts, thus facilitating greater exchanges. While this clearly has its advantages, we also learned of disadvantages, as reliance on a few key people could jeopardize the relationship if they were not able to continue to participate for some reason.
- The part-time military nurses, who also hold full-time civilian nursing positions, exposed their Estonian peers to the possibilities of nursing. For example, a male nurse from Maryland was given the honor of addressing a class of graduating Estonian nurses.¹⁰⁸ There are very few male nurses in Estonia, and his presence exposed the school to a new paradigm.
- The nurses who traveled to Estonia contributed unique skills to the partnership. For example, one of the visiting nurses was an emergency room nurse at a Baltimore public hospital; their emergency room talents impressed the Estonians, inspiring the Estonians to want to learn more about “American” style nursing.
- The Maryland/Estonian partnership had frequent health exchanges throughout its lifecycle. This constant interaction of health professionals helped in keeping alive the idea of greater civilian-to-civilian health collaboration.

¹⁰⁶ Flynn, Interview.

¹⁰⁷ Spence, *After Action*.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

D. PARTNER CITIES

As the military-to-military exchanges became more fluid, and the partners became more comfortable with one another, the idea was introduced of a formal partnering of select cities in Maryland with cities in Estonia. The idea was warmly received on both sides of the Atlantic. The goals of the partnerships are to create formal associations between the cities where an open exchange of ideas on municipal government, public administration, and economic development principles are discussed.¹⁰⁹ Within a short time of the program's inception, eight partnerships were created and shortly thereafter, two more relationships were added.

One of the most dynamic relationships to emerge from the partner city initiatives was the relationship between Westminster, Maryland and Paide, Estonia. Westminster is a town of 17,000 people northwest of Baltimore; Paide is a city of 11,000. Thomas Beyard, City Manager of Westminster, was uniquely qualified in helping build the partnership between the two cities was. Beyard was familiar with Estonia, having traveled there in his part-time capacity as a Master Sergeant with the Maryland Army National Guard. After the initial formal exchange between the two cities was complete, the Westminster City Council and their counterparts in Paide quickly established a dialogue. The working group agreed the relationship should concentrate on the core tenets of culture, government, economic development, philanthropy, and education.

While these five tenets may seem incredibly general and broad, the group established clear objectives within each of the categories. They are as follows:

Culture: Jointly identify a song/dance performer(s) from Paide to travel to Westminster to perform at the new Carroll Arts Center. Jointly identify a song/dance performer(s) from Westminster to travel to Paide to perform at a designated Paide event.

Economic Development: Jointly identify a group of five or more business people from select Westminster industries to travel to Paide to provide an economic development assessment, technical assistance, and to review investment opportunities. Jointly identify a group of five or more business people from select Paide industries to travel to Westminster to visit similar businesses. Jointly develop tourism exchange opportunities to promote

¹⁰⁹ Spence, AAR.

Paide, Estonia, Westminster, Carroll County (county Westminster is located in), and Maryland as exciting tourist destinations.

Government: Jointly continue official exchange visits of municipal leaders. Westminster commits to at least one visit per year of at least two officials. Jointly conduct a municipal exchange whereby Westminster and Paide “swap” employees to gain new insights into municipal problem solving. Jointly conduct an exchange of summer recreation employees to facilitate new program ideas and improve staff skills. Work to generate cooperation between the Maryland Municipal League and the Association of Estonian Cities.

Education: Jointly identify at least two Estonian students per year to attend school at Carroll Community College and McDaniel College. Jointly identify students to participate in an exchange program to provide unique learning opportunities and perspectives to young citizens in Westminster and Paide. Jointly identify students to participate in a “pen pal” program to include exchanges of letters.

Philanthropy: Jointly identify a project in Paide for partial sponsorship by Westminster. Westminster will initially pledge \$1,000 toward the development of a skateboarding park facility in Paide, with funds to be distributed when the project is completed. Westminster will coordinate staff support and technical assistance to establish a community foundation in Paide that can provide the organizational means to generate private funding for important community projects. Jointly work to coordinate an exchange of select Rotary Club members from Westminster and Paide.¹¹⁰

The two cities negotiated the initiatives of the partnership, without any intervention or consultation with the in-country military liaison team, or the Maryland National Guard.¹¹¹ With the goals of the partnership clearly established by the declaration, the group set to work.

One of the first things the Westminster group did was to invite several officials from Paide to attend the town’s annual fall festival. The festival serves as an income generation project. Profits from the festival provide financing for community improvement projects. According to Beyard, the idea of such a fundraising festival was

¹¹⁰ Westminster/Paide Declaration of Understanding, signed 23 September 2002, by Westminster Mayor Kevin Dayhoff and Paide Mayor Tõnis Kõiv.

¹¹¹ Mr. Thomas Beyard, City Manager of Westminster, Maryland, interview by author, phone, 29 October 2002.

new to their Estonian peers.¹¹² Therefore, the purpose of the trip was to give an understanding of how to organize and execute such a festival in Paide. In addition to gaining an understanding of how to coordinate a local festival, the Estonians took home with them a pledge from the leadership of Westminster that a portion of the profits from the festival would go to finance the skateboard park.

The partnership committee in Westminster set up a foundation to support the partnership, whereby contributors could make donations to support the program's affiliation. The City of Westminster started off the fund on solid ground by donating \$6,500. Shortly thereafter, a private donor matched the city's contribution. Also it was decided that a portion of funds from future festivals would be diverted to the account.¹¹³

Additional progress in the relationship has begun in the economic development area. Westminster has several key business sectors like the concrete industry that are similar to businesses in Paide. Leaders of these Westminster businesses are scheduled to travel to Estonia in early 2003 to consult with their counterparts on possible areas of collaboration. For example, both towns have cement plants, and a manager from the Westminster plant will travel to Paide to help managers from the Estonian cement plant improve business practices, if necessary.

Numerous examples of how committed the two cities are to making the partnership more than simply an exchange of official declarations exist. The City of Westminster has agreed to hire an Estonian to work for the city. Pending immigration approval, the new hire will move to Westminster to work as a city employee, where one of the responsibilities of the new position will be to facilitate exchanges between the two towns.

E. KEY LESSONS FROM THE PAIDE/WESTMINSTER PARTNER CITY INITIATIVE

- Although the relationship between the two cities is recent, officials from both towns are quick to understand that if the relationship is to transcend the test of time, it must be apolitical. Therefore, efforts are ongoing to link sectors of both towns' societies outside of the time limited political system. By doing this, it is hoped that

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

the relationship will flourish despite changing political administrations.

- By inviting the Estonian delegation to Westminster to see how the festival was conducted, it allowed the Estonians to see Westminster's "model" in action. Doing this helped to solidify the idea of community-based fundraising.
- The delegation's visit was well coordinated, and included numerous media events. In Westminster, the visiting Estonian delegations conducted several interviews with the media. Likewise, in Paide, citizens of Westminster participated in several public events.
- Westminster City Manager Thomas Beyard strongly believes that the early negotiations on what the partnership would entail set the partnership off on strong footing. Additionally, the partnership is between the two cities, excluding intervention by other governmental bodies. This aided in clear communications between the two towns.

F. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

It is the hope of most State Partnership Programs, which are seeking to transition to civilian-to-civilian programs, that economic development be chief among the goals. Maryland and Estonia are no exceptions. Over the course of the past several years, there have been numerous inquiries into starting the drive to business-to-business exchanges. However, until late 2001, the partners had not vigorously pursued this proposition. By late 2001, COL Howard Freedlander, of the Maryland National Guard, had already made numerous trips to Estonia. Some of these trips had ancillary purposes of investigating economic sectors in which Maryland and Estonia could partner. On a trip late in 2001, Freedlander traveled to Estonia with a member of the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED), an agency designed to bring businesses to Maryland.¹¹⁴ On this trip, the two Marylanders worked with a member of the Estonian Trade Promotion Agency. The Estonian arranged visits to various business sectors which showed an interest in meeting with the gentlemen from Maryland. One such type of business they visited was information technology (IT). This sector seemed plausible for collaboration, because both Maryland and Estonia have burgeoning information

¹¹⁴ Col. Howard Freedlander, Director of Public Affairs and Legislative Liaison, Maryland National Guard, interview by author, phone, 23 October 2002.

technology sectors.¹¹⁵ Additionally, Estonia's close relations with Finland, which is a leader in wireless technologies, is aiding in Estonia's information technology development.¹¹⁶

Colonel Freedlander, acting as a facilitator between businesses and agencies in Maryland and those in Estonia, began investigating the possibility of collaboration between the partners. After finding interest in collaboration in both Maryland and Estonia, he again solicited the help of the DBED. Members of the DBED understood the unique relationship between Maryland and Estonia, and realized the reciprocal gain business ties could have for Maryland in the future. With this in mind, they set to work.

A member of the DBED, Freedlander, a member of the Greater Baltimore Technology Council, the Dean of Administration of Garrett College who also specializes in economic development in Western Maryland where the college is located¹¹⁷, and a member of the Estonian-American business community from Baltimore, traveled to Estonia on a prearranged information technology investigative trip. This group visited 10 information technology based businesses in Tallinn and Tartu.¹¹⁸ During this trip, the DBED representative told the Estonian business members about the upcoming Maryland Technology Showcase, an event where Maryland IT businesses will showcase their products and efforts. Members of the Estonian businesses were invited to attend this event.

Upon their return from Estonia, the Maryland group followed up with their Estonian counterparts. These follow-up efforts focused on developing business profiles which will be used in marketing Estonian businesses in Maryland. Upon completion of these profiles, they will be distributed to members of the Greater Baltimore Technology Council. Additionally, the DBED is seeking a grant to hire, part-time, a consultant who will pursue leads generated from the visit to Estonia and from the marketing materials

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Spence, *After Action Review*.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Maryland National Guard, "Memorandum for Record, Subject: After Action Report – Minuteman Fellows Economic Development Mission to Estonia 31 August 02 to 6 September 02" dated 24 September 2002.

distributed through the Technology Council. Already, someone is doing this work in-kind, but the DBED has identified that this position would benefit from a paid contractor.

While the Maryland National Guard is awaiting a clear victory in the economic development arena, they are confident they have explored many possible business connections and have found the “right-fit” in developing information technology. To this, Freedlander understands that his job as lead agent for economic development is simply to sow the seeds and let others build the relationship.¹¹⁹

G. KEY LESSONS FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- Freedlander believes focusing on the information technology sector, and limiting it to that sector, is a much better approach than pursuing several sectors. He equates this to a rifle, versus a shotgun approach. However, this approach is symbiotic in nature. Both Maryland and Estonian officials agreed after numerous meetings and familiarization sessions, that the information technology sector is where both partner’s efforts should be concentrated if both are to enjoy potential rewards.
- In the early stages of exploring business relations, the then Maryland Lieutenant Governor, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, traveled to Estonia to meet with officials, including the President of Estonia. This high-level visit, in Freedlander’s opinion, illustrated the level of commitment, on the part of Maryland’s non-military sector there was to the relationship. Freedlander also notes the fact that the Lt. Governor being of Kennedy lineage made it that much more significant.
- Freedlander believes there is serious growth potential within the information technology relationships beginning between Maryland and Estonia; however, he is realistic that it won’t happen on its own. Given the infancy of the relationship, he feels it absolutely important to monitor the progress of the relations. He does this by monitoring e-mails and other communications. By doing this, he ensures that verbal commitments made to the Estonians during economic development visits are followed-up on.

¹¹⁹ Freedlander, Interview.

H. EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

The Maryland National Guard, since 1998, has striven to connect Maryland and Estonian higher education institutions.¹²⁰ During that year, the Maryland Guard invited Maryland schools to participate in a program that would connect them to Estonian schools. Also that year, an official from the Estonian Ministry of Education visited Maryland and met with select schools and discussed the possibility of collaborating on projects. Shortly after the visit by the Estonian official, the Lieutenant Governor of Maryland led a delegation of educators to Estonia to discuss areas of possible collaboration. As a result of these and subsequent meetings, the Maryland-Estonian Educational Consortium was created.¹²¹ The Consortium now consists of 22 Maryland and 9 Estonian institutions.

Members of the Consortium have agreed to pursue six goals. Not all schools pursue the same goals; for example, one school may only strive to achieve one or two of the goals. The six goals are as follows:

- Increase the number of Estonian scholars visiting Maryland higher education institutions.
- Develop the Baltic/American Studies Program.
- Solidify The Virtue Research Project between the University of Maryland, Norway, Sweden, and Tallinn Technical University in Estonia.¹²²
- Solidify partnership between the University of Baltimore and Estonian Universities in the creation of a Masters in Public Administration program.
- Coordinate acceptance of Estonian students attending Garrett Community College in a scholarship status.

¹²⁰ Col. Milton P. Davis, Coordinator of Civilian Education and Distributive Training Technology, Maryland National Guard, interview by author, phone, 20 November 2002.

¹²¹ Garrett Community College, "The Case for the Maryland-Estonian Educational Consortium" (pamphlet produced by Garrett and distributed by the Maryland National Guard) 2001.

¹²² This program partners University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute, Goteborg University, Sweden; and the University of Bergen, Norway. Soon Baltic nations will be added to the partnership in a program that is building a virtual university, whose studies focus on issues confronting the North Atlantic.

- Continue progress in developing a linkage between three Maryland colleges and the new Information Technology College in Estonia.

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Since the Consortium started, 12 students from Estonia have received scholarships to attend three different schools in Maryland. The costs borne by the students, for the most part, have been the price of airline tickets. Other costs normally associated with a university degree have been offset in various ways by students staying in people's homes, co-op jobs on campus, and financial assistance from the Estonian-American community in Maryland.¹²⁴

Key to starting the Consortium has been Col. Milton Davis, Coordinator of Civilian Education and Distributive Training Technology for the Maryland National Guard. Davis was uniquely qualified for starting the program. He has an advanced European studies degree and has done scholarly research on the differences between U.S. and European higher education institutions. Prior to consulting with Maryland educators, he had done extensive research into possible venues for collaboration with Estonian universities. Once he had a feel for areas of potential partnership, he invited Maryland schools to the table to discuss partnering prospects.¹²⁵

I. KEY LESSONS FROM THE EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

- Col. Davis has used contacts he has made over the years to solicit donations to the Consortium. To date, the group has received \$10,000 in grants to support the operational expenses of the program.
- Col. Davis feels that it is important to understand that collaboration in academics takes time; adding in the international collaboration between 31 schools involved, makes things take even longer. With this, he feels in the short run it is important to step back and look at how the relationship is developing, and not look for quantifiable results.
- In the early stages of establishing educational programs in the State Partnership Program, Davis feels it is important to get someone from the state over to the partner country to investigate possible

¹²³ Maryland National Guard, "State Partnership Program" (pamphlet produced and distributed by the Maryland National Guard) 2001.

¹²⁴ Davis, Interview.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

avenues for partnering. This person should not only have an understanding of what possible partnership could be, but also have solid connections with schools within the state. This positive working relationship with schools in the state could help make collaboration much easier.

- The Adjutant General of Maryland has been extremely supportive of civilian-to-civilian relations undertaken in the partnership. To this, Davis feels his constant support has made increasing the civilian relationships much easier. Also, Davis feels, getting the buy-in and support of the state Guard Operations Office (G3) is also important.

J. SOCIAL CAPITAL CREATION

Estonian native son and Maryland citizen Mati Koiva can attest to the level of excitement Maryland's Estonian-American population has for the State Partnership Program. This excitement has manifested itself in the level of commitment members of Maryland's Estonian population have given to the program. From helping with translation during visits of Estonians to Maryland, or to helping with pocket money for Estonians attending Maryland colleges, many Marylanders with Estonian lineage have been there to aid the program.

Koiva, who emigrated from Estonia to Maryland when he was eight, joined the U.S. Army and retired a Lt. Col. Koiva estimates those in Maryland who have clear lineage ties to Estonian, between three and four thousand.¹²⁶ Koiva, who serves as the President of the New York City based Estonian American National Council, an organization whose mission is to help in preserving the Estonian culture heritage in the U.S. and to aid Estonia in the development of their country, is uniquely qualified to aid the Maryland National Guard in the development of their partnership with Estonia. In addition to his contacts within the Maryland community, he has contacts with Estonian-American groups throughout the country. Within Maryland, he has helped coordinate the assistance for Estonian students attending colleges through the educational programs of the SPP. Estonian groups in the state donated money, which then served as spending money for the students. While tapping the Estonian Diasporas in Maryland has not been a primary method of facilitating the transatlantic relation, it has been extremely useful.

¹²⁶ LTC (R) Mati Koiva, President Estonian American National Council, interview by author, phone, 15 November 2002.

Almost in every interview conducted, participants mentioned how the Estonian-American population in Maryland was not only consulted, but included in programs. Koiva believes that keeping the association of Estonian-Americans and the Maryland National Guard informal is best. This allows for people to get involved when or wherever necessary.¹²⁷

When sociologist Alejandro Portes wrote about transnational communities, he could have easily used the relationship between Westminster and Paide as an example. He wrote:

This story, reported by the sociologist Robert C. Smith, might seem to be an unremarkable tale of civic cooperation. The water committee, however, wasn't in Ticuani or even in Mexico. It was in Brooklyn, New York. Nor was this just a case of immigrants sending money back home; thanks to modern telecommunications and air travel, the committee was directly involved. After learning that the tubes had arrived, the committee members flew from JFK Airport on a Friday, conferred with contractors and authorities over the weekend, and returned in time for work Monday morning.¹²⁸

Although the relationship is in its infancy, it has already begun to bear fruit, which is lending itself to bridging social capital. The example of the skate park, where Paide put forth the initial cost, and then was reimbursed by Westminster, not only lends itself well to Portes' bridging social capital, it also fits well with Coleman's definition of social capital. In addition, the creation of trustworthiness in the social environment and the creation of obligations between group members were exhibited in this event.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Portes, *Global Villagers*.

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V. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to bring together lessons from civilian-to-civilian programs in the Sister-Cities relationship of La Crosse, Wisconsin and Dubna Russia, and the National Guard State Partnership of Maryland and Estonia. These lessons may be applied to other partnerships contemplating civilian-to-civilian activities. The secondary purpose of this thesis has been to delve into how both partnerships are creating social capital.

As the United States seeks ways to promote our image abroad, perhaps ideas to do just that can be found within the cases of the civilian-inspired relationships between La Crosse and Dubna, and between Maryland and Estonia. Both relationships have striven to create levels of trust within the partnership that has made conducting initiatives in the respective programs much easier. In addition to creating trust in the relationship, the partnerships have borne fruit. These two things, trust and quantifiable results, are not exclusive; they are symbiotic in nature and build upon one another. Through this trust, the relationships grew and will most certainly continue to grow.

These partnerships were created under different circumstances. La Crosse/Dubna is completely civilian driven, whereas Maryland/Estonia has military, civic, and private flavor. The two partnerships are at different phases in their lifecycle. Civilian initiatives in the Maryland/Estonia partnership began in 1998; in La Crosse/Dubna, the civilian partnership began in 1989. Due in large part to the age of civilian projects, it can be readily observed that there are greater quantifiable results in the La Crosse/Dubna partnership. Despite the differences, the two partnerships have several things in common. First, energetic individuals who took the success of the partnership personally generally led the initiatives within each program. In the case of La Crosse/Dubna, Chuck Hanson, while serving as the President of the La Crosse-Dubna Friendship Association, displayed incredible energy as he sought to make the La Crosse-Dubna Friendship Association an organization of community inclusion. In the case of Maryland/Estonia, Education Coordinator COL Milton Davis was committed to getting Maryland and Estonian higher education institutions partnered in some capacity. While this level of personal

commitment to the project is admirable, it has its pitfalls. If the individual driving a project were to suddenly leave the program, then all the hard work done may have been in vane. Hanson, realizing that the potential for this to happen was there, began to distance himself from leadership positions within the Association, thus allowing others to become more involved.¹²⁹ Davis too realized this, but countered Hanson's actions, stating that people in the development stages of the initiative need to have passion for watching the project succeed. The person simply cannot do a job; they must be dedicated to the project.¹³⁰ Between the two case studies, a sense of balance between personalistic leadership and power sharing can be counted as a lesson learned.

Many more things than were mentioned in this short thesis were attempted and often completed within the partnerships. From these small successes, larger projects could be attempted. La Crosse and Dubna had many small victories before ever attempting large health and education projects. They used these small accomplishments as a launching point for larger projects. La Crosse concentrated on projects in which their community had a comparative advantage: healthcare and education. Through early Association membership and solicitation of endorsements from La Crosse businesses, those organizations in which the comparative advantage lay already had some degree of buy-in into the partnership. In addition, early projects, especially in the La Crosse/Dubna relationship, concentrated on simple, practical, and direct projects.

In Maryland, success came with time. There had been previous business connections attempted with Estonia, but not until COL Freedlander solicited the endorsement of the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development did plans for a comprehensive economic development initiative begin. Additionally, COL Flynn's nursing project came only after the partners conducted countless medical exchanges. From these early health exchanges, trust increased among the partners; and this trust then served as a conduit for larger projects.

From each partnership, unique lessons can be learned. The Sister Cities partnership was much more community based than the Maryland-Estonian SPP. It was

¹²⁹ Hanson, Interview.

¹³⁰ Davis, Interview.

easier to get buy-in from community members for the program because the La Crosse-Dubna Friendship Association needed only concentrate on soliciting support from the greater La Crosse community. They easily took their cause to local civic and religious groups, making receipt of an endorsement from these groups much easier. Members of the Association's board were active members in other local civic groups; and their inclusion on the board immediately increased the voice the Association had in the community. The La Crosse-Dubna Friendship Association had the ability to focus on what the community could offer to Dubna. They did not have to sift through hundreds of ideas, as could have been the case if they were to investigate the assets of an entire state. This ability to concentrate on a single project or community was also apparent in Dubna. The mayor and his staff needed only work with the local community to implement projects. Had he been forced to deal with a larger bureaucracy, things may have been different.

The Maryland/Estonia State Partnership also offers some unique lessons. Sources of funding for projects in the early stages were much clearer than in the La Crosse case. Maryland could plan ahead for military-to-military exchanges and be reasonably ensured that funding would be there for executing the event. This source of government funding for projects was modified over the years, and Maryland has taken full advantage of Minuteman Fellows monies from the National Guard Bureau. These funds can, in some cases, be used for civilian-to-civilian projects. Maryland has succeeded in using these funds to start projects they felt would eventually be inherited by civilians. This was especially true in the case of the Partner Cities initiative. Minuteman funds were initially used to fund local official travel to Estonia. From this initial visit, Westminster has taken it upon itself to fund projects within the relationship, the stated objective of the Maryland Guard. Maryland, over the years, has had to hone how they determined worthwhile civilian-to-civilian projects within the partnership. Only through trial have they come to determine that focusing on information technology initiatives was where they should leverage their assets. Unlike La Crosse, which could concentrate on assets in their community, Maryland has had to survey all of the assets within the State, a daunting task.

A. APPLICATION OF LESSONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The La Crosse-Dubna Friendship Association and the Maryland/Estonia State Partnership had little institutional knowledge on which to draw as they set out to craft their civilian relationships. Creating a database of lessons learned from projects like these may be extremely useful for others striving for similar results. For example, if how the Maryland Guard set out to develop educational collaborations was shared with others attempting similar projects, then perhaps some redundancy could be eliminated. Bringing out the key lessons from each initiative and sharing them with others has great utility.

If the creation of social capital in communities holds the promise that many experts feel it does, than it would be wise to investigate further how the State Partnership Program is creating transnational social capital. The generation of transnational connections by the United States with other nations holds the promise of being an exceptional tool for positively promoting the U.S. image abroad. The State Partnership Program would benefit from being able to show clear and quantifiable social capital creation that has stemmed from their program. Once this was done, they could use that foundation of social capital creation to tap into support sources that hold social capital creation as a tenet of their funding requirements.

To this end, the State Partnership Program partners, led by the National Guard Bureau, should record just what civilian-to-civilian projects have taken place within their 32 partnerships. Developing a list of relationships that have taken place as a result of the program, and the impact of these projects in their respective communities, should be among the first steps to take if solicitation of social capital development money is the goal.

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