

## Amerikānis ar kuru par visu var parunāt



Šis gads ir īpaši veiksmīgs un arī atbildīgs mums visiem, jo visu šo mācību gadu Rīgas Klasiskajā ģimnāzijā strādās ASV vēstniecības Fulbraita programmas dalībnieks Halīds Nasers Šeihs (Khalid Nasser Sheikh). Viņa uzdevums ir asistēt skolotājiem angļu valodas stundās, bet ne tikai. Sadarbībā ar angļu valodas un bioloģijas skolotājiem, Halīds jau ir veiksmīgi novadījis divas bioloģijas stundas 10. klases skolēniem, jo pēc izglītības Halīds ir bioloģijas bakalaurs un nākotnē plāno kļūt par ārstu.

Halīds noteikti ienesa prieku un jautrību mūsu ģimnāzijā un tagad skolēni ir vēl vairāk motivēti mācīties angļu valodu. Daudzi ir arī iemīļējuši mūsu debašu un sarunu klubu 10.-12. klasēm, kurā Halīds palīdz skolēniem uzlabot izrunu un iesaistīties dažādās diskusijās. Iespēja satikties ar cilvēku, kurš pārstāv Amerikāņu kultūru un uzdot viņam jebkurus jautājumus ir patiešām unikāla un mēs sirsnīgi pateicamies ASV vēstniecībai par šo fantastisko iespēju!

RKG Debašu Klubs notiek ceturtdienās no plkst. 15.30 - 303.kab (vadītāja: Ludmila Pelise).

Papildus, Halīdu un citus Fulbraita programmas dalībniekus no ASV un vienkārši ļoti interesantus cilvēkus var satikt ASV vēstniecības JFK lasītavā Nacionālajā bibliotēkā, kur otrdienās un ceturtdienās no plkst. 16.30 līdz 18.00- US Embassy's English Conversation Club <https://www.facebook.com/USEmbassyRigaEnglishClub/>

Informāciju sagatavoja Nadežda Polianoviča.

- Zemāk ir dažu mūsu audzēkņu pirmie mēģinājumi žurnālistikā, intervējot Halīdu un aprakstot savus iespaidus:

### **I didn't come to America, but America came to me!**

By Darja Besselova

Our school, Riga Classical Gymnasium, is well-known for international relations with foreign schools and educational institutions. We have a great opportunity to improve our foreign

languages, especially English, and practice our skills with native speakers, or students from other European countries.

This school year, our administration has invited an American named Khalid, who came to RKG from Chicago. During September, he visited our English lessons. It was very interesting and useful for me, we were able to ask an actual American about the culture of his nation. Khalid told us about his friend's opinion about Latvia, it was really funny.

To sum up, I'd like to thank Khalid and our administration for this possibility. I didn't come to America, but America came to me.

### **From a student to a teacher. An American is visiting our school!**

By Ārija Kalniņa

This time our school has an enjoyable opportunity to meet Khalid - a young American from Texas, who decided to visit Latvia with other Americans in the Fulbright program for a whole year.

Khalid Sheikh has a large, multicultural family with many relatives. He has moved from Illinois to Texas when he was 18 and graduated from the University of Houston, where he studied biology. Speaking about Khalid's character, we could say he is a kind and open-minded person, what is an actual benefit for an active individual.

At his first lessons with pupils, Khalid introduced himself and told about his beloved home. It was thrilling to discover how life in the USA going on, and what typically represents the primary differences between Latvia and America. We learned that in America there is a distribution of schools by their different education levels. Indeed, more interesting was the lively conversation about traditional stereotypes surrounding Latvians and ordinary Americans. The discussion has gone so far that almost everyone forgot about the time boundary!

Our school students had only a few class lessons with Khalid, but we can't wait to have another one! We sincerely believe that everyone will benefit from this valuable experience!

### **Getting to know the USA**

By Elina Šalajenko

We live in the world of different cultures, traditions and points of view. This is what makes communicating with foreigners so interesting and fascinating, and this year we had a lucky chance to meet with an American Fulbright student.

His name is Khalid Nasser Sheikh, he is 22 years old, currently lives in Riga, but comes from Houston, Texas. He is a very positive, smiling person—just the way you would expect a typical American to be. We have only had two lessons so far, but both were very informative and entertaining. We discussed stereotypes about Americans, Latvians and Russians, which was the most engrossing topic for me. I enjoyed being able to find out what was true in our perception of the USA, because it is very important to be able to see through clichés. It is also extremely captivating to learn more about life in America—about schools, for example. I would love to visit the States one day, and I bet that other students would appreciate such an opportunity too, so it is very essential to know things about the country before travelling there.

Do you think that all Americans live in skyscrapers and eat at McDonald's? Or that all of them are highly patriotic? We have broken all these stereotypes and compared Latvian and American cultures. It turns out, Americans are not some kind of aliens—they are people, just like us, and deserve respect, not prejudices.

Every Thursday I attend the Conversation Club, during which we discuss different topics in the form of debate. It is incredibly interesting for me, who never participated in something like this before, and I would highly recommend the club to everyone. Nothing helps to break a language

barrier better than actually starting to speak, so in my opinion, such a practice can really develop one's speaking skills.

When learning a language, it is very useful to speak to native speakers, because it improves one's listening skills, grammar and vocabulary. I am incredibly grateful to our school for offering us such a wonderful experience, and I hope that this year will be really productive.

### **American, biologist and a cat lover – an American in our school**

By Darja Burilova

This year Khalid Nasser Sheikh from the United States has visited our school. He lived in Houston and came to Latvia with five more people. Only six schools in the Latvia have opportunity to discover more about American culture.

**Student A:** Have you lived in Houston your whole life?

**Khalid:** No. Actually, I was born in a small town in Illinois, which is even smaller and not as lively as Riga. There was always very hot in summer and very cold in winter. When I finished school, I moved to Houston, which is located in Texas, the second biggest state in America.

**Student B:** What are the main differences between Riga and Houston?

**Khalid:** I'll name only one. As American children can get driving license at the age of 16, there are always a lot of cars and it's difficult to find any public transport. There are some buses and trams in the city center, but people mostly use only cars.

**Student C:** What is your favorite thing about Latvia?

**Khalid:** It may sound foolish, but these are cats. I really love how cats are simply walking on streets and any moment you can come and feed or pet them. In Houston you can walk for miles and don't meet any cat. It reminded me of a cat we found near the university. I wanted to take it with us, although in campus animals were not allowed. We tried to sneak it in the backpack, but, unfortunately, we got caught. I took this cat to my mom's house and named it Leo. I think my mom was a bit annoyed, because we already had three more cats.

**Student D:** Is your mother American, too?

**Khalid:** My family is kind of multinational. My dad is from Pakistan and my mom's parents are Irish. America is a multinational country by itself.

**Student E:** Do you have any siblings?

**Khalid:** Yes! My younger brother is eighteen and my elder sister is twenty-six. And I'm twenty-two, by the way.

**Student F:** What is the average number of children in American families?

**Khalid:** I think it's 2 or 3 children.

**Student G:** What do you want to do in Latvia? What is your goal?

**Khalid:** Well, I guess it's pretty simple – I want to learn Latvian, because I find it very interesting. I already know a few words. Not many people know about Latvia, I want to change it. When I said I'm travelling to Latvia, most of my friend were like, "Where's that? Is it somewhere in Africa?" And I said, "No, it's near Russia in Europe," and they were like, "Oh, so it's Russia!"

**Student H:** Thank you for your answers! It was really interesting to have such conversation with you!

**Khalid:** You're welcome!