



# Ukraine Children's Action Project (UCAP)

December 2024

On the ground, hands on, transparent

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## Making a difference...



UCAP built this arts and education center in 2023. When we visited the Kids' Club earlier this month it was packed with children, many displaced from war zones in the east, others from the surrounding low income housing neighborhood in Lviv.

There is no denying that 2024 has been a year of violent crises and sadness in many parts of the world.

But we are also feeling a profound sense of gratitude that we, UCAP's "community of caring", have been able to provide truly meaningful support for children and families in Ukraine, all of whom are impacted by an unjust war that has disrupted lives and caused untold grief in a truly democratic country that yearns for peace and normalcy.

We are just back from a working trip to Warsaw, Poland and Lviv, Ukraine. The schedule was intense and packed. But we really wanted to check on how UCAP's programs were doing, meet new partners and connect with the talented staff who are "all in" to helping Ukrainian children. And most of all, we couldn't wait to visit with kids who were coping - remarkably well - with the on-going war and the toll it's taking on everyone in the country. It's been three years of violence in America's democratic ally in Eastern Europe.

During and after the trip, Irwin was able to share some of our experiences in **appearances on CNN International and MSNBC interviews linked below.**

[CNN International](#)

[MSNBC](#)

## UCAP's Ukrainian Weekend School in Warsaw, Poland

As you recall, UCAP is funding a unique "weekend school" for Ukrainian children, 5 - 17, who have been living in Warsaw since the full scale invasion in 2022. The kids take classes in everything from dance to computer science. But the most important feature is that all classes are taught in Ukrainian, with an emphasis on Ukraine's history and rich culture. "Yes, you're living abroad, but we want to remind you that you are Ukrainian! And we hope you'll come home once the war ends." This is a distinctly challenging message for children who are gradually becoming assimilated in temporary home communities outside Ukraine.



Many of the teenagers we spoke with were planning on pursuing university studies in Poland or other countries in Europe. This is a program we want to expand.

## Education Projects - Making Progress



As we do whenever we're in Ukraine we met with our friend, Natalia Pipa, an influential member of Ukraine's Parliament. She wanted to know more about "We Are Ukraine!", the program UCAP came up with to reinforce Ukrainian identity among the kids who are part of the diaspora of children living abroad. Natalia believes that 35% of families living outside of Ukraine intend to return to Ukraine once the war is over. About 25% want to remain somewhere else and about 30% are undecided



## Making Rounds at St. Nikolas Children's Hospital

We spent a lot of time at the St. Nikolas Children's Hospital where we support a number of programs that benefit the many children who have been displaced to western or transferred from active war zones in the East of Ukraine. Irwin, a pediatrician and former director of a pediatric ICU, is totally impressed with the quality of care and the excellence of the medical staff there



Irwin got to "scrub in" on a transplant operation where surgeons were removing a piece of a mother's liver to be donated to her year old son with severe, otherwise untreatable, congenital liver disease.

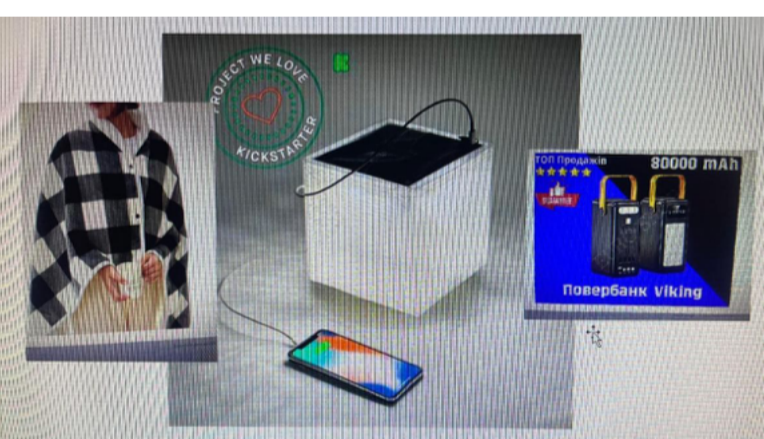
He also saw their state of the art robotic surgery equipment. (St. Nikolas is the only hospital in eastern Europe that does pediatric robotic surgery), watched a physical therapy session work with a young girl with cerebral palsy and visited a modern, well-equipped occupational therapy facility.



We also visited the hospital space currently under construction that will be converted to 3 state of the art new operating rooms over the next few months. UCAP is working with a partner, KidsOR, to support this expansion - desperately needed to meet the growing need which has tripled admissions since the war began.



## Winter Emergency Response



We had a chance to meet with our new partner - Youth Initiative, an organization based in Kherson, a front-line community that is in desperate need of winter supplies such as batteries, blankets, and lights. UCAP is supporting the delivery of winter humanitarian packets for hundreds of families there.

[Donate](#)

## Meet the Families



### Through a Mother's Eyes: Nina

Donetsk, Ukraine  
"Everything has a beginning and an end! The beginning was full of anxiety; how will it be? And the end was filled with different emotions: joy, fulfillment, confidence, gratitude, etc.! I can say this about the time spent with the children in the camp".

[Read More](#)

So, once again, we sincerely thank you for continuing to support UCAP as we pledge to pursue our mission on behalf of Ukraine's children for as long as it takes.

We wish all of you - all of us - a year of promise and peace in 2025.

Fondly,  
*Irwin, Karen, Yuliia and Kevin*



Our team in Lviv...Irwin, Karen, Yuliia (regional director), and Kevin (communications).

[Ways to Give](#)

\*After 30 months of operation, we want to share that our administrative overhead is just 13%. The respected Charity Navigator considers anything under 25% worthy of it's highest rating!



[www.UCAP.HELP](http://www.UCAP.HELP)  
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[Thank You](#)



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