



Dear Friends and Brave Generation Supporters,

It's been a full and intense season at **Brave Generation**, and I'm writing to share some updates from our work — and to offer a heartfelt thank you for continuing to stand with us.

I founded Brave Generation in New York City in 2022, after arriving in the U.S. to pursue an M.A. in Human Rights at Columbia University. Like many Ukrainians, I've been devastated by what has happened to my country — and to my own family. My hometown, along with several relatives, remains under Russian occupation. I've lost loved ones to this war.

And yet, amidst all of this, I was given an extraordinary opportunity — to study at Columbia with support from a scholarship for displaced students through Columbia Global Centers. That chance gave me something I didn't expect in the middle of so much loss: a renewed sense of purpose. I knew I couldn't go back to who I was before.

Brave Generation was born out of that conviction — a nonprofit dedicated to supporting and empowering a new generation of Ukrainian leaders from every region and background. Leaders who will not only rebuild Ukraine, but help shape its democratic future.

I'm writing now to share a few highlights from our work this season — and again, to thank you for walking this path with us.

*With love and gratitude,*

*Tanya Kotelnikova*

*Founder & Director*

*Brave Generation*

### **Core Program: 66 New Students Join the 2025–2026 Brave Generation Cohort**

This spring, we welcomed 66 new students into our flagship program. Each participant receives:

- Mentorship from U.S. students and recent graduates
- Mental health and trauma-informed care
- English test preparation and test fee coverage
- Educational advising
- Emergency aid for basic needs

- Access to a growing network of over 200 youth leaders

## **New: ImpactUA Internship Program in partnership with [Razom for Ukraine](#)**

I'm proud to share that we've been honored to partner with — and receive support from — Razom for Ukraine, an organization we deeply admire for its unwavering commitment to Ukraine's future.

This summer, with Razom's vital partnership, we are launching the **ImpactUA Internship Program** — a four-week immersive experience in western Ukraine for 16 Ukrainian and American students who are deeply committed to the country's recovery. Participants will intern with local nonprofit organizations actively engaged in rebuilding communities. This is not just preparation for the future — it's a hands-on opportunity to shape it, contributing directly to the reconstruction and healing of Ukraine from the ground up.

## **New program: support for displaced young women in collaboration with UN Women**

We are proud to launch a new initiative supporting 20 young women from frontline and occupied regions. The program provides among others:

- Mental health support
- Professional and academic development
- Tools to manage stress, reclaim agency, and build leadership capacity

## **Team and leadership news**

We're very happy to welcome several new members to our team and board:

- Eileen O'Connor joins our Board of Directors. An attorney and journalist, Eileen has held senior leadership roles at the Rockefeller Foundation, Yale University, and the U.S. State Department.
- We're thrilled to welcome Olga Marchuk as our new Communications Manager, joining Brave Generation from USAID with over a decade of experience in strategic communications and advocacy.
- We're excited to welcome Dr. Anna Lordan as our new Program Director, based in Lviv. She holds a Ph.D. from Stanford University and degrees from the University of Oxford, and previously taught at Oberlin College and Conservatory. Anna brings

exceptional academic and leadership experience, along with a deep commitment to Ukraine's future.

### **Urgent support needed**

Recent escalations have brought increased danger to areas where many of our participants and team members live — including Sumy , Dnipro, and Kharkiv Oblast. We are doing everything we can to provide emergency support, including relocation assistance and mental health care delivered by trusted professionals. Their strength continues to inspire us, and we remain committed to standing with them every step of the way.

If you're able, please consider making a [donation](#) to support our ongoing work. Every contribution helps us reach more young people in need.

If you have ideas, resources, or would like to get involved, I'd love to speak with. Feel free to book a time with me [here](#).

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### **We are proud of the success stories emerging from Brave Generation**

#### **Sofia's Brave Journey**

Meet Sofia from Chernivtsi — a bold, driven young woman shaping the future of international relations.

With a background in journalism and experience studying in the United States, Sofia is now pursuing her Master's degree in International Relations at Newcastle University, focusing on international analytics, cultural diplomacy, and civil society development.

Through Brave Generation, Sofia found more than guidance — she found a community that encouraged her to speak up, refine her ideas, and shape a career that merges media, policy, and activism.

The program empowered her to pursue what she calls a *multi-hybrid path* — where research, storytelling, and civic engagement come together.

One moment that stood out most?

Her very first mentorship session:



*"It was honest. It was human. And it made me realize how important it is to believe in yourself and set higher standards. That one conversation shifted how I approach everything."*

Sofia's journey is a powerful reminder of what Brave Generation makes possible: not just academic success, but the courage to lead, influence, and inspire — today.

***"Brave Generation gave me something I didn't know I needed: real support, confidence, and the understanding that we — young Ukrainians — are not just the future, but the present."***

***Thank you for continuing to invest in stories like Sofia's. You are fueling a generation of thinkers, builders, and changemakers who are already transforming the world.***

### From Lviv to Toronto: Solomiia's \$225,000 Scholarship Journey



***"I come from an average Ukrainian family, and without the test prep and mentorship Brave Generation offered, applying to schools abroad simply wouldn't have been possible."***

Meet Solomiia from Lviv — a determined young Ukrainian whose dream of studying finance and economics abroad has just come true. She has been accepted into the University of Toronto's Class of 2029, where she'll major in Finance/Economics with a minor in Linguistics, supported by an **extraordinary \$225,000 scholarship**.

This milestone was the result of immense dedication — and the crucial support of Brave Generation.

As a mentee in Brave Generation's 2024/25 cohort, Solomiia received personalized guidance on everything from essays and interview prep to financial aid portals and standardized testing. Brave Generation covered TOEFL and SAT preparation courses, giving her access to tools that would otherwise have been out of reach.

*"Those resources — and having someone who believed in me and showed me how the process works — made all the difference."*

Now, Solomiia is on her way to a world-class education. But she sees it as more than a personal success. It's a stepping stone toward something bigger:

*"With the knowledge I gain, I plan to return and help rebuild Ukraine. That's how I'll give back to Brave Generation and to my country."*

Solomiia's story is a powerful example of what your support makes possible: access to opportunity, belief in potential, and a commitment to building Ukraine's future — one student at a time.