

## From the President

In early October, ATAD held its annual Post-arrival Orientation for International Students, Host Parents and Host Siblings and, from the lively and enthusiastic discussions throughout the day, it appears that the students and their families are adjusting well to one another and that strong bonds are already developing. The students are involved with activities in their schools and are very appreciative of the helpfulness of their teachers and the friendliness of the people they've met. The Host Families are learning about another culture as they share their own and are enjoying sampling the cuisine of their student's home country. Joining us for the year are: from Krakow, Poland – Jakub Druszkiewicz (the Berg/Riedy family, Brighton) and Jakub Janczarski (the Merrifield family, Pittsford Mendon); from Novgorod, Russia – Lisa Musatova (the Brayman family, Pittsford Mendon), Toma Sanina (the Kudla family, Webster Schroeder) and Alexey Ignat'ev (the Minchen family, Gates Chili); and from Izmir, Turkey –Dilara Gurcu (the Konte family, Pittsford Mendon) and Ece Hanci (the Warren family, Brighton). We welcome these International Students and their wonderful Host Families and Host Schools and look forward to a successful year.

We have moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with our new web site, [www.atad.org](http://www.atad.org), which should give us much greater exposure, especially to our target audience, high school students here and abroad. We are also about to issue ATAD "business cards" that refer to the web site and that encourage students to apply and families to host.

Getting the message out about ATAD is critical if we are to continue as a vibrant exchange organization. This past summer only three American students went overseas with ATAD. While this may have been due in large part to concerns as a result of the attacks on September 11, other factors are also at play. This year thirteen wonderful International

Students were accepted into the ATAD program, yet we were able to find Host Families for only seven of them. This is a new and disheartening experience for us.

We have a number of decisions ahead of us, and we need to address them. We have been operating under an old model that served us well for 50 years, but perhaps we need to change that model. We need to assess what the community wants and needs, and then we need to look at if and how we can fill those needs. At the October Board Meeting, several members volunteered to serve on a strategic planning committee to look at how we operated in the past, what has changed to affect our results, what the root causes of the primary effects are, and what alternatives we have for a viable operating model today. The committee will gather and analyze statistics and other data as part of their work, with the goal of presenting the results of their study and a strategy for the future in the spring of 2003.

Today we have a fine group of dedicated volunteers, wonderful Host Families and excellent exchange students, both international and American, who exemplify the ideals of ATAD. In spite of our own difficulties this past year, our relationship with our overseas partners is as strong as it has ever been. Our mission to improve understanding of peoples and cultures through family living experiences remains. We have a lot to build on.

In this ever-changing world of competing forces and interests and in a time when we may feel less secure, it sometimes seems as if we take one step forward and two steps back, and it's easy to get discouraged. But now, more than ever before, we need to do what we can to build bridges, one by one by one. Every member of the ATAD family is a bridge builder, and each bridge we build has the potential to inspire someone else to build one, too. Let us take this occasion of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary to rededicate ourselves to bridge building, for "then shall we know one another and have peace."

*Marti Eggers*

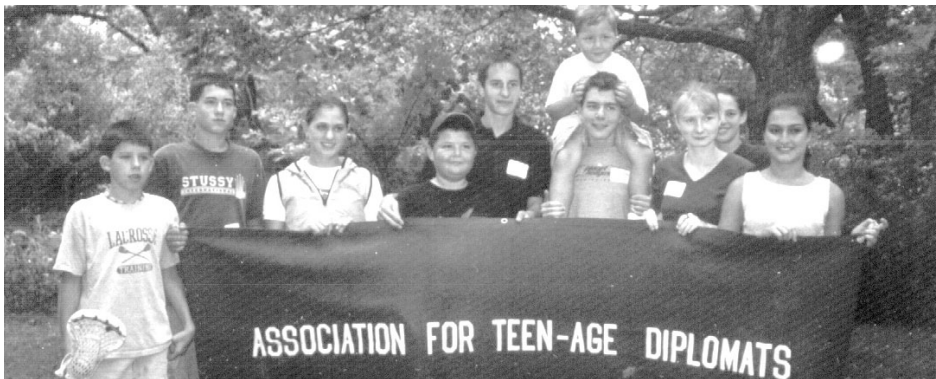
## Raina Moore: ATAD '95 Peru to Vice-Consul, Monterey, Mexico

It is always pleasant when ATAD receives news of ATAD alums using the skills and knowledge gained from their international experience in their current lives. Raina Moore is one such alumna. She spent the summer of her junior year (Pittsford-Mendon, '95) on an ATAD exchange in Peru. Raina has been the Vice-Consul at the American Consulate in Monterey, Mexico, for the past two years. A few months ago she was interviewed by Channel 9 while visiting home. She said that her interest in Spanish began in her high school Spanish classes and the trip she participated in through ATAD.

Raina spoke to ATAD recently about the steady progress she made toward her current position. "I felt that I was a great language student, but actually being in a Spanish speaking country was a revelation. I knew the basics, but I couldn't speak it. My host-family was so hands-on, so encouraging. They would introduce me as their daughter."

Raina went on to major in Spanish at Spelman College and supplemented her state-side courses with foreign study in Oaxaca, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Costa Rica. She was recruited for the foreign service through the Foreign Language Fellows Program, which allows outstanding foreign language speakers to enter the foreign service without the normal examination. She subsequently received training for the foreign service at McLean, Virginia.

Raina's work involves interviewing Mexicans for visas. She states, "I'm often told that I speak perfect Spanish, but as an African-American it's obvious that I'm not Mexican." ATAD is proud to have helped Raina on the road to fully realizing and employing her natural gifts for language.



**Welcome to ATAD!** Attending the ATAD Welcome Picnic in September are (from left): Host Brothers Parker and Kyle Warren with Ece Hanci (Izmir, Turkey); Host Brother Noah Berg/Reidy, Jakub Druszkiewicz (Krakow, Poland), Host Brothers Aaron and Isaac Berg/Reidy; Liza Musatova (Novgorod, Russia) with Host Sister Courtney Brayman; Dilara Gurcu (Izmir, Turkey).



**Bon Voyage!** From left, Maxime Creuset (the Jones family), Olivier Saliou (the Liberto family), Douglas Kopp (ATAD Chaperon), Apolline Leblanche (the Debes/Urbach family) and Elisabeth Alexandre (the Colby family) prepare for their trip to New York City before the students return to Rennes, France.

# ATAD Celebrates 50th Anniversary

The weather was perfect. The skies were clear, the air was balmy and the sunset was brilliant as eighty past and present volunteers, Host Families and exchange students along with many friends of ATAD gathered on the terrace of the Crowne Plaza, overlooking the Sister Cities Bridge, to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our exchange organization. Upon arrival, attendees were greeted with colorful displays of photographs, costumes, artwork and crafts from each of ATAD's current Partner Cities as well as detailed and enlightening statistical charts depicting various aspects of ATAD over the years. During the past 50 years, 230 volunteers have served on the ATAD Board. Over these same 50 years, ATAD has sent over 2,500 Rochester-area high school students overseas. Locally, nearly 2,000 Host Families have welcomed over 2,000 International Students into their homes. By rough calculation, when you include the American students going overseas, their natural and host families, and International Students and their natural and host families, over 25,000 people here and abroad have been directly touched by the ATAD exchange experience.

Prior to the formal dinner, past and present Board Members, "the nuts and bolts of

ATAD," were recognized for their efforts and their dedication to bringing students and families together in positive living experiences. Former exchange students were recognized for their courage to represent their country to others and to bring back home with them a broader vision of the common bonds that unite people around the world. Host Families, "the heartbeat of ATAD," were recognized for opening their homes and hearts to teens from another culture. ATAD's current International Students were warmly welcomed to Rochester and to the ATAD family.

Special guest speakers included Frank T. Lamb, Mayor of Rochester from 1964 until 1970, who reminisced about the early years when the Sister Cities Program and ATAD grew side by side, and Mayor William A. Johnson, Jr., who emphasized the need, now more than ever, to continue building one-on-one relationships through intercultural exchanges as a means toward better world understanding. Frau Friderun Woebcken, past co-chair of the ATAD Committee in Würzburg brought greetings and best wishes from our Partner City in Germany.

Following the formal dinner, Marcia Payne, ATAD's longest-serving Board Member, spoke about the early years of the

organization and the importance of international friendships. Les Knox, Chair of the Anniversary Committee, gave an overview of the middle years and the structures within the schools and the community that gave the organization its shape at that time. Beth Vinal, former school liaison and immediate Past President, outlined the economic, societal and cultural changes of the past ten years that have had an effect on ATAD and other exchange organizations. Prior to the close of the evening's program, Marcia Payne received special recognition for her vision and lasting impact on ATAD as well as for her lifelong commitment to international friendships.

In addition to providing ATAD with an occasion to recognize and thank volunteers and participants, the Anniversary Celebration served as a happy reunion for volunteers and an opportunity for all to forge new friendships. Judging from the smiles, the hugs, the laughter and the photo flashes throughout the evening and the over \$800 donated for scholarships and financial aid, ATAD's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration was a success in every way.

**ATAD**  
*Check us out on the web!*  
**[www.atad.org](http://www.atad.org)**

**Association for Teen-Age Diplomats**  
44 Lincoln Avenue  
Pittsford, NY 14534

