Dear Reader,

We at the America for Bulgaria Foundation are helping create conditions for Bulgarians to build fulfilling livelihoods and for Bulgarian businesses to thrive. This month, we bring you a selection of stories from our community — stories about livelihoods lived and livelihoods aspired to; about daring and entrepreneurship; and about the organizations that ensure that the pursuit of economic opportunity and personal fulfillment is within reach of every Bulgarian.

Beans, Crafts, and Entrepreneurship

Participants in ABF's Business Academy for Starting Entrepreneurs (BASE) don't wait around for things to happen: they carve their own personal and professional paths in life. Like Mariana Barakchieva (above), who gave up an engineering job in Switzerland for a life of pursuing mountain adventures and building her own sustainable clothing business.

Radenko Velinov comes from Bulgaria's bean capital, Smilyan. He learned woodworking from some of Scotland's great masters and brought back the lessons to his native land, hoping to revive traditional occupations in Smilyan.

The featured martenitsas come courtesy of a special place—the Nadezhda workshop and bookstore in Plovdiv. Meet the intrepid entrepreneurs from Nadezhda and find out how being in business has turned their lives around.

Making Work Work for You

Work and life need not be in conflict, but a healthy balance is hard to achieve. Enter MindFit, a new service helping companies retain their best employees by providing access to affordable counseling.

Investing in the Future

Young Roma in Bulgaria go further in their schooling and earn more than they did ten years ago. Learn what investments enabled those accomplishments and meet Emiliyan and Rujasina—two students we are really proud to know.

Bulgaria is weathering the pandemic-generated economic crisis relatively well. Find out why some local economies are pulling ahead and what the country's recovery prospects are from our interview with Svetla Kostadinova and Petar Ganev from the Institute for Market Economics.

Mark Your Calendars

Want to make a difference in the life of a young person or an entire community? Become a mentor or participant in the largest one-one-one mentorship program in Bulgaria, ABLE Mentor. Apply by February 19.

The Bulgarian Center for Not-for-Profit Law's entrepreneurship program for nonprofits, LET'S GO, is now accepting applications. Closes February 26.

Don't miss stories and announcements from the ABF community: subscribe to this newsletter and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Stay safe,

Your friends at the America for Bulgaria Foundation