



elin pelin
FOUNDATION

2020-2021 REPORT

Overview of Elin Pelin Foundation
activities and finances between
June 1, 2020 and May 31, 2021.

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Letter from the President

Dear Members and Friends of Elin Pelin Foundation:

I am delighted to report that the past year has been successful for Elin Pelin Foundation despite the temporary cancellations of social and cultural events.

There were no changes to The Board in 2020. Following Harris County's "Stay Home, Work Safe Order" the work of the foundation was mostly related to its main project – the First Bulgarian School in Houston Elin Pelin. Our newly implemented hybrid form of teaching attracted new students residing not only in the Houston greater area but also in Central and South Texas. Enrollment reached unprecedented numbers and as a direct result, the faculty grew with three teachers from San Antonio joining the team. The increased number of teachers required us to switch most teachers from contractor status to W-2 employees. That resulted an increase in expenses, but thanks to our main patrons, Elin Pelin Foundation did not have to apply for Paycheck Protection Program. The Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science funded the school with more than \$23,000. PDT Partners issued a grant to Elin Pelin Foundation in the amount of \$5,000. Reliant, an NRG Company with their many charity programs granted the Foundation a total of \$3,000. At the last day of school more than 90 people attended the Outdoor Celebration, which shows that the schoolyear 2020-2021 was a complete success and the upcoming 2021-2022 is even more promising.

Elin Pelin Foundation was created in 2012 with the idea to represent and support a small Bulgarian School in Houston Texas. Throughout the years our focus has expanded from education-only to supporting the arts and providing the community with cultural enrichment programs and cross-cultural experiences. In 2022 our Foundation will be celebrating its 10th year Anniversary. It is my pleasure to announce that the event will be formal and exclusive. To add value to the membership, we will make the event free to members of Elin Pelin Foundation. We hope you will encourage your relatives and friends to join the foundation and attend this special event.

I would like to invite all members to consider becoming part of The Board or Staff of Elin Pelin Foundation. The Board's main tasks are to search and/or provide funds and lead projects. A director's position is a one-year commitment with some very reasonable requirements and expectations. Any idea which benefits the community could be turned into reality if you are willing to dedicate your time and efforts. Elin Pelin Foundation can provide you with a team to split the workload and to help find sponsors. The Board of directors is elected anew by the foundation members on an annual basis. A Staff position is a lengthier commitment, but the hiring process is done by The Board members – not through elections. If interested in applying, please talk to any representative of The Foundation. Anyone from our team would be happy to answer your questions and help you apply.

In conclusion, I respectfully thank every single one of the supporters of Elin Pelin Foundation's cause! Whether it was a Birthday Fundraiser initiative, a monthly donation of \$25 through PayPal, a one-time donation of \$100 or \$500, an employee gift match of \$1,000, or the unexpected grant of \$5,000 on behalf of Mr. Nikola Chonkov, those surprising gifts are proof that Elin Pelin Foundation will be here tomorrow, and it will continue to support the education, culture, and arts. However big or small, your donations encourage us, the volunteers, to continue working for the community. Please accept our sincere gratitude!



Sincerely,

Gergana Araktchiev

President, Elin Pelin Foundation

31 May 2021

Bulgarian School

Summer School – Virtual Instruction – June & July 2020

Elin Pelin School is organized Virtual Summer Classes for two different age groups in June and July, using Zoom classroom and Ucha.se resources. The Summer School allowed current and future students to refresh their knowledge of Bulgarian while participating in fun and creative activities. The curriculum included children’s songs, games, virtual field trips, crafts, fairytales, but the best feature were the special guests – a famous singer, a sports coach, a police officer, and a constable visited the classes and talked to students about their jobs, duties, and experience.



Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – coordinator

Mrs. Diana Angelova, Ms. Daniela Kashukeeva, Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova, Mrs. Snejana Nihtianova – instructors

School Year 2020 – 2021 over 40 Enrolled Students

On the 12th of September the First Bulgarian School in Houston Elin Pelin opened its doors for hybrid classes at two locations and Zoom classrooms. Since 2016 our school’s main location is at the historic Dow School building, home of MECA (Multi-cultural Education and Counseling through the Arts – a community-based nonprofit organization).

The spacious building of Hosanna Lutheran Church with two adjoining kindergarten rooms and a shaded playground is a great fit for our students and is our current secondary location in the North. Following CDC guidelines, sanitary stations were available at both locations.



After the popular 2020 Summer School, there was a record number of enrolled students of all ages; over 40 students were signed up in the beginning of 2020-2021 school year. Throughout the year that number increased. Three teachers from San Antonio, TX officially joined the Elin Pelin School faculty, and held remote lessons every week. The school's 9th consecutive school year was successful with the number of enrolled students exceeding anyone's expectations.

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – principal

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova, Mrs. Diana Angelova, Ms. Daniela Kashukeeva, Ms. Rayna Levakova, Ms. Valentina Kamburova, Mrs. Boryana Veneva, Ms. Petya Petkova – instructors

Mr. Mintcho Araktchiev – IT support

Extracurricular Activities

This year's extracurricular activities included crafts focused on Bulgarian folklore as well as on widely recognized holidays like:

- Fall, Christmas, and Springtime festivities cards and decoration
- Crafting Mummer's masks
- Learning about traditional Bulgarian embroidery patterns

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – coordinator

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova, Mrs. Diana Angelova, Ms. Daniela Kashukeeva, Mrs. Valentina Kamburova – instructors



Historical Park Visit – September 2020

On September 19th 2020 The Historical Park in Bulgaria streamed a virtual tour of the park and a theatrical performance, teaching students from all over the world about The Legend of Khan Kubrat.

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – coordinator

Mr. Radoslav Ivanov – host



Day of the National Revival Leaders – November 2020

In observance of the Bulgarian National Revival Day – November 1st Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova and the 7th-grade students held a presentation about the life and work of our patron Elin Pelin. The kindergarden students prepared a short dramatization of one of his most famous tale The Old Man's Mitten.



To mark the occasion, Mrs.

Dzarbova handed a book to each student. In 2020 Vazdigane Foundation donated 40 comics books about Khan Kubrat and his legacy to our school.

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – coordinator

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova, Mrs. Valentina Kamburova – instructors

Virtual & Hybrid Christmas Celebration with Santa – December 2020

This year's Breakfast with Santa was replaced by a virtual celebration via Zoom. Santa had the opportunity to attend by logging in all the way from the North Pole and listen to the poems, songs and watch the dances the little students had prepared for him and their parents.

Mr. Mintcho Araktchiev – IT & coordinator foundation

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – coordinator school

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova, Ms. Petya Petkova, Mrs. Boryana Veneva, Ms. Rayna Levakova, Mrs. Diana Angelova, Mrs. Valentina Kamburova, Ms. Daniela Kashukeeva – instructors



Vasil Levski Day – February 2021

To honor Vasil Levski, on February 28th Ms. Petya Petkova held an open online lesson about the life and legacy of this great Bulgarian person.

Vasil Levski, also called The Apostle of Freedom is honored for his leadership and bravery during the Bulgarian movement to liberate the country from the Ottoman Empire. Levski sacrificed his life for the liberation of Bulgaria. He placed the interests of the Bulgarians nation above his own.

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – coordinator

Ms. Petya Petkova – instructor



Springtime Festivities – March 2021

To mark the 1st of March, and International Women’s Day (March 8), Elin Pelin Foundation had brought beautiful gifts for the students and their mothers - martenitsas, wooden tulips, and bracelets with hearts with the word “mama”, crafted in Bulgaria. To celebrate the 3rd of March, students learned about some of the most famous Bulgarian Revolutionaries and National Heroes.

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – coordinator

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova, Mrs. Diana Angelova, Ms. Valentina Kamburova, Mrs. Boryana Veneva, Ms. Rayna Levakova, Ms. Petya Petkova, Ms. Daniela Kashukeeva – instructors



Online Lesson about April Uprising of 1876 – April 2021

To mark 145 years since the April Uprising of 1876 Mr. Iskren Krasimirov spoke to the students of Elin Pelin School. He told them about the life and heroism of Georgi Benkovski, Zahari Stoyanov, and Rayna Popgeorgiva (Rayna Knyagina).

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – coordinator

Mr. Iskren Krasimirov – host

Mrs. Gergana Araktchiev – sponsor



End of the school year – Outdoor Celebration – May 2021

This school year ended with an outdoor celebration. The students of First Bulgarian School in Houston Elin Pelin recited poems, danced, and presented Bulgarian Traditional Costumes and crafted Bulgarian Mummer Masks. The outdoor celebration included bouncy house, a



Fun Run, and several outdoor games with prizes. There were sandwiches, pizza and cake as well as other treats for the hungry. Despite the moody spring weather, the event was a great success with more than 90 people attending, 45 of which were students and their siblings.



Mrs. Nevena Nikolova – coordinator and host

Mr. Petar Gerdzhikov – Sound Engineer and DJ

Mrs. Diana Angelova, Ms. Daniela Kashukeeva, Ms. Valentina Kamburova, Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – instructors

Mrs. Gergana Araktchiev – volunteer

Fundraisers, Grants & Social Events

PDT Partners – November 2020

PDT Partners made a grant to Elin Pelin Foundation via their Donnor Advised Fund through the National Philanthropic Trust. National Philanthropic Trust (NPT) is a public charity dedicated to providing philanthropic expertise to donors, foundations and financial institutions, enabling them to realize their philanthropic aspirations. They have made more than 400,000 grants totaling \$12.4 billion to charities all over the world.

Thanks to Mr. Nikola Chonkov, an employee of PDT Partners, in November 2020 Elin Pelin Foundation received a grant of \$5,000.

Mr. Nikola Chonkov – donation initiator

5K Challenge Fundraiser – October 2020

Initiated in the beginning of the school year by Gergana Araktchiev, this fundraiser had the single purpose of raising funds for health-promoting activities for kids. With donations from 20 people the initiative raised more than \$700.

Mrs. Gergana Araktchiev – coordinator



Giving Tuesday Initiative – December 2020

#GivingTuesday refers to the Tuesday after U.S. Thanksgiving. It is a movement to create an international day of charitable giving at the beginning of the holiday season.

Mrs. Gergana Araktchiev organized this year's fundraiser, and it was very successful, considering the short notice. On the 1st of December without any prior advertisement, a Facebook fundraiser was created on behalf of Elin Pelin Foundation. We raised a total of \$1,000 donated by 15 people. \$400 of this amount was donated by ARA Computers and Consulting Inc. Thank you for your generosity!

Mrs. Gergana Araktchiev – coordinator

ARA Computers and Consulting – main sponsor



Reliant Gives– June and December 2020

Reliant, an NRG company remained one of our two most significant corporate supporters for 2020-21. With several charitable programs, their contributions of \$3,000 have funded the school's Outdoor Celebration and the latest order of T-shirts.

Mrs. Gergana Aratkchiev – grant coordinator

Mrs. Nevena Nikolova – Outdoor Celebration coordinator and host

Mrs. Hristina Pavlina, Mrs. Nevena Nikolova – T-shirt coordinators



Springtime Picnic – March 2021

To mark the March festivities a picnic in Dennis Johnston Park was organized by volunteers.

After the long self-quarantine of 2020, more than 40 people were happy to spend a sunny day in the park with their families and friends.

Mrs. Gergana Araktchiev – volunteer initiator

Mrs. Nevena Nikolova – volunteer



Bulgarian Parliamentary Election – April 2021

On the 4th of April 2021 Bulgarian citizens, residing in Houston and other Texas cities had the opportunity to cast their vote for Bulgaria's parliamentary elections. The Bulgarian Embassy sent a representative and supplies (paper ballots) and along with



3,410
People Reached

706
Engagements

Boost Post

locally residing volunteers a polling station team was formed. Elin Pelin Foundation's main location was the obvious choice for polling place. The team, consisted of supporters of different political parties, yet worked smoothly and ensured the integrity of the voting process. A total of 172 people exercised their rights to vote. A noteworthy act of kindness was the staff's decision to donate their wages to Elin Pelin Foundation, a donation of \$190. Thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Hristina Pavlina, the Facebook post marking the completion of a successful voting day was read by more than 13K people.

Mrs. Hristina Pavlina – coordinator, Facebook and e-mail correspondent

Mrs. Nevena Nikolova, Mrs. Mihaela Araktchieva, Mr. Damian Bratanov, Ms. Mariya Velikova, Mr. Evgeni Gogov – polling staff members

Mrs. Vessi Andreeva, Mr. Vladislav Manchev – volunteers

Mr. Mintcho Araktchiev – IT Support



Easter Picnic – May 2021

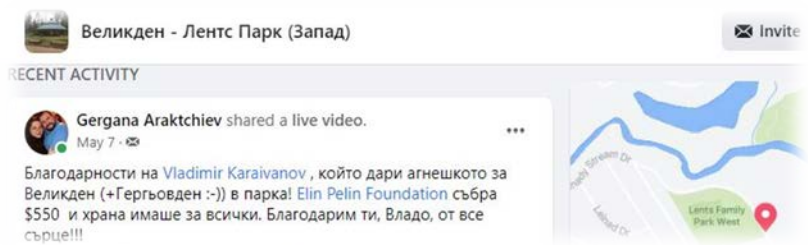
To celebrate Eastern Orthodox Easter, a picnic was organized by volunteers. The event unexpectedly turned into a fundraiser. Mr. Vladimir Karaivanov, a volunteer purchased two lambs and requested a donation box for Elin Pelin Foundation be put by the food trays.

Besides the bad weather, people attended the event, and more than \$500 were donated to the foundation.

Mrs. Gergana Araktchieva – volunteer initiator

Mr. Vladimir Karaivanov – sponsor

Mrs. Nevena Nikolova – volunteer



Outdoor Celebration – May 2021

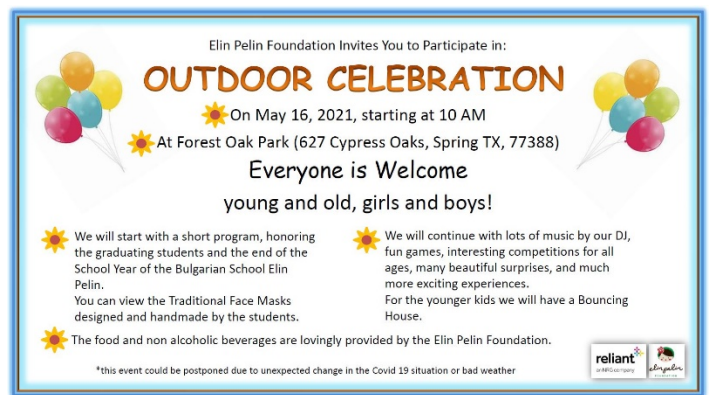
Funded mostly by the Facebook Fundraiser from October 2020 and Reliant, an NRG company, the Outdoor Celebration was the only recreational social event organized by Elin Pelin Foundation for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. The fact that it had such success despite the rainy weather showed that the community is ready to resume attendance to social events.

Mrs. Nevena Nikolova – coordinator and host

Mrs. Dimitria Dzarbova – coordinator school

Mr. Petar Gerdzhikov – Sound Engineer and DJ

Mrs. Gergana Araktchiev, Mrs. Mihaela Araktchiev, Mrs. Hristina Pavlina – volunteers



Other

Website and Newsletter

Please visit our website www.elinpelin-houston.org to find out more about our projects, events, and school curriculum.

If you wish to be included on our mailing list for our newly designed Newsletter, please send us your e-mail address to newsletter@elinpelin-houston.org or click [here](#) to subscribe.



Скъпи членове и приятели,

- Фондация „Елин Пелин“ ще направи годишната си среща на 6-ти юни, събота от 10:00 до 12:00 часа като ZOOM среща.
- Добре дошли си да присъстват всички настоящи и бъдещи членове!

Ms. Elena Nikolova – Website coordinator

Mr. Boyan Stanoev, Progress with Us Consulting – Webmaster

Mrs. Mariya Shumareva – Newsletter coordinator

Mr. Mintcho Araktchiev – IT Support



Woodcarving Artwork Exhibition

In March 2021 Mr. Kitio Gagalev offered for a temporary exhibition a Bulgarian hand carved wall panel with several



Bulgarian Symbols. One of them is a lion's image, a replica of the famous stone reliefs found in Stara Zagora. The focal point of the artwork is the Madara Rider. On the right side of it is an image of Khan Krum. On the bottom left side is depicted Saint Kliment Ohridski. On the bottom right side is an image that is most likely replication of a mural from Boyana Church in Sofia, of Constantine Asen and Tsarina Irina. In the top left corner, there is an image of Tsar Simeon The Great. The artwork will be available for viewing at Elin Pelin Library for an indefinite period.

Mr. Kitio Gagalev – artwork owner

Mrs. Gergana Araktchiev – exhibition coordinator

2021-2022 Upcoming Social Events

New Bulgarian Parliamentary Election – July 2021

The newly elected parliament could not find the necessary votes to form a cabinet. The president of the republic has assigned a temporary cabinet with primary goal to schedule new elections. The new elections will be held on July 11th 2021. The Polling station will once again be at Elin Pelin Library. Further details about the polling day are to be announced later in June 2021.

Movie Night – Fall 2021

We are looking forward to being able to resume Movie Night Events in the Fall of 2021. Members and guests of Elin Pelin Foundation were able to come and enjoy a Bulgarian movie every first Friday of the month. English closed captioning was available to the English speakers in the audience. Movie Nights are free of charge with popcorn and wine served by volunteers.



Bulgarian Happy Hour – Fall 2021

Another Elin Pelin Foundation initiative we are looking forward to being resumed. Professionals and busy individuals can gather for a friendly conversation after work at a brewery or bar. Topics usually include Elin Pelin Foundation's upcoming events and information on more opportunities for volunteers.



Social Mixer – Fall 2021

An evening of Drinks, Appetizers, & Networking was a fun, exciting and effective way to make new personal and professional connections.

This (originally a stand-alone) event quickly transitioned into a cocktail-party immediately before and after an art performance. The Social Mixer will return as soon as Bulgarian artists resume their tours throughout the United States, or it will once again be a semiannually based, more elegant version of Happy Hour. Bulgarians and friends of Bulgaria will once again be welcome to bring their business or personal cards and be ready to meet new people, share ideas, and enjoy the company of people with similar cultural background.

Elin Pelin Foundation 10th year Anniversary - 2022

As one of the first member exclusive events, our foundation's 10th birthday will be celebrated with a gala. Formal wear or your Sunday best will be required. The event will be ticketed, yet it will be free for Elin Pelin Foundation members. More information is to be announced in the Fall of 2021.

A Shout Out to Our Biggest Supporters:



- **PDT Partners** – Donation of \$5,000 or more – Donor Advised Fund through the National Philanthropic Trust on behalf of their employee Nikola Chonkov
- **NRG Reliant** – Donation of \$3,000 or more – To encourage and reinforce employee contributions to those in need, NRG supports a variety of goodwill programs year-round such as Reliant Gives, NRG Matching Gifts, and Volunteer Days
- **Well Resolutions Technology** – Donation of \$950 or more
- **Wood Mackenzie** – Donation of \$550 or more – Wood Mackenzie matches qualified donations and qualified fundraisers made by individual employees to nonprofit organizations in the United States and the United Kingdom
- **Vladimir Karaivanov** – Individual Donations of \$500 or more
- **BBVA Compass** – Donation of \$400 or more – BBVA Compass Charitable Giving Program provides grants to nonprofits where employees are active volunteers
- **First Federal Bank** – Donation of \$300 or more – Donor Advised Fund on behalf of their employee Nataliya Espey
- **Network for Good** – Fundraisers of \$3,400 or more
 - **ARA Computers and Consulting Inc (\$1000)** initiated Giving Tuesday Fundraiser
 - **Kitio Gagaliiev (\$925), Elena Nikolova (\$560), Mihaela Arakchieva (\$240)** initiated Birthday Fundraisers
 - **Gergana Araktchiev (\$700)**, initiated Ocsober 5k Challenge Fundraiser
- **Borislav Ganov** – Individual Donation of over \$200 with Monthly Donations of \$25 or more
- **Anton Dimitrov** – Individual Donation of \$100 or more
- **Amazon** – Recurring Quarterly Donations of about \$50 or more - AmazonSmile Foundation donates 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to a charitable organization of the buyer's choice.
- **Kroger** – Recurring Quarterly Donations of about \$20 or more - Kroger is committed to helping our communities grow and prosper. Year after year Kroger supports local schools, churches, and other nonprofit organizations through Kroger Community Rewards Program

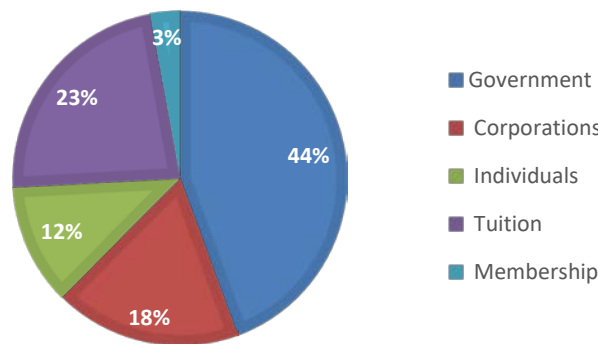
The recognition of our generous community is important to us, and we have worked hard to ensure that all information is included and accurate. If you find any errors or omissions, please contact us at 713-715-8101.

Finance

Unaudited Financial Data Summary for 2020-2021

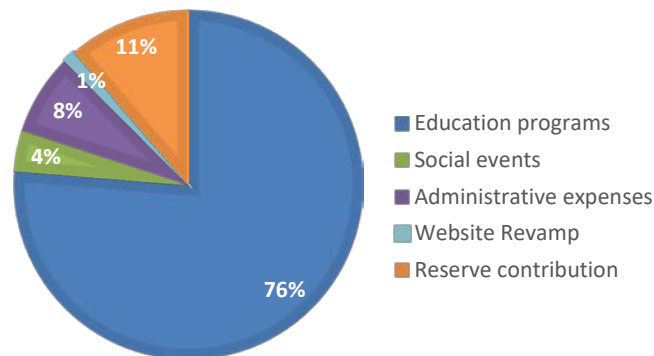
Inflow

<i>Government</i>	\$ 23,798	44%
<i>Corporations</i>	\$ 9,707	18%
<i>Individuals</i>	\$ 6,250	12%
<i>Tuition</i>	\$ 12,340	23%
<i>Membership</i>	\$ 1,525	3%
Total	\$ 53,620	100%



Expenses

<i>Education programs</i>	\$ 40,898	76%
<i>Social events and Fundraisers</i>	\$ 2,025	4%
<i>Administrative expenses</i>	\$ 4,046	8%
<i>Other</i>	\$ 575	1%
<i>Reserve contribution</i>	\$ 6,076	11%
Total	\$ 53,620	100%



The financial summary includes gifts and activities between June 1, 2020, and May 31, 2021, and is produced internally by Elin Pelin Foundation. The recognition of our generous community is important to us, and we have worked hard to ensure that all information is included and accurate. If you find any errors or omissions, please contact us at 713-715-8101.

Elin Pelin Foundation Staff and Board

Board of Directors 2020-2021

Martha Kasabova.....	Director
Elena Nikolova.....	Director
Vessi Andreeva.....	Director
Hristina Pavlina.....	Director
Mariya Shumareva.....	Director

Officers

Gergana Araktchiev.....	President
Nevena Nikolova.....	Treasurer
Mintcho Araktchiev.....	Secretary
TJ Hayes & Co.....	Controller
Vessi Andreeva.....	Librarian

Faculty

Dimitria Dzarbova.....	Principal
Valentina Kamburova.....	Teacher
Diana Angelova.....	Teacher
Daniela Kashukeeva.....	Teacher
Dimitria Dzarbova.....	Teacher
Rayna Levakova.....	Teacher
Boryana Veneva.....	Teacher
Petya Petkova.....	Teacher