



# The Prosser/Vani Connection

Charlie Bush

City Administrator, Prosser, WA



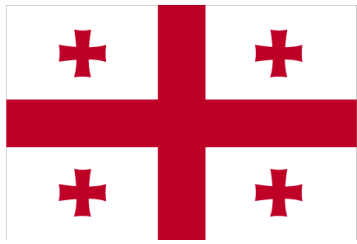
# What We Hope You Receive

- Information about the LFP Program
- Some inspiration from our experience
- Information about Georgia and Prosser
- Perhaps a broader perspective on possibilities



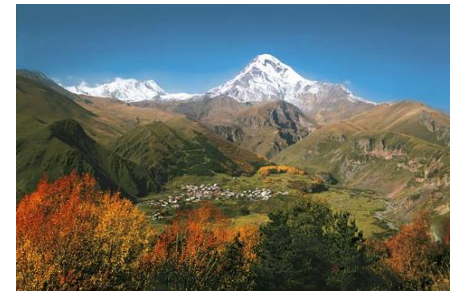
# Where is Georgia?





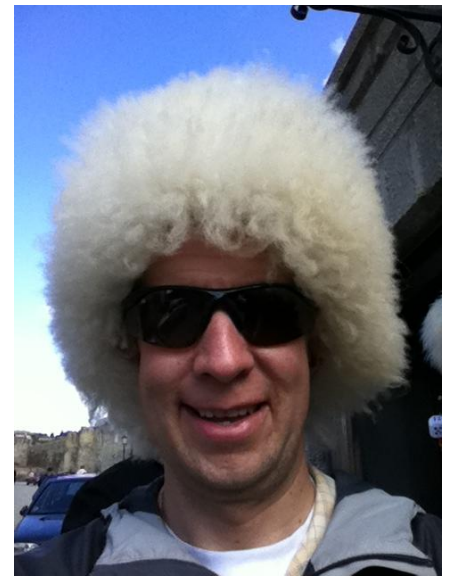
# Georgia Facts

- Location is almost exactly half-way around the world
- The size of Georgia is similar to that of Eastern Washington, population is about 4 million
- Georgia has the highest mountains in Europe and a sub-tropical climate along the Black Sea coast
- Friendly with surrounding countries, with exception of Russia, working to join EU and NATO
- Georgian hospitality is legendary
- Georgia is an emerging tourism destination
- Economic development hurdles include political stability and public infrastructure



# Why?

- Prosser is a small and rural community
- Our culture has a tendency to get stale
- We learned about Georgia's wine history
- Potential wine and agriculture partnerships
- Opportunity to teach
- WA Trade dependency
- Diversity yields innovation



# Sheep Herder



# Current Benefits

- We get to host people and expose our staff/Council to new influences
- Our staff get to go outbound outside the City's budget – huge in an organization of 44
- Historic preservation
- Opportunity to help others in need
- Potential immediate industry and research opportunities



# Long-Term Potential

- Georgia has huge tourism potential – hospitality, eco, Black Sea, history
- 3,000 varieties of wine grapes, Georgia has over 500 and that are only there – WSU
- Significant connections between wineries
- Connections between agriculture industries
- Modern infrastructure will make Georgia a tourism hub – Prosser is becoming a tourism hub





# Georgian Wine





# How?

- ICMA email
- Follow-up by me
- Immediate response from American Councils
- Application in pipeline



# Giorgi Ivaniadze

- Legislative Fellow, 34 years of age
- Master's Degree in International Relations and Law
- 12-year councilmember with experience in both his village and at the municipality level
- Experience in Vani Municipality
- Works for local “school district” in Vani Municipality
- Married with three children



# Giorgi's Presentation





**LEGISLATIVE FELLOWS PROGRAM**  
**FORGES SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP**  
**BETWEEN**  
**VANI MUNICIPALITY, GEORGIA**  
**AND**  
**CITY OF PROSSER, WASHINGTON**  
**GIORGI IVANIADZE**





# LEGISLATIVE FELLOWS PROGRAM (LFP)



- Exchange program for young professionals (between 25-35 years old) initiated in 2005 as Legislative Education and Practice program (LEAP);
- Sponsored by US State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs;
- Conducted twice a year – spring and fall. In addition, fellows host reciprocal visits by young U.S. political counterparts;
- Fall-2010 group included 125 fellows representing 17 countries: Georgia, Ukraine, Russia, Bhutan, Brazil, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines and South Africa.
- European Group (26 fellows from Georgia, Ukraine and Russia) administered by American Councils for International Education.
- Gaining experience and building connections during one-month fellowships in federal, state or local offices around the United States.





# AMERICAN COUNCILS FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION



- **Non Governmental Organization founded in 1998;**
- **Two main divisions: American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) - founded in 1974 - and American Council for Collaboration in Education and Language Study (ACCELS) - created In 1984;**
- **Located in 24 countries across Southeastern Europe, former USSR, the Middle East and Asia;**
- **Funded by various public and private sources;**
- **Contracts with US State Department to conduct various programs among them LFP;**
- **Completes and administers European Group of LFP fellows including Georgia, Ukraine and Russia;**





# ARRIVAL ORIENTATION IN DENVER, COLORADO

5-6 October, 2010



- Meeting and introducing with the members of European Group from Ukraine and Russia;
- Trainings in the office of National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) on different topics such as fiscal federalism in the United States, state budget process, ethics for legislatures and staff, ballot measures and 2010 elections preview;
- Meeting with the Colorado State Governor, Speaker of the Colorado State Senate, the representatives of two major political parties and lobbyists;
- Colorado State Capitol Tour;







# Time In Prosser, Washington

7 October - 7 November, 2010



- Hosted by a city staff member – Steve Zetz
- Data analysis for recreation survey
- Assisting city administrator Charlie Bush in the formation of City's State Legislative Agenda
- Police ride-along
- Wastewater tour
- Water system tour
- City Council presentation
- Planning Commission meeting
- Prosser School District





# Time In Prosser, Washington

7 October - 7 November, 2010



- Washington State Capitol tour
- Meeting with Association of Washington Cities staff
- Bellevue City Hall tour
- Meeting with Washington Wine Commission
- Pike Place Market
- Prosser wine tasting
- Flight from Yakima to Prosser





# Time In Prosser, Washington

7 October - 7 November, 2010



- Prosser high school football
- Dinner at the Mayor's house
- Recruitment of Sister Cities Exploratory Committee
- Washington City/County Management Association annual Board retreat
- Prosser community tour
- Boys and Girls Club volunteering/presentation
- Camas tour and experiences
- Portland Trailblazers game





# Time In Prosser, Washington

7 October - 7 November, 2010



- WSU Prosser Research Station tour
- Lower Valley Soccer Association game
- Columbia Crest tour
- Prosser Kiwanis presentation
- Prosser Rotary presentation
- Numerous articles with local media and a TV story on KNDU/KNDO
- Visiting Alpaca's farm
- Outbound project development



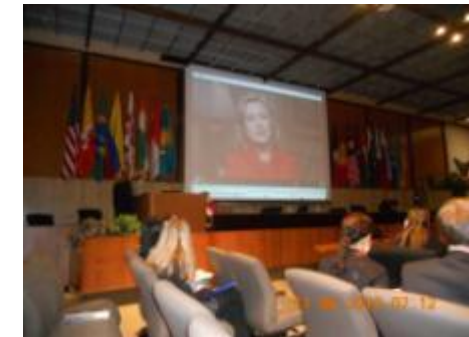


# Legislative Fellows congress Washington, DC



7 november - 9 November, 2010

- **Speed networking with colleagues from around the world, sharing our own U.S. experience and learning about the experiences of others;**
- **Attending plenary session and listening to keynote speaker - Illinois State Senator Pamela J. Althoff;**
- **Video remarks from Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State;**
- **Fellowship reports made by different groups – Middle East, South and Central Asian, Southeast Asian, South American, South African and European fellows ;**
- **Roundtable meeting with former U.S. congressman Thomas Downey. Dialogue in action on civic leadership;**





# Legislative Fellows congress Washington, DC



7 november - 9 November, 2010

- **Roundtable meeting with Angela Canterbury, director of public policy. Dialogue in action on transparency, accountability and corruption;**
- **Political Movie Night in Australian Embassy – viewing of the movie “By the People: The Election of Barack Obama”**
- **Official lunch in the Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room;**
- **Closing Reception and presentation of Certificates of Completion;**





# OUTBOUND PROJECT

## “PROMOTING LOCAL SELF-GOVERNANCE OF SMALL MUNICIPALITIES IN GEORGIA”



- **Proposed by Giorgi Ivaniadze with the participation of Charlie Bush, city administrator of Prosser;**
- **Enabled by the financial support of U.S. State Department and by the assistance of Vani Municipal Government, Educational Resourcecenter and Association “Sachino”;**
- **Conducted from May 14 to 27, 2011;**
- **Main Objective: to sign Sister City Agreement between Vani Municipality and City of Prosser and to set foundations for future cooperation and partnership;**





# VANI, GEORGIA



- Municipality in western Georgia with population more than 35 thousand people;
- Occupies 558 square km. and consists of 20 villages and one city;
- Rich historical and cultural past (antique city dates back to VIII-VII cc. BC)
- Profitable natural conditions: sub-tropical climate with warm summer and cool winter; diversity of flora and fauna, elevation from sea-level – 60-2800 meters;
- Governed by directly elected Municipal Council (legislative branch) and appointed Head of the Municipal Government who appoints and oversees various departments and services (executive branch);







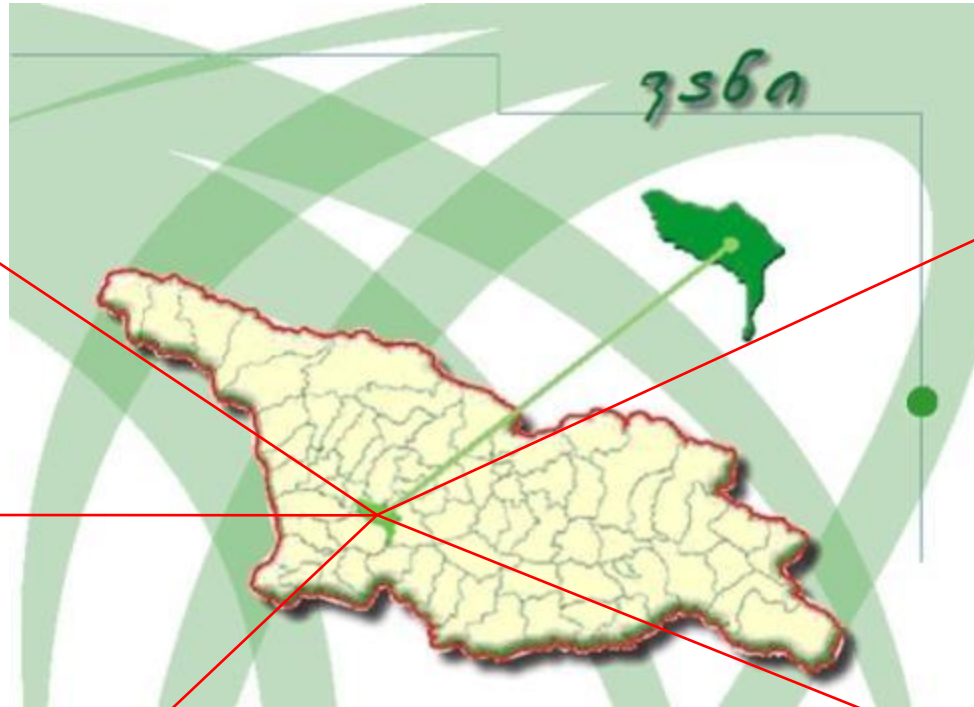
*Distance to the capital (Tbilisi)- 260 km*

*Distance to the nearest seaport (Poti)- 80 km*

*Distance to the nearest international airport (Kopitnari)- 35 km*

*Distance to the nearest railway station (Samtredia)- 24 km*

*Distance to the centre of the region (Kutaisi)- 41 km*





# VANI, GEORGIA



- **Main Industrials:** hydro-electric power station, nut processing factory, timber processing and nutritional industry enterprises;
- **Main branches of agriculture:** viticulture, fruit-growing, cattle-breeding, corn production and apiculture;
- **Good perspectives and environment for developing historical, “speleo”, agricultural and horse-riding tourism;**





# SISTER CITY AGREEMENT



## შეთანხმება ქალაქების დასამშობიოების თაობაზე



იმის გამო, რომ ქალაქების დამშობილების პროგრამა, რომელსაც ადმინისტრირებს უწყის ორგანიზაცია "Sister City International" და რომელიც ინიცირებულ იქნა ამერიკის შეერთებული შტატების პრეზიდენტის მიერ 1956 წელს, რათა უზუალო პირადი კონტაქტების მეშვეობით შეეძლებოდა წახალისებულყო ამერიკის შეერთებულ შტატებს და სხვა ერებს შორის მეგობრობა და ურთიერთგაცხება; და

იმის გამო, რომ ხელი შეეწყობა ამ მიზნებს, ამერიკის შეერთებული შტატების გამინეტონის შტატის ქალაქი პროსერი და საქართველოს დემოკრატიული რესპუბლიკის ვანის მუნიციპალიტეტი, მეგობრობისა და კეთილი ნების გამოვლენის ნიშნად, თანახმა არიან თანამშრომლობონ ტექნოლოგიური, განათლების, ეკონომიკური, მეცნიერების და კულტურული სფეროების შესაძლებლობების გამოყენების კუთხით თავიანთი მოსახლეობისთვის ურთიერთსარგებლობის მოტივით; და

იმის გამო, რომ ჩვენ ვთანხმდებით მხარი დავუჭიროთ და წახალისოთ ურთიერთსარგებლო პრაქტიკული გაცვლა-გამოცვლის შესაძლებლობები ხელოვნების, ბიზნესის, მეცნიერების და ტურიზმის სფეროებში; და

იმის გამო, რომ ქალაქი პროსერი არის გამინეტონის შტატის ლენის მრეწველობის აჯანი და საქართველო კი არის ლენის სამშობლო; და

იმის გამო, რომ ქალაქი პროსერს გამინეტონში და ვანის მუნიციპალიტეტს საქართველოში სურვილი აქვთ იმუშაონ ერთად, რათა ხელი შეეწყონ კულტურული, ტექნოლოგიური, ბიზნესის, ტურიზმის და მეცნიერების სფეროებში მოქალაქეებისა და აპარატის თანამშრომლობის გაცვლით პროგრამებს; და

იმის გამო, რომ ქალაქი პროსერის საკრებულომ მხარი დაუჭირა ქალაქის შერის გადამწყვეტილებას მოეხდინა ამ ხელშეკრულებაზე ხელმოწერის უფლების დელეგირება ქალაქის ადმინისტრატორზე; და

იმის გამო, რომ ვანის მუნიციპალიტეტის საკრებულომ ამ ხელშეკრულებაზე ხელმოწერის უფლებამოსილება მანიჭა ვანის მუნიციპალიტეტის გამგებელს;

აქედან გამომდინარე, ამერიკის შეერთებული შტატების გამინეტონის შტატის ქალაქი პროსერი და საქართველოს დემოკრატიული რესპუბლიკის ვანის მუნიციპალიტეტი, თანხმდებიან შემდეგზე:

1. მხარეები აცხადებენ თავიანთი თავს დამშობილებულ ქალაქებად და აღიარებენ, რომ მათი მიზანია დაიცვან ორგანიზაცია "Sister City International"-ის მიითითებები მისი პოლიტიკიდან გამომდინარე.
2. მხარი დავუჭიროთ და წახალისოთ ორივე მხარის მოქალაქეთა ვიზიტები.
3. დაამკარონ მეგობრული ურთიერთობები სკოლებსა და სხვა ორგანიზაციებს შორის, მათ შორის: სამრეწველო პალატებს, Rotary და Kiwanis კლუბებს შორის.
4. ხელი შეეწყონ კულტურულ გაცვლებს ვაჭრობის, ბიზნესის, მეცნიერების, ტურიზმის სფეროებში და სხვა ურთიერთსარგებლო საერთო ინტერესებს განხორციელებას ადგილობრივ ორგანიზაციებთან და მთავრობის ადგილობრივ ერთეულებთან თანამშრომლობით.
5. განავითარონ ორმხრივი ურთიერთგაცხება მოქალაქეებს შორის სხვადასხვა ინფორმაციის და მასალის გაცვლა-გამოცვლის მეშვეობით.
6. წახალისონ თითოეული მხარის წარმომადგენელთა ოფიციალური ვიზიტები, წარმომადგენლები შეიძლება მოიცადეს, მაგრამ არ შემოიფარგლება: სამოქალაქო, სასულიერო, ბიზნესის, სკოლის და მთავრობის წარმომადგენლებით.
7. ამ ძალისხმევის წარმატება იქნება ქალაქ პროსერისა და ვანის მუნიციპალიტეტის დამშობილებული ქალაქების ასოციაციების პასუხისმგებლობა.
8. ეს დოკუმენტი ძალაში შედის მასზე ხელმოწერის მომენტიდან. დოკუმენტის შესრულებულია ორივე ინგლისურ, ასევე ქართულ ენაზე და ორივე ტექსტი თანაბარი იურიდიული ძალისა.

თარიღი: 24 მაისი, 2011

ქალაქ პროსერის მხრიდან:

ჩარლი ბუში, ქალაქის ადმინისტრატორი

ვანის მუნიციპალიტეტის მხრიდან:

ზურაბ გეგიძე, მუნიციპალიტეტის გამგებელი



## Sister City Agreement



Whereas, the Sister City Program, administered by Sister Cities International, was initiated by the President of the United States of America in 1956 to encourage greater friendship and understanding between the United States and other nations through direct personal contact; and

Whereas, in order to foster those goals, the people of the City of Prosser, Washington, United States of America, and the Vani Municipality, Democratic Republic of Georgia, in a gesture of friendship and goodwill, agree to collaborate for the mutual benefit of their communities by exploring technological, educational, economic, viticulture, and cultural opportunities; and

Whereas, we agree to support and encourage opportunities for mutually beneficial practical exchanges in the fields of the arts, business, viticulture and tourism; and

Whereas, the City of Prosser, Washington, is the birthplace of the Washington Wine Industry and the Democratic Republic of Georgia is the birthplace of Wine; and

Whereas, the City of Prosser, Washington, and the Vani Municipality desire to work together to facilitate cultural, technological, business, tourism, and viticulture exchanges by having citizens and staff interact by personal visits; and

Whereas, the City Council of the City of Prosser, Washington, United States of America authorized the Mayor of the City to delegate the execution of this agreement to the City Administrator; and

Whereas, the Council of Vani Municipality, Democratic Republic of Georgia authorized the Head of the Municipal Government to sign this agreement;

Now Therefore, the City of Prosser, Washington, United States of America, and the Vani Municipality, Democratic Republic of Georgia, hereby agree as follows:

1. The parties do hereby proclaim themselves Sister Cities, and declare their intent to abide by the Sister Cities International guidelines indefinitely according to Sister Cities International policies.
2. To support and encourage visits by the citizens of both jurisdictions.
3. To establish affiliations between schools and organizations including, but not limited to: Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, and Kiwanis of both jurisdictions.
4. To promote cultural exchanges in the fields of commerce, business, viticulture, tourism, and other mutually beneficial common interests by working with local organizations and local units of government.
5. To develop a mutual understanding of the citizens of both jurisdictions by exchanging various information and material.
6. To encourage official visits between representatives from each community. The representatives can include, but are not limited to: civic, church, business, school, and government officials.
7. The success of this endeavor will be the responsibility of the Sister City Associations of each jurisdiction with the support of the citizens of both the City of Prosser and the Vani Municipality.
8. This document goes into effect on the date of the last signature, and the document is executed in both English and in Georgian. Both texts have equal power and authority.

Date: May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011

CITY OF PROSSER BY:

CHARLES BUSH, CITY ADMINISTRATOR

VANI MUNICIPALITY BY:

ZURAB GEGIDZE, HEAD OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

# THANK YOU!

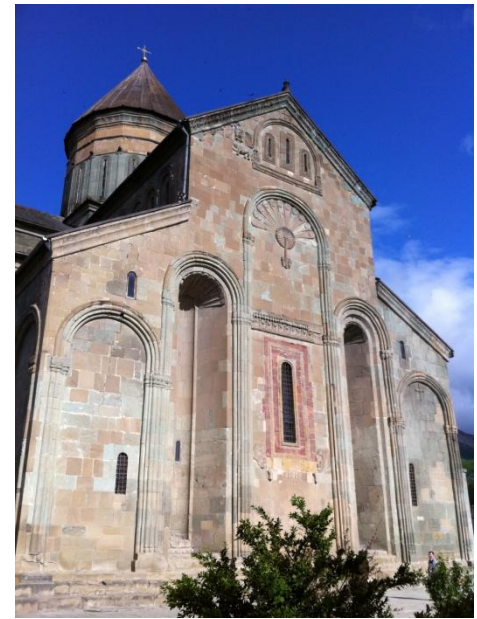


# KEPR News Story

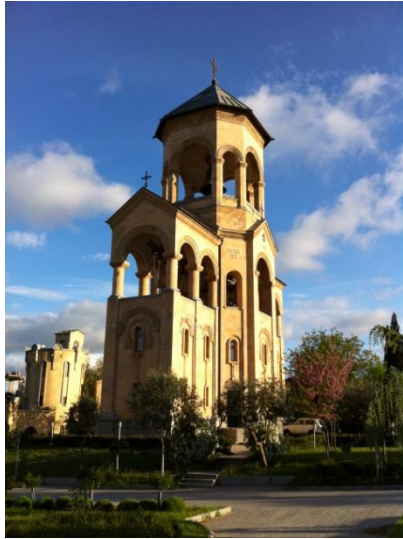


# Parameters for Georgia Trip

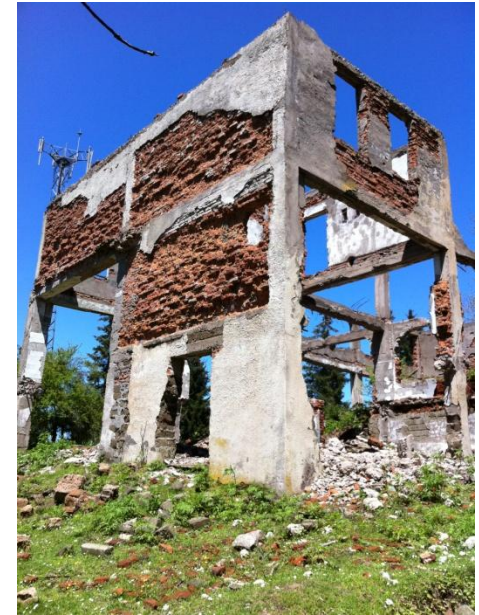
- Two-week outbound trip as part of Legislative Fellows Program
- Sister City relationship authorized by Prosser City Council in months between Giorgi's four-week stay and my outbound trip
- Lectures on democracy planned
- Signing ceremony planned



# Georgia is Very Unique



# Being a Post Soviet State is Hard





# Poverty is Hard Also



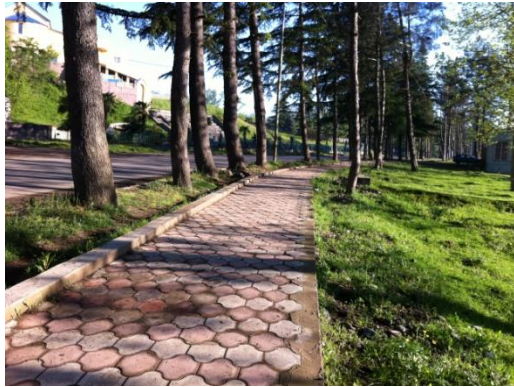
# Culturally Rich



# Supras and Festivals

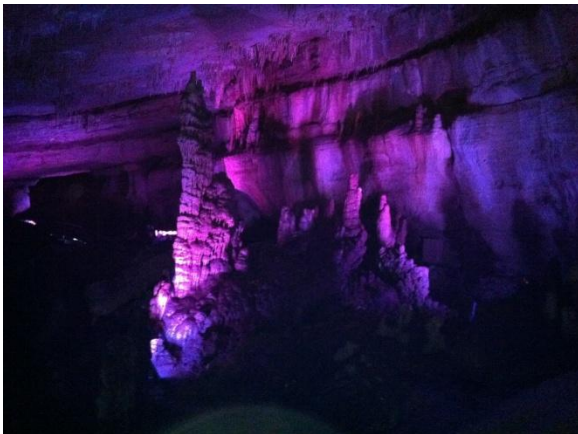


# Positive Signs Are Everywhere



# The Future is Bright

- Freeway to pass between Vani and Kutaisi, eventually connecting Vani to all of Georgia's major cities by freeway
- Kutaisi, 30 minutes northeast receiving national legislature, will expand air service and help economy



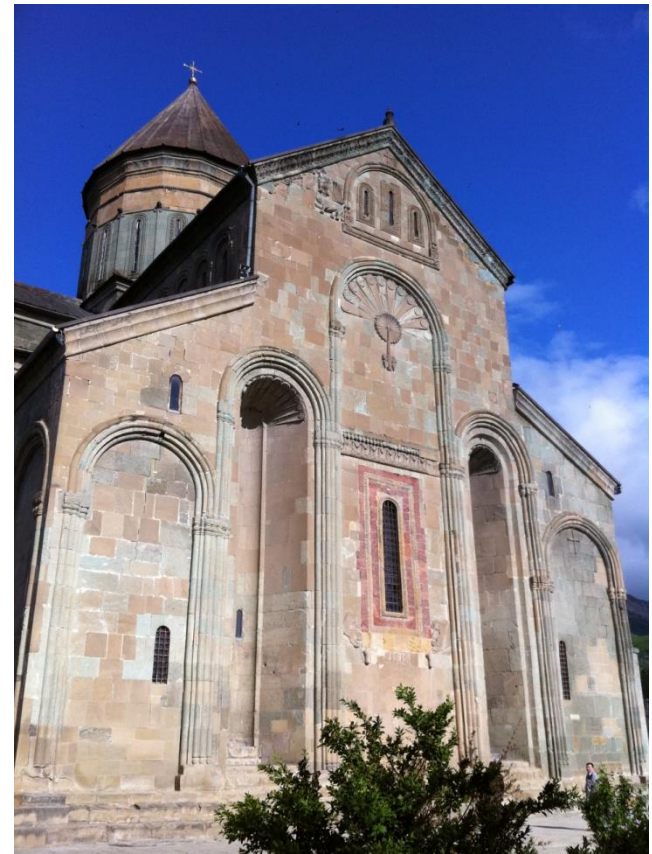
# Signing Ceremony

- Received national news coverage



# Strategic Priorities

- 1) Infrastructure
- 2) Community Development
- 3) Education
- 4) Agriculture
- 5) Sport/Culture



# Next Steps

- Vani delegation coming in late September
- We will send an outbound delegation to Vani in early spring, 2012
- Strategic plan in place
- Legislative Fellows Program participation to continue, Steve Zetz is next LFP participant





# If You Go...

- Take along a sense of adventure
- May have a life changing experience
- Will have great support
- Will have a fulfilling experience
- Will be 100% hosted
- Do your homework



# Questions?

