



To: the TCA - Arts Respond Evaluation Panel

June 20 2011

My name is Sophia Grinblat, and I am an Editor in Chief of the Russian Newspaper "Our Texas", and a Founder of the Russian Culture Center, Our Texas.

This is written in recommendation of the United Russian American Association, who I understand have applied to the Cultural Arts Program for support.

I have known Elena Philips since 2002, and as a president of URAA since 2006. I have great respect for her and URAA as an organizer of numerous Festivals and Balls in Houston and throughout Texas and as a valued member of our cultural community.

The quality of the URAA` work has been excellent, and I have been most impressed with their skills at making Russian folk music and Theater performances accessible for American audiences. Also of note, was the importance they placed on cross-cultural exchange, including performers from a number of other cultures in the programs.

In 2012 URAA is planning to coordinate "SLAVYANKA", the Festival of Russian people in Texas. The festival is dedicated to the celebration in 2012 of the Year of Russia in the USA and the Year of the USA in Russia. I am sure the United Russian American Association will create the Festival Slavyanka as something truly extraordinary.

Sincerely,

Sophia Grinblat  
Executive Director