



Nadace  
Zdeňka Bakaly

August 2014

30

## Students to Compete for our Scholarships



This year, the Selection Committee considered 270 applicants, choosing 28 secondary and university students to introduce themselves in the SCHOLARSHIP interviews, which will be held in Prague on September 5-6. These young people, who come from all over the Czech Republic, seek education at the world's top universities, in fields like mathematics, philosophy, psychology, economics, law, and music. Their ability to defend their views before the Selection Committee, which comprises leading experts and distinguished personalities from a variety of backgrounds, will be a key factor determining whether they are awarded financial

### If I Were the Minister of Foreign Affairs...

Does economic interest override human rights? If you became the Czech Republic's Minister of Foreign Affairs, how would you approach relations with countries like China and Russia?

This was one of the three essay topics to which applicants were expected to respond in English on their SCHOLARSHIP applications. The following are extracts from some of the essays submitted:

"My primary responsibility would be to ensure stable and positive diplomatic relations with strategic economic partners. My duty would be to guarantee the welfare of Czech citizens."

"I would try to make Czech exporters realize that at least some measures supporting human-rights protections are in their own interest. An example of such measures are efforts to enhance the enforcement of rule of law globally, which is undoubtedly favorable for business."

"I would adopt the Machiavellian approach of acting in the interests of my country's citizens, and assess whether the benefit in relation to authoritarian regimes is moral or economic."

The photo taken in Liberia features Karolína Křelinová, a Bakala scholar and Dartmouth alumnus, who joined the Selection Committee for this year.



### Bill and Melinda Gates through the Eyes of a Bakala Scholar

Aleš Weiser, a Bakala scholar from 2012, graduated from Stanford University with a degree in East Asian Studies last June. Aleš described his experience at the graduation ceremony (featured in the picture): "The ceremony was held in the school's football stadium, and attended by the students from all of the programs, their parents, relatives, and friends – 20,000 people in total, something hard to imagine in the Czech Republic. You had to check the time constantly to keep the right timing, stand in the right queue, etc. Speeches were delivered by the University's president and guests of honor, including Bill and Melinda Gates. Then we were awarded our diplomas. I was impressed by the Gates's joint address. Both adopted a natural tone to discuss the power of optimism, using their own memories and experiences, many of which were quite tragic. Their outlook – exemplified in the statement that "Optimism is often dismissed as false hope, but there is also false hopelessness" – was meaningful to me. Too many people use excessive negativity about the ability to find solutions to pervasive problems like poverty and disease to justify doing nothing. Optimism represents the conviction that, even in the face of helplessness and misery, you must never turn your back on those in need and lose hope that thing can get better."

