

# NEWSLETTER

*October 2023*



**FONDACIJA**  
HASTOR

## THE SIGNING OF CONTRACTS WITH STUDENTS FOR THE 2023/2024 ACADEMIC YEAR

The end of October 2023 was marked by the signing of scholarship contracts with students, beneficiaries of the Hastor Foundation, for the 2023/2024 academic year. The signing ceremony was attended by our longstanding scholarship recipients, including students in their final year of college, for whom this was the last signed contract. Additionally, a significant number of freshmen, whom the Hastor Foundation has supported through primary and secondary education, also participated, marking their first signed scholarship contracts. The signing ceremony also featured the presentation of an enhanced volunteering model.

From the beginning of its operation, the Hastor Foundation has consistently assisted and supported the development and education of young individuals. One of its most recognizable components is volunteering. Starting this year, a new volunteering model has been created to further enhance this aspect. After signing the contracts, students underwent training for their upcoming volunteer engagement. The training aimed to better prepare students for their volunteer roles, enabling them to navigate future responsibilities more effectively and transmit their knowledge more adequately to younger generations.

All scholarship recipients have been assigned to appropriate volunteer teams and clubs based on their field of interest or study. In addition to financial assistance throughout the year, they will have the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills through volunteer engagement. This not only makes them more competitive in the job market but also allows them to contribute to others and make their local communities better places to live.

At the contract signing, the director Lejla Donlagić addressed the scholarship recipients,

along with longtime volunteers Amela Dedić and Maida Sarić. They collectively wished all scholarship recipients success in the upcoming academic year and emphasized the valuable and essential role they play in their communities. This is best reflected in the results they achieve through their volunteer engagement. The Foundation stressed its commitment to recognizing, promoting, and valuing every step the students take to rise above average, highlighting the importance of accepting and maximizing the opportunities the Hastor Foundation offers its scholarship recipients during their education and beyond, providing numerous paths for their first employments.

As the new academic year begins, a large number of scholarship recipients have completed their education, concluding their formal sponsorship. However, they have not left the Hastor Foundation family. They have now entered the Alumni Club, through which the Foundation will continue to monitor their professional progress and take pride in empathetic and capable young individuals and their successes. Signing contracts has not concluded the admission of students for the 2023/2024 school year. Soon, new students will join the Hastor Foundation's family through the Talented Students Competition, which is currently in progress.



Translated by: **Edna Đuliman**

## Almedina Mušanović

*„All who have accomplished great things have had a great aim, have fixed their gaze on it, and have persevered when it seemed impossible”,* are the words of Dr. Orrison Swett Marden, an American inspirational author. This month, we will complement the story of goals and successes by introducing Almedina Mušanović, a talented fourth-year student of Health Nutrition and Dietetics at the Faculty of Health Studies, University of Sarajevo.



She was born in 2001 in Sarajevo, completing elementary school in Ilijaš and the Medical High School Jezero in Sarajevo. Throughout her education, she stood out with exceptional success. Until the age of seventeen, she actively and very successfully engaged in athletics, winning significant awards and medals at numerous competitions. However, due to academic obligations and an accelerated pace of life, she stopped pursuing “the queen of sports”. She is also a member of the Association of Nutritionists of Bosnia and Herzegovina, actively collaborating on specialized projects, which are her primary field of education and additional professional experience.

Almedina became a scholarship recipient of the Hastor Foundation in the early days of high school and has been actively involved in its work and activities since then. She learned about the Foundation and its noble goals through her mother's friend and decided to

apply for the scholarship. Her first volunteering experience was in the mail protocol team, and her effort, hard work, and dedication brought her recognition and a prominent role in the team. As she emphasizes, the experience of volunteering in mail protocol provided her with new knowledge and skills, considering that dozens, and sometimes hundreds, of envelopes need to be reviewed and processed at the Hastor Foundation's address. Almedina particularly enjoys handling letters and scholarship applications, as it allows her to be a link in the chain of good that the Hastor Foundation does every day.

As the coordinator of her team, Almedina stands out with dedication and precision in every task entrusted to her. Communication with older Foundation scholarship recipients played a crucial role in her growth and development. They were the initial spark on her path to success.

*Accepting our limitations is necessary. Once accepted, we can surpass them. Do not look back. It is essential to do what lies ahead in the best possible way. The Hastor Foundation has been a key factor that supported and motivated me from high school to college. This scholarship prompted me to strive for more ambitious life goals,* emphasizes Almedina.

Certainly, as she pointed out herself, the material support provided by the Foundation to its scholarship recipients is not the initial satisfaction. The greater pleasure is the overall concept of the Foundation as one big family and genuine altruism in helping other young people, passing on knowledge and skills, as well as the camaraderie and communication segment that significantly affects the thinking and mood of a person as a social being.

*The Hastor Foundation is expanding and upgrading year by year with young talents ready to help each other and compete in goodness. The special satisfaction lies in being recognized as potential, and then being involved in various activities, as well as the particularly noble act of volunteering. The most beautiful aspect of volunteering is not only helping students fulfill their school duties but also the camaraderie, which always lifts my spirits.*

She advises young people to have a clear vision of their lives and consciously work towards creating and achieving their goals, positioning themselves far ahead of others.

*It is necessary to focus on the possibilities of success, not potential failure. Failure is, in fact, an opportunity to try more wisely the next time. Each of us can contribute to making this world a better place; everyone is unique in their way. We should not view individuals as superior or better than us but should strive together to achieve a higher level of excellence.*

Therefore, following Almedina's saying, we should always have long-term goals so as not to be disappointed by short-term failures. The desire for success must be greater than the fear of failure. Achieving set goals requires a lot of work, effort, and investment of oneself and one's time. Sometimes we may not immediately reap the fruits of our labor. Sometimes we may have to wait for a certain period. But, they have ripened just for us. Let's not forget and neglect them.

Almedina Mušanović is an inspiration for all of us. With her dedicated work and positive approach, she continues to build the path to success. Follow your dreams, work on yourself, question, contemplate, because even a small group of thoughtful individuals can change the world.



Prepared by: **Amina Bašić**  
Translated by: **Fadil Merdić**

## SEVLETA HALILOVIĆ

The Rubric of Active Youth is the place where, every month, we introduce the most hardworking scholarship holder of our dear Foundation, the ones that put in the time and effort day by day for the greater good, making in that way, both a personal positive change and a positive impact on our society. RAM (random-access memory) is an indispensable part of the computer; the same way our scholarship holders are essential to the work of the Hastor Foundation. Besides volunteer work that they do as part of their scholarship obligations, they are also devoted to the volunteer work in their local communities. The work of the Hastor Foundation wouldn't be the same without them. It is our pleasure to introduce our dear Sevleta Halilović in this month's Newsletter.

Sevleta comes from Sarajevo, and she is a student pursuing a Master's Degree at the Faculty of Law, University of Sarajevo, where she has also obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Law. Sevleta has achieved the highest university acknowledgement—the Golden Badge—for all her efforts and academic success after she completed her undergraduate studies. Even though her academic achievements were commendable, Sevleta's ambition did not stop there. Namely, Sevleta was an active participant in projects of national and international non-governmental organizations, acquiring knowledge and skills useful for both her career in Law and for work with different social groups. Sevleta's work in these non-governmental organizations was related to legal topics, but especially to vulnerable social groups, their rights and position in society.

*In a world that came to a halt, I discovered something that ignites everything – the enthusiasm of the individuals I worked with and the vitality of the children I volunteered with.*



Sevleta joined the Hastor Foundation in the time of COVID-19 pandemic and in the beginning she volunteered with groups of pupils from various neighborhoods and cities.

Sometime later she joined the Editorial Board of the Hastor Foundation, where she also met a wonderful team of people and further developed her speaking style. Besides the humanitarian work that is especially helpful to society, Sevleta points out how her volunteer work in the Foundation is what drives her and what she has greatly benefitted from.



*I believe that every human being needs such an encounter with feelings of empathy and belonging, with unconditional support and absolutely pure altruism that drives the entire system of the Hastor Foundation.*

Despite the fact that we're living in a world where there is no or very little free time that we can spend on our own, isolated from the world so that we may charge our batteries to perform better, Sevleta chooses to spend her free time with her family and friends—another proof of her philanthropic qualities. A fun fact about our dear Sevleta is that she likes writing poetry, but not in her free time, as is usually the case with most people, but completely spontaneously and without a plan.



*Poetry is not planned; it is limited neither by time nor place.*

October is the time of year when the Hastor Foundation says goodbye to its scholarship holders who are continuing their journey outside the Foundation, which is proud to have had such successful scholarship holders in its family. One of such scholarship holders is also Sevleta who is parting ways with the Hastor Foundation and continuing her academic journey as a TA at the Faculty of Law, University of Sarajevo. With her efforts and work, Sevleta has truly shown how there are no time or place limitations, not only when her personal growth is in question, but also her contribution to her community.

**Prepared by: Aldina Šaljić**  
**Translated by: Sara Kuduzović**



## Irma Pašić-Muhović

Irma Pašić-Muhović was born in Rogatica, and during her education, she lived in Sarajevo. After completing the Secondary Teacher Training School, she enrolled in the Faculty of Education in Sarajevo, specializing in primary education. After a four-year study, she pursued a master's degree at the same faculty. Currently, she works as a teacher at the Third Elementary School in Ilidža. Before her teaching position, she worked as a teaching assistant for children with developmental difficulties. She has been a scholarship recipient of the Hastor Foundation since its early days, dating back to 2006.

*Discovery of the Hastor Foundation came, believe it or not, from newspapers. In today's digital age, this sounds unreal, but the idea of becoming a scholarship recipient seemed unreal to me until I received a call, informing me of the time and place for signing the contract. Thus, in 2006, I became a proud scholarship recipient of the Hastor Foundation.*

Irma still remembers her first experience with the Hastor Foundation and all the visits by teacher Ramo, whose mention brings a smile to the faces of many scholarship recipients, now established and successful individuals.

*I often remember teacher Ramo's visits to the field and his support through warm words, selfless assistance, and persistence in work and helping others.*



From the very beginning of her education, Irma was driven by great love for children and a desire to help them achieve their life goals and dreams. Due to all of the above, she speaks about her job with special emotions:

*Being a teacher is a great challenge for me. It does not mean you just have to be a teacher – you are a role model, a person in whom little eyes see a superhero with solutions to all problems. You are a person ready to dream and constantly respond to a multitude of questions. A teacher is always learning, preparing for new generations that always come with new interests and desires. Therefore, being a teacher is much more than an ordinary profession.*

Receiving any scholarship financially eases the period of studying for oneself and one's family. The Hastor Foundation, like for many others, for Irma was not just a source of financial assistance; it provided her with professional support, recommendations, and volunteering opportunities. It contributed to making her who she is today and realizing some of her dreams.

Irma fondly recalls her volunteering at the Foundation. During her volunteer work, she gained new knowledge, skills, and learned many things that still help her in working with children. Volunteer hours in the field and working with elementary school children hold a special place in her heart.

*I volunteered in various places, such as the Prača-Sarajevo route, which sometimes took more than two hours. We would be tired, but on the way back home, you forget about the fatigue – you feel special, realizing that you helped others that day with your work.*

Our alumna of the month has strong memories tied to the Hastor Foundation, where she was a scholarship recipient for five years. Every meeting, trip, field visit, and informal gathering of scholarship recipients brought a new story, new acquaintances, and new friendships. She says their conversations during these gatherings felt like they saw each other every day, not miles apart.



As our alumna of the month, Irma, concludes the conversation, we asked her to send a message to other scholarship recipients:

***Be proud to be members of our great Hastor Foundation. Justify not only your expectations but also the expectations of others who have invested their trust in you. Always strive for something new and better, with great encouragement and support. Be persistent and focused, persevere in achieving your goals.***

Prepared by: **Hana Hajrić**  
Translated by: **Ivan Rajić**

“ Small steps can make a big change, and we will try to be a part of positive changes throughout volunteering. ”



Altruism constitutes a source of inspiration that reminds us of the individual ability to implement positive changes in the world. With a monthly volunteer engagement, scholarship holders of the Hastor Foundation demonstrate their commitment to creating positive narratives in our country. Mentoring is a key aspect in the educational process and individual development of scholarship holders. Within the framework of the Hastor Foundation, a unique opportunity is offered to young people to demonstrate their inherent talents and qualities, whereby continuous work is singled out as an essential component in achieving the mission of the Hastor Foundation. This element is illustrated through an inspiring story about volunteer work in Živinice, told by **Emina Nukić**, a mentor whose selfless commitment to volunteering brings an invaluable contribution to the Hastor Foundation.

Emina has been a scholarship recipient of the Hastor Foundation for four years, she is a student of the second cycle of studies at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Tuzla, Department of Health Studies - nursing studies. Her volunteer group of high school students includes twelve students, and the school the students attend is the Živinice Mixed High School. According to Emina, it is not difficult to work with Hastor Foundation scholarship holders because they are young people who have a desire for progress and learning. In the context of volunteering, the integration of creative aspects, imaginative approaches and contribution to the community is always sought, which is a key segment of volunteer engagement. The volunteer group in Živinice consists of young individuals who spread their passion and work commitment within the local community, which results in general benefits for society as a whole.

The month of October is marked as Book Month. This period is dedicated to the culture of the written word and serves as an opportunity to promote reading culture and its positive impact on the intellectual and emotional development of society. The aim of the engagement is to encourage the development of awareness among individuals, emphasizing the importance of books as a source of knowledge and inspiration. Considering the above, Emina, with the help of the students with whom she volunteers, decided to take advantage of this month's meetings, and contribute to the celebration of this important month.

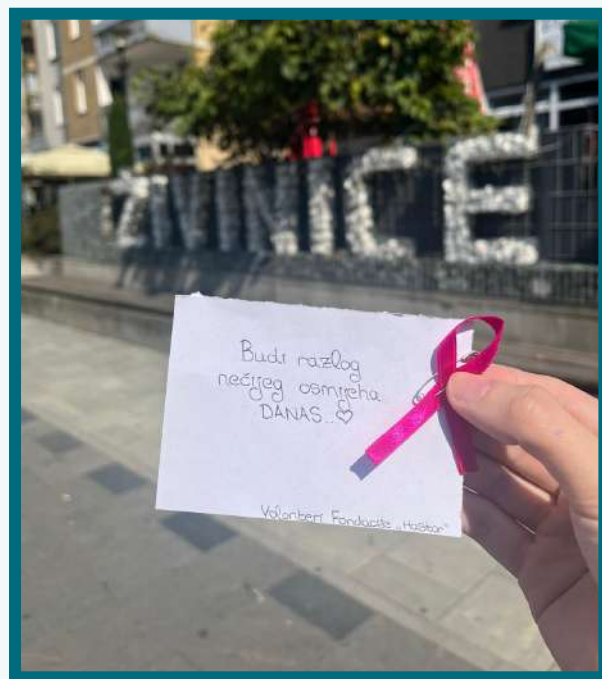
**When little hands come together, anything is possible...** –mentor Emina is also guided by this, so like every previous month, she joined forces with her students, successfully attracting our attention. What Emina points out is that during the preparation of each meeting, she tries to listen to the fellows if they have any interesting proposals and, if possible, fulfil them. Celebrating Book Month was one of the proposals, as well as celebrating Pink October. Their volunteer meeting included activities such as making small pieces of paper with beautiful and useful quotes, then making pink ribbons from satin ribbon, and at the very end a distribution made by random passers-by. During the handing out of ribbons and quotes, they briefly talked with citizens about the importance of self-examination, early diagnosis, but also about the beauty of reading. As the mentor says, she hopes that they managed to bring smiles with the various quotes, just as we hope that this inspiring story will achieve the same with our readers.

We asked Emina what role the Hastor Foundation plays in her life and how her experience as a mentor has been going so far, and the feedback we received was nothing but words of praise, both for the students and for the Foundation itself.

**Small steps can make a big change, and we will try to be a part of positive changes throughout volunteering,** said our Emina. In addition to the above, she points out that through each activity they try to deepen mutual acquaintance, because this is the only way to build an unbreakable network of camaraderie.

The very act of joining this family, as she says, was a major turning point in her life. She could not hide her excitement and impatience because she herself did not know what was waiting for her on this road. She did not know that from a calm and withdrawn girl, with the appropriate wind at her back called the Hastor Foundation, she would grow into a person full of desire to help others. She did not know that it was so easy to make friends, and today, thanks to active volunteering and commitment to the Foundation, she has friends all over our homeland, Bosnia and Herzegovina. When answering the question, she also touched on financial assistance, which she says is an indispensable part whenever she mentions the role of the Hastor Foundation in her life. However, what is of the greatest importance to Emina is that she got a unique opportunity to build herself and her personality in a special way, to pass on knowledge to younger members, as well as to gain numerous experiences that will certainly be useful to her.

Finally, Emina says that she is proud of each of her students and each volunteer group with whom she worked, and we certainly have no doubts about that, and we firmly believe that this mentor will continue to walk the path of success.



**Prepared by: Semina Sadiković i Aida Suljić**  
**Translated by: Maida Avdić**

## The Amazon Rainforest – the “lungs of Planet Earth”

The Amazon Rainforest, known as the “lungs of the planet”, represents one of the most valuable natural resources on Earth. Its vast expanse and richness in plant and animal life make it a unique and irreplaceable ecosystem. The largest tropical rainforest follows the Amazon River, stretching 6,440 kilometers. With 10,000 tributaries, it is considered the world's richest river in terms of water volume. The first person to swim across it entirely was the Slovenian Martin Strel in 2007.

The name Amazon was given by the Spanish explorer and conquistador Francisco de Orellana, who was the first to explore this rainforest, led there by the Amazon River. Francisco explored this South American region and, during his journey, reached a jungle where he encountered groups of women whom he referred to as Amazon warriors. He named the rainforest after them, where he encountered them and engaged in conflict. The rainforest is inherently a dangerous place, and during Francisco de Orellana's time, it was even more perilous. Throughout his exploration, Francisco lost a significant number of crew members. The river claimed many lives, and some succumbed to various diseases and wildlife. Francisco himself lost his life on one of his journeys through the Amazon, a place he visited multiple times. He was killed by one of the indigenous Indians using a poisoned arrow.<sup>2</sup>



This rainforest extends over an area of more than 5.5 million square kilometres, encompassing nine South American countries: Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, Ecuador, Guyana, Bolivia, French Guiana, and Suriname. The largest portion, approximately 60%, is located in Brazil, where it is considered a national treasure. However, the Amazon Rainforest faces numerous threats. Unfortunately, both for Brazilians and all other inhabitants of the planet, the Brazilian government has recognized that it could achieve significant financial benefits through the excessive exploitation of the Amazon, and it is doing so.<sup>3</sup>

To preserve the Amazon Rainforest, creative and innovative approaches are necessary. One such approach is the promotion of sustainable agriculture. Additionally, it is crucial to educate the local population about the importance of rainforest preservation. Through education, we can raise awareness of the ecological values of the Amazon Rainforest and encourage people to actively engage in its conservation. Sustainable tourism can also provide economic support to local communities, motivating them to protect their natural resources. Furthermore, technology plays a significant role in the preservation of the Amazon Rainforest. Satellite monitoring can help identify illegal deforestation and track changes in vegetation. The use of drones for surveillance and research can also provide valuable information about the state of the rainforest and its ecosystems.

The Amazon Rainforest is an irreplaceable natural resource that plays a crucial role in maintaining the balance of our planet. Through creative and innovative approaches, we can ensure its survival for future generations. It is essential to understand that the preservation of the Amazon Rainforest is not only an individual responsibility but a global imperative for all of us.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tvornicazdravehrane.com/zdravi-kutak/amazonska-prasuma-pluca-zemlje-i-izvor-zivota-69280/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://zastita-prirode.hr/zasticena-priroda/amazonija-i-sve-sto-trebate-znati-o-njoj/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tvornicazdravehrane.com/zdravi-kutak/amazonska-prasuma-pluca-zemlje-i-izvor-zivota-69280/>



Dear Hastor Foundation,

Not long ago, while I was still in elementary school, I dreamed of one day holding a position in an important organization that helps others, becoming a significant figure in people's eyes. Watching my brother engage in volunteer work through the Hastor Foundation, learning and gaining new knowledge and skills from mentors, advancing his knowledge, and later becoming a mentor himself, sparked a strong interest and desire in me to be part of the Hastor Foundation. As time passed, things in my life fell into place, leading to the moment when I applied for your scholarship and became a Hastor Foundation scholarship recipient. For me, a high school student who grew up in a rural area, the invitation to join the Foundation meant everything. Perhaps at that moment, I didn't realize how much the Foundation would change my life and open it up to previously unknown perspectives. I learned from my mentors, always being diligent, and after that, the same mentors supported and guided me towards fulfilling my dreams—enrolling in the Veterinary Faculty at the University of Sarajevo. And that dream came true. Work, discipline, and integrity are values I carried with me from my parents' home, and I could preserve and even enhance them within the Foundation itself.

Transferring knowledge to young people was a special feeling while I was a mentor to my students, and their satisfaction and success in every field were my additional motivation in every sense. By joining the volunteering efforts of the Hastor Foundation, I realized the importance of education and the true values of life.

Everything I have learned in these past 4/5 years, I owe to you, dear Foundation. You taught me that giving up is not an option. I carry only the fondest memories and experiences with me. I will proudly share them with everyone, especially with the younger generations. My life motto has always been "every setback is two steps toward success", which guides me even today. Therefore, I sincerely thank you for everything you have done for me and for being my unwavering support until the end.

Respectfully,

Emin Čekro

Translated by: **Elmina Huseljić**



#### CONTACT US!

Bulevar Meše Selimovića 16,  
Sarajevo  
033 774 789  
033 774 823  
fondacija@hastor.ba



#### Redaction

Maida Sarić  
Almina Šabanović-Kokot  
Adelisa Begić  
Amina Bašić  
Aldina Šaljić  
Hana Hajrić  
Semina Sadiković  
Aida Suljić  
Nikolina Stanar



#### Graphic Design

Sara Keserović



#### Front Page

Hana Kazić



#### Translation

Ivan Rajić  
Zerina Kosovac  
Edna Đuliman  
Fadil Merdić  
Sara Kuduzović  
Elmina Huseljić  
Maida Avdić