

FONDACIJA  
HASTOR

Newsletter  
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# 20 Generations of Leaders – The Growth and Development of the Hastor Foundation

For two decades, the Hastor Foundation has been building the foundations of a better educational system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, investing in young people who today are drivers of positive change in their communities and beyond. What began as the vision of one man has grown into one of the most significant philanthropic institutions in the region – an institution that today counts tens of thousands of awarded annual scholarships and millions of volunteer hours. Since its establishment, the Hastor Foundation has nurtured the belief that education is the most powerful tool for the development of society. Through the years, that vision has turned into concrete lives – into children who were given an opportunity, into students who became scientists, entrepreneurs, doctors, engineers, artists, athletes, professors...

## A journey through time...

From its establishment until today, the growth and development of the Hastor Foundation represent proof that continuous support for education fundamentally changes the lives of individuals, but also leaves a long-term mark on society as a whole. From the initial 304 awarded annual scholarships, in 20 years of work we have reached the impressive number of 28,000 awarded annual scholarships, while all these years of active engagement have produced more than 2,300,000 volunteer hours and an immeasurable social contribution. All our scholarship recipients and alumni are united in the same mission of philanthropy and solidarity, and that is exactly what sets us apart – that synergy of scholarships and social responsibility as the core of the existence of the Hastor Foundation.

During our work, a large number of organizations recognized our efforts, and in addition to recognition at the state level, where we highlight the prestigious award for social impact of the year, our work and mission have also been recognized internationally, crowned with a special recognition for contribution to the development of education and youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Gala ceremony of the Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina in Washington (ACBH).

As an organization that very quickly proved itself as a kind of incubator for promising young people, we can proudly highlight our activities across almost the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to the large number of children and young people whose everyday lives we made easier through financial support, providing them with the opportunity to focus on school and academic success, through the volunteering program and mentoring program, which we continuously improved, we also enabled them to work on their personal and professional development and to develop their knowledge and skills. We confirmed our contribution to the development of youth through the organization of training programs for young people that led them to their first employment, such as the Graduate Development Program, TAKT Academy and the mentoring program “First Step into the Business World.” In this way, we continued to build bridges between education and the labor market under the careful guidance of top experts from various fields who had the role of mentors to participants. Through a series of panel discussions intended for all scholarship students, we created an invaluable network of knowledge and business opportunities with the aim of additional empowerment and preparation for the labor market. An innovative undertaking was realized – the project “Together for Knowledge and Education,” through which the Foundation opens its doors and provides support through free tutoring in school subjects even to students who are not its scholarship recipients.

We are especially proud of the fact that the Hastor Foundation family expanded even in the most difficult moments; in addition to regular scholarships, we extended a hand of support to pupils and students from areas affected by floods, confirming that no one in our community is left alone, while through the "Heart for BiH" fund, founded in 2014 with the ASA Prevent Group, we took it a step further, becoming an active participant in providing systemic relief to flood-affected areas.

The spirit of togetherness and solidarity also lives through the work of the Alumni Club. Along with regular gatherings and the digital innovation in the form of a new Alumni application, our former scholarship recipients showed great generosity through the organization of humanitarian actions for the distribution of New Year gift packages.

In order to share stories of success and love for the homeland with everyone, we launched the video series "With Proud Steps Through Bosnia and Herzegovina." Through this series, we visit the hometowns of our successful alumni, promote the beauty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and reveal stories that are the best proof that young people here can build top careers, stay, and invest in the future of their homeland.

However, behind each of our projects and volunteer hours stand the inspiring stories of our best ambassadors – our scholarship recipients and alumni who contribute to the mission of the Hastor Foundation through their personal successes. Our most important result on the occasion of this great jubilee are precisely the achievements they have accomplished. These are golden mathematicians and physicists, world champions in sports disciplines, young innovators, creative artists, leaders who day by day confirm their excellence, but what is most important is above all titles and medals: they have grown into noble people and true philanthropists, drivers of positive change who ensure that the mission of the Hastor Foundation lives through their deeds.

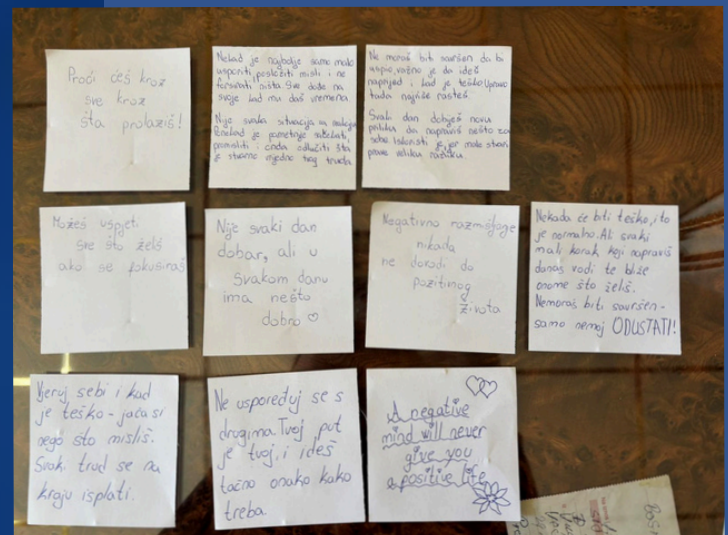
Twenty generations of leaders of the Hastor Foundation are not just statistics – they are real lives, real stories, and real changes. Every scholarship recipient carries a part of that mission within themselves and strives to build society and community by nurturing positive values. Through the years, the Hastor Foundation has proven that philanthropy is not only giving – it is an investment in the future.



# Fragments of Volunteer Stories

April, which is recognized worldwide as a month of humanity, solidarity, and mutual assistance, and which is also the month of the establishment of the Hastor Foundation, was this year as well marked by a series of inspiring volunteer activities aimed at encouraging young people to actively engage in their local communities. Through a large number of volunteer hours, students and mentors in different cities across Bosnia and Herzegovina showed that even small initiatives can have a strong and long-lasting impact on society.

In Srebrenik, mentors together with students actively observed passersby during a walk through the city and spontaneously offered help to those who needed it, whether it was carrying things or small gestures of attention, thereby directly applying the learned values of empathy. The activities continued in the park, where students participated in planting and watering flowers, cleaning the area, as well as caring for animals through feeding and play, developing a sense of responsibility towards nature and living beings. A special segment consisted of workshops such as “Box of Problems and Solutions” and “Empathy and Helping Others,” through which students openly discussed everyday challenges and learned how to solve them constructively.



In Sarajevo, multiple activities were carried out covering the humanitarian, educational, and sports aspects of volunteering. One group of students visited the organization Pomozi.ba, where through the process of sorting donations they learned about the importance of organization, responsibility, and a careful approach to work, as they had to assess the quality of donated items, properly sort them, and prepare them for further distribution to those most in need. Parallel to this, activities of writing support letters to children from SOS villages were carried out, as well as preparing packages with sweets for children without parental care, during which the students showed a high level of empathy and desire to make others happy. Also, one of the activities was an ecological-humanitarian action of collecting plastic bottles and caps, through whose recycling funds were collected and donated for humanitarian purposes, whereby students connected care for the environment with care for people. A special contribution was also made by a volunteer who, through work in a sports collective, worked with girls by organizing training sessions, providing them support in developing sports skills, but also strengthening self-confidence, discipline, and team spirit.



In Mostar, the activities were focused on developing environmental awareness and creative expression, where students made toys from recycled materials through workshops, learning about the importance of reuse and waste reduction, while through drawing and coloring they additionally expressed their views on nature protection. A particularly interesting activity was the “Eco-mosaic,” where students in groups created parts of a joint picture using collected materials, symbolically showing how collective work contributes to a greater goal. After that, students participated in arranging green areas through planting flowers in a local park, where through practical work they learned about the importance of environmental preservation and joint action.



In Kalesija, students visited an association of women suffering from breast cancer, where through joint work and socializing they provided support to the members of the association, participating in the making of tote bags and other handicrafts used for humanitarian purposes. During this activity, students had the opportunity to hear inspiring stories of women who had gone through difficult life challenges, which additionally influenced the development of their empathy and awareness of the importance of health and mutual support, while through their engagement they contributed to the work of the association and its humanitarian goals.



Volunteer activities in Derventa were carried out in the Center for Children and Youth with Developmental Disabilities, where students spent time with the center's users through games, drawing, assembling puzzles, and other creative activities, creating a safe and supportive environment. Particularly significant was the activity of creating a joint picture from puzzles, which symbolized unity in diversity, while through an individual approach to each child the student's developed patience, understanding, and social skills.



In Zvornik, the activities were focused on getting to know and preserving cultural-historical heritage through a visit to Kula Grad, where students through educational and field work learned about the importance of monuments and their role in the identity of the community. Through cleaning the site, photographing, and creating creative messages about heritage preservation, students developed a sense of responsibility towards cultural heritage and actively participated in its promotion.



In Prnjavor, students carried out the action "Box of Kindness," through which citizens had the opportunity to donate or take needed items, thereby encouraging a culture of sharing and mutual support, while additionally spreading positive energy in public spaces through the creation of motivational messages, leaving a strong impression on the community.

These are only some of the numerous activities carried out during the month of April, clearly showing that volunteering represents a powerful tool for building a more humane society, and that young people through concrete actions can develop values that will follow them throughout their entire lives. Through different forms of help, education, and joint work, students showed that doing good deeds is not only an occasional activity, but a way of life that contributes to building a better and more supportive community.

# Messages of Gratitude

Our big anniversary brought us so many warm messages from our scholarship holders and alumni. Through the memories and words of gratitude they shared with us, they once again confirmed the priceless importance that the Hastor Foundation has in their lives. It is exactly their stories that give meaning to every step we have taken together over the past two decades, and below we are sharing just a small part of those inspiring testimonies.

*Through many gatherings and activities, the Foundation didn't just provide me with financial support, but also a feeling of safety and motivation to become a better version of myself. They were always there for us as support and someone we could rely on in every step of our growth. For me, the Hastor Foundation is much more than a scholarship, it is the wind at our back that gives us the opportunity to grow and achieve our goals.*

Melina Ibrišimović

*I have been part of the Hastor Foundation for 13 years now, and throughout all these years it has given me incredible support in my education, but also so much more than that. Being part of the Foundation never meant just a scholarship to me - it was an opportunity for personal growth, development, and building values that I still carry with me today. Through the support I received, I learned how important it is to believe in yourself, stay true to your goals, and never give up even when things seem difficult. The Foundation encouraged me to recognize my own potential and gave me the strength to move forward with more confidence. Also, through the Foundation I constantly met new people from different backgrounds, with whom I built sincere and special friendships. Those connections enriched my life and gave me a sense of belonging to a big and supportive community. Today, I can say that the Hastor Foundation shaped me as a person - it taught me responsibility, persistence, and the importance of supporting one another.*

Erna Bečirspahić

*I remember the day when I first felt what it truly means to be part of something bigger. It wasn't just another meeting or gathering - it was the moment when I realized that I wasn't alone, that there were people who believed in me even when I doubted myself. The smiles, support, small words of encouragement, and the feeling of belonging stayed engraved in me more deeply than anything else. That memory always reminds me how important it is to have someone pushing you forward and believing in your dreams, and how that kind of support can completely change the course of someone's life.*

Aida Hajdarević

*When I first stepped into the world of volunteering, I was guided by a simple wish to be useful to society. However, I had no idea that this path would lead me to what I now consider the most valuable school of life - mentoring young people. If I had to summarize my experience on one page, it wouldn't be written only with my words, but with the energy, ideas, and successes of those I had the honor to support. I remember the workshops where we solved challenges together. Watching someone, with your guidance, express their vision for the first time, overcome the fear of failure, and start believing in their own abilities is a feeling that cannot be compared to any professional success. My biggest reward today is seeing those same young people become mentors themselves, continuing to spread that circle of support. That is proof that mentoring is not only about transferring skills, but also about passing on values.*

**Sumaja Subašić**

*The Foundation is one of my favorite memories from my student years: the people I met, the experiences and skills I gained while working in administration, the afternoons and mornings I spent there. Being part of this big and humane story called the Hastor Foundation truly is a privilege. When I think about that period, my favorite memory is my very first arrival at the FH office when I became part of the administrative team. I remember being worried, thinking about everything that was waiting for me and whether I would justify the trust given to me, but the only thing I encountered were smiling faces of employees, advice, and conversations with the scholarship recipients who were there at the time, and everything else became history.*

**Ilhana Tinjak**

*Having such a big and dedicated Foundation by your side is incredibly important, because from the very beginning it guides us toward the right values, education, self-improvement, and contributing to the community. Thanks to that experience, I learned that on this path there will always be people ready to support us. Besides the beautiful memories of volunteering and my first mentoring days, it is important to highlight how much we actually learn through the Foundation, often without even realizing it. What especially stands out to me is the sense of responsibility toward obligations, and today that helps me in all areas of life. They say that with one pen and one piece of paper the world can be changed. I would add: and with one foundation too.*

**Amina Bahtanović**

*Through volunteering in the Hastor Foundation, I became more open and developed my communication skills, because all the employees were always understanding and willing to help. I never felt judged, and I always felt like part of a community, which is something I now try to pass on and recreate with new volunteers in the office. That feeling of togetherness, acceptance, and knowing that I always have someone I can rely on is priceless. I will always be grateful to the Foundation because it lifted me up, stood by me during the hardest moments, and supported me throughout my entire higher education journey.*

Enisa Šeho

*The most beautiful memories connecting me to the Hastor Foundation are the relaxed atmosphere and the people who make it such a special place. There is always good energy in the office. Everyone is ready to help, but at the same time we also know how to relax and laugh together, which I really love. Those moments of laughter and togetherness are what I will remember the most. I especially appreciate that even in serious moments there is always a reason to smile, and I am grateful for that. That combination of work, support, and genuine joy makes every visit to the office a beautiful experience that I carry with me fondly. Alongside all of that, the feeling of belonging and mutual respect makes every memory even more special. It is beautiful to know that there is a place where people understand and support each other while creating beautiful moments together. I am always happy to visit or even mention my Hastor Foundation. Thank you.*

Vildana Halilić

*For me, the Hastor Foundation was never just financial support, but much more than that - a journey of personal growth and empowerment. Even as a student, through workshops, gatherings, and volunteering, I had the opportunity to learn, grow, and meet people who motivated me to become a better version of myself, but I truly realized the value of all of it once I became a mentor and a role model for younger students myself. It means a lot to me when I help students understand a topic better, give them new perspectives and strategies they can use in life, but especially when they come back to me with feedback saying those strategies truly helped them or that, thanks to my explanations, they started liking a subject more and improved their grades. The Hastor Foundation became a second family to me - full of support, knowledge, and people who genuinely want to help and spread kindness further. I am endlessly grateful that for the past 15 years I have had the opportunity to be part of the story of the Hastor Foundation, which became one of the most important parts of my life and, through its people, experiences, and support, left an unforgettable mark on who I am today.*

Ada Avdagić

We invite you to join our mission and contribute to fulfilling the dreams of promising students and young people who need our help!



## Support us.

If you would like to support the work of the Hastor Foundation, you can make a donation to one of the transaction accounts.

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