Newsletter

September, 2026

FONDACIJA
HASTOR



Two Decades of Vision: 20 Years Since the Signing of the First Scholarship Agreement

When the first scholarship agreement at the Hastor Foundation was signed on September 16, 2006, the foundations of one of the most beautiful and influential stories of solidarity, knowledge, and social responsibility in Bosnia and Herzegovina were laid. What started as a noble idea and an extended hand of support, today, exactly twenty years later, represents a lasting value that shapes the future of our country.

During the past two decades, the Hastor Foundation has proven that investing in education is not a cost, but the safest and most valuable investment in a society. Continuous support for young people from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina has transformed the lives of thousands of families, and behind this twenty-year journey stand impressive and historic numbers and more than 30,000 annual scholarships awarded. Each of them was a wind at someone's back, the removal of financial barriers, and a clear message to a young person that someone believes in their potential. More than 6,000 young people make up the large Hastor Foundation family, consisting of current scholarship holders and successful alumni, and today representing a network of experts, leaders, and drivers of change in all spheres of society. More than 2,300,000 volunteer hours is the number that best reflects the very essence of the Hastor Foundation. These hours are millions of selfless acts, helping hands, lessons held, and proof that a better local community is built through solidarity.

The Hastor Foundation has never been only a source of financial support. It is a mentor, a support, and a school of life. Through the unique concept of volunteer work, for 20 years the Hastor Foundation has carefully nurtured empathy, a sense of belonging, and a moral obligation among young people to give back to their society what they receive.

Our alumni, successful in their professions, carry the mark of the Hastor Foundation as a lasting value. They are living proof that continuous, strategic, and long-term investment in young people creates a generation that does not wait for changes, but leads them itself.

As we mark this golden jubilee, we proudly look at the path we have travelled, but with even greater responsibility, we look towards the future. The story that began 20 years ago continues to be written every day, with the same passion, the same vision, and an unwavering belief that education is the key to the development of a better Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Prepared by: Lamija Sejdić



PROMOTION OF THE MONOGRAPH
"Twenty Years of the Hastor Foundation's Work": From One Idea to Thousands of Life Stories

Twenty years ago, the story of the Hastor Foundation began - a story about believing in education, young people, and the possibility that one opportunity can change someone's life. It was precisely this story that the promotion of the monograph "Twenty Years of Successful Work of the Hastor Foundation", held on September 16, 2026, at the ASA Institute in Sarajevo, was dedicated to, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Foundation's establishment.

From the first 304 scholarship holders in 2006 until today, around 6,000 young people have gone through the Foundation's programmes. Today, the Foundation provides scholarships to 2,401 pupils and students, and behind two decades of work remain thousands of scholarships, millions of hours of volunteering, and, above all, generations of young people who, with the support of the Foundation, built their educational and professional paths.

However, as was emphasized during the promotion, the value of this work cannot be measured only by numbers. The Director of the Hastor Foundation, **Lejla Đonlagić**, spoke about the development of the Foundation and continuous investment in young people, while the editor of the monograph, **Maida Sarić**, presented the process of creating the publication which, on more than 400 pages, preserves the most important moments, results, programmes, and experiences that marked two decades of work.

The monograph is more than an overview of achieved results. It is a record of the people who, through their work, knowledge, volunteering, and support, built the Foundation and its community.

A special part of the promotion was dedicated to alumni. **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emina Sijahović, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alem Merdić**, and **Elvir Kadrić**, former scholarship holders of the Foundation, today successful in their professional fields, spoke about the experiences they took with them from the scholarship period and how they remain connected today with the community that supported them.

Their stories showed what is perhaps the most important result of the Foundation's work - that support does not end at the moment when a scholarship holder finishes their education. It remains part of their life path and often returns through mentoring, volunteering, professional engagement, and new forms of support for others.

At the promotion, the President of the Board of Directors, **Eldin Hadžiselimović**, also spoke about the responsibility carried by twenty years of work, the importance of investing in education, and the future work of the Foundation, reminding us that this anniversary is not only an opportunity to look back at what has been done, but also to look towards what is yet to come.

A special perspective was also brought by **Amela Dedić**, a former scholarship holder of the Hastor Foundation, who today serves as the Manager of the Education and Upbringing Department. Her story particularly showed how the relationship between the Foundation and its scholarship holders can, over time, turn into a lasting connection - from a person who once received support to a person who today participates in creating and providing it to new generations of pupils and students. She presented the Foundation from two perspectives: personal, as a former scholarship holder, and professional, through her everyday work with young people throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is precisely such stories that give full meaning to the Foundation's twenty years of work. Because behind the programmes, scholarships, and numbers stand people - those who received support, those who provided it, and those who today create new opportunities for others.

In the end, the monograph does not only provide an overview of twenty years of the Hastor Foundation's work, but also a look towards the future. Because what started as one idea today lives through thousands of life stories, and each of them carries the possibility for this story to continue.

That is precisely why the words of the founder: ***"The light of kindness never goes out if we share its flame with others"*** best describe what has, over the past two decades, become part of the Foundation's identity - the belief that knowledge, support, and kindness have the greatest value when they are passed on to others.

From the first scholarship holders to generations who today, through their knowledge, work, and experience, create space for new opportunities, this idea continues. And perhaps this is precisely the most beautiful view towards the future - that what once began as an extended hand continues to live through people.

From one idea to thousands of life stories. And from thousands of life stories to new opportunities for the future.



OBJECTIVE: PROMOTION OF MONOGRAPHY





































Educational and Historical Visit of Scholarship Holders to Srebrenica

As part of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Hastor Foundation's work, a joint visit to the Srebrenica–Potočari Memorial Centre was organised, with 2,300 scholarship holders from across Bosnia and Herzegovina taking part.

The visit was organised as part of an educational programme aimed at fostering a culture of remembrance, familiarising young people with historical facts, and strengthening the values of responsibility, peace, and empathy. Scholarship holders travelled to Srebrenica from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During their stay at the Srebrenica–Potočari Memorial Centre, accompanied by employees of the institution, they visited the exhibitions and multimedia centre and learned more about the documented history of the genocide committed in Srebrenica through lectures. The Hastor Foundation states that in this way it has continued its mission of educating and developing young people who, through a responsible attitude towards their community, contribute to building a better society.

For two decades, the Foundation has provided scholarships and continuous mentoring support to pupils and students from socially disadvantaged families, as well as to promising and talented young people across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since 2006, when the first 304 scholarship holders received support, a total of 6,000 young people have gone through the Foundation's programmes.

Over the course of its two decades of work, more than 2.3 million hours of volunteering have been completed and more than 30,000 annual scholarships have been awarded. Today, the Foundation provides scholarships to 2,401 pupils and students, while it highlights as the most important result of its work the generations of educated, responsible, and empathetic young people who are building the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina in various fields.

OBJECTIVE:
EDUCATIONAL AND HISTORICAL VISIT OF SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS TO SREBRENICA






















Nađa Fazlić – Step by Step Towards Great Opportunities

The Hastor Foundation is always proud to present the inspiring stories of its scholarship holders, and this month we are presenting **Nađa Fazlić**, an excellent fourth-year student at the Sarajevo Medical High School. At just 18 years old, Nađa Fazlić already has a year full of experiences behind her that have taken her far beyond the classroom. During the past period, Nađa had the opportunity to participate in cultural exchanges, an entrepreneurship and leadership programme, as well as work at some of the biggest events in Sarajevo.



One of the more significant experiences she gained was at the Sarajevo Film Festival. After volunteering at the Festival the previous year, this year she was given the opportunity to work as a location manager for the Bosnian Cultural Centre. Her role involved coordinating activities at the location and communicating with different teams. The dynamic environment and large number of people required good organisation, responsibility, and resourcefulness, and these were precisely the skills she further developed through this engagement.

Another new experience followed at Dino Merlin's concerts, where she was the hostess coordinator in the VIP area. Taking care of guests, coordinating people, and organising work during three concert evenings once again showed her how important communication, composure, and teamwork are when working at large events.

Nevertheless, the experiences that perhaps broadened her horizons the most were those outside Bosnia and Herzegovina. In April, she participated in a cultural exchange in Vallendar, Germany, where young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, and France gathered. Through seminars and workshops, they discussed democracy, social change, and the history of their countries, but an equally important part of the programme was getting to know the participants and their different perspectives. Through exchanges like these, they learn about one another, different cultures, and different ways of life.



Several months later came another major experience – a trip to the United States of America. As a participant in Taylor University's cultural exchange programme in Indianapolis, Nađa had the opportunity to participate in a camp dedicated to entrepreneurship and leadership. Together with other participants, she worked as part of a team on developing a business idea, from its conception to the final presentation before judges from the business world. Their team was declared the winner, which was particularly significant for Nađa because it was the first time she had the opportunity to work on something new and present her idea to people with experience in the business world.

Her stay in America also gave her the opportunity to experience life outside the environment she was accustomed to. The time she spent with a host family, meeting new people, and experiencing everyday life in Indianapolis enabled her to become more independent and open to new experiences.

In addition to all the activities she had this year, this is also her first year with the Hastor Foundation: ***"Although I have been part of the Foundation for a relatively short time, it means a great deal to me that through it I have met new people and become part of a community that provides young people with support and motivation to work on themselves and make use of different opportunities."***

When she talks about the past year, Nađa does not single out one particular event. Each of these experiences, whether it was the Festival, a cultural exchange, or a several-week stay in another country, brought her a new skill, acquaintance, or perspective. Precisely because of this, she now accepts new challenges and opportunities with greater confidence.

Interestingly, two major opportunities – travelling to Germany and the United States of America – came to her in a very simple way: through messages in a school group. Nađa was among those who read the messages, explored the opportunities, and decided to apply. That is why she advises young people to be curious and not casually overlook the opportunities offered to them:

"Sometimes all it takes is having the desire and willingness to take the first step. We never know where one message we read, one application, or one new opportunity might take us."

Her story shows exactly that – one opportunity often opens the door to another, but the first step is always ours.

Prepared by: Lamija Karađuz

On the Monograph Celebrating 20 Years of the Hastor Foundation

*On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Hastor Foundation, we spoke with **Maida Sarić,** a Master's degree holder in Bosnian Language and Literature and Manager of the Foundation's Projects, Development and Promotion Department, who had the opportunity to serve as the editor of the Foundation's monograph dedicated to its twenty years of work. In our conversation, we looked back at the creation of the monograph, the stories of scholarship holders and alumni, the Foundation's rich archive, as well as what its next chapter might look like.*



How did the idea for the monograph celebrating 20 years of the Hastor Foundation come about, and what did you want to preserve from being forgotten through this book?

The Hastor Foundation's monograph is a project realised as part of the celebration of the Foundation's 20th anniversary, but it was not created simply to mark the jubilee. It came from the need and desire to preserve what had been created over the previous two decades and leave future generations a record of an idea that has grown over the years and become a part of the lives of thousands of children and young people across Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The monograph follows the Foundation from its beginnings to the present day. In your opinion, what has changed the most over these 20 years, and what has remained a constant?

Over the years, the Hastor Foundation has continuously worked on improving its existing programmes for scholarship holders, as well as introducing new ones, constantly developing its volunteering model with the aim of providing young people with comprehensive support throughout their education. However, people have been at the heart of its work from the very beginning – its most important resource throughout all these years – and this is the key constant of the Foundation's work. Today, we cannot talk about the Foundation without talking about the children who grew up with its support, the young people who were educated with the Foundation, the alumni who are now successful and accomplished individuals, the mentors and volunteers, the families, and all the people who have built this story with their knowledge, time, and dedication.

A special part of the book consists of the stories of scholarship holders and alumni. Did any of these life stories particularly leave an impression on you, and why?

The stories of scholarship holders and alumni – I will be subjective here – are, for me, the most beautiful part of the monograph, which preserves numerous beautiful and emotional stories. I would not single anyone out individually, because each of them carries its own message, motivation, and inspiration for young people who are only beginning their journey of personal development. Based on their experiences, the Foundation's scholarship holders and alumni can truly be wonderful examples of how effort, dedication, sacrifice, and the desire for success, as well as positive human qualities based on empathy, honour, and honesty, can shape not only a successful but also a fulfilling life journey. Precisely because of this, these stories are not merely testimonies of what the Hastor Foundation has provided to its scholarship holders, but also of what they have built from that opportunity through their work, choices, and attitude towards others.

While working on the monograph, you came across numerous letters, photographs, and other materials from the Foundation's archive. Did you find anything that particularly surprised you or revealed a new side of the whole story to you?

The Hastor Foundation's archive contains exceptionally rich material and preserves documents that testify to the Foundation's work and development, as well as numerous personal traces and stories of people who have been part of it over the years. Looking back through the years, we reviewed hundreds of volunteering reports, scholarship holders' letters, various correspondence, thank-you notes, gifts, and other materials that we had preserved over the years. Every document, photograph, letter, or preserved item holds a part of a particular time and carries its own story. Sometimes it was a sentence from a letter, an old report, a child's drawing, or a gift as a sign of attention and gratitude. It is precisely these personal traces that best show that, besides dates and events, the history of the Foundation is above all made up of people and their stories. It was particularly emotional to return to letters written by former scholarship holders while they were, for example, primary school students, whom I now know as accomplished and successful people, in excellent positions and with excellent careers that continue to progress.

How difficult was it to decide which stories and people to include in the monograph and what to leave out, considering that the Foundation has 20 years of work and a large number of people behind it?

When you have twenty years of material and thousands of people in front of you, it is almost impossible to make a selection that seems right, at least at that moment. Every choice meant leaving out another story. Therefore, regardless of how many stories, events, and photographs it brings together, I think this monograph cannot be a complete picture of everything that makes up the Hastor Foundation. Above all, the monograph is a selection of the most beautiful and representative moments that we singled out from our great wealth of time and people.

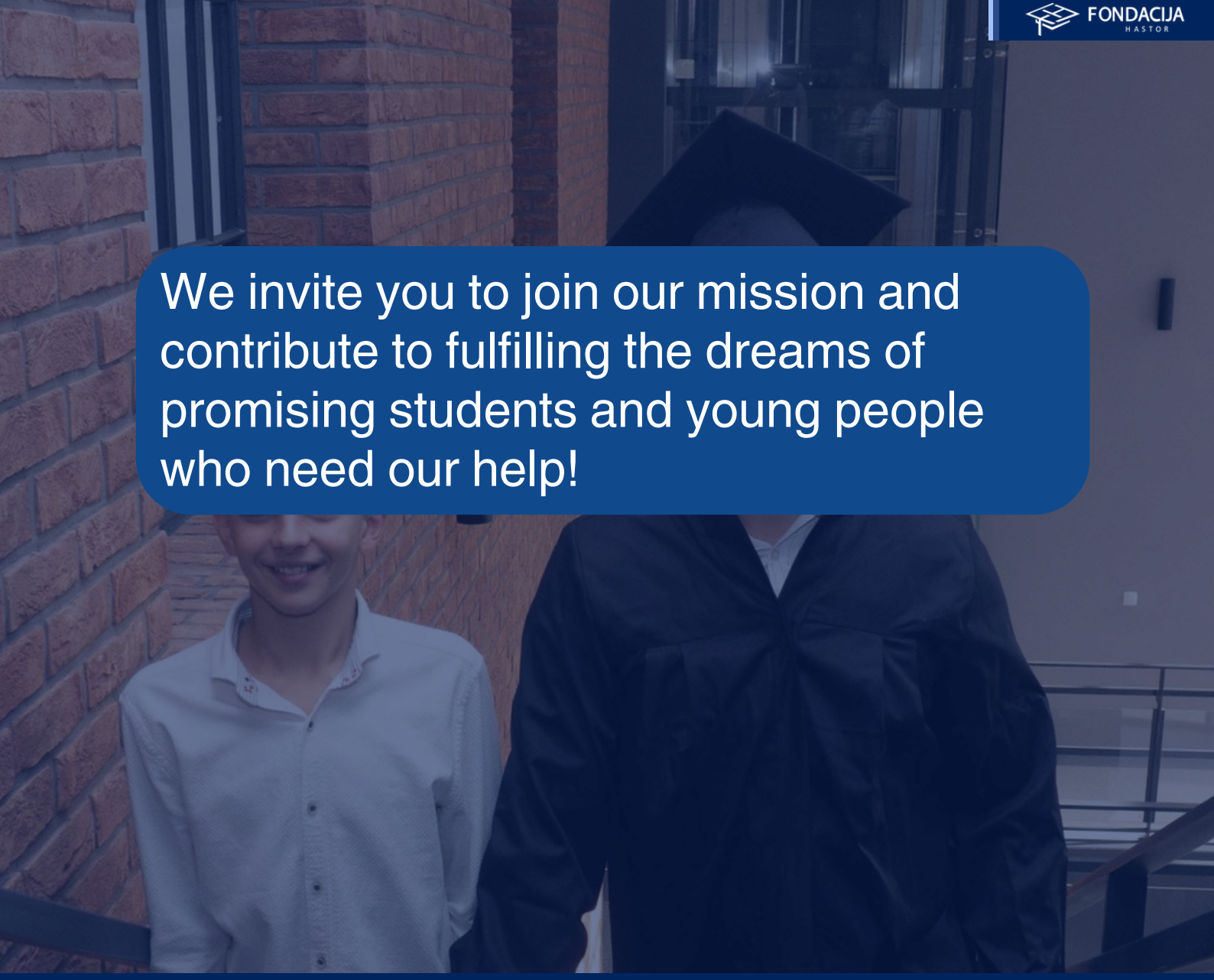
After everything you researched and read while working on the book, what is, for you, the greatest value and legacy of the Hastor Foundation today?

The greatest value of the Hastor Foundation lies in the fact that its work has never been solely about financial support. A scholarship is often the first step, while what remains is the feeling that someone believed in you and gave you an opportunity. I experienced this myself as a former scholarship holder of the Foundation. Today, from the perspective of an employee, through my work on the monograph, I see even more clearly how much this support has meant to generations of young people over the past 20 years. I believe that the greatest legacy of the Foundation is precisely what has remained in people – knowledge, experience, values, and the desire to one day pass on the opportunity they received.

If you were to single out one message from the entire story of the Hastor Foundation's twenty years that you would like the reader to take away from this monograph, what would that message be, and which of the Foundation's values does it best reflect?

If I had to single out just one message from the monograph, it would be that great and lasting things are built together – through trust, responsibility, and faith in a common goal. Over the course of twenty years, circumstances, generations of scholarship holders, and the scope of the Foundation's work have changed, but the values established by its founders have remained the same: solidarity, support, responsibility, trust, and a strong belief in knowledge and education. Today, these values live through the people who make up the Hastor Foundation. Everyone contributes through their knowledge, energy, and responsibility, and our strength lies precisely in the fact that we act as a team, united by the same goal. In this way, an individual's success becomes everyone's success. That is why the monograph is a testimony to the people and values that were established at the very beginning and that continue to define our work today. Twenty years later, what our founders established as a foundation continues to connect, motivate, and oblige us. With these values, we look ahead – ready for what is yet to come.

Prepared by: Adina Jusufspahić



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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