

## Gulfport, MS – Delegate Profiles

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translations

### Mr. Lasha Abashidze

Age: 32

Level of English: Fluent

First Visit to U.S.: No

**Title:**

- Vake District's Governor, Tbilisi Municipality City Hall Vake District

**Previous Positions:**

- Chief of Staff-Head of Administration, Administration of The President Of Georgia
- Head of Internal Audit Department, Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia

**Location:** Tbilisi, Georgia

**Professional Interests/Goals:**

- Municipal development
- Coordinating municipal activities between local and state authorities
- Finance and budgeting of public works
- Land development and land use in protected areas

### Mr. Shota Gujabidze

Age: 42

Level of English: A few words

First Visit to U.S.: Yes

**Title:**

- Director, Producer, Ajara TV
- Founder, "Batomi" NGO

**Previous Positions:**

- Lecturer, Batumi Art Teaching University
- Journalist, Ajara TV

**Location:** Batumi, Georgia

**Professional Interests/Goals:**

- Cultural tourism
- Urban planning
- Historical preservation
- Historic district and monuments

### Mr. David Megrelishvili

Age: 35

Level of English: Fluent

First Visit to U.S.: Yes

**Title:**

- Head of Foreign Relations and International Projects Division, Kutaisi City Hall

**Previous Positions:**

- Consultant at the National Bank of Georgia, Kutaisi, National Bank Of Georgia, Kutaisi Branch
- Data Entry Clerk for Western Georgia, Save the Children

**Location:** Kutaisi, Georgia

**Professional Interests/Goals:**

- Cooperation between local, state, and federal authorities
- Economic redevelopment
- Public-private partnerships
- Historical preservation

## Gulfport, MS – Delegate Profiles

### Mr. Sul Khan Saladze

**Age:** 32      **Level of English:** Basic conversation      **First Visit to U.S.:** Yes

**Title:**

- Good Governance Program Coordinator, Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA)

**Previous Positions:**

- Legal Consultant, Investigative Journalism Organization "Studio Monitor"
- Project Coordinator, Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA)
- Project Lawyer, Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA)

**Location:** Tbilisi, Georgia

**Professional Interests/Goals:**

- Cultural preservation
- Sustainable development
- Municipal development
- Transparency in municipal development
- Legal issues in public space use
- "Green" redevelopment initiatives

### Mr. Alexander Saralidze

**Age:** 44      **Level of English:** Conversational      **First Visit to U.S.:** Yes

**Title:**

- Current Position: Chef Architect, "Arcon Group" LLC

**Previous Positions:**

- Architect, Tamarina Project LLC
- Architect, Tbilisi City Planning Agency

**Location:** Tbilisi, Georgia

**Professional Interests/Goals:**

- Urban planning
- Historical preservation
- Citizen activism to protect public spaces
- Revitalizing infrastructure

Facilitator: *Ms. Tamar Sartania*

This is the delegation's rationale:

**Accountable Governance – Municipal Development/Use of Public Space**

Rationale: In the past year, the Georgian government strengthened the role of municipalities, and the U.S. Mission in Georgia is eager to work with newly enfranchised municipal public servants and those supporting municipal development efforts. Recent large-scale projects have been initiated to rebuild historical towns and town centers, but important decisions about land use are often made without public scrutiny. Before the central government continues with ambitious development projects, local communities and municipal governments should have input and share their vision for such projects. Through Open World, delegates will observe how spatial planning and development issues are addressed by municipalities in the United States, and explore the role of the public in the process.