

Stories of Resilience: Ukraine Students Speak Up - Oleksandr Tuz

My name is Oleksandr Tuz, I am a student at the National State Tax Service University of Ukraine (Irpin) and a native of Irpin, Kyiv region.

On February 23, it was my first day at work at a new position, which attracted me very much. On February 24, I woke up at 06:30 AM in a good mood and was ready to do new tasks. A moment later I heard my mom's voice saying: "The war came".

Just at that moment, everything inside me turned upside down: all plans and ideas were automatically replaced by shock and anxiety. I heard the first explosions (as it turned out, they came from the edge of my city Irpin) and began to search for information quickly. What should I put in the alarm suitcase? The bags were quickly packed, but there was no clarity of mind. What should I do next? The explosions kept going...

After that, everyone began to search for information. The President of Ukraine informed us about the beginning of the war and called upon us to remain calm and be ready for anything.

A few hours later, the "emergency alarm" began to turn into a "stable alarm". We called friends and acquaintances to ask two questions: "How are you? What are you going to do?". Nobody could form precise answers, and the explosions kept being heard...

Then began a period that was somewhat reminiscent of prostration. We just waited and listened to the news about the situation, while trembling from the vibration of the shivering windows.

After getting over it a bit, I began to communicate with colleagues on numerous community and student initiatives. I came up with the idea to coordinate the cooperation of the largest youth organizations in Ukraine. Actually, that's what I started to do (going forward: we organized ourselves quickly and have already increased the base of contacts throughout Ukraine, thanks to which we keep in touch, organize places

for displaced persons, humanitarian aid for the population throughout Ukraine, etc.).

After that, time began to return to its usual flow: we waited for what would happen next, without turning off the news. Also, I coordinated the process of communication between representatives of the largest youth organizations in Ukraine. This process, as well as mutual support with acquaintances and friends, distracted me a bit.

I am proud of my nation at this point. I continue to be engaged in organizational and communication processes and I believe in Ukraine — my homeland.