

GLOBAL CONCEPTS



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G.A.M.E. NEWSLETTER

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Fall 2009

Third Annual Peace Builder Awards Luncheon

The third Annual Peace Builder Awards luncheon, Saturday, October 17, held at the Grand Street Cafe on the Country Club Plaza highlighted the significance and success of this recognition event.

The Award recipients were selected by a neutral committee of four, comprised of two from the board of directors and two from the general membership. There were several highly recognized Kansas Citians among the nominees for the award and the committee was able to reach consensus on two outstanding candidates. The 2009 recipients are **Jay Sjerven**, President of the United Nations Association of Kansas City and **People to People International**, Mary Eisenhower, President/CEO.

Mr. Sjerven has served as President of Greater Kansas City United Nations Association for the past six years and also is a member of the national council of chapters and divisions as a regional representative for the midwest division. He is dedicated to educating, inspiring and mobilizing public support for the vital work of the United Nations.

People to People International was founded on the vision of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956 and has since been “dedicated to promoting world peace and cultural understanding through meaningful personal interaction.” People to People International offers educational and cultural

opportunities that result in a change of attitude and understanding of diversified human cultures. Mr. Steve DiGiacinto accepted the award for People top People on behalf of Mary Eisenhower, who was in Morocco.

The keynote speaker for the event was Mr. Bruce Knotts, Executive Director of the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office (UU-UNO) in New York City. He focused on a new era in multilateralism, optimism in more sustainable international peace, greater U.S. role in U.N. work on climate change and sustainable development, and a call for reduction of small arms and military spending in favor of peaceful resolution of international disputes. He stressed that despite its flaws, the United Nations is “an amazingly effective organization when member states allow it to function and provide the necessary resources.”



Auction items attracted many at the luncheon.



Sara Pedram (right) G.A.M.E. Director and Haumana Johannsen, President and her daughter Inara show their pleasure with participating in the event.



State Senator Charles Wheeler, M.D. at the luncheon.



Bruce Knotts, director of the UU-United Nations Office and Jay Sjerven, UNA -KC President, exchanging their views about United Nations. Also pictured is Gbaike Ajayi, U.N. Board and Young Professionals for International Cooperation (YPIC).



Award recipients: Mr. Steve DiGiacinto (left), a board member of People to People and Jay Sjerven, President, UNA-KC.



From left: Gbaike Ajayi, Young Professionals for International Cooperation, Jay Sjerven, Bruce Knotts, Steve DiGiacinto and Manny Pedram, Director Emeritus/GAME.



At the Luncheon



Jay and Manny, Teri Chu and Dr. Yolanda Huet-Vaughn



Jay and two participants from Park University.

(Credit for all photos goes to Teri Chu, G.A.M.E. Vice President)

Celebrating the 20th birthday of CRC!

On October 8, 2009 children's advocates from around the globe, including NGOs, State delegates, and UN experts assembled at an event in Geneva, Switzerland to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to discuss key issues related to the 'three Ds' as indicated in the conference theme ("Dignity, Development, Dialogue") in various workshops. The event was organized by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and Yanghee Lee, in her opening statement, emphasized that a crucial element of the Convention was furthering a view of children as "beings rather than becoming." She also pointed to the unprecedented support of State Parties for the CRC Convention. She also stressed, however, that there are a number of challenges impeding implementation of the Convention, including the impact of the global economic downturn, recent natural disasters, effects of climate change, lack of political will, the existence of numerous broad reservations to the Convention, and the economic

limitations to overcome. In addition, the existence of a complaints procedure to the CRC is fundamental. Ms. Lee said: “we are asked how to make rights have real meaning, and in order for this to happen, effective remedies must be available ... The Committee strongly believes an Optional Protocol to establish such a procedure will help the international community make a leap forward in terms of making children’s rights a reality.” The conference participants discussed many issues and challenges facing CRC implementation. Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights at the Council of Europe, stated, “trusting children is crucial for the realization of children’s rights. We must trust them to be responsible.”

NOTE: G.A.M.E. has formed a steering committee that is hard at work planning the next CRC/CEDAW Conference for October 14-15, 2010. Mark your calendars!

Manny Pedram

A Class Transformed

Everyone is haggard from having struggled with a concept; one student suddenly speaks from the heart with an Aha! realization. The entire classroom fills with a palpable excitement, and a transformative discussion follows during which every student excitedly contributes. Such is a truly great experience for a teacher. I never know when those times will come - - or even if they will come; still, when they arise I’m speechless and intensely grateful I’ve chosen this profession.

It was a simple question a student queried about *Bless Me, Ultima*: “I thought I knew the answer, but it has changed over and over. What is this book all about?” What seemed obvious at first about this novel changed with analysis, conversation, answered questions, and -- best of all – unanswered persistent questions. My class

was dumbfounded upon coming to the end of the novel when Ultima, a curandera (traditional healer) tells the young protagonist Antonio, “I bless you in the name of all that is good and strong and beautiful, Antonio. Always have the strength to live. Love life, and if despair enters your heart, look for me in the evenings when the wind is gentle and the owls sing in the hills”. Students struggled with the idea that evil could triumph over good people. They were frustrated that Antonio never received any ultimate answers, only a promise of memory and a blessing.

One young man suddenly spoke with clarity I had not previously seen, and he said this story was a story of a whole people. Antonio was us - - Americans - - learning to learn from our past and carrying lessons into our future. He said that memory and a blessing can be the tools we carry forward as we, too, become healers like Antonio and Ultima before him. The class became excited, and examples poured forward: how the silent Indian represented the indigenous peoples, how the war of the novel was really about life’s struggles, how the outcast characters represented various peoples of the United States, and how we ourselves can be either the healers or the destroyers of our world. Just as Ultima consoled Antonio, it takes faith to love life and create community amidst uncertainty, the class concluded. The next realization was that we as a world are responsible for each other: we are not isolated but interconnected throughout cultures, time, and even our individual choices. Again, this was such a gratifying moment, and I’m looking forward to my next class with these young people.

Such is an Aha! moment I’ve recently experienced because of literature that addresses multicultural themes. If you have not read *Bless Me, Ultima*, I highly recommend it. Please, though, I am always in search of new books to read, enjoy, perhaps agonize over, and discuss. What are some titles you recommend for me? I’m looking forward to your suggestions!

Jan S. Rog, G.A.M.E. member

Upcoming Events Local and National



October 29, 2009, 7:00 -9:00p.m. Mayor's U.N. Day Dinner, Speaker Radhika Coomaraswamy. U.N. Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, UMKC Pierson Hall.

November 1, 2009, 2:00 -4:00p.m.G.A.M.E. Board of Directors, G.A.M.E. office 3009 Holmes.

November 3,2009, Visit to World Community Center, St. Louis, MO, Manny and Sara Pedram

November 10, 2009, 5:15 p.m., CRC/CEDAW Steering Committee meeting, G.A.M.E. Office, 3009 Holmes.

December 13, 2009, 3:00-6:00 p.m, Manny & Sara Annual Yuleboeck & G.A.M.E. member appreciation

Important Event—2010—Save the Date:

October 14-15, 2010, 6th Biennial CRC/CEDAW Conference in Kansas City

United Nations Events—November and December Calendar

Nov. 6 International Day for preventing the exploitation of the environment in war and armed conflict.

Nov. 7 UN Convention for the protection of the Ozone Layer adopted in Vienna 1985, ratified by 176 nations 2001.

Nov. 16 Signing of UNESCO Charter 1945

International Day of Tolerance adopted 1995

The Law of the Sea in force 1994
Nov. 20 Universal Children's Day
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) unanimously adopted by General Assembly 1989

November 25 International Day for Elimination of Violence against women adopted by General Assembly 1981.

November 29 International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

November 30 Antarctic Treaty, requiring the continent to be used for peaceful purposes only, adopted by General Assembly, 1959.

December 3 International Day of Disabled Persons

December 10 Human Rights Day: Universal Declaration of Human Rights led by Eleanor Roosevelt adopted in Paris 1948.
General Assembly's Establishment of University of Peace in Costa Rica 1979.
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979.

Quote of the Issue

“If you wish to experience peace, provide peace for another.”

Tenzin Gyatso, The 14th Dalai Lama (b.1935)

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A non-profit organization.

3009 Holmes

Kansas City, Missouri, USA 64109

(816) 960-1546 (816) 753-2372

www.kcglobalconcepts.org

Board of Directors:

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Join the World: Become a member of G.A.M.E.

The strength of any organization depends upon the level of support and financial resources provided by its members and friends. G.A.M.E. is no exception. Please use this form to join us today.

Membership Form:

Date: _____

Patron..... \$ 30.00 _____

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I would like to contribute an additional \$ _____ for educational use of the organization.

Your membership and contributions are tax exempt.

We thank you for your support.

Mission Statement: G.A.M.E. assists in the enhancement of knowledge of global interdependence and awareness and appreciation of our common humanity.