



UNAGP

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NEWSLETTER

United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia

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GWA Annual Conference

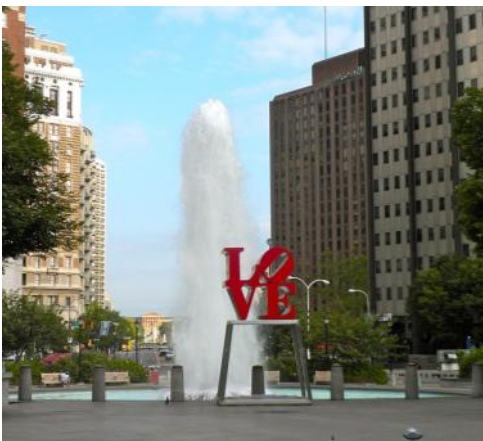
Looking forward, one of our partner organizations will be hosting an academic conference in April.

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UNA-USA Global Engagement Summit

Read about the experience of Philadelphians at the annual Global Engagement Summit. Page 5-6



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From Christiaan's Desk

A Few Words from our Executive Director

From Christiaan's Desk.

My desk is kind of empty, after much travel, especially to New Zealand. But, my phone camera is quite full, so I thought, "let me show you what I captured in images, using my Philadelphian eyes with Dutch heritage".



No police in sight. They say they have police, but I don't remember seeing cops.

In Auckland cranes everywhere. They are building in a record pace. All high-rises, most in the private sector. The marinas are packed with boats, and the new boats are larger and shinier. NZ seem to attract not only the traditional backpacker, but also the global elite. Understandable. NZ is a pleasant place.



Gay Pride and/or Peace
Pride? New Zealand
shares some values with
Philadelphia.



Nice words: Want to add some more? —>

Even nicer words!! Let's do away with plastic bags.

Entry gates to the Jewish section of the cemetery. There is also a Catholic and a Protestant section. The cemetery is over a century old. I have no idea where Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Buddhists, or atheists bury their dead.



From Christiaan's Desk (cont.)



Demonstration Urban Farm, immediately next to the City Hall complex, with composting outhouse, shed with solar panels, raised beds, rainwater barrels, instructions in English and Maori. A most pleasant surprise for this urban farming geek from Philadelphia.

But of course.



Sikh bartender, making Margaritas in a Mexican restaurant. He was a no-nonsense hard-working fella, wearing no net around his beard. Kept his bar clean and fast moving. I assume that the public health inspectors don't care about the hair and will be pleased with the bar maintenance.



Pump truck for septic tanks, city drains, etc. What is "ovality reporting?"

From Christiaan's Desk (cont.)



Backpacker hotels are all over the place. New Zealand has a welcoming kind of attitude which includes a relaxed approach to backpackers working for periods of time. Some backpackers (low budget travelers) can hang in NZ for years, some may even never leave again. Immigration rules exist, and are, in my opinion, reasonable, humane, easy to apply and focused on welcoming, not barring.



Restrooms are perfectly good places to bring Public Health messages



And then there are guns. Hand guns, long guns, machine guns, old guns, modern guns, high caliber guns and air guns. All ugly guns. Buying and owning guns in New Zealand is very easy, and every man or women, local or foreign, has the right to apply for a license. And once you buy a gun, you also have indicated that you want and need to belong to a militia, called shooting clubs down under. You are to go to the shooting range of these clubs a certain number of times each year and have your weapon(s) inspected by your comrades. The police will visit your home once to inspect and advise about proper storage. Yep, the New Zealanders have the right to buy any damned firearm they want to buy. But they read their version of our second amendment in full, without fussing over commas, semi colons, or intent.

Reflections from the UNA-USA Global Summit

February 23rd, 2018

On Friday March 23rd a dozen students from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy & Practice along with a student from Penn's School of Arts & Sciences and Temple's Fox School of Business participated in the United Nations Association's Global Engagement Summit at UN Headquarters in New York City. The Global Engagement Summit unites world leaders with America's leading grassroots change-makers. Students had the rare opportunity to sit in the UN General Assembly Hall and participate in critical global policy discussions on climate change, peace and security, human rights, and much more.

Anastasia Shown, Board member of the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia (UNA_GP) and lecturer at Penn's School of Social Policy and Practice (SP2), led the delegation of students. She had visited the UN years ago in graduate school at SP2 for the Commission on the Status of Women and had a profound experience networking with NGOs, grassroots organizers, government officials and activists. This trip was equally special. Anastasia found that the speakers lent advice for her work as a social worker, educator and community activist.



Clayton Ferrara, Executive Director of Ideas for US, said during a panel session on taking action for the Sustainable Development Goals, "Teachers and scientists need to get out from behind the desk. We can't stay in the publish or perish state. We must evolve as activists." In that same panel, Soffiyah Elijah, Executive Director of Alliance of Families for Justice, said, "Tech can only take us so far. People to people connections are what make movements. Make sure your campus organizing goes beyond using your thumbs."

The event takes place at a critical moment for the world. U.S.- UN relations are strained and several UN priorities are under threat from the White House. The world is facing the worst refugee and humanitarian crisis since WWII and serious threats from terrorism and climate change.

The effectiveness of the United Nations depends on the participation of 193 member states and the backing of citizens around the world. The United Nations Association of the United States works to support the mission of the UN by connecting Americans to the work of the UN and advocating for strong U.S. leadership within the UN. A nationwide poll, released in October 2017 by the Better World Campaign, found that the vast majority of Americans believe it is important for the U.S. to maintain an active role at the UN. 1,800 UN advocates attended the Summit and it was the largest assembly ever of Americans gathered in support of the UN.

Ashleigh Alexander, a graduate student at SP2, remarked,

"This was the first conference that truly embodied and understood the strength in diversity. I gained so much insight and encouragement from all of the different speakers, particularly Soffiyah Elijah who said, "unless we provide justice in this world, there won't be any peace. And there's no way around that." These are the words that will stick with me as I embark on my post-graduate journey."

Reflections from the UNA-USA Global Summit (cont.)

Sarah Bunjo, a graduate student at SP2, said,

“The panelists’ focus on social justice resonated deeply with me...Jeffrey Sachs, the world renowned economics professor and senior UN advisor, highlighted the need for economic equality and identified war as the primary threat to social justice and peace. A panel on Advocacy through the Arts focused on empowering marginalized communities to tell their stories through art, a process that can raise global awareness and initiate social changemaking. I was inspired by hearing and seeing my academic lessons be put into practice at the UN.”

Cindy Luo, an economics major and intern with the UNA-GP, said,

“This was one of the most rewarding and motivational experiences I’ve had. The most important thread of the Summit was humanity’s common values and our power as human beings to share our stories. It is crucial to share multiple narratives and work with those directly impacted to start shaping policy. Speaker and former NY Senator, Ruth Hassell-Thompson, put it best by saying “if you are disengaged, you are disenfranchised!” We choose how we solidify our democracy everyday by the decisions that we make and the actions that we take or don’t take. Having a personal interest requires us to be political, and that’s a powerful thing that we should not shy away from.”

Hannah Menzies, President of Penn’s Social Work Advocates for Immigrant and International Rights (SWAIIR) and graduate student at SP2, was profoundly moved to be surrounded by hundreds of scholars, learners, and global citizens. She said,

“This summit gave tangible means to the discussions, research, and dreams that my graduate studies have been established on. As we sat in the seats of many courageous leaders, past and present, the resiliency and ambition of our global community came to life. For myself, a deep-seated hope was restored simply by the presence of every person in the room. Just as Eleanor Roosevelt said, “Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home,” and just as the conference represented many types of homes, we were all once again reminded that we, too, can make a difference-- at home.”

The Summit ended with closing remarks from Perrin Ireland, the great-granddaughter of Eleanor Roosevelt. “Ireland prompted us to remember the unfinished ethical agenda of human rights, to put ourselves to work, and to critically analyze leadership,” said Luo. Ireland reminded the audience of Eleanor Roosevelt’s work in and outside the U.S. Known for being a champion of human rights and key to the creation of the global framework—the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Roosevelt also worked tirelessly at the local level for civil rights, women’s rights and social welfare reform. Shown hopes that the Summit lit a fire under her students and will propel them to action now rather than later. For Roosevelt said in 1963, “The world of the future is in our making. Tomorrow is now.”



For more information about the UNA-USA, its activities, and potential membership, please visit their website.

Upcoming Events

KSM Ministries: Walk for Water

March 24th, 2018

On March 24th, our friends at Keiyo Soy Ministries will be hosting their annual 5k Walk-a-Thon, “Walk for Water – Walk for Life”. Come join us in raising money to combat the urgent need for clean water in Kerio Valley in the Rift Valley Province of northern Kenya. Registration is available [here](#), and it includes a free t-shirt. More information is available on the [KSM website](#).

Global Water Alliance’s Water Conference

The [Global Water Alliance’s](#) 11th annual conference with the theme of “Groundwater, the Hidden and Disappearing Resource: Global Focus and Examples from Sub-Saharan Africa” is coming up on April 5th, 2018 at Villanova University’s College of Engineering. This all-day conference (9am to 4 pm) will include panel discussions, poster presentations, and network opportunities. A job market stand for prospective employers and research institutes is planned. Panels will cover topics such as the state of the resource, management approaches, and careers in water resources. Continuing Education Credits are available for engineering. Mark your calendars and keep an eye out for further information.

To receive regular email updates from GWA about Conferences, symposia and volunteer opportunities, write to info@globalwateralliance.net.

Registration for the conference is now available [here](#). Student registration is only \$15! Registration includes breakfast, lunch, and a reception afterwards.

Spotlight on Human Rights

The Council on American-Islamic Relations

The [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#) (CAIR) is a nationwide advocacy group that seeks justice and mutual understanding between Muslims and the rest of American Society. It was first organized in 1994 and has headquarters in Washington, DC. CAIR's mission is to enhance understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding. Civil rights advocacy is at the center of CAIR's work. Civil rights staff at its offices nationwide receive reports of discrimination on a daily basis and work to resolve them through mediation, negotiation, public pressure or, if necessary, through legal action. CAIR’s operating budget is funded by donations from American Muslims and others of many faiths who support its mission. CAIR faces challenges via internet misinformation and conspiracy theories that are addressed on its [website](#) . CAIR also places emphasis on education within the Muslim and non-Muslim communities. In Philadelphia there is a [strong chapter](#) which offers courses such as “Islam 101: Introduction to Islam And Muslim Civilization”, "Politics, Islam and Violence", "Gender and Family in Islam” and others. These are provided in local schools, churches, mosques and other venues.

The United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia



You can help the United Nations Association!

Please [donate](#) whatever you can to the UNA-GP, and in turn, Philadelphians and beyond!

Have any ideas for fundraising events? We're all ears! We are always in need of volunteers, no matter how much or how (seemingly!) little time you have to devote. Volunteers with all types of skill sets are welcome to work with the UNA-GP, short or long term. If interested, please contact Manisha Patel, Volunteer Coordinator and President, at mpatel@una-gp.org



The UNA-GP is a chapter of the United Nations Association of the United States of American (UNA-USA). Our website offers information about our mission and upcoming events, and ways to get involved, including volunteering and becoming a member.

Visit our website at www.una-gp.org

Check out our social media at www.facebook.com/UNAGP and www.twitter.com/UNAGP

Our office is located at 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

If this newsletter was forwarded or shared with you, you can get your own subscription and keep up with our chapter's activities! Sign up on our [website](#).

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