A Day at the United Nations: A Trip to New York

On Friday, February 10th, members of UNA-GP made a trip to the United Nations in New York City for the annual UNA-USA membership meeting. This year’s meeting was the first membership meeting of its kind, being held in the General Assembly room of the United Nations building.

This year members heard keynote speakers such as Dr. Jeffrey D. Sachs, Congresswoman Nita M. Lowey, Ambassador Rosemarry A. Dicarlo, and many more. There were presentations about Syria, global education, and changing the world, but all agreed that in order to do so we must first change ourselves to adapt to the rapidly growing population. Dr. Jeffrey D. Sachs, Special Advisor to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, emphasized that the world population is to grow to a number as high as 8 billion people by the year 2024.

With a rapidly growing population and more problems arising worldwide every day, the
role of the United Nations is becoming ever more critical. Our world is encountering more problems than ever and in order to face them Dr. Sachs believes that we must face them head on. We must face the environmental challenge, look past the GNP to help poor countries, and support honest and participatory governments. The festivities at the United Nations lasted until 2:30 PM when preparations began for the Syria talks. The UNA-USA membership meeting contained speeches and discussion panels by more than 14 different speakers and representatives.

Don’t Forget Education Is Global, and So Is Citizenship

"I want to address three things", Dr. Christiaan Morssink says as he stands before a room of global students, “You, Me, and the United Nations”.

Friday, February 4th, Dr. Morssink addressed students at the Delaware Valley Study Abroad Re-Entry Conference on the topic of the globalization of education in a global community that grows in size daily.

It is estimated that since the 1960’s world population has grown between 3% and 5% annually, and as a result we are in a time of exponential growth in all aspects of society. With over 7 billion people in the world, education is a more important issue than ever. All over the world new information is being discovered each day. Theories, equations, and discoveries – all are being found around the world, and all have the ability to change it. However, the achievements of academia are unable to change the world if they are not shared. Just as achievements cannot be made without the proper education, education is vital to the survival of our world as it expands with no bounds in sight.

“So you must ask yourselves”, he says to the room of students recently returned from study and work abroad programs, “why are we here?”

In order for education to prosper and for us, as global citizens, to share information on a global level we must be just that: global citizens. However, in order for us to be global citizens we must be comfortable being national citizens. Every culture has something different to teach us and to learn from another culture we must first understand our own. Embrace your ethnicity and share it so that others will share theirs with you. “Being comfortable is being uncomfortable”, Dr. Morssink said as he explained that in order to be comfortable in other countries we must be comfortable not knowing a culture and learning it for the first time. So why were they there? Dr. Morssink likes to think that it is so that they may understand the different cultures they saw while abroad and to understand that more was taken from the trips than just what was learned in the classroom or work place.

Meet A Member: Cameron Browne

Cameron Browne, born in Washington, DC and raised in Alexandria, VA, is a junior at the University of Pennsylvania. He currently serves as the Membership and Outreach Coordinator of the UNA-GP. This year, he plans on reorganizing the current membership database, increasing UNA-GP related activity among current members, reaching out to lapsed members hoping that they renew their membership, and continuing to recruit new members of the UNA-GP.
So why is it important for us to work with the United Nations towards global citizenship? The United Nations is an organization that works towards a prosperous future where people and cultures can coincide peacefully and feed off of each other's achievements and strengths; a future where the weaknesses of one country are overshadowed by the strengths of another country and both produce good equally. However, if this is to happen we must all become global citizens, because only as global citizens who are understanding and accepting of cultures different from our own can we work together to reach our full potential as a world.

Students who have taken part in study abroad programs are students who are actively working towards this future of mutually assured prosperity. The world can only survive if people become aware of the impact they can have on it as an individual. The United Nations wishes to help this process by creating global citizens.

Patrick J. Medeo

October 24 is UN Day, Not US National Food Day

To: Center for Science in the Public Interest
From: Christiaan Morssink, MPH, PhD
Philadelphia, February 13, 2012

Dear Michael Jacobson,

I received your email from February 6, announcing FOOD DAY October 24 2012. I was angry last year when the CSPI ignored Oct 16, International Food Day, and put insult to injury for those who take international relations and the importance of the United Nations seriously, by using International UN DAY for your important initiative. I have heard from others who have reached out to you about this and just got a cold shoulder.

We realize that planning for 2012 is already too far ahead, so please note that you can expect a major push from me and many others in the international community in the USA to change the date of US Food Day 2013 and beyond. I am not at all pleased that a politically close, major organization like yours, which I have often supported, keeps using International UN Day OCTOBER 24 for your rallying cry. This has to stop. I will not just lament that you seem not to give a hoot about the symbolisms involved. I will take action. I know several people on your advisory board, the list of which can be found on your website www.cspinet.org. My colleagues know others. We all will take action. I will hammer home the inappropriate message that comes from ignoring the globally oriented community in the USA. Next month in DC I will meet with UNA-USA and the UN Foundation seeking on how to make clear that you need to change, and change next year. October 16 is a perfect day, but if that is too skewed for you in terms of hunger, take another day, like the fourteenth of July, the 26th of December, the first or eighth of May, or the Wednesday after Mardi Gras. I intend to go to the COO of the UNA-USA, to our friends at WILPF, APHA, Human Rights Watch, etc. I do not want to stand across from you guys, as we see eye to eye on so many issues. There are plenty others on the other side, who have no understanding of the importance of the UN or who don't care, and who need confronting on the real fundamental issues.

Christiaan Morssink
146 Pelham Road
Philadelphia, PA 19119

Meet A Member: Edithmia Davies

Edithmia Davies: Originally from Central New Jersey, I am a sophomore at Drexel University majoring in International Business. I am very interested in global issues and hope to one day be able to travel all around the world. I am currently the Coordinator of the UN Café, a program through which the UNAGP hopes to promote discussion on issues among college students in the Philadelphia area.
Trafficked in Our Own Backyard

Roughly 90 people attended the program 'Trafficked in Our Own Backyard' on Wednesday, February 8, and most attendees were from the community of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, those on the Philadelphia Coalition, and the surrounding Chestnut Hill Community. There were also a few students from Drexel, Arcadia, and Chestnut Hill College there as well. I facilitated this event with the help of Dr. Conn who is the head of the religion department. Hugh Organ of Covenant House created a panel discussion after showing the documentary Very Young Girls. Overall the event was a success. The documentary was very powerful; portraying the image of what it is like to be trafficked. It also showed the life of the pimp and how he operates. After the film there was a powerful discussion on what is being done on human trafficking. Hugh Organ described their efforts to reach out to hotels and ask them to advertise the human trafficking hot line number because hotels are a major hot spot for trafficking. There are future plans to have more film outreach showings and events on human sex trafficking.

Erica Butler

Shot@Life

Hello All,

Thank you for expressing interested in working with the Shot@Life project. For those who are not totally familiar, the Shot@Life project is an effort of UNA-USA to increase awareness, advocacy and funds for the cause of promoting vaccinations abroad and domestically. As the Shot@Life committee of Philadelphia, we will be responsible for organizing a few small presentations with local students, community members and organizations concerning the importance of vaccines and throwing a larger fundraiser to promote this cause in the week of April 22. Our first webinar to begin planning this will be Monday, February 27 at 1pm. I will be attending and it would be great if everyone could attend to get some background. After that webinar, we can set up weekly meetings to plan our events. More information on the Shot@Life program can be found here. Thanks for your interest!

Kiahana Brooks

--> Event Information
- Shot@Life Webinar
- Monday, February 27, 2012
- 1pm
Advocacy and Idea Workshop

Do you have big ideas? Something that just has to be said? Do you want to inspire people to create positive change? Of course you do; you are a member of the UNA-GP!

On February 25th, the UNA-GP will sponsor a workshop by entrepreneur Mustafa Abdul-Jabbar on crystallizing and presenting those ideas. Come with questions, leave inspired!

Not My Life

On February 27th the UNA-GP, in conjunction with the Drexel International Area Studies Department, will be hosting a film showing. The film will be “Not My Life,” about human trafficking, and will be screened at 6PM in Ruth Auditorium in Nesbitt Hall Room 125.

All are welcome to come and enjoy the show. Light refreshments will be served.

Event Information

Advocacy & Idea Workshop
- Saturday, February 25, 2012
- 10:30am
- 3401 Market Street, 2nd Floor
  Philadelphia, PA 19102

Film screening of Not My Life
- Monday, February 27, 2012
- 6:00pm
- Ruth Auditorium
  (Nesbitt Hall, Room 125)
  Drexel University
  33rd and Market St.
Dr. Edna Adan Ismail

On February 27, 2012, the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia will host speaker Dr. Edna Adan Ismail in the MLK room at Friends Center at 1501 Cherry St.

Dr. Ismail will be speaking on the topic of "Increasing Access to Maternity Care in Somaliland" as well as promoting her upcoming book.

Dr. Ismail is a Somaliland national, trained nurse and lifelong advocate for women's health issues in Somaliland. She has served in the Somaliland government and made great contributions to the maternity infrastructure of Somaliland including the founding and building of a maternity hospital in Hargeisa in 2002. Further, in an effort to increase the number of trained nurses in Somaliland, Dr. Ismail has created a nurse-training program where over 30 nurses have been trained to date. Dr. Edna Adan Ismail has also deeply involved herself in women's human rights affairs including advocating for the cessation of female circumcisions. Recently she achieved international notoriety when her program was featured in the book Half the Sky and she received awards from the University of Pretoria. Dr. Ismail is a highly accomplished and dynamic speaker and we hope you will join us for this rare chance to listen to Dr. Ismail's story of her success.

This event is free and open to the public though donations will be accepted towards helping to fund her maternity hospital in Somaliland. We hope to see you then!!!
International Women’s Day 2012

Join us for a night of celebration, discussion, and networking.

International Women’s Day 2012 — inspired by Penn’s “Year of Games” will highlight the interdisciplinary landscape of women’s health and the challenges to achieving justice. The panel will include health practitioners, policy advocates, and educators working toward justice in women’s health. Each panelist will focus on the ways women’s health can benefit from a “games approach,” such as developing innovative strategies for success, teamwork toward common goals, and using creative tactics to win. Dr. Felicity Paxton, Penn Women’s Center Director and Lecturer in the Annenberg School of Communication, will moderate the panel, interweaving the theme of games in a discussion with attendees. The art and performances will feature artists who express the need for justice in women’s health through their individual art forms.


Event Information
- International Women’s Day
- Wednesday, March 14, 2012
- 6pm
- I-House, South American Room
  3701 Chestnut St.
  Philadelphia, PA 19104
- For more information, please contact Melissa J. DiFrancesco
  (Assistant Director, Center for East Asian Studies) at:
  meljen@sas.upenn.edu
  or 215.573.8367