Dear members and friends of the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia:

Our Association continues to be on a roll with activities for peace and international justice. Just in this month, our student workers and volunteers pulled together an innovative and successful Model UN with high school participants from five public and private schools; this was a special model UN focused on leading representatives of NGOs (non-government organizations such as Partners in Health) rather than the standard national representation. On March 12, the UNA-GP was a sponsor of the International Women’s Day panel at International House looking at “Migrating Wives,” an event which initiated different perspectives on women and immigration to the US.

On March 15, we joined with the Project for Nuclear Awareness, the American Friends Service Committee, and others to sponsor a talk by Dr. Helen Caldicott—a spunky lady and leading activist for nuclear disarmament, not to mention a founder of Physicians for Social Responsibility. The range of these activities is indicative of the global scope of our mission and also the essential need to connect and collaborate with organizations that share our goals. We can’t do all the heavy lifting alone!

March, in addition to International Women’s Day (the 8th) and its widening observance throughout the month, brings other anniversaries in the unofficial calendar of peace activists:

1. March 16—the 10th anniversary of the death of Rachel Corrie, a young US citizen killed in Gaza as she participated in a nonviolent effort to prevent a home demolition by the Israeli army
2. March 19—the 10th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, marking the beginning of the war that many millions of citizens around the world attempted to prevent
3. March 24th—he day that Monsignor Romero was assassinated in El Salvador 35 years ago at the beginning of the Central American war, a conflict that has now been almost obliterated from political memory in the USA

Listing these in a row can seem bleak, but each also brings inspiration to renew our energy for creating a more just and peaceful international community for all of us.

Spring forward!

Sincerely,

Mary Day Kent
President
UNA-GP
Monday, February 11 marked a much-anticipated event: the final seminar in the Philadelphia Global Initiative on the Rule of Law’s series about the International Criminal Court (ICC) for this academic year; it follows a September seminar at the Free Library of Philadelphia and one in November at Temple’s Beasley School of Law. The event offered CLE credits for those in need of it, but was free to the general public and students were encouraged to attend.

The discussion took place at the University of Pennsylvania Law School’s Silverman Hall and lasted from about 6:00 to 8:00 in the evening. The keynote address (“Pursuing Universal Acceptance of the Rome Statute and Other Challenges for The Evolving System of International Criminal Justice”) was given by the prestigious Judge Sang-Hyun Song, President of the ICC, with remarks and a follow-up presentation that included an overlook of the ICC’s first decade given by Patricia Viseur Sellers (Penn Law ’79). Ms. Sellers is the Special Advisor to the ICC Prosecutor on International Criminal Law Prosecution Strategies. The moderator for the evening was William Burke-White, Deputy Dean and Professor of Law at UPenn.

In his speech, Judge Song emphasized the need to visualize and strive for a world not governed by the law of force, but by the force of law. He also urged influential countries such as the United States to ratify the Rome Statute in order to further validate the mandate of the International Criminal Court. Additionally, Song called for closer cooperation with member states for enforcement and extradition purposes; to expand on the idea, he pointed out the importance of collaboration between the UN Security Council and the ICC to further affirm its jurisdiction. Most importantly, President Song expressed optimism despite the acknowledged challenges the ICC will face in the coming years. He effectively communicated his vision of a court that sets the normative standards of justice for the global community, and his sincerity and enthusiasm had a decided impact on his audience.

A reception with refreshments followed the conference. In a display of his generosity, Song met with Penn undergraduate students to answer their questions and discuss their perspectives on the study of law. His goal, of course, was to inspire these youths and instill in them a vision of how to change the world through the practice of law!

To gain access to a FREE video of the whole conference and see what you missed, visit: https://www.law.upenn.edu/cf/newsroom/its_player.cfm?path=/pennlaw/temp/gk100_20130211_1800.mov
Patricia Sellers

Judge Song, Karen Odoba Moseti (Head of Liaison Office to the UN), and Christiaan Morssink

Hinke Wiersum (L) (co-organizer) & Manisha Patel (UNA-GP Board Member) & volunteers:

Enid Adler (Board Member/co-organizer) and spouse

For more pictures...
Visit our Facebook page!

And don’t forget about our other social media outlets for notices about events like this!

The venue was just the right size and set a great tone for the evening!
Things get more intimate as the students have a chance to speak with Judge Song, Ms. Sellers, and Ms. Mosoti!
February’s UN Café took a look at a hot issue from a worldwide perspective: gun control. Debates within the past few months have certainly sparked much discussion in the news, but the UNA-GP wanted to hear students’ perspectives on the matter in relation to what they’ve seen in the media and in their own neighborhoods—as well as in relation to the views of our speakers. Within the relaxed intellectual atmosphere of our now-regular venue, Ross Commons, they challenged and informed the next generation of leaders: those sitting before them.

The first speaker was a pediatrician who’s seen the impact of gun violence time and time again in the emergency room, Dr. William King, Jr. Dr. King is a member of the public health group Physicians for Social Responsibility, a U.S. affiliate of the Nobel-Peace-Prize-winning International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. As such, he focused his presentation on data analysis. While students refreshed themselves and got comfortable, they heard his break-downs of graphs and numbers to explain, in essence, what they indicate on a larger scale and how the information pertains to Americans. His overall message was that the US is so violent not because of the number of guns individuals own (which is an astounding numeral), but that a lack of institutionalized regulation procedures is causing the main problems. For example, enforced background checks to detect buyers with mental health issues is missing due to state versus federal regulation issues. King also pointed out that “we don’t need to become Switzerland” to effectively reduce violence in our country, but perhaps simply look to nations such as France, England, or Japan to see how things have been dealt with according to different cultures. (For a copy of Dr. King’s PowerPoint, if you are interested, e-mail Isabella at if44@drexel.edu)

The second speaker hailed from Veterans for Peace: Mr. Mike Felker. A medic in the Navy during the Vietnam War, Felker, who had originally been promised a focus on journalism during his military education, was drafted against his will. While his officers were lenient enough to comply with his wishes of not carrying a gun, he still saw the damage weapons can inflict and has since become an activist for reformed gun control laws. As he flipped through his photo slideshow, Mr. Felker generously told Café attendees a highly personal story of not being able to save a friend, in addition to reading an excerpt of his recent letter to President Obama.

Following the bulk of the discussion, both men passed out promotional materials for their various organizations and curious students showed interest through inquiries. No doubt, they left Ross Commons with much to ponder that afternoon!
(Clockwise from top left)

#1: Mr. Felker and Dr. King introduce themselves before the café commences

#2: Students listen attentively; some take notes

#3: Café Coordinator Mike Vespa looks on in satisfaction

Don't forget to “like” us on Facebook so you can get updates on future UN Cafes!
“The U.S. firearm death rate is in the range of large developing countries.”

-Dr. William King

“even then, some officers were against the [Vietnam] war; I got away with not having to carry a gun, as a medic…”

-Mike Felker
March 17, 2013

Hello members, volunteers, and friends:

It’s St. Patrick’s Day and there is a crust of ice covering the porch behind my house; I don’t remember that combination from years past, and I hope the weather gets better before Saturday, March 23, when I am going to walk in the 4th annual “World Water Day” 5K Run/Walk-a-thon. After the walk, we will go indoors at the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center to discuss the interface of water, women and Africa in a function hosted by Karen Young. There will be input from yours truly, among others. On March 24, I will try to stimulate a discussion about water management in a global context at the UN Café. On that note and sticking with the topic of water, the UNA-GP is sponsoring the Philadelphia Global Water Initiative’s 6th Annual Conference on April 9 at the Wharton School at UPenn (see page 17). In between, I was foolish enough to accept an invitation to speak at Nerd Nite Philadelphia on April 3; I think I will stay on the topic of hygiene and sanitation!

I am still jetlagged from a trip to China. It was a very interesting journey, but the traveling wears you out. However, I managed to come back in time to attend the International Women’s Day event that Anastasia Shown organized on March 12 (see page 12), which was well attended. I especially enjoyed it when the Anna Crusis Women’s Choir sang Khalil Gibran’s poem Children; from that poem I often use the line: “you are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth” to remind myself about the need to empower our children in their own trajectory. As with the IWD “Migrating Wives” event, I also had to bid adieu prematurely during Helen Caldicott’s lecture on March 15. This fine talk was organized by Ed Aguilar, and I’m sure he was satisfied. Personally, I much admire Helen’s outspoken, in-your-face, no-holding-back approach. Waving handkerchief and plant, she relentlessly attacked the absolute nonsensical nature of American nuclear politics, as well as our acquiescence with its stranglehold of the big corporations and our political class’s military-industrial complex. Go, Helen!

Many other things need to be mentioned, such as our plans about a Red Cross Red Crescent Day event on May 8 focusing on the health status of Syrian refugees (see page 13), which will be organized by our volunteer Maya Khezam. We also have plans for a summer camp focused on preparing rising high school seniors for a global labor market. And, with PeaceDayPhilly as the network, we are continuously working on the previously mentioned soccer tournament, Philadelphia Plays for Peace. I am happy for the support of Dario Bellot, Jean Marie Kouassi, and especially James Parsons. It looks like we may be able to pull this tournament together!

While our chapter goes forward into the spring, it is also a time of reflection. On March 2, we held our first Model UN Conference on the Rule of Law (see page 10). It was a whole team effort, but special thanks have to go to Daniel Bu, the convener. While I was only able to attend the first hour, reports afterwards indicated that everything went well and that the concept of using NGOs instead of countries within the Model UN setup is promising. I look forward to a formal report and evaluation. Speaking of which, a new team of Drexel co-op students will start in April as the current team is formally reviewed and rotated off at the end of March. This particular team had to struggle with several issues ranging from presidential elections to Hurricane Sandy, yet overall we put up a great effort around the Model UN and I am hopeful that the Youth Building Roots program can rely on the support of the team beyond the end of their co-ops. During this six-month period, our website has also been re-designed, with our own Ed Gracely keeping a vigilant eye on the developments in that regard. Finally, our UN Café program has become a stable entity with a fixed time slot, a permanent location, and a clear promotion plan.

Onward,

Christiaan Morssink, Executive Director
March 1 was an invigorating day for students on Drexel’s campus as the Office of International Programs hosted the 6th Annual Student Conference on Global Challenges. This year’s topic was global security and, via interactive panel discussions, presented questions such as: What does security mean in 2013 and beyond?

An enriching experience for those who were able to attend, the free all-day seminar (8:30 am-5:00 pm) took place in the Creese Student Center’s Behrakis Grand Hall. Following the Provost’s welcome speech, the day was broken down into three time blocks of two simultaneous panel discussions in adjoining rooms A and B; students chose which panels they wished to attend and were given programs with room for notes (not to mention some neat pens promoting the OIP Office). Over the course of the day, attendees heard students in various majors present on such topics as environmental security, information/Internet security, health sustainability, gender and human rights, national and border safety, and the role of media in security. Smartly, breakfast was provided during registration, as was a lunch break between the second panel block and keynote address.

- 1st panel block topics: Global Political and Social Trends//Global Science, Technology, and Society
- 2nd panel block topics: Global Business and Economic Trends//Global Justice and Human Rights
- 3rd panel block topics: Global Health//Global Media, Culture, and Arts

Ambassador Thomas Graham, Jr.—one of the most prestigious international authorities in the field of arms control agreements—was the highlighted guest of the day. A former senior US diplomat and the current Executive Chairman of Thorium Power (a company with patents for new a nuclear power fuel derived from the element thorium), the Ambassador put his 40 plus years of experience to good use in his shining keynote address. Delivered in compelling and relatable language, he captured everyone’s attention with discourse regarding matters like negotiations with Iran, the current situation in North Korea, China’s financial involvement in the development of other nations’ nuclear weapons, and the impacts of US policies and statements on negotiations. Afterward, Graham’s new book “Unending Crisis: National Security Policy After 9/11” was available for purchase and autograph.

Following the last panel block, there was a raffle with an iPod Nano and other prizes to give students’ brains a rest after listening to so much discussion on thought-provoking issues. Dr. Julie Mostov—Drexel’s Vice Provost for Global Initiatives—concluded with some closing remarks and a few hearty jokes as well.
March 2 was the culmination of months of effort as the Model U.N. Conference on the Rule of Law finally took place at Wharton School of Business! The first of what we hope to make an annual event, the conference was named in honor of the late Philadelphia lawyer and human rights advocate Jerome “Jerry” Shestack.

UNA-GP student workers started implementing a series of lesson plans at five schools in early January: Parkway Northwest High School for Peace and Social Justice, Boys’ Latin of Philadelphia Charter School, Science Leadership Academy, Tacony Academy Charter School, and Germantown Friends School. Some made the Model UN part of the curriculum for a particular class, while others incorporated it as a club or extracurricular activity. Either way, our organization designed this special Model UN in conjunction with the Philadelphia Global Initiative on the Rule of Law to accommodate a particular theme, so the normal setup was changed and this year’s program was a “guinea pig.” The ultimate goal was to teach high school students about the concept of the rule of law (as opposed to the rule of force), in their everyday lives, with the hope that they’ll eventually use that thinking to look beyond themselves.

That’s where talking about the World Justice Project’s Rule of Law Index came in. Students were introduced to it and then broken up into smaller groups, each assigned to study a particular country (background information, current events) and how it is scored on the Index. Further, each school’s set of participants was assigned a particular non-government organization (NGO) so that their smaller country groups could examine the various nations from the points of view of those institutions. Additionally, the young adults were asked to critique the Index in the back of their minds so that they could suggest some ways to enhance it—especially considering that the world’s youth has no formal voice in shaping it.

Going into the conference, the students knew that two representatives from each of their schools (pre-selected by their peers/teachers before the event) would present two documents to the World Justice Project headquarters in Washington, DC in April or May. These documents would be a final draft resolution petitioning for greater youth voice within the World Justice Project and a proposal with points to improve the World Justice Index. So, by March 2, everyone was ready to go! The day started off with a light breakfast buffet and an energizing keynote address by Executive Director Christiaan Morssink. Flowers were also presented to Mrs. Shestack, who steadily supported the idea of the Model UN graciously attended most of the event. Things got rolling after that. [Turn to next page!]
Every school had submitted its draft resolution on the importance of youth voice in an international setting to the convener, Daniel Bu, ahead of time. Daniel had then put together a compromise document, and this was what he showed on the overhead projector. By means of several moderated and unmoderated caucuses and final editing on the computer, every NGO got the chance to make changes for a final draft. To conclude, there was a signing ceremony and then a break for lunch and staff regrouping.

Next, the participants representing different NGOs who had studied the same country came together for a breakout session. Since they’d discussed what the rule of law means and what the Rule of Law Index is trying to do in the proceeding weeks, every NGO came up with a “general” score for their country. Once again, compromise was necessary to get one score the whole group agreed on. The final score and why each group came up with their numbers was presented to the Dias by several “reporters,” and the school groups got to ask each other questions. Finally, there was a short break prior to the final session. Every school, once more through multiple caucus sessions and last-minute editing, voted on a compiled set of key points for improving the Rule of Law Index.

Overall, the day was long but productive and the students became visibly impassioned as the hours went on. The Model UN concluded on an optimistic note as the teachers were given thank-you gifts and Tammy Murphy—the Executive Director for the Project for Nuclear Awareness—delivered her short and sweet endnote speech. Certificates of achievement for all the students will be delivered to the participating schools.

The UNA-GP is now in its evaluation process. Since we had students fill out pre- and post-conference surveys, and we will be getting feedback from the educators as well, we’ll have some data to put together a report. With it, we hope to get more funding for next year and to establish a long-term program like this that can be improved, built upon, and even expanded into a series of several Model UNs. Who knows what can happen if we get more sponsors, volunteers, and member involvement!

To see photos of this brain-teasing day, please visit our Facebook page. Moreover, guest photographer Hassan Ammar, a recent Penn graduate, took a series of artistic snapshots capturing the emotions of the day. Please take a look at his work here: http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10100667337282537.1073741826.613229&type=1
Although International Women’s Day was Friday, March 8, the University of Pennsylvania wisely postponed this year’s celebration until after spring break to assure attendance—and it worked! On March 12, International House provided the venue for the free, fun, and highly informative event “Migrating Wives: Negotiating Identities in a New Land” and the room was packed with adults and students alike.

Folks of all ages, colors, and genders eagerly munched on catered goodies starting at 6:00 pm and had the pleasure of hearing the Anna Crusis Women’s Choir perform several pieces. At about 7:00, Anastasia Shown (the Assistant Director of UPenn’s Africa Center) kicked off the discussion by thanking sponsors, talking a bit about International Women’s Day itself, and explaining the connection between the talk and the Free Library of Philadelphia’s “One Book, One Philadelphia” literacy project; this year’s selection, *The Buddha in the Attic*, talks about Japanese immigration from the perspective of Japanese “picture brides.” This is appropriate since the IWD event aimed to discuss the changing patterns of immigrant wives’ experiences; arranged marriages, polygamy, and the mail-order bride industry were just some of the topics put on the table.

The evening’s moderator was Felicity H. Paxton, a UK native with a BA in English and American Literature, a Ph.D. in American Civilization, and a Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies from Penn. The panel speakers were Fariha Khan, Mary Johnson Osirim, and Anna Viden: UPenn’s Associate Director of Asian American Studies, the Dean of Graduate Studies and a Professor of Sociology at Bryn Mawr College, and the instructor of Penn’s Senior Thesis Seminar in International Relations at Penn, respectively. Each woman holds a doctorate and thus incorporated findings of and experiences from her research when answering Paxton’s prompts. Khan has worked with South Asian women from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and nearby countries, while Osirim’s research has been with African immigrants and their children. Viden, on the other hand, a great deal from her personal experiences as a Swede who lived in France and Saudia Arabia before marrying an Arabic-looking French man.

Including the question session, the whole presentation lasted until about 9:00 pm. The audience was engaged until the end and “Migrating Wives” is a credit to UPenn. To learn more about “One Book, One Philadelphia,” get the scoop here: [http://libwww.freelibrary.org/onebook/obop13/](http://libwww.freelibrary.org/onebook/obop13/)
Our organization has been trying to discern how to approach the topic of Syria for some time. Now, with the addition of a new volunteer, Maya Khezam, to our team, it seems that we have found a way to hone in on the topic.

As chapter of the United Nations Association of America, it is our intent to highlight barriers the UN faces in regards to effectively intervening in the drama that is Syria. The UN is crucial in assisting refugees and providing humanitarian help, and to an extent that goal is already supported by the work of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent. Nevertheless, we should be actively thinking about the UN’s role in distributing aid. To what degree can this important, external influence have when it comes to matters regarding internal conflict? What are some practical actions that can be taken immediately? What can we as American citizens do to make a difference, even in a small capacity?

Maya, a native Syrian and recent graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, is willing to share her story with us (turn to the next page to read about her experiences). The UNA-GP wants to take action beyond highlighting, something we already did in 2011 with a discussion in the context of the Arab Spring movement. Through Maya’s perspective as a pharmacology student, we will focus on public health issues brought on by the civil war, an important part of the Syrian conflict—especially for caring outsiders. Therefore, we are planning two events for the coming months! One will be a UN Café with Maya as the guest speaker; this will take place in April, so keep a lookout for follow-up details. Further, we will hold a sort of "awareness day" about Syria and such related topics as refugees/emigration and humanitarian global empathy. The intention is to host this event on or near May 8, 2013 in acknowledgment of World Red Cross Red Crescent Day, which happens to be celebrating its 65th anniversary this year. Most likely this gathering will be at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. Guest speakers are still being decided, but the day is sure to be stimulating and relevant. Again, keep your eyes peeled for the latest information.

A round of thanks goes out to Maya for her motivation and honesty, as well as to Yasmine Koukaz. Yasmine, a student at the Jefferson School of Population Health and a Masters of Public Health Candidate, is assisting Maya as she coordinates these events with our team in addition to doing some behind-the-scenes work on other UNA-GP projects, like Youth Building Roots. Both women deserve a round of applause!

A reminder to our readers, members, and well-wishers: Please feel free to give us feedback on anything within the public health scope that you feel deserves particular attention or clarification. Or, simply send us your comments and questions about the event! We love hearing from you and thank you for your involvement.
I come from a city in Syria called Homs. That city was the place where I spent my childhood. It is a quiet city in the middle of the country, but a historical one; and, at the same time, it is modern and becoming very developed. Originally, I lived with my mom and her parents in their home—a home where there was a nest filled with so much love and care. I was raised in a way such that I learned to treat people with respect, regardless of their beliefs or religions. Additionally, my mother’s family is famous in the Middle East throughout history and literature, with many writers, thinkers, and scientists coming from that line: the Al-Yazaji family. All of these influences were reflected in our home and created a passion for both science and literature within me.

I attended school at a prestigious old private school, where my hobbies included the piano, swimming, and tennis, but I also traveled often. Visiting different countries and exploring new civilizations, all a part of our beautiful world, became my favorite hobby and enriched me a lot. Following high school, I moved to Beirut to attend the American University of Beirut, the best university in the Middle East, where I studied biology and graduated with distinction. After that, I started my Master’s Degree. Due to my high grades and motivation, my professors believed in my potential and AUB gave me the chance to go to Harvard Medical School to do my thesis research project in the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. (My lifestyle in both Homs and Beirut was not only open-minded but also westernized, especially in Beirut, so it wasn’t challenging for me when I moved to the US. The habits, the daily routine, and overall system were very close to American life.) Since I believe that health is the most important thing in life, I eventually wanted to pursue a PhD in pharmacology, the science of discovering new medicines. In 2010, I was accepted at several universities but chose UPenn because it is one of the best research institutes in the country. Then, my world changed: the war started in my home country.

In my city, peace had always been a prevalent feature. Now, Syria was becoming a dangerous place and I lived in a continuous state of worry about my family and my loved ones. I expected bad news every day when I tried to reach my family in the morning, and bad news did indeed manifest when my grandmother and grandfather were shot randomly in their bedroom in December 2011. Due to fights between the two parties, many snipers were in the area and tragic incidents followed them. Numerous men, women, and children were killed randomly and pointlessly because of the unstable war situation, my grandpa among them. He was not delivered to the hospital because of the occurring conflict and bled to death as a result. While my grandmother was able to recover, fortunately, I was shocked by the loss of the person who had brought me up and done a lot to make sure I was well and happy. And yet, while we all suffered an emotional blow, this wasn’t the end of it! The environment worsened and my family was forced to join others who fled to safer areas. One by one, the towns turned into a mess and fights went on and on. Less than two months later, houses started being bombed during the fights. Many people saw their properties burned to the ground, my family’s too. We lost all our belongings—everything. I did not have a thing left to remind me of my dear grandfather, not even a photo! Our finances started draining quickly afterward, so we had to rent elsewhere and eventually no one could work. With the loss of income and property, the living conditions got worse; mere thoughts of electricity, water, and food brought on a headache.

What humanity suffered from and what my family and I suffered from made me want to help improve the situation in Syria. I decided to graduate with a Master’s in pharmacology and then change course to focus on public health in light of the tragic occurrences that have affected and continue to affect my people. As a recent graduate involved in scientific research, I would like to hone in on the health issues that resulted from the harsh Syrian living conditions. Since I got a job at a pharmaceutical company, I’ve been able to support myself and help my loved ones during this tough time, but it’s still a struggle to see what’s happening.

My personal philosophy is that to be a human being, you have to be pro-humanity and you have to sympathize with the issues that deprive people from their basic rights. As an American of Syrian origin and someone who has been impacted by the current situation, I vow to make any effort to help the people there. I believe that any individual can make a difference if he/she contributes through programs or donations, or simply volunteers to work with people in the hopes of improving their circumstances. This can be done by creating awareness with the help of the UNA-GP, the Red Cross, other organizations, and universities and social groups. Cooperative work and resolution will help us to begin serving this humanitarian cause. Let’s get started today!
GATHERING
Re-Launching the UNA-GP Stamp Project

Here’s something you may not have known! Our little chapter of the UN Association of America has an impressive stamp collection. Bequeathed to the organization by the children of Dr. Melvin Baron following his passing several years ago, it features first issue series, limited edition series, silver reproductions, and collectors spreads from the 1960s to early 1990s. In total, the boxes contain at least 40,000 units! The UNA-GP has thus far found use for these units by offering collectibles or stamps featuring special/thematically appropriate artwork as local awards or gifts to schools.

However, the project associates have also put extensive time into cataloging and brainstorming, two tasks that will lead to the marketing of the collection for other philatelists. Our goal is to raise awareness of the value of the lost art of philately (stamp collecting) as well as to generate revenue for the UNA-GP’s future projects.

Autumn Elliott Florida initially kicked off the organization of the stamp database. Soon to be graduating from Drexel University with a major in Sociology and minor in Anthropology, she is a young woman with an enthusiasm for international affairs; she's worked throughout her school career via co-ops in research and non-profits, in addition to study-abroad sessions. During her third year at Drexel, she joined the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia with a team of seven students, each of whom focused their talents and disciplines on a local outreach project that enhanced their skill development. When the prospect of philately was put on the table, an old stamp dabbling passion was revived. Autumn claimed the task and soon came to realize the value of philately in the UN.

Years after this motivated co-op student first worked with the collection, she is returning as a volunteer to see the close of the cataloging process and find a new direction for the sorted stock. As the long-term cataloging of the collection draws to a close in the coming months, the stamps are being translated for their universal value using the Scott Catalog, allowing students and volunteers to accurately value the stamps going forward. This is an exciting development after a period of relative inactivity for the project.

In Autumn’s opinion, developing a final order from the years Dr. Baron put into the unique hobby would be a satisfying result of her time with the UNA-GP. While working with the units, she's developed an understanding of UN history and felt a connection to a generous man.

The lovely Autumn
March International News Picks

At UN forum, countries commit to advance cross-cultural dialogue
The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Forum took place from February 26-28th in Vienna, Austria to promote principles of respect among religious, cultural, and civil groups worldwide. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon addressed the forum saying that change should come from world leaders promoting positive interactions between countries.

Doctors cure U.S. baby born with HIV in potentially ground-breaking case
On Sunday March 3rd doctors at the University of Mississippi Hospital reported that they were able to cure a baby born with HIV at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections in Atlanta. The treatment consisted of a combination of typical drugs used in the treatment of infants with HIV, in this case the cocktail of drugs was administered when the baby was just 30 days old. What these doctors have found is potentially ground-breaking for doctors and patients around the world.

Are Syria’s pro-Assad hackers up to something more nefarious?
Tech-savvy supporters of Syrian President Assad have created a secret society of hackers who call themselves the Syrian Electronic Army. Their hack of the Qatar Foundation last Friday has made many people question their true intentions as a truth-seeking political group. They have been known to hack pages of many important people including President Obama, former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and Amnesty International.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/03/01/are-syrias-pro-assad-hackers-up-to-something-more-nefarious/

Economic development tops priorities for ECOSOC, says new President
In a recent press brief for ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) President Néstor Osorio explained that macroeconomic development begins with a better commitment from developed countries and trade organizations. Osorio claims that “in order to gain respect one has to gain relevance” among the global community; this is the prominent issue in prioritizing the world’s economic, social and environmental challenges. Osorio plans to meet with various trade organisations including the WTO and IMF, in the spring to discuss what issues are most relevant on today’s agenda.

Former Haitian Dictator Denies Abuses at Historic Hearing
On February 28th, 2013 Former Haitian dictator Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier finally faced a criminal court; Duvalier is being indicted on rights abuses which lasted 15 years, 1971-1986. The impact the Duvalier family had on Haiti greatly contributed to the current corrupt state of the country and lack of development which ensued from misuse of political power. The hearing is to continue on March 7th 2013.
http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/03/former-haitian-dictator-denies-abuses-at-historic-hearing

John Kerry Seeks A ‘Tweak’ In Current Afghan War Strategy
After a variety of interviews regarding the war in Afghanistan Secretary of State John F. Kerry has stated that he is looking for ways to advance the current war strategy so that America can continue counterterrorism efficiently. Kerry also made it very clear that he opposes any comparisons between this war and the Vietnam war.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/02/06/john-kerry-breaks-obama-afghanistan_n_819243.html

Mongolia to host UN World Environment Day 2013
Since 1972 The UN has held World Environment Day to promote and encourage political attention for the environment. This year the event will be held in the Asian nation of Mongolia; chosen for its the numerous efforts to incorporate green economy in their most important sectors like mining, Mongolia is an example nation for such an event.

Protesters and Riot Police Square-up in Lisbon
Portugal recession has begun its third year and its people are not happy. The Portuguese people are unsatisfied with the €78 billion bailout program that is meant to help the economy recover and restore the living standard. After austerity measures were cut the people of Lisbon held riots last week.
http://www.euronews.com/2013/02/17/anti-austerity-protests-on-portugal-s-streets

Expanding Ethiopia’s Impressive Successes in Health
In the last 7 years Ethiopia has reinvented their health services, allowing more children than ever to live past their fifth birthday; Since 2006 the child mortality rate has dropped nearly a third. A network of 35,000 people now work in the rural areas of Ethiopia providing women and children receive the care they need. This investment in health will surely lead to economic growth and stability.
Philadelphia Global Water Initiative- 6th Annual Conference

Gender and Water: Leading Beyond the Burden

Tuesday April 9, 2013
University of Pennsylvania - The Wharton School-Jon M. Huntsman Hall

The conference will highlight and share the best practices and solutions for the women, water, and sanitation crisis among world leaders, universities, and companies and to build upon global water and environment conferences to go beyond talk into action.

Online registration is now available here!
♥ General Admission: $60 ♥ Student: $10 ♥ Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): $40

NOTE: Walk-up Registration will be available. HOWEVER, we strongly urge you to register in advance online!

Accepted Payment Methods:
→ Check (made payable to "Philadelphia Global Water Initiative")
→ Cash—EXACT CHANGE ONLY
→ Credit card (via Ticketleap on-site)

Sponsored by such organizations as the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia and Drexel University School of Public Health (to name a few!), and with multiple partners (like wH20), this event is sure to be engaging! Includes a networking reception; convenient accommodations close by. For helpful information on logistics and much more, including a map and directions, a printable agenda, and a list of speakers, visit:

http://pgwiconference2013.wordpress.com/

See you there!
Physicians for Social Responsibility

presents the 7th Annual

Legs Against Arms

5K Run/Walk/Roll
www.legsagainstarms.info
April 28, 2013
at
Saint Joseph’s University
5600 City Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19131
7:00am - Race Registration Opens
9:00am - Race Start Time

“Striding Towards a Safer Philly”
Run for youth violence prevention awareness. Teams are invited to run in memory of loved ones lost to violence.

5K Race Division
$30 pre-registration fee, $35 race-day registration fee
Ages 12 & under free registration (race shirt not included with free registration)

5K Fun Run/Walk Division*
$25 pre-registration fee, $30 race-day fee
Ages 12 & under free registration (race shirt not included with free registration)

1K Peace Parade Division
$25 pre-registration fee, $30 race-day fee
Ages 12 & under free registration (race shirt not included with free registration)

For more information or to register, please visit:
www.LegsAgainstArms.info
or contact info@psrphila.org or 215-765-8703

Additional information about Physicians for Social Responsibility and our programs is available at:
Website: www.psrphila.org, Tel: 215-765-8703
Physicians for Social Responsibility, 704 N. 23rd Street, Phila, PA 19130
March Announcements & Upcoming Events

March 2013

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

More Events on Page 20

1 2

3 4 5 6 7 8 9

10 11 12 13 14 15 16

17 18 19 20 21 22 23

24 25 26 27 28 29 30

31

♦ March 1-31: Women’s History Month at the National Constitution Center

It’s that time of year again! Visitors can participate in a variety of exciting, interesting, fun events throughout the month, free with museum admission. Highlights include the show Philadelphia Girl Power and a collection of artifacts from Susan B. Anthony. For the full scoop, check out: http://globalphiladelphia.org/events/womens-history-month-national-constitution-center-2013

♦ March 24: UN Café

This month’s UNA-GP Café topic is “The Global Water Crisis: Keeping a Thirsty World Hydrated” and will take place in Drexel’s Historic Ross Commons (above Sabrina’s Cafe). Address: 34th and Powelton Streets. Time: 3:30-5:00 pm. Light refreshments provided! To register, and for more info, visit: http://www.facebook.com/events/230808863729874/?ref=2
April Upcoming Events

♦ April 16: Foreign Policy Research Institute Presents: Conflict in the Caucasus: The Story of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia – and Why It Matters to Us

Speaker Thomas de Waal is a senior associate in the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Carnegie Endowment, specializing primarily in the South Caucasus region as well as the wider Black Sea region. He is author of the authoritative book on the Karabakh conflict, Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan Through Peace and War (NYU Press, 2003), which has been translated into Armenian, Azeri, and Russian. His latest book is The Caucasus: An Introduction (Oxford University Press, 2010). Get the scoop on the event by going to: http://globalphiladelphia.org/events/foreign-policy-research-institute-presents-conflict-caucasus-story-georgia-azerbaijan-and-armenia-and-why-it-matters

♦ April 20: Al-Bustan Seeds of Culture 10th Anniversary Gala Benefit

Celebrate ten years of Arab arts in Philadelphia with Al-Bustan Seeds of Culture at their 10th Anniversary Gala Benefit, held at the Trinity Center for Urban Life. The gala will feature a buffet dinner of Arab cuisine and a musical performance by Marcel Khalife, a composer, singer, oud master and UNESCO Artist for Peace. Khalife is an acclaimed Lebanese musician who has composed for several orchestras and film soundtracks, recorded over 20 albums, and performed worldwide. His humanitarian efforts have won him many awards. For more information and registration, go to: http://globalphiladelphia.org/events/al-bustan-seeds-culture-10th-anniversary-gala-benefit

♦ April 25: "A Stradivari in Philadelphia" — Free Concert at Rittenhouse Square

Yep, that’s right, a FREE event! To be more specific, prepared to be wooed by violin music from Italy and other places. You can’t get much better than that with warm weather just around the corner! Mark your calendars and RSVP here: http://globalphiladelphia.org/events/stradivari-philadelphia-free-concert-rittenhouse-square-2013

♦ April 26 & 28: Russian Choral Music Collaboration: Tchaikovsky and Schnittke Choral Concert

Calling all instrumental music enthusiasts! Come listen to a Russian choral musical collaboration with the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul! Enjoy two different worlds of Russian sacred choral composition: Tchaikovsky’s Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and Alfred Schnittke’s Choir Concerto. Multiple discounts available, including student rush tickets! For more information and to buy tickets, visit here: http://globalphiladelphia.org/events/russian-choral-music-collaboration-tchaikovsky-and-schnittke-choral-concert-apr-26 Alternately, if you are having trouble, try buying tickets here: http://globalphiladelphia.org/events/russian-choral-music-collaboration-tchaikovsky-and-schnittke-choral-concert-apr-28
The UNA-GP is a chapter of the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA). Our website offers information about our mission, upcoming events, and ways to get involved, including joining and volunteering. In addition, we are on social media sites and send out our monthly newsletter. Take a look around!

Volunteers with all types of skill sets are welcome to work with the UNA-GP, in the short or long term. If interested, please contact:

Manisha Patel
Volunteer Coordinator
Board Member
mpatel@una-gp.org