
Last month this newsletter was filled with concern about the risk of a unilateral US military strike on Syria. It is a great relief that this month we can see that international diplomacy and the UN have provided channels to move that prospect away. The UN General Assembly is in full swing and the value of the UN as a venue for world leaders and issues is on full display this week. (Fortunately in Philadelphia we can appreciate the General Assembly without needing to live with the traffic jams it generates for New Yorkers!) We can be grateful for the Presidential phone call to President Rouhani of Iran, the first top level contact in decades and a sign of hope for both countries that sanctions may be lifted and nuclear fears may be removed. As so often, Latin America is the region where the peace trend is going in reverse: Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff gave a powerful denunciation of US surveillance and intrusion, the President of Uruguay denounced the international gun trade, even the US ally President Santos of Colombia spoke about the failure of the war on drugs and the need for a different approach. The yearly global condemnation of the US embargo on Cuba is coming up and several national leaders have already spoken of this in their addresses. But still, what a marvelous accomplishment for humanity to create this gathering place for collective expression and contact!

As supporters of this accomplishment, the UNA-GP will be hosting two significant programs for October 24th, United Nations Day, described fully elsewhere in this newsletter. We will have an afternoon program for students, educators, and concerned citizens “Global Citizenship in Action” from 3 to 5:00 at the Fourth and Arch St. Meetinghouse and we are co-sponsors with the Project for Nuclear Awareness of the evening “Disarmament in the Light of Humanitarian Need” program that includes the Haas Award and talks by Dr. Julia Sullivan and Dr. Joseph Gerson. Both these speakers will be excellent and the gathering will also honor a young activist/scholar with the Eisendrath Award. Book now to attend and support our “sister” peace organization. Both these events are part of the GlobalPhilly2013 festival of international events and awareness in Philadelphia running through the month of October.

Yours in hope for moving towards peace!

Mary Day Kent, President, UNA-GP
Our P3 soccer tournament was fun, successful and “grassroots.” Thank you, James Parsons. James is into sports. My daughters’ whole family is into sports too. Busy with getting the kids socialized through the rituals of football, baseball, even a bit of basketball, short as they are still. Theirs is a pleasant way of socializing and being involved in the community; at least so opined my chiropractor. What a different way of socializing it is when you are into politics and global problem solving. You need nerves of steel to handle the onslaught of political news. Global Warming reports, Sudan joining the oh-so-miss-labeled Arab Spring, Syria’s nightmare of human tragedy going on unabated, and a bunch of politicians shutting down the US government. Schools underfunded, pension funds in distress. Plus this overlooked news item:

“The Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008 prohibits the U.S. government from providing military assistance to countries that directly use, or support the use of, child soldiers. Built into the law is an option allowing the U.S. president to override the ban if he/she deems it necessary. On Monday, President Obama issued complete waivers to Yemen, Chad, and South Sudan, opening up those countries to U.S. military aid despite their known use of child soldiers, declaring in a written memorandum it is “in the national interest of the United States” to override the ban.”

Bah Humbug. It makes you feel tired. Yet, our backbone is strong and we can stay the course. We need to stand strong within this maelstrom of political ill-will and keep promoting the pathway of dialogue, of accepting comprise as a win-win concept that doesn’t mean you’re a loser. We can and need to refer to the United Nations for building progress on human rights, the rule of law, corporate accountability, and governmental transparency. We can build peace, seek social and environmental justice, and see that peace and that justice as instrumental parts of building a sustainable future of all of mankind. After all, my grandkids’ grandkids may want to experience the rituals of baseball, football, soccer with the same glee as what I saw last Sunday.

See you all at the World Food Day event at Rutgers-Camden, the Global Citizens event on UN Day at the Meeting House, and the PNA event that same evening.

Yours Truly.

Christiaan, Executive Director

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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
Upcoming Events

October 10-12 PaCIE’s (Pennsylvania Council for International Education) Annual Conference will take place at the Sheraton Philadelphia University City Hotel, Theme: Building Global Competence through Collaborative Strategies in International Education. Two UNA-GP board members are presenting.

October 16: 4:30-6:30 at Rutgers Camden Campus. World Food Day 2013: “Global Perspectives on Food Justice” The World Food Day theme for 2013 is “sustainable food systems for food security and nutrition.” Speakers will shed light on perspectives and strategies for food justice outside of the US. This event is part of the Rutgers Global Health Biennial Theme Year. See Announcement on Page 11.

October 24th, United Nations Day: Afternoon event: “Global Citizenship In Action: Peace And Social Justice For A Sustainable Future” See Announcement on Page 12

October 24th United Nations Day: Evening event: Reception and Award ceremony (Organized by Project for Nuclear Awareness): See Announcement on Page 13

November 16th. At Drexel, our first Model UN Conference on Water Management for high school students, in commemoration of World Toilet Day, November 19th.

December 10th. The Annual celebration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Details to follow.
By David Sherwin, UNAGP Core Volunteer

A couple of months ago, I became a member of UNAGP. I just moved back into Philadelphia in June, so I thought volunteering with UNAGP would be a great opportunity to work on global issues and network with interesting organizations. Surprisingly, my membership has already given me the opportunity to attend a free conference in New York City. I recently returned from the Social Good Summit in NYC and it turned out to be a very rewarding experience.

Being a member UNAGP has allowed me to learn about all kinds of events happening around the Greater Philadelphia area. About a month ago, I noticed an email about an event in NYC called the Social Good Summit, which was a three-day conference that focused on using technology and social media to help solve the world’s problems.

The cost of the conference was $130 for three days and $50 for one day. This seemed like a great conference to attend but I was unsure if $130 was really worth it. However, being a member of UNAGP, I learned that you could attend the conference free if you registered as a member of the press. Well it did not take long to sign up and before I knew, I was headed to NYC.

The Social Good Summit was held from September 22nd-24th at the 92nd Street Y in NYC in the upper east side of Manhattan. The format of the conference was extremely fast paced. There was only one stage for the whole conference and each speaker or panel only had about 10-15 minutes to talk about their organization or project. From 12pm to 7pm, it was non-stop speakers. There was no official break throughout the whole 3 days. At some points, it almost felt like you were running a marathon.

The issues talked about ranged from global warming to human rights to women’s health and everything else in between relating to our planet. The list of speakers was impressive and it included headliners such as former Vice President Al Gore and Melinda Gates. Check out the agenda and speakers list Here.

As a member of the press, we were given access to the media lounge and were able to take pictures close to the stage. The only critique was that the fast paced nature of the conference did not allow any time for questions from the audience. However, the conference was streaming live online around the world so discussions about the event were happening all over social networks.

Overall, the Social Good Summit was a great experience that I will remember for years to come. It was made possible by UNAGP and we will see where membership will take me next.
New Interns and Co-Ops

Meral is an undergraduate anthropology student from Melbourne, Australia. She is studying at the University of Pennsylvania with a concentration on North Africa and the Middle East, where she hopes to conduct study and ethnographies in the future.

Hello! My name is Marta Sydoryak, I am currently attending my final year at Temple University as a German and Psychology major. After I am finished with my Undergraduate studies at Temple University I plan on further pursuing my passion for international relations whether it be international law, international relations, or public policy. I was born in Ukraine and currently am trilingual speaking English, Ukrainian and German. Since I was young I have always loved to travel, and often find myself browsing through CNN, BBC, and other international news websites out of a sheer interest and passion for international affairs. I have traveled to about 21 countries and have found that visiting countries all over the world has given me a global perspective and left me open minded yet passionate about cultural customs, traditions, history, and politics. This semester, I have started an internship with the United Nations Association in the Greater Philadelphia Area and look forward to learning and contributing more to our global society.
New Interns and Co-Ops

Arame Niang is a current Sophomore at the University of Pennsylvania majoring in International Relations and African Studies. She has always been fascinated with International Development and Human Rights. Outside the classroom she is involved in many activities. Arame is a writer for the Penn Society for International Development, and a member of the Penn UNICEF student group. She loves to play basketball, takes pictures and loves to taste foods from around the world.

My name is Wonah Sung I'm am a senior at University of Pennsylvania studying Systems Engineering. I was born and raised in South Korea and moved to the States in 5th grade and lived in Long Island, New York ever since then. I have deep interest in city planning and community development and also has interest in sustainability design. Besides school, I like to try new restaurants and cafes, and I love exploring new areas of Philadelphia.
Hello my name is Sarra Siraj! I graduated from the International School Of Madrid and I am taking a gap semester in which I will work as an intern with the UNA-GP. I was born in Jordan and moved to Spain. Stemming from Jordanian, Turkish, Kurdish and Circassian heritage, my multicultural background has enabled me to cultivate a strong passion for history, culture, languages, politics and international relations. My father worked as the Jordanian Ambassador in Spain, introducing me to the diplomatic lifestyle and Spanish culture at a young age, providing the perfect atmosphere to advance my cultural awareness, languages and political knowledge with leading international personalities. Correspondingly this experience stimulated my linguistic competence allowing my fluency in four languages: Spanish, English, Arabic and French. A promising factor in my cultural development and social awareness was the opportunity to travel throughout Europe, Africa, Asia and the US. I am determined to use languages, international relations, history and European economics as a weapon to break down cultural barriers and foster social equality. My long-term aim being to work in the United Nations to achieve a social change and a better world, the amazing opportunity to work at the UNA-GP is bringing me a step closer to my long term objective. Lastly I am passionate about traveling the world, gastronomy, psychology, sociology, art, music, photography, writing and literature.

My name is Ariane Heffinck. I'm am a Junior at Drexel University. I am currently majoring in Sociology with a minor in International Area Studies. I am half Belgian and half Liberian, and grew up in Kenya. My mother works with the United Nations and my father works with the European Commission. As a result I grew in a diplomatic family and have been exposed to many different cultures and speak Dutch and French. My upbringing has instilled an interest in humanitarian affairs, and I hope to eventually work with the United Nations. During my time with the UNA-GP I will be doing mostly event planning, financial correspondence and membership administration.
Interveiw About Philly’s Public School System

By Vesko Kostic

Vesko: What is your connection to the Philadelphia public school system?
Jeremy: I finished my fifth year of teaching secondary mathematics in Philadelphia at Germantown High School. I also served as a technology leader and a union building representative for Germantown High for the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. I accepted a site selected [merit based] position at the High School for the Creative and Performing Arts starting in the fall.

Vesko: What is the current situation of the schools that are scheduled for closing due to budget cuts?
Jeremy: All of those schools are officially closed and by the end of next week [July 15th] (unless things have changed), all educational materials should have been removed. The only ones slated to close were taken off the list after the vote back in March. The plans for those schools are uncertain at this point. There are rumors that some are sold to various entities and some charter schools are expressing interest in their facilities but nothing is certain.

Vesko: How do you feel Philly ranks in K-12 education compared to the region, nation, and world?
Jeremy: It depends on the school and the staff that runs it. When you look at schools like Central High and Masterman High, they are considered some of the top public schools in the country. Looking at the school system as a whole, it does not compare favorably to regional school districts especially in Bucks and Montgomery counties. There are completely different challenges in urban education compared to other places in the area. These are also challenges that districts in New York, Chicago, DC, Los Angeles, etc. face and we are all in the same situation. Some schools are great and some are failing and some of them are the worst in the country according to test scores. This is all based on how outsiders judge the performance of the schools which is based on data driven parameters like test scores, amounts of dangerous incidents, graduation rate, and I could go on. I have thought a lot about this since the school year ended but education is not based on these things but meeting students where they are, challenging them as much as we can, and helping them realize and achieve their goals. With that said, there are many teachers, counselors and other personnel who do a great job in these "failing" schools to reach these kids. I could go on and on about this part but I think education is happening in many schools but it is not always easy to quantify it as the state wants us to.

Vesko: Why were there such drastic cuts in the first place that caused the city to have to close about two-dozen public schools?
Jeremy: There are a few reasons. One reason the district is in the financial mess that it is in is because the federal government had given the district money in the past few years (I forget in a grant or how exactly it was distributed) but that funding source ended. Also our previous superintendents (mainly Arlene Ackerman) had taken out many loans to fund different initiatives, which were never [re]paid. So when you take away money and have to pay a bunch back, it creates major problems. One way to save money is to cut operating costs of schools that have few seats. When you look at the schools that are closed, most are in areas of the city that are underprivileged but also ones where charter schools have sprung up and have taken kids out of traditional schools and into those charters. Germantown is just one example of the situation many of the schools were in that faced closing.

To read more please visit [link]

United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia • 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 • October 2013
Peace Day Weekend Image Recap
Peace Day Weekend Image Recap
World Food Day 2013: 
Global Perspectives on Food Justice

Sustainable Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition

Speakers will shed light on perspectives and strategies for food justice outside of the US. This event is part of the Rutgers Global Health Biennial Theme Year.

Wed Oct 16th 4:30-6:30
Rutgers Camden Campus, Student Center South ABC Conference Room
326 Penn St. Camden, NJ 08102
For information contact: shown@sas.upenn.edu

• Heidi Witmer, Founder and Director of the LEAF Project

• Megan Doherty, Associate Director, International & Local Service Learning Programs at University of Pennsylvania's School of Engineering

• Sameerah Siddiqui, GROW Campaign Coordinator with Oxfam America

• Christiaan Morssink, Executive Director of the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia

Partners
A symposium that will place our own Global Sullivan Principles squarely into the movement for globalized education and fair, sustainable labor and business practices.

The symposium will be followed by an evening event, organized by the Project for Nuclear Awareness; that event will focus on disarmament in light of humanitarian needs and will include the Haas Peace Award. Please note that the venue for the symposium has limited seating and we urge you to indicate your interest as soon as possible.

To sign up, please send an email to info@una-gp.org
For questions email Morssink@una-gp.org

*GlobalPhilly2013 is a special program of the Global Philadelphia Association (www.globalphiladelphia.org)
DISARMAMENT IN LIGHT OF HUMANITARIAN NEED*

Project for Nuclear Awareness

United Nations Day
Wine Reception and Awards Ceremony

OCTOBER 24, 2013
6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
4th and Arch Streets Quaker Meeting House, Philadelphia, PA

The John C. & Chara C. Haas Award for International Peace and Social Justice
and the Eisendrath Award for Youth Advocacy.

We proudly present the 5th annual John C. & Chara C. Haas Award for International Peace and Social Justice to Dr. Joseph Gerson to celebrate his lifetime commitment and service to nuclear abolition, in honor of John C. Haas, co-founder of Project for Nuclear Awareness. Dr. Gerson is Director of Programs for the Northeast Region and the Director of Peace and Economic Security Program for the American Friends Service Committee. His many publications, thoughtful analyses, and his tireless, effective advocacy have been a source of global inspiration.

Our distinguished guest speaker will be Dr. Julie Sullivan, President and CEO of the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help. From Philadelphia, and the daughter of Reverend Leon Sullivan, Zion Baptist Church minister, civil rights leader and a social and economic justice activist supporting the anti-Apartheid Movement in South Africa, Dr. Sullivan will speak about global humanitarian needs in light of the tax dollars spent on the global weapons industry.

The 2nd Annual Eisendrath Award for Youth Advocacy in Nuclear Disarmament will be given in honor of Dr. Craig Eisendrath, co-founder and chairman of Project for Nuclear Awareness, to a young person who has exhibited a commitment to achieving a peaceful world free from the threat of nuclear weapons.

The evening wine reception and awards ceremony will follow an afternoon symposium, organized by the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations Association (1943-2013).

Please note, there is limited seating. Please register before October 5th.

RSVP at info@pnausa.org

Free private parking available

*A GlobalPhilly2013 Event

GlobalPhilly2013 is a special program of the Global Philadelphia Association
GlobalPhilly™ 2013 will consist of a wide array of international and multicultural events and activities sponsored by members of the Global Philadelphia Association, shining a spotlight on the many global dimensions of the Greater Philadelphia Region. From September 15 - October 31, GlobalPhilly™ 2013 will showcase 60-75 events or activities, each of which will be presented by a participating organization, independently or in combination with others. If you are interested in joining this endeavor, please contact Zabeth Teelucksingh, Global Philadelphia Association Executive Director, at zabeth@globalphiladelphia.org. Visit our website at globalphiladelphia.org to learn more.

You can help the United Nations Association out!

Have any ideas for fundraising events? We’re all ears! With the volume of projects the UNA-GP is constantly immersed in, we are always in need of more volunteers, no matter how much or how (seemingly!) little time you have to devote. Email Manisha Patel, (Volunteer Coordinator and Board Member) with your suggestions or any questions at mpatel@una-gp.org.

The UNA-GP is in need of funds for upcoming projects. In order to continue with extremely beneficial and enriching events, such as the Model UN, we need your help! Please donate whatever you can to the UNA-GP, and in turn, Philadelphians and beyond!