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A NOTE FROM *PAULA*



Dear CONTACT Participants,

We send greetings to all of you from a cold and snowy Vermont. You would hardly recognize the campus from your experience here in June as it looks like a different world. All of us are well and now we are preparing for the next CONTACT group. The certificate students are having a very successful year and are getting ready for their trip to Rwanda in late January, where they will see many of our former Rwandan CONTACT participants.

Of course we are all celebrating the elections in the US and are very hopeful that our new President Obama will be able to help heal the wounds that have been caused by US policies in the past. There has been so much damage and we know it will take many years to establish new policies and more justice, but the elections gave joy everywhere. For us as peacebuilders, we especially are inspired by Obama's commitment to dialogue and respect for differences, and we must help make sure that peaceful procedures replace warfare as a means of settling grievances.

I have worked in Sri Lanka and Nepal since I have seen you last, with NGOs, women Parliamentarians, ministries and others. We expect this work to continue in 2009, so that we can add our voices to the implementation of peace processes.

We are eager to hear from all of you and to keep our CONTACT global dialogue strong and our community connected.

In peace,

Paula Green
Director, CONTACT

FROM THE CONTACT OFFICE

Greetings from the Program Manager



Warm Greetings to you all! I am very enthusiastic to get back to the Program Newsletter and regular news coming from the Office. Thank you for your questions and encouragements to get this started. Jan Passion, thank you for reminding me that a personal note would be nice once in a while. And indeed... after trying to keep in touch through listserve, facebook and blog...it comes back to the old and tried (news) letter. Besides the program work, I am happy to have the opportunity to teach and facilitate. It is a great privilege and honor to be involved in such activities. I am learning and inspired every day by each and every one of you. Please make sure to stay in touch whenever you can. One of the aspects that I highly value in this program is the connectedness among people. Only we have to show it once in a while. And this is one of the ways.

Program Coordinator: Introduction



Fatima came to the USA in the summer of 2007 to pursue her Masters at the SIT Graduate Institute. She is a Fulbright scholar from Yemen and a current student in the Program of Intercultural Management. Fatima was also a participant in the 08 Peacebuilding Program. After the program Fatima decided to intern with CONTACT. We could not be happier as Fatima is bringing her own experience as a peacebuilder, her insight from being a participant in the program, enthusiasm and dedication. She already coordinated a successful event: CONTACT's first Peace Prayer Flags for International Peace Day. Currently, Fatima is focusing her efforts on updating the program's website and marketing. She likes reading and driving. Her goal is to go back to Yemen with a degree in Management that helps her develop as an NGO consultant.

FROM THE SIT CAMPUS

Graduations & Celebrations



Cheers for two CONTACT alumni that presented in the November Capstone Seminar. Congratulations to our Masters Abby McPhail and Tanja Menincanin. Only Tanja made it in the picture. At that time Abby was in a hurry to catch the train back to Canada. Abby is in Canada teaching and focusing on Social Justice and Tanja is in Serbia where she is the Senior Advisor for Center for Development Services.

Currently five CONTACT alumni are enrolled in the Master Degree program: Genet Hunegnaw, Summer 05; Nancy Swyers and Margaret Tarmy -06, Alhadi Hilal - 07 and Hannah Tyler 08.

First Thanksgiving in the United States

Alhadi Hilal a 2007 Summer Peacebuilding Program Alumni and a 07-08 Certificate student, is currently enrolled in the Master Degree in Conflict Transformation Program. Alhadi has been living in the US for over seven years but never celebrated Thanksgiving. As an SIT student, Alhadi has been encouraged to approach the community. Now Alhadi is volunteering for the first Baptist church to serve the homeless people from 7pm to 1am twice a week. Alhadi sends his thanks to Douglas family and their friends who accommodated us as close relatives: “they made our stay in campus more comfortable, other wise we could have been homesick during the holiday.”



Thanksgiving 2008, at Williams Family in Brattleboro, Vermont.

Feel free to send this newsletter to friends or people interested. If you wish to subscribe to CONTACT newsletter please drop us a line at contactprogram@sit.edu

Photo journal -Summer 08



Faculty News



Tatsushi (Tats) Arai remains active in research, teaching, and practice in peacebuilding. His forthcoming book *Creativity and Conflict Resolution: Alternative Pathways to Peace* will be published by Routledge in early summer, 2009, proposing innovative theories, methods, and case studies to illustrate how to generate breakthrough solutions to intractable conflicts. As a practitioner, he has offered trainings, workshops, and mediations sessions in diverse contexts - from Israel/Palestine, to Taiwan/China, to the effects of global warming on emerging social conflicts in the Arctic Sea.

Prof Kevin Clements, an internationally-respected academic now based at the University of Queensland, has been appointed to a new professorship in peace and conflict studies at the University of Otago. Prof Clements, who takes up his appointment in January, next year, will also become director of Otago University's National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies.



The centre, to be based in the Otago humanities division, will focus on the nature and resolution of conflict, and the creation of peaceful environments. It will bring together academics, students and visitors from many disciplines, and aims to fully involve indigenous peoples.

Born in New Zealand, Prof Clements graduated with a PhD in sociology from Victoria University in 1970 and has spent the past 17 years in international posts. He is the professor of peace and conflict studies and foundation director of the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at Queensland University.

From 1999 to 2003, he was secretary-general of International Alert, an international organization based in London working on conflict and conflict transformation in many countries. Prof Clements had long advocated establishing such a peace studies centre in New Zealand and was "humbled and privileged" to be able to develop it. He wanted this to be a centre of academic excellence and also wished to build on the rich indigenous peace-building initiatives that ran deep in New Zealand's Moriori and Maori traditions, he said. University vice-chancellor Prof David Skegg said Prof Clements had outstanding experience and ability and the new centre would quickly become a hub of research and teaching. Kevin will take up his position in January 2009. His e mail address at Otago is kevin.clements@otago.ac.nz



Olivia Stokes Dreier "This year's CONTACT Certificate program is going strong. We have 20 active participants and are greatly looking forward to seeing each other for our field seminar in Rwanda in January. I have been busy with Karuna Center projects in Nepal, including work with newly elected women parliamentarians, and Senegal, where I have just come from work with the MFDC rebels to develop community forums for pardon and reconciliation. Together with Adin and CONTACT graduates, Leora Kahn and Freddy Mutanguha, I am working on a new project to use a traveling exhibit

Peace Prayers Flags in Celebration International Day of Peace

The Conflict Transformation Across Cultures-CONTACT program initiated the Peace Prayers Flags event in which SIT Graduate Institute's students, faculty, staff and Brattleboro community were invited to celebrate the International Day of Peace by expressing their vision for peace on small flags on September 19, 2008.

During the week prior to the International Day of Peace, more than 77 people participated in the making of the peace flags. Even children wanted to participate and express their own understanding of peace.

Under the waiving flags, attendees gathered to celebrate as the wind blew the flags so high sending its prayers to the world. Participants sent their peace thoughts and wishes to their fellow humans across the globe.



Dr. Adam Weinberg, Provost and Vice President of World Learning, gave a speech in which he expressed his concerns regarding the idea of a peace day. Dr. Weinberg said that he is worried people might be concerned with peace for only a day and do things that harm peace in the remaining 365 days. Dr. Weinberg encouraged people to act responsibly at all times and expressed his appreciation for our students, faculty and staff who risk their lives around the world to make the world a more peaceful place.

Participants also wished for people in conflict areas to have the strength and the courage to change their realities and for peace-builders to continue their work around the world.

of rescue stories to promote community dialogue in Rwanda. We are hoping to develop a model that we can be used elsewhere.”

Mid-Year Seminar in Kigali, Rwanda; Certificate Students are packing their suitcases

Anne, Caridad, Carrie, Chhaya, Daniel, Dar, Elizabeth, Elspeth, George, Hannah, Kesab, Lounis, Marissa, Michael, Padmini, Rivkeh, Rose are packing their suitcases in preparation for the upcoming Rwanda trip. Meeting them there are: Dora, Jean-Bosco and Sarah. Accompanying them are Olivia Dreier and Adin Thayer, Certificate Faculty.

Besides being one of the highlights of the Certificate Program due to the nature of the curriculum, context and activities, the Mid-Year Seminar, provides the opportunity to students to study another week face to face.

Deborah Lubar, after her trip to Rwanda wrote a very insightful piece, which we still have featured on our website. Feel free to take a look:

<http://www.sit.edu/graduate/6802.htm>

AWARDS & Recognition

Once again Congratulations to our own **Paula Green, who has been nominated to receive the “Unsung Hero Award”**. Paula will be receiving the award in April 2009 from Dalai Lama.

Christian Sinclair, former CONTACT manger received the “Excellence in International Service” Award. The recipient has been a substantial positive force in international exchange, provided an outstanding service internationally with significant economic, social or cultural benefits, demonstrated significant bridge building between cultures, and greatly facilitated international understanding through international activity in a highly significant way. The recipient produced a significant positive effect on international understanding through presentations, cultural activities or exchange programs.

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