

INTERCONNECTIONS 21

Newsletter

Summer 2001

IC 21 Organizes Workshop on Promoting Conflict Resolution and Peace Education in Schools

InterConnections 21 and UNESCO convened an International Workshop on Promoting Conflict Resolution and Peace Education in Schools on April 28-29, 2001, at the UN International School in New York City. Forty educators, students, program leaders and parents participated. The U.S. contingent hailed from nine states. International participants included the leader and founder of the Colombia Children's Peace Movement—an organization nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize—and representatives from South Africa, Lebanon, Thailand, Mexico, Holland and Bosnia.

Designed as an opportunity to network, share experiences, and elicit views and strategies on ways to promote peace and conflict resolution education, the workshop was conceived as part of the UN-declared International Decade for Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World. Susan Fountain, an international specialist in conflict resolution and peace education, facilitated the workshop.

Opening Session

IC 21 President Susan Rauch welcomed the group and thanked those whose support made the workshop possible, particularly the U.S. Department of State which made a grant through UNESCO for many

of the workshop expenses. UNESCO representative Sigrid Niedermayer described both UNESCO's mission to build world peace and its Associated Schools Project. The opening session was concluded by Cora Weiss, president of the Hague Appeal for Peace (HAP), whose work is based on a 50-point agenda developed at the May 1999 international Hague Peace Conference, attended by over 10,000 people. The agenda aims to move society from the culture of violence that defined the past century to a culture of peace. Ms. Weiss emphasized that peace-building skills must be taught, and that teacher support is key for peace education to be effectively integrated in classrooms. She proposed that education be based on four "Rs": Reading, wRiting, aRithmetic, and



Workshop participants gather for a group photo. Susan Fountain, kneeling second from right, facilitated the two-day event.

Reconciliation.

Workshop Proceedings

Day One. Small groups identified factors promoting or hindering peace in schools. Case studies of conflict resolution programs around the world were presented by representatives from South Africa, Montana, Lebanon and Minnesota. A Market Place of Ideas encouraged participants to exhibit materials from their programs, and to visit others' displays. The day con-

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InterConnections 21, which coordinates the American chapter of the Associated Schools Project (ASPnet/USA), is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization (EIN: 84-1379499). Contributions are gratefully received and tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Checks should be made out to InterConnections 21 and sent to P.O. Box 960, Wilson, WY 83014. Information about our organization is found on our Web site at www.ic21.org.

Jackson Hole Global Connection Clubs Raise \$2000 for Pakistan Schools



Through “Global Connections,” an IC 21 sponsored school program in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, students raised \$2000 this spring to assist a school in Pakistan’s remote northeast Baltistan region. The money will fund one teacher’s salary and school supplies for 180 students, for one year. “We realized there weren’t a lot of global programs in schools, and that students had no clue about the plight of children in



Greg Mortenson, founder of the Central Asia Institute, talks to a group of Jackson students that raised “Pennies for Pakistan.”

other countries,” said IC 21 Schools and Global Connections Coordinator Ellen Johnson.

“Pennies for Pakistan” is Global Connections first project. Collection jars were established in schools throughout Jackson Hole. One sixth-grader, Sam Mead, emptied his savings account of \$80 to help the project. A high school student, Danielle Sachs, brought in her tips from waitressing every morning and donated them to Pakistan students. Two third-grade classes at the Wilson Elementary School took the project even further, studying Baltistan’s culture.

The funds will reach their destination through Bozeman, Montana’s Central Asia Institute, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 1996 whose mission is to support community-based programs in remote Central Asia mountain regions. Introduced to the mountainous Karakoram and Pamir regions during previous climbing expeditions, Institute founder Greg Mortenson recalled, “In the villages I noticed no education and a high incidence of infant mortality. I wondered why nothing had been done in that area.” Mortenson has funded and built 16 schools in remote villages since the Institute’s inception.

Workshop

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cluded with a showing of the CNN film “Soldiers of Peace: A Children’s Crusade,” and a presentation by Colombian Children’s Peace Movement co-founder Juan Elias Uribe.

Day Two. “Soldiers of Peace” producer Lydia Smith described how the film is used as an advocacy tool to raise international awareness about Colombian children living in armed conflict. Ms. Smith helped create the Children’s Peace Fund, an NGO supporting the Colombian Children’s Peace Movement. Ms. Fountain then presented a UNICEF behavioral change model and a research summary entitled “What We Know about Conflict Resolution Education,” published in 2000 by the Association for Conflict Resolution in Washington D.C.

Recommendations

At the conclusion of the workshop, small groups recommended strategies to promote conflict resolu-

tion and peace education in schools. These included: engaging students through simulation exercises that make the link between “us” and “them;” integration of curriculum materials that teach interpersonal skills aimed at peace and conflict resolution; developing comprehensive school and district-wide peace and conflict resolution education plans; and lobbying for legislation that encourages peace education in teacher training and school course curricula.

Evaluation and Information

Using a prepared questionnaire, participants rated the workshop a favorable 4.4 out of 5 points, and submitted a number of specific suggestions for follow-up. In response to the workshop, IC 21 has established a “list serve” for participants to facilitate on-going communication, and has initiated plans for ASPnet/USA participation in the September 29 Earth Charter Day and for visits by the Colombian Children’s Peace Movement to schools and communities in Hawaii, Montana and Wyoming. Information on IC 21’s work in the areas of Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Peace Education, including the workshop background document and report, is posted on its web site (www.ic21.org).

News from the Associated Schools



Model United Nations Conference Mexico City April 6-9, 2001

Two ASPnet/USA school delegations participated in a Model UN Conference in Mexico City from April 6-9, 2001, organized by the Carol Baur Foundation. French teacher Jean Baptiste Bassène chaperoned 9th graders Maha Saad and Frances Choi, from the UN International School (UNIS) in New York City. Social Studies teacher Greg Poduska chaperoned 10th grader Amy Jones and 9th grader Turner Resor from Jackson Hole High School in Wyoming.

Developed over 50 years ago, Model UN is a powerful tool to teach students about the UN, diplomacy, and international affairs through intensive role-playing and social interactions. Today, over 200,000 students participate annually in Model UN conferences organized worldwide.

IC 21 facilitates ASPnet/USA member school participation to help students learn about UN issues and operations; become expert researchers as they investigate multilateral issues from a national perspective; acquire negotiation skills; develop public speaking and debate skills; engage in consensus-building; and learn to respect and become sensitive to others as they interact with people different than themselves. Skills and knowledge accruing from Model UN participation relate to many national and state curriculum standards in language arts, social studies and science. IC 21 plans to send students and teachers to both the Rocky Mountain Model UN Conference in Denver and the Carol Baur Conference in Mexico in 2002.

Mexico City Model UN

Over 600 students participated in the Conference. While 85% were from Latin America, Germany, England, Canada, France and the U.S. also sent student delegations. UN committees discussed topics ranging from Security Council policies towards Bosnia-Herzegovina to cooperation between UN and

NATO in armed conflicts. Jackson's delegation represented Zimbabwe and focused on the topic of AIDS in Africa. UNIS students represented Kuwait and Iran, and participated in a Special Committee on Disarmament and Security that considered establishment of a world police force.



Amy Jones, second from right, was a member of the IC21 delegation to the Carol Baur-sponsored Model UN in Mexico City.

Students who had participated in previous Carol Baur-sponsored Model UN Conferences oversaw Conference organization. ASPnet/USA participants agreed the alumni did an excellent job, and that the Conference was rich and challenging. Prior to the trip, each student undertook research about the country s/he was to represent, and after the experience they noted how much more they had learned on the spot. UNIS freshman Frances Choi remarked "Throughout the four days, what Maha and I really did was learn: learn about the people, the culture, how to negotiate and compromise. Of course we could not forget learning about how exactly the UN works and how much effort needs to be made in order to finally make a resolution." Jackson's Amy Jones said "The Model UN Trip to Mexico City was very worthwhile, and a hands-on educational experience. Just being in Mexico taught me a lot, and seeing how world leaders struggle to make decisions that affect the entire world was also amazing."

FLASH!

InterConnections 21 is organizing the 4th Annual Human Rights Study Trip to New York from December 6-9, 2001. The trip's centerpiece will be the Annual UN Human Rights Student Conference on December 7. Other activities will include a day of cultural activities at the UN and visits to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. For more information, visit our Web site at www.ic21.org or email ic21@compuserve.com.

Workshop Resources and Materials to Help Make a World of Difference



Global Education Newsletter from the Council of Chief State School Officers

Published semi-annually, this newsletter provides an annotated bibliography of recent global education materials and resources, as well as a calendar of upcoming events. To subscribe, email czarra@aol.com

The Central Asian Institute

Located in Bozeman, Montana, this non-profit organization supports projects in Central Asia such as Pennies for Pakistan (described on page 2 of this newsletter) that afford excellent learning opportunities for schools and communities in the US. For more information, visit their web page at www.ikat.org

Colombia Children's Peace Movement

To learn more about this activity, visit www.turnerlearning.com/cnn/soldiers/ and purchase the film, "Soldiers of Peace: A Children's Crusade," or a book entitled, "Out of War: True Stories from the Frontlines of the Children's Movement for Peace." Email MaryAnnF@fox.com about the former; the latter is available from amazon.com.

Hague Appeal for Peace

See our leading article for a brief description of this organization and visit their web site at

www.haguepeace.org for additional information and lesson plans on peace education.

Model UN Programs

For information about Model UN and other education programs supported by the UN Association of the USA, visit www.unusa.org/programs.



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InterConnections 21 • (307) 733-0549 • fax (307) 733-9783 • ic21@compuserve.com • www.ic21.org

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P.O. Box 960 • 3705 West Canyon Road • Wilson, Wyoming USA 83014