

IC 21 Sends Delegation to World Parliament of Children in Paris, October 21-27, 1999

On October 21, 1999, Jackson Hole High School junior Emilie Lewis and I embarked on a one-week journey to Paris to represent the United States at the World Parliament of Children. JHHS social studies teacher Jeff Stines accompanied us. The weeklong event, organized by UNESCO and the French National Assembly, was the first of its kind in history. At the request of the conference organizers, InterConnections 21—which coordinates the American Chapter of the Associated Schools Project—selected us to participate in this unprecedented event. InterConnections 21 also helped arrange our travel and prepared extensive conference briefings.

What we, the children of the world, produced at the conference was the “Youth Manifesto for the 21st Century,” a document addressing problems we feel need the most attention. To prepare this declaration, the conference split into 12 groups. Two groups each addressed one of the following issues:

peace and non-violence; education; the environment; solidarity; economic and human development; and intercultural dialogue. After two days of debate and discussion each group drafted a proposal dealing with its issue. Emilie Lewis was elected by her group to present its proposal for education. Speaking to over 700 people from 178 nations in the historic French National Assembly Chamber at the Palace of Versailles, Emilie convinced a majority of her peers to support her group’s proposal for education in the next millennium.

The week was not only historic, but also a lot of fun. Over 350 teens aged 14 to 16 gathered in Paris. The event was a unique opportunity to meet and talk with kids our age from over 175 countries. The meetings for the adoption of the Manifesto were held in some of the most spectacular buildings in the world, namely the French National Assembly and the Palace of Versailles. We met Laurent Fabius (former French Prime Minister and current President

continued on page 2



The World Parliament of Children gathered in front of the French National Assembly in Paris.



Emilie Lewis speaking at Versailles.

of the French National Assembly) and dined in the Hall of Battles. We were escorted by the French National Police and treated like royalty everywhere we went. Between meetings, we toured the sights of Paris with the crowds and traffic pushed aside. I speak for everyone when I say the entire trip was an incredible experience and an important milestone in our lives.

Matthew Scullin
Junior, UN International School
New York, New York

Message from the President

The last four months have been busy and productive for InterConnections 21. At the request of the French National Assembly and UNESCO, we organized the participation of US delegates to the World Parliament of Children held in Paris this October. Five schools joined the American Chapter of the Associated Schools Project, and we are in touch with a number of other institutions that have expressed interest in becoming members. Initiatives moving forward include coordination of US entries for ART CHILD's international fresco project, and co-sponsorship of the UN's December 10th Student Conference on Human Rights and the Culture of Peace.

Launching any new enterprise is challenging. Accompanying the hard work of establishing IC 21 have been moments of fun and tremendous gratification. These few lines from Emilie Lewis about her experience at the Children's Parliament in Paris provided me with such a moment recently:

•
"Just those few days not only helped my Spanish but have changed my perspective on the world. We talked about everything: our different countries' governments, schools, music wars, movies or anything else that came up. I realized that kids are just kids, no matter where they come from. For the most part we deal with the same issues and have the same concerns and hopes for the future. I have never known such a caring and motivated group of individuals. Truly good things will spring from them."

•
Matt Scullin, author of our lead article, and Emilie both confirm my hope that IC 21 can make a world of difference by mentoring young people and involving them and their communities in issues of local and global importance.

Susie Rauch

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 websites at www.IC21.org and www.aspnet-usa.org.

News from the Associated Schools

United We Stand, Diverse As We Are

With support from InterConnections 21, the Jackson Hole High School Human Rights Club (HRC) recently completed a program designed to teach fifth grade students the importance of diversity and respect. Entitled, "United We Stand, Diverse As We Are," the project brought together 14 fifth

graders from elementary schools throughout Teton County School District.

"United We Stand" met for one hour every Monday after school for a month. Each session we presented a new theme, ranging from respect issues to cultural diversity to rights. One of the highlights was the session dedicated to the diversity of people

and ideas that exist in the USA. The kids participated in a discussion lead by HRC members entitled, "American as Apple Pie." Its purpose was to show that things often viewed as purely American are not necessarily so. For example, the Liberty Bell and Statue of Liberty are symbols of America, but did not originate here. The Statue of Liberty was a gift from France, and the Liberty Bell was cast in London. Two high school foreign exchange students, one from Germany and the other from New Zealand, were also present that day as guest speakers. Participants had the opportunity to listen to them and ask questions about their respective countries.

Judging from the kids' response and comments from parent observers, the project was very successful. Hopefully the kids who participated in the program will take what they learned, weave it into

their daily lives, and open themselves up to many more opportunities. Not only will they be able to enjoy different people and their ideas, but they will also be able to educate their peers about tolerance and respect.

The HRC will continue this work throughout the school year as part of its ASPnet/USA activities. Participation in this project qualified club members and participating students to apply for next month's New York Human Rights Study Trip that IC 21 is organizing for members of ASPnet/USA. The trip will coincide with the Student Conference on Human Rights and the Culture of Peace at the United Nations.

Katie Malia
Junior, Jackson Hole High School
Jackson, Wyoming

FLASH!

Over 50 ASPnet/USA students, parents and teachers will participate in the UN Student Conference on Human Rights and the Culture of Peace on December 10, 1999. Co-sponsored by IC 21, the conference will bring together 300 students from the US, Canada, Mexico and other countries to draft an action plan promoting human rights and a culture of peace. A handbook and information about UN webcasting of the event are available at www.IC21.org.

Participating Educators Speak About ASPnet/USA

ASPnet Connects Sussex to Global Village

When you grow up in Montana, talk about the "global village" or the "world community" can seem romantic at best. Rarely will a young student have any connection with people from a different ethnic or cultural background. Just a year ago, Sussex School, a private school in Missoula with 72 students in kindergarten through 8th grade, joined the American Chapter of the Associated Schools Project. Now, we have students making plans to travel to New York City in December; to go to the UN for the Student Conference on Human Rights and the Culture of Peace; to talk, work, and play with students from different countries; and to report back to our school and community on what they learned and experienced. Through our student delegates, we are going to meet our neighbors in the global village!

As the trip approaches, our excitement is growing, and so is the size of our task. To be chosen as delegates, Sussex students were expected to write an essay discussing the tension that lies between freedom of speech and hate crimes. They then participated in an interview focusing on their

thoughts about human rights. The two selected students and the alternate are now working on a study of hate groups in Montana and Idaho, and will present what they learn—along with related thoughts on schoolyard bullying—to the Sussex community and other interested groups. At the same time, they are studying the "Handbook for Delegates" to the Student Conference on Human Rights and the Culture of Peace to prepare for active participation in their upcoming workshops. Then, of course, there are the fund raising efforts, not to mention their regular schoolwork.

What a lot of work, but what an opportunity! To step, even for just a few days, into the world of cities, cultures, and languages, and to participate in the discussion of human rights and peace on earth with students from around the globe is a rare and valuable experience for people from anywhere. For our kids at Sussex, it may well be a unique occasion during this formative period of their lives.

Thomas Sanders-Garrett
Jennifer Ellis
Teachers, Sussex School
Missoula, MT

IC 21 Organizes US Participation in ART CHILD 2000

IC 21 is hosting a unique creative art opportunity for children aged 8 to 12 across the US. These young artists will join children from over 150 countries to create frescos that express their hopes for the future. Each participating country will display the frescos entered by their children. Citizen juries in each country will choose two works to be sent to Paris for an international competition. ART CHILD, a Paris based non-profit association, is organizing the international fresco contest with support from UNESCO, several not-for-profit organizations, and the private sector.

The purpose of the competition is twofold: first, to provide an opportunity for children of the world to express their cultural heritage through art; and, second, to generate funds to support education and health programs for needy "street" children worldwide. Selected frescos will be sold by an international auction house in New York. The proceeds will go to international charity organizations including UNESCO, CARE, Save the Children and others.

IC 21 has already received frescos from participating US schools, and is currently collaborating with the Jackson Hole Community Visual Arts Association (CVAA) and local teachers to create

pieces entered from Teton County, Wyoming. A US jury reflecting diverse locations, cultures and backgrounds will assemble in Jackson Hole to view works collected from across the country. The jurors will choose two works to represent the US in the international competition. All entries will be displayed at CVAA until February 2000.

IC 21 is considering compiling a publication with pictures of frescos submitted by participating US schools.



Board of Directors

Susie Rauch, Ed. D., President
Wilson, Wyoming

Benita Somerfield, Vice-President
New York, New York

Kenneth N. Musen Esq., Secretary
Bergman, Horowitz & Reynolds, P.C.
New Haven, Connecticut

William T. Close, M. D.
Big Piney, Wyoming

Eugene B. Skolnikoff
Professor, Department of Political Science, MIT
Cambridge, Massachusetts

InterConnections 21 • (307) 733-0549 • fax (307) 733-9783 • 102702.336@compuserve.com
www.IC21.org • www.aspnet-usa.org

INTERCONNECTIONS 21
P.O. Box 960 • Wilson, Wyoming USA 83014