

Connecting Youth to Global Affairs

World Link



Volume XIII

Youth Town Meeting Newspaper

Spring 2010



Photo by Reem Jubran

January 22, 2010: Unfazed by rain, traffic and an early morning, over 700 high school and middle school students from San Diego county and Tijuana gathered for the 13th Annual Youth Town Meeting at USD's Shiley Theatre

Inspirational Messages to Start off the Day

by Beatrice Martino
San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts

Global poverty is an issue that people have wrestled with for many hundreds of years. What are the causes? How do we prevent it? Where do we start? Such questions frequently arise when discussing this problem. On Friday, January 22, 2010, students from schools in the San Diego and Tijuana regions gathered at the University of San Diego (USD) for the 13th Annual Youth Town Meeting to analyze the foundations of global poverty, its significance and possible solutions.

At the opening plenary in USD's Shiley Theater, two WorldLink interns, Sam Hargrove, a junior at High Tech High International, and Kelsey Miller, a junior at La Jolla Country Day, commenced the day with an eloquent speech encouraging the students to truly engage in the discussions of the day. They emphasized the importance of youth involvement in these affairs, and asserted that trust in human ability was one of the most important things in dealing with global matters. This inspirational opening speech paved the way for the panelists who were invited to talk on the subject of "Development: Why It Matters." Three chosen panelists spoke on the subtopics of the conference: Education, Health Care, Food Security, Trade and Finance, and Infrastructure and Governance.

The first speaker was Joan Mussa, senior vice president of World Vision. She began by explaining the mission of World Vision: to serve the poor by addressing poverty from all angles in order to promote transformation. The primary focus of her speech was the significance of education in third-world countries. Mussa asserted that because a formal education system requires government action, it is difficult for World Vision to get involved, and therefore, the organization has decided to focus on providing informal education. According to Mussa, informal education is based upon community knowledge and instruction: guaranteeing proficiency in dealing with everyday situations. This includes nutrition training, HIV/AIDS awareness, agricultural knowledge, and general understanding of health. Mussa explained that even minimal knowledge of such things can completely alter a community's well-being for the better. She further asserted that there are five main things that are obstacles for children trying to get an education: a shortage of teachers (the average U.S. teacher - student ratio of 1:14 compared to Africa's 1:55), financial difficulties (paying for school supplies, tuition, etc.), and hence, child labor practices to support the family, health issues (children miss school because of diarrhea) and lastly, transportation to school. If these problems can

be addressed, education will become accessible to millions of children worldwide, and according to Mussa, this is the key to success. In her plenary speech, Mussa also urged the students to commit their lives, voices and passions to fighting poverty. She concluded by saying, "You have the power to change the world, and we leave it in your hands."

Next, Paul Bertler, USA field programs coordinator for Heifer International spoke on the deeply-rooted connection between poverty and hunger. He stated that the right to food is a human right. There are too many people in the world that are left hungry, so what shall we do about it? Bertler asserted that merely giving food to the malnourished and hungry is not enough. The roots of the problem must be addressed, and therefore Heifer International is dedicated to helping communities establish an agricultural system. Bertler further claimed that it is essential to work in conjunction with the natives to solve problems, and thereby incorporate their ideas into the process.

The last speaker of the opening plenary was Tiseke Kasambala, senior researcher of the Human Rights Watch, who described the economic and social situations of Zimbabwe and elaborated on the importance of a stable government when fighting

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<p>Global Poverty in Our Backyard: Helping the Homeless in San Diego Presenter: Rachel Jensen, president and co-founder, Girls Think Tank Moderators: Daniel Melena (SCHS) and Arianna Gomez (ORHS)</p>	Conf. Room D
<p>A Silent Tsunami: Food Security Around the World Presenter: Tori Wilson, regional recruiter, Peace Corps Moderators: Colleen Boyle (OLP) and Victor Garcia (CHAMPS)</p>	Conf. Room E
<p>A Fair Trade to Human Prosperity: How the Goods You Buy Can Make a Difference Presenters: Maria Arroyo, education and formation coordinator, Catholic Relief Services Cara McMahan, advisor, USD's Center for Awareness, Service and Action Moderators: Carlos Rodriguez (CETYS) and Margarita Vargas (EHS)</p>	Conf. Room F
<p>Build It and They Will Come: Saving Lives in Uganda through Investments in Health Care Presenter: Vivian Glyck, founder and executive director, Just Like My Child Moderators: Amanda Jereige (OLP) and Reese Russell (CHAMPS)</p>	Conf. Room H
<p>Inclusive Business for Poverty Alleviation Presenters: Patricia Marquez, professor, USD's School of Business Moderator: Nancy Munoz (CETYS)</p>	Conf. Room I
<p>Zimbabwe's Blood Diamonds: The Ugly Truth behind the Beautiful Gemstone Presenter: Tiseke Kasambala, senior researcher, Human Rights Watch Moderators: Clint Akarmann (CCHS) and Katherine Bacino (OLP)</p>	IPJ Boardroom
<p>Building a Better World, One Community at a Time Presenters: Garrett Boetzer, fundraiser coordinator, Engineers Without Borders Aren Turpening, project lead, Engineers Without Borders Moderators: Carlos Nava (CETYS) and Mariela Saldana (EHS)</p>	Room 214
<p>Improving Health in Uganda: Overcoming Powerlessness, Promoting Human Rights and Winning the War for the Poor and Vulnerable Presenters: Anita Hunter, director of International Nursing, USD's Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science Lilit Baldjyan, student, USD's Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science Moderators: Thania Herrera (CETYS) and Kaden Strong (SHS)</p>	Room 217
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Global Poverty

Speaker Bios



Maria G. Arroyo works for Catholic Relief Services (CRS) as part of the West regional office, working on education and formation on Catholic Social Teaching and global solidarity. Before her work with CRS, Arroyo served as a parish pastoral agent, a youth/university minister and taught religion in primary schools. She earned her master's degree in Theological Studies from Loyola Marymount University and recently completed an M.A. in Pastoral Care and Counseling from the University of San Diego (USD). Arroyo is also a certified spiritual director in the Center for Christian Spirituality at USD.

Lilit Baldjyan is a graduate student in the Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science at USD. Her first medical mission was to Uganda in January 2010, where she trained medical personnel to take care of children in a specialty hospital and helped develop community health programs focused on the prevention of health problems. Baldjyan graduated from UCLA with a B.S. in Biology and a minor in Armenian Cultural Studies, and has worked at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center as a research associate, investigating the causes of pre-term birth.

Paul Bertler is a field coordinator in California's Central Valley for Heifer International. He manages projects on the West Coast and runs a small organic farm in Ceres. Bertler has lived in the Philippines and Micronesia, working with communities on agriculture development projects. He has a B.S. in Natural Resource Management and Environmental Education from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, and an M.A. in Sustainable International Development from Brandeis University.

Garrett Boetzer is a manufacturing engineer and works at Vical Incorporated, a local biotech company that works on DNA vaccines and cancer therapeutics. He is also the fundraiser coordinator for Engineers Without Borders and seeks to utilize his engineering skills to give to the developing world and provide skills and technology to communities that might not otherwise have the opportunity to obtain them. Boetzer graduated from the University of California, San Diego, in 2002 with a degree in Bio-medical Engineering.

Guenevere Butler is a French teacher at San Dieguito Academy. She was formerly a health systems planning analyst at the Clinton Foundation's HIV/AIDS Initiative and a training and curriculum consultant for Partners In Health. She also has experience as an independent consultant designing health education modules for use in low-literate, resource-poor areas of Africa and Latin America. Butler has degrees from Teachers College of Columbia University and the University of North Texas and is fluent in French and Spanish.

Sean Carpenter is the technical officer of microenterprise and agri-business for Project Concern International, a San Diego-based nonprofit health and humanitarian aid organization, where he provides support to project staff and partners in 15 countries around the world. Carpenter holds an M.B.A. from the Thunderbird School of Global Management and has over 10 years of experience in economic development with an emphasis in finance, quantitative analysis and value chain assessment. Much of his work is devoted to the development of micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprises, microfinance and loan portfolio management. Carpenter has lived and worked in Mexico, France, Bolivia and Korea.

Jeffrey Church and **Nina Church** are co-founders of NIKA Water, Inc. NIKA donates 100 percent of its profits to bring clean water and education to those without these basic rights in the developing world; currently the company has four projects in Sri Lanka, Uganda, Kenya and Nicaragua. Jeffrey Church has a 25-year career in starting, building, buying and selling "for profit" businesses. He is a graduate of the Harvard Business School and Michigan State University and became a Certified Public Accountant in 1984. Nina Church is the sophomore class vice president at La Jolla Country Day School. She is actively involved in Model United Nations and maintains an honors-level grade point average, while also giving presentations on the water crisis and NIKA and developing the Agents of Change youth program.

Rishika Daryanani, 17, is a junior at High Tech High International. She is a founding member of the local chapters of both Oprah Winfrey's O Ambassadors and Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots. She also serves as secretary general for the Model United Nations program at her school. Every summer, Daryanani travels

to India where she has family and volunteers as an English teacher in underprivileged schools.

Vivian Glyck is an accomplished entrepreneur, strategic marketing consultant and esteemed author. Inspired by her love for her son born in 2007, she founded the organization Just Like My Child on the belief that every child in the world is deserving of all the dreams, hope, education, opportunities, health care and love that her son has been offered. The organization uses "deep development" – the empowerment of communities to create creative solutions to major problems – to bring an end to the suffering of women, children and families in rural Uganda.

Anita Hunter, Ph.D., is a professor in the Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science at USD and the director of its master's and International Nursing programs. She has been actively involved in international nursing and has led medical missions to Mexico, Dominican Republic, Ghana and Uganda. She has served as a medical consultant to the Minister of Health in Ghana, the Archdiocese of Uganda and the Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos Orphanage system in Mexico. Hunter has taken over 500 students, faculty and health professionals on these medical missions and has been personally involved in providing care to over 85,000 people around the world.

Rachel L. Jensen co-founded the Girls Think Tank in October 2006 and currently serves as president and board member. She is a partner at the law firm of Coughlin Stoia Geller Rudman & Robbins LLP, where she prosecutes nationwide class actions against insurance companies and other large corporations. Jensen received her law degree from Georgetown University and an undergraduate degree in International Affairs from Florida State University, where she founded a collegiate chapter of the National Organization for Women and re-opened the dormant Women's Center. She has worked for the prosecutor's office at the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, and clerked for Judge Ferguson on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Tiseke Kasambala has researched Zimbabwe for the Africa division of Human Rights Watch since 2004. She has released several reports and briefing papers on the human rights situation in Zimbabwe, including state-sponsored repression and violence, and economic, social and cultural rights such as HIV/AIDS and the right to housing. Kasambala covered the disputed presidential elections in 2008, which were marked by government-sponsored violence; the 2005 parliamentary elections in Zimbabwe; and the displacement of 700,000 Zimbabweans during mass evictions in 2005. Before joining Human Rights Watch, Kasambala worked as a campaigner and acting researcher on southern Africa for Amnesty International.

Milburn Line is the executive director of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (IPJ). He has more than 15 years of experience in international peacebuilding, human rights and development missions and projects – principally in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia and Guatemala – with various United Nations entities, intergovernmental agencies and international nongovernmental organizations. He has also worked for the Club of Madrid, an organization of former heads of state and government that addresses democratization challenges around the world. He holds a master's degree in International Affairs from Columbia University and a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina

Sara Linssen, 16, is a junior at Francis Parker School. She has been an active member of student government for the past three years, organizing events and working with large groups. In 2009, Linssen joined Hand Up, the teen-run food pantry at Jewish Family Services. She is also part of their Student Executive Committee, which organizes food drives and volunteers with different schools to bring about awareness of issues related to food insecurity. The committee also works with government officials to pass legislation about key local food insecurity issues.

David Lynch is the founder of Responsibility in Tijuana. Nearly 30 years ago, he was a special education teacher in New York and volunteered to teach children near the municipal dump in Tijuana, Mexico. He is still there. More than 3,500 children have participated in the educational programs of Responsibility in Tijuana, and the organization has built medical clinics and more than 40 homes for a community which makes its living salvaging garbage from the dump.

Patricia Marquez, Ph.D., is an associate professor of Management at USD. She was formerly a professor at IESA Business School in Caracas, Venezuela, the Cisneros Scholar at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University and a visiting professor at Harvard Business School for the 2005-6 academic year. She has taught graduate and executive education courses on Leadership and Organizational Behavior, Business Initiatives at the Base-of-the-Pyramid, Corporate Social Responsibility and Social Enterprise. Marquez's current research is on the role business can play in alleviating poverty worldwide.

Carmen Mason, 17, is a senior at High Tech High International (HTHI). Before her freshman year, she traveled to Cuba, and since then has traveled to Peru, Tanzania, Mexico and India, where she spent several weeks working on a community service project. At High Tech High, Mason is involved in clubs such as HTHI for Africa and the Cambio Club, both of which focus on bringing change to impoverished regions around the world.

Topher McDougal is an instructor of Peacebuilding and Economic Development in the Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies at USD. He has consulted for various organizations – including the World Bank, the International Association for Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research, and the International Rescue Committee – on private sector development, urban economics and public finance in postwar and developing countries. McDougal is a Ph.D. candidate at MIT's International Development Group and is the editor of the MIT International Review. He holds master's degrees in International Development and Economic Geography.

Cara McMahon works as an advisor for social issues in the Center for Awareness, Service and Action at USD. Prior to her current work, McMahon spent six years with USD's University Ministry, promoting Catholic Social Teaching through social justice education. She also taught four years of Catholic Social Ethics at the high school level. McMahon earned her M.A. in Pastoral Care and Counseling from USD and is finishing an M.A. in Global Development and Social Justice at St. John's University. Her thesis is on "Fair Trade: What's God Got to do With It?"

Joan Mussa is senior vice president of advocacy and communications for World Vision, a Christian relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. Mussa also directs the organization's Internet content and publishing ventures. She has been at World Vision for nearly two decades, first as a video journalist in Kenya and later as creative director of donor materials and head of corporate branding and communications. Mussa holds a master's degree in Broadcast Production and Management from the University of Michigan.

Clara Sekowski, 16, attended La Costa Canyon High School as a sophomore and is now at San Dieguito Academy, where she will graduate one year early. She fundraises locally for and develops projects in conjunction with Partners In Health, the international charitable organization co-founded by Paul Farmer which provides direct health care services to the sick and those living in poverty. Sekowski has done community work in Hawaii, Costa Rica and Scotland, and has traveled extensively in Europe, where she has family in Poland.

Aren Turpening is an engineer for the U.S. Department of Defense and works on numerous military bases in Southern California, upgrading electrical infrastructure. He is an accredited professional in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, and volunteers with Engineers Without Borders as project lead for a water distribution project in El Salvador. He graduated with a degree in Electrical Engineering from Western Michigan University.

Tori Wilson is a regional recruiter for the Los Angeles Office of the Peace Corps and served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Jamaica from 1998 to 2001. While there she worked for an environmental nongovernmental organization, where her projects included ecotourism development, youth camps, community organizing, environmental education in schools and an annual economic development event that brought 15,000 people to her community of 500. Wilson was awarded a Peace Corps Fellowship through Western Illinois University, where she received a Master of Recreation and Park Administration.

In Summary

Editor's Welcome: You, Me, and the World

I am humbled by the fact that you have opened this paper. Not only because it is the product of three (short) months of late nights, early mornings and long afternoons in front of a computer screen, but also because it presents the visions, thoughts and ideas of youth like yourself as they begin to discover their world. For this reason, this is not your typical letter from the editor. After all, it's more about you than it is about me.

Of course, I will not pretend that I know more about you than you do. But I can tell you one thing: As a citizen of this world—a world so unique, diverse and vibrant—it is our responsibility to be aware of this place we call home.

A lot happens in the world, and it's impossible to remain on top of it all. But just by reading this column—and hopefully the entirety of this paper—you've taken the first step to learning about the world, its people and its happenings. For over 13 years, WorldLink has been doing just that—providing youth like me and you with the most crucial information, in-depth knowledge, heart-wrenching stories and entertaining events to truly feel a deep connection with the world beyond the corners of our respective neighborhoods. For over 13 years, the WorldLink press has covered WorldLink's annual keystone event, the Youth Town Meeting, in an effort to spread the information taught at each Youth Town Meeting to those who weren't able to attend.

This year's theme of Development: Fighting Global Poverty introduces youth to the problems facing developing countries as these societies reform government, rebuild infrastructure, reassess trade and financial systems, re-provide proper access to food, redesign healthcare practices, and re-structure education in an effort to compete economically with the post-industrialized nations of today.

To learn about this, students welcomed speakers from non-profit organizations and educational institutions who spoke about their experiences with fighting poverty. Those presentations are outlined in pages 4-7 of this newspaper. In addition, a youth leader panel spoke about initiatives their respective schools are taking to provide access to proper food and healthcare services as well as educational opportunities to the less fortunate. Their work can be reviewed on page 8.

Entirely student-run, the 13th Annual Youth Town Meeting housed delegates from schools in Carlsbad, to colleges in Tijuana; from alternative schools, to low-income communities. This multi-faceted audience brought forth multiple perspectives to discussions of wealth, education, healthcare, conflict and peace. Many of these students extend these discussions to you on pages 13-14 of this newspaper.

I hope that the ideas presented in this newspaper inspire discussion among you and your peers. And if you so choose, I invite you to join me and our fellow globally minded friends at upcoming WorldLink Youth Leader meetings, forums, and of course, next year's Youth Town Meeting.

Sincerely,
Amruta Trivedi
Editor-in-Chief, Vol XIII

A Three-Legged Stool

by Megan Hastings
The Bishop's School

“What is a public and private partnership?” Sean Carpenter asked the students seated on chairs in front of him. “Why do you need to work with the private sector in addition to working with government and NGOs? Why do you need 3 legs on a stool?” These were the questions answered during the briefing session “Public/Private Partnerships: How Nonprofits and Corporations are Collaborating to Change International Development.” Sean Carpenter is the technical officer of microenterprise and agri-business for Project Concern International (PCI), a San Diego-based nonprofit organization seeking to promote sustainable development. His briefing focused on public and private partnerships and the relationships between government and private companies.

Carpenter began with a statistic about the economic development in most of the countries that PCI works in, such as Malawi, India, Nicaragua, Tanzania, and many other others around the world. In these developing countries, 85-90% of their economy is agricultural, making agriculture the #1 source of income and employment. In contrast, agriculture makes up only 2% of the United States' economy. According to Carpenter, part of economic development depends on access to credit, in addition to agriculture, and this is why microcredit has become such an important development tool. It allows impoverished people, especially women, to take out a loan, build their business enterprises and return the loan with interest. Both the bank and the loan recipient benefit in this situation. Carpenter pointed out that microcredit has become one of the most successful development tools created. The facts he presented led students to ponder if more durable and sustainable

development initiatives such as microcredit can be created on a larger scale.

This is where public and private partnerships come in. Carpenter explained that while the traditional model for a partnership involves a non-governmental organization (NGO) and a donor or non-profit organization, a public and private partnership (PPP) is a partnership between public entities such as government organizations with organizations of the private sector such as businesses or NGOs. These partnerships often begin with an NGO, which then contacts donors and businesses to educate them on issues the NGOs hope to resolve. Often times, private businesses collaborate with NGOs, independent nonprofits and government agencies, creating a very strong alliance. These partnerships are necessary because, as Carpenter stated, “at the end of the day there is more need than resources available.”

By forming new partnerships, more funds and more support are brought in. Carpenter also pointed out that businesses are often more driven towards making a profit, and want to make a difference but are not sure how to; NGOs can show businesses worthwhile causes and development issues to focus on, and gain resources and profit from the private sector. Achieving this combination of strengths creates a profit that can be reinvested and stretch the money even further. Carpenter used the example of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (GAVI) to illustrate this. GAVI works with private-sector drug companies and NGOs to provide vaccines to the world's poorest children. Because of the leverage and return that GAVI has received, it has been able to vaccinate millions more children than without its partnership with the private sector. Carpenter's briefing session illustrated that PPPs can be very successful and can change the way developing countries receive aid. ■

A Silent Tsunami

by Nina Ly
Crawford Educational Complex

“When we speak about 1.7 million people in need of urgent assistance, we refer to a food security, water, health, nutrition, and protection crisis,” said, Maxwell Gaylard the UN Coordinator for Humanitarian and Development activities. Nearly one billion people suffer from lack of food every day, and the numbers continue to grow. In the briefing “Silent Tsunami: Food Security around the World” Tori Wilson told student delates about her time serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Jamaica and how the Peace Corps helped with food security especially in Africa. Peace Corps, a U.S. government volunteer organization, has been actively recruiting people of various backgrounds and experiences in order to provide volunteer services to communities around the world. It provides investment for the future of individuals, in order to provide opportunities for life-long memorable experience. According to Wilson, Peace Corps volunteers serve for a period of 27 months - 3 months of training and 2 years in the community.

Wilson is a regional recruiter for the Los Angeles Office of the Peace Corps. She was awarded a Peace Corps Fellowship through Western Illinois University, where she received a Masters Degree in Park Administration and Recreation. From 1998 to 2001, she served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Jamaica. While she was there, Wilson worked for an environmental non-governmental organization, to help plant trees. Her projects included helping with youth camps, community organization, eco-tourism development, an economic development event

and environmental education in schools. The Peace Corps, she reflected, brought about change and empower others and help poor countries.

In the briefing session, Wilson started to introduce the knowledge about food security that Peace Corps had done. She showed a video clip about the Peace Corps volunteers in Africa with food security and agriculture of small farmers to increase food production, while promoting environmental conservation practices. They helped farmers increase income through agriculture, environmental conservation support. It also highlighted farmers and the introduction of technology to prevent soil erosion and reduce the use of harmful pesticides to supplement the soil. Together, they worked in integrated projects, often with vegetable cultivation, livestock management, and agroforestry. They also assist in the implementation of agricultural projects to the market and the sale of surplus. According to Wilson, food security is the access to food. According to the Food and Agriculture organization, food security exists “when all people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe

and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

At the end, Wilson stated, “One person can make a difference. As Peace Corps volunteers, we are all only one person, moving to a community to bring about change and empower others, and we do that. If we even educate one person about ways their household can be food secure or protect themselves from HIV/AIDS or how to do a personal budget, then that one person can educate others.” Victor Garcia, a student moderator, from Crawford CHAMPs gave his idea of what he learned from Wilson's seminar, “The briefing, ‘Silent Tsunami: Food Security around the World’ let us know how access to food helps in Africa and how the Peace Corps fixes the food security problems.” In short, food security can be counted as a problem of fighting global poverty. As a result, the Peace Corps organization collects worldwide volunteers to help with food security to fight global poverty, reinforcing Gaylard's emphasis on food security, water, health, nutrition, and protection crisis. ■

Ending Hunger at Home

by Aleli Balaguer
San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts

In room 220 of the Institute for Peace & Justice, students sitting face-to-face were thrust into a heavy discussion: confronting the problem of Food Security prevalent in their own homes.

Paul Bertler, field coordinator of Heifer International, challenged students of different backgrounds to consider the extent to which their families were classified as Food Secure. In a readily-applicable YouTube video, Bertler, of Wisconsin, introduced the colloquial term Bodega, meaning a Hispanic-based mini-mart with a lotto store atmosphere. Inside the Bodega, the average man could purchase mini donuts, ice honey buns, pork rinds, and ice cream sandwiches, all for an unbelievably cheap price.

The briefing commenced with an establishment of the definition of Food Security: the availability and accessibility of food. Bertler confronted students with the idea that while poverty exists globally, we need to help the impoverished here within our own boundaries. A discussion followed, allowing for the free flow of students' ideas: how it is cheaper to buy unhealthy food than it is to buy healthy food, how there may be some circumstances where people have the money but not the means of providing healthy food to their families (for example, not having access to a supermarket or to a kitchen) and how season-sensitive, labor-produced foods, in general, would cost more than in-demand, factory-produced foods. Bertler even addressed the fact that farmers producing commodity crops are granted government

subsidies because their crops are seen as more of a priority than the specialty crops of small-scale farmers. (Here, Bertler advised students that this is why, when we are



Maria Arroyo reviews fair trade



Topher McDougal with student moderators

In Summary

of age, it is very important who we elect to political office.) Through government subsidies, commodity crop farmers are given more of a means of getting known, than specialty crop farmers. According to Bertler. This is ultimately why specialty crop farmers have to charge higher prices for their produce. All in all, America is all about convenience; time and energy is wasted throughout the average American's day.

To display the rapid increase in the food security movement and to exemplify how we can become more involved within the movement, Bertler provided a YouTube video on Food Works, a youth group in Portland, Oregon. Once similar to the Bodega community, Portland was in need of change. The urban youth immediately took charge and an unemployment program on how food and farming works was put into action. Students both in the Portland community and in Bertler's IPJ briefing recognized that food could be grown independently and either sold at local Farmer's Markets, or donated to local neighborhoods. Even



Students, teachers and speakers enjoy lunch in front of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice

after the video, students conversed with one another about whether or not this practice seemed practical. They came to the conclusion that indeed it was; Victoria Matthews, SCPA, commented on how her grandparents are able to maintain a cost-efficient, environmental-friendly organic garden. By the end of the briefing, students were able to walk away with an understanding of how simply getting out into the community and doing something about the food they eat would make a significant difference in their lives and the lives of those around them. ■

Build it and They will Come

by Kathlene Manimtim
San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts

“Where you are born should not determine where you live or die,” says Vivian Glyck, the founder and executive director of the Just Like My Child Foundation. After visiting Uganda, Glyck found the inspiration to start the Just Like My Child Foundation, realizing that just like her own son, every child deserves equal opportunities.

The Just Like My Child Foundation uses an approach of “deep development”, empowering communities to move towards their own development and self-reliance by creating long-term solutions in education, healthcare and microenterprise. Glyck believes that in order to help Uganda, it is necessary to channel aid, resources and equipment directly to the people village by village.

The statistics are straightforward: 25 million Africans are infected with the HIV virus, 12 million children are already orphaned by AIDS and by 2012 that number is expected to rise to 20 million. Every 30 seconds an African child dies of malaria –300 children a day– a preventable disease that can be treated with a \$7 medication. Quoting her personal hero, Bono, Glyck says, “these aren't statistics, this is an emergency. You can't turn your back on injustices just because it's not happening in your own backyard.”

Quoting the butterfly effect of chaos theory, Glyck asks, “Does the flap of a butterfly's wings in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas?” The Just Like My Child Foundation began partnering with the Bishop Caesar Asili hospital in central Uganda in 2006. Through this main hospital and its 12 outlying clinics, Just Like My Child has provided over 600,000 people in 48 villages with health care. After first buying the hospital, a generator, and hiring the hospital's first doctor the Foundation also purchased a CD4 analyzer, an instrument necessary for AIDS anti-retroviral testing, an ambulance, and bed nets. The

organization and hospital also began building schools, and implementing malaria prevention education and mentoring programs and scholarship programs for school-aged children. On par with the butterfly effect, these investments were their “butterflies;” these seemingly minute investments coming from a young foundation brought far more attention and support they ever thought possible. Larger organizations are getting involved, spurred by the Foundation's initiative and such assistance and investment continues to make the Foundation's mission even more possible, proving Glyck's belief that “you never know the chain of events you might start...because there's no way that you can stop yourself from making a difference.”

There were challenges in starting the Foundation, including working with an unfamiliar culture and finding the partners that were ready and seeking, but, according to Glyck, the biggest

resistance may have come from the lack of hope. In communities where people struggled in dire conditions with little prospect of aid nearly to the point of hopelessness, Glyck felt one of her greatest hurdles was inspiring people on a big level. But she learned that “spark of hope,” like a butterfly, could make all the difference. The Foundation's first venture in partnering with the Bishop Caesar Asili Hospital has since grown, and while they still work to provide fundamental healthcare, branching out to education, and microenterprise, where financial services and opportunities are made available to the

self-employed and low-income, communities are strengthening in their self-reliance. The Just Like My Child Foundation depends on the advocacy and donations of its supporters and from donating money, volunteering time, hosting events, working with schools and just spreading the word the involvement in the foundation's work spans all levels. And as Glyck knows from her own experience, “a butterfly's wings can ignite a sequence of events you never imagined.” ■

Whiteboard of Hope

by Alexa Kern
Canyon Crest Academy

When Anita Hunter, Ph.D., and Lilit Baldjyan set out for their two week medical mission in Uganda, they had a list of goals they intended to accomplish. But at the hospital they visited, lacked one vital tool that would help improve its quality—a white board. In the United States, white boards are a staple in classrooms, offices, homes and hospitals, but in a developing country like Uganda, they don't exist. Hunter and Baldjyan were forced to create a makeshift board with laminated paper. The white board was the basis of organization and communication at the local hospital. Hunter, the director of the Masters Program at the University of San Diego's Hahn School of Nursing, was Friday's speaker on the topic of Improving Healthcare in Uganda: Overcoming Powerlessness, Promoting Human Rights and Winning the War for the Poor and Vulnerable. She was also joined by graduate student, Lilit Baldjyan.

In the beginning of the briefing, Hunter proposed the question: Is development possible? While Hunter believes the answer is yes in order to achieve development, the solution must involve some way of creative thinking. This briefing was centered on improving health care in Uganda and the factors that account for the lack of proper health care. Living conditions, improper education, poverty and corruption are all to blame for this current situation. Hunter and her team

of students, nurses and doctors are devoted on improving

the statistics of this developing country. That children in Uganda are dying too young from preventable conditions. That many are dying from malnutrition, malaria and HIV. These problems are preventable and treatable. Hunter believes that these children are the future and they must be saved.

After returning from Uganda, Baldjyan gained a new perspective on health care in the United States. She witnessed the hospital had three patients per one bed due to over crowdedness. In order to improve these conditions, Hunter, along with Baldjyan and the rest of her team will continue to provide their support to Ugandan hospitals. Hunter has plans to return to Uganda in July and is ready to accomplish even more on her next mission. ■



Vivian Glyck speaks about healthcare in Uganda

Give an Education

by Andrea Seikaly
Our Lady of Peace

The WorldLink program focuses on emphasizing the role that students can play in shaping a better world for tomorrow. However, it is also important to recognize the fact that there are many children who are not able to receive an education. In fact, these children can be found just miles from the University of San Diego in the border town of Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico. WorldLink speaker David Lynch came into contact with such children nearly 30 years ago and has taken the steps to respond to this injustice.

Lynch dedicated much of his life working as a special education teacher in New York. In July of 1980, he was presented the opportunity to spend one month in Tijuana working with the children there. While in Mexico, Lynch became acquainted with the “basureros” of the Tijuana garbage dump. These children spend the majority of their time rifling through the heaps of garbage that are deposited each day and searching for scraps of glass that can be exchanged for money at a recycling center. Among other negative aspects, Lynch particularly noted that the clouds of dust, pesky flies, and stench of the festering garbage were unbearable conditions for these children. Lynch's main concern, however, was that the child basureros were not going to school because, in addition to their poverty, the closest educational facility was two miles away. He decided to take matters into his own hands and began to lie out tarps and teach the children informally. The following summer, Lynch requested a six-week return trip to Tijuana during which he was able to set up more formal schooling conditions. During the summer of 1982, Lynch left his job in New York and became the director of a Pre-School and Kindergarten facility in Tijuana.

Lynch has since founded his organization Responsibility, which focuses on what Lynch believes to be his duty - educating the children of the garbage dump area in an attempt to end the cycle of poverty that plagues this region of the world. This foundation has received attention and support from many well-known figures including actors Susan Sarandon and Edward James Olmos and TV journalist Bill O'Reilly.

Lynch believes that providing children with an education is the most effective way to help them for a lifetime. For example, he pointed out that the people cannot fill out job applications if they have not been taught to read or write. Also, families that cannot afford telephones are also unable to receive calls from potential employers. Lynch's schools give the children of the Tijuana garbage dump the option of receiving an education. These effects of the lack of education for the children see **Education**, p. 6



Sean Carpenter explains public/private partnerships through Project Concern International

In Summary

Education, cont'd from p.5

of the garbage dump are now lessened as a direct result of Responsibility. The Responsibility schools have now come full circle. One of his former students now teaches in one of the schools and his children have been able to attend school from an earlier age than their father had. "Stories like these are what keep us going," Lynch remarked. "They show us that we truly are making a difference." Lynch has since begun a similar Responsibility project in Nicaragua and plans to continue his efforts to educate children in impoverished areas. With this sense of hope and optimism, David Lynch is helping to break the cycle of poverty — one child at a time. ■

Fair Trade and Coffee Beans

by Connor Stephenson
Sunset High School

Cara McMahon and Maria Arroyo, Catholic Relief Services contributors hosted a session about using Fair Trade Coffee to better the lives of third world farmers living off of literally dollars a day. McMahon is a USD student working towards a masters degree in Global Development and Arroyo works for Catholic Relief services.

Upon being seated, the audience was asked to check the tags on their coats or jackets, and report back as to where their clothing was made. Only one item in the class was from the USA; the other items of clothing were produced in areas ranging from East Asia to South America. Arroyo then noted that each of these products were not simply created, then shipped directly to a retail outlet for easy purchase. Rather, each individual part of each product was made, shipped, assembled, shipped to an exporter, then shipped to an importer, distributor, warehouse, and finally, to a retail environment. According to Arroyo, that's just a simplified version of current global economics; products are known to switch hands through a multitude of buyers before they are finally purchased by the user; each time the product is resold, it is subject to a markup.

Although a seemingly offensive concept, it is a basic building block for the global economy. Import (and export) exist to bring supply from an area where it is not demanded, to an area where it is. Everyone seems to benefit from the chain excepting the party at each end. The consumer, or user of the item must pay a drastically higher price for a product that was sent around the world, than for a product that was sent around the corner to a retail environment. A product that may have left the farm owners hands was likely manufactured at mere cents per pound often reaches the consumer at well over ten dollars per pound. This may be the price that must be paid for the products that we demand, but advocating for the consumer is a healthy process to keep big businesses from over capitalizing. The other party to receive the short end of the stick in this chain is the direct producer of the product. They are paid minimal wages to maximize profit for the managers, importers, exporters, distributors, marketing teams, and even governments that want in on the money to be had in simply handling a product between the producer and the user.

Fair trade guarantees the farmer not only a fair rate for their product, but also guarantees a buyer. So, regardless of dips in demand, the farmer will always make a certain amount of dollars for their product. These farming subsidies were implemented in Roosevelt's New Deal program and given to all farmers of certain crops in an attempt to lower the exorbitant prices that actions of large corporations mixed with the economic decline of The Great Depression had caused. The differences between a Fair Trade agreement and a farm subsidy is that subsidies are not optional, and are paid by tax-payer dollars, whereas Fair Trade farmers are paid through increased prices to the consumer, and the program is optional for any farmers who wish to join in.

Currently, the Peruvian Nuevo Sol exchanges for 35¢ American. The Financial Times did a study of the improvement of payment for Peruvian Fair Trade farmers in September of 2006 and found an average free trade farmer received 8 soles daily, and the average Fair Trade farmer saw an increase to ten soles.

Fair trade is a concept beneficial to small scale farmers, but it is not without flaws. Conservatives will be

turned off by the program's similarity to a subsidy or a government handout. By offering a guaranteed rate for any products, Fair Trade has the potential to stifle the growth of these small farms into larger businesses. Fair trade also produces artificial demand for a product, which is known to lead to surplus and an increase in pricing across the board. The opinion on the political left is that these pennies on the dollar that fair trade may add to each farmers wages are simply too little of an improvement to be satisfied with.

When all is said and done, Fair Trade is a benevolent program that has improved the lives of farmers in third world countries. However, it should not be seen as the pinnacle of economic policy because there is always more work to be done to benefit those who suffer poor wages and long hours. Fair Trade is just one of many stepping stones on the path to ending poverty. ■



Delegates get to know each other before a briefing session

Engineering a Better World

by Carissa Dieli and Tray Hayes
Our Lady of Peace and the MET High School

“We take what we know and expand it,” said Aren Turpening, an engineer for the U.S. Department of Defense and volunteer for Engineers Without Borders (EWB). EWB implements what its members know best— engineering— and finds ways they can use it to do good in the world. Like Turpening, Garrett Boetzer, a manufacturing engineer at Vical Inc. and fundraising coordinator for EWB, combines his passion for engineering with his work at EWB. At its most basic level, Turpening describes engineering as “figuring out how things work.” Staying constant with this, EWB finds out what a community needs to function better and improve the quality of life for the people living in that area. After discovering the problem, they come up with a solution.

However, Turpening and Boetzer wanted to make it clear that EWB is not a disaster relief program. Boetzer explained that EWB works with communities that “aren’t on the news.” Instead of going to places that receive publicity because of a single tragic event, EWB commits to villages and communities that are hindered by tragic circumstances. EWB works to create a more flourishing world by addressing basic human needs that are not present in all parts of the world. A lack of electricity and access to a clean water supply are two of the problems that EWB works to fix in remote areas. This, among other reasons, is why EWB does work strictly outside of the United States.

At the moment, the San Diego chapter of EWB, called San Diego Area Professional Engineers, is working on three projects. Two of the projects— one in India and the other in El Salvador— are focused on obtaining a clean water source for the villages. The third, which is in Kenya, concentrates on “designing and building an off-grid solar power system that can power a community center,” as Turpening explained.

With a five-year commitment to each of the communities, EWB strives to make lasting improvements. The company and its members find out what the people need and they make something that will satisfy those needs for many years after EWB has left. Boetzer explained, “We want to build a long-term relationship with them. We want to make sure that what we install

works. With the five-year commitment, we are able to serve their needs long-term and if they have some new [issues] that arise, we can continue to work with those communities and build the educational resources they have along with the infrastructure.” Caitlin Handy, a junior at the Academy of Our Lady of Peace, found this five-year commitment to the community one of the most appealing aspects of the organization. Handy said, “I like that EWB works to ensure that the communities have a long-term solution to their problem.” Handy found the work that EWB does “exciting, even though engineering isn’t something that I have a great interest in.”

EWB has roughly 12,000 members in more than 250 chapters nation-wide. Almost 200 of those chapters are for college students. Locally, it has chapters at SDSU and UCSD. Boetzer enthusiastically declared, “It’s amazing how much the colleges get done.” In keeping constant with the WorldLink message, EWB provides outstanding opportunities for young people to get involved with different cultures and make a difference in the world. ■

Alleviating Poverty through Business

by Katrina Ilich
La Jolla Country Day School

At the 2010 Youth Town Meeting, speaker Dr. Patricia Márquez, a business professor at the University of San Diego, focused on trying to tackle poverty from a different angle: not through alms given via charities, not from any kind of physical philanthropy (i.e. volunteerism); not through any methods depending on altruistic, and therefore, not fully reliable, senses. Poverty, according to Márquez, can be eliminated through business. Yes, pure, uncaring, selfish, greedy—to select from some common, propagated adjectives—enterprise. Márquez, who is also a former professor of the IESA Business School in Caracas, Venezuela and former Cisneros Scholar and visiting professor at Harvard University, opened her presentation with a simple picture.

It was an aerial shot of a grey expanse—a city, clearly. What was not so clear was what city it was. That, naturally, was the first question Márquez asked the audience. Various answers were shot out: Buenos Aires? Phoenix? San Diego? The point of the exercise was to illustrate that the answer (Bogotá, for the record) didn’t matter, because most can’t tell the difference, anyway. All the buildings, all the objects perched on that hazy horizon, were the direct result of an increase in business, which tends to have similar results—GDP growth, job opportunity, increase of regional wealth—everywhere, and more importantly, is viable everywhere. That was the main message Marquez was trying to convey.

As Marquez identified, it’s really only a matter of dispelling the misconstrued perception that poverty is absolutely perpetual and that people from poorer areas have nothing to offer in terms of profit. The fact is, however, that they do. Though, admittedly, the profit to be gleaned per person in such places is considerably less than what might be exhumed from citizens elsewhere. However, as Marquez noted, those better-off persons living in American suburbs, in the hearts of European cities, or in similar places, likely already have the services they need. Their money, rather than going to a newly-started waste management company, is going to a monstrous conglomerate that said waste management company can’t possibly compete with. In other words, that small business is thrown out of the industrial loop—materials that need to be disposed of are not being cleared, jobs are not being created, profit for further investment is not being made—and everyone is worse off because of it. Márquez points out that not all is lost, however, because customers are still in Asia, Africa and South and Central America. The three-billion-some inhabitants of those areas might have in their hands the power to make businesses thrive.

It seems odd, Márquez told the audience, that a poor woman living in the slums, or “barrios,” as they’re called, of Bogotá would have cable television. But Márquez had witnessed the anomaly, herself—in fact, she was the one who spotted it, having been in Bogotá for research—and she showed the audience a picture to prove it. There, on the crumbling rooftop of that poor woman’s house was fastened a DirecTV satellite dish. Márquez asked her how she could possibly afford such a thing. The woman responded by admitting that, while she did have to forego certain other things and work harder to pay for the cost of the television and satellite, it was worth it. Why? Because the broadcasts helped keep her boys out of trouble—rather than causing ruckus around the neighborhood, and possibly getting involved with drugs or gangs, they were safely in the house watching the football game. Márquez’s ultimate point? Businesses, rather than shying away from poverty, should start honing in on it. ■

In Summary

Helping the Homeless

by Aditi Trivedi
Canyon Crest Academy

The hustle and bustle of our self-centered lives temporarily stopped as a diverse group of students entered Rachel Jensen's forum. For students growing up with the privilege of having proper health care, access to appropriate education, and enough financial stability to support themselves, it is often difficult to grasp the scope and universality of poverty and homelessness. This forum connected this global problem to our local San Diego community, and assessed the uneven distribution of wealth around the world.

The forum began with an introductory simulation of this distribution. Jensen substituted wealth with candies. She gave lots of candies to an exclusive, small group of people, while only a few pieces to larger groups. She asserted that the foundation for homelessness is this uneven per capita wealth – a fundamental concept in solving, or preventing problems like poverty. Jensen advised that in order to ensure proper living conditions for more people around the globe, those with proper food and shelter must understand and act upon the unevenly distributed living conditions in “our own backyard”. Through this game, delegates simulated the distribution of candy with wealth, and were able to better understand the larger implications of homelessness and how it is not brought on by the homeless people themselves, but rather by the structure of society and the “system.”

After a brief discussion about homelessness and poverty around our own communities, Jensen went on to describe the need to reform these “systems” (the way the general public/society views accommodations, in this case, for homeless people) in San Diego. Jensen, a lawyer by profession, co-founded a local activist group, “Girls Think Tank,” to assist the homeless in San Diego. This group, founded in October 2006, aims to help alleviate poverty in San Diego by donating goods to the homeless and educating the larger public on ways to help this cause. “Of the 10,000 homeless in San Diego, 40% are veterans,” she said, “the highest percent increase of homeless people are currently women and families with kids.”

As poverty and homelessness are population dependent, and preventable situations, Jensen's efforts are often fulfilling and rewarding. She explained to us, that after meeting with numerous groups of homeless people, she has concluded the worst situations the homeless face are dehydration, unkempt public bathrooms and bad showers. Therefore, it is crucial to change this “system” of viewing accommodations, to eventually provide clean drinking water and adequate sanitation for the homeless as well as for the public in San Diego.

While Jensen's thought-provoking forum generally followed a sincere tone, it ended on a hopeful and optimistic note. She asserted we are the youth – the next generation, and have the potential to do great things for the greater good. Her decision to devote her time and efforts to act locally stemmed from the understanding of a more serious, and global, major problem, and persists to facilitate and ease the lives of many of our very own neighbors. Lastly, she concluded, “in whatever little ways, get involved, and use your skills to help other people.” ■

Tackling Manual Scavenging

by Salma Hashi
The MET High School

When thinking about the struggles that people face around the world, one's thoughts do not often stray toward the caste system in India's poor villages. These issues surrounding the poorer citizens of the villages has not been as publicized as other dilemmas have, but at the 13th Annual WorldLink Youth Town Meeting, speaker Topher McDougal, instructor of Peacebuilding and Economic Development at the Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies at the University of San Diego, thoroughly addressed the facts about the caste-based occupation that many of the poorer women in the villages are subjected to: manual scavenging.

McDougal introduced the students attending the meeting to the lifestyles that people face in India due to the caste system that dominates their lives. The system, a type of social structure which divides people on the basis of inherited social status, is broken into four different groups: the Brahmins, the scholars and priests; the Kshatriya, the warriors; the Vaishya, the farmers; and the Sudra, the laborers.

The Dalits, or the untouchables, are below the four, higher castes. McDougal focused on the tasks that the Dalits had to perform as manual scavengers. McDougal's research was centered in the village of Paliyad in the state of Gujarat, India. The Dalits, generally women, are subjected to manual scavenging, a social practice used as a sanitation solution. The tasks of the scavengers include cleaning the bodily waste of people of the higher castes.

Although this practice is illegal, McDougal explained, it still goes on, endangering the lives of the Dalits with the release of pathogens into the air and the lack of soap and safe water. Coupled with the health hazards, gender dimensions are another factor in manual scavenging that McDougal addressed.

He explained the detriments that the women face when working, such as violence, limited occupational choice, having to work through pregnancy and impacts on, as stated before, health, as well as education.

McDougal gave a special emphasis on the technological impacts on manual scavenging. He explained that the more developed a society is, the more advanced the technology is. The better technology includes toilets with water, which lessens the need for scavenging. But, due to water scarcity, these technological advances have not spread to villages like Paliyad. This scarcity also effects health, since it increases the need for Dalits and keeps them in contact with deadly pathogens.

McDougal then went on to introduce a potential solution to the issue: Ecological Sanitation (Eco-San). This is a process in which human waste is recycled into a useful and hygienically safe resource with a high nutritional value. The use of this process eliminates the need to handle unsafe human waste with the use of mineral water, as well as lowers the cost of water for the disposal of human waste, not to mention the use of manual scavenging as a means of disposal.

With this in mind, McDougal left the delegates with a question to ask themselves: would this indeed make sense? The question is not whether it makes sense; it is whether or not people are willing to take the step to make India better for all who inhabit it.

Good Job Salma! You cover the situation really well. I would just recommend that you avoid generalizations and see if you can get more quotations from students (maybe their reactions to what McDougal said and/or eco-san.) Also, connect the article and the situation of the Dalits with the overall theme of Development a bit more. ■

Healthcare Reforms in Rwanda

by Arielle Pardes
School of Creative and Performing Arts

While the United States grapples with debates on health care reform, faraway nations like Rwanda are taking big strides.

An expert on Rwandan health care reform is Guenevere Butler, guest speaker at the 13th Annual WorldLink Youth Town Meeting, who witnessed first-hand how health care reform is revolutionizing Rwanda. Butler, a French teacher at San Dieguito Academy, spent a year working in Rwanda as a representative of the Ministry of Health. Although her formal education focused on foreign languages and international development, she says her education on foreign nations pointed her to the concerns of health care, which led her to the Ministry of Health in Rwanda.

The Ministry of Health is responsible for a health care reform project. After the infamous Rwandan genocide in 1994, government officials have been replaced and the country has become remarkably stabilized—but the effects of the genocide are severe when it comes to health care. A disproportionate number of educated citizens were murdered in the genocide, leaving just one physician for every 500,000 Rwandans. The gravity of this problem caused the Ministry of Health to adopt their project on health care reform.

As a commissioned Ministry of Health worker, Butler participated in a project that helped to transform Rwandan health care. Butler and her colleagues visited health clinics and conducted surveys, asking doctors and nurses which supplies they lacked and what they most desperately needed. After compiling data, Butler's team recommended changes and formed plans with the nurses to improve healthcare. “There was a huge amount of input from the Rwandan people,” said Butler. “The key to improvement in a foreign nation is communication with the community.”

In spite of enormous gains in various sectors, Rwandan health care still faces serious challenges. “A nurse in Rwanda has about the equivalent of a high school education,” reported Butler, “and your lab at school is probably better equipped than the scientific labs in Rwanda.” Most clinics and hospitals are also lacking telephones, computers, and internet service.

Another aim of health care improvement is to make health services more accessible to citizens. Clinics are currently out of reach for many villages, and hospitals are much too far for many rural citizens. This issue is especially pressing as over half

of Rwandan children are born at home—not in a health clinic or hospital—because their villages are too far for a mother in labor to walk. For children born with birth complications or mothers who are HIV positive, the distance of health facilities is distressing. The Ministry of Health aims to provide a health facility within one hour walking distance from every village.

Butler believes that “the key to Rwandan reform is the presence of a stable government” and that neighboring nations can look to Rwanda as an example for their swiftly improving health care. The Ministry of Health project that Butler worked with is currently about four years old and is continuing to improve the quality of health care in Rwanda. ■

A Call to Action

by Ariela Garcia and Bridget Vaughn
Our Lady of Peace and The Bishop's School

With a newfound understanding of global poverty and development crises, nearly 800 WorldLink delegates entered the Shiley Theatre at USD for the Youth Town Meeting's Closing Plenary. A unanimous feeling of motivation and purposefulness was apparent as students eagerly shared their ideas about the day's diverse briefing sessions. Daniel Melena, a junior at Steele Canyon High School, and a Summer '09 WorldLink Intern, opened the plenary by introducing panel experts Rachel L. Jensen and Milburn Line.

Taking the floor first, Jensen urged students to take initiative and leadership to brainstorm ideas to alleviate poverty. She asked the audience, “What can you do to alienate poverty in the future? The answer really lies with you”. Katherine Bacino, a senior at Our Lady of Peace, suggested that the first step is “gaining perspective” and a greater understanding of today's most pressing issues. Kelsey Miller, a WorldLink Intern and junior at La Jolla Country Day, added a more specific idea: using microfinance to alleviate poverty. All the ideas were recorded on a whiteboard that displayed the great promise of today's youth. Jensen closed by stating the best way that the students can help people towards a better future is by educating themselves first. She told the students to help the homeless population in San Diego by “taking a step towards helping gain back the dignity of those who feel as though they have lost it.”

The second plenary speaker, Milburn Line, has dedicated more than fifteen years of his life in international peacebuilding, human rights and development missions and projects. Line began by telling of his childhood, stating that during that time, he and his generation was unable to do much to help others, but that younger generations have the capacity to grow and contribute to the world. Line proposed his view of a “continuum of development,” in which each generation is capable of understanding the past and improving the future.

One hundred years ago, 13.5% of Americans gained a high school education; today that number is nearly 100%. At that time, there was only 24% participation in the female work force, today that number has more than doubled to 59%. However, despite our success in these aspects, there have also been major setbacks in the last hundred years of history.

Line pointed out a major flaw in the idea of “development” as defined by the U.S. Government. The idea of “development” was created as a reaction to World War II, and was extremely limited in its impact. It was restricted to so-called “experts” in the fields of economics or politics, and did not engage the general public. He believes that in order to modernize this concept of development, everyday people, despite lack of so-called expertise, must actively participate. “The learning process” according to Line “is just as much a part of the game as credentialing yourself.”

Line left the audience with a favorite quote of his, from the Journal of Human Development, “people are both the means and the ends of development.” This should be remembered as delegates and speakers alike move away from the WorldLink Youth Town Meeting towards the difficult but promising road to poverty alleviation.

To close the day, WorldLink interns Kaylen Dornan, of High Tech High International, and Clint Akerman, of Cathedral Catholic High School, called to the delegates to use their new found knowledge to educate others in their communities about global development. ■



Student delegates review presentation handouts

Spotlight

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

by Sandra Anton
School of Creative & Performing Arts

Four local young women shared their accomplishments and experiences, proving that youth leaders can make a difference. This year's Youth Town Meeting focused on development and what youth can do to join the fight against global poverty.

Sarah Linssen



Sarah Linssen, 16, from Francis Parker School spoke at the main briefing session on January 22. During her presentation, Linssen revealed shocking statistics regarding the issue of hunger. "45 million people are hungry, 49 million in the U.S. live in households that lack consistent access to food, and 300,000 people are served food here in San Diego," she explained. She also stated that San Diego has risen to 12.6% of people that are considered "hungry", the highest percentage in the past 50 years. "Each person knows someone that is hungry, with more than 730,000 [San Diego] county residents struggling to put food on the table," she described.

Linssen's inspiration to help feed the hungry came from a suggestion from her dad. "He suggested that I get involved with Hands Up, the teen-run food pantry at Jewish Family Services, which "works to feed those that are homeless and anyone else that needs food," she explained. The food pantry distributes over 850 food bags per month. At the first military distribution, seeing all the people waiting in line affected her tremendously, "It broke my heart to see those that are trying so hard to keep up at home, as their loved ones are gone."

Linssen encourages that youth get involved with Food Drives because any hunger should be a priority. "It is an everyday reality that can be fixed," she stated. "Not having to worry about food should be a civil liberty that everyone is awarded with." ■

Clara Sekowski

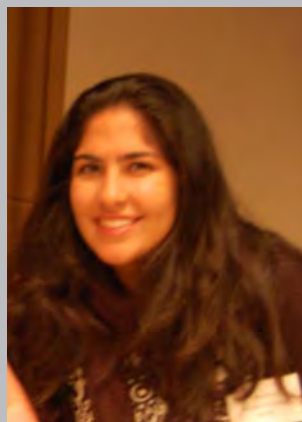


Clara Sekowski, 16, from San Diego Ceguito Academy, Sekowski introduced the topic of healthcare by posing a couple of questions to the audience including, "How many of you are allergic to something?" and "How many of you rely on medication?" She stated that if any of us had a stroke, we could easily get to the nearest hospital and be treated. "In Nigeria, if you get a scrape, you could die within a year," she stated, comparing our healthcare with Nigeria's. For many, "the closest hospital is days away. The Nigerian people, she explained, have to take the train, the bus and then walk up a hill to get to the nearest hospital. By the time they get there, it is too late." She believes that many countries have the infrastructure to help others, and they should.

That is why she decided to get involved with Partners In Health. "Healthcare is a right of people." Partners In Health works to bring modern medical care to poor communities in countries around the world. They have three goals: to care for their patients, to alleviate the root causes of disease in communities, and to share the lessons learned with others.

Sekowski admitted that it is difficult to get involved when you are under 18. "Volunteering and internships often require a degree," she explained. However, she advises reaching out to people instead of chapters. "It is a more direct way of getting things accomplished. Never underestimate the power of networking," she wisely stated. Sekowski also advises to get help from school administrators. "Administrators really do want to help you out." She used that method in order to set herself up for early graduation. see **Sekowski**, p.12

Rishika Daryanani



17-year-old, Rishika Daryanani from High Tech High International has always been passionate about global issues. Her parents have been her driving force in life, teaching her to care about other people and help others. "They led by example," she explained. Something that inspired her to get active is the fact that 400 million people do not have easy access to clean water. "I have running water in my home and can brush my teeth whenever I want, but others do not have that opportunity," she explained.

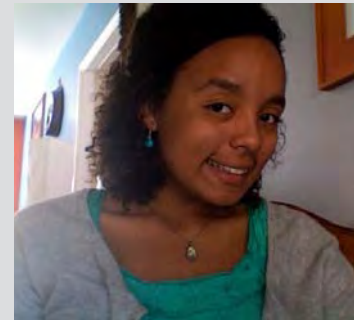
Daryanani also felt inspired when she traveled to India on a family vacation. She witnessed people living in horrible conditions there. "I was aware of poverty in San Diego, but the poverty in India was on a completely different level." She decided to spend her time teaching English at a school there. She often heard stories of tragedy and hardship from the students, which allowed her to realize that every single contribution makes a difference.

However, Daryanani did not just focus her efforts on India. She became the founding member of the local chapters of both Oprah Winfrey's O Ambassadors and Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots at her school. The O Ambassadors program was created by Oprah Winfrey and Free The Children's Craig Kielburger, designed to encourage young people to become active global citizens. The program inspires thousands of youth in North America to make a difference for their peers in developing countries by spreading awareness and working toward the UN Millennium Development Goals, which focus on poverty, education, health, and sustainable development. The Roots & Shoots Program focuses on making positive change happen for communities, animals, and the environment. With tens of thousands of young people in almost 100 countries, the network connects youth of all ages who share a desire to create a better world.

Daryanani admits that at times, the process of becoming active was overwhelming. "There are so many opportunities, but the best way to channel efforts is to work on a global level," she explained. She encourages youth to try as many things as humanly possible and never be afraid to be curious and ambitious. "Poverty is a never ending see **Daryanani**, p.12

Local Youth
working
to make a
difference
in the world

Carmen Mason



17-year-old Carmen Mason from High Tech High International (HTHI) also presented at the Youth Town Meeting. Mason grew up knowing that everything is connected. "We all live on this planet so we should all share," she explained. Her grandmother and mother inspired her to help others and act kindly at a young age. Since then, Mason has traveled to Cuba, Peru, Tanzania, Mexico, and India, working on community service projects.

At school, Mason is involved in HTHI for Africa, where she has worked to raise money and awareness of issues in Sub-Saharan Africa. She is also passionate about the issue of child soldiers. She volunteered for The Rescue for Invisible Children, which involves concerned citizens uniting to deliver the innocent from Kony's reign and ensure he is brought to justice. Thousands of participants gather in 100 cities across the world to symbolically abduct themselves to free the abducted. "We also host an annual benefit show to raise money so that 3 students can go to Africa," she explained.

Mason has also realized that these issues are in our own backyards. Downtown San Diego has opened her eyes and made her realize the severity of poverty. "They deserve shelter, food, happiness, and motivation," she declared.

She admits that finding your passion can be extremely hard, but recommends finding different organizations and getting involved. "It is okay if you don't know where to start," she states. "It is a good idea to start looking at the different clubs that your school offers." Mason also emphasizes maintaining hope and utilizing your voice, "You have a voice, no matter what age. It is a human gift, so use it to the best of your abilities," Mason advises. ■

Spotlight

Zimbabwe's Blood Diamonds: The Ugly Truth Behind the Beautiful Gemstone

by Zachary Jones and Bridget Vaughn
San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts and The Bishop's School

In 2006, diamonds were found in Zimbabwe. The government, hoping to pocket money from the mines, took over and declared the mines a free-for-all. 2000-2009, foreign correspondents were banned from Zimbabwe. When people were finally allowed back into the Marange diamond fields, the world soon learned of how diamonds were actually being mined. In February 2009, 200 were killed and thousands more wounded when the Army stormed the diamond mines and took over under orders from Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe. The government had now claimed the fields for itself, and resorted to forced labor of men, women, and children to mine them. The Zimbabwean soldiers smuggle out these diamonds for profit, and the diamonds make their way across the globe. This is the story of illegally mined diamonds, Zimbabwe's Blood Diamonds, as told by Human Rights Watch Zimbabwe expert Tiseke Kasambala.

Kasambala and another HRW researcher were sent to this diamond field in February of 2009. During Kasambala's visit, senior members of Mugabe's party sent in a government sponsored army, complete with attack dogs and helicopter units to the mining fields leaving 200 killed and thousands injured. Kasambala spoke to many witnesses, who informed her of the gruesome and unfortunate situation. Women and children as young as ten are forced to mine diamonds for the government, working eleven hour days, often at gunpoint, without water or food. Women are being stripped at diamond checkpoints, sexually humiliated and frequently raped. Kasambala compiled a report detailing the Zimbabwean diamond conflict, which was sent to various governments and the Kimberley Process.

The Kimberley Process was created in 2003 by the United Nations General Assembly to prevent diamond trade conflict. Yet, it has one major and destructive flaw: the process' definition of "blood (or conflict) diamond" is extremely limiting. It states that conflict diamonds are rough diamonds used by rebel movements or their allies to finance conflict aimed at undermining legitimate governments. Because Zimbabwe's blood diamonds are created by the government rather than a rebel group, the Kimberley Process is unable to provide their support.

Therefore, Kasambala asserted that any solution to this crisis must be multifaceted. Organizations like Human Rights Watch have been working to change the definition created by the Kimberley

Process, but have been largely unsuccessful. There are 75 participating countries in the process, including Russia and China, major diamond importers. In order to benefit their economies by keeping a steady supply of cheap diamonds, both countries have voted against broadening the definition of conflict diamonds.

During the briefing, Nia Morgan, a student at Mt. Carmel High School, brought up a very troublesome question, that is if the definition of blood diamonds is expanded, how will Zimbabwe react, and what will be the repercussions for the black market? Kasambala stated that it is impossible to predict a definite outcome, but through this question, Morgan revealed the true complexity of any solution to this crisis. The instability of Zimbabwe's economy and government make this situation extremely sensitive to drastic change. It must be remembered that Mugabe has control over the police, army and judiciary. As Kasambala pointed out, the "ability to unleash violence remains."

To stop this crisis, Kasambala urges everyone to ask the supplier where the diamonds come from before buying them. If the local jeweler is pressured enough, he or she will begin pressuring the corporate suppliers, who can greatly control a country's imports. If powerful countries such as the U.S., India or Lebanon refuse to import Zimbabwe's conflict diamonds, Mugabe may change his ways.

However, Kasambala also recognized the potential flaw in her proposed solution: it is questionable whether this alone will provide enough incentive for Mugabe to give up his personally-pocketed \$200 million in diamond profits. Kasambala pointed out the need to involve Zimbabwe's neighboring governments which may have a much greater impact on the country's economic position. When asked whether a complete trade embargo on diamonds by neighboring countries is feasible, Kasambala answered that many countries could easily afford to do so, but it is now just a matter of convincing them of the dire importance of bringing change to Zimbabwe.

Yet, as daunting and complex as this issue may seem, there is great hope for the future. If organizations and governments can work together to discontinue Mugabe's tyrannical reign, Zimbabwe has more than enough resources and opportunities to become a stable if not prosperous nation. ■



Photo by JP Horrigan
Tiseke Kasambala addresses the audience during the Youth Town Meeting at the opening plenary

Students Travel From Mexico to attend the Youth Town Meeting

by Amruta Trivedi
Canyon Crest Academy

On the day of the 13th Annual Youth Town Meeting, Mariana Zermeño Piñera woke up at 3 a.m. And yet, this wasn't anything new for her. She has attended the past three WorldLink Youth Town Meetings and every time, has woken up at three that morning, as traveling from Tijuana often takes quite a while.

Piñera was not alone, however. Over 100 of the 700 students who attend the Youth Town Meeting in January came from Tijuana. For these students, WorldLink's capstone event represents a way to connect with their American counterparts through discussion, learning and common interests. After all, that is WorldLink's mission.

"[Mexican] and American students don't have a relationship in many senses; we just come here to shop. So it is nice to know that there are people across the border who are interested in the same things we are interested in." Piñera said about what motivates her and her classmates to attend WorldLink's Youth Town Meetings.

To cross the border, these Mexican delegates usually take the trolley. Because there are so many commuters living in Tijuana but employed in the United States, waiting in line to simply board the trolley can take upwards of 3 hours. With rain, expect delays.

Piñera and her fellow students from CETYS Universidad arrived in the United States at around 7 a.m., had breakfast at a local Starbucks and then came to USD for the Youth Town Meeting where they registered for the day's events. For the past two Youth Town Meetings Piñera has served as a moderator for a



Mexican Delegates to the 13th Annual Youth Town Meeting

briefing session. This year, she moderated a session about food security. And despite the fact that being a moderator enables her to interact closely with the many distinguished speakers, her favorite part of the day remains, "seeing many people, many nationalities with all the same purpose."

With WorldLink's motto being "Connecting Youth to Global Affairs," it comes as no surprise that WorldLink interns also hail from Mexico. Alan de Callejo, a summer 2009 intern and Youth

Town Meeting moderator, traveled from Tijuana every week from June to August to participate in the WorldLink internship. For him, the WorldLink program serves as a chance to bridge Mexican and American societies.

Callejo welcomed the speakers and delegates to the 13th Annual Youth Town Meeting and served as the moderator for both the opening plenary as well as another briefing session on Healthcare in Rwanda. In an effort to learn more about this year's topic Fighting Global Poverty, Callejo researched about healthcare in developing countries and contributed to the WorldLink Reader over the summer. Learning about the varied healthcare systems around the world opened Callejo's eyes to the peoples that lack adequate healthcare. "I believe increasing our awareness about these conditions helps us become better human beings and gives us an opportunity to make a positive change in our world," he writes in the Reader's introductory letter.

In fact, these Mexican students are already creating positive change. After attending the 11th Annual Youth Town Meeting on Global Warming in 2008, Piñera, Callejo and their classmates from CETYS Universidad began a campaign to raise awareness in Mexican youth about environmental problems through implementing recycling programs in schools and organizing beach clean-ups along the coast. And by contributing to the WorldLink program, these Tijuana youth are making the mission of the program come to life, in a truly global sense. ■

Opiniones

El Comercio Global y Las Finanzas

por Katrina Ilich
La Jolla Country Day School
Traducido por Andrea Seikalv, y Ashlen Nimmo

Las discusiones sobre el comercio global, las finanzas y su relación con la pobreza se dominan por el siguiente debate acerca de la industrialización: Ayuda a aliviar el hambre, o es parte del problema? Yo creo que es parte de la solución porque, desde el siglo XVIII, ha sido imposible parar a la industrialización. La única manera de lograr éxito es seguir adelantando con el crecimiento global. Hay mucha información que apoya este punto de vista. Por ejemplo, en el 2001 un reporte del Banco Mundial (World Bank) mostró que los veinticuatro países sudesarrollados que aumentaron su integración a la economía mundial disfrutaron de salarios más altos, más esperanza de vida y mejores sistemas de educación durante dos décadas.

Al mismo tiempo, hay otro aspecto del debate al que muchos (Thomas Hobbes en particular) podrían oponerse: no es ni responsable ni sostenible depender del altruismo. Entonces, debemos de enfocarnos en proporcionar el acceso a finanzas para los pobres. Oportunidades financieras, que ayudan a que individuos logran ser autosuficientes, se pueden consistir de microfinanza que se base en préstamos pequeños y otros servicios básicos como ahorros y seguros para la gente empobrecida. Los bancos Grameen y Kiva, organizaciones que proporcionan micro préstamos, han ayudado a miles de empresarios alrededor del mundo. Algunos de esos empresarios empezaron con sumas de sólo \$25 USD. Los individuos que reciben tales préstamos son personas quienes típicamente no serían asociados con sabiduría acerca de negocios: vendedores de aves de corral en Senegal, mujeres granjeras en Palestino y dueños de restaurantes en Camboya. La microfinancia se ha vuelto en un instrumento poderoso para sosteniblemente disminuir a la pobreza. Expandir a la microfinancia – es decir, promoverla en zonas más grandes para influenciar a más personas – es un meta inteligente y alcanzable.

La expansión de la microfinanza se puede lograr con la ayuda de ciertas iniciativas gubernamentales – específicamente para terminar con las represivas regulaciones financieras. A base de eliminar o reducir los límites de crédito, los gobiernos animarían la entrada de bancos comerciales a la microfi-

nanza y también promoverían la transformación de los ONG IMF (organizaciones no gubernamentales de instituciones microfinancieras) en establecimientos que aceptan depósitos. Los límites o “techos” de crédito son la cantidad máxima de tarifas de interés que son legalmente permisibles. Estos límites hacen que sea difícil mas para que los micro prestamistas puedan cubrir sus costos. El resultado es que los prestamistas se salgan del mercado o que siquiera entren. Altos requisitos de reservas también restringen la cantidad de depósitos disponibles para prestar. Con menos crédito para distribuir, es más probable que los bancos comerciales se queden en sectores de finanzas tradicionales y no expandan a áreas más pobres donde más se necesitan los préstamos.

La lentitud del desarrollo económico es en parte uno de los resultados de la falta de libertad económica. La microfinanza ayuda a aliviar este problema, pero el gobierno también lleva un papel principal en esta situación. La liberación económica da acceso al aumento de riqueza, ayuda a que los pobres tengan más libertades civiles, extiende los derechos de propiedad, proporciona actividades bancarias y sobre todo disminuye la corrupción interna. Es difícil construir sobre algo que ya está roto, y hacer reparos es un reto aun más grande. Esta opción de arreglos también es algo que puede durar varios años, y los que pasan hambre o son pobres se merecen soluciones más inmediatas. Lo que sí podemos hacer es involucrarnos a través de sistemas como la microfinanza y otros medios temporarios mientras trabajemos en soluciones más tangibles y duraderos para promover interés en las áreas rurales, fortalecer a los sistemas bancarios y mantener estabilidad económica.

Algunos opinan que los mercados libres (los primeros lugares donde cambios positivos pueden ser implementados) discriminan y perpetúan a la pobreza. Es por eso que ciertos individuos dicen que siempre habrá víctimas de la pobreza. Aunque la desaparición de la pobreza y desigualdad no es realístico, estamos tratando de mejorar la situación de los pobres para que podamos erradicar este problema al nivel mundial algún día. ■

Creando Perspectivas

por Nina Church and Torrey Czech
La Jolla Country Day School y La Jolla High School
Traducido por Ashlen Nimmo y Karla Alvarez

Hoy en día, un niño trabajador en la India pasará un día completo buscando plástico entre montañas de basura; un niño soldado en Uganda será forzado a observar el asesinato de sus padres. Contrasta las condiciones de estas vidas a las de los jóvenes en los EEUU, por ejemplo, que viven en un mundo de apatía y materialismo, adicción y narcisismo, derechos personales e indiferencia. Cuando esas comodidades juveniles siguen hasta la adultez, vivimos en un mundo de dicotomías, un mundo que funciona como si la mano izquierda no es consciente de la existencia de la mano derecha, y que al mismo tiempo, no sabríamos que estas manos estan conectadas al mismo cuerpo. Como consecuencia, esto puede resultar en una cultura destruzada.

¿Entonces, cual es la importancia de que los jovenes esten involucrados en los temas globales? La respuesta cae en todo lo anterior.

En este momento, cuando se puede diseminar información al instante, cuando los periodistas hacen reportajes desde el otro lado del mundo y se puede hacer un video en vivo del epicentro de una crisis humanitaria, los ciudadanos del mundo deben enfrentarse a los desafíos de la humanidad. Por eso estamos mas unidos que antes. Con demasiada frecuencia estamos ignorantes de la enormidad, la urgencia y la inmediatez, o simplemente no nos sentimos que es nuestra responsabilidad tomar parte en los problemas que son más grandes que nuestros propios problemas. En nuestro camino hasta la conceptualización a la significada de los temas globales, hemos creado el pensamiento que los problemas globales no son nuestros problemas. En realidad, “problemas globales” son sinónimos a “nuestros problemas” porque somos ciudadanos del mismo mundo. Porque somos los jóvenes, es más imperativa que entendemos que en el futuro cercano, tendremos la ultima palabra relacionada con estos problemas, una verdad inconveniente de que no estamos preparado si estamos ignorantes de los problemas que enfrenta nuestro mundo ahora, como empezaban, y como podemos mejorarlos. Nuestro proceso educativo empieza con una crítica de la situación actual alrededor del mundo y el desarrollo de nuestras propias opiniones. Los jóvenes tienen que se interesen en nuestro mundo, en una manera que reconoce los problemas porque irrevocablemente son nuestros problemas.

En el momento en que sabemos que más que un billón de los niños del mundo viven en pobreza, nuestras ideas, que alguna vez se centraban solamente en nuestras propias vidas, cambian inmediatamente. Un análisis de las situaciones y la magnitud de la información provoca un sentido de indignación y un estado de shock y nos acercamos a la promoción de un futuro en donde las crisis del mundo se resuelvan. Este futuro exige nuestra participación. Como jóvenes, nuestro recurso más valioso es nuestra habilidad de buscar respuestas, con una actitud abierta. Preguntas como “¿Cómo ha aceptado este mundo unas de las perversiones mas drásticas de la condición humana?, ¿Cómo es que la gente pueda ser testigo al sufrimiento y conflicto, y todavía se va sin pena ni culpa?, aun todavía “¿Cual es la diferencia entre yo y otro niño en el mundo?”, y la respuesta es que básicamente no hay una diferencia.

Cuando reconocemos que somos ciudadanos globales quienes, a pesar de nuestras diferencias, podemos reconocer las condiciones humanas como el dolor, la pena o la alegría, y es así que nos damos cuenta de que cada caso de sufrimiento necesita tratarse a nivel individual. También tenemos que reconocer que cuando uno de nuestros ciudadanos sufre, estamos fracasando a nuestro mundo y nos fracasamos a nosotros mismos. Estamos fracasando a nosotros mismos porque hay soluciones, soluciones que empiezan cuando levantamos el halo de la ignorancia. Como jóvenes, tenemos un optimismo inigualable que puede estar levantado si realmente nos dedicamos a aprender, a reconocer y a ayudar. Durante el “Youth Town Meeting”- la reunión de los jóvenes, cientos de nosotros nos reunimos para aprender sobre nuestro mundo y planeamos los primeros pasos para salir de nuestra ignorancia. Nuestra generación no solamente tiene la capacidad de participar en un diálogo sobre nuestra comunidad global, sino que también hemos heredado una sociedad con la motivación y los recursos adecuados para influenciar a cada uno de nosotros por el beneficio de nuestra comunidad global.

Ya estamos aquí, todo lo que se necesita es interés y participación. Como ciudadanos de un mismo mundo, tenemos una obligación, cada uno de nosotros: a ayudar, enseñar, y aprender de cada uno. Y con esta responsabilidad, las soluciones de los problemas más grandes y complejos de este mundo serán alcanzables. ■

Announcing WorldLink's 14th Annual Youth Town Meeting Crimes Without Borders: Threats to Human Security

*Human Trafficking
Drugs
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Terrorism
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En Español

“En el momento en que sabemos que más que un billón de los niños alrededor del mundo viven en pobreza, nuestras ideas, que alguna vez se centraban solamente en nuestras propias vidas, cambian inmediatamente.”

- Nina Church y Torrey Czech



Briefings

Aliviando a la Pobreza con Negocios Inclusivos

por Katrina Ilich
La Jolla Country Day School
Traducido por Andrea Seikaly y Ashlen Nimmo

La Dra. Patricia Márquez, profesora de negocios en la Universidad de San Diego, se enfocó en aliviar la pobreza desde un ángulo distinto: no a base de la aportación de voluntarios. La pobreza, según Márquez, se puede eliminar a través del negocio.

Es verdad que ese sector del mundo financiero también se asocia con la avaricia egoísta. Márquez, quien ha sido profesora en la escuela IESA de negocios en Caracas, Venezuela, Escolar Cisneros y profesora visitante en Harvard, abrió su presentación con una foto simple. Era una vista aérea de una clara ciudad en gris. Lo que no estaba claro fue cuál ciudad se retrataba en la foto. Esta, naturalmente, fue la primera pregunta que Márquez le hizo a la audiencia. Se oía varias respuestas: Buenos Aires? Phoenix? San Diego? El punto de esta actividad fue ilustrar que la respuesta verdadera, Bogotá, no importaba porque muchos no la pueden descifrar. Márquez explicó que todos los edificios y objetos situados en ese horizonte nebuloso son los resultados directos del negocio. Esos resultados - crecimiento del producto interior bruto (PIB), oportunidades de empleo y aumento de riqueza nacional - son factibles en todas partes, dice Márquez. Solamente se necesita disipar a la percepción equivocada que la pobreza es absolutamente perpetua que la gente de áreas pobres no tienen nada para ofrecer en cuanto a beneficio monetario. Al contrario, sí forman parte importante de sus civilizaciones, aunque lo que se gana por persona en tales lugares es considerablemente menos en lo que se acumula en otros países. Pero, como notó Márquez, aquellos que viven en suburbios americanos, ciudades europeas y otros sitios desarrollados ya tienen los servicios que necesitan.

El dinero en esas regiones, contribuye a un conglomerado monstruoso, en vez de contribuirlo al mejoramiento de necesidades básicas en regiones mas pobres como la colección de basura domiciliar. Si se invirtieran mas fondos para estos proyectos, se crearían mas trabajos y ganancias. Sin embargo Márquez señaló que todo no está perdido porque los clientes todavía existen en Asia, África, Sudamérica y Centroamérica. Los tres billones de habitantes en estas áreas tienen el potencial de ver que estas empresas mas chicas puedan prosperar.

Parece raro, Márquez reflexiona, que una pobre mujer que vive en el barrio de Bogotá tenga televisión con cable. Pero Márquez fue testigo de esta anomalía- de hecho ella observó esta anomalía cuando hacia sus investigaciones allí y ella le mostró una foto al auditorio como prueba. Allí, en el techo despedazado de la senora, había pegado un receptor satélite. Márquez la preguntó a la senora cómo era posible alcanzar el dinero para pagar ese satélite. La mujer le contestó que aunque ella tenía que sacrificar otras cosas y trabajar más duro para pagar el costo de la televisión y satélite, valía la pena. ¿Por qué? Porque los programas le ayudan a que sus hijos no se metan en problemas. Continuo, que en vez de provocar una conmoción en el barrio o meterse en las drogas o pandillas, ella sabía que sus hijos estaban en la casa, seguros, mirando un partido de futbol. ¿El último punto de Márquez? Las empresas, en vez de asustarse de la pobreza, deben enfocar ese principio para poder ayudar a combatir la pobreza. ■

Photo by JP Horigan



High School Internships

Students: Looking for something meaningful to do this summer? Do you have an interest in global affairs? Do you want to spread your interest to other people your age? If so, apply to become a summer research intern for WorldLink!

The Summer Research internship offers six positions for qualified high school students. Selected youth will create the WorldLink Reader, a classroom tool that provides students and teachers with important background knowledge regarding YTM topics.

New: WorldLink is also pleased to announce a new Social Media internship. One student will be chosen to work with WorldLink staff to develop films and other online applications as part of WorldLink's Virtual Classroom Project.

Can't volunteer this summer? WorldLink also offers internships in the Fall and Spring.

For more information, contact the WorldLink Program Officer at (619) 260-7568, or go to <http://peace.sandiego.edu/worldlink>

“I wanted to spend a summer with substance and beyond a doubt I achieved this and then some. I found myself reading the articles and doing the research because I wanted to, not because it was required of me. I really enjoyed the process of contributing to the WorldLink Reader, which made the experience all the more rewarding as I saw my hard work pay off.”

Although I was confident that I was going to have a rewarding experience, in reality it turned out to be much more than that. This internship not only resulted in personal growth, but has also been an experience that can help me towards whatever else I hope to achieve.”

-Kaylen Dornan, sophomore
2009 Summer Research Intern

In Summary

In Summary

Water for the Masses

by Amruta Trivedi
Canyon Crest Academy

For father and daughter, Jeff and Nina Church, the glass is always half full. In February of 2009, The Church family founded Nika Water, a carbonfund certified carbon-neutral bottled water company that donates 100% of its profits to support clean water initiatives in developing regions of the world.

Nina Church, a sophomore at La Jolla Country Day School, spoke about the motivation to start this company, citing the fact that "Our generation is the first in history to have enough money, enough clothes and enough food to make every person wealthy enough to be clothed, fed, and schooled."

On that January morning, Church further called to the delegates of the Youth Town Meeting to "to prove to everybody that we are not this lost generation and that we can use things like facebook and our technological revolution to help end," what Nika calls, the "World Water Crisis."

This crisis underscores the problems many developing societies have in providing themselves with clean water to drink, cook with and bathe with. According to Joan Mussa of World Vision, a total of 143 million school days are lost in the developing world every year due to diarrhea, an illness that comes from unsanitary water. Jeff Church explained that at the base of this crisis was poverty, and thus, Nika Water made it its mission to end the poverty cycle by addressing the World Water Crisis.



According to Jeff Church, "Education is the central key to breaking people out of poverty, as many uneducated girls are married off at a young age to sustain and build a family." However, he explained that girls receiving even a basic education rarely get married as early as girls without an education. With their education, these girls are able to break out of poverty and have the ability to stop the

next generation from making the same 3-6 mile trek down to the nearest watering hole previous generations once made.

Nika Water donates 100% of its profits to projects around the world that support clean water initiatives, which, according to Jeff Church, works out to be about \$2 for every 24-bottle case of Nika Water sold. "It takes only \$20 to bring clean water to someone for life in the developing world," Church said, "With only 10 cases of Nika Water, we can bring clean water to someone." Over the past year, Nika has worked with various non-profits, including Free the Children to build schools and wells in Kenya and Sri Lanka, Project Concern International to build machine-powered wells in Nicaragua and Village of Hope to build wells

at an orphanage in Uganda. Nika Water also sponsored Project Concern International's Walk for Water in San Diego for the past two years. To date, Nika Water has donated about \$145,000 to such projects.



Jeffrey and Nina Church discuss Nika's impact

However, despite the fact that Nika invests in the education and well-being of many developing societies, Jeff Church "is a strong capitalist" and believes that an "entrepreneurial business must be either for-profit or non-profit and act accordingly" and hence, does not believe in the "redistribution of wealth from developed societies to developing ones."

Sold for roughly the cost of a higher-end, luxury water bottle, like Fiji water, Nika water can be found at local Jimbo's and Whole Foods as well as local schools. Yet, for the future, Nika hopes to expand its presence to larger supermarkets around the country. ■

2010 Participating Schools & Youth Organizations

Academy of Our Lady of Peace
the Bishop's School
Canyon Crest Academy
Cathedral Catholic High School
Connections Academy
Crawford Educational Complex-
CHAMPS
Del Dios Middle School
Escondido High School
Francis Parker School
High Tech High International
Hoover High School
Instituto Mexico Americano Noroeste
John Muir High School
La Costa Canyon High School
La Jolla Country Day School
La Jolla High School
The Metropolitan
Mt. Carmel High School
Mueller Charter Leadership Academy
Otay Ranch High School
Peace Jam
Poway High School
Preparatoria CETYS Universidad Cam-
pus Tijuana
Preparatoria Federal Lazaro Cardenas
San Diego School of Creative and Per-
forming Arts
San Dieguito Academy
Sierra Vista School/GRF
Sunset High School
Torrey Pines High School

In Continuum

Briefings

Opening, cont'd from p. 1

ing global poverty. Human Rights Watch is a non-profit organization dedicated to defending human rights by increasing government awareness of the issues at hand, ending abuses, and changing the systems and practices that have led to social distress. In her work with this institution, Kasambala discovered the absolute necessity for a stable government in nations of poverty and social inequality. Zimbabwe was a nation of prosperity in terms of health, education and economy. When a corrupt regime took over the country, there was a massive decline and collapse of all areas of the government. Unemployment, illiteracy, and the death rate increased, while the economy and education system deteriorated. This situation is an example of the results of corruption, and therefore, in order to really make a difference in impoverished and struggling countries, according to Kasambala, one must first engage the government and solve the problems in the infrastructure in order to pave the way for improvements nationwide.

As the students left Shiley Theater, ready to go to their respective briefings, they were inspired to not only pay close attention to the topics addressed and become active in the discussions, but to also make a difference in the world in their fight against global poverty. ■

Local Youth Leaders Cont'd

Sekowski, cont'd from p. 8

"There are so many ways to get involved and give back," Sekowski explained. She advises on hosting food drives, blood drives and even computer drives. Sekowski uses the latter to create computer disability programs to help people get jobs. She believes, "The idea is not to cure poverty, but to establish ways to help get out of it." ■

Daryanani, cont'd from p. 8

cycle and it falls on our generation to break this cycle," she described. Daryanani closed her presentation with an inspiring quote by Einstein, "The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it." ■

Thank You, Donors!

Grant: Raskob Family Foundation, USD Trans-Border Institute and the Ahlers Center for International Business

Donors: Glorious Journey Photography; Special thanks to the following members of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice Leadership Circle: Gloria Garrett, Elizabeth Hansen, Kimberly Heller, Anne Hoiberg, Michelle Montgomery, Amy M. Rypins, Lee Sorensen, and generous anonymous donors.

Supporting Organizations: DF Grafix, IRIN, NIKA Water Inc., the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice.

Would you like to support youth involvement in global affairs? High school students pay no fees or costs for WorldLink activities, allowing for participation from diverse youth from different schools and economic means. The Youth Town Meeting is completely free, including meals and materials, and each speaker willingly volunteers his or her time to invest in San Diego's young people.

WorldLink depends on generous grants and donations from dedicated foundations and individuals, like you. To learn how you can join our efforts to transform today's students into tomorrow's leaders, contact:

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In Summary

in their

**Own
Words:**

Student and teacher feedback on the Youth Town Meeting about the consciousness it creates and the ideas it inspires



"I have been coming [to the YTM] for a couple of years now and I feel that this exercise of peace and justice promotion inspires me to be responsible and promote ideas that can fuel change."

"[The YTM] brings more awareness of what is happening in other countries. It makes youth want to act and do something. We learn that we can make a difference."

"Regular day-to-day classes do not stir the same awareness of global issues that the Youth Town Meeting does. The stimulating environment and inspiring speakers are unique to the YTM, and I'm glad I came again this year."

"[The YTM] gave me the opportunity to network with wonderful people, be inspired by their work, and give my students access to professionals in the field of peace and justice."

"[The YTM is important because] many kids like myself are brought up with no worries or problems. [The YTM] really raises awareness of how much trouble there is in the world and how we actually are able to help these issues."



"I think most importantly, [the YTM] brought together very diverse groups of kids and made them unite under a common purpose."

"My empathy cannot be fully harnessed until I'm able to fully understand the gravity of events affecting the globe. WorldLink facilitates that type of crucial understanding."

"This type of conference has shaped my view of social justice. I have made significant changes in my perspective of global issues and facilitating conversations has led me to want to be a leader in the field. The student perspectives brought up topics that I would not have considered. Truly fresh ideas!"

"Global poverty affects everyone whether directly or indirectly, so learning about its various factors, causes and cures serves my development as a world citizen."

"It taught me and further expanded my knowledge of what is going on in this world and which areas are most heavily affected. It showed me that I have all of the devices and resources to help others."

"As a returning delegate, I am always amazed and re-inspired with the amount of power youth have when we cohesively and passionately use our global voice."

"I am always told of poverty in the world, but this is usually just teachers repeating statistics from a book. To have testimony from those who have worked in that situation allows me to better understand poverty."



Photo by Reem Jubran

"In the days that followed the YTM, the students who were part of the event occasionally come up to me and thank me for inviting them. I ask them how they have been changed by the experience and they all tell me, without fail, that they have been forever changed because they saw, met and discussed with people who have committed their lives to changing the world. Seeing is believing, and my students now believe in their own abilities to make great positive change. What better gift to give a teacher than the passion that ignites in their eyes when they talk about what they learned and how they've changed?"

"[The YTM is important] because it urges kids at young ages to try and help others in the world that we all share. We are all related in the sense that we all live on the same planet and we all have rights! We need to help those who struggle to survive. Everyone deserves the access to the necessities of life."

Healthcare in Developing Countries: Why We Should Care

by Alexa Kern
Canyon Crest Academy

Healthcare is a touchy and complicated issue. The debate on whether to have government regulation or to leave healthcare to private insurance companies continues in this country. On March 21, 2010 the United States House passed the Health Care Reform Bill which includes affordable coverage for those who qualify, and regulation of HMOs to ensure nobody is denied coverage because of preexisting medical conditions. The World Health Organization (WHO) has ranked The United States 37th in the world for its health care. This ranking comes as no surprise as healthcare is geared around private, inflexible insurance companies. For the middle class citizen, affordable coverage is an oxymoron. While Americans want to see some sort of improvement in health care, conservative voters do not approve of this bill.

On the same WHO ranking, The United Kingdom is ranked 18th while France holds the no. 1 spot. However, while The United States healthcare is lacking the success of other countries, it cannot be compared to Uganda, Sudan and Rwanda, because the the reality is that there is little to no healthcare system in these countries.

The main source of failing health care systems is corruption. Corruption from within the country's government. In these countries, healthcare is overshadowed by political and so-

cial corruption. The sad reality and effect from these corrupt governments is that too many innocent people die every single day from preventable and treatable conditions. But it's the lack of sanitary living conditions and extreme amounts of poverty that are the roots of this problem. HIV is still killing thousands of Africans every day. With the medical advancements of HIV drugs, the diagnosis of HIV is not a death sentence. However, for people in those counties, they can't get the antiretroviral drugs that would significantly extend their life span, and there are not enough doctors, pharmacies and supplies for this to be successful. It's the start of 2010, and the most important global cause should be healthcare, but it is not. If healthcare does not show a vast improvement then other industries will not be successful. Education is ranked under healthcare because with the death rate of children growing larger, there will soon be fewer children to educate. Children are the future and deserve an education. Along with healthcare and education, living conditions must be changed. The cycle will continue if there isn't any improvement in housing and safe drinking water.

Health care systems around the world are in need of a change. If there is not an implementation of change in the near future, then the world will repeat the same pattern of grim statistics. Healthcare needs to be the no. 1 concern for the world and the people. We cannot afford to lose more people to preventable conditions. Healthcare is an absolute necessity for everyone.

A New Focus on Governance and Infrastructure

by Carissa Dieli
Academy of Our Lady of Peace

The cycle of poverty has many contributing factors. Two of these include governance and infrastructure. The way a government chooses to exercise control, authority and management over its people, industries, and land has a great impact on the way its citizens live.

One of the most effective ways to fight poverty in an area is to have a good government. A government that will respect its people's needs and do what is in the best interest of the citizens can assist in making improvements in the living conditions of its people.

In any system of government, the government can make decisions without the approval of its people. In countries with corrupt regimes, the citizens rarely have any say in its decisions. With an oppressive government, such as the one in Zimbabwe, citizens cannot speak out against the government because they are burdened with the fear that they or someone they love could be imprisoned, tortured, or killed. So, the government continues to run without much opposition from inside. Its members are free to make decisions that affect the people of the nation without their consent and these decisions, more often than not, have negative consequences for the citizens. For this reason, governance becomes a crucial element in the cycle of poverty.

An administration with a great amount of corruption can easily submerge its country into any number of poor situations such as a bad economy or an unfavorable lifestyle. In our world today, there are governments that are stifling their people. Such governments are hardly given the attention their actions call for. One such government is the military regime of Burma. With deals being made in secret and a harsh military controlling the streets with nothing to stop them from violating human rights, the Burmese government ruins local cultures, environments, and human lives. The people living in such brutal circumstances that have been inflicted by governments are not getting the attention they deserve.

If the governance of a country is good, it is reflected in the lives of its citizens, its profitable economy, and its evenly

distributed classes. If the governance in a country is poor, it is reflected in the lives of its citizens, the downturn in its economy and the divisions between social classes. A prime example of this is Zimbabwe. With a corrupt president, Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe's economy has nearly come to a halt. Once a prosperous nation, it had inflation rates close to 80 billion percent per month as of November 2008, according to Professor Steve H. Hanke of the Cato Institute. Zimbabweans fear for their lives everyday and many of their basic human rights have been stripped from them. The division between classes is immense—Mugabe and his cronies sit on the top of the social pyramid with wealth and luxuries while, as of November 2009, a whopping 65% of Zimbabweans live below the poverty line, according to the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe.

Not only is the governance of a nation important, but the infrastructure is as well. A nation's infrastructure can be a way to see into the true conditions of its citizens and economy. However, infrastructure can be deceptive. In a developed urban area, it can hide the flaws that are outside the city limits. A great deal of money may be used to make the tourist attractions and business districts look presentable and developed, but that may be a façade that had been put up to deceive an outsider.

When it is not deceptive, infrastructure can tell the true circumstances of an area. A lack of electrical infrastructure can imply a lack of money that would be needed to supply such a thing. Shabby, dilapidated homes clearly demonstrate a poor state of living.

Schools are a main part of infrastructure. If schools are well staffed with good buildings and resources, it reflects well on the community and the government. Communication systems and transportation are other giveaways in terms of economic standing.

The cycle of poverty has countless contributing factors. I believe that to emerge a nation from poverty, a government must pay careful attention and give special care to its governance and infrastructure. To emerge a nation into poverty, however, it is clear that a corrupt government will have the know-how to do so.

Education for the Masses

by Tray Hayes
The Met Educational Complex

The government is not paying attention to the citizens of this country and needs to wake up from reality and let the youth speak its mind

As our youth are told to continue their education, a contradiction is rising. People may say that to be successful in the world, you need to have a good head on your shoulders that's filled with knowledge. Well, in order to rise to the occasion, the youth need to be given a little something to contribute.

School funding cuts have been considered by the government, but not by the people. The 2009 economic stimulus package included about \$100 billion for retaining teachers and improving the nation's overall education system. Well, it feels like the money is going to other miscellaneous things that are not pertaining to the real issue at hand, which is education. It needs more funding. With the government thinking they have our best interest in mind, but really, they're doing what they have to do just to make a living.

Without knowing it, the government is affecting not only youth, but teachers and schools. School funds are important because they pay for necessary essentials that the students must have. Honestly, I feel that the government is not caring for the people who live in this country and that the policy makers act like they know what we want, but really have no clue. School is important to some who want to exceed their limits and reach their full potential, which I think is most of the United States.

"The youth of today are given choices," said David Lynch, a New York teacher who went to Mexico to teach children how to read, write, and speak. If we are given choices, then why aren't we having a say in this?

The teachers for the new generations are getting affected as well. The fact that they may have to improvise to teach a class because they do not have the "proper" tools to teach their class is pretty sad. Why put a burden on the people who teach the children of future?

On the other side, there are some people that are optimistic with this issue. They think the government is trying their best. "The government is doing what they can. The process may be slow, but change will come soon," said a local San Diego woman residing in Pacific Beach, "if we just let them do what they got to do, then we're fine, but honestly, what we need to focus on is the war." Although I believe it is vice versa, you can see where this woman is coming from, but at the moment, our schools and the education is at stake.

Being a youth myself, I feel that the education system has not only been cheated and manipulated, but the youth have been as well. Experiencing the turmoil first hand, I think that it is a growing problem that shouldn't be thought through, discussed with superiors, and more. I feel that it is an issue that should be "nipped in the bud" and should be given an automatic positive answer.

42 million adults in the United States cannot read. The youth are always told by parents that they shall learn from their mistakes and short comings. They are told to follow your dreams and receive a good education because that is the one thing no one can take away from you. I'm pretty sure that many government officials have children and I'm sure they do not want their children to be affected by this because they are part of this generation as well. Our generation today knows better and they know that we have a responsibility that not only will benefit others, but ourselves as individuals. If funding for education is cut any further, policy makers will be cutting opportunities. Take away opportunities, we have nothing.

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Opinion

Creating Perspective: *A Global Education Matters*

by Nina Church and Torrey Czech
La Jolla Country Day School and La Jolla High School

Today a child laborer in India will spend his entire day rummaging through mounds of wet trash for plastics; a child soldier in Uganda will be forced to observe his parents as they are murdered. Contrast the conditions of their lives to those of self-indulgent adolescents in America, living in their own world of malaise and materialism, addiction and narcissism, self-entitlement and indifference. When those adolescent comforts are prolonged into adulthood, we soon live in a dichotomous world, a world that functions as if the left is unaware of the right hand's existence, let alone that they are connected to one body. The result is cognitive dissonance, a shattered world in disarray.

In this age where information can be disseminated nearly instantaneously, where journalists are reporting on stories halfway around the world and live video can be streamed from the epicenter of humanitarian crises, the citizens of the world stand more united than ever in confronting the challenges humanity

faces. Too often this deluge of information is overlooked by youth in the developed world. Too often, we are either ignorant of its enormity, its urgency, and its immediacy or we simply do not feel it is our responsibility to partake in problems that dwarf those in our daily lives. Somewhere in our path towards conceptualizing the meaning of global issues, we have created the mindset that global issues are not our issues. In reality, "global issues" are synonymous with "our issues" as we are all citizens of the same world. As youth, it is imperative that we understand that in our near futures, we will have the final say in these issues, an inconvenient truth which we will be unprepared for if we are ignorant of the issues our world is facing now, how they came to be, and how we can make them better. Our own educational process begins with us being critical of our current global situation and developing our own views. Youth must take a genuine interest in our world, which includes acknowledging its problems because these are irrevocably our issues.

Simply by knowing that over 1 billion of the

world's children live in poverty, our ideas centered on the comparatively self-indulgent lives we lead are easily thrown off kilter. Analyzing the hard-line situations and magnitude of this information evokes a sense of outrage and shock, and we can come closer to fostering a future where the crises of our world can be alleviated. This future demands our participation. As youth, our most valuable asset is our uncompromising ability to open-mindedly seek answers to questions as simple as: "How has the world come to accept the worst bastardizations of the human condition?", "How can people be witness to suffering and conflict, yet walk away without compunction or guilt?", or even "What is the difference between me and any other child in the world?", and answer that there is essentially no difference.

When we recognize that we are global citizens who, despite our differences all feel the spectrum of human conditions be it pain, grief, sorrow or joy, we realize that each instance of suffering must be treated on an individual level. And we must recognize that when one of our fellow citizens suffers we are failing our world, and we are failing ourselves. We are failing ourselves because there are solutions, solutions which begin by lifting our veil of ignorance. As youth, we feel with overwhelming optimism that this veil of ignorance can be lifted from the minds of fellow students. At the Youth Town Meeting, hundreds of us came together to learn about our world and took the first steps in breaking from ignorance. Not only is our generation capable of taking part in a dialog about our global community, but we have inherited a society with the motivation and resources to influence each other for the benefit of our increasingly global community.

With that said, all it takes is interest and involvement. As citizens of the same world, we all have an obligation to one another: to help, teach and learn from each other. And with this commitment, solutions to even the world's greatest problems will be attainable.



Nina and Torrey are WorldLink interns for the spring of 2010

"Over 1 billion of the 2 billion children in the world live in poverty."

- CARE International



A child in the developed world



A child in the developing world

Graphic by Torrey Czech

Microfinance and Small Loans can Help Societies Develop

by Katrina Ilich
La Jolla Country Day School

There is one central debate which dominates discussions of global trade and finance and their relationship to poverty. That is this constantly-recurring question: Can industrialization help to alleviate hunger, or is it rather part of the problem? I believe the former, in part because, at this point in time—ever since the late eighteenth century—industrialization is impossible to stop. And the only way to be successful is to keep up with the growth. In regards to evidence, one need not look further than the immense amount of research supporting the above assertion. For example, a 2001 World Bank report showed that twenty four developing countries that increased their integration into the world economy over two decades achieved higher growth in incomes, longer life expectancy and better schooling.

There is one aspect of the debate that most (particularly Thomas Hobbes) can contest to, however, and that is this: a reliance on altruism is neither responsible nor sustainable. The thing we should focus on providing is access to finance for the poor. Financial opportunity, which leads individuals to become self-sufficient, can come in the form of microfinance, which is the supply of small loans and other basic financial services (savings, insurance, money transfers, etc.) to the poor. The Grameen Bank and the more recent Kiva, both organizations providing micro loans, have created thousands of entrepreneurs across the globe, sometimes beginning with sums as small as twenty five dollars. The individuals receiving such loans are persons whom we don't immediately think would be business-savvy: poultry-retailers in Senegal, woman farmers in Palestine, and restaurant-owners in Cambodia, to name just a few examples.

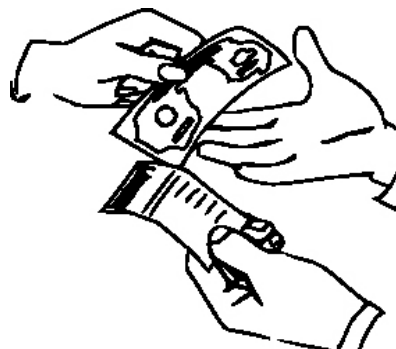
Microfinance has proven to be a powerful instrument for sustainable poverty reduction. Expanding microfinance—that is, putting it on a wider scale so that it might influence more people—is a smart and attainable goal.

The expansion of microfinance might be accomplished with certain government initiatives—more specifically, putting an end to financially repressive government regulations. By eliminating, or at least softening credit ceilings, governments will encourage both the entry of existing commercial banks into microfinance and the transformation of NGO MFIs (non-governmental microfinance institutions) into deposit-taking establishments. Credit ceilings, the maximum interest rates permitted by law, make it difficult for micro lenders to cover their costs, thereby either driving them out of the market or discouraging them from entering it in the first place. High reserve requirements also restrict the number of deposits available for lending. With less credit to distribute, commercial banks are prone to staying in traditional financial sectors and are less likely to expand into poorer areas, where loans are the most needed.

Constrained economic growth is partly a result of a lack of economic freedoms, and while microfinance helps

to alleviate this, governance plays the major role. Economic liberalization is the key to increased wealth, demands granting the poor greater liberties and doing things like extending property rights, providing banking, and, most importantly, decreasing internal corruption. It is difficult to build upon something already broken, and even more difficult to fix it. Trying the latter, furthermore, is a task to be done over time, and the hungry and poor deserve more immediate results. What we can immediately do is worm our way in through such things as microfinance, and through, at least temporarily, charitable aid, while at the same time working on bigger, more tangible reforms like the building of infrastructure, which will encourage commercial interest in rural areas, the strengthening of basic banking systems, and the general maintaining of macroeconomic stability.

Some may argue that free markets (the first places in which positives changes can actually be implemented), by their very nature, discriminate, and thus perpetuate poverty. That is why, those same people say that poverty will always exist. Getting rid of it simply isn't realistic. But we recognize that poverty, in today's society, at least, cannot be eliminated. This is why what we are striving for is not an absolute end to poverty, but an absolute end to a too-low poverty line. And this, by most accounts, is very realistic, indeed.



People & Perspective



Photo by Reem Jubran



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