

“Connecting Youth to Global Affairs”

# WORLDLINK

~ Youth Newspaper ~



Spring 2013

Volume XVI



Student delegates eat lunch in front of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice. Photo courtesy of Sarah Yang

## The Power and Influence... of Youth

A note on the Opening Plenary, which focused on motivating youth to be the change they want to see in the world, by getting involved in the global community. Story by Nicole Sadowsky, The Bishop's School, and Kira Elliott, San Dieguito Academy.

This year's Youth Town Meeting theme was brilliant in its simplicity: "The Power and Influence of the Media." In this era of technological revolution, it is indeed a subject to be addressed. How much sway does the media hold in the day-to-day lives of the billions of people living on Earth today? How much sway does it hold over the 700 student delegates filing into Shiley Theater at the University of San Diego? They would soon find out at WorldLink's 16th Youth Town Meeting, as they explored the following subtopics: *social media's revolutionary change, the relevance of traditional media, the relationship between media and government, media as a humanitarian voice*

and *media as a global activist.*

In the Opening Plenary, the delegates received the chance to listen to four speakers focusing on the overarching theme of media's power and influence.

The first speaker was Santosh Shah, founder of Today's Youth Asia—a multimedia productions house that hosts several youth-led television programs, as well as youth leadership training programs. He spoke of his own personal experiences, witnessing the ability of media to empower Nepalese youth. Through the use of various media sources, youth can begin the process of changing the world. "What connects the world today is media," said

Shah. But what truly brings change, he continued, "is believing in yourself" that you are capable in achieving this change.

The next speaker to follow was Wafa Garbout, an 18-year-old from Tunisia who was one of the many who took a step towards social change after witnessing the Arab Spring. Garbout describes the high level of censorship that existed in her country before the revolution.

However, through the aid of social media, the Tunisian people were able to push their country's dictator out. "We were the fruits of the revolution," said Garbout, describing the Tunisian youth. She added that

in Tunisia, people used to say that youth couldn't do anything. However, the younger generation was able to develop powerful leadership skills, which motivated Garbout and a group of other youth to establish WeYouth-Tunisia—an organization focused on reinforcing leadership, citizenship and volunteerism among youth. Before the revolution, "nobody could talk about the reinforcement of youth, but we are now making radical changes to gain freedom," explained Garbout.

Like Shah, Garbout told the audience to "always believe 'yes we can.' Use what you have [...]. You can be the change."

*continued on page 5*

### In Summary

Let's Begin

Sessions and Speakers

News

En Español

Features

In Closing

Our Voices

Page 2

Pages 3 - 4

Pages 5 - 7, 10

Pages 8 - 9

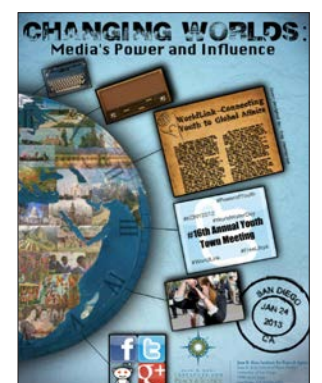
Pages 11-14

Page 15

Page 16

### Looking In

Take a look into the variety of articles produced by the 2013 WorldLink photojournalist staff. Every briefing session from the 16th Annual Youth Town Meeting is captured within these pages, and the theme of "Changing Worlds: Media's Power and Influence" is woven throughout. Glance over the Letter from the Editor, the news and features, and the powerful quotes from speakers highlighted along the bottom of each page.



## Letter from the Editor

Hello everyone,

My name is Kira Elliott, and I am the Editor-in-Chief of the 2013 WorldLink newspaper. Thank you for taking the time to read through this publication and for expressing interest in the important discussions addressed at WorldLink's 16th Annual Youth Town Meeting. I hope you will enjoy the articles and images within these pages, and that they will inspire you to initiate or continue the discussions in your own communities.

The Youth Town Meeting is a conference that brings together over 700 students from across San Diego County, Baja Mexico and abroad. This means that for one day, we bring together a vast number of different perspectives and voices, and instill in them the idea that we, as youth, can make a difference in our world.

This is a powerful idea, built around the foundations of peace and unity. What is even more powerful is the curiosity, passion and determination that I have seen in so many young people attending the conference year after year. That alone leads me to believe that youth really can change the world, even in the smallest of ways.

This year was my second time attending WorldLink's Youth Town Meeting. It was also my first time as a student speaker. I, along with Colin Czech from The Bishop's School, welcomed a delegation of more than 700 students during the Opening Plenary. That moment on-stage is perhaps the best example I can give about how I felt on the day of the Youth Town Meeting – excited, and filled with a great sense of faith in my generation.

As I looked out across the theatre at the hundreds of student delegates, I could not help but smile. "This is it," I remember thinking to myself. "This is what WorldLink is all about." The WorldLink program is about empowering youth with the belief that age does not matter. We have the capacity to make a positive change in our local and global communities. We have the world in our hands, and by beginning discussions of action, we can start on the path to making a change for the better.

When I became the 2013 WorldLink Editor-in-Chief, I was ecstatic. I immediately began to think about

how I could represent the Youth Town Meeting in the newspaper, and how I could convey the ideas behind it as action plans that are possible. What is great about the WorldLink newspaper is that the contributing team is made up of high school students, just like you and me.

Combined with the fact that the newspaper is written in two languages, it is amazing that the WorldLink newspaper offers youth the opportunity to address pressing global issues that affect us all. Together with the WorldLink program, the photojournalist contributing team and I have worked hard towards ensuring that these stories are told and that each moment of the Youth Town Meeting conference is captured in this publication.

That being said, I have a list of people to thank. First off, I would like to thank WorldLink program officer Debbie Martinez for the amazing opportunity to be the Editor-in-Chief. I would also like to thank the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice for providing opportunities for youth, such as the WorldLink program and the Youth Town Meeting.

Next, I would like to thank the 2013 team of photojournalists and editors. I could not have asked for a better group to work with throughout these past few months. And last, but I assure you not least, I would like to thank you, the reader, for taking the time to pick up this newspaper and read about these important issues prevalent in our world today.

Being young is about experiencing change. From our developing minds to our ever-evolving ideas, we embody the idea of change. It is time for us to apply this idea and combine it with our knowledge of global affairs, in order to make even the smallest of differences in the global community.

We have a lesson to teach the world: we are young, and we can do anything we put our minds to when we initiate dialogue and work together in peaceful unity.

Let's change the world together.

Best,

Kira Elliott  
San Dieguito Academy  
2013 WorldLink Editor-in-Chief

## 2013 WorldLink Press

### Editor in Chief:

Kira Elliott, *San Dieguito Academy*

### Copy Editors:

Andrea Fimbres Prieto, *IMAN*

Katherine Deutschman, *SCPA*

Morgan Chen, *Outside the Lens*

### Photo Editors:

Ariana Gallegos, *Outside the Lens*

Layla Mazdyasni, *Outside the Lens*

### Spanish Translators:

Brandon Wachs, *La Jolla Country Day School*

Israel Cedillo, *SCPA*

Victor Garcia Campaña, *CETYS Universidad*

### Journalists:

Alina Campos, *Mueller Charter Leadership Academy*

Andrea Fimbres Prieto, *IMAN*

Brandon Wachs, *La Jolla Country Day School*

Gabby Hartman, *The Bishop's School*

Katherine Deutschman, *SCPA*

Morgan Chen, *Outside the Lens*

Nicole Sadowksy, *The Bishop's School*

Tsion Fikre, *Scripps Ranch High School*

### Photographers:

Alexandra Cheney, *Outside the Lens*

Ariana Gallegos, *Outside the Lens*

Elena Kuglen Alvarez, *Outside the Lens*

Israel Cedillo, *SCPA*

Jordan Bowman, *Outside the Lens*

Layla Mazdyasni, *Outside the Lens*

Maria Jose Zepeda Flores, *IMAN*

Natasha Thomson, *The Bishop's School*

Ninett Rodriguez, *Academy of Our Lady of Peace*

Paloma Mercier, *SCPA*

Sarah Yang, *The Bishop's School*

Stefan Thompson, *The Bishop's School*

Victor Garcia Campaña, *CETYS Universidad*

## Participating Schools and Youth Organizations

Academy of Our Lady of Peace

The Bishop's School

CETYS Universidad Campus Tijuana

Colegio Baja California de Rosarito

Colegio Reina Isabel

Coronado High School

Escondido High School

Francis Parker School

Girl Scouts Service League

High Tech High Chula Vista

High Tech High International

Horizons Christian Academy

Instituto Mexico Americano Noroeste (IMAN)

International Rescue Committee

John Muir High School

La Jolla Country Day School

La Jolla High School

Mission Bay High School

Mueller Charter Leadership Academy

Otay Ranch High School

Outside the Lens

Pacific Ridge High School

Preparatoria Federal Lazaro Cardenas

Roosevelt Middle School

San Diego Early/Middle College

San Diego School of Creative & Performing Arts (SCPA)

San Dieguito Academy

Sierra Vista School - GRF

Sunset High School

Sweetwater High School

Youth and Leaders Living Actively (YALLA)

## Thank you, Donors!

The WorldLink program provides students, from varying backgrounds, an opportunity to become globally aware through year-round events and activities, at no cost. This would not be possible without the generous support of WorldLink donors!

*Special thanks to WorldLink's 2012-2013 donors:*

**Kimberly Heller, Jean Pehrsson, Nika Water Company, LLC, Santosha Fund and the Verizon Grant Foundation; and supporting organizations: Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice and University of San Diego Admissions**

To learn how to make a contribution to the WorldLink program, please contact:

Elisa Lurkis, Director of Development  
elurkis@sandiego.edu | (619) 260 - 7913

**A special thanks to the IPJ and the wonderful volunteers for helping make the 16th Youth Town Meeting possible!**

## WorldLink's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Town Meeting "Changing Worlds: Media's Power and Influence"

*Social Media's Revolutionary Change* ◦ *The Relevance of Traditional Media* ◦ *The Relationship between Media and Government*  
*Media as a Humanitarian Voice* ◦ *Media as a Global Activist*

### The WorldLink Program and the Annual Youth Town Meeting



*The mission of the WorldLink program is to connect youth to global affairs by creating an environment in which young people may consider global citizenship and responsible local participation. WorldLink encourages critical thinking and understanding of the dynamics shaping international policies and global economies, as well as local cultures and concerns.*

*The annual Youth Town Meeting, WorldLink's capstone event of the year, allows for discussions with leaders, experts, activists and fellow youth from around the world. It calls upon youth to engage in global affairs and add their voices to a civil and responsible atmosphere of problem solving, in which we can build our diverse yet increasingly intertwined communities with a vision of justice and peace.*



*Designed by Troy Chatterton, WorldLink Intern  
Rancho Bernardo High School*

#### **Whose Media is It?**

Presenter: Santosh Shah, founder & president, Today's Youth Asia  
Moderator: Isaac Hortiales (*IMAN*)

#### **Evoking Change: The Power of Photography**

Presenter: Gloria Garrett, fine art photographer, Glorious Journey Photography  
Moderator: Katherine Guerrero (*High Tech High International*)

#### **An Arab Spring Story of Social Media**

Presenter: Wafa Garbout, vice-president, WeYouth-Tunisia  
Moderator: Rebecca Young (*Academy of Our Lady of Peace*)

#### **Communicating Beyond Words**

Presenters: Youth Advisory Council, The AjA Project  
Moderator: Larissa Guerrero (*CETYS Universidad*)

#### **Crisis Reporting Roles of Journalists**

Presenter: Mark Schulte, national education director, Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting  
Moderator: Wendy Sanchez (*San Diego Early/Middle College*)

#### **Media Platforms for Social Activism**

Presenter: Scot Chisolm, CEO and chairman, StayClassy  
Moderator: Aric Yael Bandera (*IMAN*)

#### **Governmental Challenges: Media Relations**

Presenter: Amy Grier, public affairs officer, Department of State, Tijuana, Mexico  
Moderator: Adrian Alfredo Estrada (*CETYS Universidad*)

#### **Beyond Tradition: Photography in Ethiopia**

Presenter: John Rowe, founder, Omo Child  
Moderator: Kori Canale (*The Bishop's School*)

#### **Shifting Perceptions: A North Korea Story**

Presenters: Justin Wheeler, vice president, and Sarah Palmer, rescue team coordinator, Liberty in North Korea (LiNK)  
Moderator: Alexander Dey Bueno (*CETYS Universidad*)

#### **A Voice for the Environment: Social Media**

Presenter: Dimiter Kenarov, journalist, Pulitzer Center of Crisis Reporting  
Moderator: Tomer Mate-Solomon (*The Bishop's School*)

#### **Digital Tools: Empowering Youth Worldwide**

Presenter: Meena Nanji, co-founder, GlobalGirl Media  
Moderator: Ignacio Salinas (*Federal Lazaro Cardenas*)

#### **The Newspaper Industry: Dying or Adapting?**

Presenter: Gina Lew, professor, Department of Communications, University of San Diego  
Moderator: Chi Chi Chang (*The Bishop's School*)

#### **Radio Shangri-La: A Youth Radio Project**

Presenter: Lisa Napoli, author and journalist, Radio Shangri-La  
Moderator: Luz Elena Castellanos Aleman (*CETYS Universidad*)

#### **Promoting Literacy through Interactive Media**

Presenter: Kim Vallejo, community and youth outreach associate, Room to Read  
Moderator: Marija Bosnjak (*Academy of Our Lady of Peace*)

#### **Portraits of Unspoken Realities**

Presenter: Bear Guerra, photographer, (In)Visible Project  
Moderator: Armand Binombe (*International Rescue Committee Peacemakers*)

# Speakers



Gina Lew



Gloria Garrett



Santosh Shah



Justin Wheeler

**The AjA Project's Youth Advisory Council (YAC)** is a leadership program providing innovative and educational opportunities to refugee and at-risk youth. As YAC members, **Beto Soto, Fadi Ghanim, Famo Musa, Krystal Byrd, Nashwan Abbas, Nazar Alabid, Riva Oraha and Roodi Zuhair** come from diverse backgrounds, with their countries of origin being Mexico, Iraq, Kenya and the United States. Ranging in age from 17 to 23 years old, The AjA Project's YAC have explored topics such as diversity, cross-cultural social discourse, immigration and social advocacy through the use of photography, while broadening their "understanding of the world and the people in it," according to Alabid and Byrd.

**Amy Grier**, a career diplomat, currently serves as the public affairs officer for the U.S. Department of State in Tijuana, Mexico. Grier is responsible for media relations and cultural affairs for the Baja California peninsula and the state of Sonora. Prior to her current position, she served in Washington, D.C. as the Mexico and Canada public diplomacy desk officer in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and as a policy officer on the Western Hemisphere team in the Bureau of International Information Programs. Grier has also served at the U.S. Embassy in La Paz, Bolivia; Seoul, Korea; and Dusseldorf, Germany.

**Bear Guerra** is a photographer who focuses on humanitarian, environmental and social justice issues. Guerra was the photographer and creative director for the (In) Visible Project, which is a mobile, multimedia installation that offers a human portrait of homelessness in San Diego. Guerra is a native of San Antonio and now lives in Los Angeles. Guerra and his wife collaborate under the name Fonografia Collective, producing local and international print, radio and multimedia stories about human rights and social justice.

**Dimiter Kenarov** is a freelance journalist, born and raised in Sofia, Bulgaria. He is currently based in Istanbul, Turkey, and has experience on social media and its impact on the environmental activism community in Eastern Europe. Kenarov is a contributing editor at the *Virginia Quarterly Review*. His work has also appeared in *The International Herald Tribune*, *Boston Review*, *Esquire*, *The Nation* and The Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, among many others.

**Gina Lew** is a former award-winning broadcast journalist. During her career, she worked for CBS, NBC and FOX News in Los Angeles and San Diego. Lew takes a look at the dying industry of the newspaper business, which impacts both the media and society at large. Lew received a bachelor of arts in broadcast journalism and English and a master of arts in communications from the University of Southern California. She is a professor of practice in the Department of Communication Studies at the University of San Diego.

**Gloria Garrett** is a fine art photographer specializing in landscapes, wildlife in their natural habitat and indigenous cultures. Through *Glorious Journey Photography*, Dr. Garrett's mission is to two-fold: to inspire a deeper understanding of the relationship between humanity and nature, and to inspire respect for indigenous cultures. Garrett received an M.B.A. in finance from the University of Texas and a Ph.D. in healing science from the Center of Energy Medicine in San Diego.

**John Rowe**, founder of Omo Child, is a photographer and filmmaker who trained at the U.S. Navy School of Photography. He has spent years traveling the world photographing cultures in Southeast Asia, India, Mongolia, China and Africa. On his journey to southwest Ethiopia, he photographed and documented the struggles of the people in the Omo River Valley. Rowe recently joined Lale Labuko's efforts to stop the devastating Mingi practice and to bring education to the region.

**Justin Wheeler** is vice president of Liberty in North Korea (LiNK) and oversees all global awareness and grassroots efforts of the organization. His vision is to shift public perception on North Korea away from the politics and onto the people. Through innovative campaigns and programs, he hopes to engage people around the world and offer direct and meaningful ways to impact this issue. Justin brings incredible passion to the team and utilizes his prior experience in grassroots campaigns and student mobilization.

**Kim Vallejo** currently serves as Room to Read's community and youth outreach associate, overseeing "Students Helping Students." Vallejo has worked and interned with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Save the Children, the Boys and Girls Club and AmeriCorps. Vallejo holds a bachelor of arts in political science from Hobart and William Smith Colleges and a master in public affairs from Cornell University.

**Lisa Napoli** is an author and journalist. She served as a reporter and host for the public radio show *Marketplace* and as a columnist for MSNBC. She also covered the Internet revolution and the cultural impact of technology for the *New York Times*. Napoli is the author of *Radio Shangri-La*, which details her journey to the ancient Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, where she helped establish its first youth-oriented radio station, Kuzoo FM.

**Mark Schulte** is the national education director for the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting – an innovative, award-winning nonprofit journalism organization. Schulte has taught global issues-based journalism for nearly 10 years, and founded an international online network of high school reporters, with members in more than 50 countries. Prior to joining the Pulitzer Center, he worked as a magazine writer and editor, covering politics and education in Virginia. Schulte holds a master of arts in interactive journalism from American University.

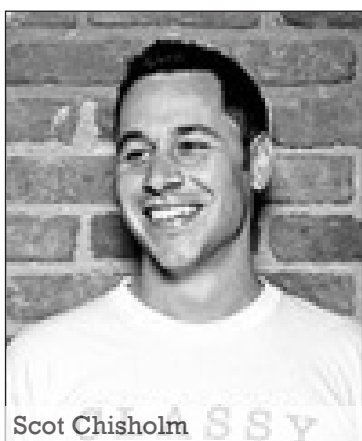
**Meena Nanji** is co-founder of GlobalGirl Media – an organization that teaches the tools of digital media to teenage girls in underserved communities, inspiring community activism and social change. Raised in Kenya and educated in the United Kingdom, Nanji is an award-winning independent film/videomaker whose work focuses on explorations of race, cultural diasporas, gender rights as seen across the backdrop of social justice and human rights. Her documentary *View From A Grain of Sand*, about women's rights in Afghanistan, has won several film festival awards and was broadcasted on PBS and internationally.

**Santosh Shah** is the founder and president of Today's Youth Asia (TYA) – a multimedia and youth organization based in Kathmandu, Nepal that covers peace, development, education, conflict and security issues. Shah served as a panelist on the United Nations Youth Advisory Panel from 2008 to 2010. He also received the title "Youth Ambassador for Peace" from the Youth Federation for World Peace. Over the past 10 years, he has gained recognition as a progressive youth leader, providing opportunities to Nepalese youth through several innovative youth-oriented programs and projects.

**Sarah Palmer** is a former rescue team leader for the organization Liberty in North Korea (LiNK). She now serves as a liaison between LiNK and Rescue Teams worldwide. She equips LiNK's grassroots teams with fundraising ideas, guidance and resources that help them reach their goals of rescuing North Korean refugees and shifting public perception on North Korea in their local communities. Palmer was born and raised in Dallas, Texas and graduated from the University of San Diego with a degree in international relations.

**Scot Chisholm** is co-founder and the current CEO and chairman of StayClassy – a fast growing San Diego-based company that develops an online fundraising product used by thousands of nonprofit organizations around the world. The company also hosts the Classy Awards, the largest philanthropic awards show in the country. Chisholm was selected by Bloomberg Businessweek as one of the top five most promising social entrepreneurs in America. Chisholm holds a bachelor of arts in industrial engineering and operations research, with a mechanical engineering concentration, from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

**Wafa Garbout** is an 18-year-old baccalaureate candidate in the arts from Tunisia. She is the recipient of a Fulbright Micro-Scholarship and participated in the Access Leadership Program in March 2012, hosted by the U.S. Department of State in Tunis, Tunisia. After experiencing the revolution in Tunisia in 2011, Garbout helped establish and became the vice president of WeYouth-Tunisia – an organization focusing on reinforcing leadership, citizenship and volunteerism among youth to develop a culture of dialogue. Garbout is also a member of Generation Association and Citizenship, Junior Chamber International, the Deutscher Tunesischer Klub and a debater with Young Arab Voices.



Scot Chisholm



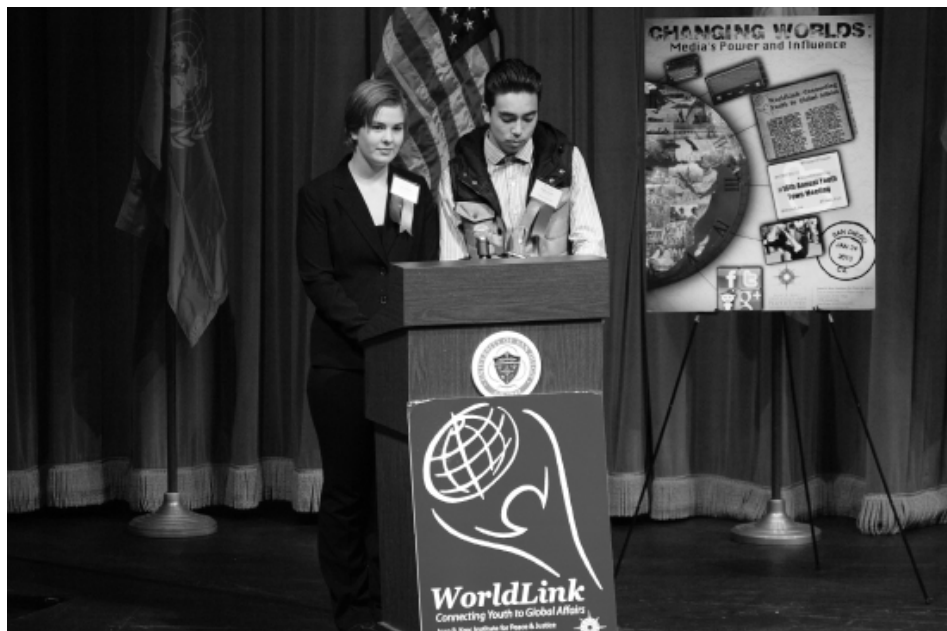
John Rowe



Lisa Napoli



Mark Schulte



WorldLink interns Kira Elliott, San Dieguito Academy, and Colin Czech, The Bishop's School, welcome students. *Photo courtesy of Jordan Bowman*



The Opening Plenary speakers engage in discussion with student delegates. *Photo courtesy of Paloma Mercier*

### continued from page 1

Dimiter Kenarov from Bulgaria spoke after Garbout. As an introduction, Kenarov talked about how he worked for the media and how he was “a walking representation of the media,” as a freelance journalist.

When describing social media, he commented that at first it was “really weird, very colorful.” He couldn’t really appreciate it until two years ago, when he was arrested by the police in Belarus for “suspicious activity.” Kenarov was, in fact, interviewing people about tractors. “‘Why are you writing about tractors?’ they asked me, they wanted to know.” He laughed at the memory.

However, while in solitary confinement, he heard the guards talking about a movement that had developed in Bulgaria. It turns out that a Facebook page had been created to help free

Kenarov from jail, and a petition was being sent around through different social media sites. He was finally set free and banned from returning to Belarus because he was seen as a threat to social order. “I never considered myself a threat to anything,” he laughed. For him, that was his personal introduction to social media and its power and influence.

Today, Kenarov focuses on reporting on environmental issues, specifically “fracking”—the act of drilling into the ground with chemicals to break shale rocks. He has recently been attentive as local citizens in Eastern Europe use social media to express their concerns and have their voices heard by their governments. Kenarov acknowledges the new opportunities new media provides, such as being able to easily reach out to communities where he had no previous contacts. He has

dubbed this era of change the “Renaissance of Media Coverage.”

The final speaker was Kim Vallejo, an associate for the community and youth outreach program of Room to Read—a nonprofit organization that works with communities in Asia and Africa to improve literacy rates and help girls complete secondary school. Before joining Room to Read, Vallejo volunteered at the domestic violence center at her college. There, she discovered, “volunteering was intoxicating to me,” and that each person has the capability to give at least one of three things to a nonprofit: time, treasure and talent.

This is a belief she took with her to Room to Read, where several of her duties involve the use of media and online sources, providing people with tools and information to initiate discussions of action, and showing donors

how their money is being used to support the program’s goals. “An important thing to keep in mind,” said Vallejo, “is to think about the intent that belies a form of communication.” Vallejo urges today’s youth to acknowledge the power of new media, but to “see beyond the image up front” and do research on the causes you support so that we can be well-informed change-makers in our communities.

In the space of a single hour, four intelligent and proactive representatives from around the world awed the audience with their passion and opinions on media and its influences. By exposing both the benefits and the drawbacks of new media, WorldLink conference delegates were now able to formulate their own opinions on such pertinent issues—and are ready to take on the world. ■

## Journalism and Social Media through the Eyes of Dimiter Kenarov

Dimiter Kenarov describes his experience as a freelance journalist. *Story by Andrea Fimbres Prieto, Instituto Mexico Americano Noroeste.*

**B**orn in Bulgaria, Dimiter Kenarov is a freelance journalist who never expected to write for a living. His masters degree is in English Literature, but admitted that he came to the realization that there is a much greater world out there ready to explore. So he turned to journalism. As Kenarov explained, “Stories are out there constantly, waiting for us to notice them.”

Kenarov began to cover a variety of stories, such as the case of a serial killer in Macedonia that mysteriously raped and murdered women from the same local neighborhood. The town was astonished and disturbed to discover that the killer was the town journalist who was “investigating” the case.

He traveled to this small town and interviewed the family of the convicted killer, expressing that it is interesting that you may think you know someone, but there may be much more to uncover.

These experiences enhanced

Kenarov’s interest in seeking untold stories, such as the rise in environmental activism through social media in Eastern Europe.

In the session “A Voice for the Environment: Social Media,” Kenarov described media’s powerful influence by introducing his stories addressing shale gas. Through support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, Kenarov traveled to Poland to research the dangers of hydraulic fracturing, or extraction of shale gas.

“People invent new technology and it’s become an issue,” Kenarov said. These types of procedures contribute to pollution and global warming, but because of the incoming revenue, large corporations do not care of the destruction it causes.

Similar to the rise of concerns in Poland, people around the world began to organize themselves against hydraulic fracturing. One primary reason these environmental movements developed in various countries is that “environmental issues know no borders.”

As Kenarov said, “what’s happening in the United States affects Mexico, and what’s happening in Mexico affects the United States.” Thus, environmental movements on hydraulic fracturing emerged almost simultaneously in Romania and Bulgaria—Kenarov’s home country.

What was unique to these new protests was the leading role that social media played in organizing the environmental activism community. Through the use of social media sites like Facebook, thousands of Romanian and Bulgarian citizens gathered in protest against these growing environmental dangers.

His stories have varied in topic between the political and environmental climates of Bulgaria, Iraq, the United States, among others. And from all the people he has interviewed, one particular group of activists surprised him the most—farmers.

While in Pennsylvania, Kenarov met a farmer who complained about a company’s attempt to take part of his land in order to build factories. As

mentioned in the conference briefing session, a common misconception of rural areas is the limited access to the Internet and new media.

However, Kenarov explained, that there are actually many people in rural Europe and the rural U.S. that are well-connected through the Internet.

In this particular case, the local farmers used social media to have their voices and concerns be heard. In the end, this particular farmer’s story became known.

According to Kenarov, the development of social media and new forms of communication are giving a voice to specific issues and communities that often go ignored.

New global activists are emerging worldwide that are not only using new media to communicate and spread information, but also to collaborate in global movements.

As Kenarov describes, “In the end, you see [people] all around the world gather around the same issues [...] because it concerns our future as human beings.” ■

*“Stories are out there constantly, waiting for us to notice them.”  
— Dimiter Kenarov, journalist, Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting*

## Giving a Voice to the Under-Reported

Speaker Mark Schulte describes to student delegates the inner-workings of the field of journalism.

Story by Morgan Chen, *Outside the Lens*.

**W**hat is a crisis? What does it mean to advocate for something? What has the Internet done for the field of journalism? These are the questions that Mark Schulte posed to his audience—a group of student delegates from both San Diego and Baja Mexico at WorldLink's Youth Town Meeting. Schulte serves as the national education coordinator at the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting—an award-winning non-profit organization that supports independent international journalists who cover topics that are typically under-reported.

To demonstrate the Pulitzer Center's mission and current projects, Schulte created an interactive website presentation for the conference delegates. "This is the first time I've used this," Schulte admits with a smile, glancing at the screen behind him, "so we'll see how it goes." The first slide asked the question: "What's what in media?" The group of student delegates explore the answer with Schulte. Reporters should not "focus on the effect" that their work will have on the public. The main job of journalists, he says, is "to inform."

The second slide read: "What do you hear too much about in the media?" This time he stays at his com-

puter, calling on students as he types their responses up in brief, bullet-point notes on the slide, with replies that include "the economic state" and "celebrities."

However, the slide that follows introduces a very powerful question: "What do you want to hear about?" A student calls out, "human trafficking in San Diego," and the delegates in Schulte's session ensued in an action plan, similar to those conducted by the Pulitzer Center.

Now having decided on the issue that would be covered, the Pulitzer Center steps in and discusses funding needs. "How would you cover it?" Normally, the Center takes into consideration the journalist's travel and housing costs. However, the topic of human trafficking in San Diego is a local community issue, which would generally cost less.

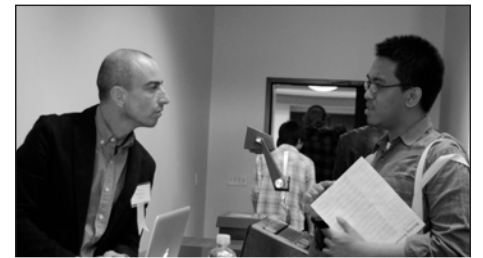
The next, and incredibly important, step is to identify the specific people who will work on this particular project. Writers, photographers and videopersons were just a few suggestions made by conference delegates. Schulte then explains the most efficient ways in covering a story with great impact, which include a variety of techniques such as graphic design-

ing, conducting interviews and even producing an interactive website like the one he is using.

Finally, "how would you pitch it?" He explains that prominent media outlets, like the *New York Times*, are businesses concerned with publishing a story that people want to read, so "pitching it" in a compelling way that will interest publishers is crucial. As Schulte proposes, why would people want to read the story, and why would big publishing companies pay to have it published? "Because it might help save lives," a student calls out. Schulte records this on his computer, and turns back to face his audience.

He ends the interactive presentation with a final question, "What has changed in the media?" The most prominent answer, he says, is 'the Internet,' since it has become "easier to reach people and 'go viral'."

However, Schulte reminds us that through the redundancy of current news in America, we are seeing less international-related news than ever before. Thus, as we go on towards our journey as future journalists, we must utilize these important steps, in order to ensure that a voice continues to be given to the under-reported. ■



Bear Guerra meets with student delegate, following his session. Photo courtesy of Ariana Gallegos

## Through Brand New Eyes

Bear Guerra's photographs initiate discussion on prevalent issues, such as homelessness in San Diego.

Story by Alina Campos, *Mueller Charter Leadership Academy*.

**L**ooking out to an audience of middle and high school students, Roberto "Bear" Guerra asked, "What does a homeless person look like?" Most of my peers answered, "They live out on the streets downtown," or "[They have] no food or basics of living."

Guerra then showed us pictures of homeless people in San Diego from his work through the (In)Visible Project. Those in the photographs were not at all what we expected. These powerful, black-and-white portraits allowed us to look into the eyes of individuals. They were no longer part of a larger population that most people often walk past on the streets.

Throughout his briefing session, Guerra asked us what we think media is and what the term "humanitarian" means, since he focuses largely on humanitarian issues, social justice and the environment. Awarded for several projects, including "Peru: La Carretera—Life Along the Interoceanic Highway," Guerra acknowledges the importance of using forms of media to raise awareness and initiate conversations about these pressing issues.

The next set of photos showed Guerra in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, through which we saw the camps of displaced people, large amounts of rubble and the fights that broke out over the shortage of food. However, these specific images also conveyed the global community's tenacity in trying to support Haitians with the struggles they had to face.

Overall, Guerra gave us a glimpse into the lives of the voiceless. This is the true power of photography, and a theme in Guerra's own projects. Images can share the stories of downtrodden populations, which is vital so that the world can begin discussions on humanitarian action.

Guerra is currently based in Los Angeles, California, and lives with his daughter and wife, with whom he collaborates with on various multimedia stories focusing on human rights and social justice. To learn more about these projects and others, visit [www.bearguerra.com](http://www.bearguerra.com). ■

## Media's Relation to the Government

Speaker Amy Grier relates her story of working at the American Consulate General in Tijuana, Mexico.

Story by Brandon Wachs, *La Jolla Country Day School*.

**E**nergy and excitement was in the air. There was a buzz that you could feel from the chatter and footsteps from all the students in attendance at this year's WorldLink Youth Town Meeting (YTM). Delegates were eager to hear from the conference speakers who had traveled to the University of San Diego from all around the world.

Amy Grier was one of those speakers. Grier is a career diplomat currently working as the public affairs officer at the American Consulate General in Tijuana, Mexico—a country with one U.S. embassy and ten different U.S. consulates. Under the U.S. Department of State, she has also worked in Germany, Bolivia, South Korea and Washington, D.C.

In the YTM session "Governmental Challenges: Media Relations," Grier explained her role as the foreign service officer responsible for media relations in the Baja California region and the state of Sonora. Grier's job encompasses press relations and diplomacy. Through these responsibilities, she explains U.S. policy to the public and introduces the American culture to local communities.

The Consulate General in Tijuana, like other consulates worldwide, works closely with local citizens, such as youth, through its year-round programs. One demographic the Tijuana Consulate has begun to focus more attention on are the journalists in Mexico. According to Grier, it is imperative to work with this group because having strong journalists and media platforms helps a democracy thrive.

On a related note, she also ad-



Amy Grier presents to a group of student delegates during her briefing session. Photo courtesy of Layla Mazdyasni

ressed the issue of censorship. Although Grier supports the need to withhold some information from the public, she argues that explicit censorship is detrimental to a democracy.

Grier also spoke about the Internet's growing level of impact in the realm of public affairs. She referred to social media and the Internet as the "21st century statecraft." This new platform gives the U.S. State Department greater opportunity to reach the younger generation, through sites like Facebook. The Tijuana Consulate's Facebook page has over 20,000 followers, and is used to recruit program participants and to inform the public about significant events in the United States, such as the presidential inauguration.

In addition, these social media

sites have been successful in initiating chats with Mexican citizens, regarding important topics such as the process of securing a visa. Twitter and YouTube are other new media sites that have successfully helped disperse information to both American and Mexican citizens. For instance, these sites were used to warn the public about potential natural disasters, such as hurricanes.

Amy Grier's session was impressive and gave a comprehensive view of what the Consulate in Tijuana does for the local people, as well as for the American citizens residing in Mexico. The talk was informative and insightful. Through Grier's session, students received the opportunity to discuss an aspect of the government that the public often hears little about in the daily news. ■

*"Everybody has time, talent or treasure that they can give [back to the world]. Not everybody can give all three, but most people can give at least one." —Kim Vallejo, community & youth outreach associate, Room to Read*



A group of student delegates listen intently to Lisa Napoli's presentation. Photo courtesy of Maria Jose Zepeda Flores

## Unplugged: Life Without Media

Lisa Napoli opens the delegates' eyes to the presence technology has in their lives. Story by Morgan Chen, *Outside the Lens*.

**L**isa Napoli was tired of her line of work and ready for a change. One day, she met a "cute guy" who told her about an opportunity to work halfway around the world, in the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan. From then on, she began an incredibly eye-opening trip that changed the course of her life.

Presenting a set of beautiful photos during her briefing session, Napoli shared with WorldLink students her magical journey. For Napoli, Bhutan is one of the world's happiest places, and she was on her way there to help start the first youth-oriented radio station - Kuzoo FM.

In Bhutan, Napoli was exposed to a very different society than the one she had left. "Most people in Bhutan are subsistence farmers," she said, and described the region as very simple but not impoverished. She did not expect to find this Himalayan kingdom as underdeveloped as it was, and also did

not realize how sacred and spiritual this place would be.

Napoli learned that over 40 percent of this region had no roads or electricity, which was a stark contrast from where she came from - Los Angeles, California. Not many people travel to Bhutan, and "kids were shocked to see a visitor," she recalled with a smile. Bhutanese have had limited access to technology and media. Napoli even showed a portrait of the royal Bhutanese family, which took over eight years to be released outside of Bhutan, due to limited access to forms of media.

However, Napoli then began to explain that Bhutan has experienced recent changes, as the ancient kingdom has begun to modernize itself and make a peaceful transition to an elected, parliamentary democracy. "It was a major movement in time for a country that never realized it would be in this situation," she admitted.

As in many other countries, the modernization began to be seen in the capital city. Although there are no traffic lights in Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, it is still more modern than the rest of Bhutan. Napoli spoke about the phenomenon of "more and more people" leaving the villages to go to the city.

She then displayed an image of a basic building in Thimphu, which was where Kuzoo FM was housed. It was set in an old house that belonged to a former foreign minister. "Imagine a world without radio," Napoli said with great vigor. It was to no surprise that Napoli and the Bhutanese youth were excited to establish this radio station, so that the younger generation could broadcast what was important to them. Napoli's book *Radio Shangri-La* details this incredible journey.

Originally, Napoli had traveled to Bhutan with a number of preconceived goals. Instead, her experience had

nurtured new "interpersonal relationships" and it introduced a new appreciation and understanding of herself. "It's overwhelming to be a minority," Napoli expressed, but "in the end, we're all the same. Even if it looks completely different from what we know."

As a closing panelist at WorldLink's 16th Youth Town Meeting, Napoli ended the day on a powerful note. She challenged each one of us to physically document all forms of media that we consume in a single day. But the real challenge - "Then, do a media fast. Turn it all off. Keep a diary and see what you learn about yourself."

And as a final piece of advice to WorldLink students looking to make a change in the world, she shared, "Be open to new things and ideas and places. Meet people. Research and propose." And most importantly, "Never be afraid to write to someone you admire and say, 'I admire what you're doing. I'd like to help you.'" ■

## A Light in the Darkness

As traditional media struggles to maintain its position in the modern world, Youth Town Meeting speaker Gina Lew illustrates its continuing importance. Story by Kira Elliott, *San Dieguito Academy*.

**G**ina Lew, former award-winning broadcast journalist and current USD professor in communication studies, argues that the news industry is changing and is continually adapting to meet the needs of the technological era. While some newspaper companies are cutting quality for profit, others are holding to their traditional role as the investigators of crooked deals and government cover-ups.

The media is an industry and therefore acts like one. In order to reduce competition, newspaper producers have begun to merge with other, smaller productions. San Diegans saw this with the merging of the *North County Times* and the *Union Tribune*. However, merging does not come without its consequences. As the number of newspaper publishers decreases, the voice of the media becomes steadily more homogenized.

With the recent recession, the traditional media industry has been hit hard. As new media takes the spotlight, advertising and subscriptions have been moving towards the Internet and away from traditional media sources. Newspapers, as a consequence, have become increasingly desperate as their revenue decreases and budgets are cut.

Lew uses the example of a full-page spread of the Kardashians from the *Los Angeles Times*, which was used as nothing more than a publicity stunt in order to attract more readers. Desperate times call for desperate measures, and Lew notes that newspapers have risked quality for profit.

Nevertheless, despite all of its flaws, Lew argues towards the importance of traditional media in the lives of the public. "In the dark corridors of the government, media shines a

light," describes Lew. Through investigative journalism, newspaper reporters have uncovered scandals, political and otherwise, like in the case of Randy Cunningham—a politician who used taxpayers' money to earn a profit through a series of complex backhanded schemes. Unfortunately for Cunningham, journalists were able to uncover these crimes and bring to light yet another crooked politician.

As the fourth estate, media keeps the public informed and tells stories. And despite traditional media's desperate attempts to adapt to the ever-changing world, it continues to be the backbone of the media. However, to keep it from collapsing, all we, the people, need to do is pick up a newspaper and appreciate the light it shines in these dark corridors. ■



Gina Lew talks about the newspaper industry's attempt to adapt to new media. Photo courtesy of Victor García Campaña

*"Do a media fast. Turn it all off. Keep a diary and see what you learn about yourself." —Lisa Napoli, author and journalist, Radio Shangri-La*

## Manteniéndose con Clase

Traducido por Brandon Wachs, La Jolla Country Day School. Por Katherine Deutschman, San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts.

**S**tayClassy, traducido como manteniéndose con clase, es una plataforma a través del internet que recauda fondos para organizaciones sin fines de lucro. Esta organización "se fundó completamente sin un previo plan," según el co-fundador y el director ejecutivo actual Scot Chisholm. "Nunca en un millón de años pensé que se convertiría en una empresa real," Chisholm dijo con entusiasmo. Y en efecto, la empresa tuvo comienzos humildes.

Para Chisholm, todo comenzó con una recaudación de fondos en el año 2006 que localmente se organizó en apoyo de la sociedad americana de cáncer. Chisholm, que acababa de graduarse de la universidad, descubrió que su madre estaba luchando contra el cáncer de mama. El y unos amigos de la universidad organizaron un evento para recaudar fondos y recaudaron \$1.000 en una noche para la causa. Como Chisholm expresó tranquilamente, "Eso no es mucho dinero, pero para alguien como yo, fue enorme." El éxito del evento motivó a los fundadores a organizar un segundo evento, un gran festival musical - y así nació StayClassy.

Siete años más tarde, StayClassy es ahora una sofisticada empresa que recauda fondos por el internet. Según Chisholm, organizaciones sin fines de lucro pueden trabajar con StayClassy para ayudar a organizar campañas, con el fin de capacitar a los miembros de la comunidad a convertirse en donantes. Por ejemplo, StayClassy ayudó a recaudar \$30.000 en una sola semana para Equipo Rubicon—una organización de alivio después de desastres, encabezada por veteranos de las fuerzas armadas. Y una de la más exitosas campañas que StayClassy ha ayudado a organizar es el movimiento Kony 2012 para Los Niños Invisibles. La empresa recaudó cerca de \$2.000.000 para la causa. Chisholm dice que este método es muy exitoso porque "conecta a muchas plataformas sociales y hace una llamada a la acción."

Además de organizaciones, personas pueden beneficiarse utilizando StayClassy. Visitando el sitio de StayClassy, personas pueden encontrar organizaciones que trabajan en campañas de su interés o iniciar sus propias campañas. A través de StayClassy, estos miembros de la comunidad tienen las herramientas para crear conciencia sobre el tema y reunir donaciones para su causa particular.

StayClassy ha recorrido un largo camino desde su primer evento para recaudar fondos. La compañía tiene en la actualidad la más grande ceremonia filantrópica de premios en los Estados Unidos. Los premios con clase, llamado The CLASSY Awards, dan reconocimiento a organizaciones que trabajan hacia el avance educativo, la defensa de animales, el alivio del hambre, y la pobreza—para nombrar algunos.

Aquellos interesados en aprender más sobre StayClassy pueden visitar [www.StayClassy.org](http://www.StayClassy.org). ■



## Una Plataforma Estable para Ideas Inestables

Traducido por Israel Cedillo, San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts. Por Nicole Sadowsky, The Bishop's School.

**L**a historia de Santosh Shah es una historia extraordinaria. Shah fue uno de los panelistas en la reunión local de jóvenes de WorldLink, llamada Youth Town Meeting, y fue uno de los que abrió la conferencia abordando el tema: "El Poder y la Influencia de los Medios."

Como un muchacho de pueblo en el distrito Sarlahi de Nepal, Shah empezó a escribir para ganar dinero para ir a la universidad. Sus escrituras se enfocaban en las situaciones políticas en su país, y casi todas fueron rechazadas excepto una—que fue vendida por 300 rupias, lo mismo a \$3.45 en dólares Americanos de hoy. Aunque vender artículos no era lucrativo, ayudó a que Shah pusiera su nombre en el periódico. Después, recibió una beca de parte de su universidad porque ellos querían recibir buena publicidad.

Durante su tiempo estudiando en la universidad, Shah conoció a personas de pensamiento similar quienes también estaban interesados en hacer una diferencia en sus comunidades, tanto local como global. Juntos, ellos fundaron Today's Youth Asia (TYA)—una organización internacional que usa diferentes medios de comunicación para amplificar las voces de los jóvenes. TYA conduce un programa de liderazgo y muchos programas de televisión para la juventud de Nepal, incluyendo el programa las siete personas más sobresalientes en debates de Nepal, llamado Nepal's Top 7 Debaters. Este programa combina las cualidades de American Idol con competencias de debate. Era el programa más popular en Nepal.

La idea detrás de TYA vino de la visión de Shah de crear "una plataforma estable para ideas inestables." El nos habló a mis compañeros y a mí de cómo los medios de Nepal a veces no querían enseñar en televisión a la juventud porque era muy riesgoso. En lugar de desanimarse, Shah creó su propia plataforma específicamente para ideas que eran consideradas in-

## Rompiendo Estereotipos Negativos de Jóvenes a Través de los Medios

Traducido por Israel Cedillo, San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts. Por Gabby Hartman, The Bishop's School.

**M**eena Nanji era una persona que creía totalmente y apoyaba los estereotipos asociados comúnmente con los adolescentes: son emocionales, rebeldes, fuera de control, y no se pueden tomar en serio.

Sin embargo, a través de su oficio como co-fundadora de GlobalGirl Media, junto con Amie Williams, ella ha formado una creencia en la fuerza e inteligencia de los jóvenes.

Los objetivos de la organización sin fines de lucro GlobalGirl Media es ayudar a afinar las habilidades de muchachas en los medios sociales, periodismo, y liderazgo. Las participantes del programa han crecido en las áreas o situaciones en donde tenían acceso limitado o no tenían acceso a los medios y tecnología nueva.

GlobalGirl Media les da una voz a las muchachas viviendo en una comunidad de bajo recursos, para que sus historias sean escuchadas en vez de "pasar por bajo el radar" de reportajes populares.



Santosh Shah comparte sus experiencias. Foto cortesía de Ninett Rodriguez

estables, pero en realidad eran innovadores. Ideas que se consideraban de riesgo incluían discusiones políticas y conversaciones de lo que el gobierno debía y no debía hacer.

Como lo pone Shah, "el dinero controla los medios." Comparado a los Estados Unidos, es relativamente barato crear un canal de televisión en Nepal. Shah espera que otros países usen la televisión para darle poder a los adolescentes para hacer cambios en sus países. TYA continúa usando los medios para darle poder a la juventud. Por esto, los alumnos jóvenes de TYA han reemplazado a intelectuales

mayores en Nepal. Los medios le han quitado poder al gobierno y se lo han dado más a la gente.

Santosh Shah es un líder modelo, y sus esfuerzos han cambiado a su país para bien. TYA ha estado trayendo cambios a Nepal y otros países por más de una década, debido al arduo trabajo conducido por Shah y otros líderes juveniles. Es evidente que su increíble impacto y poderoso mensaje tienen muchos años más para seguir.

Para mirar programas de Today's Youth Asia, visiten a [www.youtube.com/TYAchannel](http://www.youtube.com/TYAchannel). ■



Meena Nanji presenta GlobalGirl Media. Foto cortesía de Natasha Thomson

A través de los videos de GlobalGirl Media, se puede escuchar las participantes directamente. Una adolescente fuertemente afirmó que "teniendo una cámara en sus manos [la]

hace invencible." Es difícil no estar de acuerdo con su declaración, como el triunfo de la organización es claro en las acciones que han hecho las muchachas para hacer un cambio positivo en su comunidad. Ellas lograron romper los estereotipos acerca de las mujeres, compartiendo su voz.

Nanji se ha hecho una hábil cineasta en los temas de razas, diásporas culturales y derechos de la mujer, pero ha sido por el tiempo con GlobalGirl Media que Nanji se ha dado cuenta completamente del poder de la juventud y los medios.

Al darle a estas muchachas en Los Ángeles, Chicago, Sudáfrica, y Marruecos los instrumentos, apoyo, educación y equipaje para filmar sus historias, Nanji y el equipo de GlobalGirl Media han cambiado la forma en que muchachas son representadas en los medios y les han dado nuevas oportunidades. ■



## Entendiendo La Cultura y Diversidad

Traducido por Victor García Campaña, CETYS Universidad. Por Alina Campos, Mueller Charter Leadership Academy.

**E**l Proyecto AjA, organización con base en San Diego, se enfoca en proveer oportunidades innovadoras y educativas para juventud refugiada y en riesgo, a través de programas basados en fotografía. En la 16va reunión local de jóvenes de WorldLink, llamada Youth Town Meeting, miembros del Concilio de Consejeros Juveniles de El Proyecto AjA presentaron sesiones informativas.

Viniendo de México, Irak, Kenya, y los Estados Unidos, Nashwan Abbas, Nazar Alabid, Krystal Byrd, Fadi Ghanim, Famo Musa, Riva Oraha, Beto Soto y Roodi Zuhair hablaron sobre la forma en que ellos fueron afectados ya sea por la guerra o el ser desplazado.

Nazar Alabid, de 18 años de edad, nació en Bagdad, Irak y ha estado trabajando con El Proyecto AjA desde hace cuatro años. Al inicio de su sesión, él nos miró y nos pidió enlistar tres ejemplos negativos asociados con el Medio Oriente. Algunos estudiantes mencionaron el 11 de septiembre, mientras otros solo dijeron “actos terroristas.” Alabid luego nos pidió que enlistáramos tres ejemplos positivos—muy poco fue dicho.

Alabid, como muchos de sus colegas panelistas, comenzó a analizar conceptos erróneos comunes de nuestro mundo. Él describió la cultura Iraquí, revelando muchos atributos positivos acerca del Medio Oriente. Desde que se unió a El Proyecto AjA, él ha descubierto que la juventud debería mirar las cosas buenas que la gente ha hecho y no enfocarse solamente en lo malo. “No todas las personas son malas,” explicó Alabid, a pesar de que existen los grupos extremistas.

Mis compañeros delegados y yo recibimos la oportunidad de tener conversaciones honestas con todos los



Famo Musa sonriendo durante la conversación con estudiantes, sobre las metas del Proyecto AjA. Foto cortesía de Ariana Gallegos

panelistas. Beto Soto, 18, fue otro. Soto es un fotógrafo y artista que apoya a las comunidades homosexuales, bisexuales y transgénero. Cuando él era más joven, Soto estaba confundido acerca de su sexualidad. Esto resultó en una serie de ataques de acoso cibernético (también conocido como cyberbullying), que dejaron a Soto preguntándose por que sus atacantes se preocupaban por sus decisiones. Los ataques le permitieron desarrollar un entendimiento cultural acerca del acoso.

Así, cuando Soto se unió a El Proyecto AjA, el encontró que sus

compañeros jóvenes lo entendían y lo apreciaban por quien él era, y no lo discriminaban por su sexualidad. A través de El Proyecto AjA, Soto está empezando a aprender más acerca de la diversidad—un aspecto cultural que ha tratado de entender desde su infancia.

Los panelistas del Concilio de Consejeros Juveniles proveyeron una sesión informativa e inspiradora que dejó a muchos estudiantes ansiosos por aprender más.

Para más información acerca de El Proyecto AjA, por favor visiten: [www.ajaproject.org](http://www.ajaproject.org). ■

## ¿Cuál es tu mensaje?

Traducido por Victor García Campaña, CETYS Universidad. Por Andrea Fimbres Prieto, Instituto Mexico Americano Noroeste.

**Q**ué mensaje quisieras darle al mundo?—esa fue la pregunta que la Dra. Gloria Garrett nos hizo cuando veíamos las impresionantes fotografías que nos rodeaban.

Como muchos fotógrafos, ella empezó a tomar fotografías como una manera de expresarse. Mientras enfrentaba algún tipo de violencia en su casa a una corta edad, ella nos explicó como sentarse bajo un árbol la ayudaba a sentirse a gusto. Fue en esos momentos cuando una voz dentro de ella le dijo que había otra forma de responder a

la ira y al miedo en lugar de crear más. Fue gracias a su amor por la naturaleza que descubrió su don fotográfico.

En 2006, después de conocer a Lynne Twist, cofundadora de La Alianza Pachamama, la Dra. Garrett se dió cuenta de que la compañía Texaco estaba perforando en Ecuador buscando petróleo. Sin embargo, Texaco continuamente ignoraba el desperdicio tóxico que tiraba en las corrientes y en la tierra. Esto dió lugar a un aumento en los niveles de cáncer y otras enfermedades relacionadas con toxinas entre la población indígena local y los animales.

La Dra. Garrett hizo un viaje a Ecuador, en un intento de ayudar de cualquier manera que ella pudiera. Ella trabajó junto a La Alianza Pachamama—una organización dedicada a darle poder a la gente indígena para conservar su cultura y sus tierras, y a educar e inspirar a la comunidad global a producir un mundo más sostenible. Mientras estaba en Ecuador, la Dra. Garrett fotografió las catastróficas condiciones en las que la compañía había impactado la región. Al regresar a casa, ella intentó explicar la gravedad de la situación a sus amigos y colegas, pero las fotos tenían tal impacto que hablaban por si solas.

Ella decidió llevar a cabo una recaudación de fondos y vender sus fotografías. En unas cuantas horas, la Dra. Garrett reunió cerca de \$10,000 para La Alianza Pachamama. A través de esto, los indígenas locales sintieron un nuevo sentido de potencial y pudieron iniciar conversaciones con su gobierno. Este gran nivel de impacto también sirvió como una forma de inspiración para la Dra. Garrett. Ella continuó su viaje y empezó a viajar por el mundo, dirigiendo la conciencia hacia la naturaleza y los animales a través de imágenes cautivantes—cada una con su propio poderoso mensaje.

Así, la Dra. Garrett nos desafió a cada uno preguntándonos, “¿Qué mensaje quisieras darle al mundo?” De acuerdo a la Dra. Garrett: “Todos los mensajes que mandamos, regresan a nosotros mil veces. Por lo tanto tenemos que ser cuidadosos con nuestros mensajes.” Como una de mis compañeras en la audiencia expresó, una foto “es algo más que lo que vemos,” lo que importa “es lo que nos hace sentir.”

Para ver las imágenes de la Dra. Garrett, por favor visiten [www.gloriousjourneyphotography.net](http://www.gloriousjourneyphotography.net). ■



Un estudiante explica en que manera la foto lo representa a él. Foto cortesía de Jordan Bowman

## Un Historia Primavera Árabe de los Medios Sociales

Traducido por Brandon Wachs, La Jolla Country Day School. Por Gabby Hartman, The Bishop's School.

**E**n jeans, zapatillas deportivas y una pulsera brillante, Wafa Garbout parecía ser sólo otra chica de dieciocho años. Pero cuando ella comenzó a hablar acerca de los niveles violentos de censura en su país de origen, Túnez, parecía tener mucho más de dieciocho años.

La revolución en Túnez fue un intenso período de resistencia civil que fue causada por el alto desempleo, la inflación, la corrupción, y la falta de libertad de expresión y otras libertades políticas. El catalizador de las manifestaciones masivas fue una acción tomada por Mohamed Bouazizi, un joven vendedor de fruta en Túnez.

Después de continuos abusos de la policía local, el joven vendedor se prendió fuego para protestar contra los funcionarios municipales violentos. La ira y la violencia sólo aumentaron después de este horrible sacrificio y continuó hasta que el, por mucho tiempo, dictador Zine El Abidine Ben Ali renunció en enero de 2011 después de más de 20 años en el poder.

La juventud es el grupo más grande en Túnez, y podemos ver varios jóvenes líderes surgiendo en sus comunidades. Garbout es una de ellos. Al principio de 2012, ella participó en el programa de liderazgo de acceso organizado por el Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos.

Junto con algunos de sus compañeros, creó la organización WeYouth-Tunisia, que inspira al diálogo entre jóvenes sobre voluntariado, ciudadanía, valores de hermandad, paz y la posibilidad de convivir con los vecinos de Túnez. La organización trata de eliminar exclusión y la dependencia del consejo de otros países.

Garbout desea rellenar el hueco entre la juventud de Túnez y la juventud de todo el mundo a través de redes de comunicación extensas. Utilizando Facebook, que es popular internacionalmente, como su centro de comunicación, Garbout sabe que “las redes sociales son una espada de doble filo.” Puede ver la dificultad de vivir sin los medios de comunicación y también entiende lo peligroso que es tener a los medios sin ningún tipo de control.

Al final, Garbout aun espera que la Revolución Jasmin y la Primavera Árabe pueden incitar un cambio positivo y una revolución en otros países que están bajo dictaduras severas.

“El caos es normal” para los jóvenes como Garbout que han vivido en países desolados por la guerra, pero no tiene que ser y no debe de ser así. Los derechos humanos deben ser igualitarios y universales. ■



Estudiantes de Colegio Reina Isabel. Foto cortesía de Layla Mazdyasni



Nazar Alabid introduces The AjA Project's Youth Advisory Council. Photo courtesy of Ariana Gallegos

## Understanding Culture and Diversity

The AjA Project gives student delegates an insight into the diversity of culture. Story by Alina Campos, Mueller Charter Leadership Academy.

The San Diego-based organization The AjA Project focuses on providing innovative and educational opportunities to refugee and at-risk youth through photography-based programs. At WorldLink's 16th Youth Town Meeting, members of The AjA Project's Youth Advisory Council (YAC) served as briefing session speakers.

Coming from Mexico, Iraq, Kenya and the United States, Nashwan Abbas, Nazar Alabid, Krystal Byrd, Fadi Ghanim, Famo Musa, Riva Oraha, Beto Soto and Roodi Zuhair each spoke about how they were either affected by war or displacement.

Nazar Alabid, 18, was born in Baghdad, Iraq and has been working with The AjA Project for about four years. At the beginning of his session, he looked out to his fellow youth and asked us to list three negative examples associated to the Middle East. Some students mentioned September

11th, while others simply said "terrorist acts." Alabid then asked us to come up with three positive examples—very little was said.

Alabid, like many of his fellow panelists, began to deconstruct common misconceptions in our world today. He went on to describe the Iraqi culture, revealing many positive attributes about the Middle East. He also described how, since he joined The AjA Project, he has discovered that youth should look at the good things that people have done and not focus solely on the bad. "Not all people are bad," Alabid explained, even though extremist groups do exist.

My fellow delegates and I received the opportunity to have honest conversations with all of the panelists.

Beto Soto, 18, was another. Soto is a photographer and artist who supports the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community. When

he was younger, Soto was confused about his sexuality. This resulted in a series of cyber-bullying attacks that left Soto wondering why his attackers even cared about his life choices. The attacks allowed him to develop a cultural understanding behind bullying.

Thus, when Soto joined The AjA Project, he found that its youth participants understood and appreciated him for who he was and did not discriminate against his sexuality. Through The AjA Project, Soto is beginning to learn more about diversity—a cultural aspect that he has been trying to understand since childhood.

The Youth Advisory Council panelists provided an informative and inspiring session that left many students eager to learn more.

For more information about The AjA Project, please visit [www.ajaproject.org](http://www.ajaproject.org). ■

## What is Your Message?

Photography is a powerful medium for communication. Story by Andrea Fimbres Prieto, Instituto Mexico Americano Noroeste.

**W**hat Would You Want Your Message to Be? — that was the question Dr. Gloria Garrett asked us as we looked around at the breathtaking photos that surrounded us.

Like many photographers, she began to take pictures as a way of expressing herself. While facing some violence in her home at a young age, she explained how sitting underneath a tree would help her feel at ease. It was then that a voice inside of her told her that there was another way of responding to anger and fear, instead of creating more. It was thanks to nature that she discovered her gift of photography.

In 2006, after meeting Lynne Twist, co-founder of The Pachamama Alliance, Dr. Garrett learned that the company Texaco was drilling for oil in Ecuador. However, Texaco continuously ignored the toxic waste it dropped into streams and on the land, which led to an increased level of cancer and other toxin related illnesses among the local indigenous people and animals.

Dr. Garrett made the trip to Ecuador, in an attempt to help in any way she could. She worked alongside The Pachamama Alliance—an organization dedicated to empowering indigenous people to preserve their culture and lands, and to educate and inspire the global community to produce a more sustainable world. While in Ecuador, Dr. Garrett photographed the catastrophic conditions in which the company had impacted the region. When returning home, she tried to explain the severity of the situation to her friends and colleagues, but the photos had such an impact that they spoke for themselves.

She decided to hold a fundraiser and sell her photos. In just a few hours, Dr. Garrett raised about \$10,000 for The Pachamama Alliance. Through this, the local indigenous community felt a new sense of empowerment and were able to initiate conversations with their government. This great level of impact also served as a form of inspiration for Dr. Garrett. She continued on her journey and began to travel the world, directing awareness to nature and animals through captivating images—each with its own powerful message.

Thus, Dr. Garrett challenged each one of us by asking us what our message would be to the world. According to Dr. Garrett, "All the messages that we put out there come back to us a thousand fold. So we have to be careful with our message, and make sure that it is what we want coming back to us." As one of my fellow delegates helped close the discussion, she expressed that a photo "is more than just what we see," the importance lies in "how we feel about it."

To view images by Dr. Gloria Garrett, please visit [www.gloriousjourneyphotography.net](http://www.gloriousjourneyphotography.net). ■



Two student delegates from IMAN show off their WorldLink Youth Town Meeting tote bags. Photo courtesy of Maria Jose Zepeda Flores

## Start a WorldLink Club at your school!

Host student meetings, coordinate campus events, design service projects and more!

To learn about the WorldLink Clubs at The Bishop's School, CETYS Universidad Tijuana, Hoover High School and San Dieguito Academy, visit [peace.sandiego.edu/worldlink](http://peace.sandiego.edu/worldlink).

*"All the messages that we put out there come back to us a thousand fold. So we have to be careful with our message, and make sure that it is what we want coming back to us." —Gloria Garrett, fine art photographer, Glorious Journey Photography*

## A Stable Platform for Unstable Ideas

Santosh Shah provides Nepalese youth with a way to have their voices heard. *Story by Nicole Sadowsky, The Bishop's School.*

**T**he story of Santosh Shah is quite remarkable. Shah served as a conference speaker at WorldLink's 16th Youth Town Meeting, and was an opening panelist addressing the topic: "The Power and Influence of Media."

As a young man from a village in the Sarlahi district of Nepal, Shah began to write in order to raise enough money for college. His articles focused on the political situation in his country, and almost all were rejected from being published except for one—which sold for 300 rupees, equivalent today to \$3.45 in U.S. currency. Although selling articles was not lucrative, it helped Shah get his name in the paper. Subsequently, he received a scholarship from his college because his school wanted to receive good publicity.

While in college, Shah met some like-minded people who were also interested in making a difference in the local and global community. Together, they founded Today's Youth Asia (TYA)—an international multi-media organization amplifying the voices of youth. TYA hosts a leadership academy for Nepali youth and numerous youth-led television shows, including the program "Nepal's Top 7 Debaters." This show combines qualities of American Idol with debate competitions. It topped the charts as the number one watched show in Nepal.

The idea behind TYA came from Shah's vision of creating a "stable platform for unstable ideas." He spoke

to my peers and I about how Nepali media outlets at the time did not want to air youth television shows because it was too risky. Instead of being deterred, Shah created his own platform that would specifically cater to those ideas that would have been considered unstable, but were in fact innovative. Ideas considered risky included political discussions and conversations about what the government should and should not do.

As Shah puts it, "money drives media." Compared to the United States, it is relatively cheap to create a television channel in Nepal. Shah hopes that other countries will catch on to the idea of using television to empower teenagers to make change in their countries. TYA continues to use media to empower youth, and because of this, the younger trainees of TYA have replaced older intellectuals in Nepal. The media has taken power away from the government and given it back to the people.

Santosh Shah is a model leader, and his efforts have changed his country for the better. TYA has been bringing change to Nepal and other countries for over a decade, on account of the hard work conducted by Shah and his fellow youth leaders. It is evident that their incredible impact and powerful message have many more wonderful years to come.

To watch TYA programs, visit [www.youtube.com/TYAchannel](http://www.youtube.com/TYAchannel). ■

## Emerging from the Chaos: Tunisian Youth and Social Media

Through social media, Wafa Garbout and other Tunisian youth raise awareness about the Arab Spring. *Story by Gabby Hartman, The Bishop's School.*

**I**n skinny jeans, sneakers and sporting a sparkly charm bracelet, Wafa Garbout appeared to be just another 18-year old. But when she began to speak about the violent levels of censorship in her home country of Tunisia, she appeared years much older than 18.

The Tunisian revolution was an intense period of civil resistance that was caused by high unemployment, inflation, corruption and a lack of freedom of speech and other political freedoms. The catalyst for mass demonstrations was an act taken by Mohamed Bouazizi, a young Tunisian fruit vendor.

Following continuous abuse from local police, the young street vendor set himself on fire to protest the violent municipal officials. Anger and violence only increased after this horrific immolation, and continued until the longtime dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali stepped down in January 2011 after being in power for more than 20 years.

Youth is the largest demographic in Tunisia, and we saw several young leaders emerging in their communi-

ties. Garbout is one of them. In early 2012, she participated in the Access Leadership Program hosted by the U.S. Department of State.

Along with some of her peers, she created the organization WeYouth-Tunisia, which inspires dialogue between young members on citizenship, volunteerism, peace, brotherhood values and the ability to coexist with Tunisia's neighbors. The organization attempts to eliminate exclusion and trusteeship in its native country.

Garbout also wishes to bridge the gap between Tunisian youth and youth from around the world through extensive communication networks. Using the internationally popular Facebook as her center of communication, Garbout knows that "social media is a double edged sword." She sees how difficult it is to live without media and how uncontrolled, uncensored media can negatively affect a nation.

In the end, Garbout still hopes that both the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia and the Arab Spring can incite positive change in other countries that are

To read more about "Media's Power and Influence," access the 2013 WorldLink Reader today!

*The free, online publication was produced by WorldLink interns, Alexander Dey Bueno (CETYS, Tijuana), Marian Dorst (La Jolla High School), Kira Elliott (San Dieguito Academy), Tsion Fikre (Scripps Ranch High School), Ellie Molise (Francis Parker School), Brandon Wachs (La Jolla Country Day School) & Catherine Zuniga (Hoover High School).*

WorldLink's 2013 Reader is available at [sites.sandiego.edu/wl\\_reader](http://sites.sandiego.edu/wl_reader)

Interested in the WorldLink Internship Program?

Summer Internship Application Deadline: May 15, 2013

For more information, visit: [peace.sandiego.edu/worldlink](http://peace.sandiego.edu/worldlink) or find us on Facebook!



Wafa Garbout tells her story about the role social media plays in her organization, WeYouth-Tunisia. *Photo courtesy of Natasha Thomson*

under severe dictatorships.

"Chaos is normal" to young adults like Garbout that have lived in war-torn countries, but it needn't and shouldn't be. Human rights should be egalitarian and universal. ■

*"Never say that you are weak or can't make a change. Believe in yourself. You should always believe in yourself." — Wafa Garbout, vice-president, WeYouth-Tunisia*

## Staying Classy

StayClassy had unlikely beginnings and an extraordinary goal. *Story by Katherine Deutschman, San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts.*

**S**tayClassy, a successful online fundraising platform dedicated to nonprofit organizations, was “founded quite haphazardly,” according to co-founder and current CEO Scot Chisholm.

“I never in a million years thought it would become a real business,” Chisholm stated enthusiastically. And indeed, the company had humble beginnings.

For Chisholm, it all began with a one-time fundraiser in 2006 that was locally organized in support of the American Cancer Society. Chisholm, who had just graduated college at the time, found out that his mother was battling breast cancer.

He and a few college friends decided to organize a fundraiser, and raised \$1,000 for the cause in one evening. As Chisholm expressed lightheartedly, “that’s not a whole lot of money in the grand scheme of things, but for a guy like me—it was huge.”

The event’s success motivated the founders to organize a second event, a large musical festival—and StayClassy was thus born.

Seven years later, StayClassy is now a sophisticated online fundraising company. According to Chisholm, nonprofit organizations can work with StayClassy to help organize campaigns, in order to empower community members to become active supporters.

For instance, StayClassy helped raise \$30,000 in a single week for Team Rubicon—a disaster relief organization led by military veterans. And one of the most successful campaigns StayClassy has helped organize is the Kony 2012 movement for Invisible Children, raising nearly \$2,000,000 for the cause.

Chisholm says that the web site is so successful because “[it] connects a lot of social platforms and attaches a call to action.”

In addition, individuals can also benefit from utilizing StayClassy. By visiting the StayClassy web site, individuals can find organizations currently working on campaigns that may be of interest to them or initiate their own campaigns.

Through StayClassy, these individual community members have the tools to raise awareness on the issue and gather donations for their particular cause.

StayClassy has come a long way since its first evening fundraiser. The company now hosts the largest philanthropic awards ceremony in the United States, the CLASSY Awards, giving recognition to organizations working towards educational advancement, animal advocacy and hunger and poverty relief—to name a few.

Those interested in learning more about StayClassy can visit [www.stayclassy.org](http://www.stayclassy.org). ■

“Like”  
WorldLink on  
Facebook!



Speaker Scot Chisholm discussing how social media has empowered activism all around the world.  
*Photo courtesy of Elena Kuglen Alvarez*

## Start Local, Go Global with Room to Read

Kim Vallejo emphasizes the advantages of using social media, in order to build networks and help make a difference. *Story by Brandon Wachs, La Jolla Country Day School.*

**F**ollowing lunch, conference delegates headed to their third and final briefing session. I entered the room with anticipation, for I had heard nothing but positive feedback about Kim Vallejo and Room to Read.

This non-profit organization began in Nepal in 2000, and works with communities that lack access to education. Room to Read conducts a large amount of its work in Asia, striving to increase literacy rates. Despite the general stereotype that the education systems throughout Asia are strict and produce high scores in a variety of subjects, many regions in Asia lack the resources to teach many people how to read. In Nepal, many families live on two dollars a day; thus, hampering education because materials are expensive.

Room to Read also works in Africa, where poverty is a prevalent issue. In South Africa, 80 percent of students do not have access to a library, and in Tanzania, the student to teacher ratio is 100 to 1. This is a result of the lack of funds for education. Vallejo notes that education is the way to end the cycle of poverty, and literacy is where you must begin. Today, over 750 million adults (age 15 and older) worldwide are illiterate, and two-thirds of those people are women.

Thus, the organization strives to diminish the growing rates of illiteracy and gender disparity, which is vital and extremely helpful to the communities in need. Room to Read achieves this by helping build schools and libraries, as well as train local teachers and publish children’s books in the local language. Vallejo spoke about the lack of books in the language of the local communities, and explained that distributing books in the local language can inspire a love for reading. This love for

reading, she said, helps young individuals realize their aspirations, and it becomes the building block for their education.

In addition, Room to Read provides resources specifically towards improving girls’ education. The nonprofit offers tuition scholarships and positive learning environments and mentorships for girls. Vallejo stressed the importance of having guidance and support from women teachers and other inspiring women who come from similar backgrounds.

During the question-and-answer period, my fellow delegate asked how Room to Read changes the culture in a community that does not allow girls to go to school. Vallejo explained that maintaining open dialogue is key. Room to Read staff works closely with local individuals in the planning process, which has proven successful in changing the negative view on girls’ education. It is important for the entire community to embrace the culture of learning, and to have the local children, adults and elderly all learn how to read. It is also important to note that the non-profit does not force itself into communities. It formally seeks permission from the local governments before entering each country.

To date, the organization has established 15,082 libraries and published over 800 different books, printed in 27 languages. Over 8,000,000 children around the world have been impacted, in countries including Zambia, India and Sri Lanka. Vallejo addressed Room to Read’s marketing strategy and its role to help accomplish this. Other companies and organizations often use the shock value, celebrity endorsements, pity marketing or pinpointing an enemy. However, none of these strategies seemed to fit what

Room to Read envisioned.

By utilizing social media and new technologies that highlight positive images, Room to Read helps the global community become empowered to join the cause and become global activists from their own home. The nonprofit depends on a heavy usage of Twitter, YouTube, Google+ and Facebook. Room to Read actually has two Facebook pages, one of which has half a million followers.

The organization also values its individual chapters that have emerged throughout the United States and in other regions, including Europe and the Middle East. These chapters raise excitement, awareness and funds at the grassroots level. Social media is greatly used to connect volunteers and to share information and photos with the public. Room to Read has created a successful network that allows activists to stay involved and visualize the change they are making.

At the Youth Town Meeting, Vallejo inspired her young audience to change the world and showed us the blueprint of how to do so. She concluded the session by stressing the importance of building a network: start locally and then go global.

To locate a chapter near you, visit [www.roomtoread.org/chapters](http://www.roomtoread.org/chapters). ■



“The importance of building a network: start locally and then go global.”  
— Kim Vallejo, community & youth outreach associate, Room to Read

## One Child at a Time

Omo Child works to abolish the Mingi tradition and establish faith in the power of youth. *Story by Kira Elliott, San Dieguito Academy.*

**W**hen a baby is born, the event is usually a cause for celebration. This gift of life is showered with love within minutes of its first gasp of air.

Not every child, however, is seen as a gift. In the Southwest area of Ethiopia in the Omo River Valley, many children in the nine main Valley tribes are seen as cursed or imperfect. For example, a child can be considered cursed if their teeth grow in first from the top instead of the bottom, if they are born out of wedlock or if an older child falls and chips his or her teeth.

Mingi is the ritualistic killing of these children, through which tribal elders leave them to die in the bushes or drown them in the river to avoid bringing harm to the village. This is the way it has been for generations.

That is, until Lale Labuko and photographer John Rowe founded Omo Child, a nonprofit organization that rescues and shelters the Mingi children. Labuko was a travel guide for Rowe when he first visited Ethiopia to photograph rural areas. It was he who told Rowe about Mingi, and asked Rowe to support him in his crusade to help reverse the traditional beliefs associated to these so-called “cursed” children.

Together, they started Omo Child, which not only finds and cares for the abandoned children, but also educates the local youth about the negative consequences of Mingi. Contributions to the organization help maintain the sanctuary house, the salaries of the nannies and the children’s education. So far, 37 children have been rescued since the origin of Omo Child 3 years ago, and they continue to be cared for

today by Ethiopian nannies.

There is no better example of the power and influence of the media than this organization. Media has provided the world a chance to see through the looking glass at the current situation in, what National Geographic calls, the “last frontier of Africa.”

Rowe’s job is both overseeing the organization as well as raising awareness, especially through social media. This is where his photography comes in handy. People worldwide get a glimpse of the life of Mingi children, as well as the people of the Omo River Valley.

However, one of the most pressing yet challenging steps was having to negotiate with the tribal elders to end the practice of Mingi. According to Rowe, Labuko and the local youth played a pivotal role in these regards, allowing the children to live outside their tribes.

On July 14, 2012, the Kara tribe held a ceremony that officially recognized the end to the practice of Mingi. One tribe at a time, the youth are bringing change to their community, and are potentially saving the lives of hundreds of Mingi children. Through his passion and interest in photography, Rowe also played a significant role in bringing this incredible change.

As Rowe says, “We are all similar in so many ways. This is real. People are dying, people are being oppressed. Time goes quickly. Don’t waste your time.” As young leaders in our own communities, we must discover our own passions, for we also have the great potential to make remarkable, lasting change. ■



## Global Girl Media: You Have a Voice

GlobalGirl Media empowers young girls to have a voice of their own. *Story by Gabby Hartman, The Bishop’s School.*

**M**eena Nanji was once a person who strongly believed and encouraged the stereotypes commonly associated to teenagers: they are overly emotional, rebellious, out of control and not to be taken seriously at all. However, through her role as co-founder of GlobalGirl Media, along with Arnie Williams, she has formed a growing belief in the strength and intelligence of the younger generation.

The nonprofit organization GlobalGirl Media aims to help strengthen girls’ skills in social media, journalism and leadership. These young program participants have grown up in areas or situations where they

have had limited or no access to new media and technologies. GlobalGirl Media gives a voice to young girls living in underserved communities so that their stories can be told, instead of “passing under the radar” of mainstream reporting.

Through GlobalGirl Media videos, you hear directly from the program participants. One young girl strongly asserted that “having a camera in hand makes [her] invincible.” It is hard to disagree with her statement as the success of the organization is apparent in the fact that these girls become agents of change in their communities. They successfully break down gender divides while



Speaker Justin Wheeler talks about the organization Liberty in North Korea (LiNK). *Photo courtesy of Elena Kuglen Alvarez*

## LiNKing the World to North Korea

Justin Wheeler and Sarah Palmer introduce their organization LiNK. *Story by Katherine Deutschman, San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts.*

**T**he maltreatment of citizens and extreme levels of censorship and control in North Korea are the driving forces behind the organization Liberty in North Korea (LiNK)—an organization that aims to shift the focus of discussion from the North Korean government to the Korean people.

According to LiNK vice president Justin Wheeler and rescue team coordinator Sarah Palmer, the most important concern is to make known the struggles of the average North Korean. There are five active political prison camps in the country that are home to about 75 percent of the population.

Those lucky enough to be “free” live in poverty, often struggling just to get one meal a day. There is no freedom of speech and all of the information going in and out of the country is heavily censored. Furthermore, leaving the country is punishable by death.

For Wheeler and Palmer, no obstacle is too great. LiNK has managed to rescue 120 North Koreans in the past nine years, helping them gain refugee status in the United States or South Korea.

One of these refugees was Min-Ji—a 10 year-old girl abandoned on the streets of North Korea. Min-Ji does not even know her real name since she

was left at a very young age. However, by the good nature of a fellow North Korean, Min-Ji was secretly taken to China to receive medical attention. However, since it is illegal for North Korean refugees to live in China, Min-Ji’s caretakers contacted LiNK. Min-Ji is now living safely in South Korea.

Unfortunately, the nature of the North Korean government continues to dominate media headlines worldwide. As Wheeler explained, “In order for perception to change, the media must be involved.” However, before achieving this, the change must begin at the local level. “The solution to North Korea is not politics. The solution is the people in Korea, on the ground,” Wheeler argued.

Cell phones, which are considered illegal technologies in North Korea, provide local citizens a new form of access to the outside world. This new level of access is promoting change at the local level. Black markets that sell food and these types of resources are becoming a more common sight in major cities.

“It’s not that the people in North Korea are trying to change the government,” continued Wheeler. However, with the influence of media both inside and outside the country, change can slowly begin to emerge. ■



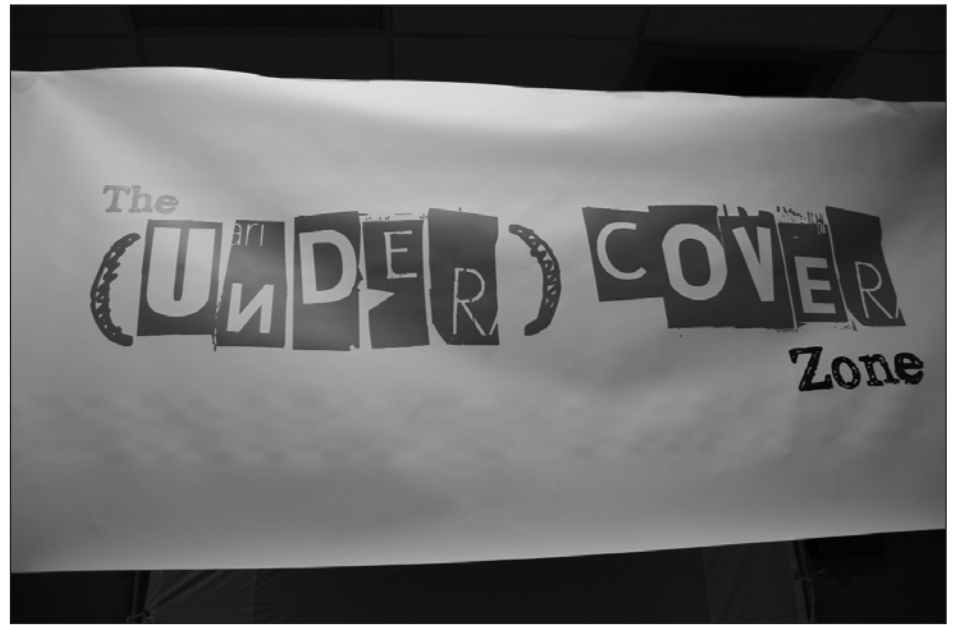
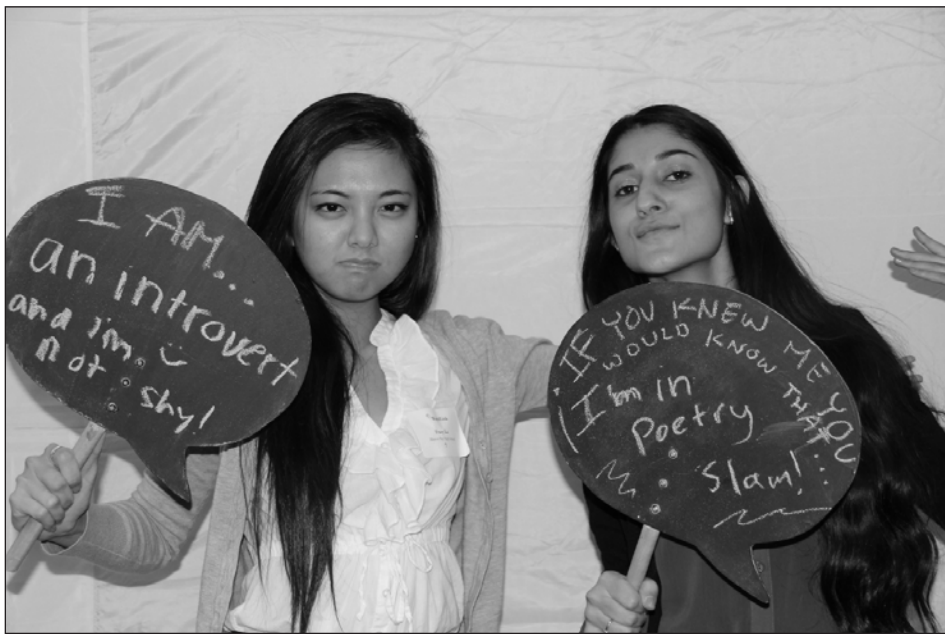
Meena Nanji enjoying a conversation with WorldLink students. *Photo courtesy of Natasha Thomson*

*“In order for [people’s] perception to change, the media must be involved.” —Justin Wheeler, vice-president, Liberty in North Korea*

## Outside the Lens: The (Under) Cover Zone

Outside the Lens sponsored project, The (Under) Cover Zone, comes to the Youth Town Meeting. *Story by Natasha Thomson. Photos courtesy of The Covering Project.*

The Outside the Lens Youth Council brought my project, the (Under) Cover Zone, to WorldLink this year. This project was inspired by Kenji Yoshino's book *Covering: The Hidden Assault on Our Civil Rights*, which states that "covering" is a trait in which we downplay in order to fit the norm. At the Youth Town Meeting, the intention was to spread awareness of the concept of "covering" and to help others further discover their identities. To accomplish this, the Youth Council and I set up a photobooth titled The (Under) Cover Zone, wherein we took photographs of participants holding a sign with a written response to one of the following four prompts: *If you knew me, you would know \_\_\_\_\_, I am \_\_\_\_\_, I am not \_\_\_\_\_, or I believe \_\_\_\_\_.* I was pleasantly surprised by the response of the students that participated. They all invested whole-heartedly in the project, and in turn, fostered a socially accepting environment, learning more about themselves and the other students at the conference—exactly what we had hoped for. ■



## Running Adroit: Media Dependence in the Emerging Online Literary World

Here's a real-life experience of a young, emerging writer turned entrepreneur. *Story by Peter LaBerge, guest student writer and Editor-in-Chief of The Adroit Journal.*

**Peter LaBerge** is a high school senior from Connecticut, and a nominee for the 2013 United States Presidential Scholar in the Arts distinction. He has received two national Gold Medals from the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for his poetry, and was a 2013 YoungArts Level I Writing Finalist. His recent work has appeared in *The Newport Review*, *Gargoyle*, *The Louisville Review* and elsewhere. He is a Genre Editor for *Polyphony H.S.*, a *New Voices* Editor for *The Newport Review*, and—of course—the founder/Editor-in-Chief of *The Adroit Journal*. In the fall, Peter will be a freshman at the University of Pennsylvania, where he aspires to study creative writing and business. For more information about *The Adroit Journal*, please visit [www.adroit.co.nr](http://www.adroit.co.nr).

**T**he *Adroit Journal* is a print literary magazine for all ages, with a special concentration on global human rights violations and the work of young writers. I founded the publication in November 2010, when I decided that the world needed a literary magazine that would accept submissions from all and would be run entirely by high school and college students. Originally a hobby, the

journal has grown into a full-fledged literary enterprise and community for aspiring young writers and artists around the world.

As the Editor-in-Chief, I have produced six issues of writing and art, and received over 4,000 submissions for publication, with an approximate acceptance rate of 4 percent. Additionally, the journal has been recognized and applauded around the world for its dedication to community service, emerging writers and human rights.

Last spring, I was fortunate enough to work with exiled Cuban poets, to construct a Cuban dissident feature for Issue Four. With the help of two staff members, this project—which started as an exercise for my Spanish class—became a seventy-page feature of translated poetry and fiction, and ultimately a call for change. Through this initiative, I was able to make originally published work available to a new audience in a different language. I also had the opportunity to give a group of repressed writers a platform on which to speak and educate. And with these features and distinguishing characteristics, the word has gotten out.

Running *The Adroit Journal* is by no means an easy task, however. As the

publication's founder and chief editor, I maintain numerous responsibilities that depend on the functional and efficient use of media. From submission management to staff oversight, and from solicitation to promotion, I am—quite literally—always connected.

Take Submittable, the publication's trusty submission manager. Without Submittable, coordinating staff comments and votes would be impossible, responding to contributors with final editorial decisions in a matter of days would be impossible, coordinating in-house edits and recording submission statistics would be near impossible and, finally, establishing the journal's history and content would be impossible.

Yet, there are many other quintessential roles filled by media application and distribution. Social media websites, namely Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr, assist us in linking existing and prospective Adroit enthusiasts with our message and mission. To our benefit, the simplistic frame of social media remains the same: contributors and followers can simply 'like,' comment on or share our postings, and all of a sudden that introduces us to their acquaintances.

Social media also assists us immeasurably on an interior level. Skype provides the perfect collection platform for the fifty teenagers on staff that hail from seven different countries and countless different time zones. As one might expect, it is difficult enough to coordinate meeting times for this literarily enthusiastic group. However, without a media-friendly application like Skype, it would be that much more difficult. Similarly, Facebook provides an appropriate platform for staff members to not only discuss pieces and potential future directions for the journal, but to also further the bonds between the Adroit editorial family members: united under one mission, one plan and one goal.

The overall beauty of media application is that it unconditionally inspires delegation and collaboration. Quite simply, I could never manage all of the behind-the-scenes work required to produce *The Adroit Journal*. Media technology has smoothed many of the potential bumps in the publication road, and has led us all—contributors, readers and editors alike—in the right direction. ■

*“Media technology has smoothed many of the potential bumps in the publication road, and has led us all – contributors, readers and editors alike – in the right direction.” —Peter LaBerge, editor-in-chief, The Adroit Journal*

## Changing Worlds: Our Role

The closing panelists challenge the students to make a difference, one step at a time. *Story by Tsion Fikre, Scripps Ranch High School.*

Media is oftentimes described as either extremely negative and manipulative or positive and empowering. Whether it is used as a source of entertainment or a means of connecting to others worldwide, media can play a role in either the pathway to destruction or innovation. However, as the closing panelists at WorldLink's 16th Youth Town Meeting explained, the key lies in the hands of the people. Global citizens have the capacity and the means to use media in influential and positive ways.

With a quote by Benjamin Franklin, "An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest," the Closing Plenary began in Shiley Theatre. Armand Binombe, student from San Diego High School and an International Rescue Committee (IRC) Peacemaker, introduced the three panel experts: Lisa Napoli, Meena Nanji and Scot Chisholm.

Lisa Napoli is an author and journalist who has served as a reporter for the public radio show Marketplace and was a columnist for MSNBC. However, her journey to the ancient Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan to establish the first youth-oriented radio station is an experience that not only highlights the importance of media, but also the value of true connections. With the world being a "vast, global, connected universe," she commends all of the connections that are made at the WorldLink conference because changemaking comes down to people looking others in the eye and communicating directly.

On a related note, Napoli addressed the prominent role media plays in each of our lives. To fully understand media's influence, Napoli challenged the conference attendees to undergo a "media fast" and disconnect from all media sources. Through this, each person can see just how much media affects everything we do, and we can decide whether each platform has a more positive or negative impact when trying to build these connections.

The next speaker was Meena

Nanji, filmmaker and co-founder of GlobalGirl Media. The organization provides teenage girls in underserved communities the tools of digital media, as a device for local activism, storytelling and social change. Working closely with these young women, who have had little access to media and new technology, GlobalGirl Media introduces how the use of various media outlets can simultaneously teach them about themselves and their own values.

Each person has a story to tell. Through GlobalGirl Media, youth reporters documenting their stories have

the Millennial Generation—a generation of young people that "has redefined what media is." This group is made up of more than 80 million people, and includes all individuals who were born between the early 1980s and early 2000s, which as Chisholm said, includes all the students in the audience.

For Chisholm, there are three ways in which the Millennial Generation has had a significant impact on media: its appreciation for community, collaboration and social change. As a student delegate, it is motivating to know that we are not isolated individuals. As Chisholm

not be easy to find, but the solutions to our world problems do not have simple answers." There is no open book outlining the answers for us. As problems may arise from every corner of the world, media should not just be used as a form of entertainment, but should be a way to spread information and garner activism.

The power of media can be managed by our will to use it responsibly. It begins with us, the youth, to understand and be aware of what is around us. Making connections, just like attending WorldLink's conference, is the first step towards awareness and understanding. If the younger generation invests its time to understand and expand its knowledge of the world, we are sure to see positive change in the near future. Our involvement and genuine dedication to changemaking have the power to make a tremendous difference in our world. ■



Student moderator, Armand Binombe, and closing panelists settle in at the beginning of the Closing Plenary. *Photo courtesy of Sarah Yang*

emerged in Los Angeles, Chicago, South Africa and Morocco. According to Nanji, witnessing the rise in their self-confidence is the most rewarding part of her job. Thus, it is important to motivate one another and remind underrepresented individuals that their voice counts and that there are people who want to hear their voice and opinions.

The final speaker of WorldLink's 16th Youth Town Meeting was Scot Chisholm. As co-founder and CEO of the online fundraising platform StayClassy, he introduced conference delegates to

mentioned, "Remember, you are part of an 80 million person club, and each of you are going to play a really important part in that." By keeping community, collaboration and social change as our core values, it is possible to make a change in human history.

With the farewell by WorldLink students, Marian Dorst from La Jolla High School and Isaac Hortiales from Instituto Mexico Americano Noroeste, the annual Youth Town Meeting was brought to an end. Dorst and Hortiales left us with the understanding that "your answer may

*Save the Date!*

**WorldLink's 17th  
Youth Town Meeting**

*will focus on the  
student-selected theme*

**"Global Conflicts"**

**Wednesday,  
January 22, 2014**



Over 700 student delegates listen attentively to the panelists during the Closing Plenary, at WorldLink's 16th Annual Youth Town Meeting. *Photo courtesy of Sarah Yang*

# Our Voices



Photo courtesy of Natasha Thomson



Photo courtesy of Ninett Rodriguez



Photo courtesy of Paloma Mercier



Photo courtesy of Alexandra Cheney



Photo courtesy of Alexandra Cheney



Photo courtesy of Stefan Thomson



Photo courtesy of Victor García



Photo courtesy of Israel Cedillo



Photo courtesy of Ninett Rodriguez



Photo courtesy of Ariana Gallegos



Photo courtesy of Alexandra Cheney



Photo courtesy of Victor García

At first, I came [to the Youth Town Meeting] as a 15-year-old girl who had no clue of what I could do to help others around the world. But now, I'm a 15-year-old girl who knows that she can make a big difference.

—Student delegate, San Diego Early/Middle College

We need to understand that regardless of our borders, we are sharing the same problems. No matter the country we come from, we need to deal with these problems because, sooner or later, they're going to affect us all in the same way. Believe us when we say that [these problems] don't care if we are Chinese, Mexicans, or Americans. Ultimately, we are equal.

—Student delegates, Federal Lazaro Cardenas

[At the YTM], there were kids my age that had something that they felt passionate about, and they were changing the world. But more importantly, I could learn from them.

—Student delegate, Roosevelt Middle School

Suddenly, someone giving a presentation in front of you is a person, and not some unachievable goal. You start thinking to yourself "I could do this. I can be like them. They worked for this, and if I wanted to, I could do the same."

—Student delegate, CETYS Universidad

We are young, we are students, we are teenagers, but that doesn't mean that we only care about ourselves. It doesn't mean that our voice is less important than those older than us.

—Student delegate, Federal Lazaro Cardenas

We can use the popularity and accessibility of social networks and traditional media to move society and solve problems of global importance. We all deserve to live in a place of peace and welfare. We must take the initiative because the tools and support are in our hands.

—Student delegate, CETYS Universidad

Thank you for organizing something that reminds us how far our voices can go and how we can use our passion to create a beautiful world for the better.

—Student delegate, Roosevelt Middle School

Global issues are no longer a concern of adults only, but also of young people like me who are interested in the shape the world is becoming.

—Student delegate, CETYS Universidad

Thank you for permitting us to have this once in a lifetime experience to a conference that made a difference in all of our lives.

—Student delegate, Sweetwater High School