

WORLDLINK

Youth Newspaper

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Photo by Michele Zousmer

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Students Analyze the Complex Network of Global Crimes

by Gaia Croston
Francis Parker

The issues of small arms, human trafficking, transnational gangs, drugs and terrorism are by no means breaking news. These matters, however, remain prevalent. The causes of and solutions to these problems were the focus of this year's Youth Town Meeting, opening up opportunities for discussion, analysis, true understanding, and positive involvement.

The United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights says, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person," and furthermore, "All human beings...should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood" (Articles 1-3). What this tells residents of our modern, globalized world is that the responsibility of every individual, regardless of background, is to look after his or her fellow human beings and to protect their human rights. Now more than ever, we possess the resources necessary to aid our less fortunate neighbors: mediums of television, Twitter, YouTube, and blogs, make it easier than ever to find the truth and discover solutions.

The first speaker at the Youth Town Meeting's Opening Plenary was San Diego City Councilman Tony Young, who reflected on his work with gangs in the city. Solving this problem is arduous work, but it has the potential to benefit many citizens. Young has the experience to say that gang members act like terrorists in their community. "They will terrorize if you let them," he declared, but that's no admittance of defeat. Rather, he informs us that San Diego's numerous initiatives to combat gangs' influence, including gun buyback programs, curfews, and security in housing complexes, have combined to create auspicious results: in 2005, the city had about 50 murders, but by 2010 that number dropped to less than 30 (Davis, UT). In other words, though there is no easy answer to the problem of gangs, a multi-faceted, resilient approach puts a community on the way to improvement.

What follows were words from William Canny, director of emergency operations for Catholic Relief Services (CRS), whose speech was marked by the theme, "Trafficking does not exist in

isolation." Canny explained that human trafficking, contrary to popular belief, has recently experienced a resurgence. Victims of this crime are often sold by their poor families into a cycle of violence, poverty, and police arrests due to their alien status, which usually leads them back to their captors. Canny dubbed the issue "tragic, yet almost predictable," but not unsolvable: with the practice of awareness, prevention, protection, and reintegration (including alternative income sources), CRS and other relief groups expect an upturn.

Edward Laurence, who spoke next, co-founded the International Action Network on Small Arms. He tells the audience that one must focus on the tools, not just the causes, of violence; "killing," he says, "has become very, very impersonal," and the distance between aggressor and victim becomes greater every day. Small arms are a global problem because standards of control vary between countries, and what one country dispenses to a neighboring state can disrupt society and steal the lives of innocents. After conflicts such as the Cold War or civil war in Sudan, guns often diffuse into the lives of civilians. While this topic is complex, the security of innocent civilians can only increase with direct, joint solutions.

Jonathon White, of the Drug Enforcement Association, emphasized a comprehensive, cooperative approach. He claims that no one nation is entirely to blame for the issue of the drug trade, and so "No one nation is exempt from the moral responsibility" of fighting the spread of drugs. Addiction can lead to the downfall of both individuals and nations, and the drug trade often finances or accompanies many of the other categories of organized crime. In the years to come, it will be the duty of world powers to collaborate in order to control drug production and use. Such a widespread problem cannot be tackled without fostering relationships and friendships between nations.

Lastly, Meriam Palma from Mindanao, Philippines Mindanao Peoples Caucus discussed hostilities in the Philippines between Christians and Muslims, which have affected Palma's own youth. She illuminated the dangers of cultural prejudice, confessing to her own youthful bias against Muslims and explaining that such misinformed beliefs are only natural in a climate of political and cultural conflict. With education and interaction, though, she realized her error in assuming the worst of Muslims; in reality, many such conflicts are driven by individuals with personal interests and no legitimate ideological (Continued on page 4)

YTM Briefing Sessions**Mindanao's Youth Working for Peace- Film Premiere***Jóvenes de Mindanao Trabajan por la Paz - Estréno*

Presenters: Holly Cramer, Jaliah Mulay, Meriam Palma, Joseph Ramirez

Moderators: Sebastien Akarmann (CCHS) Marcela Bucardo (OLP)

IPJ Theater

Do What You've Always Done, Get What You've Always Wanted*Haz lo que siempre has hecho, consigue lo que siempre has obtenido*

Presenters: Scott Silverman, executive director, Second Chance

Moderator: Ardis Zhong (LJHS)

Conf. Room B

Guns, Drugs and Money: Welcome to the Southwest Border*Armas, drogas, y dinero: Bienvenido a la Frontera del Sudoeste*

Presenter: Edna Trigo-Valdez, criminal intelligence analyst, San Diego County Sheriff's Dept.

Moderator: Alexander Dey (CETYS), and Arianna Gomez (ORHS)

Conf. Room C

International Adoptions- Child Trafficking in Disguise*Adopciones internacionales: Tráfico de niños en disfrazo*

Presenter: Carmen Kcomt, program officer, Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition

Moderators: Ambar Avalos (OLP) and Carlos Nava (CETYS)

Conf. Room D

My Life in the World of Organized Crime*Mi vida en el mundo del crimen organizado*

Presenter: Francisco Mendoza, employment training specialist, Second Chance

Kenny Biggs, housing services manager, Second Chance

Moderators: Amanda Jereige (OLP)

Conf. Room E

Organized Crime and International Justice*Crimen Organizado y la Justicia Internacional*

Presenters: Octavio Rodriguez, program coordinator, Trans-Border Institute

Moderators: Marian Dorst (LJHS) and Adia Sykes (OLP)

Conf. Room F

Threats to Human Security: It's Not Just a Matter of Crime*Amenazas contra la Seguridad Humana: No es sólo una cuestión de la delincuencia*

Presenter: Antonio Mazzitelli, regional representative for Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, UNODC

Moderators: Katie Athis (OLP) and Elena Bellaart (PHHS)

IPJ Boardroom

A Marriage Made in Hell: Terrorism and Organized Crime*Un matrimonio hecho en el Infierno: Terrorismo y el crimen organizado*

Presenters: Dipak Gupta, professor, San Diego State University

Moderator: Alexa Alonso (CETYS) and Aly Barrett (FP)

Conf. Room H

Human Trafficking: A Global Problem*Tráfico de humanas: Un problema global*

Presenter: Juan Jacobo, supervisory special agent, Department of Homeland Security

Anthony Rios, special agent, Department of Homeland Security

Moderators: Skylar Economy (LJHS) and Sara Linssen (FP)

Conf. Room I

Trafficking in Our Own Backyard*Tráfico en nuestro propio Patio*

Presenters: Jason King, sergeant, San Diego County Sheriff's Department

Moderators: Luz Elena Aleman (CETYS) and Olivia Johnson (TPHS)

Room 214

Youth Confronts Drugs in Nepal*La Juventud enfrenta a las drogas en Nepal*

Presenters: Dee Aker, deputy director, Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice

Chris Groth, interim program officer, Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice

Kanchan Jha, founder and executive president, Sano Paila

Moderators: Joshua Clapper (Bishops)

Room 217

Reducing Armed Violence: It's the Guns*Reduciendo la violencia armada: Son los pistolas*

Presenters: Edward Laurance, professor, Monterey Institute of International Studies

co-founder, International Action Network on Small Arms

Moderators: Zachary Velasquez (ORHS)

Room 218

Is There Really Justice for Victims of Human Trafficking?*¿Existe realmente justicia para las víctimas del tráfico de humanos?*

Presenter: Lilia Velasquez, attorney, private practice

Moderators: Rishika Daryanani (HTHI) and Olivia Williams (TPHS)

Room 219

Understanding the Drug Threat*Entendiendo la Amenaza de las Drogas*

Presenter: Jonathon White, resident agent, Drug Enforcement Agency

Moderator: Domenica Berman (SDA) and Alexis Miranda (CETYS)

Room 220

Human Trafficking: Global Trends, Local Solutions*Tráfico de Humanos: Asuntos globales, soluciones locales*

Presenter: William Canny, director of emergency operations, Catholic Relief Services

Moderator: Nina Church (LJCD)

Room 223

“ I hope you have a legacy of sobriety and service, and not medicated indifference”*Johathon White, resident agent of the Drug Enforcement Agency, challenging the delegates on their future choices*

Dee Aker, deputy director of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice (IPJ), is a psychological anthropologist and conflict resolution professional with 30 years of experience working with interational communities and individuals in transition. At the IPJ, Aker created and directs the Women PeaceMakers Program, WorldLink Program and the Nepal Peacebuilding Initiative. Currenly her work in Nepal specializes in programs for youth, women, nongovernmental organizations and leaders assuming their rights as stakeholders and responsible actors in the creation of the new republic.

Kenny Biggs is housing services manager for Second Chance, a San Diego-based organization, and a facilitator and mentor for at-risk youth who are on probation. Through the GAME (Gang Awareness Mentoring Education) Program, Biggs educates youth on the prevention of gang violence and drug abuse. He is also a facilitator for relapse prevention classes and a life skills mentor for recently released adults participating in Second Chance's PREP (Prisoner Re-entry Employment Program).

William Canny is the director of emergency operations at Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Working with a network of emergency technical advisors based in Baltimore, MD., and overseas, he supervises a team that responds to disasters and helps communities to prepare for potential catastrophes. Prior to his current position, Canny was CRS' country representative in Haiti, where he was responsible for overseeing programs and church partner relations in the poorest country in the hemisphere. From 1998-2004, he was secretary general of the International Catholic Migration Commission, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Holly Cramer is a recent graduate of La Jolla High School and the first social media intern for the WorldLink Program at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice. As such, she edited the documentary "Mindanao's Youth Working for Peace." Cramer decided to defer college for one year to do volunteer projects in Mexico, Peru and Cambodia. While in high school she was actively involved in Model United Nations and Youth and Government. Cramer has also interned for the San Diego Asian Film Foundation and produced her own short film.

Chris Groth is an interim program officer at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (IPJ), where he provides support for the Nepal Peacebuilding Initiative. He was the graduate intern at the IPJ from 2008-2009, during which time he traveled with an IPJ team to Nepal to conduct participatory seminars on negotiation training and security issues. Groth recieved an M.A. in international relations from the Univeristy of San Diego (USD) and has degrees in social science and sociology from the University of California, Irvine.

Dipak K. Gupta, born in India, is the Fred J. Hansen Professor of World Peace and a professor in the Department of Political Science at San Diego State University, where he is also the director of the International Security and Conflict Resolution program, a multidisciplinary program for undergraduates. Gupta earned his Ph.D. in economic and social development from the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh. He has been a visiting scholar at the Terrorism Prevention Branch at the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention in Vienna, Austria.

Juan Jacobo is supervisory special agent with Homeland Security Investigations in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), where he supervises the Human Smuggling/Human Trafficking Group. He began his federal law enforcement career with the U.S. Customs Service in 1991 as a customs inspector at various ports of entry in San Diego and Imperial Counties, and later served as special agent. Agent Jacobo holds a B.A. in liberal arts with an emphasis in bilingual and bicultural studies and a master's degree in public administration from San Diego State University.

Kanchan Jha is the founder and executive president of the organization *Sano Paila* (or "Little Step"). *Sano Paila* is a member-based, nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that works in communities in and near Birganj in the Terai region of Nepal, based on the idea that often it just takes a "little step" to serve your community and create change. The organization's development work includes Action for Addiction, which focuses on the prevention and control of drug abuse and HIV/AIDS; an income-generating project; and a youth awareness and communication program that focuses on peer-led educational projects.

Carmen Kcomt is program officer and victim services coordinator at the Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, working with victims of human trafficking. She is a family and juvenile court judge from Peru and has worked in the Domestic Violence Clinic in El Cajon as a volunteer through the San Diego Volunteer Lawyers Program, and as a family advocate at the Center for Community Solutions. Forced to leave Peru because of her work for human rights, Kcomt was granted political asylum in the United States. She has written over 100 published articles and books.

Jason King is a sergeant with the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, where he has been for 16 years. He has worked a variety of assignments, including detentions, patrol, community policing and investigations. Approximately four years ago, Sergeant King took over the administration of the San Diego Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force.

Edward Laurance has been a full professor at the Monterey Institute of International Studies since 1992. He is co-founder of the International Action Network on Small Arms, the largest transnational nongovernmental organization dealing with small arms, and is a consultant to the United Nations on the development of the Arms Trade Treaty. Laurance is the author and editor of four books on conventional weapons proliferation and is a leading expert on the global problem of small arms and light weapons proliferation and misuse.

Antonio Luigi Mazzitelli, an Italian national, is the regional representative for the Mexico, Central America and Caribbean region for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Previously, he served as regional representative for UNODC in Central and West Africa, covering 23 countries on the continent. He has worked for the United Nations International Drug Control Programme as programme officer of the Regional Section for Africa, and as assistant representative of its office in Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia. From 1999 to 2003, Mazzitelli was a UNODC representative in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Francisco Mendoza works for Second Chance, a San Diego-based organization, and has over 30 years of experience working with the challenges of the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems. Enhanced by his personal experiences, Mendoza brings specialized skills in dealing with street gangs and international trafficking. He is an investigative gang consultant for ASTIS Consulting and does volunteer work with youth centers throughout the San Diego region, providing feedback and reinforcement to youth who are at high-risk for gang involvement and criminal activity.

Jaliah Mulay, featured in the documentary film "Mindanao's Youth Working for Peace," is program staff in the Ancestral Domain Protection Program of the Mindanao Peoples Caucus on

the southern island of Mindanao in the Philippines. She has a B.S. in international relations from Mindanao State University-Marawi City and is studying for a Bachelor of Law degree from the University of Mindanao-Davao City. Mulay volunteers with the organization Kapamagogopa Inc., a Muslim organization that works to foster better understanding and mutual respect between various cultures and faiths.

Meriam "Yam" Palma, featured in the documentary film "Mindanao's Youth Working for Peace," is the information, education and communications officer for the Mindanao Peoples Caucus in the Philippines. She has a B.A. in film and audiovisual communication from the University of the Philippines-Diliman, and has since worked with conflict-affected communities on the southern island of Mindanao to document their plight and highlight the voices of women and children. Palma conducts video and photography workshops with children and youth so they can learn to document their own experiences.

Joseph Ruanto-Ramirez works at the Cross-Cultural Center at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD). He is a

Katutubo-American from three different nations – Igorot, Lipis and Moro. His activism revolves around indigenous rights and a critique of the nation-state. His primary research project is the deconstruction of the nation-state identity, narratives and culture as a homogenous identity. Looked at as Pilipino, Joseph deconstructs the nationalistic identity and opposes the nation-

state title placed on him in the diaspora. He graduated from UCSD with a degree in ethnic studies.

Anthony Rios is a special agent with the Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Investigations in San Diego. A graduate of the University of California, Irvine with a B.A. in political science, Agent Rios began his career with Immigration and Customs Enforcement in 2007 and has since been assigned to the Human Trafficking

Unit. He has led and assisted in a variety of cases related to the smuggling and trafficking of persons along the southwest border and beyond. Agent Rios is also an instructor of the International Human Trafficking course with the California P.O.S.T. (Police Officers Standards and Training).

Octavio Rodriguez is the project coordinator for the Justice in Mexico Project of the Trans-Border Institute at the University of San Diego. A native of Aguascalientes, Mexico, he has a law degree from Universidad Panamericana's (UP) Law School and did postgraduate studies in Mexican civil law procedure at UP, and in human rights at Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha in Spain. Before coming to the United States, Rodriguez worked as chief of the Public Law Academy and full-time professor at UP, and prior to that, was legal advisor on human rights and communal rural property for governmental offices in Mexico.

Scott Silverman is the founder and executive director of Second Chance, a human services agency in San Diego that is committed to breaking the cycle of unemployment, poverty and homelessness by offering job readiness training, employment placement assistance, mental health counseling, case management and affordable housing referrals to people who desire to change their lives. Over the past 15 years, Second Chance has assisted more than 24,000 economically disadvantaged and homeless persons in San Diego gain employment and leave poverty, gang affiliations and crime. Silverman is the author of *Tell Me No, I Dare You: A Guide for Living a Heroic Life*.

Edna Trigo-Valdez is a criminal intelligence analyst for the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and previously worked in the Criminal Intelligence Detail and the Special Investigations Division of the East County Regional Gang Task Force. She works with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies on gang-related crimes and the Operation Safe Streets Initiative. Trigo-Valdez is also a member of the Border Working Group that produced the 2010 Cross-Border Kidnapping Threat Assessment for law enforcement. She has an M.B.A. in organizational leadership and a B.S. in criminal justice, both from National University.

Lilia Velasquez, L.L.M., J.D., is an attorney in private practice. She is a certified specialist in immigration and nationality law, and for the last eight years has focused on defending women's rights, particularly victims of domestic violence, refugee women and victims of trafficking for forced prostitution. She was recently part of a delegation of lawyers that traveled to Cambodia to learn about the complexities of human trafficking in Southeast Asia.

Jonathon White is the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) resident agent in charge of the San Ysidro Resident Office, San Diego Field Division. He has 20 years of experience in the field of law enforcement, first as a Sheriff's Deputy in Tampa, Fla., and later with the DEA in the Houston and Miami Field Divisions and the Office of Training in Quantico, Va. White coordinates with numerous federal, state and local enforcement entities on criminal investigations and intelligence associated with drug trafficking organizations operating illegally in and around the U.S.-Mexico border.

Tony Young is president of the San Diego City Council and has served the 4th District since 2004. His main areas of focus on the council are enhanced public safety, community and regional economic development, increasing opportunities for youth and improving neglected infrastructure. Young established the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention and has been appointed by the council and mayor to several leadership positions, including vice-chair of the Committee on Public Safety and Neighborhood Services. He has a degree in socio-economics from Howard University and teaching credentials from USD.



Antonio Mazzitelli, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Representative



SDSU professor Dipak Gupta (center) with student moderators

"The victims of modern slavery have many faces. They are men and women, adults and children... all denied basic human dignity and freedom." *President Obama on human trafficking*

Letter From the Editor

Dear Reader,

Imagine a day where students from across our city and from across the border are brought closer to a different reality, which is in this case, the reality of what thousands of youth like ourselves experience every day somewhere across the world. Whether it be gang violence, human trafficking or small arms trade, the stories and first-hand eye-witness accounts that were shared on January 21, 2011 proved to be a learning experience that brought us further from our lives and closer to someone else's. That is pretty powerful.

This newspaper is an extended version of our day at USD. It's about the experts who educated us and the people who they fight for. Take "La Flama" Lilia Velazquez, (pictured on this page) an attorney who defends victims of human trafficking. Listening to her share the difficulties of defending trafficking victims begs the question, simply, is there justice for these victims? That is a question that is hard to resolve, but it's important. And it's the reason why we're interested in hearing these stories.

The pursuit of justice drives Tony Young, the president of the San Diego City Council to start a campaign for adults to trade in their weapons so that their children can grow up in a safe environment. The pursuit of justice drives Carmen Kcomt, member of the Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition to investigate international adoptions so that infants and youth are not brought up under oppressive conditions. Justice, something that can be at times elusive, is why many of the expert contributors are drawn to WorldLink. There is some kind of justice in knowing that students can know what is happening around the world, no matter how disheartening these stories may be.

I would like to thank the speakers because they're working for the communities rife with small arms and high crime rates, they're working for the girls who turn to or are coerced into prostitution and for the people who are ingratiated in trading and producing drugs. They're working towards reaching justice, and as you will read (see an Interview with San Diego Police Detective Hunter, page 11) it's not easy.

This year's theme was namely "Crimes Without Borders: Threats to Human Security" but what separates this paper from the first-hand expert accounts that were shared in January is that this newspaper is a sounding board for student journalists. Year after year, students leave with somewhat of a "reality check" about the topics of the day. And I have to say, almost each article that was sent in was followed up with an affirmation that we are now closer to these topics, surprised by the extent of the reality, and more aware of what is occurring. I'm excited to get to share student voices with you because I want that feeling of awareness and interest to stay.

This paper also includes some new features, which is our effort to make you, the reader, involved in learning more about the reality of threats to human security. These include the personal account by a victim of human trafficking, Malaki, and his heart-breaking childhood, on page 9. There is also a series of statistics, on page 6, that add a sense of enormity to these issues. Some book titles, on page 12, will hopefully inspire you to learn about these topics in full (My favorite is *Half the Sky*). I was moved by Marissa's article "Fighting Crime with Compassion" on page 14, which starts with "What will your legacy be?" So keep that in mind as you read this paper and allow yourself to get inspired by the difference that the speakers of the 14th annual Youth Town Meeting have made in the field of human security and in the field of humanity. Difference is what I want to leave you with. The difference to care, the difference to think globally and the difference you all will make.

Thanks so much to all of the writers and editors who are a part of this paper. I hope to see you and all of the readers again at next year's Youth Town Meeting.

Sincerely,
Torrey Czech
Editor-in-Chief, Vol XVI

Opening, cont'd from p. 1

foundation for violence. For that reason, Palma works to heal wounds of the past, to give people a voice, and to relieve tensions based on false ideas, all of which are ideas can be applied to addressing terrorism and conflict anywhere.



Over 750 student delegates and guest speakers listen to opening plenary highlights

The Race for Justice

by Brynna Hall
San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts

La Flama. That's what they call Lilia Velazquez. The flame of justice that burns for the silent victims around the world. Human trafficking is the fastest growing illegal trade in the world. For most people it seems as though the crime and those involved are miles away and completely unrelated to us. Unfortunately, that isn't true. Human trafficking victims are invisible and everywhere. Lilia Velazquez LL.M., J.D. is an attorney working internationally for these victims, trying to get them the justice they deserve. She has traveled around the world, from Colombia to California, in an attempt to right the wrongs that have been committed. But what you see when you meet Lilia Velazquez is red.

Decked in fire red from head to toe, flaring red like the flame of justice, Lila commands a room with a power that can only be described as blazing. "I'm not going to get on my soapbox and talk at you. I want a dialogue. So, please... The first thing we need to know or define is 'what is justice?'" She asked the room at large, all slightly in awe of her presence. "Can there be full justice..." According to Velazquez, who has witnessed almost all there is to see about human trafficking, when victims are seldom discovered and often too terrified to testify against their traffickers, the answer is no.

These people, the victims, men, women, and children, are coerced into sexual slavery or forced labor, with some women meeting up to twenty men a day. Their humanity is stripped away and any hope they have that some day will be better than today is repeatedly ripped down. Slavery, by definition, means the state of being bound by some external power, but in present-day human trafficking, slavery does not always consist of physical chains. Instead these are often emotional and psychological ones, creating an alternate reality in which these people are powerless, and hopeless, and completely out of chances, so that even if they get the chance to leave, they often don't.

There are expected to be 20,000 victims arriving in the U.S. per year, and no more than 275 are discovered and offered the government's help. That's little more than one percent. The fact is that justice is not being served for the victims of human trafficking because we do not know where they are. How do we repair the harm that has been done and give these individuals new chances at a life when they have been told time and time again how they'll be harmed if they ever go to the police? Women and children make up 80% of traffic victims, and half of the entire number are said to be less than 18 years of age. The United States government is said to be assisting in the alleviation of some of the pain that the trafficking victims and the torture they go through by giving out visas to victims. But, when the victims of trafficking are said to get fewer visas than victims of domestic

violence, and other serious crimes against their personal security, how can they really be making a difference?

All things considered, ending human security seems daunting. Even Velazquez admits that the movement toward the finish line seems slow. So how do we stop this terrible breach in human security? "The first step," Velazquez said, "is always to learn." She spoke of her inspirational meetings with teens and youth from California to Cambodia who were taking steps in the right direction toward ending human trafficking. She experienced young men and women who had put their lives on hold to go to Cambodia, a country where their own security would be put at risk, to tell the victims of these awful crimes that it is not their fault, and assert the fact that they are human,



Lilia Velazquez, attorney, during her briefing session on human trafficking

a fact that has been denied them for so long.

Velasquez states that the youth of America can make a difference by getting involved in any way that they can. Here in San Diego we have three of the foremost shelters for the victims of human trafficking and domestic violence, ACTION Network, San Diego Youth & Community Service, and the Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, three shelters that are combating the dangers and troubles that the crime of human trafficking is forcing upon America, and the world. According to Velazquez, what the victims need most of all, to start their rehabilitation, is to be reminded that they are human, a fact that they have been stripped of for so long. Velazquez toils throughout her career to re-humanize men and women who have lost all hope for any sort of a life. She takes their hands and encourages them to empower themselves, because in the end, it is only yourself who can make a difference in your own mind. But, a warm hand and a gentle push in the right direction, like Velazquez and all of the youth in Cambodia and around California working toward the end of human trafficking, are constantly providing is another step toward the end. The involvement of more and more willing volunteers is only going to bring us all to the finish line faster, and the race begins... now.

"Enslave the liberty of but one being and the liberties of the world are but in peril."

William Lloyd Garrison

Everyone Deserves A Second Chance

by Sam Weinstein
Francis Parker

“There are three kinds of truth: there is your truth, there is my truth, and there is the truth.” Scott Silverman, author, and founder of Second Chance, shared this insight on truth with students at the 14th annual Youth Town Meeting. Silverman’s reflections struck a chord with every young attendant of his briefing sessions as he spoke about truth and how it can be perceived in different ways. What is Silverman’s truth? There is an invisible workforce of people who hold criminal records, several who at one time were a part of organized crime. Yet, when these men and women recognize the importance of changing their life paths, they have very limited opportunities for a new lease on life. As Silverman shared, they need second chances.

Second Chance, Silverman’s non-profit organization, works to teach the basics of obtaining and keeping a job in today’s rough economic situation. Statistically speaking, eighty percent of Second Chance’s clients have criminal records while the other twenty percent have never held a stable job. The organization works on the basics, starting with an exercise called “Handshake 101.” While a handshake may seem like a simple enough action, there is much more to it. According to Silverman, “You get eight seconds to make a first impression, and you don’t get a second chance.” This statement alone emphasizes why it is important that the simplest of things, such as a proper handshake, should be taught. Along with teaching the men and women at Second Chance how to shake hands with a professional, the organization also teaches them how to have a proper attitude and other basic necessities. By teaching these skills that will go far in a workplace, Second Chance is trying to make sure nothing gets in the way of these men and women’s much-deserved second chances.

While he is now the executive director of this organization, Silverman spoke about his own life before Second Chance and the process of getting the organization running. Years ago, Silverman volunteered at St. Vincent de Paul’s, a charity organization distributing food to the less fortunate. While volunteering there, he noticed he was seeing the same people week after week. One Sunday, he was asked one of the people he was serving, “What are you doing here? Why do I see you here every week?” The man’s response was straightforward: he was unable to get a job. After a long conversation, Silverman agreed to help him find employment and a few months later, the man was hired. When he went back to work, Silverman told his employees that he would no longer be teaching people how to get jobs, but rather that the newly employed man would. Week after week, people were drawn to these lessons and Silverman felt compelled to create a nonprofit for this purpose.

Silverman’s book focuses on the difficulty some people have when asking for help. “One of the hardest things to learn is how to ask for help. If we aren’t working together, we are working alone. If we aren’t working alone, we are working against each other. It is far better to work together.” As an example of the potential of doing this, he recalls being able to sell a record amount of books on the day of his book signing at a local store.

Through all of the stories and experiences he shared, Silverman taught the students in his briefing sessions about the important details that can make or break an opportunity. A person must learn to ask for help, have a positive attitude, help those in need, and, of course, have a good handshake. Above all else, every person, no matter what his or her background holds, deserves a second chance.



Scott Silverman, executive director of Second Chance

Welcome to the Southwest Border by Marissa Wong High Tech High International

Welcome to the Southwest Border. Daily, countless lives are lost in bloody gang battles for control over Narco Plazas, the drug smuggling hubs of Mexico. Here, the largest criminal industry in the world, human trafficking, is at full force. Money laundering, cross-border kidnappings and weapons trafficking are some of the most successful businesses in the region. In fact, “Ninety percent of the weapons used in Narco Plazas are from the United States,” says Edna Trigo-Valdez, a Criminal Intelligence Analyst for the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department. At the briefing entitled “Guns, Drugs, and Money: Welcome to the Southwest Border,” Valdez explained the relationship between United States and Mexico’s gangs and, most importantly, how their connections affect everyone on both sides of the border.

Not only does the United States experience gang violence, but Americans initiate gang violence in other countries as well. In Texas, Nevada, Arizona and other states where weapon restrictions are significantly less, guns can be bought and sold through wholesale distribution, putting a threefold profit into the pockets of gang members. Yet weapons trafficking is only one of the many connections between the U.S. and Mexico in the realm of border crime. On another front of the battle, drug cartels are fiercely fighting to fulfill the demand of U.S. patrons or consumers. Gang networking has proven to be as strong as ever. After Mexican President Felipe Calderon took office, the number of executions have increased yet violence in the Narco Plazas has also skyrocketed under Calderon’s leadership, as he declared an official war on cartels in 2006. These drug centrals have served as a battlefield for inter-gang conflict, creating a palpable fear spilling over into neighboring towns and communities. The warfare taking place in plazas is unlike any other, where all sides are excessively armed and seem to have countless soldiers. One of the most notoriously ruthless gangs, MS-13, is estimated to have anywhere between 50,000 and 100,000 members worldwide. MS-13, infamously known for its brutality involving machetes, has invaded approximately 33 states and six countries. Many other street and prison gangs have begun to form networks as well, even in San Diego’s own backyard. For example, La Eme, a San Diego Mexican Mafia, is known to have connections with cartels in Mexico.

But what can youth, without access to criminal intelligence and police forces, do about this growing problem? “Talk to youth who seem interested in gang violence,” Valdez answers. Children as young as eight or nine are recruited, coerced and often drugged into submission by deadly gangs. “At thirteen or fourteen, its too late,” she continues. Young people facing personal difficulties are looking for an outlet and seeking the respect, family, belonging, status, money, and women they believe gangs will provide. Unfortunately, these youth are a highly demanded commodity for cartel leaders. Young boys are especially key players, as they are often used to smuggle guns and drugs. Even with the successful work of operations such as Community Shield, the Merida Initiative and other multi-agency task forces working to connect the dots, we still cannot reach the root problem of gang violence: the home.

“It starts in the home,” states Valdez, emphasizing that strong family values and caring parents can keep youth from running away and joining gangs. While law enforcement, immigration

policies and gun regulations are factors of border violence, the underlying issue is the exact opposite. To diminish the lure of the criminal lifestyle, we need to educate, communicate with and instill proper morals in today’s youth. Just as Valdez expressed, by providing youth with alternative opportunities and limiting their exposure to gang violence, we can begin to steer them away from gangs and crime. After all, it starts in our home with our neighbors, classmates, students, coworkers and friends. In that respect, the most immediate step we can take to stop gangs is to actively engage with adolescents, and through one-on-one connections, promote healthy and beneficial activities. In the world of guns, drugs, and money, it is our voice that is most powerful.

False Promises

by Kaitlyn Greer
The San Diego MET High School

International adoptions do not ensure a child’s security. In fact, the hidden side to international adoptions is grim: children, expecting security and comfort, are coerced into forced labor and sex trafficking. Their living conditions are heartbreaking. Some are forced to go with little or no food for long periods of time, but malnutrition is only one of the many daily struggles that these children are forced to live through. Among the odds stacked against these children are infectious disease, unsanitary conditions and unsafe political climates. According to the World Health Organization, “In low income countries ... nearly a third of all deaths are in children under 14.”



Carmen Kcomt, program officer, Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition

One individual, Carmen Kcomt, decided to take a stand against this crime. On January 21st, I was lucky enough to attend Worldlink’s 2011 Youth Town Meeting. It was a completely mind-altering experience that will affect me for the rest of my life. The session, “International Adoptions – Child Trafficking in Disguise,” was hosted by Carmen Kcomt.

Kcomt, the program officer at Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, is passionate about human trafficking and understands the impact it has on the world today. Attending her session made me realize how important this matter is. Some adoption agencies sell children for \$20,000 to \$35,000, depending on the child’s physical traits. After this process is over, the child’s new guardian is supposed to be in regular contact with the agency to ensure that the child is safe. Kcomt told students about an adoption she tracked, “I received very few reports about how the baby was doing after he or she was adopted. When you send a baby to another country, you never know what’s going to happen to it,” said Kcomt. This fact is terrifying to me. Children, from infants to teenagers are victims of this crime, and their whereabouts are unknown. Unfortunately, it is impossible to know if they are being taken care of properly, and few people care enough to look.

Human trafficking is not a problem that only third-world countries face. It is a problem that must be brought to the attention of Americans too. There are over 50,000 persons trafficked into the U.S. each year. In fact, Stephanie Voorkamp, the California director of *Not For Sale*, said “San Diego County has long been an on-ramp to the human trafficking highway that runs from Central America and Mexico to San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco and the rest of the United States.” Clearly this problem can no longer be ignored. We often don’t think twice about walking down the street to the local store, but for others there is a pervading fear that children could be abducted, raped or even murdered. The paranoia is growing as time goes on, and it needs to be stopped.

Attending this event has brought all of these horrible truths to my attention. It’s not something I ever thought about before, and hearing about it from someone who has been there to experience these things is really eye-opening and revealing of the importance of our participation in addressing this global issue. Making ourselves and those around us aware of the problem can go a long way towards altering stereotypes and effecting a change in the way we approach such international crimes.

“Currently, there are over 300 manufacturers of light weapons and related equipment in 50 countries around the world - a 25% increase in the last decade alone.”

Swadesh Rana, author, Small Arms and Intra-State Conflicts

In Summary

Gangs & International Justice

A continued overview of the speakers and briefings of the 14th Annual Youth Town Meeting



Francisco Mendoza, staff, *Second Chance*

Life After Organized Crime

by Rhoda Sabatchi
San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts

Emotions ran high as Kenny Biggs and Francisco Mendoza, former gang members and current employees for *Second Chance*, revealed their harsh histories to empower teenagers with knowledge about the gravity and extent of organized crime. “A lot of people think of organized crime and right away think of the mafia. But being in organized crime can also happen in a street gang. When it comes down, you got to have power, guns, and money, because it’s about protection,” Biggs explained. Today, fear of gang violence is prevalent all throughout the United States. There are at least 10,000 gangs in the United States, totaling over half a million members.

Kenny Biggs spoke of his challenging life, from growing up in a gang, realizing who he had become and changing in order to help those who have been exposed to a gang-affiliated neighborhood. “In every gang, automatically you grew up in the neighborhood; you were part of a gang. It’s just how much you participated in it,” Biggs explains. At the age of nine, he had already been initiated into a crew and had sold marijuana and other drugs. By age 16, he had become the leader, doing much of the gang’s “dirty work.” Overtime, small arms became available to gangs, and selling drugs meant easy money. Biggs shared how the gang world permeated his life and affected his loved ones. His oldest son was stabbed, his daughter was involved with gangs and prostitution and his youngest son died six years ago in a shooting by an opposing gang member. At the age of 37, Biggs has stared life-threatening situations in the eye: he has overdosed seven times, been to prison, been stabbed five times and was almost decapitated. Because of his family, he decided to end his gang involvement and educate youth about the cons of organized crime. As a gang survivor, Biggs shared, “You already did your time, you already lived from a young gang member and what did you get out of it, a lot of prison time, tattoos, scars? Now it’s time to start living.”

“A smart person learns from his mistakes, but a wise person learns from the mistakes of others,” quotes Francisco Mendoza. Like Biggs, Mendoza also grew up with gangs, and he eventually gave into them. He spoke of the intelligence and deception of gangs and human trafficking networks which coerce people into prostitution. Mendoza was sentenced to prison for 37 years to life for his participation in these crimes. However, after only spending 30 years in prison, he appealed to a judge and was paroled. With a past full of gang association, Mendoza finally decided to change the course of his life. *Second Chance* gave him a second shot at life and helped him give back to the community by permitting him to educate youth about the dangers of gangs.

Second Chance is a San Diego based organization partnered with 350 different companies that empower and educate youth and adults ages 16 and above. They help those who are in dire need of a new life and life skills to escape gang life. Their two year STRIVE (Support Training Results in Valuable Employees) program and four week workshops are free and focus on exercises to improve self image and attitude in order to achieve self sufficiency. Their youth programs target at-risk teenagers who live in gang vulnerable neighborhoods. Kenny Biggs is a facilitator and mentor for at-risk youth, and the housing services manager for those who need refuge from their violent neighborhood. Francisco Mendoza is a trainer.

Students left the briefing with a firsthand perspective of life before, during, and after organized crime. In closing,



Student moderators Marian Dorst (left) and Adia Sykes (right), with Octavio Rodriguez, program coordinator at USD’s Trans-Border Institute

Mendoza said, “Life kind of distorts your identity. We forget who we really are. We’re not just human beings having a spiritual experience, but rather we’re spiritual beings and we’re having a human experience. What are you going to bring into your life? Are you going to bring chaos or destruction or are you going to bring something positive and productive that’s going to benefit the world? What are you going to do with the world you inherited?” Biggs left us with this advice: “Lazy people become slaves. Hard workers become leaders.” With this, students left the briefing with a new understanding of gang lifestyles and awareness of the community around them.

Sealing the Gap

by Carissa Dieli
Academy of Our Lady of Peace

Peace and happiness seem like natural born rights that every human being is entitled to. Unfortunately, they are not all that easy to acquire, as proven by one look at the drug wars in Mexico. Organized crime can be a huge detriment to peace and security. One cannot tackle each crime individually because drug production and drug trafficking do not exist in isolation. They are part of a larger network that links human traffickers, arms traffickers, money launderers and instigators of violence. Octavio Rodriguez discussed the root of these crimes in the panel “Organized Crime and International Justice. Before coming to the U.S., Rodriguez, a native of Aguascalientes, Mexico, worked as Chief of Public Law Academy and was also a Legal Advisor for Governmental Offices in Mexico regarding human rights and communal rural property. Now he works as the Project Coordinator at the University of San Diego’s Justice in Mexico Project of the Trans-Border Institute.

Rodriguez highlighted the prevalence of drug production, consumption and trafficking in Mexico. Though some say that marijuana is Mexico’s “main drug,” the country produced a whopping 38 metric tons of heroin in 2008 alone. As the production increases, so does the consumption. Marijuana, heroin and cocaine consumption levels continue to rise within Mexico’s borders. Rodriguez startled his audience when he explained that, since 2006, there have been approximately 30,000 drug-related deaths in Mexico. In 2010 alone, there were 12,000. This loss is not all due to overdoses, fatal batches or deaths after prolonged use. The 12,000 lives lost were in large part due to the increasing violence that is spreading throughout Mexico due to the drug wars. The violence has expanded from the border towns and cities into more central areas of the country. Rival drug cartels fight for regional control as the government tries and fails to stop the drug trafficking. Arrests of important cartel leaders have led to even more violence as other cartels fight for control of trafficking routes into the United States. As the violence infiltrates more and more areas of Mexico, the necessity of a method of controlling organized crime becomes even clearer.

Ten years ago, the UNODC’s Palermo Convention gave countries tools and ideas to assist with the fight against organized crime. Though the documents from the convention are broad enough to provide only a loose framework for dealing with these issues, Rodriguez commented that “at least we have somewhere to start.” He explained the very important processes of extradition (when one nation surrenders a suspected or convicted criminal to another nation), mutual legal assistance and police cooperation. Rodriguez said these three legal points are necessary in the effort to fight organized crime, especially that which takes place between the U.S. and Mexico.

The efforts to control the organized crime in Mexico are go-

ing to be numerous, time consuming and taxing. Rodriguez explained that these organized criminals cannot be beaten simply with weapons. There is a substantial gap between the people and the government of Mexico. Unfortunately, organized crime fills this gap and “provides to the people what the government does not.” The country needs to focus on economic development and education in an attempt to lessen the gap, and therefore lessen the room for and tolerance of organized crime. Corruption and abuse of power must come to a screeching halt. With distrust of the government in the hearts of many Mexicans, the gap continues to widen. We in the United States may be tempted to look the other way, believing that this is their problem, not ours. The truth of the matter, however, is that it is quickly becoming our problem too. The corruption and violence taking place in Mexico is steadily finding its way into the United States. Cooperation between the governments is vital, as is the implementation of the methods Rodriguez recommended in his session, from extradition to police cooperation. Most of all, we citizens must be conscious of the fact that the issues of organized crime affect everyone, and that none of us have the luxury of ignoring the problem.

By the Numbers

by Alyanna Cardozo
San Diego MET High School

27 million people are victims of modern day slavery across the world.

- Kevin Bales of Free the Slaves.

5,750 people in Los Angeles County were killed in gang violence in the last 10 years

- Bill Bratton, Los Angeles Police Dept. Chief.

1 billion US dollars is the estimated amount of revenue generated from the illegal trade of small arms each year.

- Center for Defense Information.

50 percent of transnational victims who are children.

- U.S. Department of Justice, Report to Congress from Attorney General John Ashcroft.

42 - the number of states in which the Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13 gang operates in.

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation, January 2008.

321.6 billion US dollars were generated in 2005 through illicit global drug trade.

- United Nations Report.

“He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.” Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Threats to Human Security: Its Not Just a Matter of Crime

by Victoria Acosta
High Tech High Chula Vista

Antonio Mazzitelli captivated the audience during his session, “Threats to Human Security: It’s Not Just a Matter of Crime” with compelling narratives on drug and small arms trafficking, organized crime and terrorism based on his experiences working for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). In his presentation he explored the different issues that must be addressed on a step-by-step basis before organized crime and its related illegal activities can be stopped.

With respect to terrorism, Mazzitelli commented that events such as September 11 could be avoided in the future if the United States and the international community strengthened the rule of law, effectively analyzed the domestic and foreign issues and took the initiative to preemptively begin the process of prevention and treatment in “at-risk” areas.

In his discussion of human trafficking, Mazzitelli used the U.S. and Mexico as his main example, citing statistics that as many as 17,000 individuals are trafficked yearly, with 80 percent of those illegal immigrants being Mexican nationals. Mazzitelli also described the issue of the “Coyotes”, those who are paid to help immigrants cross the border, and their impacts.

The largest portion of Mazzitelli’s session focused on drugs, explaining how there has been an increase in the production, trafficking and overall consumption of drugs, including cannabis, methamphetamines, cocaine, opium and heroin. Because drug trafficking falls under the greater umbrella of organized crime, organizations like the UNODC and other international organizations, like the European Union, are increasing their efforts to combat the problem through collaborative policies.

Mazzitelli further utilized extensive statistics to illustrate the various increases in drug-related crime; for example, since 1998 North America consumed 288 tons of cocaine, while Europe consumed 63 tons. In 2008, only 10 years later, the North American total decreased to 196 tons, but Europe’s total consumption rose to more than 124 tons. Of note, the 2008 statistic in South American cocaine consumption was 95 tons.

Mazzitelli also discussed what he calls “*plata o plomo*” (loosely translated as “money or bullets”), a phenomena that describes the relationship that the state or actor has to drug trafficking. For example, the cocaine trafficking between Colombia and the United States is an example of the “*plomo*” aspect, because many individuals die throughout the process of transport between the two states. Other examples of “*plomo*” include Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, the U.S. and Canada, who have all seen an increased number of drug production and trafficking-related deaths.

Mazzitelli finally concluded that the UNODC believes that in order to end illegal drug trafficking, something must be done about the consumers themselves. Since drug consumption is a health-related problem, one way to target this is through the use of health-related policies and solutions for decreased drug dependency and overall healthier living standards. Mazzitelli is optimistic that should the international community adopt these steps to success, drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime can and will be combated to the benefit of all.



Mazzitelli walked student delegates through the complexities of supply and demand of the drug trade.

The Complexities of Terrorism

by Alyanna Cardozo
San Diego MET High School

Dipak Gupta, a distinguished professor at San Diego State University, is an established scholar in the field of terrorism and political violence research. On January 21, 2011, Gupta was warmly welcomed as a guest speaker at WorldLink’s 14th Annual Youth Town Meeting. He delved into what soon became an engrossing topic: terrorism. Many are familiar with the term, but Gupta shed new light on the matter that encouraged students to look at it from a different perspective.

While some may use the term “terrorist” to describe any act of violence inflicted on a community, Gupta asked delegates to assess the reasons behind the violence. A criminal uses violence to achieve goals that will only benefit that individual. However, there are those who aim to do something for a community, often for a minority group that is being oppressed. In such situations, these individuals see violence as the only method of making their voices heard. Depending on the context, what one group may refer to as a “terrorist,” another may see a “freedom fighter.”



To clarify that criminals and terrorists are not at completely opposite ends of the scale, Gupta told his audience that the two do often merge. “For instance,” he explained, “many terrorist organizations, they may start out being very ideological, but they veer off toward criminality.” This is often the result of lack of funding. They need money, but where can they get it? There are many options, but one common course of action is to step into the drug trade. FARC, a group in Colombia that claims to represent the rural poor in a struggle against Colombia’s wealthier classes, is a good example. Before long, drugs became FARC’s main source of funding. Over time, FARC was much more interested in drug trafficking than in bettering the lives of the poor people in its territory. FARC is a good example of how a terrorist group can become a criminal organization, and the same thing repeats all over the world.

As the session continued, Gupta admitted to his audience that he became an expert in the field of terrorism in part because he was once a terrorist himself. He was able to get out of the group before causing any harm, but the experience had impacted his life; he knows firsthand how terrorist groups work and the distinctions that must be made in dealing with them. Governments must understand that if they want to develop public policies to deal with terrorism and organized crime, they cannot conflate the two. Once this is understood, there might be a chance to thwart terrorist attacks and impede criminal actions before it is too late.

Today’s generation of youth has been endowed with the great desire to get involved. They want to be a part of the solution to global issues, so Gupta knew that the next question was inevitable: What can the youth do to help prevent crime and stop terrorism? A straight answer would be terrific, but hardly possible. Perhaps the better question is: how can we stop our youth from being indoctrinated by extremists? “Terrorism,” as Gupta said, “just like crime, has been with us from our earliest recorded time. Therefore, there is nothing that is brand new about this. We have to live with it and manage its threats.” We must learn to live with it by dealing with it, not merely accepting it. The biggest step to dealing with it is one that the youth have the power to take. Young people can help teach about the destructive consequences of terrorism, how it destroys innocent lives and scars communities. It may seem like a small step, but with enough people advocating that violence is not the way, our world will be much closer to peace. Together, youth undoubtedly have the capability, will and influence to make a difference. The time to start is now.

A Little Step for Nepal, A Giant Leap for Mankind

by Gaia Croston
Francis Parker School

One of the number-one questions that teenagers ask at meeting like this is: “What can we do to make a difference?” Generally, the answer is to take initiative: take a problem you see and try to fix it. For anyone who questions the power of youth, there is no better inspiration than the story that follows, of a few youths who saw a problem - drug production and addiction in Nepal - and set out to solve it.

Birganj, Nepal, may not be a household name, but the Nepalese know it as the district with the largest drug problem in the country. Located in the fertile Terai region and connected to India by an open, chaotic border crossing, Birganj is an important participant in the drug trade that traffics marijuana and opium both domestically and internationally. The regions of the “Golden Crescent” and the “Golden Triangle” surrounding Nepal are also heavily involved with the drug trade. Nepal’s recent transition from monarchy to democracy has left an unstable political, economic and social system in its wake, a reality which has compounded the nation’s drug problem. In Birganj, the main moneymaker is tourism, there are few good roads, and the people live with little economic or physical security, and seemingly no options.

In such circumstances, the farmers in Birganj began to view drug production as a much more lucrative field than food production. Even though farmers only earn a small fraction of the finished product’s selling price, many growers switched to opium and/or marijuana in order to make a better living. What



Kanchan Jha, founder, Sano Paila

resulted were unforeseen repercussions in the community: over half of the drug users in the area were now between the ages of 15 and 19, countless citizens were falling victim to drug dependency and even the police were afraid to confront the farmers, who often carried weapons.

This is where Kanchan Jha, a young Nepalese man, comes in. Kanchan founded a local non-profit organization called *Sano Paila* (“A Little Step”) in 2006. *Sano Paila* is made up of thirty or so members, with an average age of 28, whose goal is to decrease drug production in Birganj by using direct, personal appeals to the farmers. The youth involved in the organization have done what the police dared not do: confront drug farmers to explain the adverse effects their crops have on the community and attempt to convince them to cease drug production. A few of the members of *Sano Paila* are even recovered addicts. As Kanchan says, this method aims to “uproot the problem.” Since its inception, this project has had remarkable success; 99% of the 150 farmers in the region have stopped using their land to grow narcotics.

Of course, this process was not without its challenges. The youths of *Sano Paila* traveled through hazardous areas on bikes, and chances of violence were high even with the group’s police escorts. Moreover, the topic of drugs is a sensitive one, and farmers don’t necessarily want to make less money by selling less profitable crops. Kanchan Jha points out that adults usually didn’t trust the teens until change was noticeable. Despite all this, the youths kept on, and no physical harm came to a single member. As Kanchan says, “Where there is life, there is hope,” and as this inspiring story shows, not only can youths make a difference, but the future depends on them to take that initiative.

“It’s easier to be ignorant and say I don’t know about the problem. But once you know, once you’ve seen it in their eyes, then you have a responsibility to do something.”

Craig Kielburger, founder, Free the Children

In Summary

Human Trafficking & Small Arms

Lethal Cartels: The Drug Threat

by Anna Fox
La Jolla Country Day

"No nation is fully to blame for the lack of peace and justice in the world. No nation is exempt from the moral responsibility of contributing significantly to the solution." With this quote, Jonathon White set the tone of the 14th Annual Youth Town Meeting. Accountability, he stated, is integral to working with threats to human security. As an agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), White enforces laws and regulations of controlled substances in the United States and abroad in over fifty countries. White notes that when talking about human security, drug trafficking is a major obstacle in reaching global peace as it spans across the entire world. Because of the expanse of the issue, cooperation between all nations is key in eliminating the violence and suffering caused by the illicit drug trade.

During White's briefing on drug trafficking, he emphasized that the main problem is the demand for illegal drugs. If we can reduce the number of people that buy and use illegal drugs, the power that drug cartels have will go down. The wars between the cartels bring huge amounts of violence and unrest to a country, Mexico is a prime example of a country that has been hugely affected by violence related to drugs. In a report filed by the FBI an estimated 22,000 deaths since 2007 were linked to drug trafficking, most between the ages of 14 and 25. The people that are killed are mostly members of rival cartels, but citizens of Mexico and others are sometimes caught up in the

violence. But as White said, the biggest problem is people buying and becoming addicted to drugs, and it is the underlying problem of demand that needs to be addressed before moving forward with rehabilitation.

The Mexican government is also working simultaneously to address the problem of drug trafficking. In 2006, President Felipe Calderon launched his crackdown on the drug cartels in Mexico. In January, the Mexican government revealed a new list of drug related crimes showing that "2010 was the bloodiest year so far, with 15,273 drug-related murders" (BBC). This up-tick in deaths is attributed to the new tension between drug cartels that were formerly associated, resulting in a turf war. The Mexican government has deployed 50,000 troops to combat such gruesome violence, as the police cannot be trusted with deep-seated corruption prevalent in the police force. Echoing the sentiments of White, on March



Jonathon White, agent, Drug Enforcement Administration

the session, Laurence explained the difference between a glock containing 33 bullets and an AK47 containing 100 bullets. The amazing difference was that a glock (a semiautomatic gun) can shoot 33 rounds in 11 seconds while an AK47 (an automatic gun) shoots 100 rounds in 8 seconds.

At a UN conference last year, IANSA reported that representatives from all over the globe – from Zambia to the Dominican Republic – cited gun violence as one of their countries most pressing challenges. The issue is also clearly prevalent domestically, with presidential assassination attempts, widely publicized school shootings, and attacks as recent as that in Arizona reveal that the accessibility of small arms has caused them to remain the major security threat that they have been for centuries. There are many reasons for the abundance of small arms, among them terrorism, ideological variations concerning gun control, regional conflict and government instability. Debate also rages over the effectiveness of gun control laws; studies on the impact of increased legislation are often conflicting or inconclusive. The fact remains, however, that the small arms trade is highly lucrative, and small arms are involved



Photo courtesy of IRIN News

3rd, 2011, President Obama said, "We are very mindful that the battle President Calderon is fighting inside of Mexico is not just his battle, it's also ours. We have to take responsibility just as he's taken responsibility."

During the question and answer segment in White's briefing session, a student asked, "is addiction the real problem, or is it

people's desire for something exotic?" White said that people being curious about drugs is what initiates the problem, but addiction is what causes the problem to persist, and keeps people buying drugs. Drugs, whether they are being bought, sold, or used, never lead to good things in life. It is always a lose-lose situation, as the user is hurting his or her self,

in addition to the surrounding people.

White ended his session on an optimistic note, reaffirming his faith in humanity by remarking that people are able to do extraordinary things, but the use of drugs inhibits those amazing achievements.

in up to 200,000 civilian peacetime deaths. Given the current state of small arms violence worldwide, change that begins with the youth is an increasingly pressing issue. And the realities add gravity, as Edward Laurence points out, to the fact that youth involvement and activism is so necessary.

When a student asked: "What can the youth help to reduce small arms?" he answered "You all know people." That simple statement has enormous implications; many teenagers know at least one person that has joined a gang and tried to shoot a weapon at someone. Because of this, many teenagers have opportunities to educate their peers about the dangers of small arms. "A great start would be telling that person that guns will lead to their death."

We all know people. That fact is absolutely empowering. A desire for change and a platform

with which to see it through are two key factors in achieving peace, and the student delegates at the Youth Town Meeting are powerful evidence that both of these dynamics are driving forces in this generation. All that remains is the final ingredient – action. Stories such as that of Edward Laurence are inspiring and galvanizing, and will certainly lead students to a greater enthusiasm and understanding of the ways that they can effect concrete change, in circles as small as school communities and as broad as the world of policymakers.

Small Arms, Big Troubles

by Maria Jose Zepeda
IMAN

Edward Laurence has been a Full Professor at Monterrey Institute of International Studies since 1992. He served as a consultant in the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs and is the cofounder of the IANSA, the International

Action Network on Small Arms. IANSA advocates for small arms control by raising awareness among policymakers and facilitating the collaboration of various Non-Governmental Organizations seeking to reduce arms violence. Edward Laurence sees the importance of working with young adults so that they understand the ramifications of small arms.



Edward Laurence, small arms expert

Small arms are easy to carry, easy to traffic and available to anyone. From revolvers, to rifles, to light machine guns, shockingly 90% of all weapons come from gun dealers. During

2011 WorldLink Press

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The opinions expressed in this newspaper are strictly those of the writers and do not represent those of the WorldLink Program, the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice, or the University of San Diego.

One Voice From the Frontlines

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Malaki Hendrix is a human trafficking survivor.

He was a guest speaker in November 2010 for a WorldLink Youth Forum on Human Trafficking. The following is an excerpt of his story.

As my mind comes awake, so does my body. I feel the flicker of tiny legs as flies use my face as a landing strip. My ears become aware of their buzzing as well as the bustling and scrapping sounds of my mother moving around our little dirt hut we call home. It's dark and cold outside. She is already getting ready for work. I get up and roll up my tattered straw matt. As I get ready, I pass my mother but no words are exchanged.

I head across the dusty trail to where a large sharp rock sits. An old banana tree that yields no fruit but refuses to give up life droops lazily over the rock. My rock. The rock I sit on day in and day out.

A few minutes later, my mother walks out, desperately trying to smooth out her wrinkled clothing and furiously trying to pin her raven-like hair back. Anything that will take attention away from her frail teenage body - a body that hasn't eaten in a couple days. You see, image is important to my mother. It's how we get food.

My mother glances over to me with a look that I understand as a stern, silent reminder not to leave my rock feet, my mother walks down that long, winding path that leads away from our hut and deep into the brush. Another day has started deep in the jungle of the Philippines. My name is Malaki, I am 5 years old and my teenage mother is a prostitute.

I feel a sense of calmness come over me as I sit on my rock. I can feel the searing heat of the tropical sun as it rises through the sky. I can smell the sweet scents of fruit mixing in with the smell of decaying bodies of animals. It burns the skin on my naked body. I can hear the howls of jungle cats, the screeching of monkeys and large birds. This is my life every day, until my world stopped.

On that unforgettable day, my mother came walking back only a little after having just left. This was unusual until the moon was over my head. Two, she walked right up to me and stared me in the eyes. She then grabbed my little hand with her bigger warm hand.

We walked down the path only she took every day. This was a treat for me since I have never gone past my rock. I remember the overwhelming new sights and smells. As we walk, we could see a crowd of people surrounding a group of men. The dust rose up higher and higher. My mother hadn't spoken a word to me the entire trip.

After much pushing and shoving, we made it to the makeshift table where some men stood. I saw my mother talk to a dark man that looked like he rose all the way into the sky. I remember shivering when I looked at him and he turned a piercing stare into my own soul. His eyes were as black as my mother's hair and radiated a coldness that would melt ice cubes.

He shoved something into my mother's hands and turned towards me. I felt the world stop. He then grabbed me very hard. I had bruises for days afterwards. He pushed and shoved me into a rusted cage so small that I couldn't even sit up in. I looked desperately for the woman that had brought me into this world and to this man.

She never said good bye or looked back. All I could see was her long, dark hair as she walked away. I saw there was no help from her. I cried for the first time in my short life. This day marked the nightmare that even 23 years later engulfs my spirit, my mind and my body.

They loaded cage after cage onto anything that had wheels or legs. Trucks, cars, trailers, even donkeys. Some cages had two or three kids. They ranged from newborns to mid-teen years. Boys and girls crammed together.

We traveled village to village. I don't know how long we traveled for or how many countries we went to. A lot of kids died every day. I was forced to either bury my new brothers and sisters or pull their limp bodies from the cages. I believe our minds and bodies shut down. We would be yanked from our cages, stripped of our clothes, to be paraded across a stage. If someone in the crowd had the right amount of money, you became their property. Some of us would become child soldiers, some workers, some just for entertainment for whatever dark, twisted, impulsive fantasy the owner came up with.

Most of us became sex slaves. A great majority of my brothers and sisters would not live past a 6-month period from point of sale due to the lack of food, water and torture. My body became numb to the painful acts of human greed and lust, to the drugs they pumped into our bodies. My ears no longer heard the screams of tortured babies. My eyes no longer saw the brutality of organs being pulled out for sale. I have had at least 14 owners in the United States alone.

My name is Malaki and I am a survivor. I made a promise to my brothers and sisters I would not die before I told our story.



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until she returns. With dust swirling around her Another day has started deep in the jungle of

it rises through the sky. It burns the skin on my can hear the howls of jungle cats, the screeching

in two different ways. One, she never came back

Closer than You Think: Human Trafficking

by Taylor Fugere
SCPA

Special Agent Daniel Page of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) handed a dry-erase marker to students from each side of the border. "Write down three things that are the most important to you," Page said as he directed the students to the whiteboard. One by one he went through the items on their lists and asked the students to imagine their lives without these essentials. Family? Gone. Friends? Gone. Security? Don't even think about it. He explained that this is the life of a human trafficking victim; these fundamental elements we take for granted are stripped away, all at once. As William Canny of Catholic Relief Services explained earlier that morning, human trafficking is a "violation to the human dignity and human rights of those directly involved." It is the act of stripping away basic human rights by means of force, fraud and coercion.

Such unthinkable acts are prevalent in San Ysidro, the biggest land port of entry in the world, and thus a gateway for many of these wrongdoings. Twenty minutes from the city of San Diego and five minutes from the Mexican border, San Ysidro is especially susceptible to violence and the dangers of human trafficking. As Special Agent Juan Jacobo presented real case studies and photos from our area, suddenly these crimes hit even closer to home. "A lot of people don't understand that it's actually happening in our country. It's actually in our backyard," moderator Skylar Economy remarked.

DHS Agent Anthony Rios detailed the Department's victim-centered approach: it encourages victims of human trafficking

to come forward in exchange for their protection. "Unlike drugs," Agent Jacobo stated, "...victims do talk." He explained that without many brave individuals coming forward, no perpetrators would be arrested and put on trial. Reintegration services, witness protection and counseling resources provided by the Department help turn these victims into survivors.

La Jolla Country Day student Kelsey Miller blames the shock of human trafficking on the distorted lens of the media. Many students are aware of these social injustices happening in Africa or Southeast Asia, but have no idea the same things are happening mere miles away from their homes. Since many Americans are not cognizant of the widespread nature and enormous scale of this modern-day slavery, they fail to do anything about it. "Human trafficking is where domestic violence was twenty years ago: nobody talks about it," Agent Rios warned. This statement rings true considering that the Department of Homeland Security relies on tip-offs from concerned citizens and local agencies for their investigations. Recently, there have been stronger efforts to raise awareness of trafficking on the part of the U.S. government and many interest groups. President Obama recently proclaimed January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Month and celebrities such as Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore joined the fight against human trafficking by recording a public service announcement for the Department of Homeland Security.

"It is important that we are informed because we can tell people and [in doing so,] we might make a change," CETYS sophomore, Iselle Guerrero, claimed. "I would hate for anyone else to go through that pain." Human trafficking is referred to as modern-day slavery because it involves humans being sold and transported against their will, while people conducting these trades rake in the profits. Many organizations, such as the DHS, dedicate themselves to stopping this tragedy by investigating cases, prosecuting offenders and aiding victims.

One can raise all of the awareness in the world, but it means nothing if no one acts upon it. A person was trafficked today, in San Diego. It is happening in our neighborhoods and across our border everyday will continue without someone to speak up and work with the authorities to defeat human trafficking around the world.



"Are you going to bring chaos and destruction or are you going to bring something positive and productive that's going to benefit the world?"

Francisco Mendoza, employment training specialist at Second Chance, prompting YTM delegates to consider how they want to live

Cruzando la Línea: Las Redes del Crimen en la Frontera del Sudoeste

Por Marissa Wong
High Tech High International

Bienvenidos a la frontera del sudoeste. Cada día, incontables vidas se pierden en batallas de pandillas por control de las Narco Plazas, los centros del tráfico de drogas en México. Aquí, la industria criminal más grande del mundo, el tráfico de humanos existe en toda su fuerza. El lavado de dinero, secuestro internacional y el tráfico de armas son unos de los



Mas de 150 estudiantes Mexicanos atendieron el evento de WorldLink

negocios más poderosos en la región. De hecho, “el noventa por ciento de las armas usadas en la Narco Plazas son de los EEUU” dice Edna-Trigo-Valdez, analista de inteligencia criminal para el departamento del San Diego County Sheriff. Durante su presentación “Armas, Drogas y Dinero: Bienvenidos a la Frontera Sudoeste” en la 14ta Junta Regional Juvenil, Valdez explico la relación entre las pandillas de los EEUU y México, y las consecuencias de esas conexiones en ambos lados de la frontera.

Los pandilleros en los EEUU también están involucrados en la violencia en otros países. En Texas, Nevada y Arizona, y otros estados donde las leyes contra las armas son menos estrictas, la compra y venta de armas es distribuida por mayoreo, dándole una ganancia triple a los pandilleros. Sin embargo, el tráfico de armas es solo una de las conexiones entre los EEUU y México en términos del crimen en la frontera. Por otro lado, los carteles de drogas batallan ferozmente para cumplir con la demanda de los clientes en los EEUU. Redes de pandillas son mas ponderosas que nunca, notado con el aumento de ejecuciones desde la inauguración del Presidente Calderón. La violencia en las Narco Plazas también ha incrementado desde que el Presidente Calderón declaro la Guerra Contra los Carteles en el 2006. Estos centros de drogas son centros de batalla entre las pandillas, que ha creado temor en las residencias y comunidades que los rodean. La guerra en las plazas es sin igual a otras batallas, donde todos los partidos tienen acceso a amplias armas y un sin fin de soldados. Una de las pandillas más despiadadas, MS-13, es conocida por su brutalidad con machetes, ha invadido aproximadamente 33 estados y siete países. Muchas otras pandillas mas chicas y en las cárceles han comenzado a formar redes, incluyendo en San Diego. Por ejemplo, la Eme, una mafia Mexicana en San Diego, tiene conexiones a los carteles en México.

Pero que es que los jóvenes, sin acceso a la inteligencia criminal y la policía, puedan hacer sobre este problema? “Platiquenles a otros jóvenes quienes estén interesados en la violencia pandillera,” responde Valdez. Niños de ocho y nueve años son reclutados, forzados y a menudo son drogados para someterse a las pandillas. “Si uno espera hasta los trece o catorce años, ya es demasiado tarde,” continua. Los jóvenes quienes están enfrentando problemas personales buscan apoyo y quieren el respeto, familia, estatus, dinero y mujeres que creen que las pandillas ofrecen. Desafortunadamente, estos jóvenes son una comodidad para los líderes de los carteles. Los niños, específicamente, son importantes para los carteles porque pasan armas y drogas por contrabando mas fácilmente. A pesar del trabajo de organizaciones como Community Shield, la Iniciativa de Mérida y otras fuerzas especiales que investigan las operaciones de pandillas, no pueden alcanzar la raíz del problema: el hogar.

“Todo comienza en la casa,” comenta Valdez, dándole importancia a los valores de familia y a papas involucrados en las vidas de sus hijos para que no entren a pandillas. Aunque la policía, póliza de inmigración y reglamento de armas son solo unos de los factores para prevenir la violencia de la frontera, la educación, comunicación y el inculcar valores a los jóvenes son aun más importantes. Al proveer adolescentes con oportunidades alternativas y limitando su exposición a la violencia pandillera, podemos comenzar a guiarlos lejos de las pandillas y el crimen. Últimamente, todo

comienza en nuestras casas con nuestros vecinos, compañeros, estudiantes, colegas y amigos. El paso mas inmediato que podemos tomar para detener a las pandillas es involucrar a los adolescentes, con conexiones individuales y promover actividades que sean saludables y beneficiosas. En el mundo de armas, drogas y dinero, nuestra voz es la más poderosa.

El Crimen del Futuro

Por Tess Baker
Torrey Pines High School

La palabra “prostituta” frecuentemente es asociada con la idea de que alguien es “sucio,” “barato,” “fácil,” y “de baja clase.” Raramente es asociada con la palabra “víctima.” A menudo, la sociedad no ve a los que están enredados en la prostitución como esclavos sexuales, y aun menos como seres humanos. En realidad, la mayoría de los que son prostituidos son víctimas de tráfico de humanos: el deteniemento forzado de personas. Jason King, Sergeant con San Diego County Sheriff’s Department y el administrador de la fuerza especial de anti-tráfico en

San Diego, lo llama “el crimen del futuro.” El problema con este crimen es que nadie está completamente seguro. Individuales llamados “pimps” son los que trafican y explotan a las víctimas. Irán a donde sea para encontrar a sus próximos empleados forzados: conciertos, fiestas, cines, Facebook, y hasta escuelas. “El problema en cuestiones de explotación sexual,” dice King, “es que la persona puede ser vendida con ganancias una y otra vez, a comparación de las drogas, que solo pueden ser vendidas una vez.”

Los traficantes atrapan a sus víctimas a medio de la fuerza física, amenazas y manipulación emocional, a veces actuando como una figura paternal o como novio. Por medio de estos roles, las victimas comienzan a desarrollar un sentido de pertenencia. Una vez vendido, los victimas viven en un infierno. Trabajan en las calles 24 horas al día, siete días a la semana mientras que los traficantes se quedan con todo el dinero. Si las víctimas son arrestadas por ofrecer el servicio, frecuentemente dicen mentiras para proteger al traficante. “Las prostitutas son controladas y manipuladas y hacer creer que van a vivir un sueño,” dice King. “Les han dicho mentiras y metido ideas a la cabeza.”

La sociedad también tiende a creer que los que están en la prostitución puede escaparse fácilmente de la industria. Esto es una idea falsa. “Cuando pensamos en prostitutas, pensamos de la película Pretty Woman,” explica King. “Es lo mas lejos de la verdad.” Una vez que estas niñas están en esta red, son amenazadas, diciéndoles que si huyen, los traficantes las encontrarán y se desquitarán con sus familias. A la misma vez, las manipulan para creer que no tienen valor y que si se van, no encontrarán algo mejor porque esa vida es lo mejor que jamás encontrarán. “Esta es una joven, una niña, que la

han violando cientos de veces, dice King, “Y ya no tiene auto-estima.” Por esta razón, muchas víctimas no quieren dejar o traicionar a sus traficantes. En el caso de que logren escaparse del mundo de la prostitución, frecuentemente regresan porque creen que ya no tiene otra opción. Como consecuencia, no encuentran otro trabajo y en algunos casos, mueren del abuso sexual y físico.

Se estima que el crimen del tráfico de humanos va seguir aumentando considerablemente en la cantidad de traficantes y en los precios que ellos demandan. King dice que “el tráfico sexual es un tema tan importante porque la sociedad la hace ver glamorosa.” En Pretty Woman, la prostituta trabaja para un empresario que le paga una cantidad enorme por un fin de semana. El también le compra ropa de diseño, se la lleva a San Francisco vía un jet privado y termina enamorándose de ella. Aunque la película es entretenida, no representa la vida real de una prostituta. En primer lugar, “ellas no se quedan con el dinero, es para su traficante,” dice King. En segunda, “son muy pocas las mujeres que trabajan independientemente en las calles,” continua King, “son controladas y manipuladas.” Y en tercera, “ellas son víctimas,” dice King. “No lo están haciendo porque quieren.” King describió una situación cuando trataron de rescatar a una niña, pero la cual reusó la oferta por miedo de que su traficante fuera a perseguirla y a su familia. El explicó que atentaron sacarla de las calles varias veces.

Este crimen no parará hasta que las sociedades en donde

esto ocurre cambien de opinión. “Tenemos que cambiar nuestra perspectiva por que estas prostitutas realmente son víctimas,” dice King. En vez de castigar a las mujeres que son traficadas, la póliza debería cambiar para ir detrás de los traficantes. También



Una estudiante contribuye su perspectiva durante una sesion
Fotografía por Michele Zousmer

se necesitará la aceptación de la sociedad para reintegrar a la víctima a una vida normal y entender que una prostituta casi siempre es una víctima forzada. Hasta que todos los miembros de la sociedad se den cuenta de esto, este crimen continuará y probablemente se hará peor.

Por los Números
por Alyanna Cardozo
San Diego MET High School

27 millones de personas son víctimas de esclavitud moderna en todo el mundo.

- Kevin Bales autor, Free the Slaves

5,750 personas en Los Ángeles fueron asesinados por violencia asociada con pandillas en los últimos 10 años

- Bill Bratton, Jefe del Departamento de Policia de Los Angeles

90 porciento de la droga que se consume en Europa y Estados Unidos transita por Latinoamerica, y la región sufre la violencia y la corrupción que acarrea el narcotráfico

- Oficina de la ONU contra la Droga y el Delito

“Latinoamérica debe combatir una creciente delincuencia vinculada principalmente al narcotráfico, pero garantizando que sus fuerzas de seguridad respeten los derechos humanos.”

Amnistía Internacional, reporte anual 2011 que destaca los progresos y abusos contra grupos vulnerables

In Focus

Working for Peace and Security

Hope for Mindanao

by Leah Veleker

The Academy of Our Lady of Peace

The history of the Philippines has been one of oppression. First, the Spanish inhabited the Philippines, ruling over the native peoples for nearly four hundred years. After the Spanish-American War, the Philippines changed hands and was awarded to the United States as a spoil of war. The Philippines finally secured independence from the United States in 1946. Unfortunately, the young nation has been continually plagued by conflict for the past half-century.

At the heart of the conflict and at southernmost tip of the country is Mindanao, the second largest island of the Philippines. About a quarter of Mindanao's population is Muslim. However, they weren't always the minority. Muslim merchants introduced the people of Mindanao to Islam long before the Spanish showed up and the religion spread far and wide to most of the inhabitants.

After the Philippines became independent, Christian immigrants flooded into the country and into Mindanao. The land that the native peoples had lived on for hundreds of years was being taken from them. Conflict erupted in the 1960s between the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the central government. The MNLF represented the Muslims, or Moros, and fought for independence from the Philippine government. After years and years of fighting, the MNLF and Philippine government reached a peace agreement in 1996. Sadly, the peace accord did not curb the violence; the conflict between the Muslims and Christians continues today.

This conflict in Mindanao has displaced hundreds of thousands of people. The region has been torn apart by war and people are fleeing from danger, from their own homes. Displaced people are extremely vulnerable to starvation and disease. The camps for displaced persons only receive food once every six months. The lack of aid and international attention is stark and saddening.

Karla Alvarez, program officer for the WorldLink Program, traveled to Mindanao over the summer. She captured the thoughts and feelings of the youth of Mindanao on film and returned to the University of San Diego with hours of video footage. From this footage, film editor and social media intern Holly Cramer was able to create the documentary "Mindanao's Youth Working for Peace" which premiered at this year's WorldLink Youth Town Meeting.

"Mindanao's Youth Working for Peace" brings to light a conflict most people know nothing about. It features a number of young people, Christian and Muslim alike, and reveals both how the war is affecting the young people of Mindanao and how they are working to restore peace. One interview with a young girl, perhaps eleven years old, is especially sobering. She shares that the other children are afraid of her and call her a terrorist because she is a Muslim. "It really hurts my feelings," she says. Prejudice, bias and discrimination permeate the society. Still,

there is hope for the youth of the country.

Meriam Palma, a young woman who was featured in the film, has dedicated her life to bring peace to her country. She explained, "The real cause of the conflict is land, not religion." Palma is from Mindanao and is Christian. Growing up, she was

taught that Muslims could not be trusted and that they were terrorists. Like most other Christian children, she believed what she was told. Everything changed when Palma went to college in Manila, the capital of the Philippines. There were "Moros" in her classes. When she got to know them, she realized that they were just like her and her friends. She is now a communications officer for the Mindanao Peoples Caucus. Palma teaches children in Mindanao how to use cameras to document their own experiences.



Meriam Palma, staff, Mindanao Peoples Caucus

Joseph Ramirez, a graduate from UCSD with a degree in ethnic studies, spoke after the film. He asked the audience, "What is terrorism? Who has the power to define it?" Ramirez wanted to highlight the power of language, noting that not only does it influence the way we talk, but also eventually influences the way we think. He reminded the audience, "One person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter."

Trafficking at Home

An Interview with SD Police Department Detective James Hunter

The following is an edited version of an interview with Detective James "Chappie" Hunter and a WorldLink Intern for this youth publication. Chappie will appear as "C" and "WL" stands for WorldLink.

WL: Why is sex trafficking still around? It seems like something very backwards... why is it still happening?

C: It's not backwards because the whole aspect of sex in general only increased - especially when the internet came around. So when you're talking about anything from a basic sexual predator, from a pedophile to the guy around the corner who's wanting to just hook-up with a girl, the minute the internet came around everything completely exploded sexually, period. So the drive for that increased and then people found and made it an easy way for the customers (or the "johns" or the "tricks", as the slang term is for it) to start bringing sex to their life more privately. Nowadays, I could sit at my own house and I could jump on the internet and I could order a girl to come for a session as easy as I could order a pizza. And they'll come right to my house and no one will ever know what's going on. So because it is much easier and accessible, human trafficking in itself got a lot more popular.

WL: Okay so I was wondering, and this is a very general question, what are the factors that contribute to human trafficking? Is there a certain mentality in tow with each community or is poverty an influence?

C: Well, it depends. That's kind of a really broad question because that has an affect on all aspects. That has an effect on who the suspects are, that has an effect on who the victims are, and that also has an effect on who the clients are. So in regards to the suspects then yes, the economy affects their work because the suspects see that as a way of making money. The girls or the victims of the crime, a lot of the time come from the lower socioeconomic areas, they are the girls who don't have a positive family structure. Their parents are in prison, the family is divorced, maybe they don't have any jobs, they're being raised on welfare, they're in the social system, they're in foster care, they're in group homes, or they don't really have any parental guidance. And so, you know, that has an effect obviously on the victim. And then on the client side of things, since times are a little bit tough right now, they'll lower their rates to accommodate the economy so the guys can still purchase. When the guys want to come and have sex and they don't have a lot of money, then the pimps will shift their prices down in order to just get that money.

WL: I see. I think it's really interesting what you said about the girls, how they're coming from usually broken families and they don't have much guidance, so would you say that these girls are deciding to go into human trafficking because is it their own volition?

C: You know the drive for this thing right now is a lot of the music and a lot of the music videos. When you watch, and these young girls who are like 12, 13, and 14 years old, the teenage girls see the music and listen to the lyrics and they get into them. We as adults just listen to the beat - you guys take that stuff to heart sometimes, and these young girls will take that stuff to heart, and they see the videos about these guys who are rapping about prostitution, they're rapping about pimps, they're rapping about the whole gang life period. The girls that have nothing in life, that come from broken homes see this, and they believe that it is reality. They think that being a prostitute is glamorous to them. They believe that and then once they get into it and become numb to it, then it just becomes normal life to them. Then obviously the reality that they show on TV, that is not reality anymore, but they're absolutely immersed in it and they can't get out of it.

"The girls, the victims... come from the lower socioeconomic areas. They [of ten] don't have a positive family structure."

upset at their pimp for something and they decide "you know I just want away from him" and they'll come and we'll do a case on it or something like that, but that's very rare. Majority of the time, what happens is the girl winds up getting so physically and mentally beat that they have nowhere else to turn in life except to try and finally eventually get help for themselves. And so when we come across our victims they have been mentally and physically abused day in and day out for as long as they've been with that perpetrator. They are submerged in the life. They've been so manipulated and brainwashed by the pimp to make them believe that this is the life for them, so that they continue to work for it. And we have to be able to take the time to pull them out of that situation and get them to trust in me, and to trust in us as law enforcement, which is really difficult to do.

WL: So what is the reality? What is the state that these girls are in usually?

C: It depends from case to case, because some girls will get out because maybe they're pissed off, they're mad, they're

WL: So how exactly do you convince them?

C: Yeah, to try and convince them of what life - of what the reality of life really is. And unfortunately, the recidivism rate for the girls going back into the life, once you've pulled them out and rescued

"The drive for this [begins with] music... they're rapping about pimps, they're rapping about the whole gang life... these young girls will take that stuff to heart"

them from one pimp, is fairly high. I mean it happens very often. And that's just based upon the fact that that's all they know.

WL: Has there always been a really high rate of recidivism?

C: Well you know I'm going off of my personal experience, my personal cases, and also the cases of other investigators I've dealt with across the nation. So a lot of times when you rescue these girls and you pull them out of the life, they'll stick it out for a couple days but a lot of times they'll wind up just running away again and they'll go right back into the life again, whether that's with their original pimp or whether that's with a new pimp, because that's all they know. The other aspect of that is that there's just a minimal amount of social services to be able to care for these girls. And with those social services, none of those social services are secure facilities, so even if it's something that's good for them to be at, if they don't want to be there, they can just walk right out the door.

WL: So do you think the system that's in place right now, like the social services - obviously it's not sufficient you're saying, but what specifically should be changed about the people who are responsible for helping these girls?

C: Right now the major reason why it's so difficult to retain these girls is because there is a minimal amount of services. And that's nation wide, I'm not just talking about here. Obviously here in San Diego, you know, true, but nationwide there's minimal services for these girls. They're all under funded, none of them that I'm really aware of were funded by any type of county, city, or government support, they're all funded by private investments or churches. So until we as a community, we as a nation embrace

(Continued on Page 15)

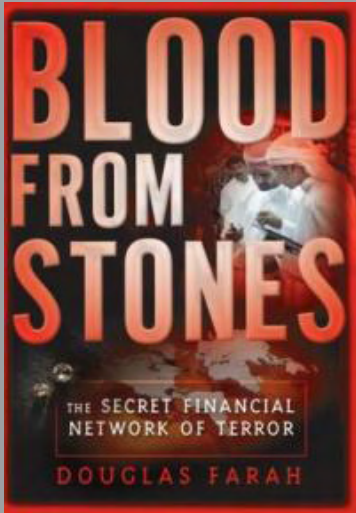
"Until we as a community, we as a nation, embrace these victims as true victims...we'll never be able to rescue these girls the way that we should." James Hunter, Detective, San Diego Police Department

Reviews by Alyanna Cardozo

Blood from Stones

By Douglas Farah

Former West African bureau Chief Douglas Farah tries to find an answer to the question that law enforcement agencies have been struggling with since 9/11: How do terrorist groups pay for their activities? In his book, *Blood from Stones*, Farah writes about the dangerous investigation that he undertook in order to find the answer to this cryptic mystery. Putting his life at risk, Farah spent time with killers and arms traffickers, who were strung out on drugs in West Africa, in order to trace the links between underground diamond trade and international terrorism. After he discovered a business alliance between Osama Bin Laden and Charles Taylor, the infamous Ex-President who was behind the bloody conflict in Liberia, Farah began his investigation on terrorist finances. This took him on a long journey to Dubai, Pakistan and the United States. In this chilling story of terror and greed, readers experience the atrocities that Farah saw firsthand. As General Barry McCaffrey said, "This will become required reading for the thousands of U.S. and allied law enforcement and intelligence officers prosecuting the global war on terror." With the same hard work and dedication that is evident in Farah's work, the world may find itself closer to ending the terrible and perilous network of terrorism.

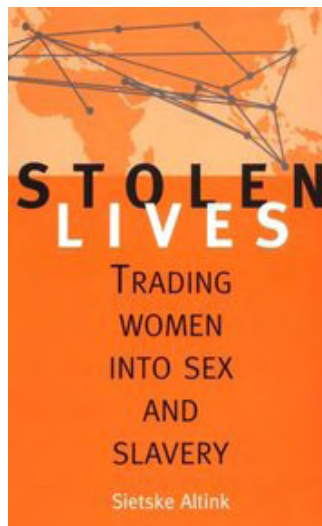


women, and during that process, we will also be taking part in the best strategy for fighting poverty.

Stolen Lives: Trading Women into Sex and Slavery

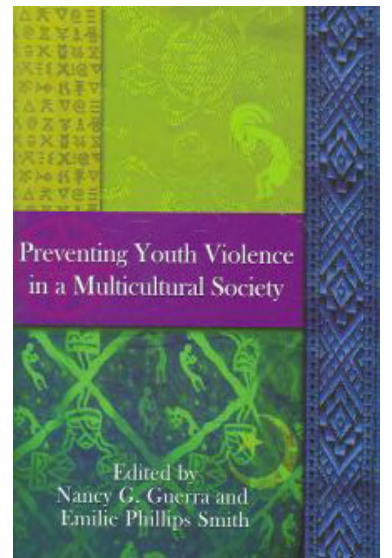
By Sietske Altink

Poverty can lead to desperation, and some women become prey for amoral opportunists during their desperate search for help. People claim to offer a chance for these women to improve their lifestyle, but their true intentions might lead to a far worse situation. This is the sad story of many women who have fallen victims to human trafficking. *Stolen Lives: Trading Women into Sex and Slavery*, written by Sietske Altink, talks about their exploitation in prostitution. It is a very serious and widely known issue, but does not get the attention it deserves. Through this book, readers will understand how the trafficking of women is carried out. It goes into further detail, explaining the process in which women are falsely hired in their country of origin, transported, left without money and then trapped into prostitution. Altink interviewed many women who had recently been recruited into the trade. She recorded their motives, their routes and how they managed to work around the law. She also wrote about the political structures of countries that support trafficking. Now the only question is: what can be done on an international level to do away with this horrendous business?



Preventing Youth Violence in a Multicultural Society

Edited by Nancy G. Guerra, EdD and Emilie Phillips Smith, PhD

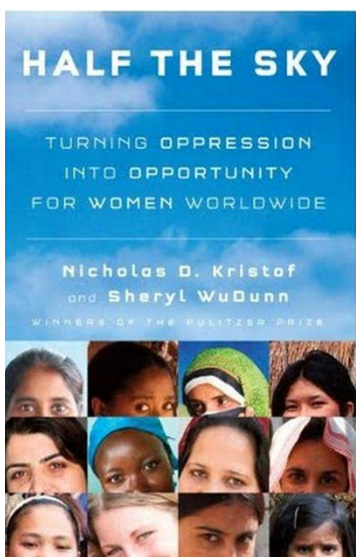


This book examines the steps that must be taken in order to eradicate worldwide violence. First, one must realize that to change the future, the best place to start is with the youth of society. The youth of today will be the adults of tomorrow; they are the future. In *Preventing Youth Violence in a Multicultural Society*, different authors focus on the connection between environmental conditions and youth violence. The chapters investigate how ethnicity and culture can affect the risk of violence. Readers will get a better understanding of the foundation of violence and prevention methods specific to different ethnic groups. It is not only important to understand the reasons behind such aggression, but also ways to stop it from happening. Towards the end of the book, authors from different universities talk about strategies for developing culturally competent youth violence programs. For societal violence to end, the youth who have overcome this negative lifestyle must teach what they know to future

Half the Sky

By Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

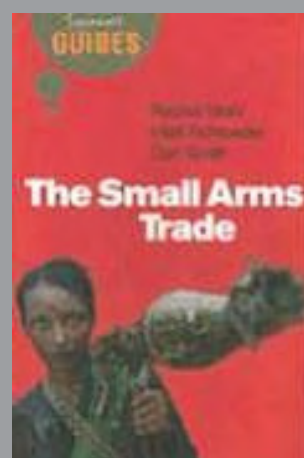
Women have come a long way in establishing their role in the workplace. They still, however, do not hold the position that they rightfully deserve for being human beings. In *Half the Sky*, Pulitzer Prize winners Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn help readers see that the key to economic progress lies in unleashing women's potential. In order for this to happen, women around the world must be emancipated and brought into the formal economy. The oppressed women and girls in the developing world can no longer be ignored! To prove to readers how very possible it is for change to come about, Kristof and WuDunn share the stories of women who have overcome the ghastly situations that they were thrown into. One Cambodian teenager was sold into sex slavery, but was later able to escape from her brothel. With the support of an aid group, she soon built a successful retail business which now supports her family. Another woman from Ethiopia suffered overwhelming injuries during childbirth. She grew from this unfortunate experience and became a surgeon. Through these stories, Kristof and WuDunn help us realize that many people have helped to give women their part in this world, and we can each do our part too. This inspirational book will help us help marginalized



The Small Arms Trade

By Rachel Stohl, Mathew Schroeder, Dan Smith

There are many issues that have the potential to disrupt international peace, but the misuse of small arms is one of the most pressing security threats of them all. Because of the ease with which these weapons can now be obtained, no one can be safe from the fatal threat that they pose. Rachel Stohl, a Senior Analyst at the Center for Defense Information in Washington DC, Matthew Schroeder, the Manager of the Arms Sales Monitoring Project at the Federation of American Scientists, and Dan Smith, a U.S. army retiree, came together and wrote a book about the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. In this book, *The Small Arms Trade: A Beginner's Guide*, they provide an intriguing overview of these cheap weapons, the threat they pose and different methods for reining them in. This Beginner's Guide holds vital information for anyone who wishes to fully understand one of the biggest threats of the 21st century. It is engaging and, as the Journal of Peace Research wrote, "almost exclusively empirical in its approach."



Announcing

WorldLink's 15th Annual Youth Town Meeting

Human Rights

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Wednesday
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"It doesn't matter if we are adults or teenagers, we can make something of this world."

Student delegate from the 14th Annual Youth Town Meeting

Human Trafficking

The Crime of the Future

by Tess Baker
Torrey Pines High School

The word “prostitute” is often linked to an idea of someone who is “dirty”, “cheap”, “slutty” or “low class”. Rarely is it associated with the word ‘victim.’ Society often fails to think of prostitutes as sex slaves, and even less frequently as people. In reality, most prostitutes are actually victims of human trafficking, the harboring of people for services through force. Jason King, sergeant with the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department and administrator for the San Diego Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force, calls it “the crime of the future.” The problem with this crime is that no one is completely safe from it. Individuals known as pimps are those who traffic and exploit victims. They will go anywhere to find their next unwilling employees: concerts, parties, movie theaters, Facebook and even schools. “The problem in sexual exploitation,” says King, “[is] the person can be sold for profit over and over again, compared to drugs which can only be sold once.”

Pimps generally collect their victims through force, threats and emotional manipulation, sometimes acting as a father figure or posing as their boyfriend. Through these roles, they give their victims a sense of belonging. Once trafficked, these victims are forced into a living hell. They work on the streets 24 hours a day, seven days a week while their pimps earn all of their profits. If the victims are arrested for propositioning themselves, they are forced to lie to the police so that pimps will not be exposed. “[The prostitutes] are controlled and manipulated thinking they’ll live the dream,” says King. “They’re all brainwashed.”

Society also tends to believe that prostitutes can easily escape the industry. This is a misconception. “When we think of prostitutes, we think of the movie Pretty Woman,” explains King. “[It’s the] farthest from the truth.” Once these girls find themselves in this position, they are threatened and told that if they leave, the pimps will find them and their families and brutally harm them. In addition, these girls are constantly manipulated into thinking they are worthless and that if they leave, they won’t find anything better because this life is the absolute best life they could possibly live. “This is a girl that’s been raped hundreds of times,” says King, “and has no self esteem.” The girls have been deprived of thinking they have any worth or value. For this reason, many victims are unwilling to leave or betray the pimps and, if they do escape from the world of prostitution, they often return because they have been made to believe that there is no other option. As a consequence, they often never get any other job and in some cases may die from being continually raped or beaten.

The crime of human trafficking is predicted to only grow as the years pass due to society’s outlook. King states that, “[sex trafficking] is such an issue because society glamorizes it.” In *Pretty Woman*, a prostitute picks up a guy who pays her an enormous amount of money for a weekend. In addition, he buys her high-end designer clothes on Rodeo Drive, whisks her off to San Francisco via private jet and ultimately falls in love with her. Although this film is entertaining, it inaccurately portrays the life of a prostitute. First off, “they don’t get the money, their pimps do,” says Sergeant King. Second, “there are very few independent workers out there,” continues King, “they are controlled and manipulated.” And third, “they are victims,” says King. “They aren’t doing this because they want to.” King described one girl that they tried to rescue, but refused to comply because of the fear that her pimp may come after her and her family. He explained that they tried multiple times to get her off the streets.

This crime will not stop until the societies in which it occurs change their views. “We need to change our outlook because [prostitutes] are victims,” says King. A policy that prosecutes pimps rather than the girls they traffic, a proactive approach to preventing trafficking and the societal acceptance that will facilitate reintegration into normal life are all key components to ending human trafficking, and all stem from understanding that the prostitute is almost always an unwilling victim. Until all members of society realize this fact, this crime will only continue and most likely worsen.

Human Trafficking Global Trends, Local Solutions

Mitch Baker
Torrey Pines High School

William Golding once said that the flaw in human society can be traced back to fault in human nature. The Director of Emergency Operations for Catholic Relief Services, which deals with helping impoverished countries to prepare for disaster, Mr. William Canny, explained this principle in his presentation at the WorldLink Youth Town Meeting. His current job involves collaborating with a network of technical advisors based in Baltimore and overseas and supervising a disaster response team that helps communities prepare for potential disasters. Prior to this current job, Mr. Canny was Catholic Relief Service’s country representative for Haiti where he coordinated various programs that assist impoverished countries and church partner relationships there. From 1998 to 2004, he was Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission, which coordinates with other countries to ensure safe migration of their citizens, with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Mr. Canny has been deeply involved in matters concerning human rights since he was a Peace Corps volunteer. Since then, he has established himself in organizations that fight for human rights, especially those that concerned with human trafficking.

In his presentation, Mr. Canny explained the mechanisms of human trafficking. He explained that poor, isolated communities are largely targeted by traffickers. Vulnerability to both communities and individuals is due to one of three issues: developmental, social, and economic stagnations. The largest developmental issue is forced migration due to lack of economic opportunity. Natural disasters, violence, and the devastatingly low social status of women and children around the globe render communities susceptible to global human traffickers. Canny stated, “Young women or girls in economically deprived populations are most affected by human trafficking.” Women especially are viewed as a commodity rather than actual human beings. Canny, aware that this stereotype created a psychological consent to traffic, said, “don’t let yourself be subject to the prejudices of your culture...reject generic stereotypes.” Also orphans and kids that live in the street are easily taken, and rarely returned. Other issues occur during rapid economic declines. Due to budget cuts, governments are forced to eliminate social safety nets and in turn, citizens of a community are forced to migrate in order to support their families unprotected and vulnerable to



William Canny, director of emergency operations, Catholic Relief Services

human traffickers. Although many trafficking victims are forced into prostitution, others are subjected to forced labor such as domestic laborers or beggars.

Human trafficking is the most profitable form of organized crime to date. Mr. Canny said, “Human trafficking is a blatant disrespect for human beings. Traffickers treat humans as commodities, not humans.” William Canny is largely aware of the magnitude of the industry. He recognizes that like all business, there are the consumers and suppliers. “You cannot exempt to attack one side of human trafficking.” Although he recognizes that efforts are being made to both reduce and prevent human trafficking, he strongly believes that not enough is being done. Mr. Canny himself is involved in organizations that rescue victims of trafficking and strive to educate others about the dangers of trafficking. He is involved in organizations that promote safe migration and educate governments on the signs of a victim of human trafficking. He is also involved in a safe house in which escaped victims can take refuge and seek both medical and psychological treatment. Mr. Canny explained that through research, heightening awareness, the availability of alternatives, and through the reconstruction of community livelihood, the superpower of human trafficking may fall. He hopes that the youth may at least, be aware and educated about it as the first step in a long line to combat one of our most detrimental threats to human security.

Working Working Abroad? Working Working Abroad? Working Abroad?

FOR SALE

The Dangers Of Human Trafficking.

Working Abroad?

The Product of Human Trafficking

DESIGNED BY MITCH BAKER, TORREY PINES HIGH SCHOOL

“Human trafficking has become big business—generating billions of dollars each year through the entrapment and exploitation of millions. Almost every country in the world is affected, either as a source or destination for victims.” *Eric Holder, Attorney General of the United States*

Fighting Crime with Compassion

By Marissa Wong
High Tech High International

In the first plenary of the morning, youth of all classes, ages, ethnicities, and perspectives were hit with the question, "What will your legacy be?" These words were spoken by Jonathon White, a Drug Enforcement Administration agent focusing specifically on drug trafficking around the U.S.-Mexican border. White encouraged students to realize their circle of influence and to use their power in it for the better. "Peace and compassion flow through relationships," he continued, emphasizing that we are all capable of cultivating compassion through our interactions with our family, friends, community, and the world.

While I was truly inspired by his statement, I didn't understand how compassion could possibly make a dent in the war against drugs, human and weapons trafficking, and gangs. Yet throughout the day, I realized just how wrong my preconceived notions were. Youth are often brought up to believe that to fight an evil, we must be equally as evil. We are surrounded by images of war, armed violence, and recurring destruction. The Youth Town Meeting showed its attendants that what the world really needs is compassion. Compassion has the power and potential to be a solution to the crimes that take place along the U.S.-Mexican border everyday. While an AK-47 can immediately eliminate a "problem" in a person's life, compassion is what picks up the pieces that remain after a round has been fired and sews together the beginnings of new life.

In the war against gangs, compassion is one of the most effective combatants. Edna Trigo-Valdez, Criminal Intelligence Analyst for San Diego County, identified a gang's offer of family and respect as one of the main reasons adolescents are drawn to criminal lifestyles. To stop the flow of young children into gangs, the youth of today and tomorrow must be shown that there are other means to a sense of belonging and acceptance. Otherwise, the world will continue to foster a steady stream of youth susceptible to gangs, further empowering these groups to terrorize communities.

Scott Silverman, founder of the organization Second Chance, has experienced the destruction caused by gangs

from an entirely different perspective. In the past fifteen years, the Second Chance program has secured employment for over 24,000 persons in the cycle of poverty, many of which are former gang members. A widely acclaimed philanthropist, Silverman, attributes his success to personally believing in each individual's ability to rebuild his or her life. "If we didn't have compassion for the people we serve, we couldn't do this job," Silverman stated. "We don't always like the people we serve. But we know they are people who have a heart." Without such an understanding for all people, even for those with the most heinous pasts, Second Chance could not transform lives of suffering into lives with purpose.

In Lilia Velasquez's briefing, "Is There Really Justice for Victims of Human Trafficking?" students learned of the difficulties of not only finding and rescuing victims, but also keeping them out of the trafficking ring. "Fifty percent of rescue victims in India will go back [to their traffickers]," explained Velasquez, "because that is the only place they will be accepted." Even those who are lucky enough to escape cannot find justice upon their return home. These victims are rejected by their own communities and families. They are placed in a world where their pain is not only misunderstood, but also a source of shame. They are viewed to be just as worthless in society as they were in the trafficking ring. For victims of trafficking to truly recreate their lives, a shift in millions of mindsets around the world must occur. We must set into the hearts of communities genuine compassion.

Meriam Palma can also relate to the global tragedy of unfounded judgments. A documentarian who focuses on the war-torn communities of Mindanao, Palma's work exposes deeply rooted prejudices between Christians and Muslims and slowly builds bridges of understanding. A participant from the Instituto México Americano Noroeste identified with Palma's story, stating, "With compassion, we

see [the humanity in others]. We understand what makes them suffer... We need to change the picture we have of people and put ourselves in their shoes."

Other speakers included Dee Aker, deputy director of the Institute for Peace and Justice (IPJ), and Chris Groth, interim program officer at the IPJ. They experienced first-hand how invoking compassion could eliminate the production of narcotics. They worked directly with an organization founded by Kanchan Jha called Sano Paila (A Little Step). Sano Paila's body of Nepali youth leaders began a campaign to encourage farmers to have compassion for the youth who will use drugs as a result of their farming practices. "The opium disappeared," shared Groth, "They made the [farmers] realize the crops eventually come back to Nepal and hurt their own community." Aker agreed, comparing the compassion cultivated in Nepal to the aims of WorldLink. "The better you understand someone else's reality, the easier it is to be compassionate... That's what this day is all about," she said. The success of Sano Paila's efforts further supports Groth's statement, "The seeds are there, we just need to open the lines and tap into compassion."



We have a legacy to leave. What will your next move be?

Closing Plenary

by Gaia Groston
Francis Parker School

This year was the 14th annual WorldLink Youth Town Meeting hosted by the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego. After attending the briefing sessions in the IPJ, an emotional closing was given by two exceptional speakers, Lilia "La Flama" Velasquez and Antonio Mazzitelli. Lilia "La Flama" Velasquez is an attorney in private practice and Antonio Mazzitelli is the regional representative for the México, Central America and Caribbean region for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Each speaker focused on their expertise concerning the threats to human security and their experiences working for justice in other countries. Both were very vocal about the idea that youth are the answer to helping those in need. In addition, they both strongly encouraged the attendees to find a way to contribute to the community, whether it is by volunteering in shelters or continuing to educate their peers at schools.

Lilia "La Flama" Velasquez has spent 30 years defending women and children victims of domestic violence, rape, crime, and trafficking. At the Youth Town Meeting, her focus was centered on the question: "Is there really justice for victims of human trafficking?" She made it very clear to the students that the only way to bring justice to all is to "identify the criminal, prosecute the criminal and convict the criminal." Velasquez also said, "You can never reverse or undo the harm to the victims. It will be permanent." Velasquez noted that by finding what is morally and legally right, you can vindicate the victim and, in the end, see how truly resilient they are.

Velasquez's focus during her closing speech was on the problems in Cambodia. She told her listeners about the time that she took her daughter to Cambodia to show her how much corruption resides there. Velasquez informed the students about how the

country struggles with human trafficking and how the victims who are found cannot be permanently integrated back into society because many suffer from extreme trauma. She gave an example of a teenager from Cambodia. She and another girl about the same age had been rescued from Cambodia and were on their way to speak about their ordeal at the University of North East Florida. On October 20, 2010, the survivor said, "I lost my voice, I lost my choice, I lost myself." Velasquez wanted us to know that we, as a country with many privileges and resources, and as mature youth, have the power to do something. This young girl is considered a success story because of her determination to continue on her journey of healing.

The main problem with human trafficking, no matter where it takes place, is the fact that the victims struggle to cooperate with those trying to convict their abuser. Some fear the consequences of exposing their trafficker while others fear the person who initially trafficked them while other victims don't cooperate because they are scared to come forward due to their status as illegal immigrants. There are an estimated 20,000 victims brought to the US per year that have been trafficked or sold into labor.

In 2000, the Trafficking Victims Act was passed. This gave those who came forward the chance to receive a green card. Velasquez also pointed out to the students that 5,000 visas are given out per year to victims of abuse, but only 273 victims of trafficking have received visas out of approximately 20,000 victims. So the question still remains, "Is there really justice for victims of human trafficking?"

The second speaker during the closing panel, Antonio Mazzitelli, has spent the last 21 years with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as the regional representative for the México, Central America and Caribbean region. Mazzitelli opened with a brief history of his life which enabled the students to connect with him. He talked about growing up in Italy and he explained that the "rule of law was made by organized crime". He mentioned that the crimes committed back home were violent and unpredictable due to the increasingly large numbers of mafia-related crime. When something was wrong or went missing, nobody went

to the authorities. Instead, the mafia was sought out to deal with the perpetrator. As a result, his father moved Mazzitelli and his siblings north to study.

Mazzitelli explained that "organized crime is not how something is done, but what is done". He used stories from his time in Colombia, West Africa, and México as examples of what he meant by this comment. In Colombia, where he lived during his time in the UNODC, 80 percent of the population knows someone who has either been killed or robbed. Mazzitelli's own wife was robbed and her father was killed by a criminal. The second example took place in West Africa, where Mazzitelli spoke about his reaction to finding out that there was no prison. He was told by judges that they would rather let the violent criminals be free because of the fear that they instilled in the people all around the region. The third example he spoke about was his current job in México with the UNODC. He spoke about the severity of corruption and said that many people choose to stay indoors during the night so as to not risk a run in with criminals. In México, 50,000 people have lost their lives in situations related to organized crime and 25,000 people between the ages of 18 and 25 have died due to government corruption. Relating everything back to his own life story, Mazzitelli said that the crime rates matter to him because, in his small hometown of only 10,000 people, 350 people were mercilessly killed in merely one year.

Mazzitelli closed by making it clear to all the students that they should not give up on their dreams. He said that following the rules is one of the ways to make sure that you do not allow others to spoil your plans. He said, "There is no winning unless we respect the rules." This comment rings true in many situations, including in his examples of the countries that are faced with an immense amount of corruption due to governments run through fear. Corruption could have been avoided if the people not only respected the rules but worked within them as well. Clearly, the threat to human security not only involves crime but also certain levels of organized chaos.

Throughout all the briefing sessions and opening and closing panels, it was clear that this year's Youth Town Meeting was an immense success. Many teens left talking about all of the inspirational and eye opening information given to them by the professional and challenging speakers. They said that they did not want to leave and they were disappointed that they could not stay longer. But don't worry! Next year there will be another intriguing topic to learn about during one of the most memorable events the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice holds all year.



Senior Marissa Wong, designed this year's WorldLink cover

Trafficking in San Diego: An Interview (cont.)

p.15

(Continued from page 11)

these victims as true victims and become ready to put the money aside to pay for these social services to— until that happens, we'll never be able to rescue these girls the way that we should, the way that we could properly rescue them.

WL: For all this legislation, usually it's just lengthened time in jail, but this one issue came up in our discussions here at USD: is there ever justice for these victims? I know it's a little reassuring to know that the "john" is in jail, but do you think there is ever justice for these victims?

C: The only justice that you can say that you're going to get for these victims is the sentencing of their pimps. That's why there's so much push for legislation right now to increase those sentences on the state side, because the sentences are so minimal right now. The one thing that's good for Law Enforcement and victims is that in the state of California, pimping is mandatory state pris-

"That's why there's so much push for legislation... the sentences are so minimal right now."

on. There are very few felony crimes that are mandatory prison. So even though the sentences aren't that big, for pimping of an adult it's 3-6 years prison time. For pimping of a minor it's 3-8 years prison time. And so the thing is that a lot of times what happens if you're on good behavior while you've been sentenced, you could basically do 50% of that time. So if I put a pimp in prison and he was sentenced to do 8 years, he could end up doing only 4 years. And what happens is that it takes these victims multiple years to recover from these crimes. So a lot of times what happens is while she's trying to recover or she's just beginning to turn her life around, the pimp that ruined her into life is walking out of prison already. The whole aspect of finding justice for these girls is to — in my opinion — make the punishment match the crime. And right now for state law, I just don't personally believe that the punishment matches the crime.

WL: What motivates you personally to investigate these crimes?

C: I used to be just like everybody else in this nation, when I saw the girl that was working that's all I saw, I didn't realize what it was. I just thought the girl was out here trying to make money and

she's generating radio calls for me and I just wanted her off the street and away from me. I didn't look at the whole story. Well then when I walked through the door in VICE, I was educated on this whole aspect of pimping and then I got my first case. It was a 16 year old girl who was not from a broken from, she was a straight "A" student in school, she had a part time job, and she had an excellent family, but she was manipulated and brainwashed into this life. Once she was into it, the pimp mentally and physically destroyed this girl, and when

I was able to pull her out and help her, she trusted in me and believed in me and she accepted my help. She moved on and 3 years later I got a phone call from her saying "Hey Detective Hunter, thank you very much for everything you did for me, I've got a little boy now, I've got a job, I'm working, I've got my own place, and I'm just calling to say thank you" and that is what motivates me to do this job. And I'll be honest with you, I don't know any other detective that isn't going to give you the same answer. When you have the opportunity to actually rescue one of these poor girls, that's what does it for you.

"When I was able to pull her out and help her, she trusted in me and believed in me...she accepted my help."

Thank You, Donors!

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Photography Exhibit: "Violent Realities" by Jon Lowenstein

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

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

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

High School Internships

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

The WorldLink Program offers internship positions for qualified high school students. Selected youth will work on various projects, including the WorldLink Reader, a classroom tool that provides students and teachers with important background knowledge regarding YTM topics.

Internships are available in the Summer, Fall and Spring semesters.

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

"My goal was to spend my senior year in high school doing something meaningful and good for my future. I applied for the fall position believing that I would be able to accomplish everything I set out to do. Little did I know that this internship would affect me in more ways than one. Not only was I able to do something extremely meaningful, but I was able to further my education on global affairs, grow as a person, and learn so much from the other students my age on their thoughts about global injustices.

It was no longer just about me - it was about what I could do with others so we could all achieve our goals. Beyond learning about global issues, we worked together and completed projects we designed. This internship was even more than I could have dreamed of and it enabled me to prepare for the future ahead of me."

-Katie Athis, senior
2010-2011 Intern

Participating Schools

Academy of Our Lady of Peace
Bishop's School
Cathedral Catholic High School
Colegio Baja California de Rosarito
Crawford High School - IRC Program
Del Dios Middle School
Escondido High School
Francis Parker School
High Tech High International
Hoover High School
Instituto Mexico Americano Noroeste
John Muir High School
Second Chance
La Jolla Country Day School
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San Diego Early/Middle College
San Dieguito Academy
School for Creative and Performing
Arts
Sierra Vista/GRF
Torrey Pines High School
West Hills High School

Thank you teachers and students for all your hard work. We hope to see you next year!

14 Years of Including the Voices of Youth!



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