

JULY 2014

Winners of Many Languages, One World contest meet at United Nations

They were among thousands of contestants from some 128 countries who had participated in the international essay contest, Many Languages, One World. Each of them was asked to write an essay on the role of multilingualism in a globalized world – under 2,000 words – on global citizenship in one of the six UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish). But there was a catch: the language in which they were to write the essay could not be the mother tongue, nor could it be their primary language of instruction.

Ultimately, the sixty winners – ten from each language category – stood out not only because they had mastered a language other than their own, but because they were able to articulate what it means to be a global citizen in an inter-dependent world.

In appreciation of their efforts, the sixty winners were invited by ELS Educational Services Inc. for a series of activities in New York, culminating in an International Youth Forum at UN General Assembly Hall at UN Headquarters on 27 June 2014.

In welcoming the winners United Nations Under-Secretary-General Peter Laursky-Tieffenthal, praised the highly talented young students for their sense of purpose, foresightedness and



ingenuity in addressing complex global issues and articulating a vision for an inter-dependent world. “Reading your essays, learning about your project proposals for UN Academic Impact and speaking with some of you, it is clear there is no project more rewarding than investing in our youth,” he told the cheering winners.

Each of the winners attending the event spoke from the General Assembly Hall in their chosen language category, presenting concrete proposals on three UNAI principles – educational opportunities for all, global citizenship and inter-cultural dialogue.

The forum was also addressed by Mark Harris, CEO of ELS Educational Services Inc., Dr. Bob Scott, President of Adelphi University, USA, and Mrs. Susan Adams, whose late husband J Michael Adams, former President of Fairleigh Dickinson University, played a key role in defining the UNAI.

For more: <http://bit.ly/1q9Gr5B>



Secretary-General receives IAUP's Leadership and Service Award

At the XVII Triennial Conference of the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP), held in Yokohama, Japan from 11 – 14 June 2014, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was honoured with the first J. Michael Adams Leadership and Service Award. The award was instituted by IAUP in the memory of Mr. Adams, a former President of the Association, who passed away in 2012.

On behalf of the Secretary-General, the award was received by Mr. Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information (above).

The award recognizes the Secretary-General's role in pursuing peace throughout the world "through his dedicated efforts and negotiations with world leaders." It also recognizes his support for responsible development for all countries of the world in a devoted manner, and his efforts in promoting "the individual rights and aspirations of citizens of all Member States of the United Nations, and particularly those in disadvantaged regions and circumstances." The citation further notes the Secretary-General's recognition of the role of university presidents and chancellors "by launching the United Nations Academic Impact initiative around the world."

Earlier, in a video message to the conference, the Secretary-General thanked IAUP for its continued support to the United Nations. Referring to the award, the Secretary-General said he was deeply

honoured to accept it on behalf of the United Nations. He recalled that Dr. Adams was a global force for progress, a tremendous advocate of the United Nations – and "he was my personal friend."

The conference, which focused on "Creating the future of higher education," was enhanced by the participation, for the first time in IAUP, of university students who have formed ASPIRE groups on their campuses. ASPIRE---Action by Students to Promote Innovation and Reform through Education---is the student offshoot of UNAI.

IAUP announces three-year plan

At its Yokohama triennial conference, IAUP announced a three-year work plan that includes promoting UNAI. Introducing the plan, Toyoshi Satow, President of J. F. Oberlin University, Japan, and newly elected President of IAUP, noted that IAUP intends to place emphasis on the following three areas:

First, the global strengthening of higher education worldwide by promoting mobility and diversification through projects such as "The United Nations Academic Impact," "ASPIRE/IAUP," and the "Qatar Foundation/IAUP/IIE WISE Education Leadership Programme;"

Second, provision of help to students and educators in regions where education and research are poorly developed owing to social disorder; and

Third, further development of education through new initiatives at the worldwide level and regional level promoting partnerships with international and regional network of universities, as well as international organizations. For more: <http://bit.ly/1iReSYK>

IAUP, founded in 1964, is an association of university chief executives from around the world. Its objective is strengthening the international mission and quality of education of its member institutions in an increasingly interdependent world, and to propose global awareness and competence as well as peace and international understanding through education. For more: <http://iaup.org/home>



Entrepreneurs for Social Change

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations is organizing a seven-day training on social entrepreneurship in collaboration with Fondazione CRT and the Italian Government. The training will bring together 20 young people from the Euro-Mediterranean region to enhance the skills needed to boost a business idea with a social mission, and be a powerful motor of economic development and social inclusion.

In addition to this training, the selected 20 young adults will receive feedback from peers, mentoring from experienced social entrepreneurs and will be matched with potential investors during the 9 months following the training. The event will be organized at Fondazione CRT premises in Torino (Italy) from 16 to 22 October 2014.

If you are a young adult between the age of 18 and 35 years old and you come from the Euro-Med region, if you either already have a social enterprise and need to learn how to leverage it or you have already taken steps to start a social enterprise and want to learn how to move its business, this is an outstanding opportunity for you. There is no participation fee, and all participants will be provided with round-trip international tickets to Torino as well as accommodations, meals and visa support.

If you want to know more about the programme, take a look at AoC's information material on the meaning of social entrepreneurship (<http://unaocyouth.org/e4sc/key-words/>), the profiles of the participants to the 2013 edition and highlights from the previous edition. Application submissions to the 2014 edition of Entrepreneurs for Social Change are open from 12 June to 14 July 2014.

For more: <http://unaocyouth.org/e4sc/>

Second UNAI Collegian Research Paper Contest and Global Conference, 28 August 2014

The Korean Association in support of the UNAI (Academic Impact Korea) in collaboration with the UNAI Secretariat, as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea, has announced its plan to hold the Second UNAI Collegian Research Paper Contest and Global Conference.

The theme of this year's conference is "Prospects for Post-MDG Framework and Global Engagement by Universities." The conference, consisting of a student research paper contest and the ensuing debate, is open to all undergraduate and graduate students of the UNAI member universities around the world.

To be held on Thursday, 28 August 2014 in Seoul, the conference will serve as a meaningful ground to young participants to cope with aforementioned issues while bringing creative ideas.

For further information, please contact: choids@handong.edu

Beijing Normal University hosts Second International Forum on Landscape Sustainability Science

The Center for Human-Environment System Sustainability (CHESS) of Beijing Normal University, a UNAI member, hosted on 29 and 30 May 2014, the Second International Forum on Landscape Sustainability Science. Eleven top scientists from the United States, the Netherlands, Canada and China delivered academic reports. Nearly 150 experts and scholars attended the forum.

Landscape sustainability refers to the continuous provision of ecosystem services with landscape characteristics and the ability to maintain and/or improve human wellbeing. Landscape sustainability science is based on sustainability science and landscape ecology. It focuses on landscape and regional scale and studies the relationships between landscape patterns, ecosystem services and human wellbeing using a spatial approach.



UNAI forum on MOOCs

MOOCs, which stands for Massive Open Online Course, aims at large-scale participation through free access via the internet. A number of web-based platforms supported by top universities and colleges currently offer MOOCs on a wide range of subjects. Experts say MOOCs can be key to promoting high quality education to people in places with internet access. However, as demand for MOOCs grow rapidly, experts also see reasons for concern.

In order to explore these two perspectives on MOOCs – one for and one against - the United Nations Academic Impact held on 19 June 2014 at UN Headquarters a discussion forum, in collaboration with the Rockefeller Institute of Government of the State University of New York and the Institute for International Education.

Speaking in favour of MOOCs, Anant Agarwal, CEO of edX, stressed that many countries are looking forward to launching national MOOCs platforms since decentralized and distributive model can be much more powerful in many developing countries, especially through open source platforms. Also, through licensing contents, many local institutions can translate the courses in their own language and offer them to their populations after paying licensing fee. Mr. Agarwal insisted that decentralization and non-profit, open source approach is forcing many developing countries to completely rethink their approach to education.

Philip G. Altbach, research professor and director of the Center for International Higher Education at

Boston College, defined MOOCs as neo-colonialism of the willing, since MOOCs curriculum and courses are mostly developed by those coming from Americans and western academic traditions, particularly in the area of social sciences and humanities. Pedagogical assumptions behind most MOOCs are largely western methodology. He emphasized that people should think what the central ideas are behind the courses and how they are being fundamentally adopted.

Barbara E. Kahn, professor of Marketing at Wharton, threw the question, who are taking MOOCs and why they are taking those courses. According to Ms. Kahn, many of those who take MOOCs do have graduate degree or doctoral degree. Also, a number of students are gaining a lot of help by studying MOOCs in terms of getting a job or starting their own businesses.

S. Sitaraman, senior vice president of the Ritnand Balved Educational Foundation, giving the example of India where many students are hungry for knowledge but do not have access to quality education, emphasized the role of MOOCs when it comes to allowing students to have opportunities to get the best and the latest knowledge. At the same time, he pointed out, there are three areas that require reform: registration, credibility, and language.

When asked by members of the audience about the technology behind MOOCs and its challenges for developing countries, panellists agreed that infrastructure is a serious problem but not insurmountable, if there is collective will to address the problem.

With regard to MOOCs in 15 years, Mr. Altbach said that MOOCs is a sea change in the way distance education and technology have merged. If current brand leaders can maintain the quality, MOOCs will be around for a long time. Both Mr. Agarwal and Ms. Kahn stressed that MOOCs are definitely helping to improve the quality of education. They asserted that MOOCs will be part of radical changes in future higher education. Mr. Sitaraman also agreed that within the foreseeable future, MOOCs will become a reality in the world of education.

The event was webcast, an archived version of which is available at <http://bit.ly/1iuGYhR>

Third Asian Diversity Forum at KazNU, 21 – 22 May 2014

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, the UNAI global hub on sustainability, in partnership with Kazakhstan Society of Engineering Education, held the III Asian Universities Forum, “Eurasian Diversity and Role of Universities for Sustainable Development,” within the framework of VII Astana Economic Forum on 21-22 May 2014 in Astana and Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The main idea of the Forum was to bring together Eurasian key players not only from academic communities but also from international organizations concerned about issues of knowledge-based economy to look into insights of the current state of green economy and sustainable development.

The Forum served for the participants as a unique platform for intelligent dialogue on the new developments regarding the following issues:

- Consolidation of scientific and educational potential of higher education institutions in addressing main challenges of the present period;
- Internationalization in the condition of Eurasian diversity to increase awareness and competitiveness of Asian universities in the world;
- The role of universities in creating conditions for sustainable development and energetic security;
- Establishment of joint projects on sustainable development and modernization of higher education universities of Eurasia.

KazNU, as the UNAI hub on sustainability, has developed a Model Plan for Sustainable Development of Universities. The Model Plan focuses on combining collaborative efforts and mobilizing intellectual potential of universities in the world to implement the Millennium Development Goals and plans for sustainable development at the university, city and country levels.

Participants at the III Asian Universities Forum have agreed to unite their efforts with the purpose of creating effective international academic and scientific programmes in the field of sustainable development.



“One student, one laptop” programme at Daffodil University, Bangladesh

To prepare the students for the 21st century and adapt them to the latest ICT friendly education, Daffodil International University, a UNAI member in Dhaka, had launched in 2010 its “One Student: One Laptop” programme. The initiative is designed to provide every student admitted into Daffodil International University with a free laptop. In April 2014, the university concluded the ninth phase of the programme by distributing a total of 600 laptops (pictured above).

KNUST, Ghana Hosts 2nd Geoscience Conference

Last month, the Geophysical Society of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) hosted in Kumasi the Second African Geoscience Students Conference (AGSC) at the College of Science auditorium. The theme of the conference was “Exploring the Depth and Breadth of the Geosciences.”

The conference was a student-organised event of the Society of Exploration Geoscientists (SEG) in partnership with the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) and American Association of Petroleum Geologist (AAPG). Students, professionals and other resource persons were brought together to learn and share novel and best practices in the discipline of Geoscience and also to network to foster bonds across the African continent.

For more: <http://bit.ly/1JRZGW>

Study on metabolic health at the University of Tasmania

Researchers in the University of Tasmania's Division of Pharmacy are undertaking a study to investigate whether fucoidan, a commercially available seaweed extract, has an effect on blood sugar and other markers of heart and metabolic health.

Researcher Cameron Wright said the study would assess whether fucoidan affects blood glucose control, specifically insulin sensitivity, and how the body tolerates a dose of sugar (assessed through an oral glucose tolerance test).

At the start of the three-month trial, participants will be randomly allocated to receive either one seaweed capsule or a placebo capsule twice daily. They will then take this capsule for the duration of the study.

Mr. Wright said participants will visit the university for an initial screening visit and on two additional occasions over the three month period (at the beginning and again at the end of the trial).

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NYU film-makers win student Oscar

Two filmmakers from New York University, a UNAI member, are among the winners in this year's Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' 41st Annual student Academy Awards competition. The 2014 winners—15 students in all representing 11 colleges and universities—were announced June 7 at a ceremony at the DGA Theater in Hollywood, California.

Yulin Liu, who is pursuing an MFA in film at the Kanbar Institute of Film & Television at the NYU Tisch School of the Arts, received the silver medal in the narrative category for her short film Door

God. Zijian Mu, a masters student in News and Documentary at the Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute, was awarded the bronze medal in the documentary category for One Child.

New study by Roskilde University

A new study by Bo Poulsen, Associate Professor at Roskilde University, Denmark, together with Dr. Jelle van Lottum of the University of Cambridge, shows that the Scandinavians were better at reading, writing and arithmetic than French, German, Spanish, Dutch and Italian seamen in the 18th century. The study also confirms that being bright does pay off. The study also shows that Scandinavian seamen came out on top in the 18th century when it came to using their brains.

The study is based on the researchers' analysis of 966 maritime enquiry documents kept in the National Archives in London. During the 18th century, England was at war with practically all other nations in Europe. As a result, thousands of foreign vessels were seized and the crews brought before a military tribunal and subjected to a maritime enquiry which was concluded with a written statement. Nearly 20,000 of these statements have been preserved, and these are the documents that have been systematically analysed by the researchers and now serve as documentation of the level of proficiency among seamen. Roskilde University is a member of UNAI. For more: <http://bit.ly/1nxjru3>

CFR@UNAI to discuss fracking, 16 July 2014

Fracking, or hydraulic fracturing, is the process of extracting natural gas from shale rock layers deep within the earth. For many energy-hungry countries, fracking offers great opportunity. But scientists have warned that this could lead to serious environmental degradation. To discuss pros and cons of fracking, UNAI in partnership with the Council on Foreign Relations will host a lunch-time discussion forum on 16 July 2014 at UN Headquarters. Well-known energy expert Michael Levy will lead the conversation. For more, contact UNAI.

AUC to develop Free Online Courses in Arabic

Representatives of the American University in Cairo, a UNAI member, recently finalized an agreement with Edraak, a Queen Rania Foundation initiative, to include AUC in a select group of regional universities that will develop some of the first Arabic courses for the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) platform. MOOCs are free, interactive, web-based classes spanning a wide range of topics and featuring prominent professors from top universities worldwide.

According to the partnership agreement, Edraak will provide the technological and instructional resources to upload and maintain the courses online, while AUC will provide single course releases for up to two faculty members per year for course development, as well as graduate assistants to be online teaching assistants. In addition to seeking original courses from AUC, Edraak will work to translate some of the most popular courses from the widely used MOOC platform into Arabic.

Istanbul Human Security Conference, 23 – 24 October 2014

The Fourth Istanbul Human Security Conference, "Twenty Years On: Human Security at a Crossroads", will take place on 23-24 October 2014 in Istanbul. As a close collaboration between the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies (CPRS) at Coventry University, the Centre for Strategic Research and Analysis (CESRAN), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Turkey, the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNOCHA) and Kadir Has University in Istanbul, the conference will be hosted by Kadir Has in Istanbul.

The panel sessions will address four conference themes in innovative and interactive formats to engage both the academic and practitioner communities. For more: Facebook and Twitter @human_sec or follow the conversation at #IHCS2014.

CESRAN is a member of UNAI.



Nelson Mandela Day, 18 July

Like in previous years, the United Nations Academic Impact is urging everyone to join a call by the Nelson Mandela

Foundation to devote on 18 July – the day Nelson Mandela was born – sixty-seven minutes of time to helping others, as a way to mark the Nelson Mandela International Day.

In November 2009, the UN General Assembly declared 18 July "Nelson Mandela International Day" in recognition of the former South African President's contribution to the culture of peace and freedom.

UNAI believes that by devoting 67 minutes of their time – one minute for every year of Mr. Mandela's public service – people can make a small gesture of solidarity with humanity and a step towards a global movement for good.

What can you do in 67 minutes? Here are some ideas from the Nelson Mandela Foundation:

- Get to know someone from a different cultural background.
- Read to someone who can't.
- Visit a local home for the blind and open up a new world for someone else.
- Help out at the local animal shelter.
- Help someone get a job. Put together and print a CV for them, or help them with their interview skills.
- Many terminally ill people have no one to speak to. Take a little time to have a chat and bring some sunshine into their lives.
- Donate a wheelchair or guide dog, to someone in need.
- Buy a few blankets, or grab the ones you no longer need from home and give them to someone in need.

To see all 67 suggestions for action, visit <http://www.mandeladay.com/static/join>

New e-publications from the UN System

New partnerships for development (UNDP):

UNDP's 2013-2014 Annual Report spotlights results



from actions across core dimensions of development, from jobs and food security, to well-run elections, to crisis recovery, to the management of finite natural resources.

To download: <http://bit.ly/1yJMSAI>

The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture

2014 (FAO): This new edition of The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) highlights the significant role that fisheries and aquaculture plays in eliminating hunger, promoting health and reducing poverty. To download:

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3720e.pdf>

Climate-smart development: adding up the benefits of actions that help build prosperity, end poverty and combat climate change (World Bank):

This report describes efforts by the Climate Works Foundation and the World Bank to quantify the multiple economic, social, and environmental benefits associated with policies and projects to reduce emissions in select sectors and regions. To download: <http://bit.ly/1yJKPwa>



Motherhood in Childhood

(UNFPA): Every day in developing countries, 20,000 girls below age 18 give birth. Nine in 10 of these births occur within marriage or a union. This report explores the

consequences on the health, education, employment and rights of an untold millions of girls. To download: <http://bit.ly/1cmIBEn>

New educational products from



United Nations Television (UNTV) produces award-winning programmes covering the wide range of issues addressed by the United Nations system of organizations for broadcast and online viewing.

21st Century monthly news magazine

Thailand: Fighting Domestic Violence (11'54") :

Domestic violence is a tragic feature of millions of women's lives. But in Thailand, new efforts are underway to better protect women from violence at the hands of their partners. We follow the story of one young trainee police-officer, who's dedicated to bringing change.

Ghana: Fake Medicines (6'26"): Modern medicine has transformed lives around the world – protecting children and adults from diseases that would have killed in the past. But medicines are also big business – and at risk from corrupt traders – sometimes with dire consequences.

India: Fishermen (3'42"): Freedom from a modern form of slavery – that was the aim of a small group of fishermen in a village on India's southern coast. Could they escape the grasp of moneylenders who had controlled them for generations?

These and other 21st Century programmes can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1io2DT0>

This and other issues of the UNAI Newsletter are available at
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