

Connections

Volume 33 Number 1 Summer 2012



Global leaders from St James School in Calgary

The journal of the Global,
Environmental & Outdoor
Education Council



To promote involvement in
quality environmental and
outdoor education

What GEOEC Does

The Global, Environmental & Outdoor Education Council (GEOEC) is an interdisciplinary specialist council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. Our mission is to provide resources and venues for dialogue and networking, as well as to promote quality professional development for Alberta teachers in the area of global, environmental and outdoor education. Members receive current news items, teaching ideas, information about our workshop series, and food for thought through our quarterly journal *Connections*. We are also active on Facebook (www.facebook.com/geoecalberta) and Twitter (@GEOEC), with up-to-date information on PD opportunities and initiatives in Alberta.

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Message from the Editor

Hi, folks!

Welcome to *Connections*, which focuses on the theme “Connecting the silos of environmental sustainability and social justice.” This theme makes explicit what has become clear to many: environmental sustainability is not possible unless it takes into account the well-being of a community in its totality, including social justice issues. How we can connect sustainability and justice? To begin with, our president, Jessica Scalzo, defines *global education* as a practice of introducing social justice issues into the classroom. Marianne Rogers explores just how to do this—she involves her students, from High Park School in Stony Plain, in PeaceJam initiatives that address social and environmental issues. Julia Dalman writes about how to create students as engaged citizens who connect intentionally with teachers, mentors and community members, and create ongoing and inspiring projects. From the practical realm, we move to the historical foundations of our theme. For example, scrutinizing the histories of the places we visit during our outdoor adventures can reveal stories that have been suppressed or eliminated altogether. It is from these stories that the nexus of social justice and environmental sustainability becomes clear. Jesse Sorenson is a third-year preservice teacher at the University of Alberta. In his essay, he uses the concept of Leave No Trace (LNT), a wilderness travel ethic, to illustrate how the production and conceptualization of what constitutes the “ideal wilderness” is an exclusionary practice. For example, in the past, land has been expropriated from the First Nations to create national parks that are illusorily pristine and empty. The connection between sustainability and unequal access to resources like land and water is made evident in the article submitted by Brianna Strumm, from the Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST). Please also see wonderful submissions from Change for Children, the Seminar on the United Nations and International Affairs (SUNIA) and the University of Alberta’s global education team leader, Earl Choldin. I hope this issue provides much food for thought and many ideas for action.



Take care.

Lara Fenton

Schedule for Submissions

Connections seeks articles on the following topic:

Theme: Success stories in outdoor environmental education

Deadline for submissions: October 15, 2012

Our next issue will focus on teachers who have successfully taken their students off school property, whether to the nearby river valley or the faraway mountains. We are looking for submissions from teachers at small schools, large schools, urban schools and rural schools who would be willing to outline how they were able to get their kids outside.

How to Make a Submission

Sending submissions by e-mail is ideal, but you may also submit articles, artwork and photographs by regular mail (on thumb drive or hard copy). Please include a short biography and your mailing address. You must receive parental permission to print student work or photographs of children (see the form at the end of this issue). Send submissions to Lara Fenton, 58, 5615 105 Street, Edmonton, AB T6H 2N2, or lfenton@ualberta.ca.

GEOEC Business and News

President's Message

Greetings, GEOEC people—welcome to *Connections*, through which we will explore how, as educators, we can connect the silos of social and environmental justice. This issue will highlight the interconnectedness of the three strands of our council— global, environmental and outdoor education. This edition, which is the last from our marvellous editor, Lara Fenton, will highlight how we can weave together social and environmental justice in order to provide powerful learning opportunities for our students.

Social justice and environmental justice movements do not work at cross-purposes. They are both deeply concerned with questions of access, accountability and sustainability for the benefit of all living things; work in both these areas focuses on grassroots efforts to strengthen people's ability to make decisions for their own well-being. Both social and environmental justice seek to question the role of corporations in our daily lives while pursuing the ideals of human rights and human dignity.

Social and environmental justice are inextricably linked, just as the fate of humanity is tied to the fate of the environment. Norman Borlaug, humanitarian and father of the Green Revolution, said in his acceptance of the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize that “almost certainly, the first essential component of social justice is adequate food for all mankind.” Global food security issues exemplify the embeddedness of these two prongs of justice and can be the perfect jumping-off point for discussion of social and environmental justice in our classrooms. We can also explore the oil and gas industry through these complementary lenses. Global water issues and global climate change can similarly be investigated. At any place where environmental issues intersect the well-being of humankind, we see opportunities to teach and learn about social and environmental justice.

It is our hope that this issue of *Connections* will serve as a guide, inspiration or reassurance for the work that you do in your own classrooms.

Enjoy!

Jessica Scalzo

A Fond Farewell

The strength of any organization is determined by its members, and the Global, Environmental and Outdoor Education Council has been lucky to be sustained by a core of outstanding executive members and members at large. Our executive is made up of dedicated and enthusiastic people who are committed to providing excellent opportunities for global, environmental and outdoor education and who willingly share their passions and expertise to advance the ideals of these three strands of educational philosophy and practice.

As with any volunteer organization, there comes a time when people must move on to other pursuits and enter new chapters in

their lives. This spring, the GEOEC executive bids a fond farewell to several of its long-serving members, who have served our council with an energy that inspires all who had the pleasure of working with them.

They are Erin Couillard, Lara Fenton, Chenoa Marcotte, Christina Pickles and Karen Whitehead-Kuntz.

On behalf of the membership and the executive, I would like to formally thank you for your service to our council. As you move forward with your personal and professional endeavours, know that this is not goodbye, and that you will always be welcomed back.

While we say farewell to some members, it is with excitement that we welcome three new executive members. Kathy Worobec joins the

council as our new environmental education community liaison, continuing to represent the Alberta Council for Environmental Education. Jessica Prodor joins the council as our new conference chair, and Breanne Oakie-Carriere joins as our new professional development lead. We are looking forward to working with all of these new members.

We are still looking for enthusiastic educators to join our ranks in the following executive positions:

- President-elect
- Publications editor

If you are interested, please contact Jessica Scalzo at scalzo@ualberta.ca.

Jessica Scalzo

Articles and Features

What Is Global Education?

Jessica Scalzo

Global education is a concept that has multiple meanings and manifestations. It is a concept that is widely contested and often misunderstood. Global education goes beyond subject matter and speaks to a certain spirit within education, which contributes to the murkiness of the subject. Global education is something that is widely written about and widely practised; however, it is very difficult to define in a way that is accepted by all parties.

The Maastricht Global Education Declaration (2002) states:

Global education is education that opens people's eyes and minds to the realities of the globalised world and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all.

and

Global education is understood to encompass development education, human rights education, education for sustainability, education for peace and conflict prevention

and intercultural education; being the global dimension of education for citizenship.

(www.coe.int/t/dg4/nscentre/ge/GE-Guidelines/GEgs-app1.pdf; accessed June 8, 2012)

The power of global education lies in its potential to be transformative. Any process that addresses social inequities presents an opportunity for students to play a role in both personal and systemic change. The Council of Europe (2010) states that "transformative learning through global education involves a deep, structural shift in the basic

premises of thoughts, feelings and actions. It is an education for the mind as well as for the heart. This implies a radical change towards interconnectedness and creates possibilities for achieving more equality, social justice, understanding and cooperation amongst peoples" (p 13). Being a part of this transformation can seem daunting, but it is also the most rewarding aspect of teaching within this framework.

Global education can seem intimidating to those who are not deeply immersed in it. I have had many colleagues who were hesitant to teach global education or use a global education approach to their subject matters because they felt that they did not know enough about the issues. While being knowledgeable about certain specific social issues does benefit a teacher who is interested in global education, it is not a prerequisite. In fact, I would argue that concern about the human condition and a desire to learn are the perfect prerequisites to using global education in your classroom.



Our students are incredibly curious about the world around them, and they are very sensitive to the injustices they see. Using a global education approach in our classrooms allows our students to work in an environment that encourages them to investigate these issues and learn how they can effect positive change. Our role as educators is to provide a space

where questions can be asked and solutions sought, and to encourage our students to be proactive and to empower them. Global education allows students to build meaningful understandings of the world around them and their place within it, while simultaneously offering students the opportunity to use their growing citizenship skills to create a better world.

Reference

Council of Europe. 2010. *Global Education Guidelines: Concepts and Methodologies on Global Education for Educators and Policy Makers*. Lisbon: North-South Centre of the Council of Europe. Orig pub 2008. Available at www.coe.int/t/dg4/nscentre/ge/GE-Guidelines/GEguidelines-web.pdf [accessed June 6, 2012].

Albertans Heading for Peace, or How to Make Social Justice an Expectation

Marianne Rogers

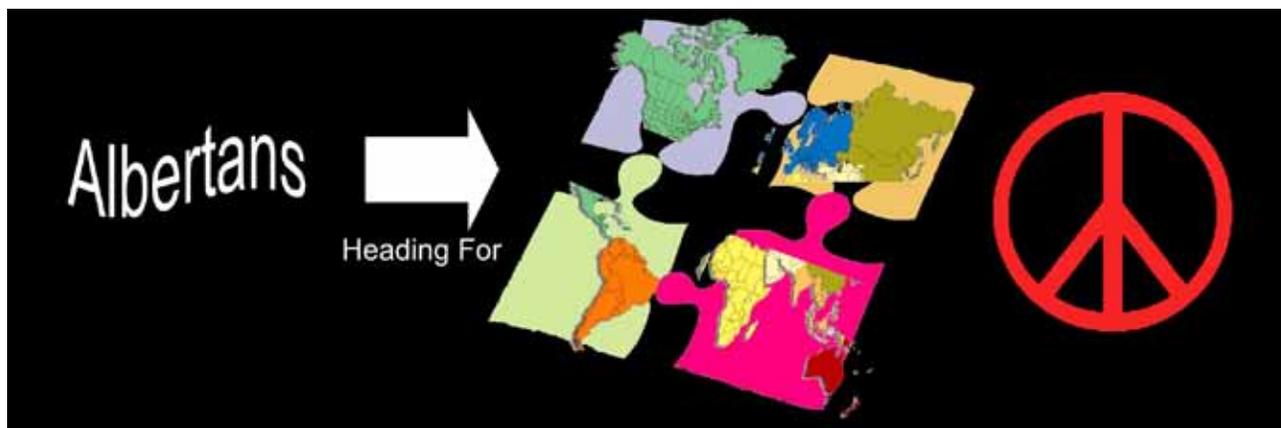
Albertans Heading for Peace is a grassroots social and environmental group—it evolves and grows, each year taking its own direction in a guided and supported way. It is part of a larger idea—PeaceJam. It is an attempt by students at High Park School to empower other students and to promote a more peaceful world. It is a series of small things.

The hardest thing about sharing the ideas of Albertans Heading for Peace is knowing where to begin, what to put in and what to leave out. What is the tried-and-true formula to promote student commitment to social justice or environmental action? How has our involvement in PeaceJam made a difference?

Even before High Park School opened, my students and I were involved in social action projects. Perhaps it began in Entwistle, in 1988, when *Time* magazine nominated the endangered earth as the “person” of the year. Once my Grade 9 students read about the need for change, they planned a project to provide drums for recycling oil. Every year since then, my students and I have done something; sometimes it is big, and sometimes it involves just a few committed people. But it is always meaningful and fuelled by students’ desire to make a positive difference. My students made the difference, but I discovered I had a role. I could explore current events, teach what

I’d learned about social issues and the environment and look for the issue that ignited my students’ passion. Then I provided the background organization to make it happen. This could be facilitated through a club, but bringing issues into my classroom and discussing them with my students, no matter the subject, is a powerful learning tool. I need to build the leadership capacity of students, help them with the paperwork and wading through the policies, procedures and protocols, and fuel the hope that things can be better.

When I moved to High Park School, in 1993, I started an environmental education option. I wanted a way to be better prepared



Let's Stop Bullying

Because we believe that all people deserve respect, to be loved

And to be liked...

We reject a culture that allows and promotes bullying and racism

We promise to change our communities

One person,

One action at a time!

We aim to rid our communities of all bullying,

All racism,

And all dehumanizing actions within our generation.

*We have the **POWER** to make the change!*

We have the strength to show our true colors

And be who we are

Positive and welcoming citizens!

- this is our pledge -



Hamza



Hamza Mohamed

Age: 14 years old

Came to HUSA in 2009

Hamza loves to have fun and is usually the first to be chosen for a soccer match.

In 2009, Hamza was living with his mother in Dar es Salaam, the largest city in Tanzania. When his mother suddenly passed away, he was sent to Kimamba to live with his only other relatives. Hamza's elderly grandmother was already dependent on community support and support from her own daughter. His grandmother and aunt work hard selling cassava to help keep him in their home. His Grandmother asked

HUSA for help in caring for him and with his schooling and health care costs.

Because Hamza came from Dar es Salaam, the process to get him enrolled in school would have been a lengthy and costly procedure. However, HUSA's involvement with the school helped to speed up the registration and only pay the minimum fees.

Hamza is a natural athlete and has said he'd like to play on the school team when he is in high school. He will be starting Form One (Grade 10) with the other HUSA children this year.



and anticipate what the students could be involved in. The concept seeped into all my classes as other students asked questions. We didn't always follow the plan as I envisioned it, but whatever we did always turned out well. My students investigated, researched, discussed and debated and then took action. In every case, we started with a core of dedicated students and spread the word. We faced frustration and tackled apathy. We challenged the notion that students are self-centred and uncaring. We tried some projects that, quite simply, failed. But we always involved as many students as we could from K to 9, and sometimes expanded beyond our school walls. Our projects always involved an awareness campaign in which students gave voice to their ideas for action. Usually, it involved school assemblies and presentations on ideas—an advertising campaign of some sort. The most successful also invited the media and elicited support from service groups and parents. One key to success was to recognize a catalyst and challenge students to get others involved. We started in our own backyard—our first project was to clean up the construction debris on our school site and reforest it. We called it “Welcome Back.”

Since then, we've sponsored wolves in Kananaskis and supported Ruthie, a disabled girl in an orphanage in Africa. We've joined the campaign to reduce effluent pollution in the St Lawrence River whale habitat and hosted a week-long, five-school student conference on climate change with world-

renowned keynote speakers Robert Swan, with the 2041 campaign (<http://2041.com>), and Eva Olsson (<http://evaolsson.ca>). We challenged everyone in the province to provide support for the victims of natural disasters in Haiti and created Bandanas for Peace to assist with tsunami relief in Japan. We've worked with a Holocaust survivor and created a pledge to reduce racism. We've involved students in leadership training, often bringing the “pony dance” into assemblies to inject fun and camaraderie into assemblies. Now, Albertans Heading for Peace has become an expectation: we will do something to help others. Now students are the ones who come to me and say, “We need to do something about ...”

The problem has become not what to do, but how to manage to do all the things we are passionate about. The simple answer is that we can't. We always do something, but we also have to teach our curriculum. Time is our biggest asset and our biggest challenge. We take the time to be involved and to spread awareness. We commit the time to projects to infuse them into what we are teaching. But we don't try to do everything. We try to help students find a way to get involved and carry through on their passions. Most students follow the lead we set. But some students have become true leaders and develop their ideas and share them with us at assemblies. Recently, two Grade 5 girls spent their spring break making bracelets, selling them and donating the funds to an orphanage. We talked about Kony 2012, but

decided that supporting that initiative should be an individual choice, not a school choice. We talked of the power of the Internet and how to harness it for good. This was a powerful lesson.

2012 has been a less active year. We didn't do anything big – or did we? Our goal was to join the Human Sympathy Association (HUSA; <http://ainembabazi.org>) and create a reciprocal relationship with a new home for HIV orphans in Kimamba, Tanzania, which wanted to create a sustainable food supply. We helped raise money to plant crops, purchase livestock and help villagers get a head start on changing the lives of the 50 children in the home. Along the way we decided to go further—we would try to raise enough money to send the home's eight high-school-age residents to school. We needed \$1,500. It was about money, but it was also about commitment, caring, learning, sharing and making a difference while creating friendships. It was local because it started with one committed person, Sarah Pollock, from our greater community. It was global because we now have friends on another continent. We planned to help eight people make a difference in their community by supporting their schooling. Simple, really.

The project that gave us our name is perhaps the most notable. Our middle-years humanities teachers decided that we needed to make all our students more aware of the issues. In a cross-curricular project we challenged each of our students to create an awareness campaign about an important issue.

The goal of the “Be Aware ... Show You Care” project was for students to convince at least two other people to take action on their issue. Each group created a logo for a T-shirt that would promote the central idea. How did it work? In the words of our students,

We chose issues we were passionate about, such as poverty in Third World countries, media influence, body image, climate change and many more, and began to research them. Groups used available resources such as Internet, television, newspapers and interviews to research their topics. After weeks of research and planning, the projects came together with the groups’ slogans or logos printed onto T-shirts and poster boards displaying facts and visuals about their topic. Many groups made PowerPoint presentations or videos to help visualize the issue they were presenting. The media and citizens of Stony Plain were invited to observe the displays. Members of the community that attended the fair voted on the top causes and made donations through our T-shirt and bake sales. The profits from the sales went towards the most effective presentations. In the coming year we plan to continue informing and involving the community through our upcoming project.

—Excerpt from student presentation on PeaceJam 2008, by Ashley, Ashley, Stefan, Tate, Megan and Natalie

The project was immensely successful and exceeded our expectations. Every student

reported learning a lot. Every student became passionate about a cause. Every student took action to inform others. Something ordinary and routine—a research assignment—had impassioned them and empowered them. We provided the structure and unleashed potential.

We caught the attention of PeaceJam Foundation, an international organization whose mission is to create young leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities and the world through the inspiration of Nobel Peace Prize laureates (www.peacejam.org). PeaceJam invited us to attend their 2008 conference, and our six leaders received leadership training and inspiration. They met Nobel Peace Prize laureates who inspired them to take further action, and Albertans Heading for Peace was formed. Our commitment was to

... help the community develop a better understanding of global issues as well as creating different ways for youth to make a difference. With everyone’s help, the Nobel Peace laureates are hoping to inspire one billion acts of peace by the year 2018, so that together the laureates, the youth, and everyone else who joins in to engage in acts of peace will be able to begin the transformation of the future. ...

We would like to be able to change the world on our own but the fact of the matter is we are only one small piece of the puzzle; we can’t fix a broken world by ourselves. We need your help to finish the picture.

We challenge you, the principals/ teachers, to take this idea and have each classroom in PSD commit to an act of peace. People are doing great things every day. We are doing this to expand on what is already being done.

—Excerpt from student presentation about PeaceJam 2008—Ashley, Ashley, Stefan, Tate, Megan and Natalie

It was a life-altering experience. It started small and grew and grew. Our six students spent the next year making presentations to more than 1,000 others, including university students, town councillors, sponsors, teachers and superintendents. Their goal was to increase involvement. We spread the word and tried to coordinate the projects throughout the province. The reporting proved more than we could handle, but the passion and spreading of the word proved that we can make a difference. We learned that social action starts with taking the first steps, building capacity and following through on our commitments. One of the students, Ashley, was selected by the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation to be part of a delegation to Ethiopia; she spent a year travelling Alberta relating these experiences. Now that’s empowerment! But it doesn’t end here.

PeaceJam—Albertans Heading for Peace—is now a highly anticipated expectation. It changes hands invisibly, but continues each time with a new direction but always with one purpose: to open up possibilities for people to take

JAPAN

Earthquake and Tsunami Relief

Bandanas for Japan

Alberta **Students** and
Canadian Red Cross
Working Together
to Bring Aid to Japan

Inviting schools across
Alberta to join the
movement



PLEASE HELP by
purchasing a bandana.
The money raised will go
towards bringing water,
blankets, hygiene items,
tents and medical supplies
to Japan to help them
through this disaster.

To Order Your Bandanas

Contact: Tracy Atkinson
High Park School 780 963-2222
tatkinson@psd70.ab.ca

Colleen Woloshyn
fax: 780 963-9399
cwoloshyn@psd70.ab.ca



\$10

Flyers / Bandanas printed by students of Parkland School Divisions' Memorial Composite High School CommTech class.

action in a meaningful way and to make a positive difference at a local and/or global level. As this school year draws to a close, we have begun planning how we will select 23 students from Grades 6 to 9 to attend We Day in Calgary, in October. Our problem is how to limit the number to 23 because we have so many students who want to get involved. All we have to do is ask, and our students will respond.

So, when asked to give advice or a helping hand to those who want to start a project, I've learned that the hardest things are knowing where to begin, what to put in and what to leave out. I started planning for this article with a list of suggestions: decide on an issue, stay committed, create awareness, provide the mentors and role models, build the core group, plan the action—then revise the plan, look for your

supports inside and outside the school, build capacity, support, support, support, take on the paperwork; it is more than fundraising, but awareness can start there. I've strayed from this plan—as usual. But what I've meant to say is start small, but start. Get going, and keep going. The pace will vary, but small steps add up. There will be frustrations along the way, and time will always be too short. Perhaps most important, don't be afraid to ask for help. My journey and my students' learning have been supported by many people—from agencies like Inside Education's FEESA (Friends of Environmental Education Society of Alberta), www.insideeducation.ca/; A+ For Energy, <http://bit.ly/L1seDI>; and ATA Inclusive Learning Communities grants, <http://bit.ly/L1swdA>, to name a few—and the

staff at High Park School and the County of Parkland. We work as a team and build a network.

I set out to have one student each year learn that his or her actions matter and can make a difference in the lives of at least that student and one other. That is something powerful! I've reached this goal many, many times and take pride in my students' hope for the future and their belief that a more peaceful community starts with the actions of one.

Marianne Rogers is a Grade 9 teacher at High Park School, in Stony Plain, who engages K to 9 students in social and environmental action on a project-by-project level.

Editor's note: websites accessed June 7, 2012. For more information about HUSA, go to <https://sites.google.com/site/husakimamba/home-1>.

Be Aware - Show You Care: The Social Action T-shirt Project

You must be the change you want to see in the world. – Mahatma Gandhi

Never Doubt That a Small Group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world, indeed it is the only thing that ever has. – Margaret Mead



PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

Global Cafe

Julia Dalman

It has been stated in many peer-reviewed articles that youth of today are facing the most complex and multifaceted challenges in our collective history. Many wonder about how we can prepare our youth to face these challenges. How can we foster more imagination and creativity in our education system to bring forth the type of creative minds it will undeniably take to solve the world's many problems?

One thing that has always surprised me in articles like these is that they usually include the statement that it will be up to our youth to solve these problems, yet youth have little voice in current problem-solving attempts. How can we expect our youth to feel that they have a role to play when we do not include them? And then we turn around and call them apathetic! The truth is that our current education system is perpetuating a system of exclusion rather than inclusion and is stopping short of fostering creative minds. Two well-respected educators also argue these points: Sir Ken Robinson argues that our schools kill creativity, and Joel Westheimer argues that the lack of inclusion and participation of youth in schools limits our conceptions of functional democracy.

I think a case can be made that school is more than a place where students go to become educated—it is also a place where they learn to

become engaged citizens. School is just as much a place where students learn how to interact with the world around them as it is a place to learn theories and concepts. Life is not an 80-minute block of math followed by social, science and art, so why should school be structured this way? It would be to the advantage of our communities, our workplaces and our world if we started educating and helping minds develop in multifaceted and interdisciplinary ways—ways that engage community, creativity, multiple perspectives and challenges that will impart lasting lessons. We could be exercising the brain in ways that help youth to face challenges and educating in a way that gives youth an authentic voice in their own education.

I have not stated anything new in this article. All of these ideas have been around for a while, but I would like to talk about a new approach to including the youth voice in our education system authentically and having youth themselves innovate multifaceted, creative approaches to critical issues.

I want you to imagine a space. It is about the size of two small cafés and has a high ceiling and a loft off to the right. What if I told you this space was free to enter, a truly public space where you do not have to consume or buy anything, a space where ideas are shared, things

are created and community is flourishing? What if I told you this space is located in a high school with an outside entrance for community members? And that inside this space you see engaged and passionate youth developing their voice, a sense of belonging and purpose, and becoming intentional citizens? What if I told you that this space actually exists in Jasper Place High School, in Edmonton, Alberta, and it is my honour to run it?

This space is called the Global Café and it is a by-students-for-students space. The idea is to start shifting the paradigm in the school one space at a time so that youth have more say and can start shaping the direction their school goes, including how curriculum is delivered. Each student that walks through the door of the Global Café is asked “What would you like to see in the space and what would you like to see more of in your school?” We take their answers seriously. We ask them how they would like to see their ideas implemented and then connect them to as many community supports as we can to help them through the process. The Global Café is not about implementing students' ideas for them—it's about empowering them to do it themselves. Some of the ideas so far are to start a radio show, have an

all-student-made film festival, have an actual café in the school and a place to come and hear new music. The Global Café committee is currently 15 members and growing. The committee decides when to meet and has divided into subcommittees to achieve more in a short time frame. The committee has even drafted its own constitution for the space and is hoping that the Global Café will become a foundation that can support other schools in creating similar programs. The students dream of naming it the Global Café Foundation for Sustainability in Education and Culture.

One of the biggest challenges, according to one of our students, Gloria Osei, is getting people to realize the potential. Change takes time, and in school settings new programs are often bombarded with criticism. The real issue is funding; there is heavy competition for program funding in schools in a province that has enough money to adequately fund innovative initiatives. This does not enhance collaborative approaches to new initiatives in schools—instead, it fosters competition. The Global Café is funded mainly by grants, which is another challenge because of the time it takes to apply for and receive funding. Moreover, there is limited time to mentor students' creative ideas. Lunch and after-school hours are not ideal for helping youth implement an event or idea. Regardless of the many challenges in starting innovative initiatives, it is still worth it to try.

The reality is that the more diversity of programs a school can offer and the more connected those programs can be within the school and community, the more resilient the youth become because of the abundance of opportunities accessible to them. This is the ultimate benefit of a program like the Global Café.

Students who talk about the benefits of a space like the Global Café in a high school say that “It’s a great way to connect school life to community life” (Gloria Osei), or “It’s a unique experience and opportunity and gets the whole school involved and opens minds of students” (Cody Anderson, a Grade 10 student at Jasper Place High School). Another student, Emma Wiley-Suter, invented the slogan “The Global Café, where creativity becomes reality” and mentioned that she “got to meet Grade 11s and 12s and make more friends in the school.” The aspect of the Global Café program that students seem to value the most is the opportunity to connect with each other and the community and the relationships that form as a result.

One of the most common questions that I receive as the coordinator of the Global Café is whether I think this program is replicable. I certainly do think that the process and the approach of the Global Café are replicable, but each space, if achieved with student voice at the centre, will be completely different. Programs that will be most effective are those that can capitalize

on the ideas and spirit that are already available in the school rather than trying to invent something that might have no roots or might be inappropriate for the context. I hope more programs take this approach to building authentic student voice and community in their schools.

We have big goals at the Global Café and hope you all stay tuned for our progress. Next year we are hoping to get funding to become Alberta’s first zero-waste café, have students operate the café and manage the finances as a social enterprise, and build bicycle power generators. So far we have developed relationships with 65 community partners and continue to grow. The opportunities and ideas that can come from connections like these are limitless. If you would like to get involved or hear more please contact me at julia.dalman@epsb.ca or call 587-926-3391.

Julia Dalman is the Global Café coordinator at Jasper Place High School, in Edmonton, and a local Edmonton activist. Julia was a participant in the second Edmonton Next Up cohort and is a member of a small group called ConsentEd, dedicated to eliminating sexual violence. Growing up in Canmore, Alberta, with a family of environmentalists drew her to study an unlikely but fitting combination of biology and international studies at the University of Alberta. She is deeply passionate about community and fun. When she’s not at school, you can find Julia blues dancing, reading books in local cafes or cooking up a storm for her next meeting.

Limitations of the Leave No Trace Principles

Jesse Sorenson

If you asked some avid backpackers about what LNT stands for, there is a good chance they would know the answer—simple: Leave No Trace. If you proceeded to question what it means to practise Leave No Trace principles, they would probably give responses such as “to leave the land the way you found it” or “to protect the wilderness.” However, if you asked them to provide a limitation of the Leave No Trace movement, they might struggle to come up with an answer. For many outdoors enthusiasts, adhering to these principles has become so normalized that they haven’t ever stopped to think about why they follow these guidelines. Articles by Moskowitz and Ottey (2006), Cronon (1996) and Turner (2008) critique these “common-sense” guidelines. In further exploring the effects of the LNT movement, three major issues become evident. First, while certain people benefit, groups that “do not belong” in the wilderness inevitably suffer. Second, the effectiveness of Leave No Trace is extremely hard to measure. Finally, by focusing on protecting specific areas, we often fail to see the “traces”—an understatement—that are left in areas not included in our current definition of *wilderness*.

To fully understand the implications of the Leave No Trace movement, it is first necessary to look at what *wilderness* really encompasses with respect to Leave No Trace. If we were to ask the backpackers what they meant when they said “to protect the wilderness,” they probably would elaborate to say “away from civilization” or “in the mountains” or something of that nature. These types of responses, which idealize and romanticize nature, are the types of answers we would expect from most people when asked to describe wilderness. Furthermore, as Cronon (1996) explains, “wilderness embodies a dualistic vision in which the human is entirely outside the natural” (p 17). Given that LNT follows this definition of wilderness, the first and broadest category of creatures that do not belong in the wilderness becomes clear: humans.

If the notion that humans do not belong in wilderness seems absurd, consider the following two questions. Have you ever seen someone get reprimanded for breaking a twig off a tree in a national park? Have you ever seen beavers get reprimanded for cutting down trees to make their home in the same national park? The

answers to those questions should reveal who belongs and who does not. Now, it’s not that humans should never enter wilderness, but as Leave No Trace suggests, we just shouldn’t stay there permanently; doing so would not be in accordance with the goal of limiting our impact on wilderness.

But what about the people who have been living off the land for thousands of years? We often forget that prior to the development of major civilizations, wilderness was all there really was, and for many people, namely First Nations, wilderness was home. However, as tourism began to grow in Canada, Aboriginal settlements were seen as barriers against promoting the myth that certain Canadian land was pure, uninhabited space. So the First Nations people were “forced to move elsewhere, with the result that tourists could safely enjoy the illusion that they were seeing their nation in its pristine, original state” (Cronon 1996, 15). It is clear how the emergence of this nature-versus-human dichotomy—the notion that wilderness and humans are opposites and should not coexist—has been used to legitimize the treatment of Aboriginal Canadians. The current notion of wilderness and the extent to which humans

belong have not always been so widely accepted but instead have undergone a process of normalization throughout the years. "The removal of Indians to create an 'uninhabited wilderness' ... reminds us just how invented, just how constructed, the American wilderness really is" (Cronon 1996, 15). Therefore, since this ideology of *wilderness as uninhabited space* has grown to be common sense, people who live off the land can certainly no longer be included among those who "belong in the wilderness."

Therefore, if humans are not to live in wilderness, the only interaction we can have with nature is as visitors. Through the Leave No Trace guidelines, we are reminded of the importance of not disturbing wildlife. "It's as if we ask students who visit the wilderness to live, eat, travel and play inside a museum, constantly reminding them not to upset the fragile displays" (Moskowitz 2006, 16). In addition, Leave No Trace gives a "humans are bad" message that causes people to think "it might be better to never go into natural environments" (Moskowitz 2006, 16). In essence, through the scope of LNT, humans are prohibited from living in wilderness, and can visit only if they promise not to wreck anything, and if they can afford it—since Leave No Trace focuses on protecting wilderness areas usually located far from the nearest cities or towns, people that want to enjoy these spaces must be able to afford to get there.

As previously mentioned, the process of pushing inhabitants of wilderness spaces out of their

homes so tourists can enjoy the view has been happening for many years. This tourist-friendly mentality is also portrayed through the guidelines of Leave No Trace. In addition, people who really want to leave as small a mark on the land as possible must have the necessary gear to do so. As Turner outlines, following the new "wilderness recreation ethic" means having the right gear, which includes gadgets such as stoves, nylon tents, and engineered fabrics such as polypropylene and Gore-Tex. Of course, the manufacturers of all these necessities certainly also benefit from the increased focus on having the right gear. The new land ethic sparked a boom in the outdoor supply industry that grew into a \$400 million market by the mid-1970s (Turner 2008). Recently our university outdoor education class engaged in an outdoor camping trip; some students bought new gear that they probably would not have thought about buying before. Buying these types of environmentally friendly products—at least marketed as such, although the actual effects of the production and consumption of such goods on the environment is unclear—has almost become a rite of passage in proving one's commitment to protecting the environment. Consequently, through the Leave No Trace land ethic, the only acceptable human forms of interaction in wilderness have become limited to tourists and outdoors enthusiasts who can afford the time and money to follow the rules.

A second issue of Leave No Trace concerns the possibility that

one can actually "leave no trace." That is, even for people who have the proper gear and are committed to following the guidelines, is it really possible to enter the wilderness without affecting it at all? As Cronon (1996) states, "The myth of wilderness ... is that we can somehow leave nature untouched by our passage" (p 23), and many people have bought into the myth because of the LNT initiative. Now, it is important to note that I am not criticizing people for following Leave No Trace principles; taking precautions to minimize one's impact on the wilderness is a great way to respect the wilderness. However, I believe that minimal impact is a more appropriate goal than leaving no trace at all. Even though we followed Leave No Trace principles on our class overnight trip, we would be naïve to assume that the area where we stayed was unchanged during our visit. Although the visible trace was minimal, it is impossible to know exactly how our presence affected the wildlife. Did we inadvertently damage plants while snowshoeing or digging snow while building a quinzhee? Did we scare away wildlife? In evaluating the possibility of leaving no trace, it becomes apparent that even the most direct ways in which we affect the wilderness are hard to measure.

If the direct ways we affect wilderness are hard to observe, how can we evaluate the more indirect ways in which our actions influence the environment? For example, although outdoors enthusiasts generally make a conscious effort to pack out what they take in, it is

important to remember that this garbage does not just disappear. Moskowitz and Ottey (2006) critique how disposal questions such as “Does a plastic bag filled with feces and gelling chemicals break down in a landfill?” are not acknowledged in the seven principles of Leave No Trace (p 17). Personally, I took many plastic bags on our trip for ease of packing—as opposed to using recyclable containers. Although some of them were reused, some were also thrown away. However, since this action did not affect how the wilderness area looked, I—probably just like a lot of people—did not really consider how I was affecting the environment.

Perhaps the greatest criticism of the Leave No Trace principles is that they prioritize protecting areas that fall within the popular definition of wilderness over areas that do not. As already discussed, wilderness is seen as a place apart from humans, a place where people can go to escape civilization. Ironically, while Aboriginal people have often been criticized for hunting and living in wilderness spaces—land that belonged to them—major corporations and industries have destroyed many natural areas to make way for new developments seemingly without criticism. As Cronon (1996) states, “Idealizing a distant wilderness too often means not idealizing the environment in which we actually live, the landscape that for better or worse we call home” (p 21). In other words, in protecting areas such as wildlife reserves and provincial parks, we feel a sense of satisfaction and tend to forget other ways we negatively

affect—leave a trace in—the environment closer to home.

Our class discussed the difficulty of assessing whether going away for a period of time on an outdoor trip results in reduced or increased energy consumption. According to one study, outdoor recreation results in about one third the energy consumption of stay-at-home consumption (personal communication, March 2012). However, just because we are out in the wilderness does not mean our at-home consumption stops. Have you ever met people who try to conserve energy by not using electric or battery-powered lights in the wilderness, yet leave the lights on at home while they are away? We seem to go to great lengths to protect the distant wilderness while neglecting to worry about our closer environment. As Cronon suggests, to protect the entire environment we must apply the practices we use in the wilderness to our immediate environment.

This broader view on environmental protection is what Moskowitz and Ottey (2006) call *conscious impact living*; it focuses on how humans can “optimize impact on excursions in wild areas” and in “their daily lives in developed environments” (p 18). As previously mentioned, everything was at one point uninhabited wilderness. Therefore, as civilization expands, the land that we consider wilderness will inevitably decrease. Despite well-intentioned efforts to protect nature by practising Leave No Trace principles, a more holistic approach must be taken.

The Leave No Trace movement is problematic because it portrays the

message that human involvement in nature should be limited to simply enjoying the view while not causing too much damage. Also, only certain groups are able to enjoy the wilderness under these guidelines. Finally, by separating wilderness and civilization, overemphasis on protecting wilderness areas has resulted in environmental neglect in other areas. Instead of simply attempting to leave no trace, we need to be more proactive and learn how to positively affect the environment. To do this, wilderness and civilization must no longer be viewed as opposites but as coexisting counterparts. If we, as individuals and as a greater society, can become cognizant of how our actions affect nature in both our nearby “civilized” surroundings and the more distant wilderness areas, we will be able to positively affect the environment as a whole.

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Just in Time?

Just in Time is the newsletter of the ATA's Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee. The most recent issue has a special focus on social justice; articles include highlights of two Inclusive Learning Communities grant projects (the Peer Ambassador Club, at Forest Lawn High School, in Calgary; and Diversity Day, at Olds High School, in Olds); a description of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network; an article by two US researchers entitled "Using the Circle of Oppression to Understand Teaching About Social Justice"; an article from two University of Alberta researchers on schooling and social justice ("Schooling and Social Justice: A Human Rights and Global Citizenship Perspective"), which is reprinted below; and a broad list of resources and information related to social justice. To see the entire issue, go to <http://tinyurl.com/7aq6fdy>. If you would like to subscribe to this free award-winning newsletter, please contact Karen Virag, at karen.virag@ata.ab.ca.



What We Talk About When We Talk About Social Justice

Karen Virag

The theme of this issue of *Just in Time* is social justice, a very broad theme indeed. Generally, though, by *social justice* we mean the idea that we should be creating a society that is based on equality and equity (not always the same thing), and grounded in a common understanding of human rights and the inherent value of all people. For Jennifer Wathen, a teacher at Mother Teresa School in Grande Prairie, and a member of the ATA's

Diversity, Equity and Human Rights (DEHR) Committee, "*Social justice* generally refers to the idea of creating a society or institution that is based on the principles of equality and solidarity, that understands and values human rights, and that recognizes the dignity of every human being, despite gender, race, ethnicity and so on. Educators must be cognizant of the differences in their classrooms and schools and make sure to extend every possibility to recognize those differences while not alienating those students. This can be extremely hard, but it is still the goal. Students cannot be expected to learn unless they feel safe, nurtured and loved for who they are. This is also our goal as

educators. By coming together, we can keep these conversations going and keep this society moving in the right direction." That right direction being forward, of course.

If you read the newspapers every day or listen to the radio too assiduously, you might be forgiven for thinking that the world is an irredeemable and unmitigated mess. The thing is, people seem much more interested in catastrophes, murder and mayhem, so positive events rarely get reported. This issue of *Just in Time* aims to counter that tendency. It features articles about some very good things, indeed—school projects, funded by the DEHR Committee, that focus on social justice, and social justice activities related to the UNESCO

Associated Schools projects. Professor Pat Russo, who teaches in the Curriculum and Instruction Department at the State University of New York, Oswego, shares some research that she is doing with her colleague Anne Fairbrother on teaching for social justice, and you can also read an article about social justice from a human rights and global citizenship perspective by two University of Alberta researchers.

Robert Mazzotta wears many hats at the Association; he is an executive staff officer at the ATA, a member of the DEHR Committee, ASPnet provincial coordinator and chair of the National Coordinating Committee for Associated Schools in Canada. When I asked him about what the DEHR Committee does to promote social justice, he told me, "The DEHR Committee strives to engage schools into a deeper discussion about the actions schools take and why they take them. Do schools understand the difference between charity and social justice? When schools raise money for a cause, do they explain to students why they are doing so? Do they explain the root causes of why there is such a discrepancy between our country and the country in need? This is what we strive to achieve—a clear understanding of what needs to be done to effect real change. This is what social justice is all about."

So press on, gentle reader, and remember—the world will be just in time.

Karen Virag is secretary to the ATA's Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee and supervising editor of ATA's publications division.

Schooling and Social Justice: A Human Rights and Global Citizenship Perspective

Lynette Shultz and Ali A Abdi

Introduction

Social justice is becoming a frequent topic of conversation in such education circles as school staff rooms, university halls and school district board meetings. The nature as well as the directions of these conversations might be likened to platforms of shifting sands, where notions of social justice sink, remain submerged or are reinvented as educators strive to make sense of the competing educational agendas of accountability, marketization and individual competition beside their awareness of increasing levels of marginalization and inequity and how these play out in their classrooms, schools and communities. Educators must challenge ourselves to more fully understand the vision of social justice that underpins these conversations if we are to create alternative futures characterized by just relationships based on human dignity.

Understanding Social Justice

Many approaches to social justice are concerned with the equitable distribution of goods

and benefits—the things that are valued by people in society, and burdens—those things that people seek to minimize in order to improve their quality of life (Rawls 1971). According to the United Nations, in 2006 the world's 500 richest people had an income that exceeded that of the poorest 416 million people (UNDP 2006). Researchers with the Make Poverty History Campaign ([www .makepovertyhistory.ca](http://www.makepovertyhistory.ca)) indicate that today 1.2 billion people live in abject poverty, most of them women, while more than 800 million people don't have access to enough food, and 50,000 people die every day from poverty-related causes. In Canada, although a 1989 House of Commons resolution committed to ending child poverty, an advocacy group, Campaign 2000, reported that in 2003, the richest 10 per cent of families with children earned \$13 for every \$1 earned by the poorest families in Canada, up from \$10 in 1993, and that in 2005, one in six Canadian children lived in poverty (Campaign 2000 2005, 4). However, as Nelson Mandela stated in his rallying cry to make poverty history, "like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings" (www.makepovertyhistory.org).

Educating for social justice requires addressing the role this macro-level ideological foundation and subsequent institutional structures have on local social, political and economic processes of exclusion and marginalization.

Social Justice in the Context of Canadian Schools

It may seem almost banal to state that justice is limited when the wider structures of society are reflected, enacted and reproduced in schools, but when examining policy and procedures that exist within schools, it appears this fact continues to be overlooked in relation to marginalization and exclusion. Just as the incident that occurred in Herouville, Quebec,¹ highlighted events of misrecognition, schools continue to create codes of conduct and procedural policies that reflect the same patterns of oppression, whereby identities are de-formed and used as part of ongoing processes of exclusion and marginalization, and distributive patterns serve the interests of a minority elite. Schools, then, become places where macro-level injustice is reproduced rather than challenged. By its very nature, education is an important agent of social development, or well-being. However, throughout human history, education has also been a potent weapon of oppression to colonize and take away people's rights (Abdi 2006; Mandela 1994). As such, education has also been a counter-human-rights project that destroyed the possibility of social justice for many people. Knowing this is very important, for as we write these lines in the province of Alberta, Canada, we are confident that schools are not meeting the rights (that is, the learning needs

and expectations) of Aboriginal and immigrant and refugee students who could find schooling culturally alienating and, therefore, socially and eventually economically excluding. The same could be true for children from low socioeconomic backgrounds, regardless of their ethnic background (Davies and Guppy 2006). Educators, then, need to address injustice from an integrated social justice approach that questions the distribution of material goods and positional goods, recognition and participation. While the kinds of changes needed may seem daunting in a system where change is slow and often cumbersome, there is a powerful foundation for such a shift. A human-rights approach to social justice involves the ethical foundation needed for social justice along with a clear normative and regulatory integration of distribution, recognition and participation.

Human Rights and Global Citizenship Education as Enactment of Social Justice

The issue for educators is more than just the isolated absence or the selective denial (unacceptable as these are too) of a human-rights perspective or a social justice platform. It is actually about primary categories of citizenship that, under all circumstances, must represent the proactive meanings and practices of a space that is equitable and, at the same time, creates equity. It is in this process

that the space between people's lives and their public institutions is rendered inclusive, transparent and as multi-directionally responsible as possible. To achieve a more viable measure of citizenship and, by extension, less exclusionary social justice paradigms, education must expand from focusing on skills that enhance the acquisition of knowledge for economic performativity to the creation of citizens who have a pragmatic and empathetic understanding of the world. Undoubtedly, this idea will seem farfetched in a world where economic realities are "permanentizing" a culture of consumerism and the ideology of monetarism dominates both the intentions and outcomes of private and public institutions, including schools and the relationships learners establish with those schools.

Despite these concerns, though, the capacity of education as a citizenship-building block can be powerful. And throughout history, schools have been advancing their own versions of citizenship development, but the main point, especially from a social justice perspective, will be what kind of citizenship, for whom and with what outcomes. In a world where the local is informing and influencing the global and vice versa, the kind of citizenship that schools establish should be locally deep and responsible, but also globally aware and inclusive. As such, this kind of global citizenship will have a global ethic (Dower 2003) that teaches students not only about the general

1. In 2007 in the village of Herouville, Quebec, the town council created a code of behaviour for immigrants.

existence of peoples across the globe but also about the responsibilities we have for the well-being of all humanity. ...

The type of schools that would achieve reliable regimes of citizenship rights and social justice would be able, in their teaching and social relations perspectives, to achieve a more universal ethical understanding of the rights of citizenship to enhance the lives of current and future generations. By engaging in comprehensive and objectively concise projects of social justice, education will be more effective when it is shared with students in the earlier and formative years of schooling. It is that understanding that educators and educational policymakers must bring to the fore; from there, they can aim

for programs of global citizenship and social justice that become lifetime projects for all teachers and learners. Through that commitment we could achieve, in this globalized yet highly interdependent world, some aspects of the African humanist philosophy Ubuntu, which, in simplified terms, urges us to see our humanity through the humanity and the needs of others.

Lynette Shultz (lshultz@ualberta.ca) and Ali A Abdi (aabdi@ualberta.ca) teach in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. They are codirectors of the Global Education Network, where they work to create local and global academic, professional and community partnerships that link social justice to educational research, teaching and social action.

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Show and Tell—Change for Children

Nicole Farn

Do you remember standing in front of the class for “Show and Tell”? Do you remember being so excited about something that you couldn’t wait to share it with your friends, to show your teacher, to tell the world? With the support of the Change for Children Association (CFCA), teachers are putting a new spin on the concept of “Show and Tell”—telling students about the impacts of environmental and social injustice, showing them their ability to act as global citizens, and inspiring them to show and tell in return. With hands-on programs, partnerships and travel opportunities, showing and telling just got a lot more interesting.

With handfuls of blue jelly beans—or for some, just a few—to simulate water disparity, elementary students at St Angela’s School in Edmonton became CFCA’s youngest supporters as teachers embraced a year-long hands-on approach to connect their students with global water issues. As a demonstration of their increasing awareness of the devastating effects of the lack of clean water, St Angela’s students united to raise funds for the drilling of a water well in rural Nicaragua. And when their teacher travelled to the small recipient community of Divino Niño to dedicate the well and show students the global connection they

had made, the students could not have been more proud to see Nicaraguan children cheering as the well they had raised funds for was turned on for the first time.

Some teachers enhance their students’ learning by vividly relating a travel experience; others choose to travel with their students—virtually. Through the Video Conference for Hope (VCFH), students from across Canada came face to face, using video conference technology, with Miskito indigenous youth living in the Bosowás region of Nicaragua. In November, North American youth and Nicaraguan youth sat across from one another and engaged in real-time show and tell to discuss culture, climate change and food security. Through the perspective of their Nicaraguan peers, North American students learned about the connection between food challenges and climate change and were shown how biologically diverse community garden projects can make a difference in the Bosowás.

Through creative projects and learning opportunities, young people are indeed making the connection between environmental justice and social justice and are learning, by example, their potential to effect change as global citizens. Through Change for Children’s Youth Council: International Development Mentorship Project,



Elementary students learn about water issues using Paola’s Story, an educational storybook resource for elementary students, one of many Tools for Schools offered by Change for Children; for more information, go to www.changeforchildren.

... Articles and Features ...

eight passionate Edmonton area youths are learning about development and are showing the world that they have valuable things to say and ideas to contribute in return. As evidenced by the participation of 30 enthusiastic youth in the YoutH2O—Youth for a Brighter Blue Conference, recently organized by the Youth Council, today's generation of youth want to be involved in building real and just solutions. This by-youth-for-youth event embodied the spirit of experiential learning through hands-on activities and inspired presentations and group dialogue about local and global water issues.

Over the years, the Change for Children Association (CFCA) has witnessed a powerful movement of

educators, children and youth across Alberta organizing in their schools and communities to focus on learning about global issues and taking steps to address poverty and injustice. In an effort to extend this movement beyond the classroom and into the community, Change for Children organizes monthly development cafés to inform, inspire and engage not only local teachers and students who are invited to share their stories, but also the community at large. As a small grassroots organization with big ideas and faith in a community of like-minded people, CFCA is proud to provide curriculum support materials to ensure that there is no shortage of opportunities to connect with our

youth and our community—no shortage of opportunities to show and to tell.

Nicole Farn is a Change for Children board member and volunteer. Change for Children is an award-winning Edmonton-based charity that partners with grassroots organizations in Latin America and Africa to support community-based solutions to extreme poverty. Locally, Change for Children provides unique global education programs that foster awareness, understanding and leadership among students, youth and the community at large. Funds are used to support international programs that provide access to potable water; education, health and nutrition programs; and sustainable agriculture and economic development initiatives. For more information, visit www.changeforchildren.org.



Brenda McDonald (Change for Children volunteer and member of St Angela Elementary School's Social Justice Committee) poses with children of Divino Niño, Nicaragua, for the inauguration of the water well that Edmonton students raised funds to support.

Seminar on the United Nations and International Affairs

Will Cathcart

The Seminar on the United Nations and International Affairs (SUNIA) is a place where involved youth congregate. Young people come to SUNIA primarily from Canada; however, this prestigious camp also attracts people from all over the world, and for good reason. SUNIA is a nonprofit organization that for the past sixty years has been actively championing social justice in all its forms. From the rights of Palestinians living under Israeli rule to women's rights, any topic is up for discussion. Digging into these huge issues is by no means a simple task. It takes several days to get even a small foothold on any social issue. Luckily for SUNIA participants, they are given five days with extremely knowledgeable councillors (all of whom are former SUNIA campers), and guest speakers from the United Nations, the Department of National Defence and several nongovernment organizations, who, contrary to their title of "guest," will be there for the entire week.

Prior to attending SUNIA, participants receive an information package that contains details about the main topic for the week and informs them which country they will represent on the mock Security Council at the end of the week. During this week, campers research and eventually represent a country

that is not their own and with which they may not necessarily agree. Doing this serves to expand your world view and lets you really explore the rationale behind how other people view the world.

Largely due to its name, SUNIA may come across to many people as a week of being trapped indoors, lectured to and surrounded by people who are sporting pocket protectors. As a former SUNIA camper, I can dispel these rumours. At SUNIA you will explore the beautiful Goldeye Centre; there you will play teambuilding games, hike, play soccer, swim and canoe. Also, there is a very nice balance between structured and free time to get to know the speakers, councillors and your fellow campers.

Since 1952, no student has ever been turned away from SUNIA based on financial situation. There is a large and very supportive group of people who have passed through this amazing camp, all of whom provide support. There also are many scholarships available. Teachers advocating for SUNIA and the wonderful councillors visiting schools are a huge reason why students will be attracted to SUNIA. It is important that teachers explain this camp to their students to ensure that this program continues.

On a personal note, I will resort to several clichés—they are the only way I have been able to describe my

experience. SUNIA was one of the best weeks of my life. I made friends and amazing connections that I will always have. SUNIA provided direction for my life in that it gave me an insight into the inner workings of both the United Nations and international affairs. No paper about SUNIA would be complete without reference (as strange as this may sound) to what I can't write about. Some of the best parts of SUNIA are secrets, traditions and surprises—but you must attend SUNIA to find out about those. To begin your journey, please visit <http://www.sunia.ca> and check out topics, videos and pictures from previous years.

Kofi Annan is quoted as saying, "Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family."

SUNIA is the doorway to all of these things. Your adventure awaits.

Will Cathcart goes to Cochrane High, and is in Grade 12.

SUNIA is a summer camp that takes place in August at the Goldeye Centre in Nordegg, Alberta. It is a week-long session meant for high school students aged 15 to 19. The main outcome of participating in SUNIA is the acquisition of a global perspective. For more details on the program, please go to www.sunia.ca or contact the registrar, Melissa Schmidt, at mschmidt@sunia.ca or 780-934-6355.

Flushing Away Youth Apathy

Brianna Strumm

After realizing that the urinals flushed every six minutes in the boys' washroom at St James School, in Calgary, Bill Robinson's Grade 9 global leadership class lobbied the school board to install sensors to reduce water consumption. And on March 22, 2012, Bill Robinson's class had the opportunity to attend CAWST's (the Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology) World Water Day celebration in downtown Calgary to share their success.

Joelle Hass, a Grade 9 student in Bill's class, explains, "People in Zambia use less than 20 litres of water per day while Calgarians use in excess of 300. This made us ask, could we use less? If so, why don't we?" The class also did leaky-toilet tests to support a water conservation campaign in their school.

Bill's class has been involved with CAWST's Youth Wavemakers program for the last seven years. "CAWST stands out because it not only inspires young people to take action on global water and sanitation issues, it also gives them the tools, time, ideas and funding to take those actions." Bill believes that participation in the Wavemakers program has allowed his students to feel there is hope in dealing with some of the world's seemingly insurmountable issues. "They get to feel part of something bigger—and to realize they are not alone in

fighting to make the world a better place."

On March 22, almost 100 youths from the Calgary area displayed their water action projects to raise public awareness on global and local water issues at CAWST's World Water Day celebration. In addition to Bill's class, this year's other Wavemakers action projects included sending home leaky-toilet testers, holding peer seminars on local water conservation, organizing a benefit concert to raise money for water projects in Kenya and creating a community mosaic on the relevance of water.



CAWST's Youth Wavemakers also has a comprehensive website where K-12 teachers can download lesson plans, unit plans, games and action planning tools. *Tikho's Story Slideshow* is the most popular resource; it uses a hopeful story from a 10-year-old girl in Zambia to introduce students to global water issues. The Wavemakers program hosts a free youth summit in Calgary each November; students spend the morning learning about

local and global water issues, and the afternoon planning their water action project. All of the resources that CAWST uses on the day of the youth summit are available for teachers to use on their own to guide students in creating a youth-driven action project. Action grants for up to \$500 are available for students across Alberta; applications will be accepted this fall between from September 1 to November 15, 2012, for implementation between December 2012 and May 2013.

Introduction to CAWST and Wavemakers

CAWST (Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology) is a Calgary-based nonprofit organization that works in 69 countries to provide training and support to organizations that implement water, sanitation and hygiene projects. The Youth Wavemakers program was created out of a demand from Calgary youth who were thirsty to learn more about global water issues. CAWST's Youth Wavemakers and youth involved in the program have now influenced more than 55,000 Canadians with water education that bridges the gap between global and local issues.

Water facts

- 3 billion people, almost half the world, do not have access to clean drinking water or basic sanitation.
- 27,000 children younger than 5 die each week (this is the equivalent to 65 jumbo jets going down every week!).
- A Canadian taking a five-minute shower uses more water than the average person in a developing-country slum uses in an entire day.
- In just one day, 200 million work hours are consumed by women collecting water for their families.
- The water and sanitation crisis claims more lives through disease than any war claims through guns.



Brianna Strumm is a sessional instructor in the Social Work program at Mount Royal University, in Calgary, and community engagement coordinator for CAWST.

Rip van Choldin Visits GEOEC

Earl Choldin

From 1988 to 1996 I directed, with the support of Sara Coumantarakis, the Alberta Global Education Project at the ATA. After our funding ran out, GEOEC picked up some of our work. Now I am temporarily leading the global education program at University of Alberta International and I have come back to GEOEC after a 16-year absence to write this article. I feel a bit like Rip Van Winkle, who returned to his village after a 20-year absence and noticed how his village had changed. I am noticing how the global education village has changed.

One very positive change is in language—we now talk about global *citizenship* education. When the ATA began the Global Education Project in 1988, some people thought we were promoting globalization; we were not. Nor were we preparing youth for success in the global marketplace. We were providing teachers with resources and strategies to help them develop their students' global perspective, so that students understand the global challenges we face and develop the will and the skills to deal with those challenges as responsible citizens. It was indeed global citizenship we were discussing.

Perhaps the most striking change is that global education is now part of the Alberta Education program of studies, where the goals of

strategies of global education, particularly *active citizenship*, are mentioned numerous times. For example,

Social studies develops the key values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding, and skills and processes necessary for students to become active and responsible citizens, engaged in the democratic process and aware of their capacity to effect change in their communities, society and world. [Alberta Education's program of studies for social studies; available at <http://www.learnalberta.ca/ProgramOfStudy.aspx?ProgramId=564423&lang=en#> [accessed June 11, 2012]]

Global citizenship education has also become institutionalized in the academy. At the University of Alberta, the Centre for Global Citizenship Education and Research is doing outstanding work as are scholars at universities around the world. However, we still have some way to go in getting global citizenship education infused in the methods and pedagogy courses that have the most impact on teacher practice.

The schools and society in which we teach global citizenship have changed as well: for several years, Canada has been welcoming a quarter of a million immigrants a year, mostly from Asia and Africa.

So we are a much more heterogeneous society. One-third of the population of Edmonton, for example, was not born in Canada. This creates both challenges and opportunities for a global educator.

Among the issues global educators explore are protecting the environment and preserving human rights. In these areas, also, there has been considerable change and our students come to us with new attitudes and ideas. In general, society's views have become more polarized, making our work more challenging, as global educators take advantage of controversial issues for their great teaching value.

Regarding the environment, for example, students have a greater environmental consciousness. In 1996, most Albertans were unaware of global warming. This year it was an issue in our provincial election. Former premier Stelmach recently stated that the Wild Rose Party lost the election because party leader Danielle Smith stated that she doubted that human activity is causing global warming. Whether Stelmach was correct or not, there clearly has been change. We could not have imagined that happening in 1996. Sadly, global warming was not even an issue then.

We are also operating in a different milieu with regard to human rights. Since September 11, 2001, and the "War on Terrorism"

that followed it, restrictions of civil liberties have been imposed that would not have been tolerated in 1996. On the other hand, most Canadians have become more liberal in regard to sexual preference, but that liberal attitude has inspired a backlash, as seen in the recent amendment to the Alberta *Human Rights Act* that affects a teacher's right to teach about sexual preference.

Perhaps the biggest change for global educators is the expansion of electronic communications—the Internet and social media. The *Kony 2012* phenomenon, for example, grabbed students' attention and created a teachable moment as we contextualized the content and claims of the Kony campaign video. It opened many doors for successful

lessons about militarism, Africa, colonialism, postcolonialism, social media and activism, mass movements, and so forth.

Fortunately the Internet also provides us ready access to teacher resources, such as *React and Respond: The Phenomenon of Kony 2012*, from Boston University (www.bu.edu/africa/files/2012/04/Kony-React-Respond.pdf).

So many changes; yet one thing remains the same—teaching is a great opportunity to save the world by nurturing, inspiring and expanding the minds of our students.

To keep up with global citizenship education events and resources, subscribe to the University of Alberta Global Education Program newsletter, *Reading Your World*, at www.industrymailout.com/Industry/

Subscribe.aspx?m=27011 or <http://tinyurl.com/7dun3w2>.

Come to U of A International Week 2013, January 28 to February 1. Watch for information at www.globaled.ualberta.ca.

Earl Choldin is global education team leader with University of Alberta International. He has taught in India, Chicago, Fort McMurray and Westlock. He has served as the director of education for the Dene Tha' First Nation and as director of the Alberta Global Education Project; Learning Network—East Central Regional Consortium; and the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. He is the president of the Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation. He can be reached at echoldin@hotmail.com.

Editor's note: websites accessed June 11, 2012.

Resources

Environmental Education Resources in Alberta

A field trip to give your students a hands-on experience in a wetland, a school visit from an expert to inform a water discussion, lesson plans that explore environmental careers—these are some of the more than 500 resources from 90 organizations available in the Encana Environmental Education Resource Centre, launched in September by the Alberta Council for Environmental Education.

The database, which is still growing, was created in Alberta and lists resources available to Alberta teachers. You can search by grade, curriculum, topic, region of

the province or key word. Also being developed in the database is a list of funding organizations that provide money to environmental education projects.

Visit www.abcee.org/resources/search to find what you need to engage your students in meaningful and relevant learning about the environment.

If you have any comments or additions to the database, please contact Christina at christina@abcee.org.

Editor's note: website accessed June 7, 2012.

Cool Web Connections

This is a CBC audio file about eight minutes long that discusses the benefits of natural playgrounds versus traditional playgrounds:

- www.cbc.ca/onthe coast/episodes/2011/08/09/parent-projectplaygrounds (also available at <http://tinyurl.com/6rfcjt2>)

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), in the United States, is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. NRPA encourages healthy lifestyles, recreation initiatives and conservation of natural and

cultural resources. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. These links are available through NRPA:

- www.fayobserver.com/articles/2011/06/07/1097530?sac=Life, about a children's garden project in Fayetteville (also available at <http://tinyurl.com/713qv3j>)
- <http://www.outdoornation.org/page/history-1>, about Outdoor Nation, a group formed in New York's Central Park, dedicated to getting youth outdoors (also available at <http://tinyurl.com/887vd47>)

Editor's note: websites accessed June 7, 2012.



Diversity • Equity • Human Rights Diversity • Equity • Human Rights

We are there for you!



The Alberta
Teachers' Association

www.teachers.ab.ca

PD-80-14 indd gr4



Diversity • Equity • Human Rights Diversity • Equity • Human Rights

Specialist councils' role in promoting diversity, equity and human rights

Alberta's rapidly changing demographics are creating an exciting cultural diversity that is reflected in the province's urban and rural classrooms. The new landscape of the school provides an ideal context in which to teach students that strength lies in diversity. The challenge that teachers face is to capitalize on the energy of today's intercultural classroom mix to lay the groundwork for all students to succeed. To support teachers in their critical roles as leaders in inclusive education, in 2000 the Alberta Teachers' Association established the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee (DEHRC).

DEHRC aims to assist educators in their legal, professional and ethical responsibilities to protect all students and to maintain safe, caring and inclusive learning environments. Topics of focus for DEHRC include intercultural education, inclusive learning communities, gender equity, UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network, sexual orientation and gender variance.

Here are some activities the DEHR committee undertakes:

- Studying, advising and making recommendations on policies that reflect respect for diversity, equity and human rights
- Offering annual Inclusive Learning Communities Grants (up to \$2,000) to support activities that support inclusion
- Producing *Just in Time*, an electronic newsletter that can be found at www.teachers.ab.ca; Teaching in Alberta; Diversity, Equity and Human Rights.
- Providing and creating print and web-based teacher resources
- Creating a list of presenters on DEHR topics
- Supporting the Association instructor workshops on diversity

Specialist councils are uniquely situated to learn about diversity issues directly from teachers in the field who see how diversity issues play out in subject areas. Specialist council members are encouraged to share the challenges they may be facing in terms of diversity in their own classrooms and to incorporate these discussions into specialist council activities, publications and conferences.

Diversity, equity and human rights affect the work of all members. What are you doing to make a difference?

Further information about the work of the DEHR committee can be found on the Association's website at www.teachers.ab.ca under Teaching in Alberta, Diversity, Equity and Human Rights.

Alternatively, contact Andrea Berg, executive staff officer, Professional Development, at andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca for more information.

Global, Environmental and Outdoor Education Council

Mission Statement

To promote involvement in quality global, environmental and outdoor education

Objectives

- To provide a vehicle for Alberta teachers for professional development and communication in global, environmental and outdoor education
- To study and make professional recommendations about global, environmental and outdoor education issues
- To network with other provincial organizations that have similar concerns

Membership

- Regular member—Active and Associate members of the Alberta Teachers' Association, as specified in ATA bylaws, are entitled to full privileges of council membership including the rights to vote and to hold office.
- Student member—Student members of the ATA are entitled to all benefits and services of council membership except the right to hold office.
- GEOEC members may also choose to belong to the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EECOM) for an additional fee.
- ATA members may sign up for a GEOEC membership through the ATA website as their choice of one free specialist council membership included in the ATA annual fee.
- ATA members and subscribers may also sign up for a GEOEC membership and pay a fee determined by the GEOEC executive. From time to time the executive may decrease the fee to provide incentives for membership recruitment.

Subscribers

- Persons who are not ATA members as specified by ATA bylaws receive all the benefits and services

of council membership except the rights to vote and hold office. Subscribers do have the right to serve as community liaisons on the council executive.

Publications

- The GEOEC recognizes the wide range of interests among members and strives to foster the exchange of ideas and provide information and articles relating to the various components of the elementary and secondary curricula through the publication of *Connections*.
- The GEOEC maintains a website in order to publish timely information and provide access to like-minded organizations and individuals.

Annual Conference

- The annual conference features a blend of activities, indoors and outdoors, ranging from hands-on workshops to social gatherings. All grade levels are represented in sessions. The emphasis is on practical information and application. The annual general meeting of the GEOEC is held in conjunction with the conference.

Executive

- Members are elected to serve on the GEOEC executive.
- Contact the president or past president of the GEOEC through the ATA office if you are interested in seeking a position.
- Elections take place at the annual general meeting during the annual conference.

Workshops

- Various activities and workshops are organized by the GEOEC either as standalone events or in conjunction with other organizations.

Join now and become involved in the Global, Environmental and Outdoor Education Council

Name _____ Alberta Teaching Certificate No _____

Address _____ Postal Code _____

School or Employer _____ Grade Level/Specialty _____

New Membership

Renewal of Membership

\$25.00 Regular Membership

\$12.50 Student Membership

\$30 Subscription

\$10 EECOM Membership (in addition to GEOEC membership)

Make cheque payable to the Alberta Teachers' Association and mail it with the application to the Association at 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton AB T5N 2R1.

Permission for Use of Photographs or Student Work

The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) requests the permission of parents/guardians for the reproduction of photographs depicting their children and/or the reproduction of work assignments completed by their children. The photograph/work will be reproduced in the Global, Environmental and Outdoor Education Council (GEOEC) newsletter, *Connections*, and is intended for teacher professional development.

Name of student _____

I, _____ (printed name of parent/guardian of student), agree to the use of this photograph/work for the purpose stated above.

Signature _____

Relationship to student _____

Address _____

_____ **Postal code** _____

We have recently begun posting archived issues of *Connections* on the GEOEC website (www.geoec.org/newsletter). Are you willing to have your child's written work posted on the Internet as well?

- Yes, I agree to have my child's written work posted on the GEOEC website.
 - Yes, I agree to have my child's written work posted on the GEOEC website, using a first name only.
 - No, I do not want my child's written work posted on the GEOEC website.
-

Please fax or mail forms to

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The Alberta Teachers' Association

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