

DKG@UN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE DELTA KAPPA GAMMA SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL
TO THE UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND
THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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Your representatives at the United Nations live in the area hard hit by Superstorm Sandy. We were hoping to publish this issue of the newsletter toward the end of October, and it is now December as we work to put all the pieces together and send it out to our members and friends.

We open this issue with news about our NGO representatives, followed by reports from members who attended the International Convention in New York in July. We also have an announcement regarding the CTAUN UN Conference scheduled for January 18, 2013. These articles are followed by reports of briefings at the UN that some members of our rep group have attended. Finally, we close this issue with suggested teaching resources related to a theme that seems to us to run through all of the articles of this issue—the empowerment of women.

NEWS ABOUT OUR NGO REPRESENTATIVES AT THE UNITED NATIONS

The Society's representatives at the UN are delighted to announce that one member of our group, **Cathy Daugherty**, who has previously served as the facilitator of the Schools for Africa project, has been named as the Chair of the Educational Excellence Committee for this biennium. In discussing the EEC work, Cathy said, "The committee has set three goals: 1) Advance excellence in education; 2) Empower women, and 3) Increase global awareness. The SEE (Supporting Early-career Educators) project comes under goal one. Schools for Africa and our relationship with the UN will be key objectives under goal three. Remaining components of the EEC as outlined in the *Constitution* will be addressed under the appropriate EEC goal."

As part of goal three, EEC members are currently working on compiling complete lists of UN Liaisons appointed at the state level. At the 2002 International Convention, the International Executive Board approved the appointment of UN Liaisons for each state organization in order to disseminate UN-related information throughout their states. To date, the Southeast Region is the only region that has a UN Liaison for each state. Appointments throughout the rest of the Society are spotty. Our NGO rep group is quite eager to have the information we send out, including this newsletter, actually reach all members throughout the Society.

As our primary representative, **Grace Murphy** will continue as a member of the EEC. She is also a vice-chair of CTAUN. In addition, there is now a new member of the rep group, **Eileen Venezia** of New York. She has recently retired from the New York City Dept. of Education, and during the last ten years was a coordinator of special projects. At that time she became involved with CTAUN, and in 2006 won the Best Practices Award for a project she did with her students on "Understanding Water Sustainability—The Life Straw." In 2008 her students won the PBS Award for their project on the Global Water Gap, which was aired several times on Channel 13. She was recently elected as a CTAUN Director-at-Large and is a facilitator for the Atlanta conferences. Eileen was initiated this last June as a member of Delta Kappa Gamma in the chapter in Suffolk County, Long Island.

UN-RELATED EVENTS AT THE 2012 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

By Dr. Linda Dix, UN Liaison, New Jersey

Cathy Daugherty, former DKG facilitator for Schools for Africa, wrote in the 2012 International Convention newsletter that DKG has made a significant contribution to this International Project. These were the statistics she cited: “Of the 1,846 (74.7%) chapters completing 2012 DKG Biennial Reports, 1,039 (56.2%) indicated their support of the project. While the data fall short of every Chapter/member embracing SFA this biennium, it reflects an excellent start and dictates our need to communicate the SFA message to those not yet on board with the project.” At the Third General Meeting, it was announced that over \$100,000.00 had been raised thus far by DKG for Schools for Africa. We were told to “smile with pride.” DKG has made a notable difference in the lives of African children. DKG members have expressed their appreciation for SFA resources found on the DKG website and featured in the SFA “newsettes,” the power point presentations to be shared at meetings and the CD given to every state organization.

Cathy has since announced that as of this December members have donated \$116,398.56. And if you haven't seen it yet, be sure to read Cathy's article, “Schools for Africa: Transforming Lives through Education,” in the Fall 2012 issue of *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*.

Ramu Damodaran, UN Deputy Director for Partnership and Public Engagement, Outreach Division, and Department of Public Information, in his address at the International Convention, spoke in terms of the “New UN” as a concerted decision by all involved on definitive targets and issues of individual countries united on global millennium goals that include initiatives on education, poverty, hunger, and disaster relief.

“What does this mean to the world at large?” he asked. The knowledge brought about by education enables people to understand the “power of people” to communicate and make necessary changes that can affect not only their own lives but the lives of their community and society at large. Educated human beings can change systems that oppress them and make changes in governments. They can create a global community in partnership with the aim to protect human rights. The movement of the United Nations depends upon willing women and men at the local level who are willing to support this effort. He named DKG as a willing partner in this endeavor, and commended the members for “their energy, compassion, power, and promise.”

Ramu initiated an acronym for Delta Kappa Gamma to signify the following: Discovery, Education, Learning, Training, and Achievement. This “Delta” enables children to receive books from the Donkey Bookmobile in one country and enables Manno of Madagascar to enjoy three more classrooms and two more teachers in his African school thanks to the efforts of Schools for Africa. “Kappa” can be equated with knowledge, which equips people to make necessary changes, while “Gamma” illustrates the mutuality of giving and receiving. We open the space of our loving hearts to fill the space of the world so that all may be mutually fulfilled. The impact of the UN academic initiatives coupled with the advancement of women creates a “concert” of harmonious worldwide support that involves the creativity, academics, critical thought and compassion that can inform governments worldwide, thus promoting a climate of global peace.

ANNOUNCING THE CTAUN CONFERENCE AT THE UN--JANUARY 18, 2013

The theme of the coming CTAUN Conference is “Advancing Social Justice: The Role of Educators.” All educators and concerned citizens are invited to attend and to examine today's social justice issues and explore the role educators must play in helping students understand them and address and resolve them for the future. To carry out this task, young people will need to be

empowered with the content knowledge and 21st century skills necessary to navigate and make significant democratic changes in their global society.

Investigating current social justice issues will require critical discussion on such complex topics as human trafficking and economic inequality. Human trafficking, including the exploitation of youth, modern day slavery, and immigration/forced migration will be considered. Underlying these issues of “human security” is the primary problem of economic inequality and the essential question of how to resolve such overarching dilemmas as child labor, ensuring environmental justice, and food security. Speakers and panel discussions will highlight these fundamental concerns. Additional information about the conference, including registration and special hotel rates, is now available at the CTAUN website: teachun.org.

A UN BRIEFING REPORT: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD **By Lochie Musso**

The International Day of the Girl Child was approved by General Assembly resolution 66/170 on 14 November 2011. Beginning this year, October 11 is the day set aside for advocacy and action by and for girls, which was the motivation of this DPI/NGO Briefing. Four panelists focused on the many barriers facing girls worldwide—especially child marriage and how this practice influences a girl’s access to healthcare, the probability of premature pregnancy, exposure to domestic violence and sexual exploitation and, above all, the chance for education.

A short film about a young girl from Nepal who was forced to give up her much loved schooling to help support her family began the session. The Honourable Rona Ambrose, Canadian Minister for Status of Women, Public Works, Government Services and a champion of women’s rights, then welcomed all to this important first-ever UN Day of the Girl Child. She focused on the vulnerability of girls everywhere saying, “girls’ rights are human rights” and girls “need to know this so they can claim them.”

Changu Mannathoko, Senior Education Adviser to UNICEF, emphasized the importance of educating girls for their own sakes as well as for society. Education is one of the best strategies for protecting girls, building self confidence and self respect as well as reducing poverty and child marriage. Carol Smolenski, Executive Director and founder of End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT-USA), stated that early child marriage is often a camouflage for sexual exploitation, and in many locations married children as young as nine become “legal adults.”

Raquel Evita Saraswati, American Muslim activist and writer, labors to end gender-based violence in the Muslim community. She reminded all that historically there has been an effort to promote women’s issues since 1909, the inauguration of International Women’s Day. She spoke of the devastation of honor-based violence, genital mutilations, and forced early marriages. She cautioned that it is “easier to fight an identified enemy than those who walk among us,” referring to the lack of enforcement of governmental laws on human rights and the protection of children and women already in place.

This very significant assembly closed with a powerful program by Project Girl Performance Collective. Eight young teenage girls presented an evocative story, “Trafficked”, through poetry, dramatic expression and dance. It was truly thought provoking. To learn more check out the following sites: projectgirlperformancecollective.org; DayOfTheGirl.org; and ECPAT.net.

Several weeks before this briefing, I had attended a briefing for Slavery Remembrance Day. Although focused on the history of slavery more than current issues, it touched on many of the same topics as the briefing on the International Day of the Girl Child. In summing up the presentations on the history of slavery and their relevance to the present, Kiyo Akasaka, Under Secretary General for Communications and Public Information (DPI), stated: “We humans don’t seem to learn from past mistakes,” noting war, holocausts and the slave trades of child soldiers and girls for sex. He expressed hope for the future with increased awareness through the use of modern technology and the many programs the United Nations has to combat these issues. For more information, go to www.un.org/en/events/slaveryremembranceday.

RESOURCES FOR GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING

Our articles in this issue are woven together by a common theme—the empowerment of women. As your editor began assembling this issue last October, including the announcement of the CTAUN Conference with its focus on social justice and reports from DKG NGO reps about the briefings they had attended, news reports everywhere were filled with details of the shooting in Pakistan by Taliban terrorists of a fifteen-year-old girl, Malala Yousafzae, whose offense was speaking out boldly about the importance of education for girls. As Nicholas Kristof wrote in his column in *The New York Times*, “Her ‘Crime’ Was Loving School.”

The Half the Sky Movement. Many of our readers may have seen the four-hour series on public television based on the book by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn: *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. This television series was shot in ten countries, with a crew accompanied by Kristof and a group of celebrities who are women’s rights advocates. A DVD of the television series was published on November 13, and may be purchased from Amazon as well as from the Half the Sky Movement website. Additional information about the Half the Sky Movement may be found on its website (halftheskymovement.org) along with the offer of a discussion guide to be used with the DVD.

Curriculum of Hope for a Peaceful World. We have referred several times in the past to the “Curriculum of Hope for a Peaceful World” newsletters, founded by DKG member Jeanne Morascini (CT) and an ongoing project for 25 years of the Connecticut state organization. The newsletters are now available on the Connecticut state website. Go to www.deltakappagamma.org/CT, scroll down the side menu to Publications, and click on Curriculum of Hope. For further information, contact Jeanne Morascini at jemora@aol.com.

YOUR UN REPRESENTATIVES

The members of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International listed below are your official representatives at the United Nations Department of Public Information and the Economic and Social Council. Most of them also work with CTAUN. You can email us for further information.

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