
Global Peace Services USA

...an idea whose time has come

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Greetings from John Eriksson, President, GPS USA

Welcome to this Fall 2008 edition of the Newsletter of Global Peace Services USA. This edition features a set of articles relating to "Nurses and Peacemaking." The article by GPS Board Member Professor Harry Yeide provides an historical introduction to the subject. The article by Board Member Inshirah Farhoud, MSN, conveys the perceptions and assessments of students and teachers of a one-semester elective course on "Nurses as Healers and Peacemakers" taught at Alverno College in Milwaukee by Ms. Farhoud and Professor Judeen Schulte, Dean of Nursing at Alverno. We introduce our new Board Member, Dr. Sovan Tun, at the end of this newsletter.

The GPS "Youth and Conflict" project, introduced in previous editions, is getting off the ground in Youngstown, OH, where Board Member Cecil Monroe is initiating an "Urban Youth Gardening Project." This project will initially involve youth aged 12-17 in urban settings in and around Youngstown. The youth, with mentoring from selected adult community leaders, will play key roles in designing and implementing the project, which is intended to orient youth to productive employment as an alternative to violent conflict, as well as to enhance nutrition. Cecil is mobilizing the support of local government, religious communities and the media. He aims to have the project "on the ground" for the Spring 2009 planting season. The youth project in Milwaukee, WI, under the leadership of Inshirah Farhoud, is seeking constructive solutions to conflict issues by involving youth in interfaith settings. The youth and conflict project will be featured in the next edition of the GPS Newsletter.

Nurses and Peacemaking

A major item in this Newsletter will be our work with the Nursing Program at Alverno College and we have received sufficient questions about this effort, that it seemed good to have a more general introduction to it. While this is hardly the place to run – even very swiftly – through the whole history of nursing, let us look quickly at some relatively recent events that suggest why we might be interested in Nurses and Peacemaking.

For English speaking persons, Florence Nightingale is both a heroine and really the model for nursing. She lived from 1820 through 1910, and is best known for her organization of nurses to attend the wounded in what we call the Crimean War. She organized a group of 38 nurses, and arrived in the theater of operations in October of 1854 (the selection of the 38 was consciously economically diverse and "interreligious" – as defined at the time). While today, there are those who would question her methods of nursing and the growth of fatalities for a time, she is remembered by both historians and poets as someone who did something that had never been done before.

Peacemakers are always upset by war and its carnage, and Florence Nightingale's response represented both a desire to help and to heal, and a judgment on traditional ways of doing things. This is celebrated as the first time that women

have been selected by the state to perform health-care responsibilities. It is not necessary to wait for the movement called "Feminism" to find this theme trumpeted. But one senses the still underdeveloped commitments to Peace and Women in words attributed to Sir Edward Cook; "A great commander was lost to England when Florence Nightingale was born a woman."

Of course, nurses have typically been members of a team, headed by a physician. There is an argument for arranging things that way, but this approach is now undergoing substantial change in our part of the world. While most of us still tend to feel that persons with more training and qualifications usually know what is best for patients, there are exceptions. I have read various professions of guilt by German nurses that they ought to have been more resistant to this traditional chain of command when in the Nazi years they did things they now regard as antithetical to their professional ethics. In our country, nurses have increasingly decided that it is necessary to speak collectively lest their voices be lost in the typical chain of command. It would be interesting to know whether the modest increase in male nurses, and the dramatic increase in female physicians are important in this regard. It could be that the former only give evidence of male dominance, while the latter moves the

The Board of Global Peace Services USA sees the GPS newsletter as a forum for a wide range of views on the many questions and concerns entailed in peace-building, peacemaking and peace service. We welcome ideas and opinions from a variety of perspectives, even if we do not necessarily concur with all the thoughts expressed. The GPS Board encourages you, our readers, to share with us your responses to the ideas and experiences presented in these pages. Please write, phone or e-mail us and let us know if you'd like us to publish your reflections in forthcoming newsletters.

other way. But it seems to me as likely that these are both professions that seem less interested in gender than earlier.

Some persons writing today conclude that women are, on average, more oriented to peace than men. Some say it is genetically determined, but one of the leading scholars in the field of Peace Studies, Elise Boulding, regards it more as a cultural development; there are matriarchal cultures in which the women seem quite violent, and peace cultures in which the men seem non-violent. Despite the changing makeup of the community of nurses, women are still a majority in this

profession, and we live now in a culture in which women seem less likely to be violent. The very activity of nursing and caring is an expression of nonviolent concern for both our familiar neighbor and the stranger. (As the reader might imagine, I question the wisdom of the spreading practice in nursing circles of speaking of “clients” rather than of “patients.”) Thus, I am pleased by the program at Alverno, and regard it as a natural extension of what GPS USA stands for.

Harry E. Yeide, Jr.

Nurses as Healers and Peacemakers

In the spring 2008 semester, Global Peace Services USA and the School of Nursing at Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin partnered in the development and presentation of a unique pilot course: *Nurses as Healers and Peacemakers*. Alverno College is a four year liberal arts college for women, chartered and sponsored by the School Sisters of St. Francis. The elective course for junior and senior nursing students was designed to enable the nurses-in-training to gain insights and develop the skills vital in addressing the many conflicts they will encounter as they practice their profession.

Alverno was uniquely situated to host the inauguration of the *Nurses as Healers* course. The college features a measurable, outcome-focused curriculum in which the individual student can grow as a learner, with students expected to succeed in meeting competency levels in a number of areas. Successful completion of the *Nurses as Healers* course enabled students to develop competencies in such areas as social interaction and developing a global perspective.

Taught by GPS Board member Inshirah Farhoud, MSN, and Dean of the Alverno School of Nursing, Judeen Schulte, Ph.D., *Nurses as Healers* met for two hours a week for 14 weeks, and granted two college credits. Student course evaluations indicated that the course was highly successful in helping the nursing students identify personal, social, spiritual and other peacemaking skills to promote the health and wellbeing of the many communities with which nurses interact, and the health and wellbeing of nurses, themselves. Important tools in developing these skills were the concepts in nursing educator Peggy Chinn’s volume, *Peace and Power* (7th edition, Jones and Bartlett, 2007), and an array of materials on such issues as peacebuilding processes, forgiveness and humanitarian aid. Experiential learning was a significant course component, helping students integrate and internalize their readings and their clinical nursing experiences. The class began every week with student reflections on current events and how these events could impact wellbeing. Students were invited to respond to their

classmates’ observations if they felt safe and comfortable. To further help move students forward in being present in spirit and body, every student was also provided the opportunity to reflect on any happenings in their own lives, which could influence their class participation. This practice proved to be a very important classroom experience, enabling all individuals to be honored and respected as classmates, peers and friends.

The course requirements, in addition to the required readings, included weekly journal reflections on the assigned readings and/or personal experiences, and a presentation on a peacemaker outside the class and his/her impact on society, describing how this peacemaker’s beliefs and activities can be applied to nursing practice.

Student journals chronicled the personal growth of each young woman as she learned to understand the many reasons for conflicts and possible interventions to foster both constructive conflict resolution and transformation. Students were also asked to present a peace praxis, and discuss how this praxis (action-reflection-action) had positively changed her life. The types of praxis undertaken by the nursing students included meditation, music, Yoga, and recitation of holy texts, accompanied by the use of visual and audio media. The capstone course component was a peace praxis poster presentation to the entire Alverno college community.

A subject of particular interest to many students was “lateral violence,” with students studying the February 2008 Center for American Nurses position paper on “Lateral Violence and Bullying in the Workplace.” Lateral violence, also known as horizontal violence or horizontal hostility, describes the physical, emotional or verbal abuse inflicted by an employee on another employee. The class identified the most common forms of lateral violence in nursing as: non-verbal innuendo, verbal affront, undermining activities, withholding information, sabotage, infighting, scapegoating, backbiting, the failure to respect privacy, and broken

confidences. Bullying and disruptive behavior were other workplace concerns explored in the class.

The culture of workplace safety, an issue addressed by the Institute of Medicine and a number of professional nursing associations, was another area of special interest to the nursing students. A culture of safety is characterized by open and respectful communication among all members of the health care team in order to provide safe patient care. Strengthening this culture can help counter workplace bullying and verbal abuse – forms of behavior which can negatively impact nursing performance and affect patient care.

Students in the *Nurses as Healers* course recognized that challenges they are experiencing in their work environment related to lateral violence, and chose to focus their final course projects on lateral violence in nursing. Through poster presentations during the college's final exams week, the students highlighted what they had learned and shared with the students, faculty and staff of the Alverno community their insights gained through a peacemaking prism.

In keeping with the course focus on creating a process which, in itself, promotes peacebuilding, students identified goals for the process of developing their final projects. These goals included: establishing the groundwork for building solidarity in group interactions; respecting individuality, equality and cooperation; putting forth collaborative effort to ensure that the final project was done

well; accepting differences; maintaining group identity by respecting values and protecting confidentiality of members; sharing for the purpose of empowering everyone; and having open and honest cooperation.

In their evaluations of *Nurses as Healers and Peacemakers*, students noted the course dynamism, stimulation and creativity; the very positive interaction between the two course faculty (exemplifying “peace in action” in the words of one student); the open discussion environment and the feeling of safety in the class; the peace praxis involving contributions from every student and learning so much about peers and themselves. Students enjoyed the guest presentations in the course (which included participation by two GPS Board Members from the Washington DC area at a class session in early March 2008), the respect shown for student opinion, class teamwork and learning how to make a difference and find inner peace.

Alverno College plans to offer the course again in the future, and Global Peace Services USA, over the next months, will be exploring opportunities to work with additional schools of nursing in adapting and offering *Nurses as Healers and Peacemakers* as a course in their own institutions.

Inshirah Farhoud

Introduction of New Board Member

We welcome Dr. Sovan Tun to the Board of GPS USA. First, we hear in Dr. Tun's own words why he accepted the invitation to join the Board.:

Happiness is to Join Global Peace Services

I was honored when I was asked to join the Board of Global Peace Services USA. I have known this organization since I participated in an inter-faith conference on peace at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in November 2005. I have followed its activities through its newsletters, and I strongly believe it has undertaken a noble mission. The logo of the GPS USA tells everything about its objective. It shows a variety of pieces of the puzzle that falls into a united one. How true it is in real life about the diversity. People of various backgrounds must live in harmony to achieve peace. Peace just does not happen without hard work. Hard work consists of dialogues among religious denominations in order to achieve mutual understanding

and to avoid the feeling that your own religion is the best. Hard work also consists of negotiations and conflict resolutions in order to promote cooperation and collaboration among nations and to avoid armed conflicts. Furthermore, hard work consists of bringing people together in order to promote discussions and to accept differences in ethnicity and culture. Each individual plays an important role in promoting peace. First, the individual must cultivate his/her own peace. Then, the peaceful behavior of that individual will affect other individuals in the family, in the community, in the country, and in the society as a whole. Thus, people can live in harmony and in peace. Ultimately, global peace can be achieved. I will try my best to further the mission of GPS USA because it fits well the purpose of my life, i.e. to promote peace around the world.

Dr. Tun is presently working at the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Previously, he worked at the U.S. Department of Treasury, U.S. Department of

Agriculture, the American Chemical Society, and the University of Maryland. Before he left Cambodia, he was a member of the National Economic Advisory Council of President Lon Nol of Cambodia. Dr. Tun received his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Tennessee. In Cambodia, he received his Licence-en-Droit (Law degree) from the Faculty of Law and Economic Sciences in Phnom Penh.

As a volunteer, Dr. Tun is President of the Cambodian Buddhist Society, Inc. at a Temple in Silver Spring,

Maryland, Advisor to the International Buddhist Committee of the Washington DC area and Vice President of the Washington DC Buddhist Network. He is also active in working with leaders of other religious faiths as Secretary of the Board of the InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington. Dr. Tun has been a Commissioner of the Maryland Governor's Commission of Asian and Pacific American Affairs since 1998. He is a member of the Asian American Health Initiative and a member of the Board of Trustees of Hospice Caring, Inc.

Global Peace Services USA

The newsletter of Global Peace Services USA is published quarterly. GPS USA is incorporated in the District of Columbia and is tax-exempt. Current board members are: Martin Benton, John Eriksson, Inshirah Farhoud, Cecil Monroe, Robert Muscat, Mindy Reiser, Sovan Tun, and Harry Yeide. We welcome contributions and comments. To contact us:

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