

Mission:

**Network for Peace,
Through Dialogue
creates opportunities
for individuals and
groups to engage in
constructive
conversation in an
atmosphere of
openness and mutual
respect.**



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Recent Dialogues Focus on Sex Trafficking

The traffic in human beings for labor and sex, particularly of woman and children, is the fastest growing illegal trade on the planet, generating around \$32 billion a year in revenue. Over the years, the Network has sponsored a number of dialogues with activists who have devoted themselves to rescuing the victims and/or trying to stop the traffic with legal remedies. A compilation of reports on these evenings, dating back to 2004 but unfortunately as relevant as ever, can be found on our website.

In June, internationally renowned anti-trafficking activist Sr. Eugenia Bonetti talked to us at a dialogue at Marymount Manhattan College where she was joined by three New York activists, Carol Smolenski of ECPAT, Taina Ben-Aime of Equality Now, and Dorchen Leidholdt of Sanctuary for Families. Over 70 people attended.

After the presentations the participants, almost all women, formed small groups in which to digest and analyze what they had heard, as well as to network. This is a critical component of a Living Room Dialogue – the portion of the evening where the dialogue takes place. One thing that emerged from these conversations was interest in what drives the “demand” side of sex trafficking, and how to engage more men in the issue.

Participants were invited to continue the discussion on our blog and to use it to inform people in our network of events and actions. A full report of the event can be found there and on our website.

Coalitions in the Philippines

Later in June, Sharon Tiongco, director of a Philippine NGO, talked to us about efforts of NGOs to work with government agencies to combat human trafficking there. A report of this evening is also on the website and on the blog. Following are short excerpts from these interesting reports:

“In 1993, Sister Eugenia Bonetti returned to Turin, Italy after 24 satisfying years of missionary service in Africa. She was surprised to find prostitutes on every street corner, she told participants in a Living Room Dialogue, and discovered that this was the case in every Italian city and all over the countryside.

“At first, she felt annoyed with the women on the streets because she was convinced that they chose to be there. Then, after meeting Maria, a woman trafficked from Nigeria who came to her asking for help, she learned that the women were forced into prostitution. Maria became her teacher, taking her into the streets and introducing her to the harsh life faced by the women she had scorned.

(Continued on p. 3)

From the Director

Last June we launched a new program called “Dialogue: Not Argument!” based on our time-honored Living Room Dialogues. In it we focus on a single topic for a series of sessions and encourage continuing discussion on the internet through our Blog and Facebook. The first topic was “Modern Slavery: The Secret World of Trafficking of Women,” and we were most fortunate that Sr. Eugenia Bonetti, an internationally known anti-trafficking activist who was visiting in New York, could take time to tell us about her work and open a dialogue. The evening was a spectacular success: For details see page 1.

After the meeting, we got responses from many people who attended. Here is a sampling:

Kiersten Ellefsen, one of Media4Humanity interns who helped out during the evening, wrote: *I just wanted to thank you again for the wonderful opportunity to attend and help at your event last night. Sister Eugenia and the three panel members presented excellent and interesting insights into human trafficking that I will certainly carry with me. The opportunity for us to engage in group discussion was also great and I was able to take a lot away from the topics we covered in our group.*

Sr. Rita Arthur, RSHM representative at the United Nations NGO, wrote: *Thanks for helping out with the requested information for Sr. Eugenia. Great to be able to network with such ease!*

Taina Bien-Amie, Executive Director, Equality Now, wrote: *It was an honor to be among such incredibly passionate activists. We have begun a wave that will one day turn into a groundswell of change.*

Dorchen Leidholdt, Executive Director of Sanctuary for Families, wrote: *Last night’s event was fantastic. I was so impressed with the level of knowledge and commitment of the women and men attending.*

The next topic in the series will be Understanding Islam. See details in the “Coming Up” column.

We are interested in your ideas. Contact us with other topics you think we need to talk about.

—Virginia Dorgan

Coming Up

Oct. 4 (Tuesday) *Faith and Culture* :
 UNDERSTANDING ISLAM SERIES,
 Marymount Manhattan College*
 5:30 – 7:30 PM in the Chapel
Imam Yusuf Hasan will lead a dialogue distinguishing between elements of faith in Islam and various cultural practices among Islamic peoples.

Oct 12 (Tuesday) *Fasts and Feasts*:
 UNDERSTANDING ISLAM SERIES,
 Marymount Manhattan College*
 5:30 – 7:30 PM in the Chapel
An outline of the practices in various religions with an opportunity to compare and contrast in dialogue.

Oct 26 (Wednesday) *Recognition Night*
 6:30-9 PM
 Marymount School
 Fifth Avenue at 84 St., NYC
 \$100, \$150 for couples

Nov 29 (Tuesday) *Social Doctrine for Peoples of the Book*:
 UNDERSTANDING ISLAM SERIES
 Marymount Manhattan College*
 5:30 – 7:30 PM in the Chapel
The Torah, New Testament, and Koran are sacred books of the religions stemming from the Abrahamic tradition. Each of them tell how people should live in society. How do they differ in this regard?

*Marymount Manhattan College
 221 E. 71st St., NYC
 (Between 2nd and 3d Avenues0

Please Pre-register at least 5 days before the session by calling 212-426-5818 or e-mailing info@networkforpeace.com

Network for Peace through Dialogue is a 501(c)3 organization and depends on individual contributions. Any contribution you can make in cash, stock, or a bequest will help to further our work. The address and phone number are on the cover of this newsletter. Thank you.



Sharon Tiongco

(Continued from p. 1)

“...Since that time, Sr. Eugenia has built a network of nuns who are on the frontlines of the battle against trafficking in persons – offering shelter, material security and pastoral care to thousands of its victims. The network includes some 250 sisters from 70 congregations who operate 100 shelters throughout Italy and deal with rehabilitation, social reintegration and protection of victims. She believes that these “women helping women” have saved more than 6,000 victims....”

“In the Philippines, older women promising good jobs go into rural areas and lure young ones into labor and sex trafficking networks. Mothers, trusting other women, are pleased to send off their daughters into what seems like a better life, and, since migration in search of work is commonplace in the country, it all seems normal.

“But behind these seemingly normal transactions among women are vast shadowy organizations...., Sharon Tiongco told participants in a Living Room Dialogue June 13 at Marymount School. Nobody knows who is behind the industry, she said, and the more one finds out about it, the more complex and intractable it seems. And because it can appear to be normal economic activity, in the Philippines some people in the government appear willing to enable it, so that it happens that the Department of Foreign Affairs at times issues passports that facilitate the traffic.

“However, a number of organizations in the Philippines, non-governmental organizations working with government agencies like the Philippine Ports Authority, local police and some local government bodies, have begun to tackle the problem together from different angles....”

Read the full reports at www.networkforpeace.com

SPONSORS FOR RECOGNITION NIGHT 2011

“Stop the Traffic — in Humans”

Honoring Melanie Siben and Media4Humanity and their mission to eradicate child trafficking

I want to be a sponsor for Recognition Night

Circle one

\$2,000 \$1,000 \$500 other

Major donors of \$1,000 and over may use their donations to bid on our bigger auction items.

**And then the send donation to:
Network for Peace through Dialogue
240 E. 93d St., #3H, NY, NY 10128**

One item this year is a 6 day-6 night African Safari for two, with bidding beginning at \$950.

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A Media4Humanity Summer

By Kate Brennan, Brown University

This summer has harbored so many memories. Very early on, the interns and I had the opportunity to work the New York Press Club Awards Dinner at The Water Club in Manhattan. A huge highlight of the evening was when Kiersten and I had the opportunity to meet Mayor Bloomberg after he gave a small speech. We were able to shove as much information about Media 4 Humanity and human trafficking into our 30 second interaction as we could. All our preparation to give 30-second pitches really came in handy.

My favorite thing that we did as Summer Interns was lead a jewelry seminar with the women of the Coalition for the Homeless. I had no expectations before the workshop began, but it quickly turned into an experience I will always remember. The “us teaching them” structure quickly disbanded, and the room became one of mutual learning and understanding. We spoke to these women less about stone types and wire bending and more about the common threads in our lives: internships, jobs, learning, home towns, and commuting (but also, of course, how beautiful the jewelry they made was!).

The most rewarding aspect of this internship for me has been the bonds I have created with my fellow interns. I could not have asked for a better group of smart, independent and bright women to work with this summer.... From taking trips to the South Bronx to reorganize the library at our adopted school to getting stuck in the middle of a torrential downpour in the middle of Chinatown before our Networking Event, each trip was an adventure full of nonstop laughter and learning experiences. I am going to miss each intern so much, and believe with all my heart that each one is going to do incredible things in the future.

I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to be a summer intern for such a dedicated organization. This internship has opened my eyes to the horrors of the world, but also the incredible people who are working to end them. We were guided by an incredible woman and leader, Melanie Siben. She has really given each of us a platform to expand ourselves as thinkers and young professionals. Her spirit and dedication to end trafficking was inspiring. It was an absolutely unforgettable summer.

The Network Welcomes New Staff Member



Kelly James

Kelly James joined our staff in August as Office Manager and immediately showed herself to be both super-competent and attuned to our work.

Since graduating from NYU in political science, she has worked as a constituent liaison in the offices of Sec. of State Hillary Clinton, then a senator, and current New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. She worked with immigrants in both situations.

In those jobs, her talent for listening well, a key dialogue skill, helped her both to understand the problems of the immigrants who contacted her and to communicate their struggles effectively to the senators and sometimes to the U.S. Immigration Department. Some of the immigrants were willing to tell their stories, some were too angry to communicate clearly. It was necessary to be open to what people had to say and then to be able to relay information to them in ways that they were able to hear.

We were very sorry to see Bret Nelson, our former Office Manager and writer of essays for this newsletter, depart. After three years with us he goes to Freedom House, which promotes democracy around the world, and he continues his graduate studies in Middle Eastern affairs and Arabic.



**Melanie Siben
(l), with former
intern
Kassie Deng**

“Stop the Traffic – in Humans” is the Theme for Recognition Night

Over the summer, the Network sponsored two dialogues confronting what some are calling “a modern form of slavery” -- the trafficking of human beings, most especially women and children, across the globe. It’s a business so profitable that it ranks with the illegal arms trade in the billions of dollars it generates for organized crime, and it’s growing even faster.

While planning these events, we were introduced to Media4Humanity. This organization, founded by Melanie Siben, a former TV news correspondent, is dedicated to eradicating child trafficking, starting in America. In its program, college interns research the issue of trafficking and acquire many skills they can use to address social problems. Several interns came to our events, helping to organize refreshments and sharing their knowledge.

As we learned more about Melanie and her work to combat this great social evil, we were so impressed that we wanted to honor her and Media4Humanity at this year’s Recognition Night, which will take place Oct. 26. Some of this year’s new interns will also be involved, helping to design the evening’s program in ways that will be informative and engaging.

Tomorrow’s Leaders

Melanie regards the young women and men she trains as leaders of tomorrow. She brings them together with members of the press, legislators and celebrities as well as everyday people like the at-risk children at a Bronx public school, formerly homeless women, and female survivors of trafficking. The interns prepare and rehearse quick presentations of the issues, “Human Trafficking 101” as they call it, so they can communicate information effectively as they network at events or campaign in the street.

The organization focuses on prevention, addressing the factors that can make young women AND men vulnerable to predators, such as poverty, environmental catastrophes, sexual abuse, and limited language skills. The shorthand letters that describe the program are R.E.A.L., which stand for Rescue (activities like sending aid to New Orleans after Katrina); Empowerment (confidence-building activities for girls and young women at risk); Awareness (bringing facts to the attention of the media and general public), and Legislative (lobbying in Washington and in state houses).

An internship at Media4Humanity is a major commitment. To be accepted, an intern must have a GPA of 3.4 or higher and be willing to work 6 to 12 hours a week. In return they learn such skills as fundraising, grant writing, event planning, media monitoring, community action and networking. On p. 4 you will find Kate Brennan’s description of some of the activities interns engaged in this summer.

Sr. Eugenia Bonetti (center) with her assistant Amy Roth and Media4Humanity interns (l to r): Abigail White, Kate Brennan and Leora Kaufman



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Network for Peace through Dialogue

Recognition Night 2011

Wednesday, October 26, 6:30—9:00 pm

Marymount School, Fifth Avenue at 84th St., NYC

Donation \$100, \$150 for couples



THE TRAFFIC
in humans

**Honoring Melanie Siben and Media4Humanity
for assisting college students, the leaders of tomorrow,
to publicize and lobby against a modern form of slavery
—global trafficking in human beings for labor and sex.**

**RSVP to Network for Peace through Dialogue, 240 E. 93d St., #3H, NY 10128
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