

# CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM YOUTH LEADERSHIP GRANTS

6<sup>th</sup> Annual Award Ceremony



A collaboration between the  
Fund for the Future of Our Children (FFC)  
and  
Campus Ministry, Georgetown University

*Stranger!*

*if you passing,*

*meet me, and*

*desire to speak to me,*

*why should you not speak to me?*

*And why should I not speak to you?*

- Walt Whitman, inscription to *Leaves of Grass*

The 2010-2011 FFC Children of Abraham  
Youth Leadership Grants asks . . .

**YOUTH** to put

*WELCOMING the STRANGER*

into **ACTION**

# IN HOW MANY WAYS CAN WE WELCOME THOSE WHO ARE . . . .

Different

Unfamiliar

Strange

Unknown

Foreign

New

Unusual

Unexplored

. . . TO US?



The Young Leaders  
We Honor Today Have  
Their Own Ideas



WE CAN LISTEN AND LEARN, FOLLOW AND LEAD . . .



WE CAN INVEST IN AND SUPPORT THIS PRO-ACTIVE SPIRIT



*“The process of writing the essay for FFC opened my eyes to the great similarities between the three Abrahamic faiths, contrary to what I originally believed were three very distinct religions.”*

Reflection of Tala Ahmadi  
Glenelg Country School

*“This project has helped me realize that service is an opportunity, not an obligation. And I'd like to share that opportunity with everyone.”*

Reflection of Hannah Ball-Brau  
Washington International School



*“I realized how hard my grandmother works with her school, so the future of Pakistan may be well-educated. I used to go to the school as a child, thinking of ways to give back just like my grandmother. Today, I have realized that not only can I give back, I can give back through the very school that inspired me to do so.”*

Reflection of  
Minahil Choudry  
Glenelg Country School





Reflection of Clara Eder  
James Madison High School

*“The Abrahamic faiths teach acceptance of others, regardless of differences. In today’s world, countless people are ostracized from their communities. By following the examples laid down by Abrahamic faiths, we can welcome these strangers into our societies.”*



Reflection of Lital Firestone  
Walter Johnson High School

*“Using your personal gifts to give back to the world is a responsibility and a gift as well . . . a significant way to share this gift is to learn to accept the differences among people and groups of people, particularly culture and faith, and to use each difference to create acts of caring and welcoming towards others.”*

*“This process has motivated and inspired me to think deeper and strengthen my faith that I will achieve my goal of establishing an Educational Center for the Maasai Girls in Kenya.”*



Reflection of Kikanae Punyua  
Glenelg Country School

*“I have always wanted to help the people in Pakistan get rid of poverty; providing education is the best way for that. Through this essay I have learned more about myself and how passionate I am about the topic of the lack education in third world countries.”*



Reflection of Aleena Warich  
Glenelg Country School



Reflection of World Cultures Latin  
America/Africa Class, Hudson High  
School

*“Our hearts break as we watch these complete strangers. Our teenage hearts are filled with more compassion than we would ever be able to explain . . . We look around the room at each other, all experiencing the same overwhelming feeling. We have to do something . . . “*

# 2011 YOUTH LEADERSHIP MATCHING GRANT RECIPIENTS



**CONGRATULATIONS!**



**Fahad Ahsan** is a senior at Glenelg Country School in Ellicott City, MD.

Fahad applied his 2010 micro-grant to Ecuadent, which sends medical specialists to Ecuador to surgically repair people's birth defects.

In 2010 disastrous floods struck Fahad's parent's home of Pakistan, so he shifted his focus to the displaced people of Pakistan and raised more than \$1,000. Fahad's fundraising efforts and a 2011 matching grant from FFC will benefit the Special Education and Training Center in Lahore, a school which both houses and educates impoverished students.



**Victor Crentsil** initiated **Help to Orphans (H<sub>2</sub>O)** in 2010 to assist an orphanage in Haiti with clean water. He has raised over \$2,900 through the sale of water and water bottles and a donation from the Church of the Resurrection in Ellicott City, MD. With a 2011 matching grant H<sub>2</sub>O plans to begin construction of the water system this summer.

Victor is a junior at Glenelg Country School.

**Veronica Ferris** is a senior at Washington International School.



For her 2009-2010 entry, Veronica proposed **Youth Dinners With Shelter Residents**. She was awarded the initial grant of \$1,000, and then raised an additional \$2,300. FFC awarded Veronica her matching grant last summer.



**Youth Dinners With Shelter Residents** brings students together once a month to plan, shop for and prepare a healthy meal at St. Paul's Lutheran Church for the men who are residents at the church's shelter.

Rishabh started **Health for Haiti** and raised over **\$1,100** in response to the January 2010 earthquake and resulting life-threatening health issues. The money raised went to the building of a new health clinic in Camp Coq, Haiti and renovating a school. At a school fundraiser, Rishabh and other students were successful in raising an additional \$2,000.

The 2011 matching grant from FFC will provide continued funding for the health clinic.



**Rishabh Khatri** is a junior at Glenelg Country School.

**Social Action For Everyone (SAFE)** was by started Danny Roza, Shayna Solomon and Sarah Schwartz with the assistance of a 2010 micro-grant from FFC to bring Muslim, Christian, and Jewish teens together to participate in various service projects.



# THE FOUNDERS OF SAFE SOCIAL ACTION FOR EVERYONE



**Sarah Schwartz** is a senior at Montgomery Blair High School and plans to attend Princeton University in the fall.

**Shayna Solomon** is a junior in the Communications Arts Program at Montgomery Blair High School.



**Danny Roza** is a senior at Mercersburg Academy. He plans to attend Yale University in the fall.

# PREVIOUS YOUTH LEADERSHIP MICRO-GRANT RECIPIENTS



Since 2006, the remarkable initiative displayed by participants in FFC's programs motivated FFC to invest in both the particular projects the youth have undertaken and also their personal development as our future leaders.

**Diana Jeang** created a high school-based carbon offset program ([greentradingnow.com](http://greentradingnow.com)). Students' carbon footprints are calculated for each school break, and the students are asked to contribute a dollar-for-tree equivalent to the Arbor Day Foundation, an organization that plants one tree in an American national forest for every dollar it receives in donations.

Diana was a 2008-2009 micro-grant recipient and is now a student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD.



**Andrew Franklin** used his 2008-2009 micro-grant to construct a sustainable rooftop greenhouse and a garden in a vacant lot near The Baltimore Station, a homeless shelter and recovery/ rehabilitation center for former drug addicts. The greenhouse serves as an urban agricultural and educational center for the immediate community.



Andrew is studying at Duke University in North Carolina and received the Bentley Tomorrow 25 Service Award in 2010 from Bentley University in Massachusetts.



Laila is currently studying at Brown University in Rhode Island.

**Laila Handoo** used her 2008-2009 micro-grant for her work with the Human Effort for Love and Peace Foundation (H.E.L.P. Foundation) to make a difference in the lives of Kashmiri women and children suffering from the mental illness, hopelessness, and depression that results from the conditions of war.

Her work includes opening a dialogue in schools that will increase awareness of the problem of mental illness and reduce the estrangement from their communities.



**Devika Jaipurkar** created a comic book called “Earth Girl!” that teaches children the basics of environmental awareness. She traveled to many elementary schools, including the Ryan International School in Delhi, India, sharing Earth Girl’s message of healthy social living and responsible environmental stewardship. Devika was awarded her micro-grant in 2008.



Devika is now a student at SUNY Binghamton University in New York.

**Jonathan Kesten**, a 2008 micro-grant recipient, worked with School Girls Unite (SGU), a non-profit organization that seeks to prioritize global girls' education by raising funds to educate underprivileged girls and spreading awareness within their communities about the lack of education of worldwide.

With a \$1,000 micro-grant from FFC, Jonathan helped to organize two benefit concerts that raised nearly \$5,000, enough to support over 80 young women in Mali, Africa, to attend school for one year.



Jonathan is a student at Georgetown University.

**Priya Agarwal-Harding** worked with an organization in India called PRAYAS, which offers shelter and other aid to victims of child-trafficking. Priya was able to spend some time during the winter of 2007-2008 working with PRAYAS. The organization has launched a project they are calling “Girls’ Empowerment” (G-Power for short) in honor of her effort. Priya raised a total of \$8,500 over two years, and continues to work with the project today.



Priya was a 2007 micro-grant recipient and is attending Wellesley College in Massachusetts.



**Melissa Mergner** is now a Martin Luther King Jr. scholar at New York University, where she is a sophomore at the Tisch School of Film & Television. She has written and directed several short documentaries and her films have won awards or have been shown at over 50 film festivals.

Her 2007 micro-grant funding permitted her to produce “Forgotten War, Unforgettable Aftermath” about the Korean War. She also worked with Priya Agarwal-Harding to produce “Rebuilding Broken Lives – My Story with PRAYAS,” a film about child-trafficking in India, and the work that Priya has done with PRAYAS.

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