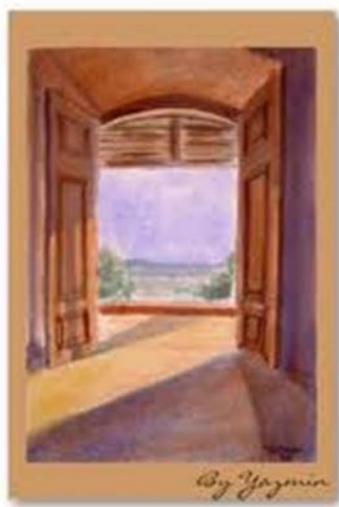


*6<sup>th</sup> Annual Children of Abraham  
Award Ceremony  
"Welcoming the Stranger"*



*Fund for the Future of our Children  
and  
Campus Ministry  
Georgetown University*

*Sunday, May 1, 2011, 2-4pm  
Riggs Library, Healy Hall  
Georgetown University*

## *Welcome Friends . . .*

On behalf of the Fund for the Future of our Children (FFC) and our supporters and partners, I welcome you and thank you for joining us at the sixth annual Children of Abraham Award Ceremony. This year marks a change and growth for FFC in that our applicants did not just submit a thoughtful essay on our topic, but also a youth-driven project showing how best to put into practice “welcoming the stranger.” Your continued encouragement of the young leaders we honor today contributes greatly to the interfaith dialogue and understanding we all envision.

I would like to extend a special welcome to Arsalan Iftikhar and to express our gratitude to him for being with us today to share in this celebration of inter-faith youth dialogue.

The Children of Abraham project would never have been realized without the support of our generous patrons, Mrs. Josephine F. Ammerman and Mr. Andrew R. Ammerman, and the Georgetown University Campus Ministry, as well as the members of our Advisory Committee, our distinguished panel of Kick-Off presenters (see pg. 8), and online mentors whose gift of time and knowledge has been invaluable to us. This program would obviously not be possible without the encouragement of the teachers of the student applicants. Thank you.

It is with great pride and pleasure that we welcome the young applicants who have devoted so much time, energy, and thought to the exploration of the role of “welcoming the stranger” in the Abrahamic traditions. We look forward to hearing what this concept means to them and how they see themselves as agents of peace in our world.

Peace, Shalom, and Asalam alaikum,  
Avideh Shashaani

President, Fund for the Future of our Children

## **About the Fund for the Future of our Children**

Already we know that the next generation of leaders will face daunting challenges in striving to secure peace, in establishing social justice, in caring for the environment, in demonstrating compassion and welcoming those who are unknown to or different from us. Since 1993, the Fund for the Future of our Children (FFC) has taken as its mission the support and encouragement of leadership qualities in today's youth. In the past, FFC promoted its vision through a variety of projects, including a national tour of the Copenhagen Boys' Choir to raise awareness of children's issues, and a series of peace workshops in area schools by Israeli and Palestinian youth and the display of their art in Washington, DC.

As its vision has evolved, FFC has adapted its strategies. Since the first Children of Abraham Peace Essay Contest in 2005, high school students have been invited to explore questions about the commonalities among the Abrahamic faiths. This year's expanded program not only includes an essay but also a youth-led community project which brings to life the deep teachings of the Abrahamic faiths.

FFC believes that young people, not having yet developed a "self-interest" perspective on the world, can bring forth a multitude of changes in our society, and that investing in this group goes a long way. FFC wishes to encourage and support this pro-active spirit and awards leadership grants to qualifying applicants. Additional \$1,000 matching grants are also available to students who raise \$1000 toward their project.

Our work would not be possible without the dedicated commitment of our friends and supporters, the students, parents, teachers, school administrators, clergy, scholars, and other professionals who have given so freely of their time, support, and encouragement.

# **Children of Abraham Award Ceremony**

## ***Musical Offering***

Lena Seikaly

## ***Welcome***

Father Kevin O'Brien, S.J.,

*Executive Director, Campus Ministry, Georgetown University*

Andrew R. Ammerman

*FFC Patron and Board of Regents, Georgetown University*

## ***Offering of Prayer in Honor of Holocaust Remembrance Day***

Rabbi A. Nathan Abramowitz

*Faculty, Theology Department, Georgetown University*

## ***Keynote Address***

Arsalan Iftikhar

## ***Introduction of 2010-2011 Youth Leadership Finalists***

Dana Alsaadi

*2005-2006 Award Recipient and Undergraduate Student,*

*Georgetown University's School of Nursing and Health Studies*

## ***Introduction of Matching Grant Recipients***

David Weeks

*Civic Leadership Director, Glenelg Country School*

## ***Presentation of 2010-2011 Children of Abraham Youth Leadership Grants and Matching Grants***

Andrew R. Ammerman and Dana Alsaadi

## ***Closing and Candlelight Ceremony***

Lena Seikaly, Musical Offering

***Reception Immediately Following***

## ARSALAN IFTIKHAR, Keynote Speaker



Arsalan Iftikhar is an international human rights lawyer and global media commentator. Arsalan is a regular weekly political commentator/legal analyst for the National Public Radio (NPR) show "Tell Me More" with Michel Martin. He is also a regular contributing writer for CNN's "Anderson Cooper 360" on domestic and international issues affecting our world today and

*Esquire Magazine* (Middle East edition).

His interviews, commentaries and analyses have regularly appeared in virtually every major media outlet around the world including: CNN, BBC World News, The TODAY Show, National Public Radio (NPR), FOX News Channel, MSNBC, Associated Press, C-SPAN, Voice of America (VOA), Agence France-Presse (AFP), *USA TODAY*, NBC Nightly News, *The Washington Post*, ABC World News Tonight, *Los Angeles Times*, CBS News Up to the Minute, *The New York Times*, Rolling Stone, TIME, The Economist and Newsweek magazines (among dozens others worldwide). Additionally, Arsalan is also a featured expert 'Voice' (along with Donald Trump and Deepak Chopra) for [Intent.com](http://Intent.com).

In March 2008, Arsalan was one of four international debaters selected to participate in *The Doha Debates* on BBC World News Television. As a September 2008 Christian Science Monitor 9/11 anniversary profile of Arsalan would report about the final voting outcome of the March 2008 Doha Debates: "[Arsalan] and his partner won the debate..." with a final television audience vote of 70.4% to 29.6%.

Arsalan is the founder of [TheMuslimGuy.com](http://TheMuslimGuy.com) and global managing editor of the [CrescentPost.com](http://CrescentPost.com), a recently launched a global news portal bringing media stories about the 'Muslim Street' together in one place.

## 2010-2011 Topic - “Welcoming the Stranger”

Much in today’s world makes people strangers. Many people are dislocated and made immigrants or refugees through “economic development,” ecological disasters, famine, poverty, war and violence. Displaced persons are often separated from families and face poverty. Still others, while perhaps not homeless, feel like exiles and seek a sense of home, tradition and community.

The Abrahamic traditions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) have passed along wisdom on how to treat such “strangers” to our nation or community. The teachings of these faiths have been exemplified in the lives of their leaders (Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad). This year’s essays and projects focus on what can be learned from these traditions, the lives of their leaders, and how one can apply this wisdom to our contemporary societies.

In 2009, nearly 43.3 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced due to conflict and persecution. This is the highest number since the mid-1990s. This number includes 15.2 million refugees, 27.1 million internally displaced persons, and nearly 1 million individuals whose asylum application had not yet been adjudicated by the end of the reporting period.

Who are “displaced people”?

- **Refugee** - an individual who flees to a foreign country or power to escape danger or persecution.
- **Internally displaced persons** - people or groups of individuals who have been forced to leave their homes or places of residence, in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights, or natural- or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an international border.

\*\* Taken from <http://data.worldbank.org/news/43mil-people-worldwide-displaced-in-2009>

## 2010-2011 Distinguished Panel of Kick-Off Speakers

On November 1, 2010 the 2010-2011 Youth Leadership Grants was formally launched with an online Kick-Off of recorded presentations and additional resources from a distinguished panel of speakers from three faiths and community development.

We are in great appreciation of these individual's perspectives, thoughtful reflection and time taken to share their wisdom.



**Fr. Kevin O'Brien, S.J.**, joined the Campus Ministry staff at Georgetown University in August 2008 as its Executive Director. He also serves as a Jesuit-in-Residence in Copley Hall. Most recently, Fr. O'Brien served as associate pastor at Holy Trinity Parish in Washington. A graduate of Georgetown University (C '88), Fr. O'Brien earned his law degree from

the University of Florida and served as a corporate litigator before joining the Society of Jesus in 1996. He earned his M.A. in Philosophy from Fordham University, an M.Div. and an S.T.L. from the Weston Jesuit School of Theology, and was ordained as a priest in 2006.



**David Fraccaro** works as an immigration specialist with the Interfaith Youth Core ([www.ifyc.org](http://www.ifyc.org)) in Chicago through IFYC's new "Stranger to Neighbor" initiative, which seeks to build greater interfaith collaboration and friendship between diverse communities of faith and their immigrant/refugee neighbors.



**Arsalan Iftikhar** is an international human rights lawyer, global media commentator, founder of [MuslimGuy.com](http://MuslimGuy.com) and global managing editor of the [CrescentPost.com](http://CrescentPost.com). Additionally, Arsalan is a regular weekly political commentator and legal analyst for the National Public Radio show "Tell Me More" with Michel Martin and he is also a regular contributing writer for *Esquire Magazine* (Middle East edition) and CNN's "Anderson Cooper 360."



**Emily Gantz McKay** is Mosaica's ([mosaica.org](http://mosaica.org)) Founding President and CEO with nearly 40 years of experience helping nonprofit organizations become sustainable and provide high-quality services. Emily gained much of her experience with community-based nonprofits during her 16 years on the senior staff of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR).



**Rabbi Jack Moline** is the Rabbi at the Agudas Achim Congregation in Alexandria, VA ([agudasachim-va.org](http://agudasachim-va.org)) and Chair of the Board of The Interfaith Alliance. He is the author of two books and a frequent contributor to radio, television and newspaper coverage of religious affairs.





**Dr. Eboo Patel**, named by US News & World Report as one of America's Best Leaders of 2009, is the founder and President of Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC), [www.ifyc.org](http://www.ifyc.org), a Chicago-based institution building the global interfaith youth movement.



**Rabbi David Saperstein**, designated in *Newsweek's* 2009 list as the most influential rabbi in the country and described in a *Washington Post* profile as "the quintessential religious lobbyist on Capitol Hill," Rabbi David Saperstein represents the national Reform Jewish Movement to Congress and the Administration as the Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism ([rac.org](http://rac.org)).

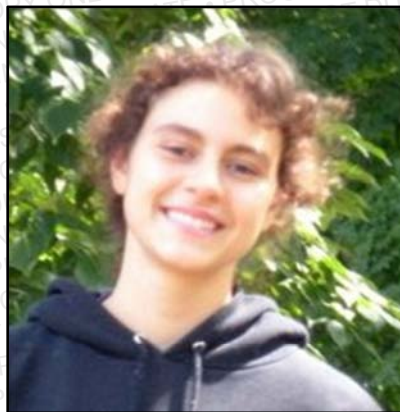
## ABOUT THE 2010-2011 GRANT RECIPIENTS



**Tala Ahmadi** is a sophomore at Glenelg Country School. Her heritage is a mix between Iranian and American, and she is bi-lingual in English and Farsi. Tala is a member of the Glenelg Country School mock trial team, and thoroughly enjoys debate. She has a passion for service to the community as well as the world through bringing happiness and safety to others.

She greatly enjoys international travel and enriching her own life with an understanding of various cultures and traditions. She loves to write as well as read literature from all time periods and from all the continents of the world. Tala's Essay and Project is ***The Uniting of Strangers through the Enjoyment of Soccer.***

Tala's Reflection – *The process of writing the essay for the Fund for the Future of Our Children opened my eyes to the great similarities between the three Abrahamic faiths, contrary to what I originally believed were three very distinct religions.*



**Hannah Ball-Brau** - My name is Hannah Ball-Brau and I am originally from Baltimore, where I attended both private and public school. I relocated 2 years ago and now live in DC with my mother. As an 11th grader at the Washington International School, I am in the IB program. I am especially interested math and for the second summer in a row I will

be attending the Canada/USA Mathcamp for five weeks. I play varsity volleyball and in my free time enjoy cooking, baking, and sharing my food with people. I learned about hospitality through my experiences at a small inner city church in Baltimore. I am currently a member of Luther Place Church in DC where I often share the food I make. Hannah's Essay and Project is **Hospitality by the Homeless**.

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



**Minahil Choudry** – I am a 16 year old student at Glenelg Country School. I was born in the United States, yet moved to Lahore, Pakistan when I was in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade till 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Living abroad in a third world country, I went to an international school, which allowed me to experience a different culture. I also witnessed poverty, seeing that Pakistan is a developing country, and not many people can achieve a higher education. I

was deeply influenced by my grandmother, Durdana Shahzad since she runs a tuition free school for children right outside of Lahore. Getting to know the school has most definitely transformed me into the person I am today. Minahil's Essay and Project is **Opening Doors with Open Minds**.

Minahil's Reflection - *After reading the question I started to look at religion in a way that I had never thought of before. I realized that those who follow a religion, no matter what race, color or creed they may be, share similar values, ethics and feelings toward a higher power. I also realized how hard my grandmother*

actually works with her school, *Isfundyar Model School* and the children in that school, so the future of Pakistan may be well-educated and informed. 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.



**Clara Eder** - A sophomore at James Madison High School, Clara can usually be found in the props room of the Madison drama department. When she ventures out into the world, she participates in her school's Amnesty International chapter as treasurer and works as a costumed interpreter at a colonial living history museum. She also enjoys reading and

playing guitar. She hopes to study genetics in the future. Clara's Essay and Project is ***Act for Autism***.

Clara's Reflection - *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.*



**Lital Firestone** is a 16 year old sophomore at Walter Johnson High School. After participating in the Humanities and Communications Magnet Program at Eastern Middle School, she moved to be a part of the APEX Scholars Program at WJHS. In middle school Lital and

two peers competed at National History Day, and were National finalists with their play on McCarthyism. Lital has participated in a performing ensemble for five years, and performs in various musical theater shows. She is also a member of WJ's mock trial team, which competed at finals for the first time this year. Lital's Essay and Project is **Teens Unite for Troops**.

*Lital's Reflection - Using your personal gifts to give back to the world is a responsibility and a gift as well. I believe that 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.*



**Kikanae Punyua** - I am a senior at Glenelg Country School and originally from Kenya. I came to America two years ago as an exchange student through American Field Service (AFS) an organization that promotes cultural exchange among youth all over the world, Muslims, Jewish, Hindus and Christians. The AFS experience changed my whole life of how I view people from different cultures

and religions. It opened my eyes to see that we are all created by the same creator and we should work together to make the Earth a better place for all. I am also a member of the Maasai tribe with a family of ten siblings, seven brother and three sisters. In the Maasai community women are discriminated against and my hope is that my three young sisters will have a chance to complete school and help others in need. Kikanae's Essay and long-term Project is **Hospitality/ Osiligi (Hope) Foundation**.

Kikanae's Reflection - *The application process and getting information from FFC's website 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.*



**Aleena Warich** – I am a student at Glenelg Country School currently in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. My parents are from Pakistan and I was born in Arlington, VA. I am a Muslim girl who believes that everyone is equal and that success only comes through hard work, passion and hope. I am an endearing, cordial and diligent student who sets her goals and makes every possible stride to accomplish the feat. Visiting Pakistan every year I

developed a compassionate feeling toward people suffering from poverty and living their lives as beggars. I have always wanted to do something to change that. Aleena's Essay and Project is **A Better Future for the Stranger.**

*Aleena's Reflection - From this essay contest I have learned that there are people who want to help you achieve your dream but you have to work hard for it. 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.*



## **Hudson High School, World Cultures Latin America/Africa Class, Hudson, MA.**

The World Cultures Class' Essay and Project is **Schools for Sudan.**

**Matt Bouvier** has been a student of the arts since grade school. Matt began singing in the 9th grade and has not stopped since. He recently performed in the Massachusetts Districts Choir, and then proceeded to the Massachusetts All-State Choir. Matt has also been playing the saxophone since the 4th grade. As well as being diversified in the arts, Matt is also enthusiastic about the world cultures and how those cultures are influenced by the arts.

**Katie Gorman** is a senior and has been a varsity cheerleader for 4 years. Her future plans are going to Nichols College and studying either psychology or communications. She will also be cheering at Nichols. Katie has been working at Honey Dew Donuts for over two years. She loves to watch the Bruins and hockey is her favorite sport. Emmanuel Jal is such an inspiration to her because of how he survived a life of hardships and uses his life as inspiration for his music and making a difference in the world.

**Kara Knights** has been a student in the Hudson School District for ten years. She is the youngest child in a family of five, with two older brothers. Kara practices her passion for government as class president from eighth grade, to her current grade of sophomore. A highly motivated and focused student, Kara plans to attend college to study political science. A citizen of Hudson, MA for her entire life, Kara has participated in many of the town's

recreational sports. These sports include softball, basketball, and soccer. She was a member of the 2010 Division II MA State Softball Championship Team.

**Rebekah Lizotte** is a senior and is active in her school's performing arts programs including singing in the a capella group and participating in the drama productions. She has a passion for photography and a recent interest in painting. Rebekah plans on attending Lesley University and pursuing a degree in English or communications. This is her second year participating in the FFC program, and could not be happier to see others reaching out into their communities to make a positive difference.

**Erika Rothberg** is a senior and has been a varsity cheerleader for four years. She is currently captain. Her future plans include attending Nichols College and studying communications. She will also be cheering at Nichols. Erika has been working at Honey Dew Donuts for almost two years and also has a second job at Curious Kids Preschool. She loves the Bruins because hockey is her favorite sport. This experience with Emmanuel Jal has changed her life. She sees him as a role model for doing what he does, after everything he's been through. His courage has really made a difference and Erika believes that she can too.

**Laurie Vinciullo** has lived in Hudson, MA her entire life. She has spent the last 5 years at Hudson High. Being a runner since she was young, she is the captain of the cross-country team and indoor track team. Laurie was inspired to dedicate herself to the Gua Africa fundraising effort because being in June Murray's class since sophomore year has changed her view on the world around her. Helping others also inspires her to help herself. This experience has changed her view on the African continent, especially Sudan.

**Ian Whalen** was born in Massachusetts to a very loving family. As he grew they taught him how to live and love. His main goal in life is to help everyone he meets, in one way or another. He plans on going to UMASS Amherst to study psychology and Middle Eastern



studies. He loves traveling and one day hopes to explore every continent, except Antarctica, because it is too cold. Ian would like to thank his loving family, parents especially, his friends, and his World Cultures teacher, June Murray. "Neither fire nor wind, birth nor death can erase our good deeds."

*World Culture Class' Reflection - Our stomachs growl as we enter the classroom. We are happy to throw down our heavy backpacks, slouch in our chairs and remind ourselves that there is only one more block until lunch. We rejoice when we are told we are going to watch a movie. Someone flips the switch and as the room becomes dark, the classroom turns into a night club. After repeated shushing we finally quiet down as the movie begins.*

*African scenery rolls across the screen as the music swells. Immediately we are taken in. A country so unlike our own filled with tall grass, blue water, exotic animals. Our trance is soon broken with the sound of gunfire, images of people running, screaming. We find goose bumps rising on our arms, and we squirm uncomfortably in our seats. We see thousands of boys. They walk through the jungle blindly, not carrying anything but each other. We realize they are no older than twelve, but they are leading, guiding, each other. We think of the memories of our childhoods. We think of playgrounds, computer games, and summers spent at the beach. We watch them with their swollen bellies and tattered scraps of clothing. We see them as they walk without shedding tears. We watch their faces which lay expressionless. 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 to our friends, to our teachers, to our parents. We look around the room at each other, all experiencing the same overwhelming feeling. We have to do something . . .*

## 2011 Matching Grant Recipients



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

Last year I wrote in the Peace Essay contest and applied for a micro grant to benefit Ecuadent. This Maryland-based organization raises money and sends

medical specialists to Ecuador every year to surgically repair people's birth defects. Supporting this cause directly correlated with the theme of compassion because I had a first-hand experience seeing the dehumanization of a child with a facial disfigurement. Including the micro-grant, I raised over \$2,600 in 2010 for this cause. In the summer of 2010, disastrous floods struck my parent's homeland of Pakistan, so I turned my efforts toward raising money for displaced Pakistanis. This year, I have already raised more than \$1000 at our school's Annual Fashion Show and Benefit Gala for a school in Lahore, Pakistan that educates and houses thousands of impoverished students. Therefore, the matching grant will be donated to The Special Education and Training Centre in Lahore.



**Victor Crentsil** is a junior at Glenelg Country School in Ellicott City, MD.

Victor initiated the **Help to Orphans (H<sub>2</sub>O)** project in 2010 to assist an orphanage in Haiti with clean water. Over the past year, the Help to Orphans project has gotten closer to reaching its goal by fundraising. H<sub>2</sub>O has raised over

\$3,900 through the sale of water and water bottles and generous donations from FFC and the Church of the Resurrection in Ellicott City, MD. H<sub>2</sub>O is currently in conversation with two organizations with experience in water projects and Haitian orphanages to identify a receiving orphanage and with this matching grant, H<sub>2</sub>O plans to begin construction of the water system this summer.



**Veronica Ferris** is a senior at Washington International School (WIS). She is not sure where she will attend college, but knows that she wants to become fluent in German and Spanish, continue her interests in community service and human rights and receive a degree in Environmental Science with a focus in Public Policy.

For the 2009-2010 entry, Veronica proposed **Youth Dinners With Shelter Residents** as her micro-grant project. She was awarded the initial grant of \$1,000, and then raised an additional \$2,300 after making an announcement at her church on Mother's Day. FFC awarded Veronica her matching grant last summer.



**Youth Dinners With Shelter Residents** brings together middle school and high school students every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month to plan, shop for and prepare a healthy meal in the kitchen at St. Paul's Lutheran Church for the men who are residents at the church's shelter.

The residents are served a meal in an elegant setting and the students enjoy the meal with them. The project not only restores the dignity to the homeless by serving them with ceramic plates and silverware instead of disposable utensils, but helps introduce the youth to homeless people and to know their stories. It also helps clear up some of the misconceptions surrounding homelessness, and shows the reality that no one is safe from becoming homeless.





**Rishabh Khatri** is currently is a junior at Glenelg Country School in Ellicott City, MD.

Rishabh started the **Health for Haiti** campaign and sold blue and red

wristbands to raise \$1100 in response

to the January 2010 earthquake and resulting life-threatening health issues. Rishabh was able to sell the bands at 4 area schools with the assistance of other interested students. The money raised from the sale of the wristbands went to the building of a new health clinic in Camp Coq, Haiti and renovating a school. Rishabh and other students organized an “International Food Night and Glenelg’s Got Talent” event with donated cuisine and raised over \$2,000.

Through the partnership with the Build Haiti Foundation and his school, the Camp Coq health clinic will open in May. FFC will be recognized for its contribution to this project on the dedication plaque at the Build Haiti Foundation Mediatrix Health Clinic.

**Social Action For Everyone (SAFE)** was by started by Daniel Roza, Sarah Schwartz and Shayna Solomon to bring Muslim, Christian, and Jewish teens together to collectively participate in practical projects such as making sandwiches to donate to a food bank.

SAFE’s two events this year addressed a social need, such as hunger or sickness, and how different religions and cultures view those needs. At their first event, “Breaking Bread, Building Bridges,” around 20 students made Middle Eastern food for the homeless. In fact, this event was so successful it caught the attention of Washington Jewish Week and was featured in an article in September 2010. The second event centered on the approaches of Christianity, Judaism and Islam to health and healing. Attendees made over 30 cards and care packages for the NIH (National Institutes of Health) Children’s Inn’s “Thoughtful Treasures” project. At the Inn, each child is given their own

mailbox and a special treasure is placed in the child's mailbox each day.



**Danny Roza** is a senior at Mercersburg Academy. He plans to attend Yale University in the fall. **Sarah Schwartz** is a senior in the Communications Arts Program at Montgomery Blair High



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

## 2008-2009 Youth Leadership Micro-Grant Recipients



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

**Laila Handoo** used her 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. Laila is currently studying at Brown University in Rhode Island.





**Diana Jeang** created a high school-based carbon offset, [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 is now a student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD.



### **2007-2008 Youth Leadership Micro-Grant Recipients**



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



**Jonathan Kesten** 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.

### **2006-2007 Youth Leadership Micro-Grant Recipients**

**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 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, including: “Legacy of Peace” about Japan’s atomic bomb victims, “Woody Guthrie:

Voice of the Common Man” about the legendary singer-songwriter, “Invisible and Invaluable” about the plight of farm workers, “The President as Commander-in-Chief” about the importance of foreign affairs in the presidential election, and “Speaking Truth to Power” about farm labor activist Baldemar Velasquez. Her films have won awards or have been shown at over 50 film festivals across the U.S. Her 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.

**FFC would like to sincerely thank the following individuals and foundations for their commitment to FFC, the applicants and the interfaith dialogue we all envision.**

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Mr. Andrew R. Ammerman

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*....that our children may be peacemakers*

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