



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION of the United States

Northern
Colorado
Chapter

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UPCOMING EVENTS

CELEBRATE HUMAN RIGHTS DAY: Sunday, 10 December, 3:00 at Council Tree Library, we will celebrate Human Rights Day with a program honoring our **International Humanitarian of the Year**. We will also hold a silent auction. See announcements below.

UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE DAY RALLY: On Tuesday, 12 December, at noon at the Ice Skating Rink in Old Town, Colorado Foundation for Universal Health Care is sponsoring a rally for quality health care for all—a UN Sustainable Development Goal.

UNA Program: Sunday, 21 January, at 2:30 at the Harmony Library, Melissa Esposti, Director of Global Health Grants for ProjectCURE, will tell about her experiences at the UN General Assembly this fall.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I believe, as we look towards 2018, we need to keep in front of us the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals in planning programs and initiatives for our chapter. The goals were adopted by the UN on 25 September 2015. Goal #3 is to "ensure healthy lives and promote the well-being for all at all ages." Goal #3 also calls for "universal health coverage." This is why our Board, at its last meeting, voted to support and participate in "Universal Health Coverage Day" on Tuesday, December 12 starting at 12:00 noon at Oak Street Plaza. I would like to encourage members to attend this rally that is being organized by the Colorado Foundation for Universal Health Care. We need to look for ways to network with our allies. As someone once said, "think globally but act locally."

Bob Jeffrey, President

CELEBRATE HUMAN RIGHTS DAY and HONOR the 2017 UNA NoCO HUMANITARIAN OF THE YEAR, DR. BRETT BRUYERE



When: Sunday, 10 December, 3:00 pm
Where: Council Tree Library
2733 Council Tree Ave, FTC
(In Front Range Village on E. Harmony)

Dr. Bruyere, Assistant Professor of Environmental Communication at CSU, is known for his work establishing the Samburu Women's Village in Kenya for women and children who are victims of domestic abuse.

He also co-founded the Samburu Youth Education Fund, which provides access to secondary schools for youth from the Samburu region. Dr. Bruyere also works with east African communities and universities in sustainability planning, environmental education and training of conservation professionals.

The program will begin at 3:00 with a half-hour social and **SILENT AUCTION** (see announcement to the right). Presentation of the International Humanitarian Award and a talk by Dr. Bruyere will begin at 3:30.

Following the program, there will be a 15-minute period for bidders to get their last **SILENT AUCTION** bids in.

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED
EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Celebrate Human Rights Day with us and Participate in a

SILENT AUCTION FUNDRAISER

When: Sunday, 10 December, 3:00 pm
Where: UNA NoCO Human Rights Day Program
Council Tree Library
2733 Council Tree Ave, Fort Collins
(In Front Range Village on E. Harmony)

Proceeds go to the Samburu Youth Education Fund Foundation and the UNA Adopt-a-Future Campaign

How to Participate: Donate and/or Bid

1. **Donate** small items WITH AN INTERNATIONAL THEME: Art, pottery, basketry, jewelry, coffee-table books, etc.

Write a starting bid amount and a brief description of the item and either drop the items off at Eleanor Dwight's (907 Sailor's Reef, FTC) before 10 December or bring them to the Human Rights Day celebration by 2:30 pm.

2. **Bidding** will start at 3:00 pm and last for 30 minutes. Following presentation of the International Humanitarian Award and speaker, bidding will re-open for 15 minutes.

Payment will be by check or cash ONLY.

We have many members who have traveled extensively throughout the world for work and pleasure. Be prepared to view some wonderful items for sale!

*For more information, contact Eleanor Dwight at 970-377-0863
Eleanor@dwrightcentral.com*

UNA SCHOOL CONTEST WINNERS

At our UN Day celebration on 22 October, we were privileged to hear the winning Middle School essays on the theme, "Life in a Refugee Camp for a Middle-School-Aged Child", and view all the lovely Elementary School art submissions on the topic, "Friends Around the World. Winning essays and pictures are below. Congratulations, young people, on excellent work!!!



Student Name: Sidney Oveson **Age:** 11
Title: *Joy to the World*

"My drawing shows that friends could be everywhere not just who you know well. Friends could be across the world but they are still your friends no matter how far away they are."

LIFE IN A REFUGEE CAMP [1st place]

Jayda Beaner
Webber Middle School, Grade 8

I rushed off to school, excited to be going to the place I liked to call my safeplace. I felt accepted there, because we all wanted to learn something. The walls closed us off from the outside world, but it felt safe rather than dangerous. My friend used to come to school with me, but she and her family were lucky enough to move to America, so our communication is a matter of slow-moving letters.

I pushed through the rusty, creaky doors of the school, taking in the scent of what must be hundred-year-old textbooks. My teacher never uses those, however. He tells us things he learned from reading before he was a refugee in this camp. A smile adorned my face, something that is very rare. I practically ran into the classroom, walking over to a desk and leaning onto it, excited for the lesson to come.

The school is really the only building in this camp, everything else are just small, white tents that can barely fit three people, let alone entire families. But alas, the school is still extremely small and only has one classroom, one teacher, and the room is cramped with many children intrigued in the fashion of learning.

The air is dry, causing our skin to peel and crack, our lips becoming chapped and faded. The water here

isn't very fresh, we have to boil it. But it's water, and that's that. Most of us are so malnourished, you can see our ribs, and we just overall look unhealthy.

It's extremely rare for anyone here to go to college, it has never happened before, and it won't. The camp is going to close, displacing millions of refugees. But I don't worry about it that much, I'm focusing on here and now.

"Hey Wangari!" my friend Mbiti greeted me when she walked in and stood next to me at the cheap desk.

"Hi, Mbiti," I replied cheerily, a smile spreading across my face, causing dimples to crease into my cheeks, another rare sight.

"Did you hear that the camp is going to close?" Mbiti asked, her brown eyes sparkling, something they always did whenever she was excited about something. I nodded my head in reply, though I was scared about my future, I try to focus on the now.

"You aren't scared?" she asked, tilting her head in slight confusion. I shrugged, averting my gaze to the front of the room.

"Not really," I fiddled with my fingers, staring at the ground now. "I mean, I kind of am. But the future doesn't really matter right now. I'm trying to focus on the present."

Mbiti seemed shocked, confused almost. Everyone in Dadaab was preparing for the worst, fear seeming to take over as a primal instinct. "Well, aren't you at least worried about what you're gonna do in the future?" she inquired.

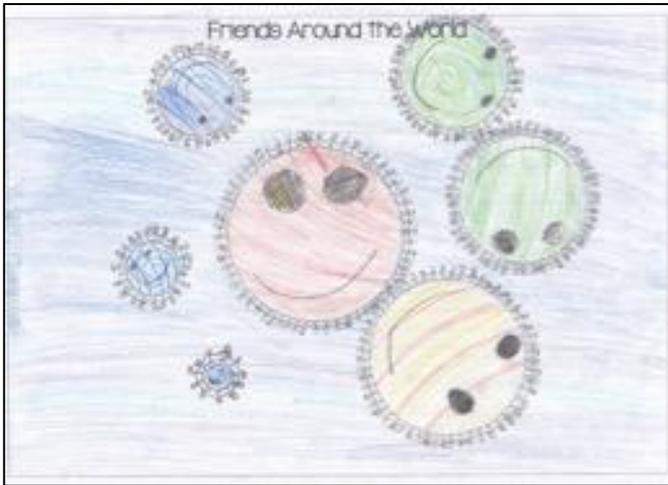
I looked up again, peering into Mbiti's eyes. "All I know, is I'm aiming for being a teacher. But that's not for today, that's for tomorrow. So let's focus on today." I answered her, once again turning to look at the front of the room, as class was starting and I wanted to pay attention.

"Okay, Wangari. Go ahead and do that. But you won't be prepared." Mbiti said under her breath, finally beginning to pay attention to the lesson. But I acted as if I hadn't heard her, I didn't want to follow my instinct. The instinct telling me to prepare, or run. I wanted to follow my spirit, I wanted to follow my dreams.

And that's exactly what I'm doing.

Research links:

- Kopf, Nancy. "Meet Halima: a girl from Africa." *Skipping Stones*, Feb 2010, p. 15, accessed 4 Oct 2017.
- CNN Wire, 7 May 2016. "Kenya to close refugee camps, displacing more than 600,000," *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, go.galegroup.com/ accessed 4 Oct 2017.
- Lewer, Natasha. "Caring for Somali refugees in Kenya." *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, go.galegroup.com/
- UPI NewsTrack, 8 Dec 2010. "Kenya criticized on Somali refugees," *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, go.galegroup.com/ accessed 4 Oct 2017.



Student Name: Willow Daylin **Age:** 9
Title: *No Matter the Size*

I want to show that everyone big and small deserves a place on this world or any other place.



Student Name: Finn Lischka Treble **Age:** 6
Title: *I'm Always There*

I want to show that I live under the same sky as all of my friends and all the friends I haven't met yet.

LIFE IN A REFUGEE CAMP [2nd place]

*Avalon Berdzar
 Webber Middle School, Grade 7*

The filthy smell of this camp overwhelmed me. It smelled like rotten food and ash. This camp was crowded and was home to about 350,000 refugees. I had been born here and have never thought about leaving. I was on my way to school when I saw some of my neighbors talking to each other.

"They're talking about closing the camp. At least that was what I heard," said a man who was carrying a bucket of water.

"But where would we go?" asked another man, sitting on a wooden crate.

I walked over to them, not sure of what I had just heard. I went to a tent where they were sitting under, blocking the penetrating sun rays.

"What are you talking about?" I asked.

"You should not of heard that." He said as he sat up. He walked over to me and put his hand on my shoulder.

I looked at a broken clock lying on the dirty ground. The glass was broken and the hands that pointed to the numbers were bent. If the time was right, I would be late to school again. I ran off to the school house.

The school house was run down and looked like a big rotting shed. Of course it was not taken for granted. Most kids went to school unless they were helping their family with housework. I felt lucky to be going to a school such as this one.

As I ran into the school house, I saw every student look at me. I found a desk and sat down in it. The desks were old tables. Some were broken or stained. Others had pieces of wood missing from them. The teacher looked back at me but said nothing as I scrambled trying to find a clean piece of paper.

My teacher was very nice to me, even outside of class. She always talked to my mom about moving me up a grade. Normally all the students who could go to school went. It didn't matter about if they ever went to school or what their academic level was. She always told me that I was very smart and if I work hard, I could get into college a little early.

My mom always told her that we didn't have the money to send me to a college. I always new that I would probably never get to go to college but I had dreams of going to one.

The school day passed and on my way home I saw my neighbors again. They were still under the tent and sitting in the same spots. It was like they hadn't moved all day.

"Amanika, come." One of the men said beckoning me to walk over to them.

"Yes?" I called as I ran over to them.

"It is true what they said," he said as he shook his head. "They are shutting down the camp." He said softly.

"Where will we go? We have nowhere else to go." I said as a tear rolled down my face.

"Come here child." He said as he patted my head.

I stayed as he slowly patted my head, it comforted me. I looked at the ground, staring at what I grew up looking at. This was my home and I didn't want to leave

it behind. The clock that was lying on the ground quietly ticked as the hour hand struck four-o'clock.

"Amanika?" I heard someone call my name. I moved away and looked around for whoever called me. I spotted my mother.

"Yes?" I asked as I walked towards her.

"Where have you been. I was so worried." She said as she grabbed me and hugged me tight.

"Mother, they are talking about closing the camp. Where will we go? I asked as I looked up at her.

"It will be okay. They won't close the camp and we will all be okay." She said as she glared at the men sitting under the tent.

My mother still hugging me, started to walk towards our tent. She let go of me and I walked besides her.

Our tent was a bright blue color but was stained with dirt, mud, and what I hoped was bird poop. All we had were wooden crates which we put outside for chairs and extra storage and our beds inside of the tent which consisted of a bunch of pillows and blankets.

We had our water station where we kept buckets of water. If we ran out, I would walk to the water station and fill up the buckets with water. Our food came from the food station which provided us with food every meal time.

When we reached our tent, I ducked inside and sat on my bed. My mom followed.

"How was school?" she asked as she grabbed a jar and filled it with water. She handed it to me as she poured water into another jar for herself.

"It was just like every other day." I responded as I took a sip from the jar. I was tired and worried for the days ahead. I was worried that the camp would shut down and we would have nowhere else to go. Even my mother looked worried although she acted like it didn't bother her.

I didn't want to tell my mother about how much I wanted to go to college and become a teacher. I knew what she would say.

"Amanika, you know that we can't afford college. You are smart and I wish that I could send you to a college but you know that I can't. Even if there was a way you could go, I need you here with me. I am sorry Amanika."

Even though I was worried about what might happen in the future, I knew that change would eventually come. I had to be brave for both myself and my mother. If I was brave, so would my mother and our entire community.

Sources: Seven articles from the Gale Virtual Reference Library, go.galegroup.com.



Student Name: Yuze Jiang **Age:** 7
Title: *Friends all around the World*

I want to show that you can have friends all around the world and even in outer space

THE SOUND OF ADIA ZERE [3rd place]

*Neva C. Foy
Webber Middle School, Grade 7*

Adia Zere was born to sing. From the moment she could talk, she was humming a distant tune, or whispering a line from songs that existed only in her imagination. As she grew older, the sound became clearer and louder, swelling like wood in a rainstorm. As a toddler, her mother would sit Adia down on a tall stool and have her sing to the distant villages in Ethiopia.

But when Adia was just seven, her voice was stolen. Ripped from her throat, just like her father was ripped from their lives that dark evening. She watched the sound leave her lips like a tendril of smoke, to be lost in the cold, dusky air.

In the tragic weeks since then, her mother would sit in front of Adia and beg for a song a word, a sound. Her twin brother Abel, couldn't even reach the pearl of hope left inside her, as blackened and burnt as it was. When they entered the refugee camp, it was full of sound, and Adia was not. And it seemed that she never would be.

"Adia!" Adia's mother, Elene, whispered. Adia curled under her thin blanket and reached out beside her to find her sister, Zahra, sleeping contently. She flipped to her other side and, again, groped around blindly. Abel was not there.

Adia wasn't surprised, considering the rare occasion when he actually went to school. He was almost always out with his friends, looking for fights. But rather than dwell on the inevitable, Adia stretched her legs out of the bed. Her eyes burned with dust and sand, and she cringed.

She signed to Elene, "Do I have to go to school?"

"Yes." Elene said in Amharic. "It is the only way you will get a job and leave the camp. Now get dressed. Quickly!"

Adia made a face, then sat down and pulled a bucket from under the bed that contained all of their clothes. She dug through the shirts to find her uniform, grimacing at the stale smell of cheap detergent.

Finally, she found the navy skirt and bland white polo. A quick trip to the bathroom to splash water on her face, a short breakfast, and she was ready for school. Adia kissed Elene and Zahra, then left the white dome tent to go to the dreaded blue tent for elementary grade girls. Even though she was fifteen, Adia did not have proper schooling for girls in her village, so this was where she went.

Adia kicked her tennis shoes in the dust as she walked, and watched the cloud of red dissipate into the air that rippled with heat. Soon she was at the school entrance. Inside, plywood desks dug into the ground stood tall. A stained blackboard was propped up against one wall, and colorful paper signs plastered the others.

Adia ran over to a back seat quickly. She opened her pack and took out a pencil, careful not to break the tip. If she did, it was very hard to find another.

“Hello class!” A stern voice called. The girls all looked over at Ms. Cache as she strode in, and she returned their gaze with a crippling stare. Her bright red hair was piled on top of her head and her glasses perched on the very tip of her nose.

“Today we will be reviewing the multiplication table and how it relates to division.” The class groaned collectively, which caused Ms. Cache’s thin lips to purse.

“There will be no complaining. This is the only way you will get out of the camp and into a college! Be grateful,” she said, her Amharic blurring together at her fast speech.

For the rest of the morning, the children bent over crisp white worksheets and musty, used books. Adia was one of the top students, but even she bit her lip worriedly as she wrote, the problems swimming together into one big pile of ink in her eyes.

Her mind wandered to Abel. What was he doing now? Was he okay? If he was injured, it wouldn’t be the first time. He had a total of fifteen stitches, a number the family couldn’t afford to increase.

“Miss Zere, are you focusing?”. Ms. Cache asked, her hawk-like vision scanning the room for any note passing.

“Yes, Ma’am,” Adia signed. Ms. Cache took a moment to decipher her hand motions, then nodded grudgingly. She turned to her papers once again, red pen at the ready, to graffiti their papers with condescending marks. Adia groaned inwardly, knowing that this monotonous silence would go on all morning.

The afternoon was slightly better, as the girls gathered into clusters and worked on a vignette. Adia laughed loudly with her friends, but inside she felt hopeless. She kept her head up, though, knowing that she must be strong for her family and the possibility of a future.

Finally, just as the time had ticked to five o’clock, they stretched their aching limbs and stumbled into the cafeteria. Inside, the atmosphere was light and cheery, as a man with a microphone stood on a stage of old milk crates. People crowded around him, clapping with delight.

“Hey, Adia! Over here!” a voice called. Adia searched for the noise, until she pinpointed the speaker. Abel. He sat crisply in his school uniform, with her family in the corner. She ran over to him, careful to not drop her tray.

Suddenly, a sweet melodic voice filled the tent. The man was singing a tune that Adia knew by heart, an old childhood rhyme called “River Woman.” His voice swelled as he reached the peak point in the song, then slowly abated to the soft rhythm.

Adia found her lips moving to the words, though only a whisper was heard. Still, Elene looked over, tears filling her dark eyes. Abel pressed his hand to his mouth at the delicate sound, his spoon clinking onto his plate. Adia Zere had found, thought small, her real voice again.

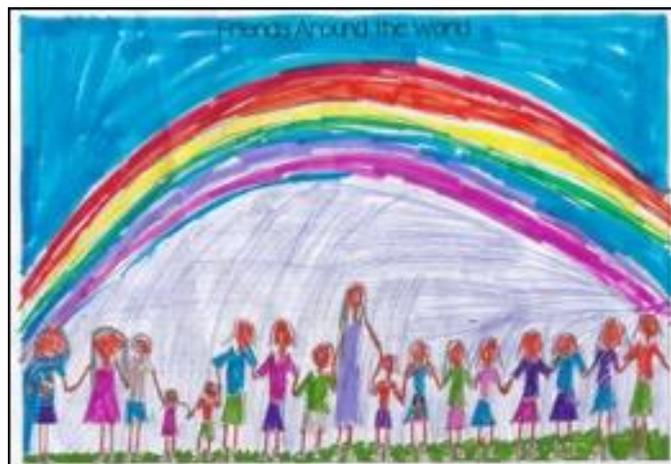
Resource links:

<http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/ethiopia.html>

<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org>

Al Jazeera America, “A day in the life of a child refugee in Belgrade.” 13 June 2017, go.galegroup.com.

Page, Kent. “Garana’s story: A day in the life of a young Afghan refugee.” National Geographic Explorer: Pioneer, Se 2002.



Student Name: Elena Bowman **Age:**

Title: *Friends Forever*

I want to show that everybody is together holding hands



Student Name: Raven Yatabe **Age:** 10
Title: *I'm Always There*

I want to show that no matter where you live or what you look like, friends will always be there!

FALL AND WINTER CHAPTER DOINGS

The annual fall contests for middle school and elementary students are completed. Twenty students submitted entries for the middle school writing contest on the subject of life as a student in a refugee camp in Kenya. The three winners read their stories at our UN Day program on 22 October. Elementary art entries on the topic "Friends Around the World" numbered 120 and they were displayed at the UN Day Celebration. They will be displayed again at our annual meeting in March.

On 19 November, our chapter met with the Veterans for Peace (see article on page XXX) and the announcement of the December 10th honoring for the International Humanitarian Award.

On January 21st at 2:30 at the Harmony Public Library, one of our new members, Melissa Esposti, will speak of her experience at last fall's UN General Assembly meeting in New York. What goes on when presidents and prime ministers gather and delegates buzz in the corridors of power? Melisa is the Director of Global Health Grants for ProjectCURE and will share her insights with us.

Dick Rush, Education Committee



NEW GenUN CHAPTER AT CSU



UNA-NoCO enthusiastically announces that CSU is now home to one of the newest GenUN chapters in the UNA network, established by CSU seniors Leah Eyob, an Environmental Sociology major, and Lauren Burr, Economics and Cultural Anthropology major.

Undeterred by critical global issues, Leah and Lauren became part of the UNA's GenUN movement, which represents a generation of young people more committed than ever to carry forward the mission of the UNA-USA, "to inform, inspire, and mobilize the American people to support the ideals and vital work of the United Nations."

In discussing their efforts to establish the CSU chapter, Lauren notes, "One thing that stood out to me during [the] whole process is the passion I see among my peers that are involved in this with me. Leah and I are both graduating in the spring. But neither of us let that deter our hope in getting this chapter off the ground and doing great things. We have been able to share that passion and inspire others to join our efforts, as well. That kind of passion is crucial to make significant change and it excites me to be part of something so much bigger than myself."

Leah and Lauren first became aware of the work of GenUN when they attended a UN Day talk, called "Global Goals, Local Leaders," given by Rachel Bowen Pittman, the Senior Director of Membership and Programs at UNA-USA.

Leah said, "The event was incredibly insightful and it gave me a peek into the work that UNA does. Rachel highlighted the importance of leading locally in achieving global goals and discussed how GenUN is a platform for mobilizing local youth under the values and development goals of the UN."

Burr added, "The idea of working toward Sustainable Development Goals at a local level appealed to me because of the work I am doing in a class this semester [IE-472 taught by UNA NoCO member Dr. Elissa Tivona] and because I believe that local solutions to global issues are the most likely to last. I was motivated to start a chapter locally because of the power of the aggregate. While a single chapter may seem to be insignificant on a global scale, combined with chapters across the US, we have the power to make a large impact—and one that is likely to last because it will be tailored to a specific context."

Both students are minoring in International Development and share a commitment to secure and sustainable forms of international development that aim to address one or more of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which represent the highest intentions of the UN community. GenUN chapters



ADOPT-A-REFUGEE SCHOOL PROJECT

welcome the opportunity to engage young activists in exactly this type of local problem-solving.

"I believe in a number of values in development that GenUN stands for: the power of grassroots movements, youth empowerment, and community-level education," said Leah. "Within the field of development, I think it's imperative that we include the youthful energy and fresh perspective of young adults in finding solutions to today's most pressing global issues."

Lauren agrees fully, "The GenUN movement is exciting because it shows that you don't have to have a full-time job and significant salary to make an impact. You can have a voice and advocate for the work of the UN even as a (broke) college student!"

Elissa J. Tivona

Our Chapter has pledged to raise \$3,000 for the UNA/USA/UNHCR Adopt-a-Future campaign. In this campaign, UNA chapters 'adopt' a school in a refugee camp, raising funds for school supplies, materials and infrastructure. "Our" school is the Kakuma School in the Dadaab Camp in Kenya.

We have already raised about one third through generous contributions from our members and the sale of Susan Solick's whimsical pottery. (More will be available at our Human Rights Day program for a donation \$10 or more).



VETERANS FOR PEACE

On Sunday, 19 November, our chapter sponsored a program to acquaint us with the goals and work of the Veterans for Peace (VfP) group. Three members of that group, UNA member Ken Tharp, local VfP president Paul Gessler, and a spokesman from Denver, Ted Engelmann, made presentations and answered questions. The cozy audience of twenty, comprised about equally of UNA and VfP members, with a few interested unattached community folks, was generally supportive of what was said.

A major topic was a reminder of the human cost of wars, traced from World War I through to the present, with increasing incidence of civilian casualties and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among veterans. The occasional stigmatization and frequent poor treatment of veterans by the Veterans Administration were also brought up.

The VfP speakers discussed our nation's responsibility regarding the causes of wars and the suffering of civilians and their belief that we, as a nation, have been brainwashed to always point fingers at "the enemy" and to accept violence as necessary by a government tending toward fascism. The VfP solution is to do away with nuclear weapons, remove NATO, promote negotiations and humanitarian aid, and abolish war. The VfP attempts to encourage a national dialogue to accomplish these goals and urges the UNA and other groups and individuals to join this effort.

Points were made via the audience that defensive wars may be necessary, that the presence of nuclear weapons has eliminated major conflicts since 1945 and that to achieve the abovementioned goals there must be room for various methods and an agreement to disagree. All in all, it was a thought-provoking session on a vital topic.

Any ideas on how we can raise more money?

Many UNA Chapters across the country are hosting "A Night of a Thousand Dinners," where one person holds a dinner for friends and family and asks them to contribute to the Adopt-a-Future campaign. If you are interested in hosting a dinner, we have all kinds of guides. We also have a Power Point presentation that you can use--but you need not get that technical for a dinner party.

I will be calling a meeting to work on our Adopt-a-Refugee School project soon. If you would like to participate, even in a small way, or have ideas to share, please email me at Eleanor@dwrightcentral.com.

Eleanor Dwight

ANY UN-RELATED CONCERNS FOR OUR GOVERNMENT? CONTACT OUR REPS BELOW AND LET THEM KNOW.

GOVERNMENT REPS OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Michael Bennett	Phone: (970) 224-2200
E-mail:	Senator_Bennet@bennet.senate.gov
Facebook:	https://www.bennet.senate.gov/?p=contact
Postal:	1200 S. College Ave., Suite 211, Fort Collins, 80524
Cory Gardner	Phone: (970) 352-5546
E-mail:	gardner.senate.gov/contact-cory/email-cory
Facebook:	https://www.facebook.com/SenCoryGardner/
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Jared Polis	Phone: (202) 225-2161
E-mail:	info@polisforcongress.com
Facebook:	https://www.facebook.com/jaredpolis/
Postal:	1220 South College Avenue, Fort Collins 80525.

THE UN AT WORK

The following are excerpts from UN News Centre (<http://www.un.org/News/>) and other authoritative news sources.

World pushing for faster climate action at Bonn conference. 11 November—World cities, the transport sector, and ocean advocates announced a number of new initiatives to push for further, faster climate action, at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 23) in Bonn, Germany.

France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Costa Rica and the Paris Process on Mobility and Climate (PPMC) launched the *Transport Decarbonization Alliance* to stimulate greater political leadership in the sector. Transport contributes about one quarter of all energy-related carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and about 15-17 per cent of the entire spread of human CO₂ emissions.

Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) a global network of more than 1,500 cities, towns and regions working together for sustainable development announced new efforts to coordinate their climate action commitments to deliver bigger and faster results together

Urban areas account for around two-thirds of the world's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from global energy use.

The mayor of Pittsburgh, William Peduto, announced that 367 American mayors have agreed to be “part of the Paris Agreement no matter what our Federal Government did.”

The new initiatives announced include efforts ICLEI and the global NDC Partnership (a coalition of countries and institutions working to mobilize support for climate goals and enhancing sustainable development) to design, implement and align climate action strategies across all levels of governments.

The Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance (40 organizations working to mobilize investment in low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure in cities and urban areas internationally) is mapping available finance to match known infrastructure projects –to help local governments identify funding.

A new declaration was signed to strengthen global response to climate change impacts on oceans and coastal zones. Oceans are the planet's largest carbon sink, a major regulating force of global climate, and fundamental to the survival and well-being of humanity. Ocean acidification could put at risk whole ecosystems. Vietnam has undertaken one of the national-level ocean initiatives undertaken to strengthen the coastline by planting forests of mangroves.

Nearly 21 million people now have access to HIV treatment. 21 November—About 20.9 million people now have access to the antiretroviral therapy, according to a new report by Joint UN Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). This remarkable progress is attributed to people living with HIV demanding their rights, strong leadership, and financial commitment.

South Africa as an example of a dramatic scale-up of HIV treatment, saying that while in 2000, the country had 90 people on treatment, today, there are more than four million. The South African program is the largest life-saving treatment program in the world.

However, the report also shows that new HIV infections are rising at a rapid pace in countries that have not expanded health services to those most affected.

In eastern Europe and Central Asia, for example, new HIV infections have risen by 60 per cent since 2010, and AIDS-related deaths by 27 per cent.

While in sub-Saharan Africa, the majority of new HIV infections are among young women and girls aged between 15 and 24 years.

General Assembly, Security Council fill final vacancy on 'World Court'.

20 November—The General Assembly and the Security Council elected the fifth judge to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) concluding the 2017 elections to the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Dalveer Bhandari, of India, received the absolute majority of votes in elections – conducted independently, but concurrently – at the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Mr. Bhandari joins Ronny Abraham of France, Antônio Augusto Cançado Trindade (Brazil), Nawaf Salam (Lebanon), and Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf (Somalia) as the five judges who will serve along with ten other judges at the ICJ. Their nine-year terms begin 6 February 2018.

Established in 1945, and based in The Hague in the Netherlands, the ICJ – informally known as the 'World Court' – settles legal disputes between member States and gives advisory opinions on legal questions that have been referred to it by other authorized UN organs. The Court is composed of 15 judges, who are elected by an absolute majority in both the General Assembly and Security Council.

The jurisdiction of the ICJ is limited. Only member states can bring a compulsory claim against another state, and then only with the consent of the responding state. However, certain UN agencies have the power to submit questions for advisory opinions, which are not binding under international law but do provide the ICJ's advice and interpretation of the international laws involved. 166 cases have been heard since the court's inception.

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