Dear Friends,

Whether the summer season brought you a long summer break, a brief respite, or just more of the same, we at AV hope that you have been able to enjoy this season that has come to usher in the new school year. Our 2007-2008 Unity Program has already begun and students are using our new Unity Curriculum. As for the Vision Program, Summer 2007 Fellows are returning to their campuses and home communities and are now gearing up to participate in our Fall Retreat and preparing for their follow-up presentations. And finally, along with our new logo, we have prepared new materials that highlight our powerful work. We invite you to scroll down to learn more about our current activities. Ramadan Mubarak and Shanah Tovah

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Invited Back to the 2007 Clinton Global Initiative

Following AV’s recognition on the main stage at the 2006 Clinton Global Initiative for our 2006 Vision Program, we have been invited back to attend the 2007 CGI Conference.

CGI is a non-partisan endeavor, bringing together a carefully selected group of the world’s best minds and most distinguished problem solvers to focus on practical, effective measures that can be taken now. These leaders -- from a wide variety of political, ideological, religious, ethnic, and geographic backgrounds -- include current and former heads of state, top business executives, preeminent scholars, and representatives of key non-governmental organizations.

This year’s event, to be held in New York City from September 26th to the 28th, will be attended by such distinguished guests as CNN Anchor Anderson Cooper, Former Prime Minister Tony Blair, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoðan of Turkey, Actress and Activist Angelina Jolie, Author and Scholar Toni Morrison, President and CEO H. Lee Scott, Jr. of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., Founder & Chairman of the Skoll Foundation Jeff Skoll, Chairman of Turner Enterprises, Inc. Ted Turner, 2006 Nobel Peace Prize Winner Muhammad Yunus, and Editor of Newsweek International Fareed Zakaria, and many more.

New Member Joins Our Board of Directors

AV is pleased to announce the addition of a new member to our Board of Directors, Dr. Samina Ahmad, who has dedicated her life to working on global health and wellness issues. In addition to founding the Al-Rehman Welfare Trust & Medical Center to administer the needs of underprivileged women and children, she has worked as a scriptwriter, director, producer, and host to numerous highly popular television programs which target issues such as health care, nutrition, family planning and social issues, and served as a leading journalist in the field of wellness with three monthly columns.
in publications read by 12 million people.

She is currently living in New York, working as a certified Holistic Health Counselor as well as the Business Manager for Junoon, a highly acclaimed, internationally renowned, Pakistani rock band that specializes in Sufi music promoting peace throughout the world. To read more about Dr. Ahmad’s amazing accomplishments, refer to the ‘About Us’ section of the AV website.

2007-2008 Unity High School Program Begins

The 2007-2008 Unity High School Program began this month for our third consecutive year. There have been many exciting evolutions within this program, which continues to work with both the Abraham Joshua Heschel and Al-Iman high schools. This year we have 19 students participating in our program, all studying from the third edition of our unique curriculum. The students from each school will meet their counterparts in a series of field-trips, inter-group facilitation sessions, and other future joint programming.

As part of this month’s ’Speakers Series’, Rabbi Yehuda Sarna, the Religious Life Coordinator of the Edgar Bronfman Center for Jewish Life Student Life at NYU, is scheduled to visit Al-Iman to discuss the depth and importance of Muslim-Jewish relations, while Houda Abadi, our Director of Unity Programs, is scheduled to give a presentation at the Heschel School to discuss the impact of 9/11 on
Muslim-Jewish relations.

In addition to the 'Speakers Series', our students are already planning their first field trip of the semester, which will explore the essence of the sacred months of Tishrei and Ramadan. Together, the students from both schools will be visiting the Rockwood Park Jewish Center (Queens) where they will learn about Sukkot and share with each other the importance of the Jewish holidays. They will also be heading to the Al-Khoie Foundation at the Al-Iman school to break the fast together (Iftaar) and observe the congregational prayer for Ramadan. This field trip is designed to take the learning outside of the confines of the classroom and allow the students to interact together first-hand directly with the Rabbi and the Imam of these two centers.

University Vision Program Retreats Scheduled for 2007 Fellows

As 2007 Vision Program Fellows have returned to their university campuses, having finished the month-long summer portion of the program, they will now continue our nine month follow-up programming. They will take the knowledge that they have gained through their summer experience and share what they have learned about the nature of conflict and the roles we as individuals play in these dynamics to members of their home communities and on their
university campuses.

To help them process their experiences over the summer and prepare for the presentations they will be giving on their campuses and in their home communities, they will be participating in two follow-up retreats. Our Fall Retreat will take place November 29th to December 2nd, while the Spring Retreat is scheduled for March 6th to March 9th, 2008.

Check out our ‘Students Speak’ section at the bottom of this newsletter to read about participants’ summer experiences in their own words. For photos and expanded essays, check out our Summer 2007 Vision Program Weblog.

2008 Vision Program Recruitment Launches in October

Starting in October, AV will begin recruiting for our 2008 Vision Program. Recruitment will target select universities in cities such as Boston, East Lansing (MI), Los Angeles, New York City, and San Francisco. Staff from AV visiting campuses in these areas will be giving informational presentations about the Vision Program featuring a short film with footage taken by our students while they
were traveling through the Balkans.

Announcements about when AV will be at a campus in your area will be featured in future newsletters, e-mail campaigns, and in advertisements in local university papers.

Applications for our 2008-09 Vision Program will be available on our website starting November 1st, 2007 and must be submitted by February 15th, 2008 to be considered for the 2008 program.

New Materials Highlighting the Work of AV

The front and back covers of our new Organizational Brochure.

In preparation for our attendance at the Clinton Global Initiative as well as the many visits we will be making to universities across the country as part of our 2008 Vision Recruitment campaign, we unveiled our new updated website on September 1st, and have completed a redesign of our logo, which has been unveiled in our last newsletter.

In addition to this, we have incorporated our new logo into two new program brochures as well as an organizational brochure meant to cogently explain who we are and what the nature of our work is. These materials are available at all of the events that we present and will be available to download from our website.
In Other News…

AV is excited to announce that Zakiya Muwwakkil has joined our team as a Co-Educator of the Unity Program in New York City. She will be working primarily with the students at Al-Iman and comes to us highly recommended, incredibly skilled, and very excited to take part in this program.

On November 1st, from 5-7 pm, under the auspices of Board Members Peter Geffen and Judith Scheuer, AV is holding a Fundraiser in Manhattan at Darna Restaurant. Featured speakers will be Co-Executive Director Aaron Hahn Tapper, Director of Operations Gibran Bouayad, along with several alumni from the 2006 Vision Program including Shira Danan and Tina Musa. For more information contact Aaron Hahn Tapper at aaron@abrahamsvision.org.

"Students Speak"

In this feature, we highlight the transformations taking place using our students' own words, some from written assignments, while others are excerpted from articles featuring their emerging voices. To view more student reflections, visit our website at www.abrahamsvision.org or click here to view the Vision and Unity weblogs.

THE VISION PROGRAM

"The question of responsibility came back today into our group process, a topic that never seems to leave us. I felt that there are still things that people are looking to hear from the group and that they haven’t gotten it yet. In the last few days I found myself struggling with the question of what I’m responsible for and what does this
To read the entirety of the submission by Nir Zernyak, visit our Summer 2007 Vision Program Weblog.

"Bosnians had significantly less arms and resources compared to the Serbs, therefore, I cannot accept that the UN can leave it up to two nations that are not fighting equally. Moreover, I feel like a violent act done upon a nation, state, or people is a violent act on humanity. Meaning, we as humans all have the responsibility to find peace and justice."

To read the entirety of the submission by Janan Saba, visit our Summer 2007 Vision Program Weblog.

THE UNITY PROGRAM

As the Unity Program just launched this month, we will be featuring our first Unity student postings shortly. In the meantime, we encourage you to read our three previous student weblogs from the past two years, where we have graduated more than sixty students thus far! Please go to the following links from 2006-2007: SAR intra-community student weblog and Al-Iman/Heschel interschool weblog, or go back to the 2005-2006 students weblog, our first AV program!

HOW ARE WE DIFFERENT?

Abraham’s Vision is a conflict transformation organization that explores group and individual identities through experiential and political education. Examining social relations within and between the Jewish, Muslim, Israeli, and Palestinian communities, we empower participants to practice just alternatives to the status quo.

We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit conflict transformation organization, dedicated to creating a new generation of leaders empowered and committed to improving our world. Our distinct vision is based on the following principles:

- Equal Partnerships: We are committed to equal partnerships across ethnic, religious, and gender lines. This commitment is reflected in our organizational structure as well as our long-term programs, workshops, and presentations.
- Experiential Learning: We are committed to creative forms of education that both recognize the importance of content-based teaching and value
individual and group participant experiences.

- Encounters: We approach inter-group encounters as a reflection of the political realities in which we live, utilizing them as a central element of our educational approach.
- Political Education: We focus on individual and collective relationships within current political realities, placing the relationship between individuals and groups at the center of the educational experience rather than analyzing political developments as something separate from students.