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Transforming the Present, Shaping the Future

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&
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Accepting
Applications

April 2011 Newsletter

Dear Friends,

As clashes throughout the Middle East continue, issues of agency, responsibility, and justice continue to surface. Now, more than ever we need a young generation of leaders who understand the complexities of modern conflict, have the skills to transform involved communities, and are able to create sustainable solutions to inter-communal strife. Abraham's Vision works to transform conflict by creating profound and lasting effects with individuals and their larger communities. Please help Abraham's Vision continue to transform personal and collective relationships by showing your support with a tax-deductible [donation](#).

Salam, Shalom, In Peace,

Huda Abu Arqoub and Aaron Hahn Tapper

Here are this month's activities and updates:

- New AV Book, Muslims and Jews in America... Hot off the Press!
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[New AV Book, Muslims and Jews in America... Hot off the Press!](#)

Released this past week, [Muslims and Jews in America: Commonalities, Contentions, and Complexities](#) is a compilation of essays co-edited by internationally acclaimed author, writer, and AV Board member Reza Aslan and AV Co-Executive Director Aaron Hahn Tapper.

This book is an exploration of contemporary Jewish-Muslim relations in the United States and the distinct and often creative ways in which these two communities interact with one another in the American context. Each of the book's sixteen essays discusses a different episode from the recent twentieth and current twenty-first century American milieu that links these two groups together.



Individuals who contributed to this important volume are as follows (in order of appearance in book): Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN), Dr. Reza Aslan, Rabbi Brad Hirschfield, Dr. Omid Safi, Rabbi Amy Eilberg, Debbie Almontaser, Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, Dr. Aaron J. Hahn Tapper, Dr. Taymiya R. Zaman, Hannah Ellenson, Rabbi David Ellenson, Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed, Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie, Dr. Ingrid Mattson, Dr. Saba Soomekh, Salam Al-Marayati, Dr. Aysha Hidayatullah, Dr. Judith Plaskow, Dr. Eboo Patel, Rabbi Reuven Firestone, Hebah H. Farrag, Rabbi Michael Lerner, and Peter A. Geffen.

Proceeds from this groundbreaking project are going to Abraham's Vision! Click [here](#) for the book's exciting Table of Contents.

[AV Film Selected for 2011 InterFaith Film Festival](#)

"Abraham's Vision Graduation Day!," a film documenting the 2009-10 Unity Program (UP) graduation, has been selected for the 2011 InterFaith Film Festival, a multi-religious, web-based event aired across the globe. Co-produced by Abraham's Vision and the [Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue Group](#), the film brings voices to UP students' experiences examining issues within North American Jewish and Muslim communities, the historical relationship between Muslims and Jews, and the relationship between Judaism and Islam. UP students describe personal transformations and insights from their experience exploring group and individual identities. Click [here](#) to view "Abraham's Vision

Graduation Day!" and [more selected films](#) from the 2011 InterFaith Film Festival.



2009-10 UP students are featured in the "Abraham's Vision Graduation Day!" video.

2010-11 VP Spring Conference Great Success

The 2010-11 Vision Program (VP) Fellows met officially for the final time at the [Marin Headlands Institute](#) earlier this month. The fifth VP cohort discussed social justice activism with a range of individuals, including six alumni from the VP '06-'07, '08-'09, and '09-'10 programs, [Dr. Aysha Hidayatullah](#) (Feminism and American Islam), [Dr. Amie Espen-Dowling](#) (activism through dance), and long-time peace activists Libby and Len Traubman. Each speaker presented a different methodology and theory surrounding activism which the Fellows can use in the next stage of their transformative journeys. The AV staff would like to thank the 2010-11 VP Fellows and spring conference speakers for an inspirational weekend.



2010-11 VP Fellows pose for a photo with the AV Co-Executive Directors during the spring conference.

Scholarships Still Available for 2011-12 Vision Program



VP Fellows share their thoughts on social justice activism.

What happens when you put university students together for a summer to learn about resolving ethnic conflict? What happens when that group of university students is half Jewish American/Israeli and Palestinian/Palestinian American?

There are still a few spots available for bright, motivated applicants for the 2011-12 Vision Program. Now in its sixth consecutive year, the Vision Program takes under/graduate students on a journey of conflict transformation and comparative conflict analysis. The ten-month fellowship starts with a three-week trip to the Balkans (Serbia, Kosovo, and Bosnia-

Herzegovina) which runs from July 1 - July 22, 2011 and includes two follow up conferences in the US. Click [here](#) for more information.

APPLY ONLINE TO THE VISION PROGRAM!!!

Beyond Bridges: Israel-Palestine... Gearing Up!



2010 BB:IP students listen to a lecture at Bir Zeit University.

Gearing up for its second summer, Beyond Bridges: Israel-Palestine (BB:IP) is seeking ambitious, politically conscious under/graduate students for the last few spots on this unique three-week study course. Based in Jerusalem, students travel to Haifa, Bethlehem, Tel Aviv, Hebron, and beyond to meet with scholars and activists from across the political spectrum. The BB:IP staff is refining the course curriculum and securing on-site program logistics within Israel-Palestine. Run through USF, BB:IP is an accredited study abroad program that engages narratives often absent or underrepresented in mainstream discourse and challenges its participants to see the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from different angles. This summer's trip will run from June 12 - July 3, 2011. Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis (first come, first serve!). Click [here](#) for more information.

CLICK HERE TO APPLY TO BB:IP

Progress at Fourth UP Group Process



UP students discuss issues of individual and group identity.

Earlier this month Muslim and Jewish UP students from three SF Bay Area groups (East Bay, South Bay, and San Francisco) gathered for their fourth group process, held at the University of San Francisco. Having made significant headway in the last group process, UP students directly addressed the difficult questions that Co-Facilitators [Oren Kroll-Zeldin](#) and [Rangineh Azimzadeh](#) helped raise. There will be a fifth and final group process on May 15, before the UP students reconvene for a final time at the UP graduation on June 5, where acclaimed [Imam Suhaib Webb](#) will be delivering the keynote address.

Lessons Learned in Israel-Palestine?



Abu Arqoub and O'Sullivan sharing thoughts and experiences on conflicts with students.

In mid-April, AV Co-Executive Director and University of San Francisco Professor Huda Abu Arqoub spoke on a panel focusing on conflict resolution. Along with fellow USF Professor [Christopher O'Sullivan](#), the panel, titled "Lessons Learned," addressed lessons taken from the conflict in Northern Ireland and the possible applications of those lessons in conflict resolution within Israel-Palestine. Sponsored by USF's International Studies department, an audience of 40 USF students engaged the panelists in a stimulating debate over power dynamics in conflict settings.

Upcoming Events

May 8, 7:30PM: Co-Executive Director Aaron Hahn Tapper will moderate a panel titled "Muslims and Jews in America: Friends or Foes?" at the 92nd Street Y in New York City. Panelists will include Udi Aloni, Rabbi Brad Hirschfield, Daisy Khan, and Dr. Ingrid Mattson. To receive 30% off the ticket price use discount code [MJAF](#) when purchasing your tickets. Click [here](#) or call 212.415.5500 to purchase tickets.



June 1, 7PM: Co-Executive Director Hahn Tapper and AV Board Member Reza Aslan will be joined by Professor Aysha Hidayatullah (USF) and Rabbi Sidney Mintz (Congregation Emanu-El) for a panel discussion at the [Commonwealth Club](#) in Lafayette, California. The panel will examine innovative ways in which Judaism and Islam have absorbed and been profoundly altered by the American experience. Click [here](#) for more information and to purchase tickets.

June 5, 12PM: AV will graduate 35 students from the 2010-11 Unity Programs Bay Area during a ceremony held at USF's Fromm Hall. Following remarks by graduation speaker [Imam Suhaib Webb](#), UP's Muslim and Jewish students will share their reflections on their experiences with this groundbreaking and intensive ten-month conflict transformation program.

June 28 - July 1 (Chicago), July 25 - 28 (Washington DC): The [Interfaith Youth Core](#) is holding [Leadership Institutes](#) for student activists which will teach participants to mobilize movements for interfaith cooperation on college campuses. Applications are due by May 20. Click [here](#) to apply.

In the News: VP Alumnus Featured in Time Magazine



Fadi Quran speaks to members of the March 15 Movement in Ramallah.

VP '08-'09 Alumnus Fadi Quran was featured in a recent Time Magazine article "A New Palestinian Movement: Young, Networked, Nonviolent." Quran is central figure in the March 15 Movement, a non-violent youth-lead movement in the West Bank. Click [here](#) to read the full Time Magazine article.

Quran was also the subject of a profile article published by the Institute for Middle East Understanding's (IMEU) news site, "Generation Oslo: Fadi Quran." Click [here](#) to read the full article.

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