



Transforming the Present, Shaping the Future

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from  
BB:IP  
and VP  
set to  
launch!](#)

## June 2011 Newsletter

Dear Friends,

When we look into our past we summon an image of who we were; as we peer into our future we create an image of who we hope to be. Linking the past and the future, however, is the present moment. It is in this present moment we are called to make a crucial decision to be an agent of change. With many uncertainties in our world, including the constant evolution of unrest, conflict, and inter-group tensions in the Middle East, Abraham's Vision seeks to empower a new generation of student leaders to make a commitment towards fashioning a more just and peaceful transformation of the present. In a continued effort to promote this positive transformation we ask for your help and support in this crucial time. Please make a tax-deductible [donation](#) to Abraham's Vision so we can continue our innovative work.

Salam, Shalom, In Peace,  
*Huda Abu Arqoub and Aaron Hahn Tapper*

Here are this month's activities and updates:

- Unity Program is Now Accepting Applications for 2011-2012
- Beyond Bridges: Israel-Palestine Successfully Launched for Second Consecutive Summer Program
- 2011-12 Vision Program Thrilled to Launch its Sixth Consecutive Year
- Recent Events
- In the News

**[Unity Program is Recruiting for 2011-2012](#)**  
**[Applications are Now Being Accepted!](#)**

In June 2011 our sixth consecutive year of the Unity Program officially came to a close as we celebrated the graduation of 35 new students. (230 students have now taken this ten month

intensive course.) The dedication and commitment of the students, however, did not end with graduation.

Several of them expressed interest in continuing their involvement with Abraham's Vision and, as a result, we have created our first group of Unity Program Alumni Ambassadors! Keep your eyes open for our UP Ambassadors, who you may find speaking at local events, sharing their unique experiences. Welcome Unity Program Alumni Ambassadors Maya Katz-Ali (2010-11), Talat Mirmalek (2009-10), Talia Mirmalek (2009-10), and Edil Yousef (2010-11). If you are interested in continuing your involvement with the Unity Program as an Alumni Ambassador, please contact Rangineh Azimzadeh at [rangineh@abrahamsvision.org](mailto:rangineh@abrahamsvision.org).

And now that UP 2010-11 has officially come to an end, we are ramping up our recruitment for the 2011-12 Unity Program. [Applications](#) are now being accepted. We highly encourage you to apply to this unique and groundbreaking program. We anticipate a high turnout this year so please be sure to get your applications in soon!

Finally, it is our pleasure to announce that the 2009-10 Abraham's Vision [Unity Program Graduation Film](#), held in June 2010, is being featured at this year's 48th Annual [Islamic Society of Northern America \(ISNA\) Convention](#) in Rosemont, IL. The film was selected from a competitive pool of many other movies and will be featured on Sunday, July 3rd at the ISNA Film Festival.

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## **Beyond Bridges: Israel-Palestine Successfully Launched for Second Consecutive Summer Program**



The Western Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem, one of many places where participants explore and unpack the dominant Jewish and Palestinian narratives.

CTE is proud to announce the successful launch of its second consecutive [Beyond Bridges Israel-Palestine](#) summer program. The success of the last year's BBIP program was evident, as this year's enrollment was more than double with 16 university students. Over the last few weeks we have traveled from Tel Aviv's Independence Hall to Ramallah's Mu'qat'ah and Yasser Arafat's grave; we have traveled from Yad Vashem and Har Herzl to the Jenin refugee camp; we have gone from riding camels in the desert to learning about Israeli Bedouin unrecognized villages; we have gone from meetings with Jewish Israeli settlers to Bethlehem's Church of Nativity.

Through this journey we have traveled all over Israel and Palestine, exploring dominant components of the Jewish and Palestinian narratives, including an examination of marginalized communities such as Jerusalem's Mizrahi Jewish Israelis and even the Nablus Samaritans.

This program is certainly one of a kind.

A student writes in her [blog](#) entry "I have hope here in Palestine as well as in Israel, and it is my duty to bring hope back with me to my country and share it with others. Knowledge is power."

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## **2011-12 Vision Program Thrilled to Launch its Sixth Consecutive Year**



The city of Belgrade, one of the many fascinating places awaiting Vision Program Fellows.

On Thursday, June 30th the newest group of [Vision Program](#) students will arrive in Belgrade, Serbia to begin their transformative journey through the Balkans. Exploring tenets of conflict transformation and social justice, the group of 12 students (6 Palestinians and 6 Jews) is the sixth consecutive Vision Program group (we've already graduated 84 students from this intensive ten-month experience).

Over the course of three and a half weeks traveling through Serbia, Kosovo, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the group will engage in theories of comparative conflict analysis and intensive group process exploration with VP staff Huda Abu Arqoub, Miriam Abed El-Dayyem, Adina Friedman, and Tal Kligman. Following this summer's experiential educational trip, students, and staff will reconvene for two follow-up conferences in fall 2011 and spring 2012.

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## **Recent Events**

**June 1:** Co-Executive Director Aaron Hahn Tapper and AV Board Member Reza Aslan were joined by Dr. Aysha Hidayatullah (USF) and Rabbi Sidney Mintz (Temple Emanu-El) for a panel discussion at the [Commonwealth Club](#) (Lafayette, CA). Springboarding off Hahn Tapper and Aslan's new book, [Muslims and Jews in America: Commonalities, Contentions, and Complexities](#), the panel examined the myriad innovative ways that Jews and Muslims interact with one another in the United States. This event was sold out!

**June 5:** AV graduated 35 students from the [2010-11 Bay Area Unity Program](#) during a ceremony held at the University of San Francisco's [Fromm Hall](#). Following remarks from keynote graduation speaker [Imam Suhaib Webb](#), Muslim and Jewish UP students shared their reflections on their experiences with this groundbreaking educational ten-month conflict transformation program.



## **In the News**



**THIS JUST IN...**

Media Coverage of the new AV book published by Palgrave Macmillan, *Muslims and Jews in America: Commonalities, Contentions, and Complexities*:

- J. Weekly's recent article, "New Book with Local Ties Examines Muslims, Jews—and Their common ground."
- Tablet Magazine briefly touched on this new book in "On the Bookshelf: Levantine lives, stone synagogues, faithful feminists, minority Muslims, and Jewish jokes."
- Rabbi Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer's piece from the Multifaith World site. [Click here](#) to read the full article.

Proceeds from the book go to Abraham's Vision. [Click here](#) to order a copy.

Unity Program Educator/Facilitator and BBIP Senior Educator Oren Kroll-Zeldin speaks about his community service work.

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