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Transforming the Present, Shaping the Future

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VP 2011-12
&
BB:IP 2011
Now
Accepting
Applications

March 2011 Newsletter

Dear Friends,

As citizens of the world currently experiencing the trauma of conflict and devastation at the hands of nature and humanity, we must remember the power of peace and freedom. Now, more than ever, we need a young generation of leaders who understand the complexities of modern conflict, those who can help create sustainable solutions to inter-communal strife. Abraham's Vision aims to transform conflict and create profound and lasting effects with the individuals and communities with whom we work. 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:

- AV Participates in Abrahamic Family Reunion Conference at Esalen Institute
- 2010-11 VP Spring Conference in April: Final Conference for Fifth VP Group!
- A Few Spots Left for Beyond Bridges: Israel-Palestine Program
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[AV Participates in Abrahamic Family Reunion Conference at Esalen Institute](#)

From March 16 to 18, Co-Executive Directors Aaron Hahn Tapper and Huda Abu Arqoub attended the annual Abrahamic Family Reunion conference at the [Esalen Institute](#) in Big Sur, California. Run by [Track Two: An Institute for Citizen Diplomacy](#), the conference brought together influential representatives from the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities across the US, including such notables as Esalen Institute Co-Founder Michael Murphy, prominent Evangelical leader Richard Cizik, Executive Director of HaMifgash: An Ongoing Conversation Among Jewish Intellectuals Rabbi Haim Dov Beliak, founder of the Progressive Faith Foundation Rabbi Steven Jacobs, Executive Director of Track Two Dulce Murphy, diplomat Peter J. Kovach, Hartford Seminary Professor Yahya M. Michot, and Oakland Imam Faheem Shuaibe, among others. The conference aimed to strengthen inter-group ties using psychological, political, and spiritual methods to establish a sense of cooperation, mutual respect, and justice.



Esalen is a retreat center for humanistic alternative education.

[2010-11 VP Spring Conference in April: Final Conference for Fifth VP Group!](#)

The 2010-11 VP Fellows will gather together for the final official time at the [Headlands Institute](#) in Marin, California in early April. After a ten-month journey, which began with a month-long immersion in the Balkans, the VP Fellows will now reflect upon their journey while discussing how to integrate their VP experiences into careers in social justice activism. Among other important figures coming to the conference are five VP alumni from as far back as our first VP group, the University of San Francisco's prominent Professor Aysha Hidayatullah, and long time peace activists, Libby and Len Traubman. The AV staff and VP Fellows are looking forward to their much anticipated reunion.



The Headlands Institute in Marin, California will host the Spring VP conference.

[A Few Spots Left for Beyond Bridges: Israel-Palestine Program](#)

[Beyond Bridges: Israel-Palestine \(BB:IP\)](#) is seeking ambitious, politically conscious under/graduate student leaders for the last few spots on this one-of-a-kind summer program. Now in its second year, BB:IP is a three-week study course that takes students of all backgrounds to Israel and Palestine. By engaging narratives often absent or underrepresented in mainstream discourse, BB:IP challenges participants to see the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from different angles. Based in Jerusalem, students travel to Haifa, Bethlehem, Tel Aviv, Hebron, and beyond to meet with scholars and activists from across the political spectrum. Run through the University of San Francisco (USF), BB:IP is an accredited study abroad program which will take place 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](#)



Beyond Bridges: Israel-Palestine

BB:IP allows students to explore questions at the core of all conflicts.

[Scholarships Still Available for 2011-12 Vision Program](#)



VP Fellows discuss the Balkans conflicts during their trip to Serbia, Kosovo, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Scholarships are still available for select, qualified applicants for the [2011-12 Vision Program](#). Preference will be given to bright, motivated under/graduate student leaders who exhibit a sense of self-awareness and intellectual curiosity about conflict and identity politics. Now in its sixth consecutive year, the Vision Program takes university students who identify as Jewish American, Palestinian American, Israeli, and/or Palestinian 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!!!](#)

[Significant Headway in Second UP Group Process](#)



UP:SB students take a break during a course meeting.

In early March, Muslim and Jewish UP students from across the Bay Area met for their second group process at the University of San Francisco, engaging in facilitated group discussions and interactive group activities. According to UP Co-Facilitators [Oren Kroll-Zeldin](#) and [Rangineh Azimzadeh](#) the students have continued to show their commitment to the process and to each other through their eagerness to engage in difficult discussions. After a large group discussion, UP students broke into uni-communal groups and examined power dynamics. The UP Co-Facilitators and staff are happy to see the group's maturity and dedication. The Unity Program students will reconvene on March 27 for their third of five group processes.

[Upcoming Events](#)

April 1, 2PM: BB:IP alumnae Lizzie Guerra and Kaitlin Locascio will lead an important Q&A session following the screening of [Budrus](#) (an award-winning film about non-violent resistance in Palestine) at the 9th USF Human Rights Film Festival. The screening will take place at USF's Presentation Theater. Click [here](#) for more information about the film festival.

April 13, 6:30PM: AV Co-Executive Director Huda Abu Arqoub will sit on the conflict resolution panel "Lessons Learned," sponsored by USF's International Studies department. The event will be held at USF's Fromm Hall at 6:30PM (click [here](#) for map of USF campus). The panel will discuss the similarities and difference between Northern Ireland, South Africa, the Balkans, Kashmir, and Israel-Palestine.

April 21: AV Co-Executive Director Aaron Hahn Tapper and AV Board member Reza Aslan will release their new book, "Muslims and Jews in America: Commonalities, Contentions, and Complexities." Co-edited by Aslan and 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 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 and Rabbi David Ellenson
- Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed



Muslims and Jews in America, by Reza Aslan and Aaron Hahn Tapper, will be in stores soon.

- Rabbi Eric H. Yoffie
- Dr. Ingrid Mattson
- Dr. Saba Soomekh
- Salam Al-Marayati
- Dr. Aysha Hidayatullah and Dr. Judith Plaskow
- Dr. Eboo Patel
- Rabbi Reuven Firestone and Hebah H. Farrag
- Rabbi Michael Lerner
- Peter A. Geffen

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

May 8, 7:30PM: Hahn Tapper will moderate a panel titled "Muslims and Jews in America: Friends or Foes?" at the [92nd Street Y](#) in New York, NY. Panelists include Udi Aloni, Rabbi Brad Hirschfield, Daisy Khan, and Dr. Ingrid Mattson.

In the News



THIS JUST IN...

2008-09 VP Alumnus Moriel Rothman published an Op-Ed in the Jerusalem Post. Click [here](#) to read this important piece.

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