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Transforming the Present, Shaping the Future

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October 2011 Newsletter

Dear Friends,

As autumn begins to un-fold, we hope you are taking time to contemplate the profound idea of conflict transformation. Seasonal transitions, while dramatic, are temporary. Working with individuals and communities on transforming their conflicts through education, on the other hand, creates lasting effects and requires years of work and commitment.

Supporting Abraham's Vision allows you to contribute to the transformation of personal and collective relationships between and among Jews, Muslims, Israelis, and Palestinians. This autumn help support the most powerful tool in the fight against inequity, ignorance, and discrimination—Education. Please make a [donation](#) to Abraham's Vision.

Salam, Shalom, Peace,

Huda Abu Arqoub and Aaron Hahn Tapper
Co-Executive Directors

Here are this month's updates:

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Seventh Consecutive Unity Programs Off to a Great Start



UP Students learning with and from each other through group process workshops.

This month we launched our seventh consecutive Unity Program. With an incredibly strong group of Co-Educators, the 2011-12 Unity Program promises to be another excellent year.

This course teaches Jewish and Muslim 15 to 18 year-olds about issues relevant to North American Jewish and Muslim communities, the historical relationship between Muslims and Jews, and the relationship between Judaism and Islam. Since 2005 we have graduated 210 students from this intensive ten-month program while partnering with more than sixteen Muslim and Jewish institutions.

With three regional groups—East Bay, South Bay, and the city of San Francisco—the Unity Program is designed to work with 72 students this year. Click [here](#) or email Unity Program Director Rangineh Azimzadeh (rangineh@abrahamsvision.org) to learn more about the course curriculum, staff, and overall program details.

New UP Staffer and Return of Another



UP Co-Educator Mabruka Abudra returns to UP Peninsula/South Bay.

Welcome to new UP team member Andrew Gordon-Kirsch and previous educator Mabruka Abudra! (And welcome back Rangineh Azimzadeh, Oren Kroll-Zeldin, and Wafaa Sabill!)

Andrew recently moved back to Berkeley, his hometown, after a six-year hiatus. During the past year he lived in Jerusalem as a Dorot Fellow, doing such things as working with high schoolers at Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam, a bi-national (Palestinian and Jewish) village near Latrun. Previously, he served as a raft guide on the Kings River outside of Fresno, led backpacking and rock climbing trips for UCLA Outdoor Adventures, worked with UCLA Hillel, and taught communication skills as a ropes course facilitator. Andrew has focused a majority of his academic studies on the Middle East and has lived and traveled extensively throughout the MENA region.

Mabruka Abudra, a former 2009-10 UP Co-Educator, was born and raised in Santa Clara (CA). She currently dedicates her time to working with outreach and volunteer organizations, such as the newly established Muslim Activists for Peace (MAP). Previously she has worked with San Jose State University's Jewish-Muslim-Christian Coalition, the first organization of its kind to be established at SJSU. Earning her BA in English from SJSU, Mabruka has studied and lived in Egypt and Jordan.

A Few Spots Left for Bay Area Unity Programs



We still have a few spots open in our three Bay Area Unity Programs: East Bay, South Bay/Peninsula, and city of San Francisco. [Apply now!](#)

2010-11 Vision Program Fall Conference Reunites Fellows at USF



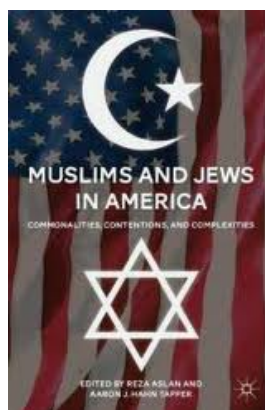
2011-12 VP Fellows in Mostar, the final city on their voyage through Serbia, Kosovo, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[Vision Program](#) fellows will travel from all over the US, Israel, and Palestine to attend the Fall Conference in the San Francisco Bay Area. Held from November 17-20, this will be the first time all twelve Fellows see one another since their intensive trip to the Balkans in June and July.

The Fall Conference will kick-off with a group dinner open to BBIP (Beyond Bridges: Israel-Palestine) Summer 2011 students and current VP-ers, followed by a day of programs held at the University of San Francisco.

Fellows traveling to the US from Israel and Palestine will be staying on after the conference officially ends, on Sunday, November 20, in order to give a number of presentations at communities throughout the Bay Area.

AV Book – Muslims and Jews in America



Released in April 2011, *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 one-of-a-kind book explores 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. And click [here](#) to order it on-line.

Recent Events



September 30 (Berkeley): During the second day of Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) services, Huda Abu Arqoub was invited to speak about her hopeful vision of Muslim-Jewish and Palestinian-Israeli relations with the entire community at [Congregation Netivot Shalom](#).

October 9 (San Francisco): In early October, UP Director/Facilitator Rangineh Azimzadeh and Educator/Facilitator Oren Kroll-Zeldin represented AV at the 11th annual Teachers for Social Justice Conference, "The Power in Community." Rangineh's and Oren's workshop explored issues of alliance building across differences in the high school classroom. During the session they discussed various methodological practices in inter-communal work, while sharing 'best practices' from their experiences as UP staff. Workshop participants were also given an opportunity to share their own experiences and challenges with alliance building and participate in a lesson from the UP curriculum in an effort to simulate the methodologies that were presented.

Upcoming Events

November 17-20 (San Francisco and Peninsula): 2011-12 Vision Program Fall Conference.

November 21 (San Francisco): Aaron Hahn Tapper will be presiding over a panel at the annual American Academy of Religion conference. Titled (surprise!), "Muslims and Jews in America: Commonalities, Contentions, and Complexities, the following scholars will be participating in the session's topic: Dr. Reza Aslan, Dr. Aysha Hidayatullah, Rabbi Michael Lerner, Dr. Eboo Patel, and Dr. Judith Plaskow. Click [here](#) for more information.



AV-Affiliate Organization Events



Speaker Series at the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California

The ICCNC's exciting "Islam and Authors" series is designed to introduce cutting-edge academic and literary works on Islam and Muslims to the greater Bay Area community, offering live, onstage conversations with writers of new books, followed by an audience Q-and-A and book signing. The next event will take place on Saturday, October 30, 6PM, where Sumbul Ali-Karamali will speak about "The Muslim Next Door: the Qur'an, the Media, and that Veil Thing," in conversation with Wajahat Ali and Jason van Boom. Tickets: \$10 general, \$5 students. Location: Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California, 1433 Madison Street (between 14th and 15th streets), Oakland, 94612. For complimentary tickets for media professionals contact Hamza van Boom at [510.219.2431](tel:510.219.2431) or hamza@iccnc.org.

Spend Next Year with [AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps](#)

Do you want to make a difference in the world? AVODAH gives passionate young people, like you, hands-on work experience at local organizations fighting poverty around the country. Spend next year creating an active Jewish community while learning about yourself and partnering with service providers and residents in low income communities. Interested? [Start your application today!](#)

Our first deadline is **January 29, 2012**.

In the News



THIS JUST IN...

Huda Abu Arqoub has a piece in the recent edition of *Shm'a: A Jewish Journal of Responsibility Magazine*. Along with a number of Jewish notables—Menachem Creditor, Naomi Graetz, Shai Held, Naomi Less, Shaul Magid, Peter Pitzele, and Chana Rothman, among others—Abu Arqoub presents a Muslim perspective on the (almost) binding of Abraham's son. Click [here](#) to read the piece.

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