



Partners Toolkit for March 2007

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Citizens for Global Solutions
Partners Nationwide Teleconference

- A Conversation at the Intersection of Art and Activism-
The Spring 2007 Virtual Poetry Slam Project

Saturday, March 10, 2006
1:00pm Eastern time

Dial: 800-391-2548
Verbal password: V A 3 1 7 8 5 5

Hosts

- Valerie Schrock, Director, Outreach and Advocacy, Citizens for Global Solutions
- Erica Tafoya, Deputy Director, Outreach & Advocacy, Citizens for Global Solutions

Speakers

- Guy Taylor, Hawaii Chapter Leader, Citizens for Global Solutions
- Rachel Benenson, Summer youth volunteer & soon-to-be Chapter Leader, Citizens for Global Solutions
- Jessica Mitchell, Fall 2006 Poetry Slam winner
- Gregory Pickett, Fall 2006 Poetry Slam winner

Agenda:

- Update on previous Partners' Project: The End Torture Campaign
- Discussion on civic engagement, chapter/group creation, and questions and challenges facing activists today.
- March/April Partners' Project: The Spring 2007 Poetry Slam project

Here are some useful tips regarding how to access the call:

- Participants should dial in 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- When dialing in, the host and participants should hold the line for an operator.
- Participants will verbally give their password to the operator.
- Operators will take the city, state and number of people in the room and place them into the Main Conference.

– A Conversation at the Intersection of Art and Activism–
The Spring 2007 Virtual Poetry Slam Project

Recently, traditional advocacy and activist organizations have been exploring new avenues for educating and activating constituencies through more creative expressions. This is not new. Marrying art and politics in order to challenge public perceptions about the status quo is commonplace in the art world. Think of great antiwar works by individual artists like Picasso's "Guernica" or Brecht's "Mother Courage," viewable in art institutions (theaters, museums) and extolled for their universality and artistic virtuosity as much as for their message. In the non-profit world, however, an artistic approach to politics is still considered a bit of an experiment. This is where Citizens for Global Solutions differs from many other organizations. We have been embracing connections between art and activism for some time now, and with great reward. For us, this road is well known and highly valued.

Oscar Hammerstein, an American writer, producer, and well known director of musicals for almost forty years, was an early leader of the United World Federalists. His play, "The Myth that Threatens the World", toured stages across the country in the early 1950's, bringing to light how the myth of national sovereignty was leading the world toward disaster. In 1959 a series of films on world law and U.N. reform were produced with the Pierce Butler Junior Foundation for Education in World Law, entitled "Eight Steps to Peace"; the narrators included Vincent Price and UWF Advisory Board member Henry Fonda. Playwrights, poets, authors and film-makers have been a part of our community since its inception.



As our organization has recently re-tooled some of our structures and programs, we've also begun to explore new ways to re-establish this rich tradition of teaching and activating

people through art and activism. Enter the 2007 Spring Poetry Slam project.

Last fall, we held an online poetry competition to increase the attention given to global environmental issues. While participants found the act of writing and performing a poem intrinsically educational and fun, the project also produced big returns for us. Over 2,500 poets and spoken word performers (including rap/hip-hop artists) participated in the competition and are now a part of our on-line community. Their poems and messages not only bring a broad viewing audience to our website, they are helping to strengthen our advocacy reach and expand our audience. By showcasing the best of these poems on our new website next to our factsheets, news updates, issue reports, and action alerts, we add passion and pizzazz to the information that we provide on some of the world's most pressing global issues, and in doing so, raise the number of people who will read on, look deeper, and be compelled to take action.

One thing that our poetry project lacked in the fall of 2006 was the passion and creativity of our leaders, long-time members, and Partners for Global Solutions. We did a poor job of plugging *YOU* into the project. We are not willing to make the same mistake twice. We want your participation, your ideas, and your poems!

There will be time to write letters, lobby leaders, and land great messages in the media as this year progresses. But for the next several weeks, we want *YOU* to explore a different side of yourselves, your chapters, your friends and your families. We want to get to know the artist in you. So be bold, be brave, and read on!

March/April Partner's Project:

Participate in the spring 2007 Poetry Slam project:

1. Read or think about the current theme, TORTURE, inspired by the End Torture Campaign (<http://endtorture.net>). There is a lot of information and opinions out there about torture and prisoner abuse, both at home and abroad. The issue has come to the forefront of America's consciousness as it's hit the front pages newspapers and landed in prime time television shows. What do you think? Start by visiting:
www.virtualpoetryslam.net/main/
2. Write a poem inspired by the theme. Poetry can be anything you want it to be. Your poem can rhyme or be free-form. Your ideas can be general or specific. Be sarcastic or sincere, furious or light-hearted. Just make it your own. If you are part of a chapter, you can work as a group or break up into smaller teams to produce a few poems.
3. Practice performing your poem. If you're working in a chapter or small group, figure out who will perform the poem the best.
4. Record your performance. You can shoot video on numerous devices these days. We don't care what you use; just use whatever you have access to (from a camcorder to a cell phone that can record short videos). We've learned that performing your poem in a quiet place to get the best possible sound is really the most important factor. If you need help with this step, contact Valerie at CGS: 202-546-3950 x114
5. If you would like to pass information about this contest along to other groups, faith communities, teachers, or friends, simply email outreach@globalsolutions.org and we will provide you with whatever materials you need. In this case, a simple one-page promotional flyer would work well.
6. Submit your recording to the virtualpoetryslam.net site. We've made it easy, so give it a try by clicking the "Submit Your Video" link. If you get stuck at any point, we're here to help! Email us at outreach@globalsolutions.org or call Valerie at: 202-546-3950 x114

Monthly Report of Your Accomplishments for November/December

Chapter _____ Leader _____

What is your chapter working on? How are your events and meetings going?

Did you carry out the November/December project?

Have you worked on any other past Partner's Projects in the last two months?

If so, what did you like about the projects and what didn't you like?

Do you feel this project made a difference?

Is there anything the national office can help you with?

Have you written any LTEs? Were they printed?

*****Please remember that you don't have to do ALL of the projects, but please do let me know about which ones you have chosen to work on.*****

Letters to the editor and op-eds *(Please note them here even if you are enclosing copies)*

Total Submitted	Total Printed	Type: LTE, op-ed	Topic	Written By	Paper	Date Ran	It

Other Political or Media Activities Your Chapter Engaged In

Use another sheet if necessary to continue your report. Please detach and return to Erica Tafoya by March 31th so your accomplishments can be published in the next mailing.

Mail: Partners Monthly Report
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