

## July 2008 Newsletter

Youth Alliance for a New Humanity Energizes "Symphony of Transformation";

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Today's young people hold the creative energy, spirit, and consciousness of our emerging new world, and it brings great hope to know that the Alliance for a New Humanity has a burgeoning youth movement springing to life. The idea to form the Youth Alliance for a New Humanity (YANH) started in 2007 as a result of conversations between Deepak Chopra and Julia Walsh. After brainstorming the possibilities of such a body and formalizing its role, YANH was officially recognized by the ANH Board of Directors in January 2008.

Soon after, YANH Steering Committee members Julia Walsh, Joshua Gorman and Stephanie Wilks, along with Global Youth Action Network's founder, Benjamin Quinto, began manifesting the idea into reality and planning YANH's role in the upcoming 2008 Human Forum. The committee identified, invited and communicated with youth organizers and activists from around the world, and with the help of ANH's Arsenio Rodriguez, found sponsorship for several of them to attend the Forum. Even youth who could not find sponsorship to attend showed enthusiasm for the project and willingness to get involved.

The response that YANH received from Human Forum participants was welcoming and appreciative. Many participants were excited about the Youth Alliance after reading an article in the ANH newsletter in March 2008 just before the Forum. Representatives of YANH participated in the Forum as panelists, including Derrick Ashong of the Sweet Mother Tour and Benjamin Quinto; Stephanie Wilks, Joshua Gorman and Global Youth Action Network's Executive Director Franziska Seel facilitated small-group discussions; Julia Walsh acted as a synthesizer identifying common themes emerging from the small-groups discussions; and many in the group led networking sessions. Members of the steering committee were pleasantly surprised to connect and create lasting relationships with many young people who had found out about the Human Forum and came for a variety of reasons.

Carlos Pittella, 25, from Brazil, and President of the organization One to Trees, said, "I found out about the ANH Forum because of a friend, who as studied with Vandana Shiva in India, and found out about ANH at her school. He suggested I go and represent One to Trees, the ecological education NGO we work with. The network I built at the Forum was priceless — a real symphony of people from everywhere thinking long-term in terms of peace instead of war."

Eugenia Teofilovic, 28, from Canada and founder of banishbling.org, said: "I found out about the ANH Human Forum, by watching clips of the previous year's event. While listening to the speakers, I knew I had to be there in person. It was an awe-inspiring experience, which I will

keep with me forever. I feel very fortunate to have been involved with such a committed group of people, all with unique visions, perspectives, and life experience - working together towards one common goal."

Hannah Merriman, 31, from Northern California and the Creative Director of the Global Oneness Project ([www.globalonenessproject.org](http://www.globalonenessproject.org)) said: "I came to the forum to share the films and interviews that our project has been creating from around the world, and offer them to all as a tool for dialogue about our responsibility to each other and to life as a whole. I wanted to connect with others involved in media, education, peace-making and consciousness-shifting projects around the world. I ended up meeting a passionate, diverse group of people (of all ages!), and was delighted to discover many ways in which our work naturally intersects. I was so inspired by the bilingual nature of the forum that we decided to make our entire collection of films available in Spanish after I returned!"

Katie Ingram, 19, from Canada, and the "Living Centre" - an ecospiritual educational center - said: "I had heard about the Human Forum through the ANH newsletters. I found the Forum to be profoundly inspiring. All of these caring minds converging and collaborating towards global change! I learned a lot about how exactly to network and what it really means to connect with others and work together. I would have liked to have seen more youth there, but everyone who attended was amazing and I learned so much from everyone I talked to. And it was wicked fun. I would like to see more dancing next time and jamming."

The Youth Engagement Networking Session, a break-out group facilitated by YANH, consisted of a diverse group of young people, parents and teachers, who were primarily concerned with creating Youth Alliance groups with and for their children and students. Everyone in the group recognized the importance and urgency of getting young people involved with the issues addressed by ANH. The outcomes of our networking session included an email list of people dedicated to increasing youth participation in ANH's work, which is currently being used to share information about the progress of the Youth Alliance's New York City Initiative and ways in which they can get youth active at a local level.

The general outcomes of the Forum are in harmony with the goals of the Youth Alliance. Our current New York City YANH project is responding to the areas of focus addressed by Forum participants, including the need for better education, more programs and individual initiatives to empower young people, the power of personal transformation practices, and the importance of working locally in creating community-based projects for political and social change.

The New York City Youth Alliance Initiative is developing a model that other youth around the world can use to connect the personal and social transformation movements in their own communities, to be launched in autumn of 2008. The goal is to connect diverse youth organizers and activists with youth involved in personal transformation to educate and empower one another in our work and personal well-being. We will be working with youth organizers around NYC to create dialogue groups in neighborhoods in each of the five boroughs as a first step in bringing

these young people together, as well as host social monthly meet-ups. We hope that through this project youth around NYC will create long-lasting collaborative relationships with the potential to create a city-wide coalition to bring about personal and social transformation.