



JANUARY 2009



UNITED WORLD
COLLEGES

United World

Striving for diversity

Reflections from
Waterford

Developing the IB

UWC leads the way
with new courses

Spotlight

on volunteering

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Welcome to your New Look United World

We've given the magazine an overhaul to make it fresher, brighter and easier to read. As well as the design, we've introduced some new sections and we hope there is something for everyone.



Thank you all those who took part in the online survey, this was really helpful and we've taken your views into account where we can.

United World is the magazine for all UWC members – National Committees, graduates, students, staff, board members, volunteers and supporters of the

movement. Its key purpose is to inspire members to continue living the UWC values in ways that work with their lives and to keep everyone informed about the movement.

Get in touch

Please contact **United World with your news, views and photographs. Comments and feedback are always very welcome.**

Please email: editor@unitedworld.uwc.org

or write to:

The United World Colleges (International),
Second Floor,
17-21 Emerald Street,
London, WC1N 3QN, UK.

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The refurbished Dyfed House.

Sustainable housing

Atlantic College has completed the refurbishment project of one of its student houses, Dyfed House. The £1.1m eco-refurbishment project incorporated renewable and low carbon technologies to modernise the house and make it more energy efficient.

Sustainability was central to the project, as Neil Richards, Principal of Atlantic College explains "With several of our student houses dating back to the 1960s and the early days of the College, they were desperately in need of modernising and renovation. It is important that the refurbishment of any building reflects our strong commitment to the environment. We are constantly looking for new ways to reduce waste and lessen the impact we have on the surrounding countryside."

Earlier this year Neil unveiled eight strategic goals to students and staff, which challenge the College to remain an innovator in education. One of these goals is a focus on sustainability which has led to the College's Environmental Action Group and Estates Service spearheading new initiatives such as growing food for the College canteen and developing a partnership with the Millennium Seed Bank.

Eco-friendly features of the new house include:

- **Energy wall:** The south facing wall of the link building will act as an absorbing panel and make use of solar gains during sunny periods.
- **High performance windows and doors:** These will be selected to provide airtight construction with well sealed casements and high insulation levels.

- **Solar hot water heating:** An array of solar cells will provide a large proportion of the domestic hot water demand for the building.
 - **Daylighting and low energy lighting:** Existing windows where appropriate have been enlarged to provide more daylight and increased solar gains. In the study areas there will be insulated study booths with views to the gardens.
 - **Rainwater harvesting:** Run off from roof drainage will be used to flush WCs.
- The renovation project was made possible thanks to donations from the Know Fund and other generous donors. Atlantic College plans to carry out similar refurbishments of two other student houses over the next two years.

United World Sustainability Grants awarded

Last year graduate Dan Marshall (AC 68-70) donated \$15,000 to a one-off fund to support current students and recent graduates to develop projects promoting sustainable living (*United World, May 2007*).

Six applications were received that met the funding criteria, and Dan worked with three UWC graduates to select the successful projects: Natascha Gonzalez Pearson (AC 93-95), Theotonio Monteiro de Barros (USA 83-85) and Cory Ross (AC 69-71).

The judging panel was expecting a diverse range of projects as the objective of promoting sustainable living is so broad and were looking for projects where

the student or graduate was personally committed to and passionate about the outcome. Although Dan and the panel had anticipated more than six applications, they were impressed with the professionalism of all those submitted, and, through a series of international teleconferences, they made the difficult decision to award funding to three. All the projects will take place during 2009. Dáire MacFadden (SEA 98-07) has received a grant to develop a community led refuse collection and processing facility in a community in Argentina which has identified a need for this service. dairamacfadden@yahoo.com

Tarini Manchanda (MUWCI 03-05) received a grant to develop and distribute a documentary about issues of water management and ownership in Delhi. Tarini plans to distribute the film to schools in Delhi and also through film festivals. mtarini@gmail.com
Lucy Richards (AD 06-08) received a grant to develop and distribute a documentary encouraging cycling, appealing to a young audience. Lucy plans to team up with a documentary maker who shares her passion and will cycle across the US to raise awareness, making the documentary along the way. artichoke.lucy@gmail.com

Continuing Nordic NC cooperation

Representatives from five Nordic National Committees (Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Greenland and Norway) met at Red Cross Nordic UWC in October for their annual meeting aimed at sharing experiences and gaining inspiration from each other. Topics for discussion included selection criteria and experiences from the selection process, the allocation of students to the different Colleges and how to keep graduates involved with UWC. By having the meeting at RCNUWC, they were also able to gain a better understanding of activities and developments at the College as well as interact with staff and students.



Krystyna and Marzena with the former Prime Minister of Poland Jerzy Buzek.

Polish NC Recognised

The National Committee of Poland has been presented with the prestigious Pro Publico Bono award for projects relating to citizenship and service. The National Committee, chosen as one of 13 finalists from 300 entries, received a distinction in the category of International Cooperation and Dialogue.

They were presented with the award on 11 November 2008, a date with some significance both for the competition on its 10th anniversary, and for Poland on its 90th anniversary of re-gaining independence. National Committee Chair, Krystyna Troszczyńska and Deputy Chair Marzena Reich attended the event in Krakow, which was presided over by Mr Jerzy Buzek, former Prime Minister, and Professor Andrzej Zoll, former Ombudsman and President of the Constitutional Court, in cooperation with the Polish-American Freedom Foundation. The Committee hope that receiving the award will help raise the profile of UWC in Poland. They also received zł 10,000 (approx. \$US3,300) as a prize which they will put toward a UWC summer school in Lithuania, a joint project they are organising with the Lithuanian and Belarusian National Committees.



Planting saplings after the ceremony.

Celebrating the United World Forest



Simón Bolívar UWC's United World Forest (*United World*, May 2007) was officially named the JJ Cabrera Malo United World Forest at a prestigious ceremony held on 1 November 2008. The event was attended by 120 people, including representatives from universities, government institutions, NGOs and companies working in

agriculture and rural development in Venezuela. Staff and students also attended and the College was pleased to welcome the British Ambassador for Venezuela and the region's State Secretary. Mr Francisco Amos, General Sub-director of Operations at the College welcomed guests to the event, followed by presentations from Luis Marcano González, President of the SBUWC foundation FUNDACEA, and its namesake Dr José Joaquín Cabrera Malo, a key figure in Venezuelan conservation. Everyone present was then invited to participate in planting some saplings and a plaque was unveiled naming the forest the JJ Cabrera Malo United World Forest.

The ceremony was also used to officially launch the 'Adopt a Tree' campaign, in which supporters can donate US\$50 for each tree. Funds raised will contribute to various related projects including a carpentry school and a forest extension programme. By harvesting a proportion of the trees every seven years, additional funds will be raised to contribute to an endowment fund for scholarships. With 45,000 trees now planted, SBUWC is almost half way toward the target of planting 100,000 trees by 2012.

Contact fundaceaccs@gmail.com for more information on 'Adopt a Tree'.

LPCUWC increase access to quality care in rural China

The Global Concerns Action Team (GCAT) of Li Po Chun United World College is working to support medical projects in an impoverished area of the Chinese province of Guizhou.

This new project is focusing on Majiang County, an area designated by the Chinese government as a 'poverty county', where in 2007, only six of the county's 129 villages had clinics of a standard deemed acceptable by government authorities.



Inside the clinic in Chengzhong village.

This led to a programme by a Chinese charity, the Amity Foundation, to raise funds and build 100 medical clinics in the county. In early 2008, GCAT contributed to this programme by raising HK\$70,000 (approx. US\$9,000) needed to build two clinics, and the first of these was completed in late 2008. In November 2008, during LPCUWC's annual China Week, 12 students and Principal Dr Stephen Codrington travelled to Majiang to provide basic furnishings and equipment for the two GCAT-sponsored clinics, having raised an additional HK\$12,500 to fund this through a fundraising dinner and through the sales of GCAT-produced T-shirts and postcards.

During the visit to Majiang, the students accompanied the local clinic doctors on their daily rounds of house visits, assisted the local builders building a new clinic, attended and performed at the opening ceremony of the first clinic they'd sponsored and performed a cultural concert to over a hundred primary school children and their parents. The performance included a public health



Anne-Margreet Sas (Netherlands) and Anastasija Karklina (Latvia) help to build the new medical clinic in Chengzhong village.

musical, which the students had written themselves in the local language.

Continuing their long term commitment to improving medical care in the province, the GCAT students have pledged to raise HK\$50,000 for a new medical clinic desperately needed in one of the villages they visited, Xian E. Student Anne-Margreet Sas (Netherlands) says of this visit "I will never forget the doctor in Xian E and her commitment to the villagers. The existing clinic is in a shocking condition and gave me a lot of think about, I am glad we have decided to continue raising money for this project."



GCAT students from LPCUWC performing a song and dance to promote hygiene.



An artist's impression of the new East Campus at Tampines, due to open in 2010.



Parents and children attend an Open House at East Campus.



The new East Campus in Ang Mo Kio.

Looking East



Students at the new East Campus.

With a waiting list of 3,000, UWCSEA has opened its doors to an extra 400 students via its new East Campus.

The UWC mission, ethos and values are being shared with an increased number of students and the wider Singapore community following the opening of UWC of South East Asia's new East Campus in Ang Mo Kio (AMK) in September.

'UWCSEA East' aims to expand the traditions of excellence started by the College in 1971 when it opened as Singapore International School. Created to provide appropriate education for the children of expatriates in Singapore, it was affiliated with the UWC movement from the start. It formalised the link in 1975 when it became UWCSEA, and in the 1990s gradually expanded its age range from a secondary-only school into primary and kindergarten to reflect the traditional Singaporean educational model and in response to government policy pressures.

Today, there are more than 2,900 students aged from four to 18 at the original Dover Campus, with a further 400 children up to primary grade 4 at the new UWCSEA East.

A new, purpose-built campus will open in Tampines in August 2010; and by 2015 UWCSEA East will accommodate 2,500 students from Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12.

"We are aware that UWCSEA is often criticised from within the UWC family for being so different but it is our belief that if the UWC movement is to achieve its mission, more students need to experience a UWC education," says Julian Whiteley, Head of College. "We are therefore excited to be able to provide this opportunity with the new campus."

Julian says that demand for places is enormous: "For both campuses, the total number of students on the waiting list – as well as future applications – exceeds 3,000 parents choose UWC over other schools in Singapore because of how we educate their children and the UWC ethos and values are a big part of that."

As it was created to provide education for children of expatriates in Singapore, the majority of students at UWCSEA are fee-paying day students. Additionally, more than 40 students – known as 'scholars' – are selected through the National Committee (NC) system to study for the IB Diploma. Julian hopes that the opening of UWCSEA East will enable the College to increase the total number of scholars' throughout the College to more than 200, provided its fundraising efforts are successful. "As well as increasing the number of scholars for the IB Diploma, we also want to increase the number of scholars we have in Grade 8, 9 and 10," he says. "These students are selected in conjunction with NCs and through our contacts working in various NGOs around South East Asia."

UWCSEA has similarities to Waterford Kamhlaba UWC – and, from 2010, the new UWC in Maastricht – in sharing its educational and service

ideals with much younger children. All infant students at UWCSEA, for example, have the opportunity to become involved in projects with elderly people or children from local preschools.

"We believe that you can educate the younger students in such a way that it ensures prejudices do not develop, they care about the environment, they show respect for other people and wish to help those who are less privileged than themselves," says Julian. "We also believe you can teach them to think critically about issues."

While the present East Campus at AMK provides well-equipped classrooms and specialist facilities the College is greatly looking forward to the opening of the new campus at Tampines in 2010. UWCSEA believes that it will challenge traditional notions of school design and create a distinctive concept suited to the UWCSEA ethos and educational style.

The key idea behind the design of the campus, which will be 30% more efficient than similar sized buildings in Singapore, is to provide shared learning and social spaces, enabling all students to interact, creating a 'UWCSEA village'. Core teaching areas are in the middle of the campus, while the green zones, sports fields and assembly halls are located around the perimeter.

The buildings themselves will contribute to the educational environment, with the ability to monitor and report on water and electricity usage in order to raise awareness of these issues.

It is therefore hoped that the new campus will become a truly interactive space that students can own and enjoy – building on UWCSEA's impressive heritage and distinctive character as it enters its fourth decade.

New College Chairs and Heads

UWC of the Adriatic

In September 2008 Peter Howe became acting Rettore (Head) of Adriatic College. Peter joined Adriatic College in 2005, having previously come into contact with UWC when he was introducing the IB World Cultures course (developed at Adriatic College) at Upper Canada College. Peter was Director of Studies and Deputy Head from 2007 and replaces Marc Abrioux, who served as Head from 2001.



Ambassador Gianfranco Facco Bonetti became acting President of Adriatic College in September 2008, replacing Michel Zanetti, who served as President for 11 years. Amb. Facco Bonetti played a pivotal role in the foundation of Adriatic College 26 years ago. He served on the International Board between 1983 and 1993 and has recently retired from a career as a senior diplomat.



Lester B Pearson UWC of the Pacific

Francis Saville, QC became the new Chair of Pearson College on 4 November 2008, replacing Diana Maughan who served as Chair for five and a half years. Diana will continue to be involved with UWC as a member of the UWC International Board and as Chair of its Governance Committee. Francis is a lawyer at Canadian business law firm Fraser Milner Casgrain, and has practised energy and environmental regulatory law for over 35 years.



During this time, he acted as counsel to a number of Canada's leading energy firms. Francis is also Chair of the Board of Nexen Inc, a large Canadian based international energy company. He has been a trustee of Pearson College for two years and was previously Secretary and Chair of the Governance and Nominating Committee.

UWC-USA

Tom Dickerson (AC 66-68) is the new Chair of the Board at UWC-USA. He was the founder of the US UWC alumni association and has been a member of the UWC-USA Board since 1985, serving as Finance Committee Chair from 2004.



Tom began his career as a lawyer with Coudert Brothers in New York, and then worked as an investment banker, at Lehman Brothers and then E.F. Hutton. Since 1990, Tom has been chairman of

Tullis-Dickerson & Co., a venture capital management company which invests in private entities in the healthcare industry.

Tom replaces Jim Taylor, who served as Chair for 12 years and will continue his involvement with the College as Chair Emeritus and as UWC-USA's representative on the International Board.

New structure for UWC International

UWC International's new governance structure came into effect on 1 January 2009. Following consultation and detailed work to develop more effective governance over the past 18 months, a two-tier structure is now in place: a smaller International Board of up to 16 members, and a larger UWC Council of up to 60. The Board will have executive responsibility and its members will be the Directors and Trustees of UWC International, while the UWC Council (which will elect the Board) will have the scope to discuss issues of strategic, developmental and philosophical significance.

The first meetings of the new structure will be at the end of February when both the UWC Council and International Board will meet alongside the Global National Committee Meeting at Waterford Kamhlaba UWC. Since 2009 will be a transitional year, the UWC Council will meet twice before moving to a pattern of one meeting a year.

An important part of the new structure will be the nominating process for new members of both bodies. The Nominating and Governance Committee will be chaired by a Board member (Diana Maughan) but with its other four members drawn from the UWC Council (Paulina Gándara Riofrío (PC 74-76), Fayyaz Nurmohamed (AD 88-90), Theotonio Monteiro de Barros (USA 83-85) and Einar Steensnaes). The Committee's immediate priority is to deal with the transition between the old and new structures, but it will also be implementing an annual nominating process which will commence in the first part of each year, with a deadline for suggestions of possible nominees in March. Any member of the UWC organisation will be invited to nominate members of the International Board and UWC Council. The Nominating and Governance Committee's responsibility is to make sure that both bodies are well equipped with the necessary skill sets and experience, while seeking as much diversity as possible; there are also categories of membership with, for example, minimum numbers of UWC graduates and members with National Committee experience.

Details of the nominating process and the requirements and expectations of membership are available at www.uwc.org

Obituaries

It is with great sadness that we report the deaths of:

Martin Breen – staff member at Li Po Chun of Hong Kong UWC from 1992-2008

Chiletso Chambwinja (LPCUWC 02-04)



Director of the reserve Hector Andrades with a school group.

Biodiversity park opens at Mahindra UWC

Mahindra UWC of India has opened up its Biodiversity Park as a study resource for schools and colleges. The Van Vihar Biodiversity Park and Conservation Reserve opened in February 2008 but until recently was used only by MUWCI students (*United World*, September 2008).

School and college groups can now visit the park's unique collection of over 400 plant species and attend various biodiversity tours. They will also be able to take part in workshops on rain water harvesting and watershed management, sustainable and restoration development, the identification and uses of medicinal plants and the use of common plants in skin care and comprehensive waste management techniques.

Climate Change

A summer school organised by UWC of the Adriatic last year brought students from 11 UWCs together to study Climate Change and the Water Cycle. The conference was organised in collaboration with the Abdus Salam



International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), a research centre linked to two UN agencies and the Italian government. Funding was provided through the European Union project WATCH (Water and Global Change). 38 students representing 29 countries took part in a series of lectures, workshops and projects based around Climate Change. The lecturers came from institutions around Europe including the Institute of Meteorology in Germany, and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology in the UK. Acting Head of Adriatic College Peter Howe said "The conference was a tremendous success and we hope to run it again in June 2010".

From the Chair

We enter 2009 at a time of great uncertainty knowing that the financial pressures facing so many organisations will not pass us by. The International Board at its meeting in October discussed this threat and determined to do all it could to minimise the impact on UWC.



Tim Toyne Sewell

Nevertheless, we have already seen UWC in Mostar facing the threat of closure because of the lack of long term funding. The fact that when the College started it was never intended to be a permanent fixture does nothing to conceal my disappointment. That is not to take away from the enormous success already achieved, the example it has set in Bosnia Herzegovina and the fact that in some form it will continue as the only example of integrated education in the country. However, I believe that keeping the current College going for at least another five years would cement its indispensable role in the region's educational reformation and if we can find the funds, I am sure this must be our aim. The College is not only an innovative model, it is also one of the least expensive UWC Colleges to operate. If you can help, please let us know.

Some people would say that now is not the time to be taking steps towards building a fundraising function at international level to complement the work of the Colleges and National Committees. I am not of that opinion and believe that we must take a long view. We urgently need to improve the financial position of the whole organisation. We know that there are opportunities we are not exploiting and if we build our capacity now we can take advantage of the upturn when it comes. We intend to conduct a thorough search for the right person to lead this effort but I am determined that we will not be rushed into making an appointment until we find exactly what we are looking for.

At the International Board meeting in October our new governance arrangements were formally agreed and came into effect on 1 January. A huge amount of work has gone into getting this right and I am particularly grateful to Diana Maughan, Chair of our Nominating and Governance Committee, and, as ever, to Keith Clark who has done so much of the detailed work. Thanks also to all who contributed to our various consultations. The Board of 16 members should become a more effective decision-making body with a diversity of membership and the range of specialist skills needed to make it function properly. With up to 60 members on the UWC Council we will have the opportunity to include a considerable diversity of perspectives, experiences, professional competencies and involvement with UWC.

The Board will meet four times a year but one meeting at least will be held by tele/video-conference, saving money and time and reducing our environmental impact. The size of the Board should also enable us to consider issues and, if necessary, make decisions between formal

meetings. The various committees of the Board will carry on their work in between and undertake much of the detailed consideration of issues for the Board.

The first meetings of the new Board and UWC Council will be at Waterford Kamhlaba UWC in February. This should be an important occasion because we will meet alongside the Global National Committee Meeting which will gather together representatives of as many National Committees as possible. Our major item of business will be the construction of a strategic plan for UWC which will steer our decision-making over the next five years. As well as being a focus for the UWC Council and Board, the meeting will provide the perfect opportunity to seek the input of National Committees.

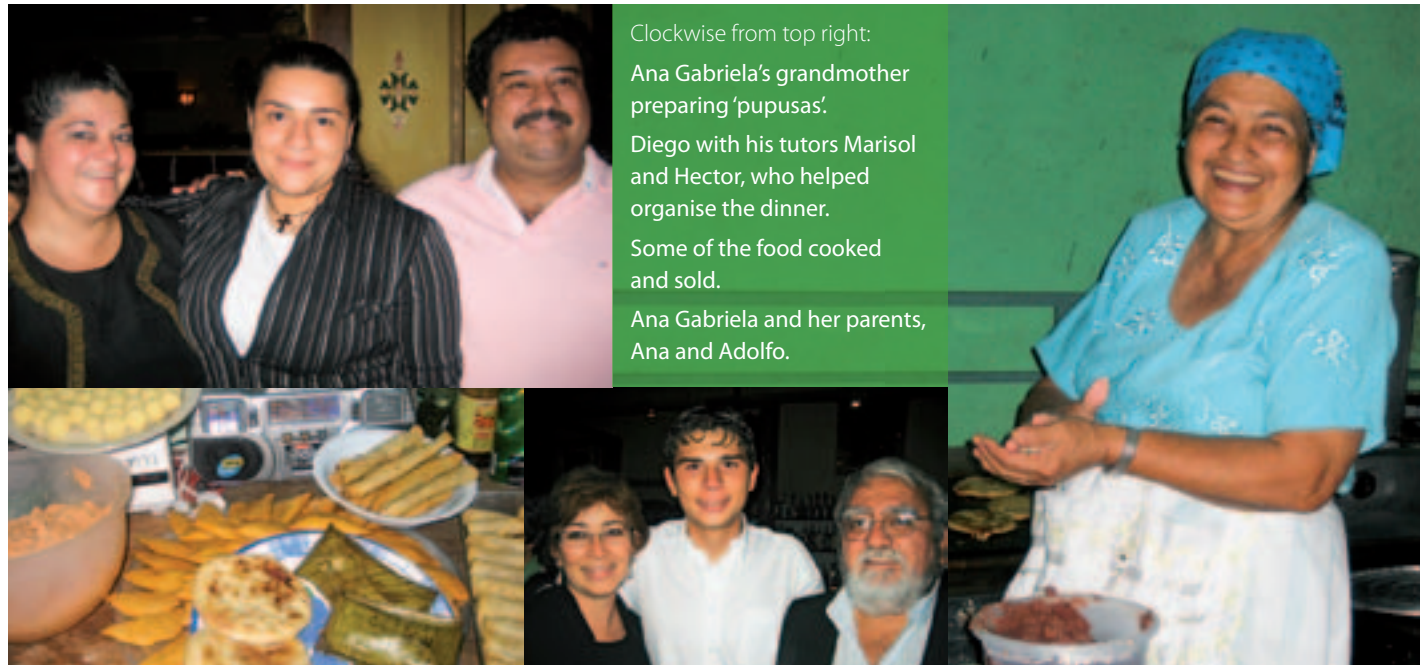
In December I had the opportunity to visit UWCSEA and learn much more about its plans for expansion in Singapore. It is an exciting time for the College but I was reassured by the way in which the UWC mission will be incorporated throughout the enlarged College. I was also hugely impressed with what the College is doing to set up a fundraising foundation and with the success of its initial activities, which have already led to the creation of a number of new scholarships. It is a success story and one which I am confident the College would be happy to share across the organisation.

Finally, as we enter this uncertain year I should like to make a plea to all our graduates. You have all received a unique opportunity through your UWC experience and we need your help to ensure that future generations can have a similar experience. Even a small regular donation helps. If you all made that commitment, we would have the financial security that all our Colleges so badly need and we could be more confident about exploring ways to develop UWC to make a bigger impact. What about making it a New Year resolution?

A Happy New Year to you all. May it be a successful one for all our Colleges and their students.

Tim Toyne Sewell
Chair

Fundraising



Clockwise from top right:
 Ana Gabriela's grandmother preparing 'pupusas'.
 Diego with his tutors Marisol and Hector, who helped organise the dinner.
 Some of the food cooked and sold.
 Ana Gabriela and her parents, Ana and Adolfo.

Embracing the fundraising challenge

Inspired by success in Guatemala, the National Committee of Costa Rica has started a new fundraising initiative which has raised US\$5000 towards the scholarships and pocket money for two students.

At the beginning of 2008, the Costa Rican National Committee (NC) was pessimistic about fundraising. Like many National Committees, it faced the difficulty of fundraising in a relatively poor country without a culture of giving to causes such as international education. "It wasn't a selfish attitude, just different priorities" said Flor Silesky, Costa Rican NC member. However, having been offered a number of partially funded scholarships and taking inspiration from the experiences of other NCs, such as Guatemala, where students are encouraged to raise funds towards their own scholarships and pocket money, the Costa Rican NC rose to the challenge.

"We wrote letters endorsing the candidates, made suggestions as to the type of events that could be organised and attended as many as possible" said Lilian Márquez, an active member of the Guatemalan NC who is living in Costa Rica and is now involved with the NC there.

Student Ana Gabriela had been offered a partial scholarship to UWC Costa Rica and, determined to take up the opportunity, she embraced the challenge enthusiastically. Her entire family helped cook dinner for friends and neighbours every weekend for three months in order to come up with her funding. Neighbours became faithful clients, 'eating out' every weekend to sample the local delicacies the family made. "It was a lot of hard work but, now settled at UWCCR, I realise this experience is worth that big effort", said Ana Gabriela.



Robert Faulstich, co-owner of restaurant Tin Jo.

To kick start another student's efforts, the Committee suggested that a local restaurant, Tin Jo, known for its generosity could be contacted to host a fundraising dinner. This proved successful, and student Diego Morera, who had been selected to attend Lester B. Pearson UWC of the Pacific, organised an evening alongside Ana Gabriela. Although Diego had been offered a fully funded scholarship by Pearson College, he needed to raise funds for his pocket money. The restaurant provided all the food for free and further funds were raised through a raffle. Guests were entertained by

two singers, including award winning Costa Rican artist, Humberto Vargas. "I was with a lot of amazing people that believe in me, and I knew that I did my best to make that and create my way to go to Pearson", said Diego. "Believing that everyday people can and actually do make a difference in other people's lives was an important lesson learned by all of us", added José David Achío a member of the National Committee.

The National Committee of Costa Rica will base future fundraising efforts on this success, aiming to exceed this year's results in years to come. Amanda Alfaro Córdoba says, "This first experience is inspirational for the students and the NC members, since it constitutes a goal to surpass in years to come. We look forward to these future experiences and initiatives coming from the future candidates, who we will support and endorse at every moment".

Zimbabwe: Increasing opportunity

Waterford Kamhlaba UWC has received a generous matched funding donation to provide ten scholarships for students from Zimbabwe.

At the beginning of 2008, Gavyn Davies, a leading British economist and member of Waterford's Governing Council issued a challenge to Zimbabwean telecoms entrepreneur and philanthropist Strive Masiyiwa and his wife Tsitsi. Gavyn pledged to fund five Zimbabwean students at Waterford if the Masiyiwas would agree to match this gift. The Masiyiwa family firmly embraced that challenge. Gavyn says, "The long term social effects of the political struggle in Zimbabwe cannot be underestimated. One of the ways I feel I can make a contribution is by supporting the education of talented young people, who may later in their lives be in a position to ensure Zimbabwe recovers from the current crisis and returns to prosperity. I'm delighted and honoured to be partnering with Strive and Tsitsi Masiyiwa in this initiative."

Strive Masiyiwa, the owner of Econet



Students waiting to be interviewed.

Wireless, now the third largest telecoms company in Africa, has a long standing commitment to providing education to Zimbabwean children. Strive and Tsitsi set up a charitable trust in 1994 to provide scholarships, so funding the scholarships to Waterford was a natural extension of their existing programmes. Tsitsi Masiyiwa says "a Waterford education is one of the special and unique gifts that we can give to Zimbabwean children."

Ten students have been selected to start at Waterford in January 2009, and all achieved outstanding results in often difficult circumstances in their local high schools. Bruce Wells, Deputy Principal at WK, says,

"I was humbled by the moving personal stories that each student shared with me. Not once did I detect a sense of hopelessness. Rather, the common thread that ran through all our conversations was a deep sense of pride and patriotism, and a strong desire to succeed academically so that they could return to help rebuild their motherland."

Waterford is committed to continue providing scholarships for Zimbabwean students at IB level, but also plans to introduce scholarships at Form 1 level (aged 11). They are currently raising funds for at least two students from Zimbabwe to join Form 1 in 2010.



Jill Longson (far left) with the crew of Skyelark.

Jill sets sail

UWC of the Atlantic Vice Chair Jill Longson (AC 79-81) has recently returned from St Lucia, having sailed 3,000 nautical miles over 19 days across the Atlantic from Gran Canaria to raise funds for an Atlantic College scholarship. The Atlantic Rally for Crusiers (ARC) is the largest transatlantic sailing event in the world, with over 200 yachts taking part. Jill sailed on the yacht "Skyelark" as part of a crew of six. Skyelark won its class and came 23rd overall. They have raised £6,000 which will help support a student from a developing world country to attend Atlantic College in September 2009. Jill says "This was a fantastic opportunity to take part in a challenge of lifetime and raise much needed funds for Atlantic College".



Diversity and United World Colleges

by Laurence Nodder, Head of Waterford Kamhlaba UWC

Kurt Hahn spoke of UWC providing an education that meets the needs of the time – the needs of today are quite different to those of the Cold War era. Is the UWC movement – its Colleges, teachers, student communities and National Committees – meeting the needs of today and anticipating the needs of tomorrow?

In an effort to meet the needs of today and tomorrow – we need to be constantly reviewing and evaluating ourselves. Diversity has always been a core element of UWC, but how does the concept of diversity differ today to that of the early 1960s? Over the last ten years as Principal of Waterford, through discussions at meetings with my colleague Heads twice a year and through involvement on the Audit Teams following the self-evaluations at UWCSEA, Red Cross Nordic and Atlantic College, my perception is that the huge majority of students attending UWCs come from similar backgrounds even if they may carry passports of different nationalities. Of course there are celebrated exceptions: orphans, refugees, students from countries or groups at war with each other or from post conflict areas, students from financially impoverished backgrounds, even students from home backgrounds that are hugely at odds with the western liberal tradition that seems to be celebrated as the ideal within most

UWCs. However, my impression is that these students are many fewer in number than we would like. Most current UWC students come from professional families; these students have had prior access to the internet, to travel experiences that have given at least some exposure to different societies. Most students come from a financial background that has allowed them to subscribe to international news services, to global music, to global brands.

For some time I have been reflecting on the concept of diversity and particularly the inadequate nature of the diversity of the current communities that make up the United World Colleges. Diversity is created in order to make possible the UWC mission to ‘make education a force for peace and a sustainable future’ through the changing of attitudes in such a way to change students’ actions. There are humanitarian imperatives to include within that diversity an increasing number of young people whose life prospects are likely to be profoundly enhanced through the opportunities presented by studying at a UWC, as well as strong educational reasons to create diversity within educational institutions. Increasingly, prejudices and the causes of conflict are not simply nationally or racially determined, and the building of diversity within UWCs should address current

“Diversity has always been a core element of UWC, but how does the concept of diversity differ today to that of the early 1960s?”

and future potential fault-lines, more so than those fault-lines of the past. There is also a need for the teachers within the Colleges to reflect the new diversities in order to give life to the difficult debates and compromises that must take place.

UWCs pride themselves on selection on ‘merit’. UWC needs to be aware of, and guard against the pitfalls of ‘meritocracy’, a term invented by a British sociologist, Michael Young, and clearly described by Professor Lani Guinier, professor at Harvard Law School: ‘The rules of meritocracy, which claimed to reward hard work and individual talent, nevertheless left existing distributions of privilege intact. Those who were born to well-educated parents with a high family income did well in a meritocracy, just as those who were born to parents with wealth and the right pedigree did well in an aristocracy.’¹ To encourage and ensure diversity within the UWC communities, perhaps ‘merit’ needs to be replaced with ‘potential’ but this is obviously a much more difficult concept for National Committees and funding requirements.

While not wishing to deny any nation or part of society equitable access to places in UWC, the current reality of funding difficulties in most Colleges, the great success in fundraising of some Western European National Committees, and possibly a lack of imagination have led to a situation where there is a preponderance of students from wealthy nations, and in the case of students selected from less wealthy nations, a predominance of students from the wealthier sections of those societies. In recent discussions amongst the College Heads, it was claimed that in one College 80% of students selected knew about UWC by word of mouth and up to 20% were siblings or children of UWC graduates. This would indicate a worrying narrowing of the wider impact of UWC that could be achieved by selection from an increasing breadth of

society, let alone those parts of society that may be in competition for resources or in conflict with each other.

The global community should not tolerate a situation where in so many parts of the world, children’s education and often then their subsequent contribution to society is largely determined by the education (and often wealth) of their parents or guardians. This is particularly true in most ‘developing’ countries. In this respect, UWC should be, through awarding scholarships, an exemplar to the global community in creating access for young people of extraordinary potential from disadvantaged backgrounds. Moreover, it could be argued that future prospects for world peace would be better served by most UWCs educating larger groups of students from disadvantaged backgrounds from ‘developing’ nations, interspersed with students from ‘developed’ nations. The current reality in most Colleges is of a majority of students from ‘developed’ countries, especially from NATO countries (where the prospect of future internal

conflict is happily so much less than it was in the 1950s when UWC was conceived in thought), interspersed with students from ‘developing’ nations or nations in conflict. (Early graduates from Atlantic College should be able to acknowledge that the differences and tensions between for instance German, Dutch and French students are remarkably less now than in the early 1960s.)

More and more research is showing the mutual advantages of having students from diverse backgrounds learning together. Elizabeth Aries, professor of Psychology at Amherst College comments (within the context of the USA) that ‘Bringing a diverse group of students to the campus

creates opportunities for all students to have their previous notions of race and class challenged, and their understandings deepened, through interactions with one another. Opportunities abound.’ However, she also points to the reality that ‘Black and lower-income white students were asked to adjust to the culture of a wealthy elite college, but institutions, too, need to consider ways in which they may need to adjust in order to facilitate the incorporation of a more diverse student body and to benefit from the mix of students on the campus.’² All UWC Colleges need to reflect to what degree we adjust in line with the

culture and needs of especially the less advantaged and ‘minority’ students.

In my view the biggest challenges currently faced by most residential UWC students are not fundamentally based in the challenges of people responding in a fresh and honest way to the national, cultural, religious and economic diversities that could and should be present within the Colleges. Rather, the biggest current challenges

for most students include sharing a room for the first time, living far away from home, being less of a focus of domestic attention, surviving on canteen food rather than home cooking, the rigours of the academic and broad curriculum, managing with sleep deprivation and exhaustion. Whilst these are all real challenges, they are a subset of those that UWC communities could and should be facing and addressing. In my view the wider challenges should be primarily those of initially overcoming prejudice (given the tensions of globally and regionally entrenched inequities and injustices), and moving to reconciliation. Archbishop Desmond Tutu is quoted as

“UWC should be, through awarding scholarships, an exemplar to the global community in creating access for young people of extraordinary potential from disadvantaged backgrounds.”

Footnotes:

¹ p11, IBWorld, Issue 54, September 2008

² Quoted from reviews of ‘Race and Class matters at an Elite College’, Temple University Press, reviewed 09/22/2008 in Chronicle.com and on 09/12/2008 in Inside Higher Education

“In my view the wider challenges for students should be primarily those of initially overcoming prejudice and moving to reconciliation.”

saying: “We speak too glibly of reconciliation and love and forgiveness in this country (South Africa) because we think they are easy things to accomplish.”³ Overcoming prejudice and moving to reconciliation in a diverse community is a difficult and potentially bruising endeavour, made easier by shared experience, mutual dependence and goodwill.

And so to the final point: the nature of the faculty that has developed within the different UWCs. With the exceptions of Simón Bolívar (all Venezuelan), Mahindra, Costa Rica, Li Po Chun and Waterford Kamhlaba, the simple statistics collated by UWC show that over 80% of all faculty are from Europe and North America. Surely the difficult, costly move to ‘reconciliation, love and forgiveness’ that Tutu speaks of needs to be demonstrated first and foremost by faculty from hugely different backgrounds grappling with living in constructive harmony in their own community of teachers. Then, as they engage with students, their voices will ring with unmistakable authenticity. How can the Colleges expect the National Committee system to deliver genuine diversity amongst the student population when we are not able to achieve diversity in the teaching staff?

Again from South Africa, a letter that culminates in a cry for role models, sent to an independent school, reflecting the ongoing challenge of transformation in that country: “For those of us who were educated in apartheid years and endured racially classified education, we saw our role models very much through lenses of colour. While we hold them up as beacons in our journey through life, we also recognise now how utterly limited the options they offered us were. We recognise that it was a struggle to

break those limitations in order to prepare for our children the limitless opportunities of a really democratic and free society.”

“I want my children never to have to face that particular struggle again. I don’t want them to see their role models through apartheid tinted lenses, but I also want them to see themselves in their role models. They must know that anybody can be a role model – black, white, male or female.”⁴ UWC would do well to reflect on this in its wider context.

As UWC grapples with its post Cold War identity, it must move beyond a narrow view of meritocracy. All within UWC must accept the hard realities of a divided world while remaining committed to addressing these realities and hopeful that divisions might be bridged. UWC must place emphasis on bringing together young people from backgrounds where ‘reconciliation, love and forgiveness’ are not yet even nearly a reality, using the types of educational remedy suggested by Kurt Hahn. UWC must let those young people see themselves in the diversity of their teacher role models. And then the students’ work towards making education a force for peace and a sustainable future will be a work modelled on and inspired by their teachers’ personal struggle towards the same ends, not only in wider society, but in their own day-to-day lives.

UWC’s Executive Director, Keith Clark, adds:

The issues that Laurence raises, and a number of related topics, will be critical ones as we think about UWC’s future. Perhaps more than anything they are at heart of what must be a continual effort to remain relevant – and it is only by remaining relevant that we can have an impact.

Some of these issues were raised at the 2005 International Council under the banner of ‘who do we educate?’ – although Laurence powerfully makes the point that the question is as much about who does the educating. We intend to give more scope to such issues as we work on a strategic plan for UWC during 2009. The planning process will not be the place to come up with the answers – these are complex questions that will take time and will require changes of culture as well as different approaches to the way we work; but we can make sure that we get them onto the agenda.

We are very fortunate within UWC to have among us people like Laurence who think deeply about the educational process, and UWC’s meaning, relevance and impact. We need that type of thinking to keep us moving forwards.



Footnotes:

³ p232, ‘Trevor Huddleston, A Life’, Robin Denniston, Macmillan

⁴ Private correspondence

A flavour of Mostar



Upon arrival at UWC Mostar, Peter investigates the post-war state of the economics classroom.

The renovated economics classroom was ready for use for Peter’s second year in Mostar.

Peter Gardner, Economics teacher at Pearson College has recently returned from a two year secondment to UWC in Mostar.

As well as teaching, Peter was involved in various CAS activities, university applications and was Pastoral Coordinator for one year. Some extracts from the reports that Peter sent back to Lester B Pearson UWC of the Pacific from Mostar give a flavour of the College’s first two years.

Early Days

UWC in Mostar has a challenging job ahead. There are many people in Bosnia Herzegovina who would like to see this incredible experiment in integration work and see this College, the first in the country to educate students from all ethnic groups together using one curriculum, as a very important symbol which may point the way to an alternative to history repeating itself. The College is housed within the Mostar Gymnasium, an existing school teaching Croat and Muslim students separately.

I am given the role of “Pastoral Coordinator”. Having run Orientation week at Pearson College, it was not too difficult to prepare the schedule and timetables for this week. What proved very difficult was that, being in start-up mode, we had no policies and procedures so the first thing Paul [Paul Regan, Head of UWC in Mostar] asked me to do was prepare the Code of Conduct and the policies and procedures surrounding it.

I was also given responsibility for the two widely separated residences and for re-organising the food programme which has been a real challenge because there is no central cafeteria for student meals. I have also been trying to get internet access organised in the residences as one does not have access to the internet at all, and the other has only limited and sporadic access.

After wrestling with all these problems, it is a relief to slip into the classroom and start teaching Economics, even though we do not have enough textbooks. It is most fortunate that I had brought my extensive class notes with me, and could use a version of my online textbook from Pearson.

We had midterm exams in October and the results were truly amazing. I had come to Bosnia with the expectation that we were dealing with students who were struggling with English and had received a poor education. Instead the average mark in Economics was higher than the mid-terms at Pearson!

Opening Ceremony

The delayed opening ceremony was an immense success. By May 07 any lingering doubts on the part of BiH [Bosnia and Herzegovina] students about their participation in the College had completely disappeared. Almost all students, including the non-resident Mostar students, had realised the true value of the Initiative and what it had already meant in their lives. By May the community of Mostar had heard about us and many were very curious about what it all meant. The energy from the opening carried right through to the examinations which is why I think so many of my students ended up with 6s instead of 5s.

Assessment Deadlines

There was the usual scramble to get Extended Essays (EEs) and Internal Assessment portfolios (IAs) ready to submit to the IB. I was particularly pleased with some of the EEs and IAs which reflect scholarship at its best. The needs of BiH came through very strongly as there were three EEs on the very serious issue of the lack of property rights, micro-credit and the failure of the banking system to extend credit to new and small entrepreneurs.

Integration

The burning question which all international

visitors ask when they visit UWC in Mostar is “have the students integrated across ethnic lines?” In the classroom and in CAS activities and services, there is virtually complete integration. When they relax together or eat together it is much the same as at Pearson College where, especially at meal times, ethnic groups tend to congregate together.

We have many Bosnian Croat students from Mostar who have, for the first time in their lives, crossed the bridge over to the Muslim side of the river accompanied by a Muslim Bosnian student. And the same is true in reverse.

Unfortunately, once students start to speak they are immediately identified as belonging to a specific ethnic group and they can be treated poorly or simply refused service if they are in a coffee shop or store. This is why they go with a student of the other ethnic origin and it usually relaxes the barrier.

The integration between UWC and Gymnasium students has been very difficult, mainly as the Gymnasium itself is not integrated, there is a period of at least half an hour where neither ethnic group is in the school in order to avoid disruptions. A moving example of integration was the participation by the Gymnasium choir which sang at the UWC graduation ceremony. I believe these efforts were as successful as it is possible to be, but there is still resistance on the part of some local parents.

Saying Goodbye

The graduation ceremony was a very appropriate ending for those of us leaving after two years and the results were an amazing endorsement for the work we have done to prepare the first graduating class. We felt justified in the risks taken by both the UWC movement and the IB programme. I am delighted to be returning to Pearson College but I am also very proud to have been part of a team of staff, students and teachers who have accomplished so much.



Pearson College's floating Marine Sciences Centre.
Photo: racerocks.com

Lessons for a sustainable future

UWC is continuing its pioneering role in developing the IB curriculum with the introduction of a new school-based syllabus in Marine Science at Pearson College and the publication of a draft syllabus for Renewable Energy Technology by a UWC graduate and teacher.

The students examining the contents of a tidepool at Race Rocks are not just increasing their knowledge of marine ecosystems; they are the first group to study the new International Baccalaureate (IB) Marine Science school-based syllabus (SBS) developed by Lester B. Pearson UWC of the Pacific teacher Laura Verhegge.

"When the IB decided to replace Environmental Systems with the transdisciplinary course Ecosystems and Societies, I saw this as an opportunity to design an SBS called Marine Science," explains Laura. "Given the unique location of Pearson College on the shores of Pedder Bay, just off the Strait of Juan de Fuca, it made sense to offer a course that would allow students to take advantage of the marine environment."

In fact, Laura's classroom is literally in Pedder Bay – it is part of the College's floating Marine Sciences Centre, which opened in 2003.

"Going on expeditions around Pedder Bay makes every single class an extraordinary experience. I am so excited that I am one of the first students to take Marine Science"

Vojtěch Sedlá (Czech Republic)

The new course is the result of a year-and-a-half of hard work on Laura's part, assisted by the Dean of Curriculum, Laura Fulton. With the College keen to offer the subject, a draft syllabus was submitted to the IB Diploma Review Committee (DRC) in October 2007. The DRC gave it provisional approval, but requested a more complete version of the syllabus,

specimen examination papers and mark schemes. It subsequently made suggestions about the syllabus and assessment model which Laura Verhegge incorporated into the second draft. Meanwhile, an external advisor also reviewed the syllabus.

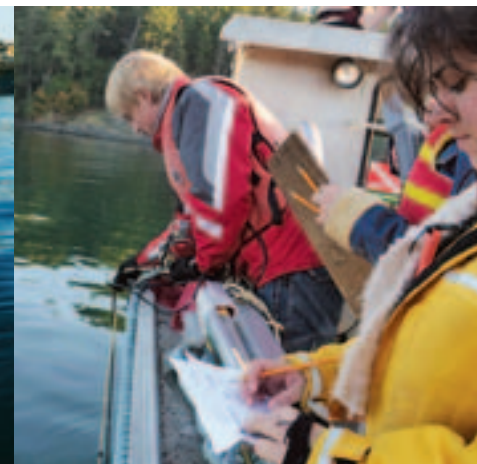
The Marine Science SBS was approved by the DRC in March 2008 and launched in September 2008. Laura acknowledges that developing the course was hard work, but sincerely enjoyed the process. She believes that the study of the marine world is becoming ever more important as factors such as climate change

impact on the habitat: "The oceans cover so much of the planet but the depths are virtually unexplored and the processes going on within the ocean and between the oceans and other ecosystems are only poorly understood," she says.

"Even if these students don't go on to become marine scientists, providing them with an awareness and appreciation of this amazing environment is crucial to their development



Marine Science is designed to be taught in the field as much as possible, with students going on regular oceanographic expeditions.



Tobi Kellner at the Centre for Alternative technology in Wales.

as good global citizens. The human impact on the oceans is enormous, and the more understanding the students have about the significance of the oceans, the more likely they are to make decisions to minimise their negative impact on them."

Marine Science is an interdisciplinary course which includes physics, chemistry and biology, and is designed to be taught in the field as much as possible. Laura takes her classes out on regular field trips, with a recent oceanographic expedition requiring the students to answer questions about spatial variation (depth and location) of seawater temperature and salinity within Pedder Bay.

Vojtěch Sedlá (Czech Republic), a student taking the course says "Before I came to Pearson College I had seen the ocean maybe four times in my life and I realised that I had a unique chance to try something new. Going on expeditions around Pedder Bay makes every single class an extraordinary experience. I am so excited that I am one of the first students to take this course." Fellow student Lee Qi (Singapore) is also greatly enjoying the course: "Whether going on a field trip or just 'downstairs' to the Pearson Docks, it is always an enriching experience to be able to see exactly what it is that you're learning."

UWC has long had a pioneering role in developing the IB curriculum, particularly school-based syllabi (see 'A critical friend', *United World*, May 2008), and a graduate-teacher partnership is hoping to follow Laura's example in having another SBS adopted. Tobi Kellner, a Mahindra UWC of India graduate (MUWCI 98-00) who now works at the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales, and Li Po Chun UWC of Hong Kong physics teacher

Magan Savant have drawn up a draft syllabus for Renewable Energy Technology which they hope will become recognised.

Magan, who is keen to teach the new subject, points out that renewable energy is becoming ever more important as the world's resources diminish. "As a resident of an emerging market economy, and as a teacher of physics, I understand how energy is produced, used – and also gets wasted," he says.

Tobi adds: "Renewable energy technology is often not only about having a smaller carbon footprint, but about producing energy locally from freely available sustainable resources such as wind and sunlight, independent of national infrastructure and rising global fuel prices. This can help, quite literally, to empower marginalised communities."

The new course is designed to introduce students to the most important forms of renewable energy technology and, in the process, educate them about general science and technology and their interaction with society and the environment.

Tobi points out that there would be opportunities for lab projects and for integrating the subject with other aspects of UWC life. "At some of our Colleges, it would be perfectly feasible to attempt to build simple biogas plants," says Tobi. "As a CAS activity, this would be open to all students and would help those taking the course to apply their classroom knowledge.

"In addition, during Project Weeks, students

could visit NGOs that implement biogas projects in rural areas to find out how this technology changes the lives of people there."

Tobi also sees sharing information among Colleges as an important aspect of the new subject.

"Students undertaking a CAS activity on biogas would document their project, maybe in the form of a digital slideshow or a short film. This resource could then be shared with other Colleges, which might have other projects suited to their natural environment."

The next steps for Tobi and Magan are to find Colleges and teachers who would be willing to introduce Renewable Energy Technology as a subject, work with them to fine-tune the curriculum, and prepare and submit a formal application to the IB.

"What we need now are Colleges to step forward and introduce the new subject," says Tobi. "Let's make UWC education 'a force for a sustainable future', as our mission statement puts it."

Laura Verhegge, meanwhile, is keen to see others introduce Marine Science. She also believes that UWC teachers can continue to play a leading role in developing the IB curriculum: "In terms of being trailblazers, if UWC teachers see a need for a course to fill a hole then I'd encourage them to propose and design one."

More information on the new courses is available from Laura Verhegge (verhegge@pearsoncollege.ca), Tobi Kellner (TobiKellner@yahoo.com) or Magan Savant (magan@lpcuwc.edu.hk).

"Renewable energy technology ... can help, quite literally, to empower marginalised communities"

Tobi Kellner

Graduate profile: Mario Konyen Joseph

Mario Konyen Joseph (MUWCI 98-00) has used his UWC education as a springboard to help other African refugees.

Mario Konyen Joseph still can't quite believe that he had the opportunity of a UWC education. "Given my background and upbringing, even getting to know about UWC, let alone arriving and studying at one, was highly unlikely," he says.

Mario, who comes from Lorema in Southern Sudan, was forced to flee to Kenya as a 12-year-old in 1991 with his brother Olof and cousins James and Peter in order to avoid being conscripted into the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement.

Many members of his large, extended family died during and after the 21-year war in Southern Sudan – his father was brutally murdered in a politically-motivated move in 1999 – and those who are still alive are either in refugee camps in Kenya, living (with minimal education) back in Southern Sudan, or scattered around the world.

"Although we didn't know what the future held for us when we fled to Kenya, there was a hope and a belief that somewhere there would be a chance to go to school," says Mario. Luckily, that chance presented itself in the form of Sr. Luise-Agonia Radlmeier OP, a Roman Catholic nun from Bavaria, Germany, who has dedicated her life to helping refugees gain an education.

Sr. Luise organised a school place for Mario in Nairobi, and later introduced him to Gilbert Lukhoba of Windle Charitable Trust (now Windle Trust Kenya), a charitable organisation that is also involved in refugee education. Part of its work has included finding opportunities in various UWCs for eligible refugees, and Mario was invited to the selection weekend in Nairobi organised by the Kenya National Committee. He was delighted when he was awarded a place at Mahindra UWC of India.

Mario arrived at MUWCI just a year after it opened, and says he knew immediately that he was part of something new and exciting. "The whole learning and living environment at MUWCI was engaging and invigorating," he says.

However, that brought its own challenges and stresses, with Mario feeling "an unwritten responsibility to lay good foundations for the generations to come." He also took time to adjust to his new environment: he had been used to a very strict environment at his school in Nairobi, and found the atmosphere at MUWCI very liberal in comparison. "I was a bit baffled by it all at first!" he says.

However, he soon settled into College life and particularly enjoyed the CAS activity he

'Although we didn't know what the future held for us when we fled to Kenya, there was a hope and a belief that somewhere there would be a chance to go to school.'

Mario Konyen Joseph

undertook, working with children and adults with mental health problems and physical disabilities at a Mother Theresa Home in Pune. "Without a doubt, MUWCI sorted out a few preconceived ideas about the world and its 'other' inhabitants. It had a profound impact on my life," he says.

After UWC Mario moved to the UK to study for a BA Hons in Economics with Development Studies at the University of Central Lancashire and a Master's in Development Economics at the University of East Anglia. He now works as Programme Officer for Windle Trust International based in Oxford, UK.

The charity aims to equip refugees affected by conflict in Africa to meet the challenges

of development by providing access to education, training and employment.

"One of the most unfortunate positions one can find oneself in is to be a refugee anywhere on the African continent," says Mario. "What Windle Trust does is not only to give

hope but also to equip refugees with lifetime skills and knowledge that can be utilised for the development of their communities and countries when peace is realised."

Mario has been involved in a number of projects, including one to help set up the William Wilberforce Scholarship Scheme. "In conjunction with willing UK universities, this gives disadvantaged African students of outstanding potential the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge to address the challenges the continent faces 200 years after the abolition of the slave trade," he explains.

Mario hopes to play a part in rebuilding his own country by one day setting up a 'Peace & Leadership Foundation' in Southern Sudan, dedicated to investing at grassroots level in the basic human values of peaceful coexistence, respect, cultural understanding and tolerance, in the hope of producing leaders of tomorrow.

"Peace and tranquillity are prerequisites for economic growth and development," says Mario. "It is my dream to help achieve this."



Mahindra UWC of India.



Mario with friend Øivind Kjonsvik (MUWCI 98-00).

Student profile: Vincent Tomasino

Vincent Tomasino (USA) is involved in numerous activities and societies at Red Cross Nordic UWC, including the Gender And Sexuality group, which celebrates and increases awareness of student diversity.



Vincent Tomasino has thrown himself into life at Red Cross Nordic UWC since arriving on campus in September. He is a member of World Today, a group that organises open-forum debates about contemporary issues; Ozonizers, an environmental action group; Snikkarbua, a student-run café; and is involved in lifeguarding, dance and theatre, directing a production of The House of Bernarda Alba last December. He is also a member of the Gender And Sexuality group (GAS), which, as a gay student, he finds wonderfully life-affirming.

The extent of Vincent's involvement in extra-curricular activities is a reflection of his desire to "make a difference both in my own life and in this world of which I have seen too little." For a World Today debate on the US withdrawal of troops from Iraq, he co-presented the US argument, "gaining a lot of perspective on an extremely complex issue." As part of Ozonizers, he has been an advocate for new showerheads that have saved the College tens of thousands of Kroners in water costs, as well as smaller projects to remind students to practise energy-saving habits such as turning off lights. And he was also involved in RCNUWC's two-day examination of religion as it relates to humanitarian issues, co-leading a GAS workshop entitled 'Religion & Sexuality'.

Vincent deliberately didn't get involved with GAS for a number of weeks after he started at RCNUWC. "My thinking was that I didn't want my sexuality to be something that limited me," he says. "However, I was invited to one of the sessions by a second year student, and felt extremely at ease there.

"The group's strength is its ability to create an atmosphere where anyone can feel comfortable to share their thoughts about the variety of topics we discuss at our meetings. I find that it is so significant, personally, to be able to share my experiences with the group – and incredibly rewarding to discuss other's perspectives and listen to their stories."

Spanish teacher Mariano Giampietri (AD 91-93), who works closely with GAS, believes that it has an important role to play within the College community: "Looking back on my experience as a gay UWC student in

the early '90s, I think I would have had fewer self-esteem problems and an easier time dealing with my sexuality in general if I'd been able to speak of what I was going through and not feel that everybody would point fingers at or isolate me. I believe the Gender And Sexuality group provides such a space for our students."

Vincent says he knew he was gay when he was 10 years old, but it took him seven years to come to terms with that knowledge. "It was a terrifying thing to cope with, being different from almost everything I knew: the hardest part was feeling like I couldn't talk to anyone about it. After seven years of shame and fear, I gradually came to accept myself and came out to my friends and family in the summer of 2007. Coming out was the most terrifying thing I have ever done."

Around the same time, Vincent found a brochure from UWC-USA in his mailbox. He says that the emphasis on diversity was one of the main reasons he applied to UWC. "My parents wondered how I, as a gay teenager, would be received. But after looking into the movement, the most impressive thing was

not just its internationalism but that it stressed diversity of people as well as of ethnicities."

Vincent says that he felt a UWC education would also give him the opportunity to achieve his goals and dreams. "When I first heard about UWC, I thought to myself, 'I want to be a part of that. I want to do something different and meaningful.'"

He was particularly attracted to RCNUWC because of its focus on humanitarian and environmental issues. "We often joke about how little humanitarian work there is to do in Norway of all places, but there really are some meaningful services – for example, volunteering at a refugee centre – that we are able to participate in through the College."

Only a few months into his UWC experience, Vincent is flourishing in the friendly and accepting atmosphere of RCNUWC. "At the end of the day I enjoy the people more than anything. After a few months it's easy to forget we come from such different places and backgrounds – we have so much to learn from one another."

'After looking into the movement, the most impressive thing was not just its internationalism but that it stressed diversity of people as well as of ethnicities.'

Vincent Tomasino (USA)



Unity within diversity

Young people in Aguirre attend a UWCCR conflict resolution workshop.

A conflict resolution programme at UWC Costa Rica is helping students and local communities alike live more peacefully together.

Speaking their minds, engaging in dialogue and finding peaceful solutions to conflict are becoming second nature to students at UWC Costa Rica as the College's Collaborative Conflict Prevention and Management Programme (CCMP) goes from strength to strength. The CCMP, which promotes 'unity within diversity', has been operating since UWCCR opened in 2006, and the College is now training its third generation of student mediators.

The programme was conceived to deal with the sorts of conflicts that can occur in multicultural settings. At a basic level, it is intended to help manage and, where possible, solve disputes arising from day-to-day community living. This often avoids the need for administrative or disciplinary measures.

"One case involved two roommates who each had completely different sleep and study patterns," explains Daniela Rojas, Development and Communications Coordinator at UWCCR, who works closely with trainer Eduardo Garro and Mediation Programme Coordinator Leila Mata. "The first student wanted to

go to sleep at 11pm, but the second liked to study late in the room.

"The problem started to escalate and affect other areas of their lives. So, student mediators held several mediation sessions and the two roommates came to an agreement that meant it was not necessary to change them to another room. Most importantly, it was a constructive solution that allowed them to build on their relationship."

Students testify to the success of the programme. Tara Hermez (Lebanon), who has trained as a student mediator, says the

'The programme shows that situations ranging from roommate conflicts to wars can be addressed through communication rather than violence.'

Tara Hermez (Lebanon)

CCMP has "helped me become a better listener, more patient, and has taught me how to help facilitate discussions to avoid emotional clashes, misinterpretations and lack of understanding."

Daniela points out that the personal transformations that result from the programme have an impact not only on campus but also in the students' family and community lives when they return home. "Their families often notice important

changes in terms of improved communication, problem-solving and conflict-coping strategies.

"Now the programme is entering a second stage that will

include studying very destructive forms of social conflict, such as genocide, and social conflict resolution strategies such as non-violence and consensus-building on a large scale. Through this perspective, we hope to give the students a stronger grasp of social issues and strategies related to conflict resolution."

Tara says that conflict prevention and resolution hold great appeal for her because she relates it to her country's current situation. "Lebanon has been involved in constant conflicts, and I feel that a lot of disputes revolve around miscommunication and the way people misinterpret different situations. The CCMP shows that situations ranging from roommate conflicts to wars can be addressed through communication rather than violence."

The UWCCR programme also has wider applications in the local community. During Project Weeks, students have worked with 13- and 14-year-old students at Santa Ana public school on prevention of conflict, and trained young people in Aguirre in communication techniques.

"There are a lot of problems in Aguirre, including crimes against property, drug- trafficking and consumption, family disintegration, poverty and unemployment," says Ronald Sánchez, who coordinates the project in Aguirre. "It is very important that our young people learn how to deal with these conflicts, and we have seen a difference in their behaviour as a result of the UWCCR workshops. Encountering students from different countries has made them very interested in their experiences."

This year, UWCCR students will support the Costa Rican Justice Ministry's Conflict Resolution Programme in marginal communities to establish a youth movement to prevent conflict and violence. These communities face problems including drug addiction, alcoholism, robberies and loss of respect for older people and authority.

With the backing of the Costa Rican Justice Ministry, UWCCR's future objectives for the CCMP are to develop outreach programmes that include training for other schools. As part of a fundraising as well as an educational initiative, the College has developed a general conflict resolution training seminar and a conflict coaching and mediation training seminar, both led by UWCCR students. There are also plans for a conflict resolution summer school to take place at the College

later this year, led by Eduardo Garro. Local and international students aged from 15-19 will be invited, including participants from other UWCCs and IB schools.

It seems clear that UWCCR is well on its way to achieving its vision for the CCMP, "to creatively and passionately strengthen, develop and transmit new and effective ways to manage conflict in the community, educational systems and the surrounding community environments."



UWCCR student Bruno Hardy (Belgium) wearing a programme T-shirt.

Sharing Opportunities

Students at Waterford Kamhlaba UWC recently organised a very successful careers event, an initial outcome of a Careers Support initiative set up last year.

The Careers Support Initiative works with students from other local high schools to create a careers support network in Swaziland. Unlike many other countries where UWCs are based, Swaziland has very little in the form of careers guidance for students. The aim of the group is to develop a student-led, student-focused forum for discussing the issues that affect young people in their career development. The careers day had stalls from employers in a wide range of fields including health, banking and finance, education, tourism, insurance, engineering, forestry, manufacturing, journalism, music and construction. Around 2,000 students from various schools attended, and the event was so successful that the University of Swaziland has asked the Waterford students to help them organise their own careers events in the future as they had never achieved such a high turnout.



Dalumuzi (right) at his IB graduation ceremony.

Dalumuzi Mhlanga (WK 07-08) from Zimbabwe was a member of the Careers Support Initiative: "Going out to schools across Swaziland has been more of an experience of sharing than imposing our

ideals. Participants have expressed how our programme has made a real and tangible difference in their lives."

Treasure Maphanga, (WK 78-82, AD 83-85), founder of Cilo Consulting, Governing Council member of Waterford and an advisor to the Careers Support Initiative said "Career guidance is an important means to support young people make informed choices. I wish to commend the WK students' Career Support Initiative for a wonderful and much needed forum to connect students from different schools in Swaziland with the world of work."



The careers fair was attended by 2,000 students.



NC selection activities in South Africa.

Spotlight on Volunteering

Our new section Spotlight will discuss topics critical to UWC's operation. In this edition, Head of National Committee Development Tian Bersey discusses the role of volunteering.

UWC relies on the energy, expertise and dedication of a large group of volunteers in its National Committees, Colleges and on the UWC International Board and Council. I am focusing mainly on National Committee volunteers who are the largest group but the principles can and should be applied across all UWC's volunteer groups and beyond.

So why do people volunteer?

People will volunteer for a wide range of reasons – many will want to give something back, support something they believe in or something that they can see the benefits of. Some people find themselves with spare time to fill, want to meet new and likeminded people or have new experiences. Others want to learn new skills or gain experience that is not available in their work place. We should not forget the strong family links in volunteering and also that many people carry on volunteering because they fear no one else will do it.

Having benefitted from a UWC experience or valuing a UWC education will be the prime motivators for our many of our volunteers, but let's not forget the other benefits they can gain from volunteering with us.

Each individual will have their own reason or a combination of reasons for volunteering, and understanding this is useful to us in two ways – for recruitment and retention.

Recruitment

Recruiting new volunteers is essential for any organisation. It brings in new ideas, skills and experiences. It gives existing volunteers the opportunity to change roles, lighten their load and/or pass on their experience to others. It is far easier to recruit to a successful and dynamic group than to one which is struggling, desperate for help and threatening closure.

We have to recognise that across the world volunteering cultures, if indeed they do exist, will vary and that each country and each National Committee will need to adapt what it does to its local circumstances. However, we should also not forget that there are many organisations operating internationally that rely on volunteers, for example, the World Organisation of the Scout Movement has volunteers in 216 Countries and Territories and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has volunteers in 186 countries.

Where should we look for new volunteers?

UWC graduates are, of course, prime candidates. Having lived and benefitted from the UWC experience we have no better spokespeople – our graduates understand their own UWC journey and how important fair and transparent selections are. Recent graduates can also give up to date information on College life and expectations. I have been very impressed

by the interest in and enthusiasm for being involved with National Committees from the students I have met at our Colleges in my first year at UWC. National Committees are working hard to keep in contact with their graduates and making great use of the wide range of internet based tools that are available to help. I think occasionally there is a concern or a reluctance to involve recent graduates in a National Committee, but as an organisation that promotes the empowerment of young people and the development of future leaders, we surely ought to be the first to give them opportunities and experience and also to benefit from what they have to offer. The key to any volunteer group will be balance – a good mix of people of different ages and backgrounds offering different skills, experiences and interests. Whilst the involvement of graduates is important, this should never be to the exclusion of non graduates.

Non graduate volunteers can be found in many different places. Each has its merits as well as disadvantages and some will be more appropriate than others depending on where you live in the world. However I would encourage everyone to look widely.

UWC has had successes in recruiting volunteers from schools and universities where the value of a UWC education is appreciated; from non governmental organisations where the concept of volunteering is appreciated and where help can often be found to widen pools of student applicants; from governments (your own and others) where ministries of education or cultural institutes can add legitimacy and value to UWC promotion; from the corporate sector where corporate social responsibility projects can be looking to give more than just cash (although we would like that too!); and from parents of graduates who have seen firsthand the benefits of a UWC experience.

I sense that many National Committees are nervous or sceptical about recruiting new volunteers especially from outside the graduate community. This is understandable and appreciated. A scholarship to a United World College is a valuable opportunity and the work of a National Committee in promoting and selecting for this opportunity

and preparing the student for the UWC experience is work that requires commitment, transparency and responsibility. How do you know if someone new will accept and work within these requirements?

There are a number of solutions to this challenge which can be addressed as you're recruiting new volunteers.

Recruiting new volunteers

The key is to keep it simple and define what task(s) need to be done and the skills and qualities that are required to do them. Do you need fundraising expertise, marketing experience or accounting skills? Are you trying to raise your profile, enhance your reputation or access a certain geographical region or ethnic group? The diversity we look for in the student body ideally should be represented in the volunteers who serve the organisation.

The Danish National Committee wanted to review how they did their selection and the HR Manager of a National Telecommunications Company was happy to spend a day facilitating that review. The National Committee in Singapore wanted to know how they could better promote UWC opportunities to young people in secondary schools and four students from the Nanyang Technological University were happy to help them with their research.

These are just two examples from a whole range of good practice from across the National Committee system.

Once you have defined what and who you are looking for, generate a list of people you know who could fill the role and get input and suggestions from a wide group of people you know and trust. Find out as much as you can from the people who suggest potential volunteers, what skills and experience they have to offer and why they think they would be good. Talk to other people about them too. Decide who you think would be best for the role and ask them to get involved.

Explain the background to your approach, why you think they are ideal for the role and the benefits of being involved. Always be clear in the description of what you do and the expectations of your volunteers. National Committees should have their selection

“a good structure and effective communications go a long way to maintaining happy and motivated volunteers”

process, eligibility criteria and selection criteria written down and be very clear about what UWC is and what it expects. Be flexible in your membership and your structure. You don't have to ask someone to join the National Committee straight away, invite them to help at a specific event or at a selection activity which will give you a chance to get to know them and see them in action first.

It is essential that people are well briefed and understand the expectations of the role from the beginning. National Committee volunteers need to carry out their role whilst adhering to the values of the organisation and the key principles of a Committee's work – transparency, accountability and responsibility.

Retaining volunteers

If we know what motivates someone to volunteer, we have a better chance of making their volunteering experience a long and happy one.

Research shows that volunteers want to feel welcome, secure, accepted, respected, informed, well used and well managed.¹ Organisations can be so focused on their primary goal they can often forget to look after their volunteers, and it is difficult when leading a group of volunteers as a Chair, already giving up so much of your time, to fit anything extra into your busy schedules. However, a good structure and effective communications go a long way to maintaining happy and motivated volunteers. There are many ways to thank volunteers: thank you letters and certificates, holding a social event, showing them how their piece fits in to the wider picture, sharing successes or simply a quick email or phone call. It doesn't have to be onerous but it does have to be done and once done, it goes a long way.

Let's make sure that in 2009 UWC supports and recognises the huge contribution that our volunteers make to National Committees, College Boards and wider College life and the UWC International Board of Directors and Council.

A big thank you for everything you do!

Footnotes

¹ Katherine Gaskin, A Choice Blend: What Volunteers want from organisation and management, Institute for Volunteering Research, April 2003



ACTION • IDEAS OPPORTUNITIES

This page provides opportunities for UWC graduates to continue to live the UWC mission in big and small ways.

Are you involved in a project that other UWC graduates could help you with? If you are looking for volunteers to give their time or expertise, email details to editor@unitedworld.uwc.org

Opportunities

- Red Cross Nordic UWC has a website dedicated to volunteer opportunities around the world at <http://volunteers.rcnuwc.no>. The website provides details of the project, eligibility and contact details. Open to all.
- Simón Bolívar UWC invites applications for its volunteer programme. The programme selects volunteers to live and work at the College for one year to help with various activities including English teaching and its Creativity, Action and Social Development (CADS) programme. Apply by 15 May for the August 2009 programme. For more information visit www.sbuwc.uwc.org/VolunteerProgramme.htm

Action

- **Take part in Earth Hour 2009**

Earth Hour invites everyone around the world to switch off lights for one hour at 8:30pm local time on 28 March, sending a powerful global message that we care about climate change. For more information visit www.earthhour.org

United World Colleges is a unique organisation. It is the only global educational NGO that brings students together from all over the world, selected from within their own countries, on merit and regardless of their ability to pay. These students come together at one of twelve United World Colleges (UWC) that aim to foster international understanding and peace.

UWC International Office

www.uwc.org
T: +44 20 7269 7800

UWC of the Atlantic

www.atlanticcollege.org
T: +44 1446 799 000

UWC of South East Asia

www.uwcsea.edu.sg
Dover – T: +65 6775 5344
East – T: +65 6553 1808

Lester B Pearson UWC of the Pacific

www.pearsoncollege.ca
T: +1 250 391 2411

Waterford Kamhlaba

UWC of Southern Africa

www.waterford.sz
T: +268 422 0866

UWC-USA

www.uwc-usa.org
T: +1 505 454 4200

UWC of the Adriatic

www.uwcad.it
T: +39 040 373 9221

Simón Bolívar UWC of Agriculture

www.sbuwc.uwc.org
T: +58 212 793 4612

Li Po Chun UWC of Hong Kong

www.lpcuwc.edu.hk
T: +852 2640 0441

Red Cross Nordic UWC

www.rcnuwc.no
T: +47 57 73 7000

Mahindra UWC of India

www.muwci.net
T: +91 20 2294 3258

UWC Costa Rica

www.uwccr.com
T: +506 282 5609

UWC in Mostar

www.uwc-ibo.org
T: +387 36 320 601



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