



## March News

### Greetings!

"Spirituality for me is to go beyond good and bad, right or wrong, you and me and realise that everything evolves out of one eternal source of love."

Rebecca Innauen

**Children of the Earth inspires and unites young people, through personal and social transformation, to create a peaceful and sustainable world.**

**One Earth....with all her Children smiling!**

**Children of the Earth**, founded by Dr. Nina Meyerhof in 1990, offers young people leadership skills programs, educational workshops and attendance at distinguished conferences. We instill the concepts of global cooperation multicultural understanding, spiritual values and ethical living.

**Children of the Earth's** programs focus on building the youth spiritual movement for world consciousness. We offer educational, interactive and interfaith gatherings, work with local community groups to develop self-sustaining projects and invite young people to a virtual platform designed for positive social exchange.

**Children of the Earth** supports young people in actualizing their personal intention, becoming inspired to altruism, and weaving a web bridging all personal, cultural, national and religious divides.

**Our vision** is that one by one, young people become spiritually awakened, socially responsible, and active peace builders; inspired and united by our organization.

## About a Chapter: Philippines



### M.A.D Projects in the Philippines

The Philippines, a beautiful country also known as the "PEARL OF THE ORIENT" is composed of 7107 Islands with an estimated population of around 92 million people, making it the

world's 12th most populous country. It is a unique Nation with four cultural heritages - Asian, European, Mexican and American. It is not unusual for Filipinos to look oriental, have a Spanish sounding name, speak English with an American accent and have a Latin temperament. Filipinos are famous for their warm hospitality, friendliness to foreigners, musical and artistic talents, romanticism, deep religiosity and bravery. They have the resiliency of the bamboo and the durability of Narra, their National tree. When wars and calamities come; they bend but do not break!

In the Philippines, education is said to be free, but despite this right to education, 3 out of 5 siblings in a Filipino household don't go to school for various reasons. One reason is the lack of school supplies like notebooks, pens etc. which makes it difficult for them to participate during class and do their homework. Some children have to stay at home and take care of their younger siblings while their parents look for work. Others are forced to go out in the streets and sell goods, just to earn a few Pesos to have food on their table.

Two creative and courageous university students have taken it upon themselves to be advocates of M.A.D (Making-A-Difference) in some of the poorest communities in the Philippines.

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## Humanitarian Alert! *Prayers for Chile*

Please join us in consciousness during the next few days to pray and send positive thought-Forms to all our brothers and sisters who are in the affected areas.

Through the Power of our mind, let us visualize the people in Chile being protected by Pillars of Divine Light and Love. Divine Eternal One, pour your Unconditional Love upon our brothers and sisters in Chile, that their fears be turned into Hope, knowing that they are not alone and that the Divine Spirit that comforts and guides us, is within their hearts; May they be given the strength they need to survive and overcome these hardships and may all their material losses be turned into spiritual gifts awakening within them.

We pray that the possible Tsunami may not take place due to this earthquake and that all coastal areas may be protected.

Let us say at least twelve times, sing or intone the Sacred Expression in Hebrew "Shekinah Layoesh" that the Divine Presence manifesting through the pillar of Divine Fire may be upon all brothers and sisters in Chile. AMEN

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Christian Marx (COE Chapter Leader in Philippines) and Mark Conrad Ravanzo (Assistant Chapter Leader) have started a beautiful project called "Adopt an Envelope". (<http://www.children-of-the-earth.org/chapters/aaEnv.htm>)

The whole idea behind the project is to ask people to donate school supplies and place the utensils inside envelopes, which are then given to the poorest of children. This encourages them to go back to school and gives them the possibility of a better future. Thanks to their determination, what started as a dream became a reality in November 2009, when the first 50 kids, after singing, playing and praying together, received their envelopes in great excitement and happiness!

It is heart-touching and inspiring, that the project went ahead and still continues, in spite of the Typhoons that hit the Philippines during the month of October, in which Christian and his family, like many others, lost almost all their belongings.



The impact of the project was stupendous and gave Christian, Mark and their friends the motivation to pursue another project which will have an even greater impact on the lives of the "Batang Iskolar" (meaning Child Scholar in Filipino).

They came up with the Chapter's flagship project called: "Batang Iskolar Program - I am a B.I.P.". (<http://www.children-of-the-earth.org/chapters/BIP.htm>)

This project will grant scholarships to 50 less fortunate children in 5 chosen remote areas. Sponsors will "adopt" children and cater for their basic needs by providing them with school supplies, enriching their childhood experience with Christmas gifts and enhancing their self esteem by giving them grooming kits. In return, the Batang Iskolars will be initiated into activities relevant to social mobilization and community service, in order for them to develop the values of a good citizen at a young age. The parents are also involved and are requested to participate in the activities of the project, making it a family-orientated event. It is Christian's and Mark's hope to have 500 Batang Iskolars in 50 remote areas in the Philippines by 2015, all of whom will be "change-agents" in their own communities.

As part of the process to identify the beneficiaries who will be receiving the grant, Christian and Mark came up with an amazing workshop called "I am M.A.D." (Making A Difference). In January 2010, forty-two children (aged between 8 -13) participated in a series of activities including physical, emotional, social and mental exercises, giving the organizers the opportunity to determine potential leaders among the participants.

Through fun games and the use of art materials like paint, thin color cardboards, balls, streamers and more, the children learned the importance of communication and teamwork. Through these exercises, the children realized that there are ways to meet the objective of a group without hurting each other and that everyone can be a winner.

They also learned that all individuals have different qualities and that one should not judge a person too quickly before getting to know them first. They saw the importance of discovering their different personalities and that they can choose their personality according to the situation.

The children were also asked to write a list of ten M.A.D. commitments that they were willing to follow every day and hang it in their rooms as a reminder. The participants became very creative in doing their own little commitments list and were happy to realize that they can make a difference already at a young age.

The facilitators gave cut out flowers to the participants on which they had to write their most cherished commitment. The flowers were folded in a special way and one-by-one the children gave their individual pledge and placed their flower in a basin filled with water. As the flower got wet, it bloomed revealing their most important commitment. This beautiful activity became a meaningful ritual which marked the start of their journey towards making a difference.

This journey has been a learning experience for both the children and the facilitators, and many lessons have been learned that will help ensure the success of future projects.

Although it hasn't been easy and the Chapter Leaders and

### Featured Article: **The European Hub Gathering in Switzerland**

Worldwide people from all cultures and religions stand up and create a power, which makes this world more peaceful, fair-minded and more honest. We, as the young generation, want to share this power: "Be the change now!"

We want to live a community for 8 days, in which we are going to open new perspectives, discuss, create, laugh and sing. All of this surrounded by the beautiful Swiss mountains, which will give us calmness, power and inspiration. [Click here](#) for more information.

### Featured Article: **Symphony Of Peace Prayers**

The Symphony of Peace Prayers (SOPP) is an inter-religious, inter-spiritual annual peace prayer event open for all. It was first held in 2005 at Fuji Sanctuary in Japan, hosted by Byakko Shinko Kai. We believe in the beauty of each peace prayers from different religion and spiritual faith. So on this day we honor and give gratitude to all the beautiful peace prayers from different faith, creating a beautiful symphony on this earth. We are spreading waves of peace, harmony, light and love to all corners of the earth, elevating the consciousness of all humanity, so that peace may be realized as soon as possible. [Click here](#) for more information ...

### Featured Article: **2010 UN Year for Youth**

In an effort to harness the energy, imagination and initiative of the world's youth in overcoming the challenges facing humankind, from enhancing peace to boosting economic development, the United Nations today proclaimed an International Year of Youth starting on 12 August 2010.

"The International Year is about advancing the full and effective participation of youth in all aspects of society," UN Focal Point on [Youth](#) Nicola Shepherd said. "We encourage all sectors of society to work in partnership with youth and youth organizations to better understand their needs and concerns and to recognize the contributions that they can make to society." [Click here](#) for more information ...

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Innertainment

members have encountered many challenges and financial obstacles, they have managed to overcome them through creativity, resourcefulness, determination, immense passion and a collective effort. In order for them to reach out further, continue touching more hearts and lightening up those beautiful little faces, they require our assistance and support. This support may be a sacrifice of our Time, Talent or Treasure.

Let us make a commitment now to join Christian and Mark in their M.A.D dream to brighten the future for all coming generations!

## About a Hub: Toronto



### Objective:

To establish a core group of committed youth to implement the vision of WSYC at the local level.

### Vision:

To create programming that illustrates and applies the integral connection between spirituality and humanitarian work, in the City of Toronto, for the betterment of our community and our selves.

### History:

The Toronto Hub of the World Spirit Youth Council (WSYC) was created following an international retreat, hosted by Diane Longboat's organization, Soul of the Mother. The Toronto Hub was founded September 21, 2008.

During the International retreat, the youth:

- Gathered to engage in the sacred ceremonies of the Mohawk people
- Paid homage to the ancestors
- Partook in a Non-Violent Facilitation training led by Ken Hood
- Continued to outline their vision for the creation of local initiatives
- Participated in a day long event organized by Fr. Terry Gallagher
- WSYC spoke of their experiences with Soul of the Mother to Greater Toronto Youth who were gathered at the Multi-Faith Centre at the University of Toronto
- WSYC lead discussions on the theme of "Spiritual Activism"

Results of International retreat:

- Email network formed
- Informal gatherings to keep momentum
- Beginning of Toronto Hub

Accomplishments:

- September 16-21, 2008: Soul of the Mother Retreat Brantford, Ontario. [Details here...](#)
- October 25, 2008: Multi-Faith Youth Gathering & Follow-up meeting. [Details here...](#)
- November 8, 2008: Potluck Celebration with speaker on Spiritual Nutrition. [Details here...](#)
- March 6, 2009: Return of The Monk: An evening with Lama Tenzin Prayadarshi. [Details here...](#)
- September 27, 2009: Awakening The Dreamer Symposium. [Details here...](#)
- November 18, 2009 Trip to a former residential school
- December 5, 2009 Fundraiser for Soul of the Mother

2010 Goals:

- Hold 10 monthly meetings at the Multi-Faith Centre of University of Toronto beginning January 9, 2010. These meetings will include spiritual discourse and leadership training followed by a volunteer initiative meant to engage the community in a spirit of selfless service.
- Partner with community organizations committed to alleviating local poverty through education.
- Organize a weekend retreat on Six Nations with the grace and hospitality of Grandmother Sarah.
- Maintain a consistent membership base of ten people over the next year (December 2010).
- Organize one annual "Toronto Hub Retreat", away from the city.

[The Next Stage of Human Evolution](#)  
[Be Selfish. Be Generous](#)  
[World Parliament of Religions](#)

### Photos



CRISTAL OF WATER FOR "THANK YOU"



PEACE PRAYERS GATHERING AT MOUNT FUJI



YOUTH GATHERING IN SCHWEIBENALP, 2009



MAGHAPUJA DAY 2009

**Team:**  
Mark Harris and Stefanie Arsenault

Mark has been involved with WSYC since 2005 and was responsible for organizing the first Toronto meetings following the international retreat.

Stefanie became involved following the Awakening the Dreamer Symposium in September 2009

The success of the Toronto Hub owes a lot to the support provided through its guiding elders from Scarborough Missions and elsewhere.

## Hub Story: Children of the Earth at the World Parliament of Religions



After months of preparation, youth and elders representing Children of the Earth finally gathered in Melbourne on the 3rd of December for the World Parliament of Religions. This was the 5th time the conference was held in Melbourne since its beginning in 1893, and there

were 1000s (if not tens of thousands!) participants from all over the world. We immediately shared updates from our lives and exchanged gratitude for having each other for our spiritual nourishment, and to be together for such a phenomenal gathering! The official opening ceremony of the conference began with honoring the indigenous people of Australia. Among the speakers for the opening plenary we heard from pre-eminent professors, Indigenous elders, government ministers, and renowned religious leaders. We expected speeches but the evening was full with music, dance and performance!

The core vision of the Parliament is to celebrate the unity and harmony between countless religions, traditions, and belief systems from every corner of the world. This paves the way for a better future for the generations ahead through improved relationships and better understanding of one another. Over 200 different faith groups, nearly 600 presentations, and 80 offsite events were included. **Only one of a few youth centered events** was hosted by World Spirit Youth Council and Children of the Earth. We reached out and called youth from around the world to heed to the evolution of youth spirituality and activism for achieving higher consciousness in their lives. WSYC members: Yuka Saionji from Japan, Colin Lee from Australia, Worakate Thangsurbkul (a.k.a. Ping Ping) from Thailand, Jimmy Lama from Nepal, Karoline Buys from Colombia/Germany and Cherry Henderson from Australia presented a PowerPoint and spoke of each of our understandings of the role of spirituality put into action in our local communities.

Although different nationalities, religious affiliations and professional organization we each belong to, the understanding of spirituality for us is woven into a single common thread. Colin as moderator, loudly and impressively introduced us and gave comprehensive overview of how each of us work together and that our works are complementary to each others' through the global network and movement of WSYC. Yuka and Karoline spoke from their heart to inform people what it means to be spiritual being within the environs of Children of the Earth and how we are helping ourselves and many others to grow for a journey for higher purpose in our lives. Jimmy and Ping Ping both shared about the dynamic and innovative projects they were carrying out in their local communities. 16 year old Cherry used her authentic and passionate voice to tell of her experience. Our elders Dr. Nina Meyerhof and Father Terry Gallagher followed with their experiences of kindling and nurturing youth spiritual development in the awakening process of this global movement. Uncertain about the number of participants since there were so many subsequent sessions, we were literally taken aback and felt immense support to see at least 50 people attending our session. All of who not only gave us a standing ovation but gave us words from their hearts of further encouragement for the paths we are walking. WSYC was also selected to join forces with the official youth group of the Parliament to help them run several subsequent workshops.

Later on keeping with the tradition of the WSYC meetings and honoring our connection with nature, a couple of us took a journey

to Philip Island to watch the penguins. Watching these darling little creatures human beings can learn so much and realize the significance and beauty of other creatures just as ours. They have a family; they go out into the ocean to bring food for their family and they work and walk in a group but back to their own burrow at the end of the day. Just like each of us would be doing with the "spiritual food" we found in the ocean of knowledge and connection at the Parliament.

Sadly, the closing session came before we knew it. It was a celebration of joy of having made the conference a success and we all felt soothed by the music, dance, and songs presented at which even the Dalai Lama was watching intently! All of us from COE/WSYC walked away from the conference feeling excited at the connections we had made with so many others from around the world walking similar paths of spiritual commitment to the greater good. The experience also helped to awaken us to the need to build our infrastructure to be able to more effectively reach out to so many youth hungering for the kind of spiritual connection and inspiration to social action that we have found.

## Chapter Story: Nepali Children Discover Their Hidden Talents



Large tournaments are unusual in rural Nepal, due to the costs involved in organizing such events.

Maya Lama, COE Chapter Member and President of Yolmo Urogen Pema Youth Alliance in Nepal,

helped organize the Helambu tournament in Nakote village during the month of November 2009. The event was sponsored by the V.D.C. (The local Government) of Helambu and the Nepal Yolmo Student Association.

The prime objective of this program was to build up confidence in the students and to develop friendly relations between the schools, villagers and students in the region. It is important to encourage personal development in children through extra-curricular activities as well as through their studies. Extra-curricular activities are crucial in engaging a child's imagination, encouraging the growth of inner virtues and exposing their hidden talents.

Sixty participants from five different schools attended the event and participated in 8 different competition categories, namely: high jump, long jump, running, dance, free art, maths, quiz and a speech competition. The Shree Pema Chholing School had the "home advantage" and their students won most of the games.

After the competitions, the winners were announced and prizes such as note books, pens, pencils, colouring pens and medals were awarded. For many of the children, this event provided them with the opportunity to face their fears and perform in front of a large audience for the first time. Some of the participants never even knew that they had a talent imbedded within and were pleasantly surprised when they were awarded with a prize. This was the case of a young girl named Dhiki Dolma Lama. She was extremely nervous at first and wasn't sure whether she could run fast or jump far enough, but as soon as she got into it and started enjoying her self, she forgot all about her fears and performed so well, that she won two prizes. This experience taught her a valuable lesson, which we all should remember:

**"Nothing is impossible if we do it from our heart!"**

The participants, judges, teachers and villagers were very grateful and expressed their deepest appreciation to the organizers of the event, who despite the many challenges, made the program a great success!



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