



Rights Sites News

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

The Human Rights Education Program is designed to introduce international human rights and responsibilities to K-12 students. It uses the framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to help students understand and appreciate common human values, encourages them to apply international standards to their own lives, and supports positive student action to remedy human rights violations in their own communities.



Minnesota Advocates Publishes New Edition of Teaching Guide

Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights has published the second edition of the "Energy of a Nation: Immigrants in America" teaching guide. Having sold over 500 copies of the 1997 first edition, the teaching guide has served as a valuable learning tool for groups, organizations, schools and teachers all over the United States. The teaching guide features charts, tables, graphs, and maps to convey important information about immigration such as: **who comes** from other countries to settle in the U.S., **why they come**, the **process** by which they are allowed in, **where they settle**, their **impact on the economy**, and the "nuts and bolts" of U.S. immigration policy.

This "Energy of a Nation" guide was created for grade 8 through adult. It can be used in classes that address current events, civics, economics, geography, history, law, social studies, art, literature, and other subject areas.

Minnesota Advocates sent copies of the full text of the "Energy of a Nation" teaching guide to the Rights Sites schools in December. This issue of the newsletter features one sample lesson plan from the teaching guide, which you can find on pages 3-4. You may also purchase or download copies of the curriculum from our website at:

Our First Educators' Newsletter!

We have created this newsletter for our partner educators in the Twin Cities area in order to facilitate discussion about human rights, resource sharing, events and opportunities. Your feedback and input are essential for the evolution of this quarterly publication.

Staff Transitions

Megan Powers, former Director of the Education Program, will leave Minnesota Advocates after more than three years of work in human rights education, effective January 10. Megan has received a full scholarship to pursue a Master's degree in Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Colleen Beebe, former BIAS Coordinator at Minnesota Advocates, will now take on the position of Director.

In This Issue...

- **Cover Story:** "Energy of A Nation" teaching guide has been updated! > p. 1
- **Feature Article:** How do you incorporate human rights into your classroom? > p. 2
- **Sample Lesson:** Case Study of Bias Post September 11 > p. 3-4
- **Student Action Opportunity:** Nepal School Project > p. 5
- **Teacher Resource:** "Moving Lives" Immigrant Artist Bureau > p. 5
- **Events** > p. 6
- **Featured book and website** > p. 2

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FEATURE ARTICLE: “How Do You Incorporate Human Rights into Your Classroom?” Interviews with Minnesota Advocates’ Rights Sites Teachers

In the spring of 2004, Minnesota Advocates and fellow members of the Minnesota Global, Peace and Human Rights Education Network held a panel discussion with teachers on human rights education. Participants included: Sherry Kempf, high school English teacher at Creative Arts High School in St. Paul; Kathy Seipp, former teacher at Sandburg Middle School in Golden Valley; and Lynn Schultz, grade 4-6 teacher at J.J. Hill Montessori School in St. Paul. Here is what they had to say:

How is Human Rights Education integrated into your existing curriculum?

Sherry: I think it’s how you teach. You must have respect for the students.

Lynn: There is always a human rights issue that we are working on. For example, Project Common Ground, Habitat for Humanity, homelessness in Minnesota. Students come up with their own ideas. Human rights are integrated within the curriculum but it is also its own [independent] subject.

Kathy: Human rights can be infused into areas such as literature, mathematics, and the arts. Drama and role playing about racism and bullying are an effective way to incorporate serious themes into the classroom curriculum.

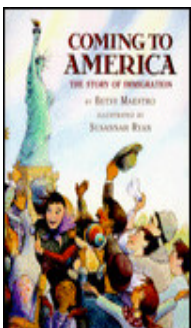
What are some success stories and project ideas that you can share with other educators?

Sherry: I had students write skits about the Convention on the Rights of a Child. I think that it’s effective to have students write their own scripts and plays. Our school partnered with Intermedia Arts and In The Heart of the Beast Puppet Theater to put on a performance about NAFTA. Lastly, our school project, “Filling the Bowls,” involved making 300 clay pots, which were sold to raise money for a local food shelf.

Lynn: My students wrote books in Spanish and donated them to a library in Guatemala. I teach a unit on immigration and the students write their own history of immigration. And our fourth graders spoke before the St. Paul School Board as a part of a campaign to stop buying soccer balls made with child labor.

Kathy: Students worked with a playwright and created “Let It Be Told,” a performance that explained the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and explored past and present human rights issues ranging from the Holocaust to schoolyard bullying. They also created a play that followed the journey of a modern refugee experience, and they hosted an art fair to raise money for children in South America.

FEATURED HUMAN RIGHTS BOOK AND WEBSITE :



Coming to America: The Story of Immigration by: Betsy Mastero
This colorful picture book tells the history of American immigration. Mastero reminds us that “many Americans are related to immigrants or are immigrants themselves.” In this book she is able to cover a wide range of immigration information in a succinct way that children can understand. This book is a wonderful way to start a unit on immigration or immigration topics.

Visit a Refugee Camp _____



[refugeecamp.org](http://www.refugeecamp.org)

To help kids learn about the refugee camp experience check out this website sponsored by Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres . The site takes you through a refugee camp, answers general questions about the refugee experience and features plenty of interactive pictures and elements. (Available in Flash or HTML format). The site also provides teacher resources.

SAMPLE LESSON [PART ONE]:

This activity is taken from Lesson 11 of Minnesota Advocates' "*Energy of a Nation: Immigrants in America*" curriculum. The lesson focuses on bias since September 11, 2001. The lesson is suitable for middle school through adult audiences. It contains a range of topics often covered in classes such as social studies, history, and current events, conflict resolution and mediation. See next page for suggested lesson activities to accompany the case study.

Case Study of Bias Post-September 11

It was ten minutes before 8:00 as Lori pulled into the parking lot of her favorite pizza place in downtown Minneapolis where she was supposed to meet Jennifer, Jennifer's boyfriend Michael, and their friend Josh for dinner. As she pulled into what looked like the last open spot in the third row, she heard angry shouts coming from the direction of the restaurant entrance. She turned down the radio so she could listen more closely. "Move it, move it," a man shouted. "Go back to your own country, Osama!" Unnerved by the violent tone of the male voice, Lori locked her car door and picked up her cell phone. Just as she was about to dial the number of the police she looked into her rearview mirror and saw Jennifer and Michael in a small group of six people, all Caucasian, who were following and shouting at a dark skinned family walking through the parking lot in the direction of her car. The man, appearing to be the father of the family, held a little girl tightly in his arms, her face pressed against his shoulder. His wife walked quickly at his side, clutching the hand of a visibly shaken young boy who looked no older than ten years old. The boy wore a Twins jersey, while the young girl wore a Lynx T-shirt. The parents were dressed casually, wearing jeans and shirts. The only distinguishing feature they shared was their darker complexion and the traditional turbans usually worn by Sikh men.

Lori felt unsure of what to do. Although she felt frightened, she didn't really know what was going on or what had happened before she pulled into the parking lot. Perhaps the man with the turban had done something to provoke her friends and the small group of people. But that didn't make sense – he was with his family and he wasn't even responding to the shouts and jeers. But surely, Jennifer and Michael wouldn't be involved in provoking a fight. What should she do? Lori looked into the mirror again. The family was getting closer and there were more voices shouting now. She had to make a decision.

Is this a true story?

The scenario presented in the case is fictional, yet based on true experiences of Sikh Minnesotans. In fact, the idea for this scenario was the result of an actual bias incident that occurred in Minneapolis on September 22, 2001 and was reported to and confirmed by the Sikh Coalition. In the actual incident, as a Sikh family left a restaurant after dinner they were verbally assaulted by several white boys and girls who were in the parking lot, yelling "Move it, move it! Get out of here!" After the family got into the car and closed the doors, a maroon Dodge Durango with two white boys of approximately 20 years of age pulled up next to them and followed them all the way back to the parking lot of their hotel. After arriving at the hotel parking lot, the young men yelled, "Go back to your own country!" and drove off.

All other examples in the case are true stories that have been documented by the police, FBI, human rights organizations, and/or national non-governmental organizations.

Note: In the full text of the "*Energy of a Nation*" teaching guide, this handout continues with similar stories and a news article describing attacks carried out after September 11, 2001 on Muslims living in Minnesota. The "*Energy of A Nation*" teaching guide can be viewed, downloaded, and/or purchased at: [www.mnadvocates.org/Human Rights Education Program.html](http://www.mnadvocates.org/Human_Rights_Education_Program.html).

SAMPLE LESSON [PART TWO]:

This activity is taken from Lesson 11 of Minnesota Advocates' "*Energy of a Nation: Immigrants in America*" curriculum. The lesson focuses on bias since September 11, 2001. The lesson is suitable for middle school through adult audiences. It contains a range of topics often covered in classes such as social studies, history, and current events, conflict resolution and mediation. See previous page for the text of case study to accompany these suggested lesson activities.

[Suggested Activity for Case Study of Bias Post September 11]

Activity #3: Fast-forward to the Present (2-3 class periods)

Class Discussion:

Why do you think people often make generalizations based on very little, and often times inaccurate, information?

Small group work:

Divide the students into groups of three or four. Then write the words "bias", "stereotype", and "discrimination" on the board. Ask the students to brainstorm definitions for the words. Then have students look up definitions in dictionaries and share aloud. Discuss how stereotypes involve **attitudes/thoughts** and discrimination involves **actions**. Ask students whether they have ever experienced discrimination or discriminated against others. If students are willing, ask for volunteers to share examples. Talk about the responsibility that every person has to recognize harmful stereotypes and prevent discrimination. What qualities does a person need in order to confront stereotypes (e.g. strength, confidence, patience, compassion)?

Connection to international law: Provide copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and ask students to find which articles have been violated in the case studies. Students may also look at the U.S. Bill of Rights and U.S. Constitution to compare which rights are included or missing. In small groups, ask students to brainstorm how we can work to protect the human rights of others. The text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be found at: <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/b1udhr.htm>

Optional Extension:

Have students role-play a situation in which they are victims of, or witness to, stereotyping or discrimination of an immigrant or group of immigrants at home, at school or in the community. Then have students take turns responding to a bias incident. Prepare students by creating a list of positive language that will be helpful in diffusing an uncomfortable situation. For example, try using "I statements". By saying "I feel bad when you call me/call my friend ____" instead of "You are wrong. I am not a ____". By using "I statements" in the role-plays students will eliminate casting blame and begin to take ownership of their own feelings, which will lead to building empathy for others.

Next, have students read **Handout #3: "Case Study on Bias."** Students may either work in pairs, small groups or individually for this part of the activity.

Questions:

1. What should Lori do? What should she say to Jennifer and Michael when they see her? Would/should Lori's reaction be different if children were not involved or if the man was by himself?
2. Are all groups equally subject to stereotyping? What if the September 11 terrorists had been of a different race or religion? Have you or has someone you know ever been the victim of stereotyping or discrimination? How did it make you feel? What did you do?
3. What is a hate crime? How is it different from other crimes? What can we do to confront bias? If you knew a student who was being targeted or subjected to hateful words, what could you do? What types of action can be taken within the student body to prevent bias incidents from occurring at your school?

Note: The full text of the "*Energy of A Nation*" teaching guide can be viewed, downloaded, and/or purchased at: [www.mnadvocates.org/Human Rights Education Program.html](http://www.mnadvocates.org/Human_Rights_Education_Program.html).

STUDENT ACTION PROJECT OPPORTUNITY: **The Sankhu Community School Project**



The International Labor Organization estimates that close to 250 million children worldwide are victims of forced child labor. In Nepal, approximately 45.8% of children ages 10 to 14 are involved in the child labor force. More than one million of these children work in difficult, dangerous, and sometimes even slave-like conditions.

To address this serious issue, Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights formed a volunteer committee to counter the system of abusive child labor by promoting the children's right to an education. This effort launched a pilot project in Sankhu, a village located about one hour by bus from the capital of Kathmandu. In Sankhu village, Nepal, more than 50% of the village's 10,000 residents are unemployed. Because public schools in Nepal require tuition, many parents cannot afford to send their children to school. As a result of the high

unemployment and the lack of free education in their village, an estimated 20% of children between age nine and fourteen leave Sankhu and their families to enter into child labor in Kathmandu.

The Sankhu School opened in September 1999 to 174 disadvantaged children in the area, including girls, who normally are expected to give up school in favor of domestic work. In addition to their free education in various subject areas including Nepali and English, the children receive a free meal—a very important and popular part of the program. In addition, the teachers have been trained in human rights awareness and are incorporating human rights into the curriculum.

To learn more about the Sankhu School, please visit: www.mnadvocates.org/The_Sankhu_School__Nepal.html.

You or your school can become involved in learning about child labor!

- Request digital photo slides or other learning resources from Minnesota Advocates
- Write advocacy letters to government officials
- Write pen pal letters to Sankhu school students
- Conduct a book drive
- Coordinate a fundraising project such as a school concert, talent show, read-a-thon, bake sale, etc., with the proceeds benefiting the Sankhu School

For more information on how to get involved, contact the Education Program at Minnesota Advocates!

EXCITING OPPORTUNITY FOR MINNESOTA SCHOOLS: “Moving Lives” Immigrant Artist Speakers Bureau

Minnesota Advocates and Intermedia Arts have assembled a new speakers bureau of immigrant artists called “Moving Lives.” Your classroom and school are encouraged to utilize the creative and knowledgeable artists in this group. With an hour-long presentation, interactive art activity, or longer arts partnership, your class or school will experience dynamic learning about human rights and immigration issues through the artwork and stories of these artists.

Through “Moving Lives,” the artists, who have been trained on the general history and context of human rights, share their stories, experiences and expertise with other communities in order to build understanding and a greater sense of interconnectedness. Artists' chosen media include: poetry, spoken word, visual arts, storytelling, and music. Themes range from the Holocaust, immigration, and African experiences in American to poverty, discrimination and child labor. The artists' countries of origin are: Togo, Korea, Poland, Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Sierra Leone, Philippines and Peru.

To see bios of the artist participants, go to www.mnadvocates.org/Human_Rights_Education_Program.html and click on the PDF brochure. To book one of the “Moving Lives” immigrant artists, please contact Theresa Sweetland at theresa@intermediaarts.org or call 612-871-4444.

Human Rights Day on December 10

To celebrate Human Rights Day and the 65th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Minnesota Advocates hosted a film screening of the new documentary entitled, "Lost Boys of Sudan." The film follows two Sudanese refugees on their extraordinary journey from Africa to America. The film demonstrates the Sudanese boys' difficult struggles for education, job experience, integration, etc., and the boys' spirit of determination in the face of such obstacles. Over 200 teachers, students, and community member attended the film screening, which was cosponsored by the Human Rights Center at the University of Minnesota.

To borrow a copy of the "Lost Boys" DVD and supplementary teaching materials, please contact Sarah Herzog at the Institute for Global Studies at the University of Minnesota: sherzog@umn.edu.

January — March Events 2005

- January 1:** UN: World Decade for Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children
- January 12:** Anniversary of the Genocide Convention coming in to force in 1951
- January 14:** Movie Night at the Resource Center of Americas! *A Day Without Mexicans*, 6:30-8:30 free in English and Spanish for more info go to: http://www.americas.org/item_643
- January 15:** Martin Luther King, Jr. is born in Atlanta, Georgia
- January 17:** Martin Luther King Day
- January 18:** Library Film Series *Behind the Labels: Garment Workers on U.S. Saipan*, 7:00 p.m. at Riverview Branch Library, 1 George Street, St. Paul
- January 24-28:** "No Name Calling Week!" Participate and find out more by going to: <http://www.nonamecallingweek.org/cgi-bin/iowa/home.html>
- February:** Black History Month
I Love to Read Month
- February 1:** National Freedom Day
- February 10:** Tenth Annual Peace Prize Festival at Augsburg College in Minneapolis: www.nobelpeaceprizefestival.org
- February 16:** Library Film Series *Well-Founded Fear*, 6:30 p.m. at Arlington Hills Branch Library, 1105 Greenbrier St., St. Paul
- March:** Women's History Month
- March 3-4:** Minnesota Council for the Social Studies conference
- March 12:** International Women's Day! Celebrate with us at Coffman Union, University of Minnesota, 8:30-4:00
- March 13:** Deaf History Month (3/13-4/15)
- March 21:** UN: Week of Solidarity with People Struggling Against Racism and Racial Discrimination
World Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

****Grant opportunity for k-12 teachers! Focus: Immigration Curriculum Project****
<http://www.aif.org/teach/grants/2005teachergrants.htm>

Check Minnesota Advocates' website for organizational events and information!
www.mnadvocates.org/Minnesota_Advocates__Events.html

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