International Guest Speakers Deliver Keynote at 2012 Global Understanding Convention

The Jack and Lewis Rudin Distinguished Speakers Series

The 11th Annual Global Understanding Convention’s keynote address took place in Wilson Hall on Tuesday, April 3. The lecture, titled “International Criminal Law and Human Rights,” reinforced this year’s convention theme of “Freedom, Sustainability, and Security: Creating Interconnected and Inclusive Communities.”

Over 400 people attended the event, including faculty, students, and administrators. As the audience was being seated, junior Meredith Calcagno and sophomore Michael Rosas performed a musical prelude along with Laura DuBois, a professor in the Music and Theatre Department.

The address was delivered by two local attorneys, Raymond Brown and Wanda Akin, husband and wife and co-founders of the International Justice Project (IJP). The IJP is a worldwide project that seeks justice by representing victims of conflicts at international criminal tribunals.

During their keynote address, the speakers touched upon the current situation in Darfur, the implications caused by blood diamonds in Sierra Leone, the Catch KONY movement, the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the struggles that women face in war-torn regions of the world.

Their non-profit organization was established in 2004 with the purpose of providing support to victims of world crimes such as genocides, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. The organization also conducts outreach and educates survivors, human rights advocates, activists, and other organizations about the ICC, international criminal law, human rights, and the current situation in Darfur, according to internationaljusticeproject.com.

In addition, the project runs the Health and Reparations Project (HARP) that provides medical support for the mental health of refugees and victims of crime in Darfur. “The number of Darfuvian refugees in the United States is expected to increase significantly in the near future,” according to the organization’s website.

Brown has been a trial lawyer, teacher, and legal journalist since 1974. He “has handled a wide variety of U.S. criminal and civil matters representing individuals and corporations, and he has appeared in courts and conducted investigations throughout the U.S. and world, including Kenya, El Salvador, Switzerland, the Bahamas, Uganda, and Sierra Leone.”

Akin is currently an adjunct professor at Seton Hall University’s School of Law and has an independent
Dr. Rekha Datta, Professor of Political Science and founding Director of the University’s Institute for Global Understanding, was honored with the Global Visionary Award at the 2012 GUC. Speaking at the awards ceremony, Dr. Nancy Mezey, IGU Director, noted that the Global Visionary Award is not an annual award. It is only given when the committee finds someone who has truly brought global change through outstanding vision and leadership, and whose work has had a direct impact on Monmouth University student life. Dr. Datta fills that description perfectly.

Dr. Datta received her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Connecticut in 1990. She has a 1st class M.A. degree in Political Science from the University of Calcutta and a 1st class B.A. Honors in Political Science from Presidency College, Calcutta. She has received several scholarships and research grants in India and the United States.

At Monmouth University, Dr. Datta has spent over ten years promoting global understanding through academic programs, field experiences, and service learning. She has taken a holistic approach to global education that integrates experiential education, volunteerism, and civic engagement on campus and in the local and global communities. Because of Dr. Datta’s broad vision, IGU has been successful in guiding the University in the hiring and development of faculty, shaping curricular reform, bringing some of the most distinguished speakers and public servants to campus, generating a myriad of cultural opportunities and social experiences, and creating valuable service learning opportunities for Monmouth students at the United Nations and throughout the world.

Over the last decade, she has written three books and taught numerous courses in the area of global understanding, including International Relations, Comparative European Governments, an International Service Seminar in which she took students to India, Democracy in South Asia, Comparative Politics in Asia, and Comparative Study of Women in the World.

Not only has Dr. Datta brought global education to her department, school, and the University as a whole, but she was also the driving force in the founding of two programs through which Monmouth students volunteer to mentor students in area high schools. In addition, she was instrumental in helping IGU gain NGO status with the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI). This status allows four Monmouth faculty members and two Monmouth students special access to the United Nations and to participate in a variety of briefings and special events. Dr. Datta also established a relationship between IGU and the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI). Through this relationship, Monmouth has become the first recipient of a fall lecture series sponsored through UNAI. IGU staff is now able to build on this relationship in order to create unique opportunities for students through the United Nations, such as participating in conferences and possibly becoming off-site interns for the UNAI.

Monmouth University is not the only group to recognize the visionary work of Dr. Datta. In 2004, Dr. Datta received the Humanitarian of the Year Award from the National Council for Community & Justice. In 2005-06, Dr. Datta served on New Jersey Governor Jon S. Corzine’s Transition Team on Higher Education Policy Group. And most recently, in fall 2011, Dr. Datta received the Outstanding Leader in Experiential Education: Higher Education Award from the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE).

Based on her many contributions and accomplishments, the committee could not think of anyone who has created a deeper or broader road in the area of global education at Monmouth University. Through her vision and work at IGU as well as with the students in her classes and around campus, Dr. Datta surpasses the standards set forth by the Award. She works closely with students and community youth to inspire them to be responsible citizens, leaders in their community, and to raise global and political awareness. Dr. Datta serves as the epitomic face of global understanding and is an inspirational member of the Monmouth University community.
practice in Newark, N.J. She has more than 29 years of experience as a trial lawyer in criminal defense in the U.S. and international courts. She is also qualified to represent the accused and the victims before the ICC, and is currently representing Darfuri victims in a case against President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan.

The speakers were suggested by Professor Don Moliver, Dean of the Leon Hess Business School, according to Dr. Nancy Mezey in an interview with “The Outlook.” “He knew of the speakers and suggested that we consider inviting them to speak,” Mezey said. “The GUC committee looked at the work they were doing and thought that their focus and areas of expertise would be a very good fit for the convention this year.”

The topic of the keynote speech was a collaborative effort between the speakers and the GUC committee members. “Given the theme of the convention and the areas of expertise of the speakers, the GUC committee proposed the topic to the speakers,” Mezey said. “The speakers then made a few suggestions on how to connect the topic more closely with their focus on criminal law, and we all agreed on the final title and topic.”

Dr. Mezey said that the speech examined many issues with which students might not have been previously familiar. “The presentation was just what we hoped it would be: informative, educational, insightful, and inspiring,” she continued. “My only regret is that we did not have more time. Because of their generosity of spirit and enthusiasm for their work, the speakers stayed nearly an hour after the official end of the talk to answer questions from the audience.”

“As impressed as we were with the speakers, I think the speakers were equally impressed by the Monmouth University audience,” Mezey added. “We are hoping to continue to work with Mr. Brown and Mrs. Akin through their non-profit organization.”

Mezey mentioned the opportunity that can come to students from their continued work with the organization. “We hope that such opportunities will open the door for our students to intern through IJP and help IJP further their mission,” she said.

Meredith Calcagno and Michael Rosas performed a musical prelude with Professor Laura DuBois
Provost Thomas S. Pearson Receives Global Understanding Award

Provost Thomas Pearson received the Global Understanding Award during this year’s Global Understanding Convention (GUC) for his involvement and support in promoting global understanding. Presenting the award to the provost, Dr. Saliba Sarsar, Associate Vice President for Global Initiatives, said that it takes leadership, vision, and resources to make change. He outlined instances in which Provost Pearson has shown his positive support for globalization at MU.

Dr. Pearson was at the creation of the Global Understanding Project in 2001 and later approved its transformation into the Institute for Global Understanding in 2008.

He ensured that the General Education programs of 1992 and 2007-2009 had within them cross-cultural and global perspectives and made sure that the University’s Strategic Plan contains global perspectives and cultural understanding as core values and principles.

He developed distinctive Study Abroad programs in England, Spain, Australia, Italy, and through the College Consortium for International Studies.

He supported the initiation of faculty-led travel courses in Argentina, Chile, China, the Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Guatemala, India, Italy, Mexico, and Spain. Provost Pearson also backed the creation of the International and Community Development track in the Master of Social Work Program at MU.

Dr. Mario Aldo Toscano - GUC 2012 Opening Ceremony Lecturer

Dr. Mario Aldo Toscano, Visiting International Scholar from the University of Pisa, Italy

The 2012 GUC Opening Ceremony lecture was delivered by Dr. Mario Aldo Toscano, Visiting International Scholar. Dr. Toscano is Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Pisa, Italy. He was the President of the Italian Sociological Association (AIS) from 1993 - 96 and won the Scanno Award for Sociological Literature in 2010.

Dr. Toscano’s talk addressed the European Union structure and culture integration. Dr. Toscano noted that the European Union is still a new phenomenon in the general panorama of great political, economic, and cultural institutions. It is not only a form of organization, it is also a gradually improving process of integration of different, original lifestyles within the framework of a higher and more participative way of living. The European Union is an experience and a laboratory where many traditions and many contradictions try to find a viable harmony for everyday life of average European people.

This lecture was co-sponsored by IGU and the Office for Global Initiatives.
Monmouth University Institute for Global Understanding held its 11th Annual Global Understanding Convention from April 2 - 6, 2012. The campus-wide interdisciplinary convention was open to the MU community and the public. A record seventy-plus events took place during the week.

Numerous visiting international scholars attended the events, including: Professor Ulrich Deller from the Catholic University of Germany; Professor Mario Aldo Toscano from the University of Pisa, Italy; Professors Jianyu Wang and Yanyan Huang from the Nanjing University of Science and Technology, China; and Professor Darijo Cerepinko from the University of Varazdin, Croatia.

Other global attendees included Mr. Martino Mazzonis, freelance journalist; Ms. Scarlett Aeckerle, LMSW, ABD, University of South Carolina; and Dr. Susan Leib, Stateside Director of Operations of the Hillside Health Care International in Belize.

Professor Susan Bucks, co-chair of this year’s Global Understanding Convention (GUC), received the Global Understanding Award at the annual GUC Awards Ceremony on April 2, 2012.

Professor Bucks, a Specialist Librarian in the areas of Reference, Instruction, and Government Documents, is also the author of numerous LibGuides covering such subjects as West Africa, Globalization, Asian Art, the Holocaust, ocean policy and law, and the United Nations.

In bestowing the award, IGU Director Nancy Mezey indicated that over the past several years Professor Bucks has been an active member of the IGU and the GUC, particularly in the area of helping to secure, organize, and display photo exhibits in the library. In 2010 and 2011, she organized the GUC volunteers. In 2012, she assumed the responsibility of co-chair of GUC. In addition to her library and IGU activities, she is also the faculty advisor for the Gender Studies Club.

Director Mezey indicated that in receiving this award, Professor Bucks is being recognized for her leadership in global education and fulfilling the mission of IGU.

In keeping with tradition, Professor Bucks will take the helm of GUC 2013 as its Convention Chair.
It was perfect weather for the 3rd Annual Global Understanding 5K on Monmouth University’s campus on Friday, April 6, 2012 to benefit pediatric brain tumor research through The Kortney Rose Foundation (KRF). With close to 100 participants, it was the largest turnout for this event to date. The 5K event is the final event of the Global Understanding Convention.

David Wong was the first man to finish in 19:07 and MU student Jenna Intersimone was the first female to finish with a time of 21:25. The event was organized by the Political Science Club and cosponsored by the Sociology Club, IGU, Aramark, Monmouth Athletic Department, and Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc. A very special thank you is needed for the generosity of both Professor Peter Reinhart, Director of the Kislak Real Estate Institute, and Professor Joe Patten, Chair of the Department of Political Science and Sociology. Both professors offered a challenge to all participants that they would donate money to the KRF for each person who finished before them. Thanks to their generosity and the support of those who participated, $1500 was raised to benefit pediatric brain tumor research through KRF.

Kristen Gillette, Founder and President of The Kortney Rose Foundation said, “We are so grateful to the Monmouth campus community, and beyond, for their support of this event to Help Get Brain Tumors Off Kids’ Minds.”

The Kortney Rose Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charity that was set up by Kortney’s parents, after her death in 2006 from a rare brain tumor, to create her legacy of helping other children through the promise of research. Since its inception, the foundation has built a playground in Kortney’s name, donated over a half million dollars to the pediatric brain tumor research program at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, and was instrumental in passing legislation naming May as Brain Tumor Awareness Month in the State of New Jersey. http://www.thekortneyrosefoundation.org
Snapshots of GUC 2012

Dinner honoring International Visiting Scholars

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Speak Out Against the Use of Child Soldiers

Fund Raiser for Inside Out

“It Gets Better”: A National Project to Support LGBT Youth
As part of IGU’s collaborative mentorship program with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Monmouth County and Asbury Park High School, the Monmouth University Debate Hawks completed their second year of mentoring the Asbury Park High School Debate Team. Members of the MU Debate Hawks conducted debate workshops every Thursday after school throughout the year in preparation for debate tournaments sponsored by the Urban Debate League.

The Asbury students were trained by members of Monmouth’s Debate Team to participate in New Jersey’s Urban Debate League. The National Urban Debate League has a rich tradition and is credited with helping to catapult many urban students into successful careers, none more inspiring than Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. Justice Sonia Sotomayor spoke mostly in Spanish as a child growing up in a Bronx, New York, public housing development. When she was nominated to the nation’s highest bench, she credited her mother and her high school involvement with New York’s urban debate league as the two most important reasons for her success. It was in fact through her affiliation with her high school debate coach that she went on to graduate from Princeton University in 1976. We believe future Sonia Sotomayors are attending Asbury Park High School right now.

The Asbury Park High School Debate Team was launched last year, made possible by a $7,000 grant from the TD Bank Foundation received by Monmouth University’s Institute for Global Understanding and Monmouth University’s Debate Team. The team is also led by Ms. Melanie Sambataro, a guidance counselor at Asbury Park High School. The students debated from both the affirmative and negative perspectives on the following resolution: Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its exploration and/or development of space beyond the Earth’s mesosphere.

The major program goal is to help participating Asbury students enhance their critical thinking skills by strengthening written, oral, and technological communication skills, in furtherance of their understanding of public policy theories and issues. In addition, MU students share college experiences with APHS students and mentor them to pursue and attain a college degree. In 2011, all 11 graduating Asbury High School debaters went on to college.
Project BAM
A Collaborative Mentorship Program between
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Monmouth County, Asbury Park High School, and Monmouth University

Event 1: Project BAM Training Session – Monmouth University students who are recruited to serve as mentors through an application and selection process that includes a background check, receive training on proper conduct, confidentiality, purpose of mentorship, and overview of program goals.

Event 2: Project BAM Kickoff – Orientation with welcome introductions from Monmouth University President, Provost, IGU Director, Asbury Park High School, and President of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Monmouth County.

Event 3: Debate Workshop – Members of Monmouth University Debate Hawks conduct a workshop to encourage students to develop self-reasoning, confidence, communication skills, and sportsmanship, as students brainstorm on the pros and cons of an issue in this academic sport.

Event 4: Nursing and Health Studies Session - This session and the Health Careers Toolkit raises awareness and provides a wealth of information about potential careers in the nursing and health care fields.

Event 5: Holidays Around the World – Focuses on different holidays around the world and how different cultures celebrate them. Students make holiday crafts, taste food from around the world, and learn about global holiday traditions.

Event 6: Capoeira Workshop – Introduction to Capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian martial art/dance combining the elements of martial arts, music, and dance. This program is geared toward self-discipline, using art to create self-esteem and confidence, and strength building.

Event 7: Non-Violence T-Shirt Project – Recognizing violence is a major issue in our society; this workshop, held in reverence to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi, includes a presentation of the philosophy of Gandhi and King and how their messages can be used in personal and community living situations. Students write messages of non-violence on T-shirts.

Event 8: Health Education – This session seeks to spread awareness about substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and other health issues, preventive methods, and healthy lifestyles.

Event 9: Admissions/Residential Life – Presentation by Monmouth University Admissions officers about the college admissions process, such as what to focus on, how to complete the applications, and when to apply.

Event 10: Athletics – This presentation focuses on how sports can serve as a channel for self-esteem, self-control, team spirit, cooperation, and inclusivity.

Event 11: Recognition Celebration – Mentors and mentees share their experiences and assess outcomes of the year’s program.
Project BAM
Session Calendar
2012-2013

FALL 2012

Oct 1, 2012  Project BAM Training Session
Oct 15, 2012 Project BAM Kickoff
Oct 29, 2012 Debate Workshop
Nov 5, 2012  Career Workshop
Nov 19, 2012 Music Workshop
Dec 3, 2012  Holidays Around the World
Dec 10, 2012 Capoeira Workshop

SPRING 2013

Jan 28, 2013  Non-Violence T-Shirt Project
Feb 4, 2013   Health Education
Feb 25, 2013  Admissions/Residential Life
Mar 11, 2013  Athletics
Apr 8, 2013   GUC-Video Conference with UN
Apr 15, 2013  Recognition Ceremony

The 12th Annual
Global Understanding Convention
Transforming Global Dialogue to
Achieve a Sustainable Future

April 8 - 12, 2013
For more information, please visit www.monmouth.edu/IGU

Special Contributions

Dr. Rosemary Barbera
Ms. Susan Bucks
Ms. Linda Cranmer
Ms. Rupa DasGupta
Ms. Kristen Gillette
Ms. Tess LaFera
Ms. Ruphina Mbua
Dr. Nancy Mezey
Mr. Blaze Nowara
Dr. Joseph Patten
Mr. James Reme
Dr. Saliba Sarsar
Ms. Susan Shumard

The Outlook

SPECIAL THANKS to Ms. Ruphina Mbua for compiling and writing most of the information in this newsletter.