



Dana Zubari, IVLP Alum from Bahrain, shares about the power of exchanges

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Academic WorldQuest 2023

From the Director's Desk

The first four months of the year have provided us with many opportunities to engage with the world and reshape the way we think about it. I especially appreciated the conversation we had with Dr. Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò about changing our perspectives around African countries' abilities to make decisions for themselves. The lessons learned from this talk have far reaching implications as we look to critical challenges facing the world today. Putin's decision to invade Ukraine and continue to commit war crimes cannot be swept away simply by blaming the West. Similarly, our own decisions to either ignore or engage with the world must be recognized as just that, our own decisions.

Thank you for your choice to remain an engaged global citizen by opening your mind, eyes, and heart to the world around you, through the work of WACNH. Your support allows us to continue holding space for critical discussions.

Tim Horgan
Executive Director

"It would require the United States, in concert with the growing circle of regional players and other allies, to embrace a sustained strategic and coordinated approach that leverages trust, relationships and influence on the parties to move in a constructive direction."

-Amb. Youssef on Israel-Palestine Conflict

Support the Council by Attending the Global Forum and Annual Meeting, June 13

On June 13th, the World Affairs Council of New Hampshire invites you to join the important conversation with Amb. Hesham Youssef, former Egyptian Ambassador and Senior Fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace, to discuss prospects for peace in the Middle East & North Africa. Despite Western attention pulling away from the region, putting a larger focus on geopolitical challengers like China and Russia, a litany of issues still remain for these countries when it comes to security. In addition, the strategic rebalancing by the U.S. and its allies has opened space for China and Russia to assert more influence in the region. The normalization of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran provides the clearest example of this, but many other examples abound. From Russian military support for authoritarian governments and China's Belt and Road Initiative, it is clear that these countries have built lasting connections to the region.

By attending this critical conversation, you will support the vital work of WACNH and come away with a better understanding of key issues, like the impact of the U.S.' chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan, rising tensions in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and an ongoing war in Yemen. All this allows you the chance to explore the challenges and solutions facing this dynamic region.

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When a High School Simulation Enters the Real World.

On March 28th and 29th the World Affairs Council of New Hampshire hosted a two-day diplomacy simulation for four Bow High School classrooms. These simulations, created by the U.S. Department of State, provide students with the opportunity to learn hard skills, while diving into a real world conflict in-order to better understand the challenges to creating international agreement. In conjunction with their studies of holocausts and genocides, the teachers selected "Peacebuilding: the Challenge of Darfur", where students traveled back in time to 2009 when the international community came together to try and bring an end the ongoing genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Students took on the roles of the United Nations, the U.S. Department of State, the Republic of China, the African Union, the Republic of the Sudan, and an NGO, Save the Children. The groups had to negotiate with each other, prioritize needs, agree to potential solutions, and identify where work remained. Each of the four classes came to different solutions and conclusions, but all agreed that this was an engaging experience that excited the students.

"We would like to let you know how much your support allowed us to gain a greater understanding of how world politics truly function," remarked one Bow High School Student.

In addition, due to her participation in the Diplomacy Simulations Mallory, a student at Bow, went home and told her parents that she was completely changing her ideal career path, hoping now to pursue a career in public diplomacy. This shows the power of exposing people to international opportunities at a young age to create global citizens for life.

If that was not enough, about two weeks later, renewed fighting occurred in Sudan amongst many of the same actors that the students had just studied.

"We discussed this extensively in class today," remarked Nick Watson, Bow High School Teacher. "We discussed the Janjaweed connection and also the relationship with the Wagner Group. As the world looks to Ukraine, Russia and China may be making bigger and bigger moves in Africa."

Without a doubt, the Bow students were more prepared to understand this current day issue than many of their peers from around the state who had not had this same opportunity. The World Affairs Council of New Hampshire looks forward to expanding the reach of this program over the next several years to schools across the state.



Students at Bow High School work to identify potential solutions to bringing an end to the genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.



Jonathan Gancarz presents opening remarks at Bow High School Diplomacy Simulations, on behalf of the African Union.



Bow High School students, representing the United Nations, discuss strategy prior to Diplomacy Simulation.

"I always love activities in which you can meet with other students interested in world affairs, as well as test out knowledge and learn new things along the way!"

Shristi Dua
Bow High School Student



Amb. Hesham Youssef (ret). began his diplomatic career in 1985, spending time in Canada and Geneva. He also served as a representative to the Arab League and to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. He currently serves as a Senior Fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Fundraiser

As the largest event of the year for the Council, the Global Forum provides the best opportunity for the community to come together, discuss critical issues, and better understand the factors driving the world today. All proceeds from this event go to supporting the numerous programs that WACNH provides to the community, including high school diplomacy simulations, the Global in the Granite State Podcast, and more.

In addition, this year the Council will combine its Annual Meeting with the Global Forum, giving the audience an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of the past year, as well as look towards the organization's 70th anniversary in 2024. All are welcome to attend the Annual Meeting, but only members will vote on new and returning board members, as well as an update to the by-laws.

Finally, WACNH will welcome two international exchange groups to the program, providing guests the opportunity to experience our citizen diplomacy efforts firsthand. You will not want to miss it!

“Great event on Tuesday! I thought the format worked very well given that Amb. Lute was such a down-to-earth (but still very smart & thoughtful) speaker. I liked that you were able to zoom in on the speakers during the sit down chat as well.”

Anna Berry, Manchester

Deactivating Disinformation through Youth Engagement

Reflecting on what he called a "once in a lifetime opportunity" Kardono Setyorakhmadi, the editor of an online newspaper based in Indonesia, talked about the power of in-person experiences to build bridges and counter disinformation. Through his International Visitor Leadership Exchange program he met with people from a variety of organizations across the state to share best practices in engaging youth in media literacy efforts. Like thousands of visitors before him, this project led to a newly formed global network, a range of new ideas, and lasting friendships that will serve Indonesia and New Hampshire well in the future.

Having hosted two programs already this year on combatting disinformation, WACNH has connected people from across Indonesia and Central Asia to practitioners in the state. However, the highlight for both groups was a "Citizen Exchange Circle" with students from Franklin Pierce University. This two-hour, facilitated conversation had the participants discuss how to end the corrosive effect of disinformation on communities. They also identified the challenges and opportunities for collaboration across borders. The students and visitors agreed that this discussion allowed them a unique space to think critically about the challenges posed by disinformation and what role they could play in making the world a better place.



Franklin Pierce University Students share with Visitors from Central Asia

"I think this was definitely one of the most unique experiences I have had in my college career. It is always an honor and privilege to speak to scholars. The fact these scholars were from a foreign country led to the opportunity of worldwide networking. I have never had that sort of experience before."

- Franklin Pierce University Student Reflection



World Affairs Council of New Hampshire
 2500 North River Road
 Manchester, NH 03106

Thank you for your continued support of the World Affairs Council of New Hampshire. It is through your support that we continue to build our global community.

www.wacnh.org • (603) 314.7970 • council@wacnh.org

NH High Schools Lead Global Studies.

This past March, students from as far away as Plymouth and Portsmouth came together after months of global studies to compete in the NH Regional Academic WorldQuest challenge, hosted by the World Affairs Council of New Hampshire. As a part of the World Affairs Councils of America national program, these students had the opportunity to study global issues, including food insecurity, economic sanctions, supply chains disruptions, and more. This program helps to fill the gap that many high school students identify in their studies, as global education is not a requirement of graduation.

Across the four hour competition, teams answered 100 questions, with Plymouth High School winning this year. The team had the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. for the national competition, along with 38 other teams from across the country. In addition, they had the chance to visit the U.S. Institute of Peace, the Organization of American States, and many of the great museums the nation's capitol has to offer. WACNH congratulates all the students on their success and wishes them luck as they pursue further global understanding and engagement.



Evelyn Smith, Grace Modzeleski, Ashe McKeen, and Alexandra Flynn participate in the 2023 Academic WorldQuest program.



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