

Center for Global Citizenship

Team:

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Project Duration: 09/01/2014 to 09/01/2015 (Pilot)

Population Served: Egyptians and Americans

Constituents: Academics, students, religious leaders

Geographic Area Served: Egypt & U.S.A



Background and Overview

"If we are to have peace on earth, our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective." Martin Luther King Jr.

Problem Statement

Exclusionary politics based upon nationalistic, ideological, and class antagonism continues to be an impetus for radicalization and violent outbursts across the globe. From post Arab Spring, identity-based political contentions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to Tea Party archetype Cliven Bundy's armed stand-off with the Bureau of Land Management in Nevada. These flare-ups are not localized to any one region and bridging these ideological divides is vital to quelling the fear and misperceptions that so often provide fuel for the fire. In our modern interconnected world, each society has a vested interest in alleviating the problems facing humanity wherever they loom. Whether it be extreme income inequality, journalistic freedom and the role of censorship, the instantiation of human rights, free and open elections, or the protection of religious liberty. There will be no peace until humankind comes to the realization that every life is intrinsically valuable and

endowed with universally indelible rights. The only way for this change to come about is through the formation of global citizens whose identity is informed by a worldview that transcends the barriers that so commonly divide us.

Project Goal

The Center for Global Citizenship intends to accomplish this task by offering students and lay persons an innovative interdisciplinary curriculum that explores the pressing issues of our time from multiple perspectives. Employing a holistic approach to education that incorporates the fields of religious studies, art and media, the social sciences, international relations, conflict resolution, and strategic planning will provide future world leaders with a new paradigm for understanding the complex nature of the challenges that encompass each of our lives, hence influencing policy makers and public opinion worldwide. Collaborative student and faculty exchanges between the flagship institutions in Egypt and the United States will provide the framework for future institutional relationships across the globe. Our hope is that these exchanges will eventually lead to joint degree programs based within the center that will prepare individuals to participate in careers within the public sector, think tanks, the media, or as social entrepreneurs.

Project Activities

* The Center for Global Citizenship intends to accomplish this task by offering students and lay persons an innovative interdisciplinary curriculum that explores the pressing issues of our time from multiple perspectives.

* Taking a holistic approach to education that incorporates the interconnections between the fields of religious studies, art and media, the social sciences, international relations, conflict resolution, and strategic planning will provide future world leaders with a new paradigm for understanding the complex nature of the challenges that encompass each of our lives.

- The conference will examine the effectiveness of various forms of societal dialogue from the perspectives of public diplomacy, person-to-person relationship building, think tanks, interfaith coalitions, cultural exchanges, and mutually beneficial national security programs.

Expected Outcomes in Year One of Implementation

The Center for Global Citizenship will launch its initiative with a conference on global discourse, which is tentatively scheduled for the spring of 2015.

Sustainability Plan

The conference will examine the effectiveness of various forms of societal dialogue from the perspectives of low politics, public diplomacy, person-to-person relationship building, think tanks, interfaith coalitions, cultural exchanges, and mutually beneficial national security programs. The conference aims to be interactive and with the assistance of live streaming, tweeting, and impromptu interviews, will investigate the extent to which the views of academicians are reflected in the opinions of people on the street. In an attempt to convey the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to subject matter, the conference will be followed by an art exhibition that explores the interconnection of art and politics from communities across the globe.

Implementing Partners

Interested parties are encouraged to contact the directors at jeremiah.bowden@cgu.edu, zelkelani@aucegypt.edu, or sdushame@gmail.com

Conclusion

There will be no peace until humankind comes to the realization that every life is intrinsically valuable and endowed with universally indelible rights. The only way for this change to come about is through the formation of global citizens whose identity is informed by a worldview that transcends the barriers that so commonly divide us.

