

**2010 Season for Nonviolence**  
SPEAK OUT, UNITE, END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Susan E. Wagner High School  
May 6, 2010

The World Peace Prayer Society works each year with the Temple of Understanding, the Association for Global New Thought, the United Religions Initiative and other NGOs to plan a youth observance of the Gandhi King Chavez SEASON FOR NONVIOLENCE at the United Nations. This year, due to UN renovations, the event was held at Susan E. Wagner High School on Staten Island on May 6, 2010.



600 students from three schools filled the auditorium. The youth moderator was the dynamic Eric Held, an alumnus of Susan E. Wagner's conflict resolution program. The Trenton Children's Chorus performed several songs and an original "May Peace Prevail on Earth" chant. Keynote speaker Ibrahim Sharif of New Jersey's Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Commission energized the students, while the youth presentation from the IDEA program (Interfaith Dialogue, Education and Action)

showed students how they can achieve fresh perspectives and growth.

Parents Dina Tush and Bob Silverstein, both having lost daughters to violence at college, gave deeply moving talks to a hushed auditorium. Their personal reflections brought many to tears but also offered hope and action steps for the young attendees. At one point Dina had volunteers hold up pictures of young women who had recently been killed by their boyfriends, in a heartbreaking line-up of sweet faces.



A high point of the afternoon was provided by George Anthony's conflict resolution class. The students presented spoken word, poetry, song and stories from experience about violence against women, many through the lens of appalling gender violence in their home countries. They dedicated their presentation to the memory of Jessica Tush and Emily Silverstein.





The finale was a universal call for peace with the World Peace Flag Ceremony, accompanied by the “May Peace Prevail on Earth” chant by the Trenton Children’s Chorus. Although the time was late, the students raised the flags with great enthusiasm while repeating all the country names, with excited cheers for countries of student origin. There was a special spirit of joy in the room as the entire United Nations came to Susan E. Wagner High School.



Following the Flag Ceremony, about 50 students filed outside for a very special dedication of Susan Wagner’s brand new Peace Pole. George Anthony introduced members of an interfaith group called Building Bridges, whose clergy from local Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, Jewish, and Catholic communities offered beautiful prayers for peace. Then the students sang, “We Are the World,” as everyone waved the flags of many nations and the Peace Pole was placed in the ground. It was a magnificent close to a deeply meaningful event – truly reflective of the spirit of nonviolence.



Deborah Moldow  
The World Peace Prayer Society

**May Peace Prevail on Earth**