

Rethinking the On-Going Refugee Crisis: Listening to Refugees as Key Stakeholders

By Jeremy Rinker, PhD Alumnus and Assistant Professor, Peace and Conflict Studies, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, jarinker@uncg.edu

Almost one year ago, I co-authored a position paper for the Peace and Justice Studies Association (PJSA) titled *International Migration and Refugee Crisis Intervention*, in which a colleague and I argued that developed countries “have a collective moral responsibility to enact a comprehensive and coordinated refugee and migration response” to the Syrian refugee crisis.¹ Unfortunately, over the last year the refugee “crisis” has subsided only slightly and refugee coordination has improved very little.² While I still argue that it is “not the time to close borders, but to open dialogue about fair and just international refugee migration



A pro-immigration rally in Cologne, Germany on January 6, 2016, following the aftermath of the New Year's Eve sexual assaults in Germany.

Photo: Wikipedia User Raimond Spekking.

and support services.”³ I believe that such dialogue cannot be effective unless refugees themselves are at the center of any such dialogue process. For too long, decision-makers concerned about immigrant and refugee issues have sidelined those that are directly affected by these issues. Unless those working on migration and refugee issues hear the convoluted and traumatic stories of refugees' experiences, they will continue to drive policy decisions that act as only

stop-gap measures in dealing with the complex social issues affecting global migration.

According to the UNHCR, the United Nations' lead Refugee Agency, there are an estimated 65.3 million forcibly displaced persons in the world today.⁴ As a result of primarily violent conflict, human rights abuses, and persecution, approximately 34,000 people worldwide were forced to leave their homes each day of 2016.⁵ Many of these were internally displaced persons (IDPs⁶), but once they leave their country of citizenship they become refugees. The plight of refugees is more difficult than most of us can imagine.

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Commentary

Reprinted: A Condolence Letter from S-CAR's Dean to the Family of Yama Quraishi

By Kevin Avruch, Dean, Henry Hart Rice Professor of Conflict Resolution and Professor of Anthropology, kavruch@gmu.edu

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

As Dean of the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University, I write to express my deep condolences on the death of our student and your fellow citizen, Mr. Ahmad Yama Nazir Quraishi. I join all the members of the School and the University to mourn his death. So many of our students come to us to study conflict resolution from parts of the world beset with destructive violence. So many return to contribute what they have learned. Such a person was Yama Quraishi.

I asked teachers and student colleagues of Nazir Yama's to reflect on his life, as they knew him. I am sending along some of these reflections. I hope you will pass them on to his family and friends.

From three of his teachers:

Yama was a student in my Negotiations class. A brilliant young man, serious, engaged, friendly, curious, Yama was a true believer in empathy and all-inclusive dialogue in a way of solving even the most long and violent conflicts, as he saw in his country. In his generous sincere class reports, Yama introduced us to an Afghanistan different than the one torn by war that we usually see on the news, but of rich, diverse cultures, with warm, intelligent and passionate people, eager and committed to find peace for their troubled society, as he was. In the Negotiations class exercises and discussions, Yama navigated with patience, respectful, gentle yet determined, leading to acceptable by all parties' solutions, like those he believed in. It was a pleasure having Yama in class, and even more, he inspired us all, myself and the other students, to have faith and always strive for a more creative, humane, powerful solution.

I had the pleasure of getting to know Yama Quraishi in my class in the Spring 2016 semester. He was already an established professional, enhancing his portfolio in his study of conflict analysis and resolution. In profound and unique ways, he understood "how the world works," and clearly communicated his knowledge and instincts in his papers and presentations. He was proud of his culture, the Afghan society and Pashtun people, and passionately and effectively explained his cultural identity to his colleagues and me. In relating his personal history, it became apparent how precious educational opportunities were to his family, intensified by a time of conflict-related prohibition of a right to an education- he gave me a renewed respect for this and other important



Yama Quraishi.
Photo: Afghanistan Embassy, US.

cultural values seen through the lens of his personal history and upbringing in Kandahar. Ahmad lived a balanced life; first, he was a dedicated and successful student. Besides that, he was among my most personable students, and I had several opportunities to chat with him about his life outside of school. He had intense responsibilities at the Embassy of Afghanistan, often rushing straight from work to school, with a sincere concern for the needs and priorities of the expatriates that he served. In addition, his love and support of his family was obvious to me through our conversations. He

aligned his time and energies to appropriately balance the three most important areas of his life, in my view. He was equally passionate about and dedicated to his culture, his family, and educational pursuits.

Yama was a gentle soul, with many accomplishments and a heartfelt hope for his country. He was unfailingly generous and persevered across language and work challenges in class and felt what he was learning here was helping him make a difference as a civil servant. This is a real loss for our community, his family, and his colleagues.

I also want to share the comments of a Mason undergraduate student, on learning of Yama's death and a bit about his extraordinary life and service. She never knew him personally, but here is what she wrote me:

I would appreciate it if you would extend my condolences to the family on the loss of their relative, who was a brave and courageous individual, giving of himself for the betterment of the Afghan people and humanity. Yama Quraishi will serve as an inspiration to me in pursuing my degree and achieving my future and lifelong goals. I was saddened by his loss, but will remember that he accomplished much.

It was an honor and privilege to have Yama Quraishi among us for a time—such a short time, unfortunately. Nevertheless, he made a palpable impact here, and I know he made an even greater one through his selfless service to the people of Afghanistan.

Sincerely,
Kevin Avruch, Dean ■

Interview with Dr. Fariba Parsa, Visiting Scholar, Founder and President of WELL

By Kwaw de Graft-Johnson, Newsletter Editor and PhD Candidate, kdegraft@masonlive.gmu.edu

This is a short interview conducted with Dr. Fariba Parsa, Founder and President of WELL - Women's E-Learning in Leadership. The organization originated at George Mason University and is on the way to becoming a non-profit organization (501(c)(3)).

What is the history behind the creation of WELL?

To answer your question, I will share a little bit of my history. I was born and raised in Iran where I witnessed the Islamic revolution, saw many buildings burn, gun shots, blood, and tear gas. In 1981, the war with Iraq began and at school we learned about different types of guns in class, and subsequently each of us was given a gun. I was only 15 years old when I became politically active against the Islamic regime in Iran. I initiated a school "newsweek" with some of my friends where we wrote critical short articles about the war with Iraq, the American hostages situation, corruption, and the lack of freedom. My parents were worried that at any time I could be arrested, imprisoned, or killed and I left Iran when I was 17 years old. Just a few weeks after, the Revolutionary Guard came to my parents' house to arrest me.

I moved to India, Germany, and later to Denmark, where I became a citizen. While I was getting used to living in my new home, I was always thinking about how I could still help Iran to become a developed and free democratic country. I studied political science at Copenhagen University and I was active in a range of organizations. Later I became a speaker and specialist on political and women's issues in Iran. My 27 years in Denmark were spent focusing on studying, learning, and being an active citizen. I finished my Master's Degree in Political Science and I received my Ph.D. in Social Science.

I moved to the U.S. in 2010 on a fellowship at Harvard University. Living in the U.S. and meeting hundreds of scholars from all over the world influenced my thinking and feelings. My friends were from all over the world with different cultures and religions. I met several women leaders who said we needed more women leaders and I aimed to use my time and energy to develop myself to become a leader. Later, I understood leadership was not about me, and how much I could advance myself. Rather, leadership was about other people and how much I could advance their life. I thought if we used new technology to educate thousands of women in leadership skills, we could make changes toward peace and prosperity.

In August 2014, I got a 9-month term job as an assis-



WELL kiosk at Mason, Fairfax campus.
Photo: Fariba Parsa.

tant research professor at the Women and Gender Studies department at George Mason University. I taught a course titled, "Women, Democracy, and Islam" and at the same time I applied for grants for developing an online leadership program for women. The process of forming WELL began in 2014. I contacted faculty members at Mason, students, and other women from non-profit organization in Washington D.C, and I also I started to focus on grants. Director Angie Hattery is the individual who believed in me

and encouraged me to continue be affiliated to Women and Gender Studies and with her help, the concept behind WELL became a reality.

What is the goal or mission of WELL and how do you envision or plan to accomplish them?

The WELL project strives to mobilize and organize female students through student unions at Mason and other universities. The students who become part of the organization can organize educational events and network with local women organizations and universities worldwide for advancing equity for women.

WELL's e-mentoring program initiative will also look to mobilize volunteers in civil society to be mentors to our students. We will work with a range of technical resources to development a web-based mentorship including new and easy access to the platform via smart phones, tablets, and computers. A mentor can also support a student in their efforts to lead an organization or to start their own business.

E-mentoring under WELL will be a strategic tool that will accelerate leadership development and readiness, as well as create a global network of female students worldwide for exchanging ideas. We hope to create a world where women and men have equal influence and leadership opportunities in the civic, economic, and political spheres.

What have been some of WELL's accomplishments to date?

WELL has been registered as a corporation in Virginia and in the early part of this year we will be an official non-profit organization.

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initiative

From the Streets of Iran to Washington D.C.: Fighting for Human Rights for All

By Soolmaz Abooali, PhD Candidate, sabooali@masonlive.gmu.edu

Shortly after the Islamic Revolution in Iran in the late 1970s, my mother marched in the streets of Iran to fight for women's basic right to freedom and expression. The incoming government had brought with it its own fundamentalist version of Islam and was brutally enforcing its laws on the people of Iran - a nation previously known as the strongest and most modernized country in the Middle East. Women were soon treated as second class citizens, being told what to wear, how to live, how to act, and what to think. Over 30 years later, my mother was once again marching for women's rights, this time in the streets of Washington, D.C. and alongside her daughter to foster a more perfect union, to promote justice, and ensure domestic tranquility in the United States of America.

On Saturday, January 21, we joined forces with hundreds of thousands of concerned citizens to walk in solidarity for human rights, equality and inclusion. As an athlete ambassador for Shirzanan, a non-profit media and advocacy organization that increases access to sport for Muslim female athletes around the globe, I was proud to join forces with nexus organizations, namely Athlete Ally, who fight discrimination of LGBTQ athletes in sport and through the engagement of athletes. Donning my Shirzanan t-shirt and helping to hold a banner reading "Equality is a Team Sport," my mother and I marched with current and former Olympic and professional athletes - Mary Harvey, Joanna Lohman, Lori Lindsey, and Greg Louganis - to name a few.



Women's March on Washington D.C.

Photo: Flickr user Mobilus In Mobil.

meant. The recognition that we are all in this melting pot that is the United States was front and center as more than half a million people convened toward the National Mall in the name of one cause: human rights.

A member of our coalition shared with us a news report that President Trump and his family were bowling in the White House while a significantly sized protest was taking place. I asked my mother if she believed our efforts would make a difference. She stated, "I am happy that women have been moved enough to pour into the streets in this way. It is a testament to how they can come together and make their power known. But without more of these events and policy-driven pushback, this march will have little effect." Perhaps she was right: only two days after the Women's March, and one day after the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, President Trump reinstated a federal ban on U.S. funding for international health organizations that counsel women on family planning options that include abortion. Approximately \$600 million annually is spent on international assistance for family planning and reproductive health programs, making it possible for 27 million women and couples to access contraceptive services and supplies. None of this money is reported to be spent on performing abortions.

Even though the above decision was made based on party lines, we, the people, must continue to march and partner with nexus organizations and local and state representatives to protect human rights, women's rights, American values, and our policy of inclusion to ensure that America remains a beacon of light and hope. ■

The march represented the very essence of a non-violent protest, with not a single arrest or incident of violence taking place. The atmosphere throughout the day was one of positivity, collaboration, kindness, and hope. From strangers sharing their snacks to making room for the elderly or pregnant women, despite the fact that we were packed tightly together like sardines, to the clever signs and chants, we were able to witness what unity

Upcoming S-CAR Community Events

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

Xenophobia & Islamophobia in the Modern Era
6:00pm - 7:30pm

Saturday, February 11, 2017

Spring 2017 Career Intensive Workshop
10:00am - 1:30pm

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

SCHAR / S-CAR Career Fair
2:00pm-5:00pm

Thursday, February 16, 2017

Dialogue and Difference Series
7:30pm - 9:30pm

For more, visit scar.gmu.edu/events-roster

Opinion: Another Chance to Revive the Central Asian Union

By Umed Partov, PhD Student, upartov@masonlive.gmu.edu

The death of Islam Karimov in September 2016 from a stroke came as a shock not only to the people of Uzbekistan but to the entire Central Asian region. The health of Karimov, who passed away at the age of 78, was a closely guarded secret and was never discussed by government officials. Without openly grooming a successor or endorsing anyone to take his place during his last days, his death also brought uncertainty, which raised the possibility of political instability and security deterioration in the country.

The first signs of such a controversy occurred when Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, sent a letter of condolence to Nigmatilla Yuldashev, the speaker of the house who was then acting as the President of Uzbekistan. Shortly after this, Uzbekistan's Parliament announced that Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the Prime Minister, would be the new acting President, prompting some rumblings of a possible power struggle. Fortunately, the political leadership vacuum seems to have been settled for now with Mirziyoyev being proclaimed as the president and successor to Karimov in elections held in December 2016.

Russian as well as local media outlets have been praising former President Islam Karimov's achievements in the 25 years of his presidency, particularly his actions to safeguard Uzbekistan from internal tribal clashes after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, the effects of identity-based politics of the Soviet Union still has its negative implications on Central Asian governments' relationships, as well as on their foreign policies towards neighboring and regional countries. It was extremely challenging for the Soviet Union to draw borderlines and impose social categorization, as they did not know how to differentiate between the various groups of people residing in those areas: whether by language, religion, or ethnicity. By requiring groups to provide ethno-geographic and historic evidence to prove the existence of their ethnic group that deserved its own republic, the Soviet Regime

infused antagonistic relations and rivalry among newly formed republics and ethnic groups.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Central Asian countries have received minimal support from Russia and have not prospered economically. After the breakdown of the Soviet regime, the idea of establishing an exclusive bloc for Central Asian countries

was explored by the regional governments as a means to preserve their sovereignty.

For many years, the Central Asian countries strived to form a Central Asian Union, but this idea never came to fruition. Today, all Central Asia countries need economic development to provide employment to the citizens and preclude labor migration to Russia, where workers are mistreated, discriminated against, and, when necessary, used as a political leverage. The Central Asian governments must work with the new president to bring the idea of a Central Asian Union to life. Central Asian countries have a lot of commonalities that can unify them and heal the wounds of history that were caused by outsiders. This union will restore confidence in the people of Central Asia and enable these countries to resolve border issues, water problems, reach reconciliation, develop industries, reinforce movement of people and goods, that will benefit all and counter domestic as well as transnational threats.

Central Asia is also experiencing issues of extremism. Russian as well as local media have been praising former President Islam Karimov's ability to dismantle religious extremism, particularly in Ferghana Valley. This region is perceived to be a fertile breeding ground for religious extremism due to numerous socio-political as well as geographic factors. The fear of a rise in religious radicalization as well as international terrorism—given Afghanistan's proximity to Uzbekistan—might prompt the country and other regional governments to establish even closer ties with Moscow.

Some regional experts are skeptical about any substantial changes in Uzbekistan's domestic politics and in its affairs with neighboring countries. Nonetheless, history is full of examples where successors have chosen political directions different from their predecessors. In Turkmenistan, for example, after the death of Turkmenbashi in 2009, Gurbانبuli Berdimuhamedov, the president of Turkmenistan, introduced reforms that would be considered relatively liberal. The time is ripe for such a regional integration because 25 years of "strategic" partnerships within Russia-led regional institutions have not been effective, and the people have been waiting for too long to see socio-economic improvements in their lifetime. ■

Recent S-CAR Media Appearances

Why Washington is Wrong to Inpose Visa Suspensions on Iraqis

Yerevan Saeed, PhD Student
The Hill 01/29/17

Presidents must come together on East Asia

Dennis Sandole, Faculty
Financial Times 01/24/17

Through the Looking Glass: Donald Trump, Julian Assange, and the Tweedle Dum Liberals

Richard Rubenstein, Faculty
Richard Rubenstein's Blog 01/06/17

Conflict analysts from S-CAR have appeared on 30 occasions since the last newsletter. These three represent a sample of those publications. For a complete list, visit:



Umed Partov.
Photo: Umed Partov.

OPINION
PRESS

Amir S. Abu-El-Hawa, Undergraduate Student

By Kwaw G. de Graft-Johnson, PhD Candidate and Newsletter Editor, kdegraft@masonlive.gmu.edu

Amir S. Abu-El-Hawa, an undergraduate student at Mason, recently returned to the U.S. after taking part in an international security study in Switzerland. He said, "This opportunity gave me access to organizations such as the United Nations in Geneva, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization headquarters in Brussels, The International Criminal Court at the Hague, and the Council of Europe in France." At these organizations, Amir interacted with policy makers and experts in the fields of nonproliferation, and human rights laws among others. According to him, this experience was a "phenomenal opportunity" that changed his perceptions on how these organizations operate within their respective regions and the world at large.

Amir, who was born and raised in Virginia, but whose family immigrated from East Jerusalem, came to study conflict resolution at Mason because he wanted to "do his part." Growing up with family in East Jerusalem, as well as, my parents having grown up there, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has always been apart of my life, so it felt natural for me to enroll at S-CAR. The hope is to contribute, as small as it may be, in ending the pain and suffering



Amir S. Abu-El-Hawa.
Photo: Amir S. Abu-El-Hawa.

Palestinians and Israelis alike endure, while focusing on nonviolence."

On November 10, 2016, Amir helped to organize a symposium that focused on nonviolence and its role in conflict in the 21st century. The event was hosted by S-CAR and was supported by The Drum Major Institute and Communities Without Boundaries International, with Martin Luther King III as the keynote speaker. He said, "Implementing nonviolence measures as a means of resolving conflicts around the globe is vital if peace is truly sought. Violence only creates new wounds, opens old and perpetuates conflict I am a firm believer that we shape the world in our image. And as it stands today, we, as a

human race, are faced with issues and conflicts that will impact our world for generations to come. I am very hopeful that not only will we overcome these issues but we will genuinely make strides in leaving a better world for those who follow. From the professors I have had the honor to learn from here at S-CAR thus far, to my fellow students and those already in the field, there is no shortage of dedication, will, and drive to take on these issues and conflicts. That being said, I am extremely hopeful of what lies ahead not just for myself but all of us."

After completing his degree, Amir plans on getting involved with organizations that focus on nonviolence and peace building and to also pursue his Masters at S-CAR. ■

Liz London, MS Student

By Ryan Mu Chiao Chiu, MS Student, mchiu@masonlive.gmu.edu

In her junior year in college, Liz London had a semester abroad in Jerusalem. While she was there, conflict resolution and dialogue work took hold of her as she heard stories and met people working on the ground. Once she got back to the U.S., Liz found work with Face to Face: Faith to Faith, an international program in conflict resolution for teens, bringing together youth from all over the world to do intensive workshops on a range of topics including faith, identity, and race among others. Liz's work during this period gave her a lasting impression that this was an area that she could invest in the future.

When she lived in Chicago, Liz worked with young people, mostly high school students. It was evident during her time there that many youth are not given adequate resources and opportunities to resolve conflict



Elizabeth London.
Photo: Elizabeth London.

constructively. Along with her passion for youth programming, Liz wanted to return to conflict resolution and fuse those interests together, so she applied to S-CAR.

Now, Liz will graduate in May and is grateful to S-CAR for the opportunity to learn about the intersections of conflict resolution and youth work, which has become incredibly relevant in her work. Liz currently serves as the Restorative Justice Program Manager at Washington Metropolitan High School in D.C., as part of Access Youth, a local non-profit organization. In this role, Liz mediates conflict between students, allowing youths to have their voices heard and to see their choices and roles in moving toward accomplishing their goals.

The mediation leaves it up to the students to decide how they want to move forward from the conflict and how they can avoid the same situation in the future. Liz is happy in her current position and appreciative of the impact S-CAR has had on her learning and practice of conflict resolution, now a part of her work every day. ■

S-CAR SPOTLIGHT

Rethinking the On-Going Refugee Crisis: Listening to Refugees as Key Stakeholders

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Sleeping outdoors, risking life and limb to be smuggled across borders, and being constantly vulnerable to crime and human trafficking, refugees not only flee dangerous situations, but live through them as they attempt to start a new life in often distant lands. Refugees are among the most vulnerable populations in any country, and with anti-immigrant sentiment on the rise around the world, 2017 does not bode well for the world's refugees.

While the recent Syrian refugee crisis, the largest refugee crisis the world has seen since World War II, has exposed critical cracks in the coordinated intervention of many Western developed economies, many responses to this human tragedy continue to discount the needs of refugees themselves. Most refugees would rather never leave their home countries, but circumstances in their homes have forced them to make the weighty decision to risk undocumented travels and extreme hardships to pursue the distant hope of peace and security. Still, internal needs of states for security often clashes with refugees need for safety. The result of this clash is often that refugee safety falls victim to states' desire for controlled borders and human security. So how might developed countries most effectively and inexpensively deal with this ongoing issue of refugees? I believe the answer involves listening to refugees' experiences instead of the fears and rhetoric of xenophobic citizens or politicians' code-switching arguments about national security.⁷

While the gaps in providing international refugees safe passage and support as they flee both environmental and man-made catastrophe worldwide represent a major challenge for state governments in more 'developed' countries, they also represent an opportunity to develop empathy and understanding for the complexities of the refugee experience.⁸ The fact is that refugees are more a boon than a draw on the economies to which they flee. In fact, a recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) report argued that both "the inflow of asylum seekers is likely to have an immediate expansionary effect on the economy" and "displacement effects on native workers—a major political concern—are likely to be short-lived and small."⁹

Developed countries not only have a collective moral responsibility to enact a comprehensive and coordinated refugee and migration response, but also a pragmatic humanitarian responsibility to work to lessen the suffering that results from the violence, instability, and trauma involuntarily experienced by international refugee populations worldwide. The safety and citizenship needs of a growing international refugee population must be systematically addressed by joint-collaborative action of state and non-state actors working off a set of international best practices for supporting, protecting, and resettling refugee communities. This cannot be done without direct connection to the refugees themselves. Each refugee has a unique story that develops a mosaic understanding of regional political histories of power.



Jeremy Rinker.
Photo: Jeremy Rinker.

Some 86 percent of the world's refugees reside in developing countries and over half (51 percent) are under the age of 18—the highest percentage in a decade. The social, political, and economic ramifications of these massive flows of young and largely able-bodied refugees requires well-reasoned and well-coordinated response, and response that meets the needs of refugees can and should be response that meets the needs of host country nationals. These young workers can and should be used in the aging populations of Europe and America. This could be a win-win with refugees being given a start to build a new life, and the economies they immigrate to benefiting from their rich skills and experience. Such a refugee-centered rethinking of the refugee crisis, might just turn

it into the greatest human development success of our young century.

This article is not for citation without the author's permission. The citations for this article are available online at: scar.gmu.edu/newsletter-article/rethinking-going-refugee-crisis-listening-refugees-key-stakeholders ■

Messages from Classmates Remembering Nazir Yama Quraishi

Sani Zanicovic: Nazir was a true inspiration. His work was tremendous, and often times we spoke about his journey as a medical doctor in Afghanistan working as a diplomat in the U.S. He shared his experiences with his classmates, in a humble and encouraging manner, providing insight on the current situation in Afghanistan. Nazir was a hardworking, honest person, that showed me the true meaning of what it's like to do the type of work S-CAR has shaped us to do. As CAR practitioners, we are faced with tough choices, and one of the hardest is risking your life, every day, to be the little bit of good that you want to see in the world. Nazir has truly shown me what that means, and his work has made a difference. I am honored to have called him a colleague.

Christopher Thaggard: Sitting in class with Nazir and hearing his stories inspired me to want to do more. To get out of my comfort zone and to explore the world to help bring about a positive change in this world. Nazir wasn't just a talker, he was a doer, and that's what I admired most about him.

Interview With Dr. Fariba Parsa, President and Founder of WELL

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As an organization, we have established a community of women who are interested in women's leadership.

We have organized several events, such as panel discussions, workshops, lectures, and focus groups. We are becoming more visible on social media, like Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. We also have a website, which has information on everyone involved with WELL and videos highlighting our activities.

Who are some of the individuals involved in the formation of the organization and how did you come together to create this organization?

I began to identify some women leaders and faculties and asked if they would like to be an advisor for the women's leadership project. Many jumped at the idea. As time passed, more women leaders, professionals and students have become involved. Among them are Dr. Beth Cabrera, Dr. Sandy Cheldelin, and Dr. Angie Hattery—all from Mason. I am so fortunate to have met several students who have also helped me with this project, including two film students who made a documentary about WELL. Another student, who later became an intern, also made a logo for the organization and developed the website. Other students made several flyers for us. One staff member from the Office of Inclusion and Diversity also helped with writing reports, and organizing events. Today we have a team of five students who work with WELL and they help with , non-profit organization legal work and fundraising.

Do you have any concluding remarks?

This organization was born in five different countries and there are many ways that individuals can contribute to the WELL project.

Whether you are a student or a professor, you can be involved through student unions or just like our Facebook or visit our website to be a friend of WELL and you will be updated with all our projects. We also welcome donations. For more information about WELL, contact me at: fparsa@gmu.edu or visit the website at: <https://wellforpeace.org/about/> ■

Announcement: Memorial Service for Johannes "Jannie" Botes



Johannes Melchior Botes, 64, of Annandale, VA, passed away on January 22nd, 2017. He is survived by his wife, Susan; children Hannah and Noah; siblings, in-laws, friends, and colleagues.

Visitation will be held at St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, 8617 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, VA 22003 on February 4th, 2017 at 3:00 PM until the start of the service at 4:00 PM. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the ALS Association in Johannes' name.

Johannes Botes (1952 - 2017).

More information is available at: <http://www.fairfaxmemorialfuneralhome.com/obituary/Johannes-Melchior-Botes/Annandale-VA/1695895>



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