

**Human Rights Watch Student Task Force
Leaders Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2012**

IN ATTENDANCE

Student leaders by school:

- **Academy of the Canyons:** Jeff Beebe
- **Canyon:** Shane Jones, Sindy Alcaron
- **Carson:** Jessica Arzola, Carlo David, Jackie Morales, Heidy Pinto, Klarissa Tarman, Jessica Vera, Frances Bundalin, Samantha Bulatao, Daianne Malinis
- **Crossroads:** Sani Scott, Samantha Schoenberger
- **Golden Valley:** Lorenzo Medina
- **New Roads:** Jeanette Vasquez, Sandra Martinez, Simon Jaglom
- **Santa Monica HS:** Linda Gordon, Rachel Kiekhofer, Cami Speyer
- **Sierra Canyon:** Ameek Shokar
- **Valencia:** Audrey Abergel, Briunia Stock, Ellah Baklash
- **Wildwood:** Rebecca Kahane, Isabel Lasker, Nick Selden, Rachel Sheftel, Emma McLoughlin

STF Teachers: Merri Weir (Carson), Tassie Hadlock-Piltz (Wildwood), Sean Brookes (New Roads)

STF Team: Pam Bruns, Gabe Barreras, Nancy Medina, Suzanne Johnson, Mason Butts

I-ACT: Gabriel Stauring & Katie-Jay Scott

Guests: Shannon Morrison, Lucia Morales (Carson mother)

ACTION ITEMS:

STF Presidents: Gabe/STF Team will organize a Presidents' Call within the next two weeks.

STF Team: Work with schools to determine plans for supporting the R2E and scheduling potential events/deadlines.

- (e.g.) Ask GS and KTJ to speak, library presentations, Lost Boy speaker, creating materials for library (ESL emphasis), etc.

All Leaders: Screen DVD features at chapter meetings to inform members about progress on R2E in Camp Djabal.

Each STF Chapter: Draft email questions or introductions to Rahma in Camp Djabal

All STFers: Check Weekly Updates every week and use links to supplementary information for our work.

MINUTES:

4:00-- STF leaders mingle and meet

4:15-- Rebecca and Nick, STF Wildwood Co-Presidents, opened up the meeting

- Everybody in the room introduced themselves (name, grade, school, position)

4:20-- Audrey Abergel, Valencia Co-President, recapped STF's accomplishments from the fall semester

- Four STF schools (SCV schools, Wildwood, Sierra Canyon and Palisades HS) screened The First Grader to raise awareness of the right to education and to raise funding.
- STF created materials and selected ebooks and hard cover books to send to Camp Djabal which were sent off in November with Gabriel Stauring,
- All STF schools participated in raising the money to fund both the R2E Mobile Libraries in Camp Djabal and this spring for Camp Goz Amer.

- Palisades Charter HS was the single biggest fundraiser with their Change for Change campaign = \$1,790.72. The total raised from all schools was \$6,594.28.
- Made a surprise announcement about the SCV gift-wrapping fundraiser...the \$900 check raised by SCV schools brought the total raised by STF to \$7,494.28. Both R2E mobile libraries are now funded, and all future funding will secure much needed supplementary materials.

4:23-- Pam talked about our goals/options for the spring semester

- Progression of the project--we accomplished a lot very quickly! First mobile library launched in November.
- We still have much to do to prepare second library and develop an understanding of the right to education at home and globally
- Everyone looked over the agenda together with different goals for the spring
- Pam mentioned the conference call with Gabriel Stauring in Chad (want to try to get more people on the next call in March)
 - Tassie commented on how unique an experience it was
 - Audrey enjoyed, "Realizing what we are doing is real...e.g. presenting the story book from Canyon High School."
 - Emma: "Provided hope..."
 - Merri talked about how crazy and amazing it is we can talk with somebody so far away in a remote area!
- Continued to go through the different options on the list:
 - Traveling R2E mobile library simulations (with donkey?)
 - Mobile library materials development, ongoing funding, phase II
 - Invite GS and KTJ to speak about R2E campaign
 - Create a "Day of the Donkey": celebrate all STF school and Camp Djabal (Adam in Camp Djabal requested a Day for the Donkey)
 - March: launch second mobile library in Camp Goz Amer, Chad
 - STF conference call with GS in Chad
 - Invite speaker: Lost Boys of Sudan (Alepho-\$300 honorarium)
 - Classroom screenings of *The First Grader* now available. DVD available for loan.
 - Public library presentations to local communities
 - Build our relationships with Adam, Rahma, and other refugee students
 - Demand the right to quality education at home and around the world (look at local issues!)

4:33-- Gabe discussed communication

- "Who has or hasn't been getting weekly updates?" (majority said they have been)
 - Make sure to read the updates and click links!
- "Who has been to www.HRWSTF.org?" (many said they have)
- Want to organize "Presidents conference calls"
 - Opportunity to share ideas with one another
 - Possible call in the next couple weeks

- Asked for questions
 - Q: "How can someone obtain the title of president?" -Simon, New Roads student
A: Different leadership models at each school...something to look into at New Roads.
 - Q: "If Samo wants to have an event with other schools, what would be the best way to coordinate this? email?" -Linda
A: "Talk to intern (Suzanne)!"
 - Q: "Is there an Excel spreadsheet with everybody's emails?"
A: STF Team maintains a list internally...can be share through interns
- Pam encouraged collaboration between different schools

4:40-- Pam introduced Gabriel Stauring, who talked extensively about his trip while showing a slideshow

- 11th trip...hasn't gotten any easier (probably more difficult and impactful)
- Emotional attachment to refugees
- What STF has done in 4 months is amazing!--rare to see an idea implemented this quickly
- Issues with flying/airports
- Talked about the poor learning environment in the classrooms, almost no materials or books
- Donkeys are highly esteemed (life savers)--"Day of the Donkey" suggested by Adam, the official librarian for R2E in Camp Djabal
- Refugees have a great love for soccer
- 7-8 hours working in the camp each day--meetings with many different groups of residents/leaders from camp
- 18,000 people reside in Camp Djabal
- Population believes that America is their source of help
- Adam moved to Djabal...worked on communication training with him
- STF should continue to build a relationship with Adam and Rahma...we have the technology to do so! (we can send email messages, photos, possibly videos)
- Only hope for Rahma=education (he really wants to leave the camp if he can't secure an education)(Pam and Tassie are working providing course work Rahma needs)
- KTJ: The library is now at the 4th school (talked about method for rotating the library)
 - 6 schools, 3 campuses--Rahma & Adam spend 1 week at each school
- Everyone loves the e-readers and talking dictionaries
- Enjoy the simple materials (e.g., story book, 10 best soccer players)
- Goal: Make HRE materials engaging @ basic level (combine with English!)
- Adam starting to teach other teachers (need new materials teacher training materials for this)
- Ideal=for the future create permanent libraries in the camp
- i-Act made DVDs for all the schools of highlights of R2E launch in November and interviews with Rahma and Adam
- Passed around "Meet Adam and Rahma" printed handout

GS asked for questions

- Q: "How many students are in the camp?"
A: 7,000 students in 6 schools (Djabal)
- Q: "Are the teachers fluent in English?"
A: Not all. Some are semi-fluent. Adam is the strongest, and Rahma is pretty strong too
- Q: "Newspapers say the crisis in Darfur is getting better...is this true?"
A: Not really...it depends on what you call "better." 90% of the villages in Darfur were already destroyed, so there is less killing now...but attacking still occurs and most people are displaced
- Q: "Does having this technology make Adam a target?"
A: No indications of this...feel safest in the camp. People want their voice to be heard outside the camp, so they wouldn't want something to happen to the technology
- Q: "Would it make sense to make calls to the White House?" (Merri talked about doing this at her school)
A: Yes...very important to voice concerns! There is a lot of new technology that facilitates this:
 - Twitter: @statedept #askstate --use to have questions answered
 - Facebook: "Ask State"
- Q: "Would it be better to focus more on digital content for educational materials we send?"
A: A little of both...real books are still very important

Pam came back up...not enough time for Nancy lead discussion of:

- What are we going to do? How will we organize this?
- Back to the basics...what are human rights? What is the Right to Education?

5:35-- Pam closed the meeting

- People invited to stay and continue asking Gabriel Stauring and KTJ Scott question

Minutes submitted by: STF Intern Suzanne Johnson