

UPDATES June 2011

Kenya Last year at this time UNANIMA International had its workshop for English-speaking youth from all over the world. This year we are sending three youth who were involved in that workshop: Jessica Chen, program coordinator for UNANIMA, Kate Cantrell (Australia) and Tyler Donohue (USA) to Kenya to meet with approximately twenty Kenyan youth. Their task is to facilitate the Kenyan youths designing a pilot project aiming to stop or reduce the demand for human trafficking. Once the three return, they will work with coalition coordinator, Catherine, to raise money for the implementation of their plan. We thank Mary O'Malley, MMM, and Radek Malinowski who works with her in Kenya for collaborating with us to make this possible.



From CSD-19 The 19th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development was scheduled to end on 13 May. However, because the governments were not able to agree on many points, this year's Commission ended without any agreed policy statements related to sustainable development. One of the stickiest points was the insistence by the developed countries on the promotion of a "green economy" while many of the countries from the global south believe this is a ploy to turn everything into a commodity and allow the global north once again to use its more advanced technology and superior economic power to exploit their natural resources. 2 June at the United Nations will see a thematic debate on this issue. For those who would like to view the discussions, on or after 2 June, please click [here](#).

UNANIMA representatives talk Among the UNANIMA International delegates to the commission were JoAnn Showalter, SP, and Michele Morek, OSU, and Sally Duffy, SNJMA. Here are a few of their comments. (For their full statements please click [here](#).)

Sally reported that for her the most frightening presentation that she heard regarding the situation of sustainability was by Jeffrey Sachs, Professor at Columbia, during the dialog of civil society with the government. You can access it by clicking [here](#)

From JoAnn: At CSD-19..(t) here were many occasions where negotiations would go for hours and progress made on 2 or 3 paragraphs. The main protagonists seemed to be G77 plus China and the US. (In one of the journals reporting the events of the day, a commentator said) ... it was possible that negotiators and governments would rather trade concessions at Rio + 20 (This is the meeting that will be held next June)... We were able to insert comments about water (at the women's caucus) because of their small group. ...

From the beginning of a longer report by Michele who ended her 4-month internship with us with this Commission meeting:

It has been a fascinating experience to see a “policy year” of a United Nations commission. Delegates were much more focused on a final “product” and the NGOs and other Major Groups worked furiously at their last chance to influence what comes out of this session. It was interesting to see how each of the different commissions organizes themselves; the CSD seemed better organized and more “user friendly” than the others, though part of that may be because I knew better what to expect. It was great to watch the Major Groups working together, and I enjoyed the interaction at the morning briefings. I saw more of the behind-the-scenes negotiating by NGOs for time to speak to the delegates, and had my first real contact with missions...

Michele’s full report can be read by clicking [here](#).

High School participants During the last two weeks in May, UNANIMA International was privileged to host two seniors from Holy Child High School in Rye, New York. These are a view of their impressions at the end of the first week of their time with UNANIMA:



Marisol Delgado:

For my Senior Independent project, I was gladly welcomed to work for the NGO UNANIMA ... With UNANIMA I have been lucky to attend different conferences at the United Nations headquarters based on the importance of water, the rights of indigenous peoples and the horrifying issue of hydraulic fracturing, also known as “fracking”. Throughout these conferences, I have been opened to both global and national problems that I was previously unaware of...(I)t made

me realize how the media excludes important topics that can threaten humanity and the quality of life. Also, knowing that these problems do exist furthers my want to major in International Relations during my college career....

Becky Mulqueen:

For my Senior Independent Project I knew that I wanted to work with an NGO or an organization related to the United Nations that would hopefully link to my interest in Public Health. UNANIMA was beyond anything I could have hoped for because it has a close relationship with the UN and I was able to attend the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Before the forum, I was not even sure who indigenous people were, let alone the challenges that over 370 million of them face daily. ... My internship with UNANIMA has showed me how an NGO operates and the passion that UNANIMA has for making a difference is inspiring to me...

The complete text of their comments can be found by clicking [here](#).

Upcoming events:

2 June - Thematic Debate on the Green Economy: A Pathway to Sustainable Development- Conference Room 4, New York.

8-10 June – Unite for Universal Access. UN High Level meeting on HIV/AIDS, UN New York.

20-22 June – Catherine presents at the Expert Group meeting on the eradication of poverty, Geneva, Switzerland.

23-24 June – Catherine invited as observer to Expert Group meeting on full employment and decent work for all, Geneva.

The full text of the following article can be found by clicking [here](#).

The Sisters of the Assumption

On 8 September 1853, the Church of Canada welcomed the new religious congregation of The Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The congregation was founded in Quebec in the parish of St. Gregory the Great in the diocese of Three Rivers. Several factors came together to bring about the foundation:

- The parishioners had a strong interest in education.
- The pastor, Jean Harper, wanted teaching sisters to educate the young women there and
- he was unable to recruit any of the existing congregations.
- Four young women of the area who were already qualified to teach wanted to become religious.

So it was that Léocadie Bourgeois, Mathilde Leduc, Hedwidge Buisson et Julie Héon came to found a new religious congregation “woven of the same cloth as the country.”

Charism

The charism of charity and faith in Providence given to us by our founder has been passed on to the members, from generation to generation:

With Mary Our Lady of the Assumption, we stake everything on God to reveal the Father's love through education.

Guided by this, the sisters have moved forward for 157 years and have responded to the human and ecclesial community in teaching, education in the faith, promotion of the arts, with a special attention to youth, to women and to those who are the poorest in society.

Where we are

The Sisters are spread throughout the world and are a part of many different communities.



Forum in Quebec (Chapter)
In Canada, in the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and Quebec



Young Japanese students in the provinces of Aomori and Saitama

Talitha, the girls who live in the streets in Brazil, in the states of Maranhao, Pernambuco and Alagoas



SASV have also worked in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, New Caledonia, Cambodia, and Haiti.

Members of UNANIMA International

The Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin have been members of UNANIMA International since March 2009. Their representative is Sister Mariette Milot, (Quebec), assisted by Sister Claudette Darisse (USA).

Environment

Because of its "YES TO THE BLUE PLANET" at the chapter of 2000, the SASV put their efforts into environmental action, especially during the construction of a pavilion for their older sisters. With architects, engineers and contractors, they worked to realize the "three Rs" of reuse, recycle and reduce. They received the Quebec "Visionary" prize for having boldly made a commitment to the environment.

Because of this award, the Congregation was recognized in various newspapers across Canada:

"In what is a world first, the religious congregation of Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, Nicolet, Quebec, sold carbon credits equal to 16 747 tonnes of CO2 The beginning of this transaction was in 2005 when the congregation began renovating its buildings. The sisters then replaced their old oil boilers with electric furnaces and launched an extensive geothermal project, "

Trafficking in Women

The SASV are also currently very active in the campaign against trafficking in women, particularly at sporting events. Their UNANIMA representative, in collaboration with members of another congregation, has produced a tool to raise awareness about the issue. The DVD and Facilitator's Guide has been translated into English and in the near future will also be translated into Innu, Spanish and Portuguese.