



December 2001

## **IRAN'S PRESIDENT KHATAMI AWARDS WORLD WIDE ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS AT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY**

SOUTH ORANGE, NJ — President Mohammad Khatami of the Islamic Republic of Iran presented awards to winners of the Dialogue among Civilizations International Essay Contest at Seton Hall University School of Diplomacy and International Relations on November 9. During the President's visit, the first ever to an American University, Khatami commended the School of Diplomacy for its efforts to bring the voices of young people to the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations.

The Dialogue among Civilizations was first proposed by President Khatami in an address to the UN General Assembly in September 1998, in which he put forth an urgent call for a process that would replace hostility and confrontation with discourse and understanding. Following his proposal, the General Assembly unanimously proclaimed 2001 as the UN Year of Dialogue among Civilizations. His Holiness Pope John Paul II lauded the Dialogue among Civilizations in his World Peace Day message, saying, "This dialogue is the obligatory path to the building of a reconciled world, a world able to look with serenity to its own future. This is a theme which is crucial to the pursuit of peace."

The School of Diplomacy and International Relations hosted seven of ten essay contest winners for the culminating events of the Dialogue among Civilizations. The winners, all university undergraduates, were selected from over 200 participants. Judged by a panel of School of Diplomacy faculty, the contest invited undergraduate students from Universities worldwide to envision how the Dialogue among Civilizations can better prepare the peoples of the world, especially the youth, for the challenges of tomorrow. Each winner was awarded a \$1000 scholarship, round-trip airfare and accommodations to visit the United Nations for the General Assembly special plenary meeting on the Dialogue among Civilizations and an opportunity to present their winning essays.

The contest was sponsored by the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations and the International Centre for Dialogue among Civilizations in Tehran, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Seton Hall's School of Diplomacy administered the contest.

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The following is selected text from the ten winning entries:

**Ogbonna Amanze**, Medicine, Fourth Year, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. Ogbonna Amanze claims the youth as the veritable vanguard for promoting dialogue. He views cross-cultural education as the ideal impetus for creating a generation that promotes peace, international cooperation, and respect for all nations.

**Nicole Cardinal**, Law, First Year, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Nicole Cardinal envisions dialogue as reducing the world's imbalances, as well as providing alternatives to violence when solving conflict. She affirms willingness as a key factor that allows acknowledgement of differences, but also recognition of similarities.

**Mazen Hassan**, Political Science, Fourth Year, Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt. Mazen Hassan says that it is dialogue, not monologue, which *integrates* rather than *disintegrates*. He sees dialogue creating a civilization based on love and peace as having the ability to overcome the weaknesses of previous generations.

**Veronica Hoyo**, International Relations, Fourth Year, Technological Institute of Mexico, Mexico. Veronica Hoyo addresses an "intercultural-multilateral" conversation that questions paradigms, without erasing diversity. She considers that ignorance and prejudice have resulted in a presumptuous fear of the other; however, she asserts that life without the "other" is inconceivable.

**Lydia Lunyova**, English/Russian Translation, Fourth Year, Irkutsk State Linguistic University, Irkutsk, Russia. Lydia Lunyova feels that each youth has an important role in initializing and shaping global interaction. She encourages this participation to be an "empathetic discourse where talking and listening rebuild the world with peace and justice."

**Patryck Pawlak**, International Law, Third Year, Czestochowa University of Foreign Languages and Economics, Czestochowa, Poland. Patryck Pawlak highlights the importance of knowing someone's history and situation in order to build understanding and tolerance. He feels that because "the bell tolls for all of us" we need to talk, but first of all we need to listen, for this is the core of dialogue.

**Maiss Razem**, Architecture, Fourth Year, Jordan University of Science and Technology, Irbid, Jordan. Maiss Razem feels dialogue should be based on the intellectual and mental solidarity of mankind. In this regard, the young generation must not find strength in ignorance, but rather bear witness for truth by recognizing injustice.

**Vincent Sandoval**, Psychology, Third Year, University of San Carlos, Cebu City, Philippines. Vincent Sandoval draws attention to the WTC event as a pressing need for dialogue among civilizations. He reminds us that dialogue is not an instant cure, but a process that bares the wounds, whether economic, political, cultural or religious, and paves the way for mutual healing and restoration.

**Adriana Segura**, Medicine, Fourth Year, National University of Columbia, Columbia. Adriana Segura stresses that dialogue is a personal choice and responsibility, that requires courage to communicate with someone else, coupled with a desire to learn from their differences.

**Amanda Wetzel**, International Politics, Fourth Year, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. Amanda Wetzel sees the Internet and technology as catalysts for enhancing dialogue. She envisions the youth of tomorrow engaged in a digital dialogue, which creates cyber identities that are non-threatening to ethnic identities.

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To request a booklet of the winning essays, e-mail the School at [dialogue@shu.edu](mailto:dialogue@shu.edu)  
Further information regarding the Dialogue is available on our website <http://diplomacy.shu.edu/dialogue>  
For the past 2 years, the School has served as the Secretariat for the Dialogue among Civilizations, supporting and publishing a book, *Crossing the Divide: A Dialogue among Civilizations*, authored by a panel of Eminent Persons appointed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Seton Hall University's School of Diplomacy and International Relations was established in alliance with the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA). The School's academic programs, leading to a Bachelor of Science or a Master of Arts in Diplomacy and International Relations, educate an international student body to become the next generation of global leaders.

Founded in 1856, Seton Hall University is the nation's oldest diocesan institution of higher education. Today, the University is made up of nine schools and colleges. One of six private universities in New Jersey and the only Catholic university in the state, Seton Hall currently enrolls nearly 10,000 students. For more information on Seton Hall University, see [www.shu.edu](http://www.shu.edu) on the World Wide Web. To access Seton Hall's Department of Public Relations and Marketing media database, visit the University's Web site and click on News and Events.

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