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## **MCW TO HOLD 14<sup>TH</sup> YOUTH LEADERSHIP RETREAT**

### **Youth from Around the World Become Change-makers through Storytelling**

#### **2011 MCW Alumni Ventures Fund Recipient to be Announced at Open Doors Ceremony**

**NEW YORK, July 6, 2011** — MCW announced today the opening of its 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Leadership Retreat, beginning with a day of training for a dozen mentors, past retreat participants, at New York University. The mentors will join the 35 youth delegates tomorrow on the bus ride to Burlington, Vermont.

Over the course of a week, the youth leadership retreat, which takes place at Champlain College, aims to help youth from around the world affect change in their communities by identifying a problem, visualizing a solution, and creating a concrete plan of action.

“Once again, we have aimed to create a program that will challenge the group,” said Yasmin Elachi, the 2011 retreat coordinator. She continued, “We also aim to ensure that they have time to interact and receive feedback from their peers.”

The participants, aged 16 to 21, come from Afghanistan, Colombia, Georgia, India, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo, the Palestinian Territories, Rwanda, Tanzania, USA and Zambia.

“Through entrepreneurial and cross-cultural communication activities, the mentors will implement skills they learned as youth participants,” Elachi said.

#### **The Program**

The retreat presents a chance for each participant to prepare a “vision plan,” which identifies a specific challenge in their community. Whether it is the lack of after school programs in their high-schools or limited oral healthcare, these youth take the necessary steps to address the challenge. Participants are also encouraged to share the ways they affect change in their communities, while working to develop a global support network with one another.

The program focuses on “Exploring Your Vision through Storytelling” with a wide range of speakers specializing in media, corporate responsibility and social entrepreneurship. Jonathan Scheinberg, *60 Minutes* producer, and Natan Edelsburg, supervising producer of Twitter’s “Shorty Awards” will hold workshops on media. Rob Michalak, Director of Ben & Jerry’s Social Mission Program, will speak on corporate responsibility. Social entrepreneurship workshops will be led by Richard Magrid, founder and president of Soundboard Consulting Group LLC, and senior consultant, Jonathan Hakakian, Bob Possenriede, vice president of Global Creative at Henry Schein Inc and his colleague Steve Kess, director of corporate relations and Dr. Gary Kadi leader in dental practice management. Storyteller Susan Danoff will educate mentors in a workshop on “Building Community through Storytelling” and Professors Charlotte

Albright of Lyndon State College and Dr. Anna Akbari of Parson's the New School for Design, will also lead workshops.

This year MCW is happy to announce that the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Leadership Retreat received a large number of donations. [Bourbon Coffee](#) provided beverages at the welcome reception for participants and parents in New York. [Chipotle](#), [the Grey Dog](#), and [Dominos](#), as well as [Park Slope Restaurant/Green Kitchen](#) and [Maoz Vegetarian](#) provided meals for the participants. [Zabars](#) and [Trader Joes](#) have donated snacks and bottled water to last the participants the week. While in Vermont, participants will also enjoy a special treat courtesy of [Ben and Jerry's](#). [Green Mountain Coffee Roasters](#) and [Maples Grove Farms](#) have provided gifts to some of our speakers and [Brueggers' Bagels](#) once again donated bagels for breakfast. If you are interested in sponsoring an MCW event please email us at [info@miralcorners.org](mailto:info@miralcorners.org).

### **Open Doors Ceremony and the 2011 Alumni Ventures Fund**

The retreat concludes with *Open Doors*—a celebratory evening program for the participants, their friends and parents, and members of the MCW community. The event will be held at the Kimmel Center at New York University on Thursday, July 17 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, and includes an MCW program update, presentations on vision plans and cultural performances. To attend the event, please email MCW at [info@miraclecorners.org](mailto:info@miraclecorners.org).

MCW will also announce the recipient of the 2011 Alumni Ventures Fund at the Open Doors ceremony. In its third year, the new fund provides micro grants to graduates of MCW's youth leadership retreat, enabling them to pursue social ventures in their communities. In addition to the start-up funding, recipients are assigned an MCW mentor in their field, who will help them develop and implement their venture plans, manage their finances, and monitor and evaluate their work.

### **About MCW (Miracle Corners of the World)**

MCW (Miracle Corners of the World) is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 with the vision: "Local Change through Global Exchange." Our mission is to empower youth to become positive agents of change in their communities. Based in New York, with affiliates in Africa, MCW offers the following programs: Leadership Training, Community Centers and Oral Healthcare, as well as Partner Initiatives (MCW Jacqueline's Human Rights Corner and the Container Project). MCW's core values include: integrity, compassion, accountability, responsibility and excellence. For more information go to <http://www.miraclecorners.org>

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