

# RIGHTS SITES NEWS

PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM

A Publication of The Advocates for Human Rights



## Human Rights Education

The Human Rights Education Program is designed to introduce international human rights and responsibilities to K-12 students. It uses the framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to help students understand and appreciate common human values, encourages them to apply international standards to their own lives, and supports positive student action to remedy human rights violations in their own communities.

## Human Rights Heroes Edition

*"Explore your mind, discover yourself, then give the best that is in you to your age and to your world. There are heroic possibilities waiting to be discovered in every person."*

~ Wilfred A. Peterson



On December 10, 2008, the world will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The UDHR states in clear and simple terms the rights which belong equally to every person. The drafters of the UDHR saw a future of not only freedom from fear, but also freedom from want. They put all human rights on equal footing and confirmed that all human rights are essential to a life of

dignity. Heroes of the past worked to create these rights; for the last 60 years, human rights defenders have struggled to make their vision a reality, and modern day heroes continue to defend, protect, and preserve them. This newsletter is dedicated to promoting the importance of universal human rights, the fundamental freedoms expressed in the UDHR, and the amazing people who have committed their lives to upholding, defending, and protecting these rights for future generations.

### In This Issue:

Lesson: Human Rights Heroes	2-3
Suggested Websites on Heroes	4
Human Rights Heroes Book List	5
HRE at Sandburg Middle School	6
Featured Organization: Pangea World Theater	7
Free Film Screening: A Promise to the Dead	7
Community Events Calendar	8

## Featured Website

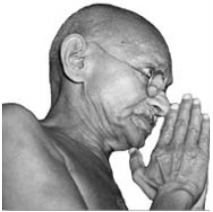
### [www.KnowYourRights2008.org](http://www.KnowYourRights2008.org)

The United Nations has created a new website, [www.KnowYourRights2008.org](http://www.KnowYourRights2008.org), as a repository of ideas to commemorate 60 years of human rights. The highly interactive website enables people all over the world to upload and download multimedia files and share their projects and initiatives on the Universal Declaration. The site aims to raise awareness of the Declaration and its relevance to people around the world and to engage participation of individuals and institutions - from global organizations to grassroots advocacy groups - to make the Declaration a reality for all. The website features:

- 60-year history of the UDHR
- Wall of events
- Portraits of Human Rights Heroes (click on "60 years of UN Archives")
- Videos and interviews on human rights
- Human Rights Quiz
- Universal Human Rights Index
- Children's Corner (hosted by Le Petit Prince)
- Resources for teachers
- Facts on the UN system and human rights
- Podcasts of human rights reports at the UN
- Profiles of UN Special Rapporteurs
- Updated news on human rights issues
- UDHR signing page

Share this site with your students. Allow them to explore the history, meaning, and relevance of the UDHR. Encourage them to read and learn about the human rights heroes of the past and stress the importance of present day human rights heroes. Because, while the Declaration opened the door to much progress, there is no room for complacency, as the almost daily litany of human rights violations around the world demonstrates. This site reminds us that we all play an important role in making the enjoyment of human rights truly universal.

## Lesson: Human Rights Heroes



**Goal:** To introduce students to the rights outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and explore the heroes from around the world who have worked to promote and protect them.

**Objectives:**

- Students will gain a general understanding of the rights and responsibilities defined in the UDHR.
- Students will analyze what it means to be a hero and develop their own criteria for the word “hero.”
- Students will research and identify one human rights hero and present their findings to the class.

**Essential Question:** What is a human rights hero?

**Resources:**

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) - <http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/universal.asp> (complete text) or <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/ABCannexesen.pdf> (complete text with plain language version)
- Chalkboard/whiteboard/flipchart and chalk/markers
- Access to the internet



**Time Frame:** 2-3 class periods

**Age Level:** 5th grade - Adult

**Procedure:**

**Activity 1: What Are Human Rights?**



1. **Brainstorm.** In small groups of 2-3, ask your students to formulate a definition of human rights and make a list of those rights that they believe everyone should have. Have the groups share their lists with the whole class. Ask the students if the rights they listed can be grouped under specific headings (environmental, civil, political, etc...). As a class, come up with a definition for human rights that everyone can agree upon.
2. **Read.** Ask your students to read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see different versions available for download under “resources”). Have students go around the room and each read one of the 30 articles out loud.

3. **Discuss.** Use the following questions to lead a class discussion:

- How does the UDHR compare to the list we came up with in class? Which ones did we identify and which ones do not appear on our list? Why might we have omitted them? (Students often overlook the right to have a name, nationality, etc. because they take them for granted.)
- Are there any rights we included that the UDHR does not include? If so, what are they and why do you think they were not included? (Environmental rights, for example, were not on the agenda in 1948.)
- Consider the quote from Article 1, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” What does it mean to say that we are born with these rights? Do we have them naturally? What is “universal” about them?
- What are our responsibilities toward the rights of others? How can we make sure our rights are respected?

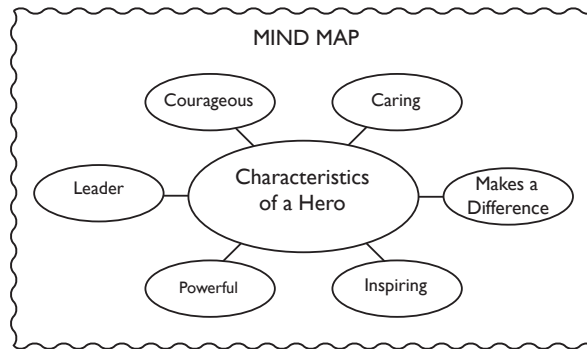


**Activity 2: What Is a Hero?**

1. **Think.** Ask students to think about the following questions for one minute.
  - What is heroism?
  - What qualities or characteristics do heroes have?
  - What actions do they take?



- 2. Pair.** Have students pair up and share their ideas with a partner for one minute.
- 3. Share.** Have each pair share their ideas with the whole class, giving the reasons for their thinking. List these ideas on chart paper, transparency, or white board using a mind map (see example in box).



### Activity 3: Human Rights Heroes

- 1. Research.** Ask each student to choose one article from the UDHR. Have each student conduct research on a human rights hero who has advocated and defended the rights represented in the article they chose. This can be someone famous or someone they know personally. To aid them in their research, provide each student with the websites listed on page 4 of this newsletter.



Ask them to find out the following about their hero:

- What human right(s) did your hero advocate for?
  - How did this person's childhood or other significant life experience contribute to their stance on human rights?
  - What obstacles did this person need to overcome or what obstacles are they currently encountering?
  - What major achievements, events, or significant contributions to human rights is this person known for?
- 2. Posterboard.** As homework, have students create posterboard presentations of their heroes. The presentations should highlight the significant contributions their heroes made to human rights and the actions and characteristics that define them as heroes. On their posters, ask each student to include and finish the statement: Heroism is....



Hang the students' presentations around the classroom and give the students time to view each others' posters. As they are viewing the posters, play some calming music and request that the students do not speak. Ask them to think about their own lives and the people who inspire them - are heroes always famous people?

- 3. Read.** Once they have finished viewing, read the following poem by Wilfred A. Peterson out loud: *"Few of us will do the spectacular deeds of heroism that spread themselves across the pages of our newspapers in big black headlines. But we can all be heroic in the little things of everyday life. We can do the helpful things, say the kind words, meet our difficulties with courage and high hearts, stand up for the right when the cost is high, keep our word even though it means sacrifice, be a giver instead of a destroyer. Often this quiet, humble heroism is the greatest heroism of all."*



Explain to the students that they can also be a hero for human rights. Everyone can play a part in making this a better world for all. You do not need to be famous; you can be a hero in your family, in your neighborhood, within your community and in all of your daily interactions with people and the environment.

- 4. Journal.** For 10 - 15 minutes ask the students to free-write or draw in their journals about the following: If people were to tell your life story in many years time, what would they say? What would you like to be remembered for?



**WEBSITES: HUMAN RIGHTS HEROES****American Memory Project**

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

This site provides a digital record of American history and creativity. The materials, from the collections of the Library of Congress and other institutions, chronicle historical events, people, places, and ideas that continue to shape America, serving the public as a resource for education and lifelong learning.

**AFL-CIO**

<http://www.aflcio.org/aboutus/history/history/bios.cfm>

Learn about the men and women who shaped America's labor movement. Get inspired by these brief biographies on working heroes who have fought for the workplace rights and protections we enjoy today.

**Environmental Justice Resource Center**

[http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/\(s\)heros.html](http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/(s)heros.html)

This site features short biographies of the unsung heroes on the front lines of the environmental justice movement.

**Facing History and Ourselves**

[www.facinghistory.org/bethechange/](http://www.facinghistory.org/bethechange/)

Facing History and Ourselves shares the stories of five extraordinary men and women they call upstanders: those who do not simply stand by in the face of injustice, but understand that each one of us can make a difference.

**The Giraffe Heroes Project**

<http://www.giraffe.org/>

This project tells the stories of "Giraffe Heroes" - people who stick their necks out for the common good. Their stories inspire others to take on the public challenges they see - speaking out against corruption, building bridges across conflicts, taking a stand against injustice, and being a voice for the powerless.

**The Hero Workshop**

<http://thejanuscenter.com/heroworkshop/index.htm>

The Hero Workshop shows students that they are the hero in their own story and encourages them to behave heroically in their lives. Through exposure to true heroes and their journeys, students will have models to help them with the decisions and challenges life throws at them. The site includes a gallery of heroes with profiles and a place to add your own hero.

**Heroes for a Culture of Peace**

<http://www.cultureofpeace.com/heroes/list.htm>

An informational website which includes the biographies of 1000 heroes for a culture of peace. The list includes heroes for human rights, freedom, and environmental justice, convincing others to take action through leadership roles and by bringing important issues to the public's attention.

**The My Hero Project**

<http://myhero.com/myhero/>

The My Hero website hosts thousands of stories of remarkable individuals written by children and adults alike. These stories serve to remind us that we all have the potential to overcome great obstacles and achieve our dreams by following in the footsteps of our heroes. It includes lesson plans for teachers.

**National Geographic: Underground Railroad**

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/railroad/lj1.html>

This site has an interactive escape on the Underground Railroad. After entering the site, use the dropdown box to go to "Faces of Freedom" for short biographies and portraits. It includes a timeline of African-American history and lesson plans sorted by age and grade level.

**Thinkquest: Heroism Stories and Biographies**

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C001515/heroism/herodb.php>

This website explores the lives of many outstanding people from around the world throughout the 20th Century - people who have stood out from the rest by virtue of the positive impact they have made in the world. Resources include helpful tips for teachers to incorporate into the classroom, as well as action plans for individuals to think globally and act locally.

**Time 100 Heroes**

[http://www.time.com/time/time100/index\\_2000\\_time100.html](http://www.time.com/time/time100/index_2000_time100.html)

Time magazine has profiled individuals who, for better or worse, have most influenced the last 100 years (since 2000). They are considered in five fields of endeavor, culminating with their person of the century - Albert Einstein.

**What Kids Can Do (WKCD)**

<http://www.whatkidscando.org>

What Kids Can Do combs the country for compelling examples of young people working with adults in their schools and communities on real-world issues. The site provides youth with inspiring examples and resources on how they can take action and be a hero in their own lives.

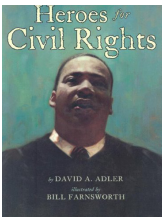
**Universal Rights Network**

<http://www.universalrights.net/heroes/index.htm>

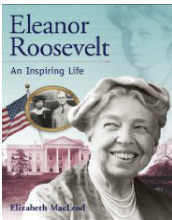
The Universal Rights Network is a meeting place for the peoples of the world to share their stories of the importance of universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. Their "heroes" section tells the stories of many prominent contributors to the human rights movement. Their resources include a history of human rights, lesson plans for teachers, and ideas on how to get involved and become your own human rights hero.



READING SUGGESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS HEROES



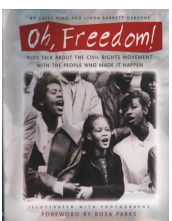
**Heroes for Civil Rights.** By David A. Adler. Moving biographies and evocative paintings that honor those Americans who risked their own lives so that others could enjoy their rights. From Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Fannie Lou Hamer, whether marching, speaking, or simply going to school, these brave men and women fought to advance social justice. (Grades 9-12)



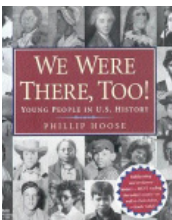
**Eleanor Roosevelt: An Inspiring Life.** By Elizabeth MacLeod. In fourteen brief chapters with short blocks of text and many photographs, the author describes Roosevelt's privileged but sad childhood, her marriage, political and family life, and post-FDR humanitarian work. The importance of Roosevelt's contributions to the world is emphasized, including her work on civil rights, women's rights, and her role in creating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (Grades 3-6)



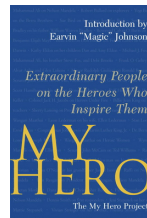
**Pass It On: Interviews by Youth with Mentors That Matter.** By the students of What Kids Can Do, Kathleen Cushman (Editor). Includes first-person essays and photographs by youth that testify to the power of community, of working together and helping one another. Each story inspires and gives hope, showing us the power of supportive relationships in the lives of youth. (Grades 6 and up)



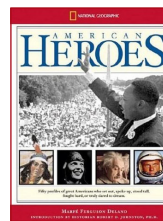
**Oh, Freedom! Kids Talk about the Civil Rights Movement with the People Who Made It Happen.** By Casey King and Linda Barrett Osborne. A student-friendly collection of oral histories with people who participated in the Civil Rights Movement. Useful both for its content and as a model for doing oral history interviews. (Grades 4 and up)



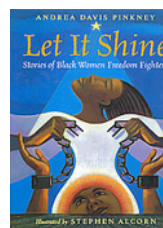
**We Were There, Too! : Young People in U.S. History.** By Phillip Hoose. This book surveys important events in American history and examines the lives of dozens of youth who played a part in them. From the Revolutionary War to the Civil Rights Movement, We Were There, Too! profiles young upstanders who helped to shape our nation. (Grades 4-7)



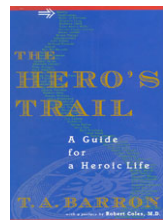
**My Hero: Extraordinary People on the Heroes Who Inspire Them.** By the My Hero Project. In My Hero, prominent heroes and leaders of our time share - in their own words - their thoughts and stories about the people who have been the greatest source of strength and inspiration to them. (Grades 3 and up)



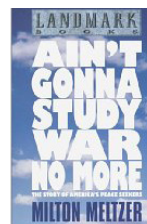
**American Heroes.** By Marfé Ferguson Delano. An anthology of 50 biographical portraits of key American figures - people whose heroism has in some way shaped American society. Their achievements are diverse, but we recognize their spirit as uniquely American. (Grades 5-8)



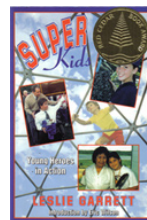
**Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters.** By Stephen Alcorn (Illustrator) and Andrea Davis Pinkney (Author). A collection of short biographies celebrating the contributions of 10 black women who moved forward the cause of civil rights in America. (Grades 3-6)



**The Hero's Trail: A Guide For a Heroic Life.** By T.A. Barron. Profiles people who exemplify heroic qualities, both well-known and less recognizable. Illustrates the importance of survival instincts in times of crisis. In the book, life is compared to a journey, exploring the ways that heroes inspire and guide us along the way. (Grades 5-9)



**Ain't Gonna Study War No More: The Story of America's Peace Seekers.** By Milton Meltzer. An authoritative and readable history of the peace movement and nonviolent resistance in America. As each generation seeks to understand and respond to the violence of its time, this historical perspective gains relevance for a new group of readers. (Grades 8-12)



**Superkids Too! : More Young Heroes in Action.** By Leslie Garret. This book's message is clear: You can make a difference. You have the capability and the power to make a positive change in your life and the lives of others. (Grades 3 and up)

## SANDBURG MIDDLE SCHOOL: SETTING THE STANDARD FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

In 2001, Sandburg Middle School in Golden Valley, Minnesota was selected as one of The Advocates' very first "Rights Sites" schools because of its dedication to weaving human rights education into its existing curricula. An accredited International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP) since 2004, Sandburg sets an exemplary standard in human rights education.

This year, the school will infuse human rights into all students' curriculum, reaching up to three times the number of students as in years past. This shift was promoted by Lauren Hildebrand, The Advocates' Education Program advisory committee member and IBMYP Coordinator at Sandburg Middle School. Ms. Hildebrand was recently named to the Education Committee of the Board of Governors of International Baccalaureate, the parent organization for IB programs worldwide. Principal Tom Henderlite of Sandburg has also provided critical creative freedom to teachers to use curricula that take on human rights issues.



International Baccalaureate Students give presentations on human rights issues.

One of the five areas of interaction in the IBMYP is community service. With community service as a new direction for the entire school, Sandburg easily ties in human rights. Community service projects are being created by students and staff that address basic human rights and responsibilities. Another area of interaction is the environment. Sandburg staff and students are already working on this human rights issue and plan to culminate the year with a school-wide project that will beautify the school as they plant, clean up, and re-landscape their school yard.



Student meets judge at school-wide poster contest competition

Using community service and the environment as a vehicle for teaching about and for human rights, the school has already done the following:

- Viewed the film *If Everyone Cared* in Humanities classes and discussed human rights activists such as Nelson Mandela.
- Piloted a new novel-based reading curriculum, starting with the book, *Thura's Diary: My Life in Wartime Iraq* (a 19 year-old Iraqi civilian's perspective on the war).

Plans for the rest of the year include:

- An interdisciplinary community service project involving a food drive competition where teams or classes build sculptures out of the food products before they are donated.
- Lessons about the history of human rights and why they are important to us locally, nationally, and globally.
- A focus on human rights and the environment through lessons on consumerism and recycling.

Lauren Hildebrand thanks the Sandburg staff "for helping students understand that what we may have in America is not a given anywhere else in the world. We need a bigger perspective, and we need our students to contribute to it."

The Advocates thanks Ms. Hildebrand and all the staff at Sandburg Middle School for their amazing commitment to teaching future generations about the importance of respecting human rights.

## FEATURED ORGANIZATION: PANGEA WORLD THEATER



Pangea World Theater, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, has one of the most unique education programs in the country, backed up by their firm commitment to human rights and diversity, as well as a decade of experience teaching, learning and creating art. Pangea's vision of education challenges students, teachers, and community members alike to embark on a fresh journey towards positive change - a journey where new ideas and new ways of thinking are not only welcome, they are encouraged. At Pangea World Theater, diversity is not seen as just a local issue to be discussed, but a truly global reality and a gift to all of us.

Their "Diverse Stages" education initiative goes beyond the limiting definitions of theater and theater education in order to provide participants with boundary-breaking artistic experiences that draw upon international, local and marginalized perspectives on human rights, diversity, and other pressing social issues of the day. "Diverse Stages" can be summed up in three words: Change, Challenge, and Action. Through dialogue, the "Diverse Stages" initiative seeks to build understanding by challenging our own attitudes towards "the other" and challenging our minds and bodies to rise above conformity and routine in order to take action in our communities as well-informed protagonists.

Teachers and students alike have expressed that Pangea's embodiment of diversity, as well as their international and relevant content, makes their educational programming - whether workshops, matinees, or summertime offerings - an exciting way to expand the classroom and theater into the outside world. To learn more about their programs, please go to their website: <http://pangeworldtheater.org/education/>.

### Help us celebrate the 60th anniversary of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights!

The Advocates for Human Rights, The University of Minnesota Human Rights Center, and Partners present

### A Promise to the Dead: The Exile Journey of Ariel Dorfman

#### FREE PUBLIC SCREENING

Wednesday, December 10th, 2008

7:00 p.m.

Reception with refreshments at 6:00 p.m.

Coffman Memorial Union Theater

300 Washington Avenue SE, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455



The film will be followed by a discussion with activists who will tell stories of "Human Rights Heroism" all around the world.

A Promise to the Dead: The Exile Journey of Ariel Dorfman is an exploration of exile, memory, longing and democracy as seen through the experiences of writer, Ariel Dorfman. Dorfman became cultural advisor to Chile's socialist president Salvador Allende. When the Allende government fell in the military coup of September 11, 1973, Dorfman was among a handful of Allende's inner circle to survive. Years later, he was told that his life was spared because "someone had to live to tell the story."

# COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

## DECEMBER

**10 Human Rights Day Event: United Nations Hearing on the Desecration of Hmong Graves.** 9am-1pm, Coffman Memorial Union Theater, University of Minnesota. Featuring Professor James Anaya, UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Human Rights. Free and open to the public. FFI: <http://www.hrusa.org/calendar/>.

**10 Human Rights Day Event: Respect for Sacred Sites: Protecting Indigenous Burial Grounds Under International Law.** 4-5:30 pm, 125 Nolte Center, University of Minnesota. Featuring Professor James Anaya, UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Human Rights. Free and open to the public. FFI: <http://www.hrusa.org/calendar/>.

**10 Human Rights Day Event: Film Viewing "A Promise to the Dead."** 6-9:30 pm, Coffman Memorial Union Theater. A Promise to the Dead: The Exile Journey of Ariel Dorfman is an exploration of exile, memory, longing and democracy through the words and memories of playwright/author/activist, Ariel Dorfman. Free and open to the public. FFI: [http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/The\\_Advocates\\_Events.html](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/The_Advocates_Events.html).

**16 Women's Human Rights Film Series: Maquilapolis: City of Factories.** 7-9 pm, Riverview Branch Library, 1 East George St., St. Paul. Story of a worker in one of the Tijuana's the multinational-owned factories (maquiladoras) who confronts labor violations, environmental devastation and urban chaos in life on the frontier of the global economy. FFI: [http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/The\\_Advocates\\_Events.html](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/The_Advocates_Events.html).

## JANUARY

**13 Women's Human Rights Film Series: SASA!** 7 pm, Rice Street Branch Library, 1011 Rice St., St. Paul. The documentary film "SASA!" tells the personal stories of two women and their experiences with violence and HIV/AIDS. It also offers analysis from activists and leaders about the causal factors, cultural dynamics and politics of preventing and responding to these dual pandemics. FFI: [http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/The\\_Advocates\\_Events.html](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/The_Advocates_Events.html).

**23 The Human Right to Water: An Overview.** 12:15-1:15pm, Room 30 Mondale Hall, 229 19th Ave S., Mpls. Featured Speaker: David Weissbrodt, Regents Professor and Fredrikson & Byron Professor of Law. In this session, Professor Weissbrodt will outline the basic framework of the Human Right to Water and its connection to other human rights standards. Free and open to the public. FFI: <http://www.hrusa.org/calendar/>.

## FEBRUARY

**10 History Lounge: American Indians/American Movies.** 7 pm, Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul. American Indians have populated American art for centuries, appearing in literature, painting and sculpture, theater and on film. Of all these media, it is the movies that have had the greatest power to shape modern notions about Indians. Join cultural historian Elise Marubio for an evening of fascinating film clips and intriguing conversation about a century of changing images of American Indians in American movies. Free and open to the public. FFI: <http://events.mnhs.org/calendar/>

**11 Women's Human Rights Film Series: To See If I'm Smiling.** 7 pm, Merriam Park Branch Library, 1831 Marshall Ave., St. Paul. In this award-winning documentary, six female Israeli soldiers stationed in Gaza and the West Bank give their testimonials on the conflict. This powerful film explores the ways that gender, ethics and moral responsibility intersect during war. FFI: [http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/The\\_Advocates\\_Events.html](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/The_Advocates_Events.html).

**13 Water and the Human Right to Health** 12:15-1:15 pm, Room 30 Mondale Hall, 229 19th Ave S., Mpls. Featured Speaker: William Toscano, Professor and Division Head, Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health. This lecture focuses on how water is linked to the right to the highest attainable standard of health in terms of access to clean water for public health, disease prevention, and medical treatment, as well as the links between water, health, and development. Free and open to the public - lunch served FFI: <http://www.hrusa.org/calendar/>.

**27 Water Distribution: Public, Private, or Both?** 2:15-1:15 pm, Location: Room 30 Mondale Hall, 229 19th Ave S., Mpls. Featured Speaker: K. William Easter, Professor, Department of Applied Economics. This lecture will explore the institutional aspects of water provision, including different models of distribution, with particular emphasis on the developing world. This lecture will also ask the question, is there a human rights-compatible role for the private sector? If so, what is it? Free and open to the public. FFI: <http://www.hrusa.org/calendar/>.

# RIGHTS SITES NEWS

Volume 4, Issue 4 Fall 2008

## The Advocates for Human Rights Education Program

**Colleen Beebe**  
Director  
[cbeebe@advrights.org](mailto:cbeebe@advrights.org)

**Emily Farell**  
Program Associate  
[efarell@advrights.org](mailto:efarell@advrights.org)

**Madeline Lohman**  
Program Assistant  
[malohman@advrights.org](mailto:malohman@advrights.org)

**Aysem Senyurekli**  
Program Associate  
[asenyurekli@advrights.org](mailto:asenyurekli@advrights.org)

**Kathy Seipp**  
Program Associate  
[kseipp@advrights.org](mailto:kseipp@advrights.org)

**Rebecca Riedell**  
Program Assistant  
[rriedell@advrights.org](mailto:rriedell@advrights.org)

Rights Sites News is published quarterly by the Education Program at The Advocates for Human Rights to promote human rights education in the classroom and highlight the achievements of its Rights Sites Teachers. We welcome suggestions and comments.

Contact: 612-341-3302  
[www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org)

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The Advocates for Human Rights Education Program would like to thank our supporters: U.S. Human Rights Fund; Best Buy Children's Foundation; Education Minnesota Foundation; Otto Bremer Foundation; Elmer L. & Eleanor J. Andersen Foundation.



650 3rd Avenue South, Suite 550  
Minneapolis, MN 55402