

## On the lookout for past participants

### Alumni tracking campaign seeks to reconnect

At Canada World Youth, we see our past participants as among our most valued assets. As living testimonials to our programs, our past participants play a critical role in spreading CWY's message, particularly the difference the program can make in a young person's life.

Recognizing the increasing importance for us to keep in touch with our alumni, we have hired an alumni tracker who will be working out of Canada World Youth's head office in Montreal. Her name is Betty-Jo

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McCarville and she is a past participant from the 2001 Halifax-Kaliningrad NetCorps program.

Over the next few months, Betty-Jo will be attempting to relocate lost alumni and she will be contacting past participants for whom we have current addresses for help. If you're a past participant who has kept in touch with members of your team, we'd appreciate hearing from you. All contact information is kept strictly confidential (it will not be shared with any external parties) and will be used to keep past participants informed of Canada World Youth's events and activities.

If you have any questions about our alumni tracking campaign or would like to provide leads on reaching some past participants, please contact Betty-Jo directly at [alumni-anciens@cwj-jcm.org](mailto:alumni-anciens@cwj-jcm.org).

## Tri-national exchange focuses on North America

### New program brings together youth to examine common continental challenges

So what could a 24-year-old architect from Veracruz, Mexico, a 23-year-old environmental scientist from Long Island, N.Y. and a 22-year-old photographer from British Columbia all have in common?

As participants in Canada World Youth's first North American Community Service (NACS) program, the three young people recently came together for six months to examine what interests and challenges they and their communities share as members of a larger North American community.

Those challenges — as they relate to the environment, culture, politics and economics, to name a few — were the basis for a tri-national pilot program last year that involved three Canadians, three Americans and three Mexicans working on community-based projects in all three nations.

The projects included environmental preservation and education in Nelson, British Columbia, followed by a centuries-old church restoration project in Socorro, Texas, and finally, house construction and environmental projects in Coyopolan, Mexico. Participants spent two months in each location.

The program's objective was to help participants identify their common interests as residents of the same continent, while developing their skills and attitudes to become active leaders in promoting a sustainable North American community. A second goal was to assist the host communities gain a greater understanding and commitment to sustainable development on the continent.

"In each community that NACS visited, community members were very appreciative and happy to have them there. There was an exchange of information and experiences at each site that fulfilled the vision of linking together themes and issues across North America," said Claudia Medina, the Canadian project supervisor.

### Program profile

#### Number of participants:

3 Canadians, 3 Americans, 3 Mexicans

#### Destinations:

Nelson, British Columbia  
Socorro, Texas  
Coyopolan, Mexico

#### Program themes:

Environmental conservation, cultural preservation, social and economic welfare

#### Program partners:

North American Institute, USA  
The Student Conservation Association, USA  
Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico  
Columbia River Basin Trust, British Columbia

#### Objective:

Building commitment to sustainable community development in North America

## A trip back in time - Part II

*(In the November 2002 bulletin, we featured a story about Jim Austin, a CWY participant [Malaysia 1976-77], who was planning a trip back to his host country with his son. The following is an account of his journey and the reunion that marked the adventure.)*

My goals for the trip were, for the most part, accomplished. I wanted to say thank you to the people who meant the most to me while in Malaysia. Unfortunately, I was not able to locate one single team member of bygone days. However, to see my former Malaysian Group Leader, Ong Ang Team, at the airport waiting for us was beyond my wildest dreams. Seeing Ong again, after so many years, it was as if no time had passed.

We were also able to find and visit with my host family: Odzman Kadir, his mother (referred to as Mak Cik) and his brother Daniel. Mak Cik has suffered two strokes, and is now confined to a wheelchair and cannot speak. I was warned in advance so that I would not be too shocked by the change, and told that if Mak Cik cries, it's a sign that she understands.

Mak Cik's nurse brought her out and I started to talk to her in my best Bahasa Malayu, and had assistance to say thank you, 26 years later, to a lady who had made me feel as if I was one of her own. I think I got through to her for she sobbed and sobbed, holding onto my hand as if she would never, ever let go. I could see in her eyes that she knew who I was, and that she remembered. I will never forget this incredible moment.

**I could see in her eyes that she knew who I was, and that she remembered.**

Not long after our return to Canada, Ong wrote me this e-mail: "Jim, your visit to Malaysia has indeed brought me to a new perspective in life. I now believe in people-to-people contact. When friendship is established and nurtured, it will bring more meaning and joy to life. God bless and keep in touch if possible."

I know now what he means. Despite time, thousands of kilometres, and choices in life, people as individuals make up the world. And that individuals can make a difference, despite what may be going on elsewhere, or even nearby.

Jacques Hébert's\* vision of 31 years ago was right! If one makes an effort to connect or reconnect, one's efforts will be met by a reciprocal force. And through that connection we come to a renewed understanding and acceptance of others.

*\*Jacques Hébert is CWY's founder.*

*(If you have a story about returning to your CWY host community or reconnecting with team members, we want to hear about it. Write to Giovanna Panzera, Communications Coordinator, at [gpanzera@cwjcm.org](mailto:gpanzera@cwjcm.org).)*

## CWY short-listed for cooperation award

Canada World Youth has been short-listed for the 11th Annual Canadian Awards for International Cooperation.

The awards are sponsored by Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters and the Canadian International Development Agency, among other corporate sponsors.

The awards recognize the achievements of Canadian business and organizations supporting sustainable economic growth and social programs to reduce poverty in the developing world.

Canada World Youth is up for the **Huguette-Labelle Award for Excellence in Youth Programming.**

This award recognizes a project that has successfully developed and implemented youth-oriented programming involving Canadian and non-Canadian youth from developing countries as contributors to and beneficiaries of international cooperation efforts. Last year's recipient in this category was the International Institute for Sustainable Development.

The awards will be presented in February at a gala at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, in Hull, Quebec. For more on the awards, visit [www.cme-mec.ca](http://www.cme-mec.ca).

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