

Association for Bahá'í Studies–North America
35th Annual Conference
“Transforming Habits of Thought”

11–14 August 2011
San Francisco Airport Marriott
San Francisco, California, USA

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Important Information

Conference Badge Your conference badge is your “ticket of admission” to all sessions. You must wear it to attend conference sessions. The security personnel will not allow admittance to anyone without a badge.

Security The host/hostess volunteers at the conference are there to assist you. Please follow their instructions at all times. They can be identified by red ribbons on their badges.

Promptness The schedule of sessions is very full. To give equal time to the speakers, the sessions must begin on time. We request your cooperation in arriving promptly.

Cell Phones The ringing of mobile telephones in the audience is very disruptive to a presentation. Please turn off your cell phone or put it in “silent” mode while you are in the conference sessions.

The Children's and Junior Youth Program. (Children must be preregistered to attend.)
The Children and Junior Youth Program for ages 5 to 15, is being held in the **Marina Del Rey**, **Monterey**, and **Santa Barbara** rooms on the 2nd floor. Parents may drop off children at their program 15 minutes before the adult session starting time. Parents are asked to pick up their children promptly at the close of each session and for the lunch breaks. (Meals are not included in the children's program.) The times for Children/Junior Youth sessions are

Thursday, 11 August 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Friday, 12 August 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, 13 August 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, 14 August 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The program of children's activities is available at the Conference Registration Table. Parents are required to sign a Medical Information and Emergency Health Care Release form and return it to the Children's Program coordinators.

The Conference Bookstore is operated by the Bahá'í Distribution Service in the United States. The bookstore is located in the **San Ramon** Room on the 2nd floor and offers a wide selection of books and materials, including books and CDs by authors and artists presenting at the conference, and Bahá'í jewellery. Hours of operation are

Thursday, 11 August 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Friday, 12 August 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, 13 August 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, 14 August 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Evaluation Forms The ABS Executive Committee asks for your assistance and cooperation in filling out the conference evaluation forms provided in your conference kit. Your feedback is very valuable to us in our continuing efforts to improve the Conference.

Audio Recordings Conference plenary sessions will be recorded and will be available for purchase on audio CD. An order form is included in your conference kit and additional forms are available at the Conference Information Desk. Please fill out the form with your credit card number and the CDs will be mailed to you after the conference.

Lost and Found Lost and found articles should be reported to the Conference Registration Table. After the close of the conference, any items not picked up will be turned over to the hotel.

Prayer Room The **8042** room on the **8th floor** has been set aside for prayer and meditation from Thursday to Saturday, 8:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m.

Evening Arts After the Friday and Saturday evening programme there will be an extended arts programme held in the **Grand Ballroom** where conference attendees can socialize and enjoy listening to live music until midnight. Performing artists at the conference are encouraged to sign up to perform at these events. A sign-up sheet will be available near the Conference Registration Table.

Networking Session: A networking session has been organized over lunch on Friday, August 12th from 12:00 – 1:45 pm in the Grand Ballroom, **Salon E**. (Pick up your lunch at the cash sales set up outside the Ballroom and join the group.) Information tables will be set up where conference participants are invited to visit and connect with others in their field of interest, exchange contact information and share research interests to explore opportunities for collaboration and networking. Tables are set up by topics for the various Special Interest Groups of the Association as well as others who may have want to network on topics other than the specific SIG themes.

Poster Sessions: Poster sessions will be held on Saturday afternoon, August 13 in the foyer outside the ballroom. Presenters will discuss their work between 12:00 – 1:00 pm. The posters will remain up all afternoon.

Association Endowment Funds: These funds are established by individuals to support and encourage Bahá'í Scholarship initiatives. If you wish to explore opportunities to contribute to these funds and support the goals of the Association, please feel free to consult with the treasurer of the Executive Committee, Dr. Mehran Kiai at the conference or contact by email: mehran@kiais.com

“Transforming Habits of Thought” Theme Statement

In its 28 December 2010 message to the Conference of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, the Universal House of Justice drew attention to habits of thought which must be developed and those which must be overcome for the Bahá'í community to realise its vision. The Association for Bahá'í Studies invites participants to contribute to the exploration of these habits of thought at its 35th annual conference.

The House of Justice wrote:

Apart from the spiritual requisites of a sanctified Bahá'í life, there are habits of thought that affect the unfoldment of the global Plan, and their development has to be encouraged at the level of culture. There are tendencies, as well, that need to be gradually overcome. Many of these tendencies are reinforced by approaches prevalent in society at large, which, not altogether unreasonably, enter into Bahá'í activity. The magnitude of the challenge facing the friends in this respect is not lost on us. They are called upon to become increasingly involved in the life of society, benefiting from its educational programmes, excelling in its trades and professions, learning to employ well its tools, and applying themselves to the advancement of its arts and sciences. At the same time, they are never to lose sight of the aim of the Faith to effect a transformation of society, remoulding its institutions and processes, on a scale never before witnessed. To this end, they must remain acutely aware of the inadequacies of current modes of thinking and doing—this, without feeling the least degree of superiority, without assuming an air of secrecy or aloofness, and without adopting an unnecessarily critical stance towards society.

The House of Justice draws particular attention to the general social trends of reducing complex conceptions of social reality and social change to simple slogans, of imposing false dichotomies over a cohesive whole, and of favouring isolated events and projects over broad processes and long term action. It then focuses on the complex relationship between three interacting agents of society, namely the individual, the community, and institutions. This troubled relationship, which has led to a dangerous concurrence of a crisis of authority with a weakening of community ties, is contrasted with the potential released by a spiritual re-visioning.

Conference participants are invited to explore habits of thought from a variety of perspectives. In many social arenas and disciplines, crises of thought and vision are already acknowledged to a greater or lesser degree. What new approaches and conceptions are developing there, and how do they correlate with Bahá'í teachings? Where do ideas and practices originate? How do habits of thought change – individually and collectively, whether through deliberate effort or subconsciously, through study, spiritual practice, or experience? How can increasing awareness of our own and others' habits of thought, and the process of changing these habits, strengthen our capacity to engage in the prevalent discourses of society in any social space available to us – in our work, our field of study, with local civic groups, on campus, etc.?

Thursday, 11 August 2011

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Special Simultaneous Sessions

Bayside 1

9:00 – 12:00 **Faculty and Student Workshop: Engaging in Scholarship in the Context of the Plans – Context and Inspiration for Scholarship in Action**
Convener: PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS, Academic Director, Association for Bahá'í Studies

Bayside 2 & 3

10:00 – 12:00 **Conversations that Redefine Religion Using Language from Recent Letters of the Universal House of Justice**
Facilitator: HOLLY HANSON

Irvine

10:00 – 12:00 **Love Lift Me Higher**
Facilitator: DOROTHY MARCIC

12:00 – 2:00 *Lunch Break*

Irvine

2:00 – 3:30 **The Missing Link in Relationship Theories and Marriage Outcome Predictions**
KEYVAN GEULA
3:45 – 5:00 **Transformation On Purpose** ROXANNE HAI

Anaheim

2:00 – 4:00 **Using Appreciative Inquiry for Exploring the Correlation between Current Public Education and the Bahá'í Teachings** ELLEN DODSON

Bayside 2 & 3

3:00 – 5:00 **Conversations that Redefine Religion by Using Language from Recent Letters of the Universal House of Justice (Repeat of morning session)**
Facilitator: HOLLY HANSON

Bayside 1

3:30 – 5:00 **Cooperating to Renew Resources Instead of Fighting over Dwindling Resources**
JANET, EDWARD and ALAN CUNDALL

5:00 - 7:00 *Dinner Break*

Thursday Evening

Grand Ballroom

7:00

Plenary Session

Chair: MARTHA SCHWEITZ

Devotions

Official Conference Welcome

Representatives of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the United States and Canada

Building Administrative Capacity KENNETH BOWERS

Friday, 12 August 2011

Grand Ballroom

9:00

Plenary Session

Chair: JUDY FILSON

Devotions

Identity, Discourse, and Policy: Reconstructing the Public Sphere MATT WEINBERG

The Ubuntu Programme: Changing Habits of Thought and Practice around Race in the American Mid-West BILLIE MAYO

11:30 - 2:00 *Lunch Break*

Please note that there is a networking session from 12:00 – 1:45 pm in the Grand Ballroom, Salon E. Those interested can purchase lunch at the cash sales outside the Ballroom and join the group.

2:00 - 5:30 p.m. Simultaneous Breakout Sessions

Bayside 1

Arts I

Convener and Chair: ANNE GORDON PERRY

2:00 - 3:00

Journey of Light: Documenting 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Visit to America ANNE GORDON PERRY

3:15 - 4:15

Multimedia Mental Health Tools: Challenging Patterns of Addiction

EDWARD EPP and LEANNE BOSCHMAN

4:30 - 5:30

Chanting Supplications Together to Promote Community Development and Wellbeing
NANCY WATTERS

- Salons A & B* **Bioethics and Health Sciences**
 Convener and Chair: ELIZABETH L. BOWEN
 2:00 - 3:00 Habits of Thought: Does Pseudoscience Harm the Greater Good?
 SANDRA J. BEAN and DAVID PIFF
- Anaheim* **Discourse**
 Chair: SHASTRI PURUSHOTMA
 2:00 - 3:00 Lessons from 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Changing Habits of Thought
 SHASTRI PURUSHOTMA and SEAN GALLAGHER
- Anaheim* **Education I**
 Chair: ELENA VANDERDUSSEN
 3:15 - 4:15 Formulating Life Decisions in a Context of Service to Humanity
 ELENA VANDERDUSSEN, SAHBNAM TASHAKOUR, and NATASHA COLLISHAW
 4:30 - 5:30 An Instrument Tempered in the Crucible of Experience: Training Institutes and Habits
 of Thought FARZIN AGHDASI
- Salons C & D* **Gender and Equality Studies**
 Convener and Chair: ÉLIZABETH WRIGHT
 4:30 - 5:30 Fulfilling Their Mission: Women as Peacemakers in the New Era
 CAMILLE N. KHODADAD
- Salons C & D* **Human Rights, Race & Culture**
 Conveners: MARIE GERVAIS and KAMILA BAHBAHANI, Chair: MARIE GERVAIS
 2:00 - 3:00 Transforming Colonial Discourse through Indigenous Methodologies and
 Philosophies: Core Requirements for Indigenous Peacebuilding ANDRIA DURNEY
 3:15 - 4:15 To Enlighten the Whole World: Recognizing the Role of Indigenous Peoples in the
 Spiritual and Social Transformation of Humankind SAHAR D. SATTARZADEH
- Bayside 2* **International Affairs**
 Convener and Chair: JULIA BERGER
 2:00 - 3:00 Individuals, Institutions and Communities – A Useful Framework for Shaping
 Habits of Thought in International Development? DARREN HEDLEY
 3:15 - 4:15 Contributions to Global Discourses: A Reflection on Content and Form
 JULIA BERGER and DANIEL PERELL
 4:30 - 5:30 Preventing Genocide: Measuring Success by What Does Not Happen
 PAYAM AKHAVAN
- Newport Beach* **Philosophy I**
 Convener and Chair: IAN KLUGE
 2:00 - 3:00 Tetrarchic Thinking in the Bahá'í Writings WOLFGANG A. KLEBEL
 3:15 - 4:15 Can Ethics Be Based on Science Alone? IAN KLUGE
 4:30 - 5:30 Dimensions of the Heart as a Gateway to Spiritual Transformation
 JOHN STEERE and MICHELLE THELEN-STEERE
- Salons A & B* **Psychology**
 Chair: ABDU'L-MISSAGH GHADIRIAN
 3:15 - 4:15 Redefining Beauty: A Survivor's Story SHAYDA CUMMINGS

4:30 - 5:30 Two Truths and a Lie: A Reflection on Lying and Truthfulness in Society and the Bahá'í Community BRADFORD BAKER

Salons G & H **Science and Religion**

Conveners: STEPHEN FRIBERG and RON SHIGETA, Chair: STEPHEN FRIBERG

2:00 - 3:00 Consultation and the Circle of Truth: A Scientific Study of Consultation and Its Impact on Habits of Thought in Society at Large SHAHIN MOVAFAGH MOWZON

3:15 - 4:15 Common Ground: Our Experience Developing a Multi-blogger Website for Discourse on Science and Religion STEPHEN FRIBERG, MAYA BOHNHOFF, and BAHRAM NADIMI

4:30 - 5:30 **Perspectives on Evolution Panel**

Evolutionary Christianity and Biologos: Looking at Two Christian Movements

Advancing the Harmony of Science and Religion LISA M. ORTUNO

Why You Are What You Think: The Evolution of Human Cognition JOHN RAGER

Irvine **Social Research & Social Change I**

Chair: KIM NAQVI

2:00 – 3:00 Exploring Habits of Thought about Sexuality and Identity: Storytelling, Belief, and Transformative Processes LYNNE SCHREIBER

3:15 – 4:15 Cyberbullying: A Spiritual Response to a Social Problem NIMA and NIKA NAIMI

4:30 – 5:30 Privacy Settings for Your Soul PAYAM SHODJAI

Bayside 3 **Study of Religion**

Chair: ROBERT STOCKMAN

2:00 – 3:00 Compromising Community: A Sociological Study of the Bahá'í Faith and Globalism TORANG ASADI

3:15 – 4:15 A New Discourse: Recalling that Primordial Covenant JACOB HILL

5:30 - 7:30 *Dinner Break*

Friday Evening – August 12, 2011

Grand Ballroom

7:30 **Plenary Session**

Presentation of Awards for Distinguished Scholarship to Harold Rosen and Abdu'l-Missagh Ghadirian by the Association for Bahá'í Studies Executive Committee

Arts Gala

Master of Ceremonies: EMAN ISADIAR

Gu-zheng Chinese instrument, Journey to the East SHURA NG

Rap Medley NABIL & KARIM

Songs from the Heart MUNIRIH SPARROW

A Touch of Opera, tenor JOHN DAVEY-HATCHER

Melodies from Persia RAMIN AMJADI, santoor; FARES HEDAYATI, tonbak

Grand Ballroom

9:30 **Evening Arts Programme**

The late evening Arts programme is one of many options open to the conference participants, and features planned and open-mic contributions.

Saturday, August 13, 2011

Grand Ballroom

9:00 **Plenary Session**

Chair: KENNETH BOWERS

Devotions

How the Arts Can Contribute to Community Building LUDWIG TUMAN

Human Knowledge and the Emancipation of Humankind HODA MAHMOUDI

12:00 - 2:45 *Lunch break*

Salon E- Grand Ballroom

1:00 - 2:30 **Consultative Session on the Vision and Activities of the Association for Bahá'í Studies – North America**

All are invited to an open consultation chaired by the ABS Executive Committee. How can ABS most effectively, in the words of the Universal House of Justice, “stimulate scholarly study of the Faith and its teachings, promote a sound understanding of the Cause in academic circles and demonstrate its relevance to the study of social issues”? Grab your lunch and come reflect on learning to date, consult about how you would like to see ABS develop, and suggest initiatives you might take to help make this possible.

2:45 – 5:30 p.m. Simultaneous Breakout Sessions

Bayside 1 **Arts II**

Convener and Chair: ANNE GORDON PERRY

2:45 - 3:45 Tapping into the Spiritual Power of the Arts: An International Grassroots Project Helping to Integrate the Vitality of the Arts into Community Life LUDWIG TUMAN

4:00 - 5:00 From the Lucid to the Wondrous Script: Further Explorations of the Emergence and Development of Bahá'í Design-Calligraphy & Illumination SHAHROKH MONJAZEB

Salons C & D **Business, Ethics and Management Science**

Chair: MARIE GERVAIS

2:45 - 3:45 The Corporation as a Participant in the Divine Plan JASON COMBS and MICHELLE TASHAKOR

Salons C & D **Collaborative Panel – Work-Life and Beyond**

- Chair: MARIE GERVAIS
- 4:00 - 5:30 Work as Spiritual Practice MARIE GERVAIS
 “Elderment” - Transforming the Concept of “Retirement” ROBERT L. ROGERS
 Exploring Synergy between Teaching Children’s Classes and Effectiveness in
 a Non-teaching Profession LYN OSTAR
- Anaheim* **Education II**
 Chair: WHITNEY WHITE KAZEMIPOUR
- 2:45 - 3:45 Follow-up Discussion to Plenary Session: Changing Habits of Thought and Practice
 around Race BILLIE MAYO
- 4:00 - 5:30 **Education and Culture Panel**
 Mothering the New Order: The Possibilities for Purposeful Change between
 Generations WHITNEY WHITE KAZEMIPOUR
 Bahá’í Appeal to Contemporary American Youth TAHIREH HICKS
 A Canadian Teacher in China JAMES HOWDEN
- Salons A & B* **Human and Natural Environment**
 Convener and Chair: JOHN THELEN STEERE
- 2:45 - 3:45 Responding to Environmentalism: A Bahá’í Perspective CRAIG LOEHLE
 4:00 - 5:00 Bahá’í Pilgrimage: History and Spirit Materially Grounded DANIEL AZIM PSCHAIDA
- Bayside 3* **Law and Governance**
Convener: ROLANDO AGUILERA, **Chair:** LISA DUFRAIMONT
- 2:45 - 3:45 The Law of the Land and the State of the Soul: Analyzing Theoretical Frameworks of
 Bahá’í and Islamic Law Within and Beyond the Nation-State MOUSSA Z. TRAORÉ
- 4:00 - 5:30 **Public Administration and Governance Panel**
 Consultation as Self Rule: Removing Power from Public Discourse DEBORAH CLARK VANCE
 Legitimacy and Religion: The Learning from Applying Bahá’u’lláh’s Teachings in the
 Context of Iceland’s Constitutional Reform VAHID ÓÐINN SPENCER
 Common Ground: The Future of the Adversarial System
 KENNETH M. CABOT and JULIE SARRACINO
- Newport Beach* **Peace and Conflict Studies**
 Chair: TRIP BARTHEL
- 4:00 - 5:00 Bahá’í Ethics: Virtues, Principles and Reciprocity in Action TRIP BARTHEL
- Newport Beach* **Philosophy II**
 Convener and Chair: IAN KLUGE
- 2:45 - 3:45 A Bahá’í Understanding of Justice Correlated with Contemporary, Liberal, Classical
 and Christian Understandings GERALD FILSON
- Bayside 2* **Psychology II**
 Chair: ABDU’L-MISSAGH GHADIRIAN
- 2:45 - 3:45 Perspectives on Altruism: Poverty, Wealth, and Compassion PAUL KAYHAN PIFF
 In Support of Altruism: Narrative Lore of Bahá’í Giving DAVID PIFF
- 4:00 – 5:30 **Spiritual and Psychological Transformation Panel**

Building Capacity for Contentment in a World of Discontent ABDU'L-MISSAGH GHADIRIAN
Transforming Habits of Thought: A Psychological/Spiritual Perspective ALEXANDER MILOFF
Transforming Our Lives in the Light of Spirit REZA SABERI

Salons G & H **Science and Religion II**

Convener and Chair: STEPHEN FRIBERG

2:45 - 3:45 A Metaphor Is Analyzed as a Thought Experiment to Bridge the Theories of Science of Hatcher and Kuhn PHILIP SMITH, JEAN-PIERRE BAUDOIN, and HOMA SMITH

Irvine **Social Research and Social Change II**

Chair: KIM NAQVI

2:45 – 3:45 Engaging in Discourse on Homosexuality NANCY SONGER and LISA ORTUNO

4:00 - 5:30 Transforming Habits of the Heart: An Exploration of the Contribution of the Bahá'í Network on Aids, Sexuality, Addiction, and Abuse
BRIAN A. MILLER, MARY K. RADPOUR and LARRY MCCULLOUGH

Salons G & H **Special Session on University Courses**

Convener: ABS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, Chair: PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS

4:00 - 5:30 Fostering the Creation and Delivery of Courses with Bahá'í Content at Universities and Colleges FIROUZ ABBASIAN, FARHAD ROHANI and BRADFORD BAKER

5:30 - 7:30 *Dinner Break*

Saturday Evening, August 13, 2011

Grand Ballroom

7:30 **Plenary Session**

Chair: PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS

Devotions

Chamber Music for Violin and Piano RICK SHINOZAKI and EMAN ISADIAR

The 29th Hasan M. Balyuzi Memorial Lecture

The Birth of the Human Being: Beyond Religious Traditionalism
and Materialistic Modernity

NADER SAIEDI

Grand Ballroom

9:30 **Evening Arts Programme**

The late evening Arts programme is one of many options open to the conference participants, and features planned and open-mic contributions.

Sunday, August 14, 2011

Regency Ballroom

9:00

Plenary Session

Chair: LISA DUFRAIMONT

Devotions

The Loving Interpretation of Space FARIBORZ SAHBA

Soulpancake: The Intersection of Art and Faith RAINN WILSON

12:00

Closing musical presentation by children and junior youth

Closing remarks: Association for Bahá'í Studies Executive Committee

Abstracts and Autobiographical Notes

Firouz Abbasian • Fostering the Creation and Delivery of Courses on the Bahá'í Faith at Universities and Colleges (panel)

Firouz Abbasian co-taught a course on the Bahá'í Faith at University of Oklahoma with Farhad Rohani

Farzin Aghdasi • An Instrument Tempered in the Crucible of Experience: Training Institutes and Habits of Thought

Educational systems have a profound impact on habits of thought. Materialistic assumptions about reality shape a worldview that often exhibits stark contradictions. The Bahá'í community is building an educational system in the form of the training institute that is destined to gradually emerge as a model for developing those habits of thought that will lead to a coherent and balanced view of physical, social and spiritual reality. We examine the construction of a conceptual framework for learning and social action that avoids fragmentation, dichotomy, and rigidity. Workings of institutes at the frontiers of this learning process will be examined.

FARZIN AGHDASI was a Bahá'í pioneer in Africa much of his adult life and intimately involved in training institute development in Southern Africa and North America. He served as a Continental Counsellor for the Americas. He holds a PhD in Electrical Engineering, and lives with his wife and two children.

Payam Akhavan • Preventing Genocide: Measuring Success by What Does Not Happen

Unlike natural disasters, genocide is a political choice. It can thus be predicted and prevented. The UN has repeatedly failed to intervene against on-going genocide, in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Darfur. The political cost of armed intervention is usually prohibitive where narrow national interests are not involved. The time to act is before manageable conflict escalates into genocidal violence. An emphasis on early warning and modest measures such as ending incitement to hatred through radio broadcasts in Ivory Coast, or preventive deployment of peacekeepers as in Macedonia, point to a new direction for confronting this central challenge to the world community.

PAYAM AKHAVAN, Professor of International Law, McGill University, served as UN war crimes prosecutor, The Hague, and counsel before the World Court, is co-founder of the Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre, chair of the Global Conference on Prevention of Genocide, author of a UN Report on Prevention of Genocide, and Co-Produced "Genos.Cide: The Great Challenge"

Torang Asadi • Compromising Community: A Sociological Study of the Bahá'í Faith and Globalism

A sense of community is implied in a range of scholarship on religion, from Emile Durkheim to Benson Saler, where the communal element is necessarily present and crucial in the religious context.

Benedict Anderson's notion of an "imagined community" is mostly utilized in this study to develop a spectrum and examine the placement of the Bahá'í Faith at a specific degree of community. The purpose of this paper is to examine the Bahá'í Faith's ideational, attempted, and achieved sense of community. Examining the Faith's unifying rudiments and impediments creates a repertoire of elements for examining the downward gradation and graduation of the Bahá'í Faith on this spectrum.

TORANG ASADI is a graduate student and teaching assistant at the University of Kansas. She specializes in new religions, communal groups, and the sociology of religion while employing film as a medium for research.

Bradford Baker • Fostering the Creation and Delivery of Courses on the Bahá'í Faith at Universities and Colleges (Panel)

Bradford Baker • Two Truths and a Lie: A Reflection on Lying and Truthfulness in Society and the Bahá'í Community

Truthfulness is the foundation of all human virtue, yet lying is a phenomenon that is central to the human condition. Surprisingly, despite the import of the former and the prevalence of the latter, both topics have been largely unexplored by science. In this interactive workshop, I will provide a brief overview of the psychological science of studying lying and truthfulness, present data and findings from my own empirical studies into the subjects, and discuss the implications of both topics on the Bahá'í community.

BRADFORD BAKER is a research assistant in the Foster School of Business at the University of Washington. His research focuses on the impact of lying and truthfulness within organizational settings, particularly NGO's. He is applying to PhD programs in business ethics this fall.

Trip Barthel and Cindy Savage • 9 Facets: Creating a Praiseworthy Life (Poster Session)

Inspired by a talk given by Mr. Ali Nakhjavani, 9 Facets develops a model for living a consecrated life based on: Prayer, study, health, education, family, community, teaching, giving and service. 9-FACETS is based on the concepts of being and doing (recognition and obedience) from the Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys, by the purpose of our life and by considering that which is praiseworthy. We offer 9 Facets to help you develop the skills necessary to make principle-based decisions, take action and bring yourself to account each day as you reflect on both your spiritual and material progress.

Trip Barthel • Bahá'í Ethics: Virtues, Principles and Reciprocity in Action

We are constantly challenging ourselves with new and different ideas, leading us in directions that create moral and ethical dilemmas. The Bahá'í Writings offer advice in three distinct areas of ethics: virtues, principles and reciprocity. This workshop will interactively explore the integration of these three paradigms and their relationship to spiritual growth. Through considering real world issues, we will reflect on the application of these criteria in a complete ethical decision making process.

TRIP BARTHEL, Founder and Executive Director (1999-2009) of the Neighborhood Mediation Center in Reno, Nevada, has a MA in Conflict Resolution and conducts teaching and training experiences at

conferences, schools and around the world and was lead trainer for the Bahá'í Justice Society Mediation Training Program. He and his wife live in Shanghai, China.

Jean-Pierre Baudoin • A Metaphor Is Analyzed as a Thought Experiment to Bridge the Theories of Science of Hatcher and Kuhn (see Smith for abstract)

JEAN-PIERRE BAUDOIN holds a Doctorate in Agronomic Sciences and is president of the Department of Agronomical Sciences at the University of Liège (Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech). His research interests in South America and Africa include the genetic improvement of tropical plants and sustainable rural development.

Sandra J. Bean and David Piff • Habits of Thought: Does Pseudoscience Harm the Greater Good?

Non-scientific thinking prevails in society, including the Bahá'í community. Non-critical habits of thought work against the advancement of civilization. Anecdotal accounts of purported non-medical cures, for example, can lead to ignoring advice from true and “competent physicians.” The Internet also provides a powerful avenue for disseminating rumors and unreliable information – for example, information found online has been found to discourage parents from inoculating their children against serious childhood diseases and dismiss other public measures. Bahá'ís are not more prone to magical thinking than other segments of society at large; however, the independent investigation of truth requires that we interrogate pseudo-scientific attitudes.

SANDRA J. BEAN, MPH, is a doctoral candidate in public health at Oregon State University. Her research focus is on the effect of vaccine opposition on the public's health. Sandra lived and worked as a Bahá'í pioneer in Asia and later worked for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Julia Berger and Daniel Perell • Contributions to Global Discourses: a Reflection on Content and Form

We will explore a number of the discourses in which the Bahá'í International Community is presently engaged, such as social and sustainable development, the equality of women and men, and human rights. We will facilitate an exploration of participants' insights for the application of Bahá'í teachings, thought, guidance and experience to these discourses as well as an exploration of new methods for engagement in global discourses.

JULIA BERGER joined the Bahá'í International Community's New York Office as Senior Researcher in 2004. Julia holds a MEd in International Development and Education from the University of Toronto. She lives in New York with her husband and twin daughters.

Maya Bohnhoff • Common Ground: Our Experience Developing a Multi-blogger Website for Discourse on Science and Religion (see Friberg for abstract)

MAYA KAATHRYN BOHNHOFF has been a Bahá'í for 36 years. A writer of fiction and non-fiction, and a musician, she worked for 15 years as an instructional designer.

Leanne Boschman • Multimedia Mental Health Tools: Challenging Patterns of Addiction (see Epp for abstract)

LEANNE BOSCHMAN, Master's in English Literature (Saskatchewan, 1989), is working on her PhD in Languages, Cultures, and Literacies Education at Simon Fraser University. A post-secondary educator teaching English and Women's Studies for twenty-one years, she is also a poet, published in anthologies, literary journals, and published her first collection in 2009.

Kenneth Bowers • Building Administrative Capacity

Since the institute process was established, the Universal House of Justice has offered abundant commentary on how the individual, the institutions and the community together advance the process of growth. Its recent letter to the Boards of Counselors refers to "habits of thought" that must be encouraged, as well as tendencies "that need to be gradually overcome" for the Plan's successful prosecution. This talk examines how the institute process has impacted the US National Spiritual Assembly's approach in administering the community, fostering growth, advancing the discourses of society, encouraging initiatives for social action, and other activities, with special emphasis on new habits of thought.

KENNETH BOWERS has served since 2007 as Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. Previously, he served as its Deputy-Secretary and as Secretary of the US National Teaching Committee. Originally from Augusta, Georgia, he lives in Wilmette, Illinois with his wife and two children.

Kenneth M. Cabot and Julie Sarracino • Common Ground: The Future of the Adversarial System - Public Administration and Governance Panel

When one considers the defining characteristics of modern systems of justice, the adversarial nature of most proceedings is among the most prevalent and historically indelible. By design, this system requires that one party "lose" in order for the other to "win," and by consequence, destroys the very fabric of relationships. This interactive discussion will explore the future of adversarial legal proceedings and the insight that Bahá'í thought can offer to the development of alternative models of dispute resolution, while at the same time safeguarding the integrity of the Bahá'í concept of consultation from pervasive societal temptations to divide.

KENNETH M. CABOT, ESQ. serves as a Deputy Attorney General for the State of New Jersey where he prosecutes child abuse and neglect cases. He holds a BA from The College of New Jersey, a MS from the Rutgers Center for Global Change and Governance, and a JD from the Rutgers University School of Law.

Natasha Collishaw • Formulating Life Decisions in a Context of Service to Humanity (see VanderDussen for abstract)

NATASHA COLLISHAW earned a Bachelor of Arts in journalism from Carleton University.

Jason Combs and Michelle Tashakor • The Corporation as a Participant in the Divine Plan

The Universal House of Justice identifies three protagonists in the Divine Plan: the individual, community, and institution. In social discourse outside the Bahá'í Faith, corporations are understood as agents of economic prosperity. Some have made significant humanitarian contributions. Discussions in Bahá'í communities do not tend to focus on how corporations might relate to these protagonists; however, the writings of the Faith do not deny them a role. This paper examines corporations as organizations unique to Bahá'u'lláh's Dispensation through which His teachings have been realized; their advancements in social action; and what they must overcome to release their civilization-building powers.

JASON COMBS, PHD, is the President and co-founder of Sirocco, LLC. He has worked as a consultant and trainer for businesses in the Dayton, OH area for 15 years. He also has taught as an instructor in communication at the graduate and undergraduate level at several colleges and universities.

Shayda Cummings • Redefining Beauty: A Survivor's Story

This is the story of a young Bahá'í girl, drawn into a world where being thin was everything. Despite her strong spiritual upbringing, she was helplessly seduced by an artificial self-image and eventually landed in the hospital with anorexia. Join her as she recounts her story, from the trials and tribulations to her eventual recovery and the central role the Bahá'í Faith played in teaching her the true definition of beauty.

SHAYDA CUMMINGS has been teaching adolescents for seven years and is currently a Junior High Physical Education teacher in Calgary, Alberta. She dedicates her time to coaching and mentoring Junior Youth in both a professional and personal capacity.

Janet, Edward, and Alan Cundall • Cooperating to Renew Resources Instead of Fighting over Dwindling Resources

BEO (LIFE in Gaelic) board game encourages participants to consult on real solutions to challenges of ecology, economy and society. By playing together, participants learn that cooperation, creativity and unity is the way to win a better world for everyone.

JANET CUNDALL, M.Sc. Education for SustainAbility (Edinburgh) and M.Sc. Forestry (Oxon), Montessori Dipl., currently Early Childhood Educator, previously Social Forester.

EDWARD CUNDALL, PhD Agricultural Botany, 30 years experience as a plant/ tree breeder, mostly in developing countries, specializes in oil seeds crop improved seed production.

ALAN CUNDALL, B.Ed. student and grass roots actor

Ellen Dodson • Using Appreciative Inquiry for Exploring the Correlation between Current Public Education and the Bahá'í Teachings

Participants will explore the correlations between leading ideas in public education and the Bahá'í teachings. Working in small groups the participants will practice forming Appreciative Inquiries that could be used to elevate discussions with people involved in public education. We'll be using techniques from the World Café consensus building process and generate possible inquiries from the perspective of a teacher, parent, administrator or community member.

ELLEN DODSON is a business owner and has a MS in Human Resource Economics. She has served on the Mt. Baker Spiritual Assembly for 30 years, on the Cluster's ATC for the last six years. She has been actively involved in all the core activities. Ellen has been the president of the School Board of her local K-12 district since 1999.

Andria Durney • Transforming Colonial Discourse through Indigenous Methodologies and Philosophies: Core Requirements for Indigenous Peacebuilding

My thesis explores Indigenous peacebuilding from the perspective of a fifteen year relationship with Gamilaroi Aboriginal people in regional Australia. My research develops postcolonial, Indigenous, anthropological, feminist and peacebuilding scholarship/activism in transforming research practice and epistemology to recognise and engage Gamilaroi lifeworlds. I investigate the impacts of colonial "habits of thought" on Gamilaroi, and Gamilaroi efforts to promote "internal reconciliation" in their community through a renewal of Gamilaroi Indigenous philosophies and methodologies. I analyse these issues from a Bahá'í praxis of consultation, justice, and the oneness of humanity. Connections between the Ancient and Bahá'í cycles are also tentatively explored.

ANDRIA DURNEY, Visual Anthropology PhD student, University of New South Wales, Australian Postgraduate Award PhD scholarship, Faculty Top-up scholarship recipient, First class honours Human Geography and Anthropology does international solidarity work with Indigenous peoples in Philippines and Australia impacted by large-scale mining. Undergraduate studies in Environmental Engineering and Resource and Environmental Management.

Edward Epp and Leanne Boschman • Multimedia Mental Health Tools: Challenging Patterns of Addiction

This session recounts instances where individuals or groups, for long-term or in one session, use art and writing as tools to initiate a dialogue about healing and facilitate recovery. We also present illustrative examples of individually and collaboratively created texts and art works from Prince Rupert, Kitkatla, Masset, Lax Kw'áams, Nunavut, and more recently, Malahat, and Pennelakut and Halalt. We highlight a project initiated in November, 2010, in Duncan, BC, at an Addiction Awareness event, where eighty people, from children to elders, were invited to respond creatively through prose, lists, painting, and poetry that were collected and published in a booklet form.

EDWARD EPP, Master's in Art, Studio Art (Saskatchewan, 1975), Master's in Counselling (UNBC 1996), was an art educator for fifteen years, has been a practising professional artist for forty years, and serves as a mental health worker for the H'ulh-etun Health Society and in Kitimat, BC
EdwardEpp.com.

Gerald Filson • A Bahá'í Understanding of Justice Correlated with Contemporary, Liberal, Classical, and Christian Understandings

Understanding the Bahá'í concept of justice deepens if correlated with presentations of liberal, classical, and Christian ideas about justice. Sen, Dworkin, MacIntyre, Walzer, Rawls, and Salvatore remind us that justice and unity are often related in justice theories, yet the Bahá'í approach to this pairing overcomes problems met in earlier theories, pointing to changes in the relationship between justice as a norm of institutions and as a virtue of individuals. Inseparable from ideas about human nature, social practices, and institutions in which it is embedded, a Bahá'í concept of justice includes concepts about unity, deliberation, practical reasoning and consultation.

GERALD FILSON, PhD (Toronto), External Affairs Director, Bahá'ís of Canada. Chair, National Committee, Canadian Network International Human Rights, 1999-2002, Co-Chair Mosaic Program Group VisionTV, 1998-2001, Producer Bahá'í TV programs, 1988-2011, Board of Directors Couchiching Public Affairs Institute. Reads, doesn't tweet: Dworkin, Habermas, Taylor, Aquinas, McDowell, Salvatore... Married, three children.

Stephen Friberg, Maya Bohnhoff and Bahram Nadimi • Common Ground: Our Experience Developing a Multi-blogger Website for Discourse on Science and Religion

The unity of science and religion is a core teaching of the Bahá'í Faith—and a powerful vision beneficial to humankind. Implementing culture of learning principles, we have developed the Common Ground blogging website (<http://www.commongroundgroup.net/>), focusing on the need for a common ground for science and religion. Currently, it has more than 152 blogs, more than 475 comments, forums, articles, book reviews and regular visitors from around the world. In our presentation, we will review our experiences, lessons learned, and ongoing challenges, as well as asking the audience to provide ideas to help us grow the site.

STEPHEN FRIBERG, a Bahá'í living in Mountain View, California is a working scientist in the semiconductor industry in Silicon Valley. He has done extensive research in quantum optics in Japan.

Sean Gallagher • Lessons from 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Changing Habits of Thought (see Purushotma for abstract)

SEAN GALLAGHER attended UC Davis in California and The George Washington University in Washington DC, where he currently resides. He works in technology.

Keyvan Geula • The Missing Link in the Relationship Theories and Marriage Outcome Predictions

With divorce rates over 50%, the question of how to prepare for marriage, who to marry, and how to build a fortress for well being and salvation remains a mystery. Family systems, CBT or attachment theory, have highlighted the lifelong consequences of patterns of attachment to primary caregivers. The Bahá'í view of what is required for well-being and salvation adds a missing link in the building blocks of relationship theories without which we do not get the whole picture. Presentation examines research on relationship and marriage with the light of the Bahá'í Teachings for a better understanding of our choices.

KEYVAN GEULA, a licensed Marriage Family Therapist for over 20 years, specializes in using the Bahá'í Teachings to identify theories, techniques and approaches that produce the best results for her clients. She is the founder and executive director of Center for Global Integrated Education, a non-profit Bahá'í inspired educational organization.

Marie Gervais • Work as Spiritual Practice - Work-life and Beyond Panel

Learning to see work as worship moves beyond dichotomies of the struggle for existence and excessive pursuit of wealth. This habit of thought begins with mindfulness, transforms drudgery to joyful service and sanctifies our material existence. In this presentation, the concept of meaningful work in a variety of contexts will be explored through both a thematic collection of Bahá'í Writings and academic studies. Whether learning, doing housework, creating virtual games, driving a bus or acting as CEO of a large company, the place of work as spiritual practice can imbue our actions with purpose and dedication to the common weal.

MARIE GERVAIS, Director of Global Leadership Associates Inc., provides research, programming, and professional development for diverse workforces. In her paid work, Bahá'í activity and volunteering she concerns herself with the dynamic relationship between individuals and the systems and groups they live in, belong to, associate with and work within.

Abdu'l-Missagh Ghadirian • Building Capacity for Contentment in a World of Discontent – Spiritual & Psychological Transformation Panel

Pursuit of contentment is a common preoccupation of humanity. This presentation explores causes and suggests a remedy, examining fundamental elements in building capacity for contentment. Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of Madinatú'r-Rida (City of Radiant Acquiescence) which reveals manifold aspects of contentment and explains prime requisites for its attainment, and how the wayfarer of the Valley of Contentment burns away veils of desire to achieve happiness are discussed. Social science literature correlating contentment with human expectation and extrinsic values and materialistic societies' view of contentment as a commodity and by-product of success are explored. Conclusion includes empowerment for fulfilling inner potential for contentment.

ABDU'L-MISSAGH GHADIRIAN, Professor, McGill University, Faculty of Medicine, is the author of extensive publications including research articles and several books, the most recent of which is *Creative Dimensions of Suffering and Materialism – Moral and Social Consequences*. His recent teaching and research works have been on science and spirituality.

Roxanne Hai • Transformation on Purpose

Prayer without faith and action is not prayer. It is simply thought. And most of our suffering comes from not acting with faith on our prayers, from not living our life on purpose. It is the yearning of every soul to express itself, and it is the ego that oppresses our nobility. What would be available to you if your soul were free? How do you burst your cage asunder? This session combines the theories of ontological coaching and the Bahá'í teachings on spiritual transformation to help participants develop deliberate intentions, commitments and actions towards their own spiritual transformation.

ROXANNE HAI, after receiving a Master's degree in organizational development from the London School of Economics, joined TED, where she helps spread powerful ideas. A professional life coach affiliated with Accomplishment Coaching, she is the co-Founder/Coach of The Empowerment Circle, a small group forum for personal development and life transformation.

Darren Hedley • Individuals, Institutions and Communities – A Useful Framework for Shaping Habits of Thought in International Development?

The Universal House of Justice states that the individual, the institutions, and the community are the three protagonists of the Divine Plan, but could the idea of transformation – through the trichotomy of individual, community and institutions – provide a useful conceptual framework for social and economic development efforts in the wider global community? A number of examples will be given from current development thinking and practice to demonstrate how this conception could help to highlight the multi-faceted nature of international development, and to affirm that it is spiritually transformative in its core.

DARREN HEDLEY is a program and policy management consultant working with TANGO International. He has worked for 20 years in international development, including 14 years resident in Russia, Zambia and Cuba. His recently-awarded PhD in public policy focuses on multi-stakeholder networks for urban poverty reduction and water supply management.

Tahireh Hicks and Whitney White Kazemipour • Bahá'í Appeal to Contemporary American Youth – Education and Culture Panel

According to the Universal House of Justice (1996), youth are “eager to make a significant contribution to the progress of their communities.” With that in mind, this paper examines what is attractive and unattractive about the Bahá'í Faith to students in a California high school. Drawing on the lead presenter's participant-observation as a student and pilot peer interviews, the paper will explore youth thinking about religious and racial diversity, homosexuality, chastity, drugs, and gender equality. Finally, the paper will discuss how the Writings may be presented in order to attract and empower youth to engage with key teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

TAHIREH HICKS, a Bahá'í, is in eleventh grade at Capistrano Valley High School, in Mission Viejo, California. She is entering the International Baccalaureate program there in the fall and plays the flute.

Jacob Hill • A New Discourse: Recalling that Primordial Covenant

The Lawh-i-Manikchi Sahib is a response to a series of mysterious questions posed by a leader of the Zoroastrian community. The recipient was apparently dissatisfied with the tablet, hoping for a more specific answer to his questions. In a second tablet, revealed two years later, Bahá'u'lláh assures him that his questions were answered. Moreover, He asserts “A different Cause... hath appeared in this day and a different discourse is required (2.11).” What is the nature of this new discourse? What implications does it have for teaching the Faith? I hope to shed some light on these questions and others.

JACOB HILL is a graduate student in the field of information science. He currently resides in Chapel Hill, NC.

James “Jay” Howden • A Canadian Teacher in China

My two years teaching graduate students in north-eastern China – while our son attended a local elementary school – have spurred constant reflections on education. Chinese schooling mandates reverence, incredible effort, feverish competition, high achievement for the “winners” and assembly-line learning. Sam experienced a 180 degree turn from his Steiner-Waldorf school in Canada, while my sci-tech students must jump, yet again, the hurdle of English (with test-passing often the sole motivation). Among the rigours of Chinese education, the explorations of learning in the West, and the evolving practices of the Baha’is, there is educational *gold in them thar hills...*

JAMES “JAY” HOWDEN is an educator, long-time basketball coach, sometime writer and all-the-time father of four sons. A high school English teacher for 20 years, he was also Editorial Advisor to the former Governor General of Canada, Adrienne Clarkson. He and Diana live, learn and teach in Dalian, China.

Whitney White Kazemipour • Bahá’í Appeal to Contemporary American Youth - Education and Culture Panel (see Hicks for abstract)

Whitney White Kazemipour • Mothering the New Order: the Possibilities for Purposeful Change between Generations - Education & Culture Panel

The Universal House of Justice calls for the development of “new habits of thought” “at the level of culture,” and the overcoming of other “tendencies.” This paper argues that key sites for these processes are purposeful efforts of mothers. An anthropological study of immigrant mothers recently conducted by the presenter demonstrates that mothers engage in attempted change of received sociocultural values, elaborated in intellect, emotion, and practice. The limits and possibilities of such change efforts by mothers are explored in light of Bahá’í Writings on the mechanisms of social change, and the roles and ideal practices of mothers.

WHITNEY WHITE KAZEMIPOUR (PhD, UCLA) recently completed her dissertation in anthropology entitled “Revolutions in Microcosm: Migration, Meaning, and Mothering by Iranian-Americans”. She is also the mother of three school-aged children.

Camille N. Khodadad • Fulfilling Their Mission: Women as Peacemakers in the New Era

The Bahá’í teachings posit a prominent role for women in the shaping of world civilization, calling for them to be welcomed as men’s equal partners in every field of human endeavor, affirming that universal peace cannot be achieved until women freely contribute to society’s policy-making apparatus. This workshop will survey the current state of women’s empowerment, paying particular attention to international covenants and to legislation intended to guarantee it. The Bahá’í administrative order—in which women have been full and equal participants—will be presented as a model society would do well to emulate. Future developments will be envisioned.

CAMILLE N. KHODADAD, JD, has practiced in the area of employment law for the last 20 years. She is currently head of the employment law department of Hall, Prangle & Schoonveld in Chicago. Prior to joining HPS, Camille was a partner in the employment law department of Lord, Bissell & Brook.

Wolfgang A. Klebel • Tetrarchic Thinking in the Bahá'í Writings

Bahá'u'lláh's Writings have frequent references to four-fold relationships such as "firstness and lastness; inwardness and outwardness" and "the Seen and the Hidden" (*Seven Valleys*, 27). This presentation shows how these relationships, or "tetrarchies" as we call them, are mutually necessary polar opposites in on-going tension. They offer us a new way of thinking about humankind and the universe. This dynamic, multi-perspectival way of thinking also avoids relativism. With references to Wilber and Guardini, we show how this 'tetrarchic thinking' applies to psychology, philosophy and theology.

WOLFGANG A. KLEBEL Born 1933 Vienna Austria, former Catholic priest. Left priesthood and immigrated USA 1968; PhD. Fuller Graduate School of Psychology. Psychologist in California State Prison for 15 years now retired, private practice. Bahá'í since 1994; eight papers in *Lights of 'Irfán*, 2004 to present; one presentation ABS San Diego 2008.

Ian Kluge • Can Ethics be Based on Science Alone?

In *The Moral Landscape*, new atheist philosopher Sam Harris proposes that science is the only acceptable basis for ethics because only science provides rational, objective and universal standards of right and wrong. Ethics neither have nor need a religious foundation. This presentation examines Harris' claims, as well as those of such new atheist thinkers as Dawkins, Stenger and Sheehan to show how these arguments fail. It offers an alternate view in which, as taught by Bahá'u'lláh, science and religion can work in harmony on ethical issues.

IAN KLUGE is a poet, playwright and independent philosophy scholar. His numerous articles on philosophy and the Bahá'í Writings are published in the *Lights of 'Irfán* series. He also founded the Philosophy SIG at ABS and presents at ABS conferences.

Craig Loehle • Responding to Environmentalism: A Bahá'í Perspective

Environmentalism makes claims of moral authority. How should Bahá'ís respond to these issues? Environmentalism is a spectrum of belief, not monolithic, and the Bahá'í teachings on stewardship of nature can be placed on this spectrum. The extreme versions of environmentalism represent a turning toward nature is a reaction to the falling away from faith described by Bahá'u'lláh as part of the current malaise of human society. Nature, however, does not provide guidance on human interactions. Environmentalists may usefully be approached in terms of Bahá'ís' efforts to promote social justice and to place spiritual values on nature.

CRAIG LOEHLE, PHD, is a research scientist in forestry and conservation, with 127 scientific papers, four books (2 Bahá'í books) and several Bahá'í publications

Hoda Mahmoudi • Human Knowledge and the Emancipation of Humankind

Human knowledge is the means toward realizing world civilization as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh. A brief overview of the concept of knowledge and its treatment in Bahá'í texts is followed by searching reflection of certain themes in the current plan as brought forward and promulgated by the House of Justice. These themes focus the worldwide Bahá'í community's consultation and its efforts towards actions which exercise knowledge in constructing a global civilization. Throughout, the presentation establishes the prominence of the individual's humble response in applying acquired spiritual and secular knowledge to the complex and enduring process of civilization building in a learning mode.

HODA MAHMOUDI coordinates the Bahá'í World Centre's Research Department, is a Research Associate at The International Center for Health, Law and Ethics, Haifa University, was Dean of Arts & Sciences and Professor of Sociology at Northeastern Illinois University, Vice President and Dean of Olivet College, and served as Auxiliary Board Member for Protection.

Dorothy Marcic • Love Lift Me Higher

'Abdu'l-Bahá encouraged the believers to be happy. The Writings tell us we should love one another, forgive, be grateful and work towards a higher purpose, all of which modern science, in the form of positive psychology, has proven make us happier and healthier. This is one time when science caught up to religion. This session brings together the research from positive psychology, showing its essential harmony with the Teachings of the Faith. Participants will learn how to bring greater happiness into their own lives and the lives of others.

DR. DOROTHY MARCIC, playwright and professor at Columbia University, is the author of *Love Lift Me Higher* (George Ronald) and *Managing with the Wisdom of Love* and is a former Fulbright Scholar at the University of Economics-Prague. Her musical, "Respect" has played in 20 cities.

Billie Mayo • The Ubuntu Programme: Changing Habits of Thought and Practice around Race in the American Mid-West

Educational Equity Consultants has worked with approximately 1900 district leaders and school faculties on dismantling racism. Ubuntu, one its premier programs, is designed and facilitated to create a safe environment for people of color and whites to heal from the hurts of racism. Through a process of introspection and reflection, educators learn to identify behaviors and policies that adversely affect students' self-perception and their potential to succeed in school. More importantly, participants learn ways to alter or eliminate those behaviors. By implementing these strategies, educators establish "safe places" for young people to reclaim their liberatory consciousness and their inherent intelligence and nobility.

Billie Mayo • Follow-up discussion to Plenary Session: Changing Habits of Thought and Practice around Race

BILLIE MAYO, EDD, taught middle school for 23 years before entering central level administration. She was Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent of the St. Louis Public Schools and coordinator of the

Saint Louis Urban Educational Leadership Cohort at Saint Louis University. She is currently a senior partner with Educational Equity Consultants.

Larry McCullough • Transforming Habits of the Heart: An Exploration of the Contribution of the Bahá'í Network on Aids, Sexuality, Addiction, and Abuse - Psychology Panel (see Miller for panel abstract)

Larry McCullough • Developing a Culture of Compassion: How to Support a Practice of Appropriate Sharing that Builds Intimacy, Not Familiarity.

BNASAA connects issues in the larger community with the Bahá'ís and demonstrates the application of spiritual principles to concerns that trouble human society.

LARRY MCCULLOUGH, EDD, worked over 30 years in dance and theatre, business consulting for large corporations and personal development facilitation. He is Executive Director of Pinetree Institute, Eliot, Maine, dedicated to using the arts to facilitate personal and social development. Work with BNASAA has been a major source of inspiration for over 20 years.

Brian A. Miller, Mary K. Radpour and Larry McCullough • Transforming Habits of the Heart: An Exploration of the Contribution of the Bahá'í Network on Aids, Sexuality, Addiction, and Abuse - Psychology Panel

What has BNASAA contributed to the development of the Bahá'í community during its first 20 years of service and what role can it play in the evolution of Bahá'í culture as it extends its wide embrace to a suffering world? What methods has it developed to address the needs of suffering souls and how may these methods be employed by Bahá'í communities as they minister to an increasingly diverse population. This panel will share provisional answers to the aforementioned questions and report findings based on the collective experience of the BNASAA project from the perspective of its planners, participants, and Coordinating Committee members.

Brian Miller • Building Safe Communities: Trust, Honesty, and the Spiritual Transformation of Mind and Heart

BNASAA has created a spirit of community which is extraordinary. As civility and connectedness become issues of national concern, it becomes all the more useful to inquire into how such a phenomenon has been fostered.

BRIAN A. MILLER, PhD, Near Eastern Studies, U C Berkeley, has presented to a number of ABS conferences on Bahá'í scholarship, the Arabic poetry of Bahá'u'lláh, and contributed to the *Bahá'í Studies Review*. He is a conference coordinator for BNASAA and served on the planning team for five BNASAA conferences at the Bosch Bahá'í School.

Alexander Miloff • Transforming Habits of Thought: A Psychological/ Spiritual Perspective — Spiritual & Psychological Transformation Panel

“The reality of man is his thought” says ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Yet, so often our thoughts are a major impediment to our spiritual goals. We numb our thinking minds with sedatives and indulge in television and unhealthy eating habits as a means of repression. How are we to approach our thoughts from a healthy psychological and spiritual perspective? This presentation will draw on the Bahá’í Writings, Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy and Hindu/Buddhist philosophy to discuss the arising of thought and how it can be used in a way that improves our ability to be of service.

ALEXANDER MILOFF holds a Masters degree in Public Health from BRAC University and in the past five years has worked for multiple organizations in the field of international health. He will soon begin an MA in Counselling and Spirituality from Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Canada.

Shahrokh Monjazez • From the Lucid to the Wondrous Script: Further Explorations of the Emergence and Development of Bahá’í Design-Calligraphy & Illumination

Building on earlier work, this presentation will show through the use of rare photos and artistic images the emergence of Bahá’í Design-Calligraphy and Illumination as a highly innovative and stylized form within the traditional genre of Arabic and Persian Calligraphy of the Islamic World.

SHAHROKH MONJAZEB has been a presenter at the ABS annual conference since 1991. He is the co-founder of The Furútan Academy for the Study of Bahá’í History and Sacred Text and is the author of a monograph on Bahá’u’lláh entitled *Bahá’u’lláh: A Brief Survey of His Life and Works*.

Shahin Movafagh Mowzoon • Consultation and the Circle of Truth: A Scientific Study of Consultation and its Impact on Habits of Thought in Society at Large

In this presentation it is shown how the efforts of crowd sourcing, group intelligence, collective diversity, decision markets and David Bohm’s concept of “Dialogue” are paving a path towards the consultation process. In addition, original research is included computing the error for majority voting group decisions based on probability theory. A scientific foundation is presented for various elements of the consultative process and its impact on reducing error in group decisions. Possible approaches are proposed towards a Bahá’í inspired process based on elements of consultation and the potential impact of such a process on the society at large are discussed.

SHAHIN MOWZON currently works in decision support. He completed his graduate research involving statistical models analyzing the surface of Mars. He is adjunct faculty at Mesa Community College and visiting Faculty at Nanjing University of Information and Computer Science. He likes to play Spanish guitar. His greatest passion is to write.

Bahram Nadimi • Common Ground: Our Experience Developing a Multi-blogger Website for Discourse on Science and Religion (see Friberg for abstract)

BAHRAM NADIMI is a system engineer working for an optical network company in Silicon Valley and a member of the Bahá’í Faith. He is passionate about how the various major religions have advanced civilization.

Nima and Nika Naimi • Cyberbullying: A Spiritual Response to a Social Problem

This presentation will introduce the topic of cyberbullying; expand upon its definition; explain which media are used, why it happens and what psychological effects it has on its victims. By looking at Bahá'í Writings that address the moral education of children and junior youth, we compare and contrast initiatives to prevent and respond to cyberbullying and how Bahá'í principles may be added to them to help “change habits of thought.” We likewise explore the link between cyberbullying, the law and the Faith while considering the fundamentals of justice within the Bahá'í context.

NIMA NAIMI received his law degree from the Université de Québec à Montréal in 2011. For the past two years he has been conducting legal research on cyberbullying internationally. In June 2010 he presented his research at the World Council of Comparative Education Societies World Congress in Istanbul Turkey. He will be called to the bar later this year.

NIKA NAIMI is receiving her Master of Arts in Culture and Values in Education at McGill University and her research focuses on cyberbullying, empathy, and the Golden Rule. She has spoken at many conferences worldwide about cyberbullying and will be teaching at Université de Montréal in 2012.

Lisa Ortuno • Engaging in Discourse on Homosexuality (see Songer)

Lisa M. Ortuno • Evolutionary Christianity and Biologos: Looking at Two Christian Movements Advancing the Harmony of Science and Religion - Perspectives on Evolution Panel

Understanding scientific evidence and how to interpret it together with Revelation are challenges Bahá'ís face. Here I present two active Christian movements that are advancing the harmony of science and religion in interesting ways – Evolutionary Christianity and Biologos. I describe the history of these movements, their goals and methods and areas of differentiation from Bahá'í beliefs. Core concepts of these movements include evolutionary processes as God's mechanism for the creation of diversity, the place and importance of the scientific enterprise and integration with Divine Revelation. Adopting similar methodologies and engaging with people with similar goals will be discussed.

LISA M. ORTUNO has a PhD in biology from the University of South Carolina with an emphasis on population genetics and molecular biology. She currently works for an international biotechnology company as a DNA technical support specialist. She is a member of the Columbia Bahá'í Community in South Carolina.

John Rager • Why You Are What You Think: The Evolution of Human Cognition - Perspectives on Evolution Panel

Anthropological evidence suggests that the frontal lobes of the hominid brain evolved over a relatively short time, some three million years. The culmination of this physical evolution is the appearance of *Homo sapiens*. This area of the brain is most associated with the uniquely human capacities of imagination and planning. Imagination is that faculty that is both brain based but also spiritually grounded according to 'Abdu'l-Bahá; that is, imagination, in its broadest sense, is the faculty that bridges the physical and spiritual worlds. This is the uniquely human faculty that demonstrates the teleological basis of the universe and man's role within it.

JOHN RAGER is a retired educator and administration who has taught children as young as Grade 1 and adults in post-graduate professional courses.

Lyn Ostar • Exploring Synergy between Teaching Children’s Classes and Effectiveness in a Non-Teaching Profession - Work Life and Beyond Panel

Training and service as a Bahá’í children’s class teacher produces benefits for both the children and the teacher. Both the writings often used in teacher education and the content of the lessons are internalized most effectively when put into practice in teaching a diverse group of students. This learning is then naturally and effectively applied in dealing with adults in a professional environment. In this talk, I will draw on personal experience to illustrate how the practice of teaching Bahá’í children’s classes develops skills that are directly applicable to effectiveness in a non-teaching profession.

LYN OSTAR graduated with her MS in Materials Science Engineering from Stanford University in 1990. She has worked as an engineer with countless individuals for more than 20 years on a variety of challenges. She is a mother, veteran children’s teacher for both Bahá’ís and friends and a Ruhi tutor.

Chris Page • Encountering the Space of Heaven (Poster Presentation)

Sky is the unbroken heaven of our world, a universally accessible example of the continuous expression of the Divine Will. “Nature is God’s Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world” (Bahá’u’lláh). Examining and experiencing the ever changing sky is a new source for my artistic practice informing the content, pictorial development, and creative process of the current series of paintings. In this series, an essentially abstract space is developed using gestural incidents that are layered, modified, or erased to create an unending flow of appearing and disappearing rhythms across the picture plane forming a spatially ambiguous image.

CHRIS PAGE is a practicing artist since 1973, with individual and group showings around the US. A 1995 trip to Baffin Island in the Canadian Arctic resulted in a significant change from painterly non-representational painting to the use of nature and landscape as overt subject matter. A Bahá’í since 1971.

Daniel Perell • Contributions to Global Discourses: a Reflection on Content and Form (see Berger)

DANIEL PERELL joined the Bahá’í International Community’s New York Office as an Alternate Representative in 2011. His work focuses primarily on human rights. Daniel received a JD from the University of Virginia School of Law and a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University.

Paul Kayhan Piff • Poverty, Wealth and Compassion - Perspectives on Altruism Panel

Economic disparities in society are as marked as ever; wealth is overwhelmingly concentrated in the hands of a select few. Inequality shapes distinct psychological cultures: divergent patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior among society’s “haves” and “have-nots.” I present experiments showing that

individuals from lower-class backgrounds—disadvantaged in terms of income and education—are more generous and compassionate than their advantaged, upper-class counterparts. This research elucidates the unique, and potentially surprising, ways in which wealth and poverty shape altruism and compassion in society.

PAUL K. PIFF is a psychology researcher and PhD candidate in social-personality psychology at the University of California, Berkeley. He studies social hierarchy, emotion, and altruism. He received his MA from the University of California, Berkeley, and his BA from Reed College.

David Piff • Habits of Thought: Does Pseudoscience Harm the Greater Good? (see Bean)

David Piff • In Support of Altruism: Narrative Lore of Bahá'í Giving - Perspectives on Altruism Panel

This presentation explores popular stories as persuasive vehicles encouraging Bahá'ís to freely give in support of community projects. It hypothesises that Bahá'í stories echo fables in the literature of other religious communities – for example the parable of the “widow’s mite.” Elsewhere, magical correspondences occur, as when, unbeknown to the giver, a particular amount, sacrificially given, exactly matches the sum needed. Other stories turn the privilege of giving into shame or loss when a Bahá'í denies financial support to the community. Implicit in these stories is a pervasive suspicion of wealth and a valorization of the virtuous poor.

DAVID PIFF, PhD, is Assistant Regional Administrator, National Archives Pacific Region and has had a long career in archives, including 17 years at the Bahá'í World Centre. He has degrees in psychology and history, a PhD in Sociology of Religion (University of Copenhagen) and has written a dissertation on popular Bahá'í lore.

Daniel Azim Pschaida • Bahá'í Pilgrimage: History and Spirit Materially Grounded

In conversation with pilgrimage studies as well as studies in material culture, this research presents reports I obtained from ten Bahá'ís through interviews as well as journals and running blogs on their impressions of visiting Bahá'í sacred sites on pilgrimage. Drawing on Belden C. Lane’s article “Giving Voice to Place,” I find their experience to be a kind of dance between place and religious conceptions, expressing the Bahá'í ideal of manifestation, where in the pilgrims’ experience this world comes closer to the sacred and the spirit realm becomes profounder through a grounding in the material.

DANIEL AZIM PSCHAIDA is beginning his fifth year of graduate school in religious studies, having previously studied education. His PhD work at University of California, Riverside focuses on fresh definitions of Islam being created by a young generation of American Muslims. He has been a Bahá'í for over sixteen years.

Shastri Purushotma and Sean Gallagher • Lessons from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Changing Habits of Thought

This presentation will examine the rhetorical style used by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to change habits of thought during his epic travels to the United States in 1912. His approach appealed to both the mind and the heart; understood the importance of symbols and analogies; was custom-suited to the capacity of the listeners, yet remained “uncompromising in defense of the truth.” The workshop will study the common methods the Master employed across a variety of social and cultural spaces, and will seek to discover how his example and approach can be applied by the Bahá’í community in its current work.

SHASTRI PURUSHOTMA works as human rights officer for the National Spiritual Assembly’s office of external affairs in Washington, DC.

Mary K. Radpour • Transforming Habits of the Heart: An Exploration of the Contribution of the Bahá’í Network on Aids, Sexuality, Addiction, and Abuse - Psychology Panel (see Miller)

Mary K. Radpour • Lessons Learned: A Reflection on 20 Years of Development of the BNASAA Process.

We overcome habits of thought that we allow to divide us from those we perceive as morally inferior to ourselves, that create false dichotomies in the language surrounding “identities,” and address the toxic cycles of thought in blame and shame.

MARY K. RADPOUR is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice in Chattanooga, TN. She is a frequent speaker at Bahá’í schools and conferences, on the topics of spirituality, sexuality, and mental health.

Robert L. Rogers • “Elderment” - Transforming the Concept of “Retirement” – Work-Life and Beyond Panel

This presentation suggests a lifestyle movement called “Elderment” where “seniors” incorporate Bahá’í concepts into everyday routines and creatively address major issues of society such as financial burdens for elder care and other practical and ethical concerns as societies age. Elders can use their collective wisdom and experience to try out alternative time management through use of the Bahá’í calendar, express world and community citizenship which moves beyond politics and money, explore ways of organizing time and space to better serve society, and illustrate that the elderly have much to contribute to ecological and justice-filled communities.

ROBERT L. ROGERS I am 11 years into my Bahá’í experience and have “retired” from owning my own architectural firm in Virginia. My wife and I recently moved to Evanston, Illinois, to be near our daughter’s family, and are exploring the fascinating and challenging aspects of “elderment” and our role as Bahá’ís.

Farhad Rohani • Fostering the Creation and Delivery of Courses on the Bahá’í Faith at Universities and Colleges (panel)

FARHAD ROHANI, PhD in Philosophy - University of Oklahoma, has taught a course on the Bahá'í Faith at University of Oklahoma and courses on philosophy at Redlands Community College.

Reza Saberi • Transforming Our Lives in the Light of Spirit - Spiritual & Psychological Transformation Panel

Mr. Saberi will explore "Transformation of Habits of Thought" through a lecture titled "Transforming Our Lives in the Light of Spirit." He will explore *why* we need to raise our consciousness and come into contact with a higher reality and *how* we can achieve this goal and gain understanding of the nature of the material world, life in general, human condition, and the different planes of existence. He will also take us through the three main paths to enlightenment: The Path of Faith (religions of East and West), The Path of Contemplation (yoga, Sufism, mysticism), The Path of Knowledge (metaphysics).

REZA SABERI is a noted educator, translator, speaker and author, having published 11 books on subjects including Persian poetry and philosophy. He holds a Master's degree in English from Seton Hall University and has written and lectured extensively on the topics of mysticism, spirituality and transcendence. He resides in Fargo, ND.

Fariborz Sahba • Loving Interpretation of Space

Using the field of architecture, Mr. Sahba elaborates on the Bahá'í insight and vision of "space". He argues space, so interpreted, could have much wider meaning than "building space" and in fact could mean the span of our world, our life. "Ineffable space" connects to our inner self, our heart. The dimension of our vision, not the material dimensions of space defines the extent of an "ineffable space." Our relationship with space shapes our imagination as our imagination creates space. It is through this extraordinary interrelation that we contribute to the perfection of the perfect handiworks of God.

FARIBORZ SAHBA, MAIBC, is recognised worldwide for his architectural work. The Bahá'í House of Worship in India is one of the most visited buildings in the world and his design for the Terraces of the Shrine of the Báb is a World Heritage Site. Mr Sahba was also the project manager of the Bahá'í World Centre Mount Carmel Projects.

Nader Saiedi • The Birth of the Human Being: Beyond Religious Traditionalism and Materialistic Modernity

Our history so far has been primarily a history of dehumanization of humans, a process through which human beings are reduced to the level of nature. Thus the birth of the human being requires a reconstruction of both religion and modernity. Defining humans as humans entails affirmation of three principles which coincide with the three chronological themes in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's redefinition of the concept of freedom is a call for the birth of a dialogical culture in which humans are treated as humans. This dialogical character of human reality is rooted in both the declaration and the martyrdom of the Báb.

NADER SAIEDI received his Master's degree in economics from Pahlavi University, Shiraz, his PhD in sociology from the University of Wisconsin, and is a professor of sociology at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. His most recent book is *Gate of the Heart: Understanding the Writings of the Báb* (2008).

Julie Sarracino • Common Ground: the Future of the Adversarial System - Public Administration and Governance Panel (see Cabot for abstract)

JULIE SARRACINO student at Osgoode Hall Law School, Toronto, has particular interest in mental health law. She previously studied psychology at the University of British Columbia, where she received her BA. Julie grew up in South Africa and enjoys serving as a tutor of the Ruhi Institute sequence of courses.

Sahar D. Sattarzadeh • To Enlighten the Whole World: Recognizing the Role of Indigenous Peoples in the Spiritual and Social Transformation of Humankind

This presentation will explore a comparative perspective on common spiritual concepts and practices shared by indigenous peoples around the world. These concepts and practices—justice, harmony of science and religion, unity in diversity, oneness, the arts, education, and consultation—also reflect some of the most essential sets of beliefs in the writings of the Bahá'í Faith. Its purpose is to raise an awareness of the significant lessons that can be learned from indigenous communities in advancing the betterment of humankind and contributing to social discourse through spiritual applications, while identifying parallel concepts found in Bahá'í texts and relevant literature.

SAHAR D. SATTARZADEH is a PhD candidate in international education policy (global development and minority rights) at the University of Maryland, College Park. Currently, a lecturer of sociology, her academic and professional interests include: international human rights law, social justice, spiritual critical pedagogy, social movements, transnational activism, and sustainable development.

Cindy Savage • 9 Facets: Creating a Praiseworthy Life (see Barthel for abstract) **(Poster Presentation)**

CINDY SAVAGE, EdD, is an author and educator. Her books include *Journey to Mount Eternity* and *Nothing in Common*, as well as a large volume of curriculum development. She is a past editor of *Brilliant Star*. She is currently teaching and living in Shanghai.

Lynne Schreiber • Exploring Habits of Thought about Sexuality and Identity: Storytelling, Belief, and Transformative Processes

What prevalent habits of thought have helped or hindered our understanding of the Bahá'í Teachings on homosexuality? How has storytelling changed our perception of homosexuality? I will examine popular slogans and false dichotomies repeated in the media and compare these to the Bahá'í Writings and current research on homosexuality. I will challenge the slogan, "once gay, always gay" by sharing stories of people who have found resolution to their same-sex attractions by courageously exploring some of the underlying issues of these feelings and deliberately addressing love and identity needs through some non-sexual means: reflection, prayer, support, friendship, and service.

LYNNE SCHREIBER's expertise on homosexuality comes not through academic study or professional years of service, but through 20 years of personal struggle and spiritual transformation. The presenter has also gained much learning through extensive study of the Bahá'í guidance, Christian materials and cutting edge research on overcoming same-sex attractions.

Payam Shodjai • Privacy Settings for Your Soul

Our thoughts, words and actions often define who we are, and they are increasingly being shared publicly. What, if anything, should be kept private? Which actions will be "laid bare before the peoples of the world?" What is the role of our private life in the progress of the Cause? In this session, we will examine the Bahá'í perspective on these questions and other topics that should be nobody's business but our own.

PAYAM SHODJAI has been working at Google since 2006 and helped define privacy policies for some of the company's search products. He holds a BSc from McGill and an MBA from Harvard.

Philip Smith, Jean-Pierre Baudoin and Homa Smith • A Metaphor Is Analyzed as a Thought Experiment to Bridge the Theories of Science of Hatcher and Kuhn

We talk about the philosophical foundations of science and the minimalism theory of William Hatcher. Considering experiments from a system's perspective, we show that the well-known "classical" model is only one of four possibilities. Three possibilities are normal science as defined by Kuhn. The fourth is "extraordinary" science and includes discovery, anomaly, justification of paradigms, "holons," and African smallholder multiple-cropping. We introduce a thought-provoking metaphor that clarifies a crucial aspect of inductive reasoning and describe a comprehensive system's model of the research process that bridges the minimalism theory of Hatcher and the paradigm theory of Kuhn.

PHILIP SMITH is originally from Kingston, Ontario. He has worked for over thirty years in West Africa, including twenty at the University of Benin (Togo). He holds degrees in Mathematics and Engineering (Queen's University), Agricultural Development (University of London), and Agronomic Sciences and Biological Engineering (Gembloux Agricultural University in Belgium)

HOMA SMITH is originally from Teheran. She has worked in West Africa for over thirty-five years, including twenty-five at the University of Benin (Togo). She holds degrees as an agricultural engineer (University of Teheran) and in environmental management (University of London). Her research interests include women's development and sustainable livelihoods.

Nancy Songer and Lisa Ortuno • Engaging in Discourse on Homosexuality

Bahá'ís are often uncomfortable on the subject of homosexuality because of current trends of thought, lack of reliable information to support their points, experience with the Bahá'í teachings becoming a roadblock for enthusiastic seekers, and because sometimes the teachings are puzzling for the believers themselves. It is a delicate and divisive subject requiring more – and more thoughtful - attention in

order to transform the Bahá'í community into one of knowledgeable, supportive friends for fellow believers and articulate bearers of Bahá'u'lláh's healing Message to the world. These points are the skeleton for a larger piece, but now form an introductory conversation on the subject.

NANCY BRANHAM SONGER, MMC, has been a member and observer of Bahá'í communities in the US, Micronesia, South America, and Africa for 43 years. She is a former research associate and director of public information at the Institute for Families in Society at the University of South Carolina.

Vahid Óðinn Spencer • Legitimacy and Religion: The Learning of Applying Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings in the Context of Iceland's Constitutional Reform - Public Admin Governance Panel

Iceland responded to a crisis of legitimacy by electing a Constitutional Council with the purpose of reviewing the nation's Constitution. The response is of interest to Bahá'í studies. Individuals, rather than political parties, were elected, allowing for a comparative analysis with the Bahá'í electoral system. It offers a contemporary Western attempt to reconcile a gap between institutions of authority and the individuals and communities from whom they derive their legitimacy. It also allows for an exploration of the absence of religion on a social experiment which is being constructed within a secular framework. This presentation intends to explore these themes.

VAHID ÓÐINN SPENCER holds a Master's Degree in Political Science from York University, Toronto. He has conducted children's classes in his neighbourhood for three years, and has served as secretary of the National Teaching Committee of Canada and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iceland.

John Steere and Michelle Thelen-Steere • Dimensions of the Heart as a Gateway to Spiritual Transformation

An often-overlooked understanding among Bahá'ís is that cultivating our spiritual life requires the utilization of all our senses so as to apprehend the wonder of God and His Creation, particularly through the "garden of thy heart;" rather than a framework of faith that is solely based upon will, reason and sentimentality. The presenters will explore a neglected dimension of progressive revelation which regards spirituality in the renewed light of the "heart" as the unifying vessel and transformative gate for God's latest Message; a quantum leap from the traditional confines of reason, scripture, and dogma as the touchstone of faith.

JOHN STEERE is an environmental planner and activator who serves on several environmental and arts-ecology non-profit boards; he is the co-author of *Restoring the Estuary* and numerous articles on deep ecology. He holds a BA from Harvard College and a Joint Masters in City Planning/Landscape Architecture from UC Berkeley.

Michelle Tashakor • The Corporation as a Participant in the Divine Plan (see Combs for abstract)

MICHELLE TASHAKOR received her BA in Economics from Macalester College, followed by 12 years of corporate experience in insurance and banking. She is completing her MBA with a focus in Organizational Development through the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University at the end of this summer.

Sahbnam Tashakour • Formulating Life Decisions in a Context of Service to Humanity (see VanderDussen for abstract)

SHABNAM TASHAKOUR has a Bachelor of Arts in International Development with a minor in First Nation's Studies from the University of Calgary.

Michelle Thelen-Steere • Dimensions of the Heart as a Gateway to Spiritual Transformation (see Steere)

MICHELLE THELEN-STEERE, MA, CMHT, is a Clinical Counselor, Hypnotherapist, and Cognitive Behavioral Instructor. She holds a Master's Degree in Clinical Counseling and is a Certified Hypnotherapist. Her specializations are in cross-cultural, women's, disability, and childhood and adult abuse issues and she has worked with clients from over 40 countries.

Moussa Z. Traoré • The Law of the Land and the State of the Soul: Analyzing Theoretical Frameworks of Bahá'í and Islamic Law Within and Beyond the Nation-State

The presentation investigates the Bahá'í Administrative Order as an alternative to state-based governance and highlights how such a model may be used to prevent both ideological and structural fragmentation, thus ensuring continuity of both the faith tradition and effective governance at the international level. Comparing the Administrative Order to the lack of a central administrative structure in Islam, the presentation alludes to how the Bahá'í model may be used to safeguard internationally recognized human rights. The presentation's goal is to promote interfaith dialogue showcasing the reality that religion and the notion of human rights are not mutually exclusive.

MOUSSA TRAORÉ holds a JD from Penn State Law and a BA from the University of Maryland, College Park. His academic interests include comparative law, human rights law, international law, religious law, and rule of law. He aspires to work towards the safeguarding of human rights, internationally.

Ludwig Tuman • Integrating the Arts into the Community Building Process

Integrating the arts into community life can produce a wide range of spiritual and social benefits. The discussion offers observations on the surprising variety of ways the arts can interface with and enhance the Bahá'í community's core activities. The arts can have a vitalizing, uplifting and edifying effect not only in devotional programs, study circles, children's classes and youth activities, but also in the spiritual tenor of community life, in connecting the inspiring experience of artistic beauty with the transforming beauty of the creative Word, and in the community's outreach to society through social discourse and social action.

Ludwig Tuman • Tapping into the Spiritual Power of the Arts: An International Grassroots Project Helping to Integrate the Vitality of the Arts into Community Life

The presentation first explores the vital importance of integrating the arts into community life. Discussion on this topic includes observations on the surprising variety of ways the arts can interface with and reinforce the Bahá'í community's core activities and its outreach to society. The presentation

then reviews highlights of the first three years of an ongoing international grassroots project sponsored by the Wings to the Spirit Foundation and coordinated by the presenter. The project is developing a course titled "Tapping into the Spiritual Power of the Arts," which seeks to promote the integration of the arts into community life. (www.wingstothspirit.org/WingsOrientationWelcome.cfm)

LUDWIG TUMAN is active as a composer, pianist, and author. He has extensive experience as a music educator and choral director. He has published a book and articles about the arts. As a faculty member of the Chicago Conservatory College, he designed and taught courses in composition, theory, and non-Western music.

Deborah Clark Vance • Consultation as Self Rule: Removing Power from Public Discourse - Public Administration and Governance Panel - Law and Governance

Democracy often follows the classical Greek practice of persuasion where opponents reach compromise by surrendering points while maintaining power. Bahá'u'lláh's model of consultation removes power from public discourse, allowing consulters to find mutually profitable solutions by seeking truth through clashing opinions. Consultation negates the authority of rank and position and requires that everyone participate in collective problem-solving. Bahá'ís have yet to exploit its role as a model for public discourse and self rule. This presentation explores consultation with the goal of having a dialogue that inspires individuals to master consultation and introduce it to others.

DEBORAH CLARK VANCE engaged in political activism on antiwar and civil rights issues before becoming Bahá'í. Associate Professor and Chair of the Communication and Cinema Department at McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland, she teaches courses in media and culture. Her doctoral dissertation researched how diverse Bahá'ís achieve a unified identity.

Elena VanderDussen, Sahbnam Tashakour and Natasha Collishaw • Formulating Life Decisions in a Context of Service to Humanity

Numerous questions arise for young people about the decisions they are encouraged to make for their lives. These questions are by no means trivial, yet can often reflect a culture rife with dichotomous thinking. This presentation explores what habits of thought might conversely emerge in educational contexts that promote integrated decision-making within a context of service to humanity. Drawing from cross-cultural data, observations indicate potential for such educational processes to reframe decisions in the context of material and spiritual advancement of civilization. Simultaneously, young people develop approaches to pursue decisions in a posture of learning through action and reflection.

ELENA VANDERDUSSEN holds a Masters of Arts in Curriculum, Teaching and Learning from the University of Toronto, and a Bachelor of Arts in International Development from Queen's University.

Nancy A. Watters • Chanting Supplications Together to Promote Community Development and Wellbeing

'Abdu'l-Bahá says "...if they chant supplications together, in a good and effective voice, that is very good." Collective chant is a powerful spiritual practice that dates back to Fort Tabarsí and the Síyíh-

Chál. It can connect us deeply to God and to each other. What holds us back? This presentation will help remove some of the barriers. It will explore what we can learn from ancient faith traditions as well as Bahá'í Writings. A live demonstration will show how every Bahá'í community can create beautiful chants together and "attract the hearts of all men."

NANCY A. WATTERS, MA, is a registered psychotherapist, music therapist, Reiki Master and vocalist. She founded Sacred World Song in 2005 after ten years of study with chant masters from many faith traditions. She has performed at venues worldwide, including Vancouver's Sacred World Music Festival and InterSpiritual Chantfest. (www.nancywatters.com)

Matt Weinberg • Identity, Discourse and Policy: Reconstructing the Public Sphere

It is through interchange that individuals and the communities they compose are able to define their identities and their long-term goals. In this sense, human life has a "fundamentally dialogical character." New models of social transformation will emerge only from a fundamental change in consciousness about who we are, how we regard others who enter our ambit – no matter how near or distant – and how we collectively design the structures and processes of social life, whether local or global. Giving full consideration to the multiple dimensions of human experience in public discourse can give rise to new social meanings and expand policy dialogues beyond narrow conceptual boundaries.

MATTHEW WEINBERG served as Research Director of the Bahá'í International Community, in Haifa, Israel, from 1995-2002. He also was a senior analyst with the U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment in Washington, DC, where he directed several studies in the areas of environmental and technology policy.

Rainn Wilson • Soulpancake: The Intersection of Art and Faith

Rainn Wilson will discuss the way his website, Soulpancake.com, his faith and his art as an actor, writer and director converge. He will examine how artistic creation and the need for faith are acts of transcendence and how the internet can be the forum for that expression. He will also tell the occasional joke. No actual pancakes will be served during his presentation.

RAINN WILSON is an actor, director and writer, best known for portraying Dwight Schrute on NBC's "The Office", for which he received three Emmy nominations. His many other plays, movies and television shows include "The Rocker", "Six Feet Under", "Juno" and "Super". He is the co-founder of Soulpancake.com and the co-author of the New York Times Best Selling book of the same name.

Artists Performing

RAMIN AMJADI commenced his musical education at 13 with the *tonbak*, a Persian drum. Within ten years, he had completed all of the *radeefs* (modes) under the tutelage of various renowned masters and launched his musical career. Along the way, he learned piano and organ. Mr. Amjadi teaches *tonbak*, voice, and provides instruction in other Persian instruments including *ney*, *santour*, *daf*, *tar*, and *setar*. He has played in concert tours throughout Iran and Europe. Since immigrating to the United States in 1999, he has instructed Iranian students. He loves his work and says, "I have a passion to transfer my knowledge to others."

FARES HEDAYATI is a PhD candidate at UC Berkeley, but continues playing the *tonbak*, which he has studied from an early age. He has collaborated frequently with Mr. Amjadi and has also appeared with many Persian ensembles in the Bay Area and elsewhere.

SHURANG NG began playing piano at five and has been teaching since age 14 in Macau after completing piano curriculum of the Associated Board of the Royal School of Music. She also began studying the *gu-zheng* at age 14 and is currently working under Master Liu Wei Shan, founder of the San Francisco Gu-Zheng Music Society. Ms. Ng, who is fluent in Mandarin, Cantonese and English, teaches both piano and *gu-zheng* at the San Francisco Peninsula.

NABIL & KARIM Nabil Moghaddam and Karim Rushdy met in 2006 while studying audio production and engineering. They released their first CD early 2009 and have performed in multiple cities ever since. This year, Nabil and Karim have made a second CD and their aim remains to use the writings of the Bahá'í Faith as inspiration to instil hope into the hearts of their listeners.

MUNIRIH SPARROW On the Canadian prairies Munirih Sparrow learned how to lean into the wind and sing, resulting in a prairie soul flavour of sound. Her album of 10 Bahá'í prayers and writings "Morning to Midnight" will be released November 2011. It will be available for pre-purchase during the conference. Visit her website www.munirihsparrow.com to learn more and hear her musical rendering of the Sacred texts.

JOHN DAVEY HATCHER has been a first tenor with the San Francisco Opera for seven seasons and is currently the Music Director of the award-winning Adda Clevenger Junior Youth Chorus of San Francisco and the Adda Clevenger Junior Prep and Theater School. John holds a Master's Degree in Voice Performance from Arizona State University and has been featured as a soloist with many opera companies and symphonies throughout the US and Canada, including; Mission City Opera, San Francisco Lyric Opera, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Sinfonietta, Tennessee Valley Orchestra, Phoenix Symphony and Phoenix Bach Choir.

EMAN ISADIAR is a winner of the California Academy of Music Young Pianists Competition. He majored in Piano Performance at San Francisco State University under Maestro Carlo Bussotti and also was also the recipient of a scholarship to complete a course of study in Paris, France. He currently teaches piano in the Bay Area and also appears with chamber ensembles and as an accompanist. Eman Isadiar completed three seasons as Executive Director of the Fremont Symphony, and in November 2010 assumed the post of Executive Director of Cantabile Youth Singers of Silicon Valley.

RICK SHINOZAKI is violinist with the acclaimed Del Sol String Quartet, and Principal Second Violinist of Symphony Silicon Valley and the Mendocino Music Festival Orchestra. He has toured nationally and internationally with the Del Sol String Quartet, and recorded four commercial CD that have been universally praised by critics, including *Gramophone*, and *The Strad*. Solo appearances include the world premiere of Zdzislaw Wysocki's Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra under Kent Nagano and the Berkeley Symphony. He has served as concertmaster and soloist with the Vallejo Symphony and the Hot Springs Festival Orchestra. He holds a Master of Music degree from Indiana University.

Conference Organization

<i>Conference Task Force</i>	Lisa Dufraimont, Mehran Kiai, Kim Naqvi, Parvin Rowhani
<i>Arts Programme</i>	Eman Isadiar
<i>Children/Junior Youth Program</i>	Julia Carranza, Young and Rob McGrady and Rose Dana
<i>Devotions</i>	Carmel Davey-Hatcher
<i>Logistics</i>	Larry Curtis
<i>Photography</i>	Tobin Smith and Maggie Rowland
<i>Programme Chairs</i>	Lisa Dufraimont, Kim Naqvi
<i>Registration</i>	Nilufar Gordon
<i>Security/Ushers</i>	Rob Vedovi
<i>Stage Décor</i>	Afsaneh Rohani
<i>Stage Manager</i>	Richard Dearborn
<i>Technical Director</i>	Geoff Cohen, Vafa Anderson
<i>Volunteers</i>	Reed Jones

The ABS Executive Committee extends its deep appreciation to all those who have assisted in the preparation and running of this conference. Our heartfelt thanks are also due to the many volunteers who contributed their service and have worked so hard to make this conference a success.

With special thanks to the Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of San Francisco and Burlingame.

The Association for Bahá'í Studies thanks Golden Gate Piano and Organ for donating the rental of the piano for the conference.