

Association for Bahá'í Studies–North America
34th Annual Conference
“Rethinking Human Nature”

12 – 15 August 2010
Hyatt Regency Vancouver
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

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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 The Children’s Program, for ages 5 to 15, is being held in the **Cavendish, Tennyson and Dover** rooms on the **Fourth 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, however snacks will be served.) The times for Children/Junior Youth sessions are

Thursday, 12 August	10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Friday, 13 August	9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Saturday, 14 August	10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, 15 August	10:00 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 Bahá'í Distribution Service Canada. The bookstore is located in the **Balmoral room** on the **Convention Level (Third 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, 12 August	2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Friday, 13 August	9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, 14 August	9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, 15 August	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 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 **Lord Byron** room on the **Fourth 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 **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.

Special Interest Groups(SIGs): General Information Session, Friday 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. Information tables will be set up in "**English Bay**" on the **34th Floor**. Conference participants are invited to visit the tables, discuss the work of special interest groups with their coordinators and other interested people, and explore opportunities for collaboration and networking.

Special Interest Groups: Specific Meetings
See separate sheet in conference package.

Thursday, 12 August 2010

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Special Simultaneous Sessions

Georgia B

10:00 – 12:00 **Using the 2010 Ridván Message to Initiate Conversations on Human Nature**
Facilitator: HOLLY HANSON

Plaza C

10:00 – 12:00 **Faculty and Student Workshop: Scholarship in the Context of the Plans I, Exploring Scholarship**
Convener: PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS, Academic Director, Association for Bahá'í Studies

12:00 – 2:00 *Lunch Break*

Georgia B

2:00 – 3:30 **Behavioural Economics, Spiritual Reality, and the Revolution within Economic Thought (interactive workshop)** NAVA ASHRAF

3:45 – 5:00 **Beauty and Perfection in the Work of the Beloved Guardian** FARIBORZ SAHBA

Georgia A

3:45 – 5:00 **Toward a Sacred Ecology of Human Nature (seminar)** JOHN THELEN STEERE

Plaza C

2:00 – 5:00 **Faculty/Student Workshop Program: Scholarship in the Context of the Plans II, Developing Participation in Prevalent Social Discourses on Campus**
Convener: PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS, Academic Director, Association for Bahá'í Studies

5:00 - 7:00 *Dinner Break*

Thursday Evening

Regency Ballroom

7:00 **Plenary Session**
Chair: MARTHA SCHWEITZ

Devotions

Official Conference Welcome - Representatives of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the United States and Canada

The Dual Character of Human Reality HOOPER DUNBAR

Friday, 13 August 2010

Regency Ballroom

9:00 **Plenary Session**
Chair: DELORIA BIGHORN

Devotions

Many Generous Hands

LEE BROWN, CHIEF DOUGLAS WHITE III KWULASULTUN, JACQUELINE LEFT HAND BULL
This panel of Indigenous leaders and scholars will share perspectives and insights on the challenges and opportunities of creating social, cultural, and spiritual reconciliation

12:00 - 2:00 *Lunch Break*

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

Plaza A

Arts I

Convener and Chair: ANNE PERRY

3:15 - 4:15 Creating Socially Conscientious, Personally Meaningful Video Games DEIRDRA KIAI

4:30 - 5:30 Bach to Baha - Melodies for Peaceful Living FRANCESCA SAWYER

Cypress

Communications

Convener: AMROLLAH HEMMAT, Chair: DEBORAH VANCE

Poster 9P Planning: A Model for Public Consultation MARCELLA LAFEVER (poster viewing and discussion with presenter during breaks and at 5:30)

2:00 - 3:00 From Armanshahr to Ruhi: Rethinking Human Nature and Utopia in Iran PEJMAN MOSLEH

3:15 - 4:15 The Philosopher's Stone: Integrating Arts, from Fantasy to Reality FARSHID SAMANDARI

4:30 - 5:30 Maximum Medium: What a Bollywood Soap Opera Can Teach Us about Communication, Change, and Social Action NAYSAN SAHBA

Plaza A

Education

Conveners: KAMILA BAHBAHANI and MARIE GERVAIS; Chair: KAMILA BAHBAHANI

2:00 - 3:00 Influencing the Latin American Discourse on Human Potential for Socio-cultural Change
PETER C. NEWTON-EVANS

Grouse

Gender and Equality Studies

Convener and Chair: ÉLIZABETH WRIGHT

2:00 - 3:00 The Changing Image of Woman CAMILLE N. KHODADAD

3:15 - 4:15 Rethinking Woman's Nature: What Do the Writings Tell Us? DEBORAH VANCE

4:30 - 5:30 Human Nature? Towards a Gendered Understanding of Bahá'í Ideals SELENA CROSSON

5:30 Special Presentation on the Commission on the Status of Women ÉLIZABETH WRIGHT

- Plaza B* **International Affairs I**
 Convener: JULIA BERGER; Chair: TBA
 2:00 - 3:00 “Trustees of the Merciful”: From Representatives to Fiduciaries MARTHA L. SCHWEITZ
 3:15 - 4:15 From “Nationalism and World Citizenship” to “Human Nature”: Socio-historical and Bahá’í Approaches, a Comparative Study NADIA RIAZATI
 4:30 - 5:30 Globalization and Human Nature GREGORY C. DAHL
- Oxford* **Peace and Conflict Studies I**
 Convener and Chair: TRIP BARTHEL
 2:00 - 3:00 Writing New Cultural Stories PREMA PERUMAL and DAVID HUNT
 3:15 - 4:15 Peacekeeping and Nation Building in the 21st Century: A Survey of Developing Practices in the Developing World OMID TOWNSEND
 4:30 - 5:30 Framing Consultation: From Conflict to Collaboration TRIP BARTHEL
- Stanley* **Philosophy I**
 Convener and Chair: IAN KLUGE
 2:00 - 3:00 Alan Gewirth’s Principle of Generic Consistency and Human Nature PINKI ANAND
 3:15 - 4:15 Rational Proofs of the Existence of the Soul RICHARD N. DODGE
 4:30 - 5:30 Bloch’s Philosophy of Hope, the Bahá’í Writings and Human Nature IAN KLUGE
- Georgia B* **Psychology and Sociology I**
 Convener: PROGRAMME CHAIRS, Chair: MARY K. RADPOUR
 2:00 - 3:00 Creating Social Space for Discourse: An Alternative to Cutting Remarks MARYAM VAHEDI PARSA
 3:15 - 4:15 Encouraging Sexual Wellness for this Generation and the Next KELLY MONJAZEB
 4:30 - 5:30 Rethinking Same-Sex Attraction and General Principles of How to Overcome It LYNNE SCHREIBER
- Plaza C* **Science and Religion**
 Convener: STEPHEN FRIBERG and RON SHIGETA, Chair: COUROSH MEHANIAN
 2:00 - 3:00 The Scientific Materialistic View of Human Nature and Spiritual Reality ABDU’L-MISSAGH GHADIRIAN
 3:15 - 4:15 Aristotle to Einstein: Revolutions in Physics and Religion LAHEEB QUDDUSI
 4:30 - 5:30 Web Trends: Vectors for Participation in the Discourses of Society DAVID HUNT, CHAD JONES and DAN JONES
- Georgia A* **Study of Religion I**
 Convener: ANNE PEARSON; Chair: HAROLD ROSEN
 2:00 – 3:00 Finding Fred Mortensen: Confirmations and Transformation on the Path of Service to the Cause BRIAN GUEQUIERRE
 3:15 – 4:15 Human Nature and World Religion: A Bahá’í-inspired Philosophical Anthropology HAROLD ROSEN
 4:30 – 5:30 From the Lucid to the Wondrous Script: The Origins and the Evolution of Bahá’í Calligraphy and Sacred Script SHAHROKH MONJAZEB
- Regency Ballroom* **Persian Language Session**
 Convenor: ABS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, Chair: FARIBORZ SAHBA
 2:00 – 4:00 The Pattern of Future World Civilization in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas SHAPOUR RASSEKH

5:30 - 7:30 *Dinner Break*

Friday Evening – August 13, 2010

Regency Ballroom

7:30 **Arts for Transformation I**
Master of Ceremonies: ANNE PERRY
ERIC HARPER, devotional song
KURT and LESLIE ASPLUND, playwrights, scene from “A Perfect English Gentleman”
Performed by ELHAM SIMMONS and SEAN OWEN ROBERTS
FARSHID SAMANDARI, piano
JASON COHEN, vocal and guitar songs
HEATHER CARDIN and JAMES WEST, poetry medley
NANCY ACKERMAN, piano
ERIC HARPER, vocal and guitar song
MJ CYR, vocal and guitar songs
DAVARI ABSTRAKT , electro-pop and hip-hop
MO CARLSON, hip-hop

Regency Ballroom

9:30 **Arts for Transformation II, evening programme**
The late evening Arts programme is one of many options open to the conference participants, and features planned and open-mic contributions.
Master of Ceremonies: MJ CYR
LIVE PERFORMANCES
and
Film “Looking for Truth” ANDREW NEWALL

Saturday, August 14, 2010

Regency Ballroom

10:00 **Plenary Session**
Chair: SUSANNE TAMAS

Devotions

From Hatred to Humanity: The Bahá'ís and Iran's Coming of Age PAYAM AKHAVAN

11:00 **Advancing a Discourse on Human Nature: Interdisciplinary Perspectives**
MICHAEL KARLBERG, POUYA EHSANI, HOLLY HANSON, MARY K. RADPOUR, RYAN SIEGEL

12:30 – 2:45 *Lunch break*

English Bay

1:15 – 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”? This year’s session will include a special focus on expanding the work of the Association to other venues, including, where appropriate, permanent and regional schools. 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

Georgia B

Advancing a Discourse on Human Nature

Convener and Chair: MICHAEL KARLBERG

4:00 - 5:30

Round-table Discussion Following up on the Morning Plenary Panel
“Advancing a Discourse on Human Nature”

Plaza A

Arts II

Convener and Chair: ANNE PERRY

2:45 - 3:45

The Nature and Character of the Artist JALALIYYIH QUINN and LESLIE ASPLUND

4:00 - 5:30

An Extraordinary Journey: Applying Bahá'í Historical Scholarship to the Creative Art of Playwriting KURT ASPLUND and LESLIE ASPLUND

Cypress

Bahá'í History and Biography

Convener and Chair: SUSAN MANECK

2:45 - 3:45

Maryam, “the Crimson Leaf” GLORIA YAZDANI

Georgia A

Bahá'í Medical Association of Canada

Convener: PAYAM SAZEGAR

4:00 – 5:30

Bahá'í Medical Association of Canada Networking Meeting

Cypress

Bioethics and Health Sciences

Convener and Chair: BETH BOWEN

4:00 - 5:00

Recognizing a Competent Physician: Science and Pseudo-science in Cyberspace
SANDRA J. BEAN

Grouse

Business, Ethics and Management Science

Convener and Chair: NOUSHA RAM

2:45 - 3:45

Money and Bling: A Bahá'í Perspective on Wealth PAYAM SHODJAI

Georgia B

International Affairs II

Convener: TBA

2:45 - 3:45

What Can Justify Duties of Global Economic Justice? Individual Responsibility, Human Consciousness, and the Oneness of Humankind SHAHRZAD SABET

- Oxford* **Natural and Built Environment**
 Convener and Chair: JOHN THELEN STEERE
 2:45 - 3:45 The Bahá'í Holy Shrines: World Heritage Sites JOHN MACLEOD
 4:00 - 5:30 Evaluating Emergent Innovative Solutions: Testing a Framework of Action for Sustainable
 Social and Economic Development PETER T. BRUSS
- Grouse* **Peace and Conflict Studies II**
 Convenor and Chair: TRIP BARTHEL
 4:00 – 5:00 Reconciling “A Conflict of Visions” JAMES WEST
- Stanley* **Philosophy II**
 Convener and Chair: IAN KLUGE
 2:45 - 3:45 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Philosophical Anthropology MIKHAIL SERGEEV
- Plaza C* **Psychology and Sociology II**
 Convener: PROGRAMME CHAIRS, Chair: MARY K. RADPOUR
 2:45 - 3:45 Positive Psychotherapy and Bahá'í Teachings THEO A. COPE
 4:00 - 5:30 The Missing Curriculum: Educating for a New Conception of Human Nature
 LARRY MCCULLOUGH and MARY K. RADPOUR
- Plaza B* **Race Unity and Intercultural Issues**
 Convener: PROGRAMME CHAIRS, Chair: NAZANIN ZARGARPOUR; CHELSEA HORTON
 2:45 - 3:45 Flowering of the Human Spirit: Teaching and Learning with Students at Hampton
 University ANNE R. BRENNEMAN
 4:00 - 5:30 Declaration, Prophecy, and Progressive Revelation: Indigenous-Bahá'í Intersections
 LINDA COVEY, CHELSEA HORTON and LEE BROWN
- Georgia A* **Study of Religion II**
 Convener: ANNE PEARSON; Chair: HAROLD ROSEN
 2:45 – 3:45 Separating Light from Dark WADE FRANSSON
- Stanley* **Special Session on University Courses**
 Convener: ABS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, Chair: PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS
 4:00 - 5:30 Fostering the Creation and Delivery of Courses on the Bahá'í Faith at Universities and Colleges
 PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS, VALERIE J. DAVIS, HAROLD ROSEN, and ROBERT STOCKMAN
- Regency
 Ballroom* **Persian Language Session**
 Convener: ABS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, Chair: FARIBORZ SAFAI
 2:45 - 3:45 Bahá'í: Faith or Religion? HOUSHMAND FATHEAZAM
 4:00 - 5:30 The Báb's Doctrines on Human Nature NOSRATOLLAH MOHAMMADHOSSEINI
- 5:30 - 7:30 *Dinner Break*

Saturday Evening, August 14, 2010

Regency Ballroom

7:30

Plenary Session

Chair: JUDY FILSON

Devotions

HUAYI PRODUCTION, CHINESE CHOIR

The 28th Hasan M. Balyuzi Memorial Lecture

Destiny and Freedom in the Bahá'í Writings

JULIO SAVI

Regency Ballroom

9:30

Arts for Transformation III- Evening Program

Master of Ceremonies: ERIC HARPER

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

HUAYI PRODUCTION, CHINESE DANCERS

and

other LIVE PERFORMANCES

Sunday, August 15, 2010

Regency Ballroom

10:00

Plenary Session

Chair: GORDON NAYLOR

Devotions

“An Irrepressible Movement”: Evolving Identity and Consciousness ALISON MILSTON,
Continental Board of Counsellors for the Americas

Young Scholars Panel: Perspectives from Young Scholars

MARIA MUTITU (co-ordinator), PAYAM SAZEGAR, TAMARA MARTELLA, SHIN-YU CHANG, and
ALAN CUNDALL

12:30

Closing musical presentation BAHIIYIH PETERS, FARSHID SAMANDARI

Closing remarks: Association for Bahá'í Studies Executive Committee

Abstracts and Autobiographical Notes

Payam Akhavan • From Hatred to Humanity: The Bahá'ís and Iran's Coming of Age

The historical persecution and foreseeable emancipation of Iranian Bahá'ís is a powerful illustration of national identity transforming from hatred to human rights. The ideological constructions which justify violence have little to do with religion or theology. Rather, they are deliberate hate-mongering against imagined enemies which justifies authoritarian power. Iran's youthful democratic movement, both religious and secular, has now realized that equal rights for Bahá'ís is a litmus test for all citizens' rights. Violence against the Bahá'í "other" is increasingly viewed as violence against the Iranian "self" demonstrating that a new identity built on diversity and justice is a vital necessity for both victims and perpetrators.

PAYAM AKHAVAN is Professor of International Law at McGill University. He received his PhD from Harvard and was formerly Senior Fellow at Yale Law School. He served as United Nations war crimes prosecutor at The Hague and counsel before the World Court. He is Co-Founder of the Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre.

Pinki Anand • Alan Gewirth's Principle of Generic Consistency and Human Nature

Reason or Faith? Could a deeper understanding of human nature reconcile this perennial and ever-evolving debate? The presenter will discuss Alan Gewirth's highly contested Principle of Generic Consistency—a supreme moral principle which, based on reason, challenges the Golden Rule—and argue that by understanding human nature, as explained in religious writings, an agent (individual) can overcome the conflict between reason and faith.

PINKI ANAND, Hons. BA (Political Science), MA (Public Policy and Administration), MA Candidate (Public Ethics), is a policy analyst at the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada. Her academic interests include Middle East Policy, Social Policy, and Religious Studies.

Nava Ashraf • Behavioural Economics, Spiritual Reality, and the Revolution within Economic Thought (interactive workshop)

NAVA ASHRAF, PhD Economics (Harvard), BA Economics and International Relations (Stanford), is Associate Professor at Harvard Business School. Her research combines psychology and economics, in lab and field experiments, to test insights from behavioural economics in the context of development projects. Her research is published in leading journals including the American Economic Review.

Kurt Asplund and Leslie Asplund • An Extraordinary Journey: Applying Bahá'í Historical Scholarship to the Creative Art of Playwriting

Kurt and Leslie Asplund offer a workshop designed to stimulate collaborations between Bahá'í historians and artists. They will discuss how their play, "A Perfect English Gentleman", evolved out of Kurt's research into the early history of the Faith, and will describe principles of playwriting that are critical to the successful creation of a polished work. Participants will be invited to read aloud selected scenes that

illustrate application of these concepts. It is hoped that the workshop will move artists and historians to work together to fulfil in some measure Shoghi Effendi's vision about the Faith "spreading like wildfire."

KURT ASPLUND, playwright and amateur historian, has a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and a master's in Human Behavior/Systems Counseling, and uses these degrees to inform his art. Over a period of 18 years he has assembled a Bahá'í library that includes early sources previously unknown to the Bahá'í community.

LESLIE ASPLUND, PhD, an Assistant Director in film for years before becoming a psychotherapist, is returning to her roots in the arts. She and her husband, Kurt, have formed a theatrical writing-directing-producing team committed to bringing the spirit and teachings of the Faith to humanity through the performing arts.

Leslie Asplund • The Nature and Character of the Artist (see Quinn for abstract)

LESLIE ASPLUND See above for biography.

Trip Barthel • Framing Consultation: From Conflict to Collaboration

Bahá'ís use consultation as a spiritual and practical decision making process to discern truth and take action. Bahá'í consultation offers a process model that addresses both our spiritual and rational natures through a framework of principles and practical guidelines. Through interactive participation this session will explore how the principles of consultation allow the parties to move from conflict to collaboration. These principles include individual investigation, truth, detachment, minority views, spiritual principles and unity. Consultation in this session will be presented in relation to brain function, learning theory, communication, conflict resolution, process design, problem solving and decision making.

TRIP BARTHEL was the Founder and Executive Director (1999-2009) of the Neighborhood Mediation Center in Reno, Nevada. Trip enjoys conducting imaginative and interactive teaching and training experiences at conferences, schools and around the world. He currently teaches in Shanghai, China.

Sandra J. Bean • Recognizing a Competent Physician: Science and Pseudo-science in Cyberspace

Today's better-educated medical care consumers increasingly seek health information and guidance from the Internet. In the welter of online advice available, how can we best apply the Bahá'í principle of independent investigation of the truth? We are fortunate as Bahá'ís in understanding that one wing of reality is science—and science and belief both inform our inquiry and decisions. As an example of the difficulty in finding factual information, 25 current websites were examined for content and design attributes. This presentation examines these websites in the light of science and pseudo-science toward the goal of following competent medical advice.

SANDRA J. BEAN, MPH, doctoral student in public health at Oregon State University, researches vaccine opposition and its effect on the public's health. Sandra lived and worked as a Bahá'í pioneer in Asia and, after returning to the US, worked for the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Anne R. Breneman • Flowering of the Human Spirit: Teaching and Learning with Students at Hampton University

The vision of a new race of men is one of the themes of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's talks given during His travels to the West. The theme of this conference challenges the current social construction of reality, which particularly in the Western world has become dominated by assumptions of rationality as the preferred state of being, if not the norm. But is this generation buying into this paradigm? Referring to various social theories and the voices of youth writers, I will show how today's youth are being prepared to become the pioneers of tomorrow's world.

ANNE R. BRENEMAN is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Hampton University, where she teaches the Sociology of Religion and Social Theory, among other courses. She, with Rebecca Mbuh, co-authored *Women in the New Millennium: A Global Revolution* (2006). She is also the author of three children's books.

Lee Brown, Chief Douglas White III Kwulasultun, and Jacqueline Left Hand Bull • Many Generous Hands

This plenary panel of Indigenous leaders and scholars will share perspectives and insights on the challenges and opportunities of creating social, cultural, and spiritual reconciliation. The panel is expected to include discussion of Indigenous perspectives on the spiritual and material dimensions of existence and their relationship, the challenges of social and cultural reconciliation and the roles of individuals and communities in those processes, and the challenges and opportunities for Faith communities, such as the Bahá'í Faith, to play a positive role in processes of reconciliation. Following the panel presentations there will be a moderated dialogue amongst the panellists.

Lee Brown • Declaration, Prophecy, and Progressive Revelation: Indigenous-Bahá'í Intersections (breakout panel, see Horton for panel description)

This presentation will explore an Aboriginal orientation to current events through the Native Prophecies of the Three Great Shakings and present the concept of progressive revelation. Then the Great Law of Peace will be presented with an exploration of the three primary principles arising from the law. The Kitáb-i-Aqdas will then be briefly presented with an exploration of the twelve principles that arise from the great law for this day. In conclusion, similarities between both statements of law will be explored in relation to the concept of progressive revelation.

LEE BROWN, PhD, is Director of the UBC Institute of Aboriginal Health and former Coordinator of the Indigenous Doctoral Program in Educational Studies, and co-author of *The Sacred Tree*. His theory of holistic emotional education and health is predicated upon six principles of emotional competency and his research is published in several academic journals.

Peter T. Bruss • Evaluating Emergent Innovative Solutions: Testing a Framework of Action for Sustainable Social and Economic Development

Enabling rural inhabitants to explore sustainable entrepreneurial solutions to local environmental/energy concerns requires a re-evaluation of our complex social realities. This must consider the influence of a spiritual reality upon the soul's creative will and its ability to empower behavioural change. Building a sustainable, adaptive and resilient civilization necessitates integrating spiritual values-virtues into the

fabric of material progress. Such key ingredients serve to reinforce/guide positive emergent human behaviour, decision making and capacity building out of which more ecologically balanced communities can evolve. This workshop will present a PhD proposal to identify such innovation in development practice, discuss these interwoven issues and will include a collaborative group exercise.

PETER BRUSS, BS Agriculture, Utah State; MS Economic Development, University of London; MBA, International Management, Thunderbird, Arizona, is currently pursuing a PhD in Human Dimensions to Ecology at Colorado State University. He has lived and worked in Europe, Africa and the Middle East and is married with two boys in high school.

Shin-Yu Chang • Young Scholars Panel (see Maria Mutitu for panel description)

SHIN-YU CHANG is completing a master's of arts in Counselling Psychology at University of Victoria. Drawing from the Bahá'í Writings and multi-cultural values, she seeks to understand how beliefs about human nature influences one's own aging process. She hopes to incorporate her findings into her future counselling practice.

Theo A. Cope • Positive Psychotherapy and Bahá'í Teachings

Positive Psychotherapy, founded by Dr. Nossrat Peseschkian, a Persian Bahá'í, assumes the functional capacities of the unconscious to be "basic capacities". The basic capacities are the capacities to love and to know. Building on an article published in the 2009 *Journal of Religion and Health*, this talk will develop the notion of the "unconscious" by briefly presenting its historical use, its current acceptance in psychology and psychotherapy and its use in Positive Psychotherapy. The talk will focus on the development of psychosocial capacities based upon the basic capacities and their function and application for psychospiritual health and psychological therapy.

THEO COPE received his PhD in Applied Psychology, is currently lecturing in Psychology, Social Psychology, and Organizational Behaviour and is Vice-Director of the Student Counselling Centre at Dongbei University of Finance and Economics in Dalian. He has taught in China for 11 years, and is a certified consultant in Positive Psychotherapy.

Linda Covey • Declaration, Prophecy, and Progressive Revelation: Indigenous-Bahá'í Intersections (breakout panel, see Horton for panel description)

This presentation will explore historic Diné Bahá'í conversion experiences in Arizona. It will consider, in particular, two ancient prophecies, the return of the Warrior Twins and the Unity Chant that foretells the coming of a chief from the east with twelve feathers. Diné Bahá'ís believe that the Twin Messengers of the Faith are the return of their Warrior Twins and that the chief with twelve feathers is Bahá'u'lláh. Covey will also argue that the Diné's history of loss and deprivation provided fertile ground for conversion, and that the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith provided much-needed autonomy and empowerment.

LINDA S. COVEY holds degrees in religious studies and psychology and doctoral work in clinical psychology. She currently teaches at Missouri State University's College of International Business at Liaoning Normal University, Dalian, China. She is a Bahá'í of many years and actively practises her Cherokee/Southern Cheyenne heritage.

Selena Crosson • Human Nature? Towards a Gendered Understanding of Bahá'í Ideals

Bahá'ís are challenged to implement new paradigms of “human nature” contained in their sacred writings that envision unity, peacefulness and cooperation. This paper explores the fashioning of new models for Bahá'í women that embrace equality but retain “feminine” virtues and for Bahá'í men that do not glorify egoism, aggressive self-interest or war. Syncretism and synthesis, as well as a distinctive Bahá'í ethos, are evident in these new paradigms, reflecting the intersections between gender, culture and religion.

SELENA CROSSON is nearing completion of a PhD in History at the University of Saskatchewan and is a sessional instructor in Canadian and Women's History. Her dissertation is provisionally titled “May Maxwell, the New World Order and Interwar Feminism: Transformative Identity, Gender & Globalism in the Early Twentieth Century.”

Alan Cundall • Young Scholars Panel (see Maria Mutitu for panel description)

ALAN CUNDALL is a student of elementary education at the University of Victoria, British Columbia with a special interest in holistic and situated approaches to education. His participation in various Bahá'í community-building and educational initiatives at both formal institutional and grassroots levels has also shaped his outlook in this endeavour.

Gregory C. Dahl • Globalization and Human Nature

Globalization is often conceptualized in terms of (a) simple Econ. 101 principles such as comparative advantage, (b) the advance of technologies that effectively reduce distances and overcome traditional barriers, (c) political and economic power structures and exploitation, and/or (d) loss of culture and identity. However, none of these mental frameworks adequately explain what we actually observe happening in the world nor provide a good basis for policy. A more useful mental framework is the Bahá'í insight that it is in human nature to be interested in our fellow human beings, resulting in a growing awareness of the oneness of mankind.

GREGORY DAHL studied economics at Harvard and pursued a 27-year career with the International Monetary Fund, including several overseas postings. He lives in Bulgaria and serves on the National Spiritual Assembly there. He is the author of *One World, One People: How Globalization is Shaping Our Future*. (See www.gregorydahl.net)

Valerie J. Davis • Fostering the Creation and Delivery of Courses on the Bahá'í Faith at Universities and Colleges (see Moccas for panel description)

VALERIE J. DAVIS, PhD Human and Organization Development, is a respected consultant who specializes in working with senior level executives and supporting change through leadership development and executive coaching. A quarter century of executive experience in global organizations has influenced her perspective on leadership challenges.

Richard N. Dodge • Rational Proofs of the Existence of the Soul

An *a priori* argument is given for the existence and eternal nature of the soul. The existence of the soul is proved by the powers of abstract thought through which we are connected to realms of perfection. Worlds of perfection are distinguished from the physical universe because it is in a constant state of combination and recombination, and the contingency of time and place. Geometric figures, as an example, are shown to be apart from the physical universe. The nature of the virtues, Writings of 'Abdul-Bahá, and the writings of the ancient philosophers are also discussed.

RICHARD DODGE holds a doctorate in geography from the University of Denver and has taught at levels from middle school to University. He lives in Douglas, Arizona and is on the Board of Desert Rose Bahá'í Institute. His interests include United Nations reform, planetary problems, philosophy, and Bahá'í history.

Hooper Dunbar • The Dual Character of Human Reality

This presentation will outline various considerations central to understanding the essential nature of humankind. It will explore the distinctions between human nature and the lower animal realm as well as the implications of prophetic Revelation for human transformation, offering a vision of true human nature and a "new race of men."

HOOPER DUNBAR was a longtime Bahá'í pioneer, educator, translator and publisher in Latin America. An accomplished painter and published author, he has served at all levels of Bahá'í administration. He recently retired from the Universal House of Justice, after 37 years at the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, Israel.

Pouya Ehsani • Advancing a Discourse on Human Nature: Interdisciplinary Perspectives (see Karlberg for panel description)

POUYA EHSANI is completing a PhD in Health Behaviour and Health Education at the University of Michigan. His research focuses on the physiological and sociological basis for risk behaviours. He previously worked as a youth health educator and a public health practitioner in Australia, Asia, Europe and the United States.

Houshmand Fatheazam • Bahá'í: Faith or Religion? (Persian Language Session)

HOUSHMAND FATHEAZAM is from a Bahá'í family whose history dates to the Bábí era. He pioneered to Iraq in 1942, then studied literature in Tehran. He pioneered to India in 1952, serving as National Spiritual Assembly secretary from 1955 until elected to the Universal House of Justice in 1963, where he served until 2003. He has published several articles and a volume of poems.

Wade Fransson • Separating Light from Dark

The Book of Certitude exemplifies the need to carefully analyze the Word of God, particularly the Qur'án. In Judeo-Christian based societies, science can often undermine faith in the Word of God, which is perfect, while scientific understanding can be incomplete or immature. This presentation compares the creation

story of the Bible with new scientific evidence, highlighting a path of defence of important spiritual ground verses secular arguments. Improved understanding in this arena can assist Bahá'ís in the West to more effectively reach those of a Christian or Jewish background.

WADE FRANSSON a Bahá'í since 2007, holds a degree in Biblical Theology, with emphasis on the integration of the Old and New Covenants, and Christ as fulfilment and continuation of Moses. He has delivered hundreds of lectures in North America, Western and Eastern Europe, South Africa, Thailand, and India.

Abdu'l-Missagh Ghadirian • The Scientific Materialist View of Human Nature and Spiritual Reality

A growing number of research publications suggest a neurobiological basis to religious experiences and human reality. Using a reductionistic approach, some authors theorize that complex metaphysical experiences such as religion and spirituality are products of the evolutionary adaptation of the human brain. Religion is perceived as a “genetically inherited instinct” while consciousness and mind are viewed as the result of brain cell activity. Given the complexity of the mind-brain relationship, claiming that the production of abstract and non-material phenomena like religion and soul are the result of brain activities defies logic. Such materialistic assumptions will be discussed from a Bahá'í perspective.

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 are *Creative Dimensions of Suffering* and *Materialism – Moral and Social Consequences*. His recent teaching and research works have been on science and spirituality.

Brian Guequierre • Finding Fred Mortensen: Confirmations and Transformation on the Path of Service to the Cause

'Abdu'l-Bahá showered love on an early American Bahá'í, Mr. Fred Mortensen, a delinquent and fugitive who learned about the Faith from his lawyer and later rode the rails across the county to meet the Master. The presenter will explore parallel experiences and a special affinity for Mr. Mortensen, while examining the empirical lessons that can be learned from observing personal transformation through Bahá'u'lláh – what inspires it, what inhibits it, and how can Bahá'í communities cultivate it as we seek to advance new models of human nature and raise up a new race of men.

BRIAN GUEQUIERRE is a consumer-protection attorney in Austin, Texas, where he received his JD in Law and BA in Literature from UT, and lives with his beautiful wife and children. An avid surfer, waterman, and naturalist, he has been a pioneer and travel-teacher throughout parts of Africa, Europe, and the Americas.

Holly Hanson • Using the 2010 Ridván Message to Initiate Conversations on Human Nature

Holly Hanson • Advancing a Discourse on Human Nature: Interdisciplinary Perspectives (see Karlberg for panel description)

HOLLY HANSON associate professor of history, Mount Holyoke College, has written on both African history and Bahá'í perspectives on social change. She is completing a book on Kampala, tracing the

transformation of political accountability over 200 years, and contemplating collaborative research on the history of East African food security.

Chelsea Horton, Linda Covey, and Lee Brown • Declaration, Prophecy, and Progressive Revelation: Indigenous-Bahá'í Intersections

This panel explores questions of declaration, prophecy, and progressive revelation as they relate to Indigenous Bahá'ís in North America - past, present, and future.

Chelsea Horton's presentation will consider similar questions across a broader geography, exploring how and why Indigenous people from urban and reserve settings in North America became Bahá'ís in the second half of the twentieth century. Drawing on oral histories, she will discuss declarations experienced and articulated through idioms of dreams, visions, prophecy, and progressive revelation. Placing this process of becoming in the context of settler colonialism, Horton will further outline a search for unity and social and spiritual belonging and reflect on challenges encountered in attempts to build unity in diversity on the ground.

CHELSEA HORTON is a PhD candidate in History at the University of British Columbia. She has taught in the History and Women's Studies departments at UBC and plans to defend her dissertation, "All is One: Becoming Indigenous and Bahá'í in Global North America," in 2011.

David Hunt • Writing New Cultural Stories (see Perumal for description)

DAVID HUNT is as a web designer using Drupal, a popular content management system, focusing on social networking functionality and user-submitted content. He is also a contemporary folk musician whose music is inspired by the Bahá'í Writings and the experiences of his physical and spiritual reality.

David Hunt, Chad Jones, and Dan Jones • Web Trends: Vectors for Participation in the Discourses of Society

In July 2009, search engines served over 113 billion requests, almost 17 for every person on the planet. A statistical analysis of the content of these searches provides important insights into the confluence of interest and knowledge among the general public about topics that shape our understanding of human nature -- peace, religion, gender, justice, death, racism, etc. Through search content analysis, this presentation will explore the scope and language of relevant public discourses, expose the conspicuous lack of Bahá'í participation in them, and suggest avenues and means for statistically meaningful Bahá'í participation in the discourses of society online.

DAVID HUNT See above for biography.

CHAD JONES, creator of the popular research programs Ocean and Sifter, has been stretching the limits of Bahá'í technology efforts for many years. He now designs web applications focused on education and social networking from his home near Sacramento, California.

DAN JONES has been working in technology and software development for over 15 years. He now designs Drupal and Wordpress web applications from his home in Oceanside, California.

Michael Karlberg, Pouya Ehsani, Holly Hanson, Mary K. Radpour, and Ryan Siegel • Advancing a Discourse on Human Nature: Interdisciplinary Perspectives

This panel explores conceptions of human nature across diverse academic disciplines, discusses their social implications, and correlates them with insights drawn from the Bahá'í writings and the experience of the Bahá'í community. The panel's goal is to contribute to the emergence of a more coherent interdisciplinary discourse on human nature that harmonizes the best contemporary insights from science and religion. To accomplish this, each panellist will offer brief reflections on currents of thought regarding human nature within their own disciplines. These initial reflections will be followed by a moderated panel discussion.

Michael Karlberg (facilitator) • Round-table Discussion Following up on Plenary Panel "Advancing a Discourse on Human Nature"

This 90 minute round-table discussion will expand the conversation begun in the plenary panel titled "Advancing a Discourse on Human Nature". It will be organized as a "fishbowl" with about a dozen interdisciplinary speakers conducting a 60 minute conversation in the central circle, while a larger audience listens on from concentric rings of the circle. In the last 30 minutes, comments and questions will be taken from the larger audience as well.

MICHAEL KARLBERG is an associate professor of Communication at Western Washington University. His scholarship focuses on the "culture of contest" and the assumptions regarding human nature and the social order that inform it. These themes are explored in his book *Beyond the Culture of Contest* and in various journal articles.

Camille N. Khodadad • The Changing Image of Woman

No member of the human family has been more constrained by the limited view of her nature than woman. Deemed weak, unstable, and inferior in intelligence, a woman's role was to be supportive. With the industrial revolution, women gained entry to the workplace. Changes since have been rapid. After recalling the image that circumscribed her freedom, this workshop will survey the rise of woman -- beginning with the unveiling of women's potential set in motion by the Bahá'í revelation. What will a world in which true equality of women and men obtains look like? Necessary measures will be suggested; imagineering encouraged.

CAMILLE KHODADAD JD, has practised in the area of employment law for the last 19 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.

Deirdra Kiai • Creating Socially Conscientious, Personally Meaningful Video Games

Though video games are primarily known for conflict resolution via combat and competition, the landscape of this comparatively new art form is slowly changing to accommodate greater numbers of games relying on cooperation and pro-social behaviour in keeping with the principles of the Bahá'í Faith. This presentation will explore one particular approach to creating such games: specifically, that of focusing on telling an interactive story, of representing authentic human relationships, and of framing problems as choices rather than simply challenges.

DEIRDRA KIAI has been designing, writing, and programming intelligent and unusual video games since she was a teenager. She is a recent graduate of the University of British Columbia's computer science program and is currently employed at Hothead Games in Vancouver.

Ian Kluge • Bloch's Philosophy of Hope, the Bahá'í Writings and Human Nature

Ernst Bloch's "philosophy of hope" presents a new philosophy of human nature which complements the Bahá'í Writings and allows our understanding of the Writings to grow into new directions and to reach new audiences.

IAN KLUGE is a poet, playwright and independent philosophy scholar. He has published numerous articles on the philosophical aspects of the Bahá'í Writings, as well as two books about the American philosophical poet, Conrad Aiken.

Marcella LaFever • 9P Planning: A Model for Public Consultation

9P Planning is a holistic model for ensuring that all cultural groups in any given community have the opportunity to be heard during public decision-making processes. Each of the 9Ps is supported by guidance from the Bahá'í writings and was developed through research that centred on the development of relationships as the focal point of public consultation. The 9P process can be used as both an evaluation and a planning tool for community development, especially where there is a traditionally marginalized group within the community.

MARCELLA LAFEVER (University of New Mexico, 2005) is a faculty member at the University of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford, British Columbia. Her research investigates the role of communication in increasing the participation of marginalized cultural groups in community development planning.

Jacqueline Left Hand Bull • Many Generous Hands (see Brown for panel description)

JACQUELINE LEFT HAND BULL is a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe (Sicangu Lakota), and Chair of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.

John MacLeod • The Bahá'í Holy Shrines: World Heritage Sites

Created by UNESCO in 1972 to protect the planet's most cherished natural and manmade places, the World Heritage Program designated the two principal sites of Bahá'í pilgrimage for inclusion on the World Heritage List in 2008. The paper examines the concepts of "world heritage", "cultural landscapes", "pilgrimage" and "outstanding universal value", and how they were applied to the Bahá'í Holy Places. It traces the process of designating these World Heritage Sites, from the state of Israel's initial proposal to their official recognition, and underlines the exemplary long-term management plan for the sites.

JOHN MACLEOD is an associate professor at Université de Montréal where he currently serves as director of the School of Landscape Architecture. A 1970s graduate of Environmental Studies and Landscape Architecture from the University of Manitoba, he has travelled widely researching and designing places dedicated to world peace.

Tamara Martella • Young Scholars Panel (see Maria Mutitu for panel description)

TAMARA MARTELLA, Vancouver Island-based vocalist, musician, educator and painter, has recorded in rap, rock, gospel, blues and jazz genres. A classically trained flautist (Victoria Conservatory of Music) she has a Diploma in Jazz Studies (Vancouver Island University) and has provided a community children's band program to schools for the past five years.

Larry McCullough and Mary K. Radpour • The Missing Curriculum: Educating for a New Conception of Human Nature

There is growing recognition that there is a new set of "core skills" required for mature functioning. These skills include capacities for emotional, social, moral and spiritual intelligence. This workshop puts forth a model of human nature that places these skills at the core of development. It also presents a proven process for authentic self-discovery and a proposal for a training curriculum based on this process. Mary K. Radpour and Larry McCullough draw on their collective professional experience in diverse fields as well as their experience working with Bahá'í personal development projects to share practical applications of this process.

LARRY MCCULLOUGH, EdD, has over 30 years experience in training and development for large corporations and organizations. He is Executive Director of Pinetree Institute, Eliot, Maine, which explores integrating the arts with personal and social development. He has worked over 20 years with BNASAA, a Bahá'í support group addressing difficult personal development issues.

Alison Milston • "An Irrepressible Movement": Evolving Identity and Consciousness

As we study and internalize the 2010 Ridván Message of the Universal House of Justice, it is compelling to reflect upon the significance of its implications in shaping individual and collective consciousness. How do we see ourselves and our work contributing to a global process of transformation in communities and individuals? How is our understanding of what it means to identify as a member of the Bahá'í community evolving in relation to our current efforts to advance material and spiritual progress?

ALISON MILSTON currently serves as a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for the Americas.

Pierre-Yves Mocquais • Faculty/Student Workshop: Scholarship in the Context of the Plans

This day-long program offers a forum to learn and consult about aspects of Bahá'í scholarship and service most relevant to faculty and students, and an opportunity to devise strategies for possible implementation on campuses. In the morning, interactive workshops are dedicated to learning about the relationship between scholarship and the Covenant, the nature of learning, and the place of scholarship in the processes of growth and core activities. In the afternoon, participants will work in small groups to devise strategies to enhance the role of campus groups and help them become forums to begin learning about "participation in the prevalent discourses of society".

Pierre-Yves Mocquais, Valerie J. Davis, Harold Rosen, Robert Stockman • Fostering the Creation and Delivery of Courses on the Bahá'í Faith at Universities and Colleges

In 1974, the Universal House of Justice called on the Canadian Bahá'í community to “cultivate opportunities for formal presentations, courses and lectureships on the Bahá'í Faith in Canadian universities and other institutions of higher learning.” Panellists will share their experiences, addressing challenges and opportunities of start-up; content, methodology, and lessons learned; and will propose new approaches which consider the new guidance regarding “participation in the prevalent discourses of society”. The focus of discussion will be on enhancing and systematizing the development of such courses to support the above mandate, now extended to the Association for Bahá'í Studies for North America.

PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS, PhD, is Full Professor in the Department of French, Italian and Spanish Faculty of Humanities of the University of Calgary. Author or co-author of five books and Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques, he is currently the Academic Director of the Association for Bahá'í Studies.

Nosratollah Mohammadhosseini • The Báb's Doctrines on Human Nature

NOSRATOLLAH MOHAMMADHOSSEINI, Doctor of Law (Tehran), has taught courses on Bahá'í topics as well as on criminology and law in both Canada and in Iran. He has published many articles in Persian Bahá'í journals, and authored seven major works in Persian such as the Life, Work and Poetry of Tahirih and a Concordance to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas.

Kelly Monjazez • Encouraging Sexual Wellness for this Generation and the Next

The problems resulting from the misuse and abuse of the sex impulse are one of the most pervasive social/spiritual ills afflicting individuals and society today. The current “syndicate” model creates shame and is detrimental to stable family life. This presentation will address the urgent and critical need for creating dialogue about issues related to current sexual norms and the collective vision required to create a healthier and more enlightened civilization.

KELLY MONJAZEB (kelly@betterfamilylife.ca), Bachelor of Social Work, University of Victoria, has been a part of the Bahá'í community for 16 years. Kelly currently offers educational programs to help strengthen marriage and family life. Her areas of special interest and training include moral education, addictions, women's issues and human sexuality.

Shahrokh Monjazez • From the Lucid to the Wondrous Script: The Origins and the Evolution of Bahá'í Calligraphy and Sacred Script

This presentation will show, through the use of rare photos and artistic images, the origin and development of Bahá'í Design-Calligraphy and Illumination from the time of the Báb up to the present day.

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*.

Pejman Mosleh • From Armanshahr to Ruhi: Rethinking Human Nature and Utopia in Iran

Relegated to distant time and space, armanshahr or utopia in Iranian discourses has captured the imagination of many: from al-Farabi to Farrokhzad, from nineteenth-century reformists to twenty-first-century mahdists. Its citizens range from the docilely good-natured to passive benefactors of a just monarch or a militant messiah. Emerging voices from Iran, however, are increasingly self-empowered but non-violent, all-inclusive and cooperative, at the grassroots and with a sizable female component. For their fellow citizens, Bahá'ís, whether in playgrounds or prison cells, translate what “hath been written into reality and action,” and exemplify how the “betterment of the world” is within one’s reach.

PEJMAN MOSLEH works in the high tech sector. He studied sciences and English literature.

Maria Mutitu (co-ordinator), Payam Sazegar, Tamara Martella, Shin-Yu Chang , and Alan Cundall • Young Scholars Panel

This panel will explore concepts of human nature through various academic disciplines, including but not limited to Education, Medicine, Psychology, and the Arts. The panellists will, through a combination of their research and field practice, relate the social implications of certain aspects of these disciplines and how the Bahá'í Writings further inform their practices, understanding of human nature, and society in general. The panellists intend to offer an interactive medium through which both they and the conference participants can further advance this dialogue on how Bahá'í scholarship can contribute to the emergence of a new consensus regarding human nature.

MARIA MUTITU is a member of the Victoria Bahá'í Community and the University of Victoria Faculty of Education. Her teaching and research strive to incorporate the Bahá'í Writings and encompass curriculum and instruction, especially creating holistic working and learning spaces that are culturally, ethnically, linguistically, intellectually, psychologically, spiritually, and physically inclusive.

Peter C. Newton-Evans • Influencing the Latin American Discourse on Human Potential for Socio-cultural Change

Feedback from participants in Núr University’s Moral Leadership program showed that the assumption that humans are “incorrigibly selfish and aggressive” is common among university students and staff in Latin America, and that this burdens potential agents of change with the “paralyzing contradiction” identified in “The Promise of World Peace”. Seeking to address this challenge, for over a decade friends have been compiling arguments supporting and refuting that assumption, posting them in Spanish on the Internet, and speaking on them at universities and organizations. The enthusiastic responses received suggest that this region is ripe for a change of perception and approach.

PETER C. NEWTON-EVANS has a master’s in Education from UC Davis and postgraduate studies in Social Development and Anthropology. He has taught at various universities at his Ecuador pioneer post, through both formal courses and informal seminars, and has served on the Auxiliary Board and the National Spiritual Assembly.

Maryam Vahedi Parsa • Creating Social Space for Discourse: An Alternative to Cutting Remarks

Set in an adversarial arena, the complex and multifaceted nature of the practice of Female Genital Cutting has been reduced to simple polarized positions that are further amplified and exaggerated by our commercial media. In an attempt to move away from the hostile and aggressive nature of debate, several informal groups were formed and the practice discussed. What this research offers as learning is that creating a social space for discourse aimed at reflecting on the complexity of our actual social relations, values and beliefs contributes to an understanding of our interconnectedness.

MARYAM VAHEDI PARSA currently lives in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo, where she teaches English language, history and literature at the Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs, and the Institut Supérieur de Pédagogie.

Prema Perumal and David Hunt • Writing New Cultural Stories

The cultural stories and the histories that our elders tell us and we share with our own children have a profound influence on the nature of the communities we are building. Fairy tales and nursery rhymes inculcate a cynical perception of human nature; romanticized stories often banish the wicked to hellfire and the hero to heaven. As we learn to unveil our true heritage as humans, we are re-writing the bedtime stories for future generations. What are the cultural narratives emerging from the body of experience of the Bahá'í community, that will engender the construction of a more peaceful civilization?

PREMA PERUMAL resides in Oregon, where she has the bounty of learning to support the spiritual empowerment of junior youth. Her service has inspired her to focus on the education of children and youth. She is currently a graduate student in Conflict and Dispute Resolution at the University of Oregon.

Laheeb Quddusi • Aristotle to Einstein: Revolutions in Physics and Religion

Philosophers and physicists from Aristotle to Einstein laboured ceaselessly to explain the motion of stars and planets. Many were belittled, many were satisfied with old methods, and many ignored the clear signs and observations of a more universal theory. A case study into the science and history of celestial motion reveals important parallels to religious truth. This presentation, more specifically, will correlate the observations that helped determine the earth's motion to Bahá'u'lláh's claim as a Manifestation of God.

LAHEEB QUDDUSI recently graduated with a BSc from the University of Alberta and served on the Campus Association for Bahá'í Studies for the last few years. After taking a course about the nature of the universe and the history of physics, he was compelled to correlate his findings to Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation.

Jalaliyyih Quinn and Leslie Asplund • The Nature and Character of the Artist

Is the artist constructed differently in his/her mind and perception so as to render the artistic being fundamentally different from others? What in human nature makes a person creative? How is the artist affected by the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh? What are the implications of the statement: "every soul its particular aspiration"? Dr. Leslie Asplund will interview artist Jalaliyyih Quinn about these concepts and how the artist can participate in creating peace, and teaching the Bahá'í Faith. Slides of various art images will be presented to illustrate concepts.

JALALIYYIH QUINN, MFA Colorado, has held solo exhibitions and taught in the US, China, and Liberia during 19 years of pioneering. Her paintings work to image the relationship between science and the Bahá'í writings and invite contemplation. She received several awards in China, and now lives in Colorado. Her paintings are at www.jalaliyyihquinn.com.

Mary K. Radpour • The Missing Curriculum: Educating for a New Conception of Human Nature (see McCullough for workshop description)

Mary K. Radpour • Advancing a Discourse on Human Nature: Interdisciplinary Perspectives (see Karlberg for panel description)

MARY K. RADPOUR is a clinical social worker and adjunct professor of psychology at the University of Tennessee. She is one of the founders of the Authenticity Project, which provides training in moral decision-making, built upon the explication of Bahá'í ethics in Dr. William Hatcher's book *Love, Power and Justice*.

Shapour Rassekh • The Pattern of Future World Civilization in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas (Persian Language Session)

SHAPOUR RASSEKH, PhD, Sociology, was a professor at the University of Tehran, and Iranian Secretary of State for Economic and Social Planning. He has been a consultant to UNESCO, the IIEP and IBE for many years and is the author of numerous studies written for these organizations.

Nadia Riazati • From “Nationalism and World Citizenship” to “Human Nature”: Socio-historical and Bahá'í Approaches, a Comparative Study

With a comparative study of socio-historical and Bahá'í perspectives on nationalism and world citizenship in the nineteenth and twentieth-century, this paper argues for the centrality of the concept of Human Nature to any of these perspectives. Furthermore, it discusses a model of dynamic process of recognition of human nature in a socio-historical context and reveals the fact that the scientific disciplines have not acknowledged its entire dimension yet. This emphasizes the crucial role of the religions to impel humanity toward the recognition of its spiritual potential, both at the level of the individual and the social.

NADIA RIAZATI has been living in the US for two years. She is a PhD student in Sociology, participated in Bahá'í media programs and will attend the second global issues conference to talk on the effect of the non-recognition of the Bahá'í minority in Iran and the construction of their identity.

Harold Rosen • Fostering the Creation and Delivery of Courses on the Bahá'í Faith at Universities and Colleges (see Mocquais for panel description)

Harold Rosen • Human Nature and World Religion: A Bahá'í-inspired Philosophical Anthropology

How do revealers depict human nature? A composite picture emerges from studying major scriptures. Situated dramatically between natural and spiritual realms – higher than earth, lower than heaven – we are given unique capacities and choices. Insights from classical humanism, philosophical anthropology and virtue theory enrich this view. Themes of creative freedom, sociability and self-transcendence in these

fields offer positive alternatives to secularity. This presentation offers a coherent account of four levels of reality – natural, human, spiritual, divine – while accenting human capacities of willing, loving and learning. Bahá'í teachings are shown to integrate scriptural and philosophical sources.

HAROLD ROSEN (www.interfaitheducation.org) is a community interfaith educator in the Vancouver, BC area with master's degrees in religion, philosophy and education.

Shahrzad Sabet • What Can Justify Duties of Global Economic Justice? Individual Responsibility, Human Consciousness, and the Oneness of Humankind

Starting with the premise that human rights to global economic justice exist, I ask: who is responsible for delivering on these rights and, more centrally, why should such far-reaching responsibilities be assumed? In other words, what justificatory principle(s) can ground the duties engendered by global economic human rights? I argue that the only types of justification which can withstand rigorous logical and empirical scrutiny are those that are grounded in the recognition of our common humanity. My argument implies that the reorientation of human consciousness around the principle of the oneness of humankind is an essential prerequisite for sustainable action towards economic justice.

SHAHRZAD SABET is a PhD candidate in the Department of Government at Harvard University. She received her MPhil in Political Theory from Oxford University as a Commonwealth Scholar, and her BA in Economics and Political Science from McGill. Her current research investigates the non-material sources of individual attitudes towards economic globalization.

Fariborz Sahba • Beauty and Perfection in the Work of the Beloved Guardian

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.

Naysan Sahba • Maximum Medium: What a Bollywood Soap Opera Can Teach Us about Communication, Change, and Social Action

One of India's most widely watched television soap operas is busy promoting the knowledge, attitudes, practices, and behaviours that can enhance and even save the lives of children, youth, and women. This case study presents how, why, and with what results an experience-based, Bahá'í-inspired perspective on the role of entertainment-education and behaviour change communication in development and social transformation.

NAYSAN SAHBA is the Chief of Communication, Advocacy, Participation, and Partnerships at UNICEF Mozambique. He has worked internationally in the field of communication for development, including on a number of Bahá'í and Bahá'í-inspired initiatives.

Farshid Samandari • The Philosopher's Stone: Integrating Arts, from Fantasy to Reality

The spiritual maturation brought by the advent of the Ancient Beauty has drastically changed cultural needs and expectations, refined cultural awareness, replaced prejudice with pluralism and multiculturalism, enriched the arts, and revived art forms. In this paper, I will review some related Bahá'í Writings, then examine the integration of arts in human affairs within some contemporary communities. Finally, I will propose a blueprint practical approach, which may advance the status quo towards an ideal integration of the arts, which accords with the spiritual recipe latent in the Writings and aligns with the current pluralist cultural milieu.

FARSHID SAMANDARI's music reflects interest in contemporary classical vocabulary, spectral analysis, and extended techniques. Moreover faith in unity in diversity, has led him to integrate different ethnic music. His music has been performed internationally and had received various awards including VNM06 for Apogee and CUMS09 for other half from opera SunarcanuS.

Julio Savi • Destiny and Freedom in the Bahá'í Writings

To know the boundaries of one's destiny and freedom, especially how the latter can be best used, are two very common aspirations. This paper comments upon relevant, mainly officially translated Writings, some untranslated Tablets, and a few talks by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and interpretations by Shoghi Effendi. Human destiny is a mystery; only the true seeker can obtain insight into it. Life itself will assist him. Human beings are free, yet their lives are regulated by both irrevocable and revocable decrees of God. A man best uses his freedom if he understands God's will and makes a disciplined effort to fulfil it in his daily life, with radiant acquiescence.

JULIO SAVI received a classical education, studied medicine in Bologna and Florence, and practises gynaecology in Bologna. He participated in the translation of most of the major Bahá'í texts into Italian, and researches and publishes on scripture, spirituality, interreligious dialogue, and poetry. He is currently secretary of the Italian National Spiritual Assembly.

Francesca Sawyer • Bach to Baha - Melodies for Peaceful Living

Bach to Baha is an Arts Presentation developed by Francesca Sawyer adapting Bahá'í Prayers to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. Her program includes prayers of The Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá which she melodiously chants to her own recorded music, and interactive discussion of participants' musical experiences. It is Francesca's belief that the intonation of prayers throughout one's day keeps stress away and assists individuals to have a peaceful nature. These prayers have been enjoyed at Bahá'í devotionals and fundraisers, churches, schools and nursing homes.

FRANCESCA SAWYER won two Awards of Excellence and two Certificates of Merit from competitions held by the Religion Communicators Council, a national interfaith organization for her Bach to Baha work.

Payam Sazegar • Young Scholars Panel (See Maria Mutitu for details)

Payam Sazegar • Networking Meeting - The Bahá'í Medical Association of Canada (BMAC)

BMAC was founded in 1992 as a committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada. In this session, we will share an overview of the history and accomplishments of BMAC and have members share projects they're involved with. Current activities of BMAC include the development of curriculum on medical ethics and spiritual determinants of health, as well as position statements on the diseases of materialism, violence and prejudice and their relation to health. BMAC has local chapters and seeks interested physicians and allied health professionals (or those in training) who are keen to participate in such endeavours.

PAYAM SAZEGAR is a member of BMAC Executive Committee and clinical faculty in the Department of Family Practice at the University of British Columbia. He currently works in Vancouver as a community family physician with a focus on Aboriginal health, marginalized populations, addictions medicine and correctional health care.

Lynne Schreiber • Rethinking Same-Sex Attraction and General Principles of How to Overcome It

The fact that some people experience same-sex attraction as unwanted and take measures to overcome it remains somewhat hidden from society, including much of the mental health profession. Shedding light on this process may be encouraging news to those who struggle with such attraction. Understanding the complex factors that commonly shape same-sex attraction unlocks the possibility to conceptualize a new framework for growth.

LYNNE SCHREIBER's expertise comes not through academic study or professional years of service, but through 20 years of 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.

Martha L. Schweitz • "Trustees of the Merciful": From Representatives to Fiduciaries

When Bahá'ís engage in public discourse, how do we talk about the system of elected Bahá'í institutions? "It is a democracy except . . ." How do we relate Bahá'í teachings to the primary contemporary criteria for good governance: transparency, accountability, and protection of human rights? Bahá'u'lláh calls those elected to His institutions "trustees of the Merciful." A "trustee" owes the highest degree of fiduciary duty known to the law. Is the pattern of Bahá'í governance similar to a legal trust? What are the implications for the relationship between electors and elected? Can this analogy help Bahá'ís contribute to dialogue on advancing democratic governance?

MARTHA SCHWEITZ is a lawyer who has practised international business law in Chicago and taught international public law, human rights, and international organizations at the University of Oregon School of Law and in Japan. Her focus of research and several publications is the role of civil society in global governance.

Ryan Siegel • Advancing a Discourse on Human: Interdisciplinary Perspectives Nature (see Karlberg for panel description)

RYAN SIEGEL is completing a PhD in Applied Economics at Oregon State University. Ryan has concerns about the discipline's conceptions of value, social organization, and human nature, and he seeks to

understand how a conception of human nature based on insights from science and religion fosters individual and social advancement.

Mikhail Sergeev • ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Philosophical Anthropology

My paper will focus on ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s views on human nature in the context of various traditions of philosophical anthropology. In my presentation I will attempt at a comprehensive reconstruction of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s anthropological views that are scattered throughout many of his writings and utterances. I will focus on the distinction that is made in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s writings between spirit and matter as it relates to the question of human nature. I will also touch upon several of the topics that are directly connected with his philosophical anthropology – immortality of the spirit, reincarnation and resurrection as well as human evolution and afterlife.

MIKHAIL SERGEEV holds his doctorate in religious studies from Temple University. He teaches courses in philosophy and religion at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. He is the author of two books – *The Project of the Enlightenment: Essays on Religion, Philosophy and Art* and *Sophiology in Russian Orthodoxy*.

Payam Shodjai • Money and Bling: A Bahá’í Perspective on Wealth

The recent financial crisis brought into sharp focus the economic principles governing the most powerful nations of the world. While it is common for extreme views and countermeasures to result from such severe a crisis, the Bahá’í perspective on capitalism, wealth and competition is refreshingly balanced. This session will explore Bahá’í principles on economics and wealth, from both a societal and individual viewpoint. Whether you are looking to attain unto wealth or wondering how to expend all that bling, you will walk away with a solid understanding of what the Bahá’í Writings say on the topic of wealth.

PAYAM SHODJAI hosts a study class in New York City on the topic of wealth based on research conducted while serving in the Comptroller’s Department of the Bahá’í World Centre. He currently works at Google as a product manager, and holds a BSc from McGill and an MBA from Harvard.

John Thelen Steere • Toward a Sacred Ecology of Human Nature (seminar)

The presenter will reflect on the meaning of Bahá’í practice and scripture relative to cultivating Paradise in the present moment through an increasing focus on performing sacred, conscious actions. He will explore ways that Bahá’í covenant is seeking to restore humanity to an experience of sacred space and time in living through metaphors of nature in the sacred writings; focusing on the Unity of being/mankind/God; performing acts of service; esteeming beauty at its source; and seeing life as a spiritual journey as with the Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The presenter will then open a dialogue on participants’ experience.

JOHN THELEN STEERE, BA Harvard College, joint master’s in City Planning and Landscape Architecture, UC Berkeley, is an environmental planner and activist serving on several non-profit boards. He is co-author of *Restoring the Estuary* and numerous articles on deep ecology. He Coordinates the Natural and Built Environment special interest group.

Robert Stockman • Fostering the Creation and Delivery of Courses on the Bahá'í Faith at Universities and Colleges (see Mocquais for details)

ROBERT H. STOCKMAN received his doctorate in the history of religion in the United States from Harvard University in 1990. He is an instructor of religious studies at DePaul University, Chicago, where he teaches world religions, and is Director of the Wilmette Institute in Wilmette, IL.

Omid Townsend • Peacekeeping and Nation Building in the 21st Century: A Survey of Developing Practices in the Developing World.

Terrorism, insurgencies, and non-state actors are becoming the reasons countries are working closely together. The era of supremacy is fading and the future of each country is increasingly dependent on the security and stability of all. Current leaders have provided ample commentary on this assertion. 'Abdu'l-Bahá states that, "True civilization will unfurl its banner in the midmost heart of the world whenever a certain number of its distinguished and high-minded sovereigns—the shining exemplars of devotion and determination—shall, for the good and happiness of all mankind, arise, with firm resolve and clear vision, to establish the Cause of Universal Peace."

OMID TOWNSEND is a graduate student at Georgetown University and works with the Institute for the Study of War. He is a cadet in the United States Army and will commission in 2011 as second lieutenant.

Deborah Vance • Rethinking Woman's Nature: What Do the Writings Tell Us?

Research shows that two phenomena define people's experiences throughout cultures: that all societies perceive the sexes as different, and that men dominate. I argue that women still define themselves using male perspectives. How can women escape dominance and define themselves in their own terms? Further, if everything in the material world has its counterpart in the spiritual world, must we apprehend physical distinctions in order to understand spiritual distinctions? Using a symbolic interactionist framework which holds that humans create meaning collectively through exchanging symbols, this session explores the Writings, our experiences and social worlds to consult about womankind's true nature.

DEBORAH CLARK VANCE, PhD, is Associate Professor and Chair of the Communication Department at McDaniel College in Maryland where she teaches courses on culture, media, and qualitative research procedures. In 1970 she discovered feminism then became a Bahá'í, and pioneered to Italy in 1971.

James West • Reconciling "A Conflict of Visions"

Philosopher economist, Thomas Sowell, in his classic book, *A Conflict of Visions*, proposes that mankind has conflicting visions of human nature, splitting the population into camps of "conservatives" and "liberals". He epitomizes the struggle as one of man's actual limitations (the tragic vision) and his perfectible inclinations (the utopian vision). This conflict of visions generates much social stress as each side stridently advances radically different public policy choices. The Bahá'í teachings offer new and relevant perspectives on human nature. This paper will explore these seemingly irreconcilable visions along with the transcending vision of human nature offered in the Bahá'í teachings.

JAMES WEST, PhD, is Professor and Chair of Economics at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He worked in India at the New Era School, was a Fulbright Scholar in Slovakia and teaches and writes on global economic development. Also a poet, he recently published a book entitled, *Wayward: Selected Poems*.

Chief Douglas White III Kwulasultun • Many Generous Hands (see Brown for panel description)

CHIEF DOUGLAS WHITE III KWULASULTUN is the Chief of the Snuneymuxw First Nation, member of the Political Executive of the First Nations Summit, and member of the First Nations Leadership Council. He is also a practising lawyer, and frequent lecturer at universities and law schools including on the topic of Indigenous laws and reconciliation.

Gloria Yazdani • Maryam, “the Crimson Leaf”

A poetess of a tender heart, who helped nurse Bahá’u’lláh back to health after His release from the Siyah Chal, Maryam’s character and life still remain somewhat obscure even though Bahá’u’lláh’s Tablets addressed to her have showered her with lofty appellations. This paper attempts to bring to light some aspects of Maryam’s life, including her relationship to Bahá’u’lláh as a trusted confidant and an ardent admirer in the face of severe harassment by relatives who were mostly fierce enemies of Bahá’u’lláh. The paper also attempts to explore the depth of her devotion by examining some of her poetry.

GLORIA YAZDANI is project coordinator for Borani Global Education, a non-profit association that facilitates university enrolment for the under-represented. She is also a performing artist with varied scholarly interests. She contributes articles to international panels and journals, hoping to help foster understanding between Islamic nations and the Western world.

Artists Performing

DAVARI ABSTRAKT (Vargha Davari) (<http://davariabstrakt.com>) Difficult to categorize, easy to listen to, and impossible to put down, this LA performer's influences range from Mozart to Muse to Michael Jackson. Outcome: eclectic tracks with an R&B flow and some great classical guitar twists, a gateway into a myriad of cultural influences.

NANCY ACKERMAN is a linguist and musician. With special interests in comparative phonology and women studies, she has performed widely in folk and classical circles in the US, Russia, and Canada. From her home in Toronto, she now manages an independent editing company, Amadea Editing, named after the sister of Mozart (<http://www.amadeaediting.com/index.htm>)

KURT ASPLUND (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=143826632295012&ref=search>), playwright and amateur historian, has a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and a master's in Human Behavior/Systems Counseling, and uses these degrees to inform his art. Over a period of 18 years he has assembled a Bahá'í library that includes early sources previously unknown to the Bahá'í community.

LESLIE ASPLUND, Ph.D. (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=143826632295012&ref=search>), is a psychotherapist/performing artist with a long history of service in the promotion and development of the arts. She produced arts programming for the SED conferences, the 2002 Bahá'í Festival of the Arts in NYC, and was Director of the Gwen Wakeling Endowment for the Arts.

JASON COHEN is an independent singer/songwriter/recording artist based in Vancouver, BC. His latest album, "The Long Road Home" is now available on itunes (<http://itunes.apple.com/ca/album/the-long-road-home/id379850338>).

HEATHER CARDIN (www.heatherpoet.blogspot.com; www.heathercardinbookwoman.blogspot.com) has published three books and has another forthcoming, along with several poems in literary magazines. She has taught for two decades in a number of locales, including at the Maxwell International Bahá'í School. She and her husband Bernie now live in Saskatchewan and visit their three grown children.

MO CARLTON (www.mocarlton.com; [facebook.com/mocarltonmusic](https://www.facebook.com/mocarltonmusic)) is an upcoming, young Bahá'í artist equipped with an energetic live show and an ambitious, poetic, and socially conscious view that comes across in his lyrics. A humorous and delightfully talented artist, he presents hip hop with a new consciousness.

MJ CYR (www.myspace.com/mjcyr) At the age of eight, MJ Cyr once argued with her father that "New Kids on the Block" were bigger than the Beatles. She's smartened up since then...

ERIC HARPER (www.ericarpermusic.com) Have you ever looked at a painting and felt it in your blood? Heard a song that transcended all and etched itself onto your soul? That is Eric Harper. Not so much a musician as an experience. His voice is his paintbrush and your heart his palette.

HUAYI PRODUCTION (www.vdcmpro.blogspot.com) is dedicated to producing concerts, music CDs, and music festivals. It provides training programs and opportunities for performing and working with professional music production and has its own Chinese based choral program. The choir, made up of 50 Chinese enthusiasts from all walks of life, rehearses regularly, mainly in Chinese.

ANDREW NEWELL has directed and written several short films and the feature-length drama *Looking for Truth*. He served as an Associate Professor of Film Production at the Watkins College of Art & Design/Film for nine years. He currently teaches digital filmmaking at Eaglearts Academy on Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

BAHIYYIH PETERS (www.bahiyyih.com) is a Vancouver-based singer and songwriter with a clean and soulful voice that touches the heart. Her musical career has spanned over a decade. Her latest solo album, *Take Me Home* (2009) is a beautiful collection of original compositions using the Bahá'í sacred writings.

SEAN OWEN ROBERTS is a professional actor with extensive credits in television and film, including 22 episodes as computer specialist Riley Jensen in "Painkiller Jane", a SCI FI Channel original series. He is currently in development, as both writer and actor, for two new series.

FARSHID SAMANDARI (www.farshidsamandari.com) currently pursues studies towards a PhD in composition. His music reflects his interest in contemporary classical vocabulary, spectral analysis, and the integration of diverse cultural music. He has taught in various schools including the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education and collaborated with a variety of ensembles including the Vancouver Symphony.

ELHAM SIMMONS, was active in theatre in high school and with an experiential theatre troupe in college. She is grateful to Bahá'u'lláh for the gift of the arts. Elham lives in Seattle where she has a practice as a holistic health coach.

JAMES WEST is a professor and Chair of the Economics Department at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, as well as being a poet. Beginning his writing as an editor of *Glory*, the Bahá'í youth magazine of India, Jim has recently published a book, entitled, *Wayward: Selected Poems*.

Conference Organization

<i>Conference Task Force</i>	Lisa Dufraimont, Mehran Kiai, Kim Naqvi, Parvin Rowhani
<i>Arts Task Force</i>	Geoff Cohen, Jarome Matthew, Susan Millar, Anne Perry
<i>Children/Junior Youth Program</i>	Caroline Khazei, Yas Bahji, Keyvan Khadem
<i>Hospitality</i>	Aflatoon Khoshkhassal
<i>Logistics</i>	Ardeshir Taghvaei
<i>Photography</i>	Tobin Smith
<i>Programme Chairs</i>	Lisa Dufraimont, Kim Naqvi
<i>Printing</i>	Shahram Taghvai, Alliance Printing
<i>Registration</i>	Nilufar Gordon, Atusa Partovi
<i>Security/Ushers</i>	Farhad Goldan
<i>Stage Manager</i>	Susan Millar
<i>Technical Director</i>	Geoff Cohen
<i>Volunteers</i>	Tabasom Eblaghie

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 Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Vancouver, BC

The Association for Bahá'í Studies thanks Tom Lee Music donating the rental of a Yamaha Grand Piano for the conference. Tom Lee Music has been helping not for profit organizations and bringing music making to the Greater Vancouver and Vancouver Island communities since 1969.