

2010 – What is Happening?

2010 was even better than 2009, and 2009 was extraordinary!

Let's see...

Wise at Heart

The book wound up with a pool of 262 Global Wisdom Leaders and 2000 children contributing their wisdom. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Tom Hanks, Jane Goodall, and Walter Cronkite led the way. Over 23 countries were represented. Publication is March, 2011. (Reviews have been wonderful.) KidsCan Press did a magnificent job putting it all together with Valerie Wyatt becoming a new superstar in our lives.



Community of Wisdom

Building out from the book is our first Community of Wisdom campaign – Littleton, Colorado. The planning process began in November. Dr. Diane Hegeman, Vice President of Instruction at Arapahoe Community College (ACC), once again became our muse. Diane grasped the big picture instantly, while delegating execution details to trusted colleagues.

Littleton, Colorado will serve as the “test city” for a Community of Wisdom. Twelve “pilot” merchants, Buck Recreation Center, Bemis Library, a select number of Littleton Public Elementary Schools, and The Village Preschool will have customers / patrons / children complete wisdom cards shaped like owls and hung on self-created or ACC provided wisdom trees. Kathy Holt and Malcom Branz at ACC are liasons with the Milestones Project. More on Community of Wisdom in the 2011 report (we already know the numbers!). Ask us, we like to “brag!”

Community of Wisdom

A Community of Wisdom campaign demonstrates that “every head has wisdom” and that each generation has something to share and learn from the other.

Shared Joys & Sorrows

A public lecture at St. John's Cathedral in Denver set us on a new but familiar course. A Muslim spokesperson for the Colorado Muslim Society lamented on the fact that followers of the three Abrahamic religions fail to have much in the way of human scale relationships with one another. Because of this veritable isolation, misconceptions, distortions, and lack of understanding and mutual respect can develop.

Faith: many beliefs, so much in common

Our 2007 book touched this surface by exploring the commonality of the three Abrahamic faiths plus Buddhism, Hinduism, and the Maori of New Zealand's belief system.

Our conclusion: we need to go deeper. As usual, our enthusiasm preceeded funding. What's new! Locating 33 plus families who would consent to having their photographs taken and stories told, was our first task.

Shared Joys & Sorrows

The 12 Life Events included:

- First Steps
- Fitted for Glasses
- First Grandchild
- First Day of School
- Preparing / Serving a Special Meal
- Donating Time / Money to Charity
- Worshipping Together
- Cherishing Children
- Value of Family in Faith
- Loss of Grandparent
- Loss of Child
- Loss of Teeth

Shared Joys & Sorrows

Using the 6 degrees of separation principle, we located consenting families, winding up with 3,174 photos taken between June – September, 2010. October 6 was our “Whew!” event where 39 individuals joined in an ice cream love fest at Sweet Action Ice Cream on Broadway.

Follow-up for 2011 will include a January update / progress report at Bemis Public Library, culminating in a June 25, 2011 world premier of the exhibit and companion book at the Englewood Civic Center, hosted by the Museum of Outdoor Art.

Shared Joys & Sorrows

“In their words” was a theme that resonates for us. Participants were asked the same 5 questions:

What were your thoughts when...

If you could say one thing (give advice) to a parent about to go through the same experience, what would it be?

How did you prepare for going through...

What did you learn from....

What did you learn about yourself by going through...

Their expressions of common joys & sorrows were overlapped with regularity. No surprise there. Touching, poignant, funny, and clever observations were shared in abundance.

Photo Exhibitions and Permanent Collections

- Colorado State University hosted a mini Faith: Many Beliefs, So Much in Common exhibit beginning November, 2010, scheduled to come down May, 2011.
- Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church in Lakewood displayed 25 Faith related photographs in the sanctuary.

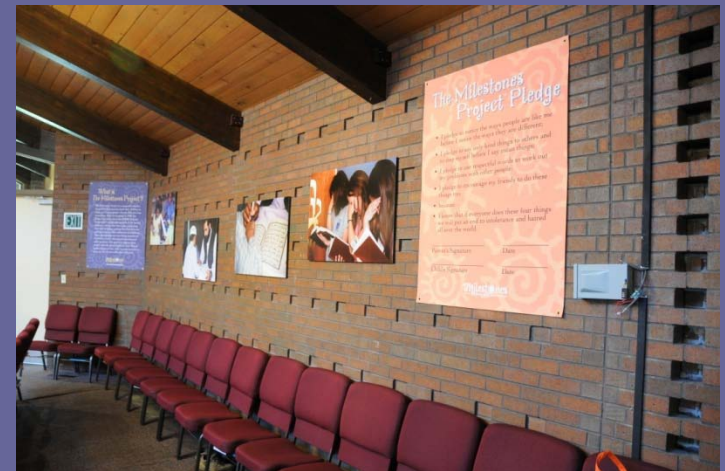


Photo Exhibitions and Permanent Collections

- Denver's Immigration Integration Network now has an assortment of images from several countries, many of which represent the birthplace of their clients.
- Aurora West Middle School acquired 12 poster-size prints for their new facility slated to open in 2012. Led by master educator, Debbie Getzel, AWMS organized curriculum activities around their presence at the school.

Precious!

Portraits of the hopeful and undefeated kicked into high gear in 2010.

Three opportunities arose resulting in free 8" x 10" family portraits, similar size prints of their children and a DVD to the organization which they can use to make up additional pictures of various sizes.



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July 13, 2007

Re: Richard & Shelli Steckel

La Academia at the Denver Inner City Parish is a non-denominational private school for at-risk, low-income Latino youth in grades seven through twelve. We received a wonderful treat this year for our 2010 Graduation Ceremony when Richard & Shelli Steckel photographed the ceremony.

They did a remarkable job of telling the story of the graduation, but much more. Through their compelling and thoughtful photos they were able to tell the story of the challenges, obstacles and victories of our student's lives.

Upon my first viewing of their work, I cried, cheered, laughed and applauded. The second viewing ended in the same result but with even more emotion. After the third viewing I wondered if they had been hiding in the closet of the school unnoticed for two or three years, because I was amazed how they could understand our school and our youth so well in such a short time.

Richard & Shelli "get it!" they understand who we are, what we are about, their pictures tell our story and expose our soul – not an easy trick. I am delighted by their efforts and I am forever grateful for their documentation of La Academia at the Denver Inner City Parish.

Respectfully,

D. Todd Clough,
Executive Director

Whew!

That about does it for 2010. Then again, our “sister organization,” AddVenture Network, was asked to tell the stories of women struggling to rebuild their lives (Work Options for Women – www.workoptions.org) and people with special needs overcoming low expectations and prejudice (The Ability Society – www.abilitysociety.org). Discrimination based on class and differing abilities are two challenges added to our efforts and consistent with our values.

2010 was thrilling. Here we come 2011!



How You Can Help

We invite you to join us in our efforts to promote mutual respect, understanding and empathy. To keep going, a tax-deductible investment of \$50 - \$100 - \$500, would be terrific. Feel free to give what you can comfortably afford.

Checks can be mailed to:
The Milestones Project
5443 S. Prince Street
Littleton, CO 8012

Wire transfer to:
Colorado Business Bank
Routing transit / ABA # 102003206
Account # 3137430

May you have love, laughter and joy in your life in 2011.

Hugs,

Shelli & Richard