



MEDIA CONTACT:
Eric Kasum
(714) 261-0660
erickasum@gmail.com

Shinnyo-en Foundation

www.sef.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On Memorial Day this year (May 25, 2009) the [Shinnyo-en Foundation](http://www.sef.org) will host an important news event... the [SIX BILLION PATHS TO PEACE: "Reflection and Dialogue."](http://www.sef.org)

At the same time, the 10th Anniversary of the spectacular [LANTERN FLOATING](http://www.sef.org) ceremony will be hosted by its sister foundation, the [Nā Lei Aloha Foundation](http://www.sef.org), and [Shinnyo-en](http://www.sef.org).

The [Shinnyo-en Foundation](http://www.sef.org) is also co-sponsoring a third important event, in partnership with the [Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue](http://www.sef.org) co-founded by [Len & Libby Traubman](http://www.sef.org), entitled [CHANGING LIVES IN THE HOLY LAND: "Stories of loss, vision, and hope"](http://www.sef.org).

As part of its ["Six Billion Paths to Peace"](http://www.sef.org) initiative, the [Shinnyo-en Foundation](http://www.sef.org) has invited [people from both sides of the Middle-East conflict](http://www.sef.org) who are traveling halfway around the world to take part in these healing and historic events...



[CLICK HERE to view a slideshow](#)

[CLICK HERE to watch MOVIE of Lantern Floating](#)



DETAILS – WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE?

[LANTERN FLOATING](#)

Monday, May 25 (Memorial Day 2009)
6.30 p.m. at Magic Island
Ala Moana Beach Park, Honolulu, Hawaii
<http://www.lanternfloatinghawaii.com/>

[SIX BILLION PATHS TO PEACE: "REFLECTION AND DIALOGUE"](#)

May 26, 2009
Honolulu, Hawaii
<http://www.sef.org/sixbillionpaths.html>

[CHANGING LIVES IN THE HOLY LAND: "Stories of loss, vision, and hope"](#)

May 27, 2009
7:00 - Exhibits & Refreshments
7:30-9:30 - Palestinian & Israeli stories
St. Ignatius High School Commons, San Francisco
<http://traubman.igc.org/changenight.htm>



SIX BILLION PATHS TO PEACE

The [Shinnyo-en Foundation](#), in response to President [Barack Obama's national "Call to Service,"](#) and in its role as a non-governmental member of the United Nations, is actively stepping into the role of catalyst and convener for events that help to create world peace. This year, we are proud to host and co-sponsor the [SIX BILLION PATHS TO PEACE: "Reflection and Dialogue"](#) in Hawaii and the [CHANGING LIVES IN THE HOLY LAND: "Stories of loss, vision, and hope"](#) event in San Francisco.

Mahatma Gandhi said: "Become the change you want to see in the world." That's why, at the Shinnyo-en Foundation, we created our ["Six Billion Paths to Peace"](#) initiative: to inspire people to focus on how we are all one world community – and to encourage each one of us to reflect upon how one person can help to create a more harmonious world.

There are 6 Billion ways.

What is YOUR path to peace?



LANTERN FLOATING

- On Memorial Day, more than 25,000 people will gather on Ala Moana beach in Honolulu, Hawaii, within a stone's throw of the USS Arizona Memorial, to honor their ancestors, victims of natural disasters, and also those who have died in wars – without distinction between friend and foe – and to offer spiritual consolation.
- Dramatic and visually spectacular (a news cameraman's dream), [Lantern Floating](#) is an emotional experience, as people of all faiths and from all corners of the Earth gather together. They wrap prayers around candles, and at sunset, float them out to sea in small boats. It is a vision of a global future that connects Asia, America, and the Middle East in an expression of peace and harmony.
- The [Shinnyo-en](#) Buddhist order is the only major world religion which has a woman, [her Holiness Keishu Shinso Ito](#), as its spiritual leader.
- Following a devastating earthquake in Pakistan, [Shinnyo-en](#) built a mosque – a place for spiritual refuge – for the people. That's right: a Muslim temple. A Buddhist order building a mosque for Muslims? Why not? We believe that: "Kindness has no borders."

HEROES OF PEACE

This is more than just a story of hope. It is the story of a NEW BREED... a story of people living in the midst of war who reject all the forces around them pulling them back into conflict... heroes like **Huda Abu Arquob, Ilana Meallem, Mohammed Issa Abufayyad, and Elad Vazana**. They are exemplars of courage, lights that shine in the darkness, people who reject violence and refuse to be enemies. Instead, they've chosen their Paths to Peace: engaging each other and creating a new future. They are a NEW BREED of human being, a new DNA at the spiritual level... living in the midst of war, and yet choosing to live "beyond war." They walk a path between two worlds: an old world that is dying but not quite dead, and a new world that is conceived but not quite born. We celebrate these dynamic peacemakers with this year's historic and healing events: the [Lantern Floating](#), the [Six Billion Paths to Peace: "Reflection and Dialogue,"](#) and [Changing Lives in the Holy Land: "Stories of loss, vision, and hope."](#)

Our event participants – who have made a decision to “live beyond war” – include:

Huda Abu Arquob – a Muslim Palestinian from the West Bank city of Hebron, where her family has lived for centuries. Growing up under military occupation, Huda witnessed countless acts of violence, including assassinations, shootings of family members, jailing of her father and uncle, assaults on her school, and daily humiliation. Despite these challenges, she was raised valuing human life of her own people and all others. Huda earned a B.A. in Education and English Literature while helping to bring up her eleven siblings. She then became a Fulbright Scholar, earning an M.A. in Conflict Transformation from Eastern Mennonite University. Since 2007 she has been Co-Executive Director of Abraham's Vision. A model of exemplary communication and conflict resolution, Huda embodies the principles and courage our world needs.



Ilana Meallem – after serving in the Israeli Air Force, she began working to build better relations between Jews and Arabs at the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies. Ilana is shepherding Spirituality Without Borders – a group of citizens of diverse faiths from Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon and beyond meeting face-to-face, building peace, harmony and Earth-based eco-spirituality together. Ilana speaks English, Hebrew, and Arabic.



Mohammed Issa Abufayyad – a devout Muslim from Khan Younes, Palestine. As a teenager in the “Seed Peace” program, he traveled into Israel with other Palestinian youth to build relationships with Jewish peers. At the time of the Second Intifada, he worked as a medical rescuer with his family’s Fayyad Clinic Center, carrying severely war-injured children and adults to the hospital. Mohammed studied medicine at Cairo University and Sixth of October University in Egypt with a full Yasser Arafat PLO scholarship in 2004-2006. Since he became a teenager, eight of Mohammed’s cousins have been killed in war – five in he past year. Yet, he still chose to become deeply involved in the 2007 Palestinian-Jewish Family Peacemakers Camp and sustained Palestinian-Jewish Living Room Dialogue.



Elad Vazana – a Jewish Israeli who served in the Israel Defense Force. He now works in service to build relationships between Palestinian and Jewish youth and families in Israel. He has taught and managed projects for “Youth Leading Change,” the Sulha Peace Project which helped to unite “thousands of Arabs and Jews,” the Gevim North Mediation Center, and Makon Balev, a shelter for at-risk youth. He was a strong force in the 2007 Palestinian-Jewish Family Peacemakers Camp. Most recently, Elad has gathered youth from Palestine and Israel for one-week desert journeys to build relationships and learn to identify with all humankind and Earth.



(EVENT PARTICIPANTS – CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE →)

Len & Libby Traubman – have received media attention for their sustained Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue, face-to-face grassroots meetings held since 1992 with its new quality of listening among Muslim, Jewish, Christian and other adults and youth. In 1982 they also helped launch Beyond War, now Foundation for Global Community. They co-produced two films: Dialogue at Washington High, and Peacemakers: Palestinians & Jews Together at Camp. Libby & Len are respected for their guiding hand in the creation of the Palestinian-Jewish Family Peacemakers Camp, to which the Shinnyo-en Foundation is a major contributor. They live in San Mateo, California.



OTHER NOTABLE PEOPLE who are participating in the SIX BILLION PATHS TO PEACE: “Reflection and Dialogue” include:

Dr. Reuven Gal – is former Chief Psychologist of the Israeli Defense Force and has also served as a combat officer in an elite infantry unit of the IDF. He retired with the rank of Colonel. Co-author of the new book “Service Without Guns,” Dr. Gal is the General Director of the Authority for National Civic Service in Israel, coordinating over 12,000 youth volunteers coming from all ethnic and religious groups. In this capacity, he works closely with the office of the Israeli prime minister.



David Eisner (facilitator of SIX BILLION PATHS TO PEACE: “Reflection and Dialogue”) – is a nationally recognized leader on nonprofit effectiveness, infrastructure, and capacity-building. In 2003, he was appointed by President George W. Bush as Chief Executive Officer of the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#), where he administered the Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs. Before 2003, Mr. Eisner was a Vice President at AOL TimeWarner, where he directed the company's charitable foundation. A graduate of Stanford University, he received his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center. He lives with his family in Bethesda, Maryland.



Michelle Nunn – CEO of the [Points of Life Institute](#) in Washington D.C. The Points of Light Institute inspires, equips and mobilizes people to take action that changes the world. Most recently, she oversaw the successful 2007 merger of [HandsOn Network](#) and the [Points of Light Foundation](#) to create Points of Light Institute, the world’s largest volunteer network. Daughter of former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, Michelle was the founding director of Hands On Atlanta, a non-profit organization that, under her leadership, grew from a grassroots startup to one of the nation’s largest community-based volunteer organizations, engaging nearly 100,000 volunteers each year.



(EVENT PARTICIPANTS – CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ->)

OTHER NOTABLE PEOPLE who are participating in the SIX BILLION PATHS TO PEACE: “Reflection and Dialogue” (continued):

Reverend Mark Farr – an Episcopalian priest, is [Executive Director of Faith Engagement](#) at the Points of Life Institute in Washington D.C. In that capacity, he is responsible for the strategic faith development of Points of Light, including the management of the Interfaith Community Ministry Network, its lead partner. Before taking on that position, he was Senior National Faith Director at America’s Promise – The Alliance for Youth, a national crusade founded by General Colin L. Powell. Rev. Farr is also CEO of “To Kindle Spirit,” a non-profit which seeks to enhance the use of spirituality in non faith-based situations. Before moving to Washington, D.C., he was a senior minister and psychotherapist in England.



Henry Lozano – Deputy Director of the Shinyo-en Foundation. Mr. Lozano was appointed by President George W. Bush as the Deputy Assistant to the President and the Director of the USA Freedom Corps, which also oversees the Peace Corps. In 2003, Mr. Lozano was appointed by President George W. Bush to serve on the Corporation for National & Community Service Board of Directors. In 1998, President William J. Clinton appointed Mr. Lozano to serve on the President’s Advisory Commission for Drug-Free Communities. Mr. Lozano has been instrumental in shaping and advancing the Foundation’s [“Six Billion Paths to Peace”](#) Initiative.



Harumitsu Inouye, Ed.D – Chief Executive Officer of the Shinyo-en Foundation. Since the inception of the foundation, Haru has served as its Executive Director as well as a member of the Board of Directors. His academic and professional background includes international and multi-cultural education, as well as intercultural management at both non-profit and for-profit organizations. He enjoys gardening, in which he sees a parallel between human development and the growing process: from planting seeds, to nourishing them with water and proper food and loving-kindness, and ensuring that they get nurturing and sufficient sunlight to grow strong. This is his formula, his secret recipe so to speak, for how one grows leaders who create harmony and peace.



PLEASE NOTE: Media access to the Tuesday morning [SIX BILLION PATHS TO PEACE: “Reflection and Dialogue”](#) will be limited. It is our intention to give members of the Press access to HD-quality video from the Tuesday morning Reflection and Dialogue shortly after the event. Reporters will also have access to the event participants before the Tuesday morning Peace Dialogue and the morning after the public event in San Francisco: [CHANGING LIVES IN THE HOLY LAND: “Stories of loss, vision, and hope”](#) (see next page).

(SEE CHANGING LIVES IN THE HOLY LAND: “Stories of loss, vision, and hope” – ON NEXT PAGE →)

**CHANGING LIVES IN THE HOLY LAND: Stories of loss, vision, and hope**

An important public event takes place on Wednesday, May 27 in San Francisco, where the Palestinian and Israeli participants of the Peace Dialogue are featured in [CHANGING LIVES IN THE HOLY LAND: Stories of loss, vision, and hope](#). This event, co-sponsored by the [Shinnyo-en Foundation](#), is inspired by the extraordinarily successful method of sharing stories and listening to each other, pioneered by [Len & Libby Traubman](#) in their [Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogues](#) where participants discover that “an enemy is one whose story we have not heard.” Since 1992, this grassroots peace movement has held many hundreds of living room and public peace dialogues that change people and relationships. Participants include citizens on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian relationship who decide to live “a life beyond war.”

EVENT DETAILS:

Wednesday evening, May 27, 2009

7:00 - Exhibits & Refreshments

7:30-9:30 - Palestinian & Israeli stories

The Commons of St. Ignatius High School, San Francisco

Contact: Libby Traubman - LTraubman@earthlink.net or (650) 574-8303

Nahida Salem - SettyNahida@gmail.com or (650) 921-3225

<http://traubman.igc.org/changenight.htm>

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR EASY LINKS TO ALL EVENTS

AND PEOPLE FEATURED IN THIS NEWS RELEASE →

LINKS:

Shinnyo-en Foundation

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

Six Billion Paths to Peace

<http://www.sef.org/sixbillionpaths.html>

Lantern Floating event

<http://www.lanternfloatinghawaii.com/>

Lantern Floating Slideshow

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/37175635@N08/show/>

Lantern Floating MOVIE

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_bq9LF0jAg

About the Lantern Floating event

<http://www.lanternfloatinghawaii.com/aboutTheEvent.html>

Na Lei Aloha Foundation

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

Shinnyo-en Buddhist order

<http://www.lanternfloatinghawaii.com/shinnyoen.html>

Her Holiness Keishu Shinso Ito

<http://www.lanternfloatinghawaii.com/herHolinessKeishuShinso.html>

Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue

<http://traubman.igc.org/dg-prog.htm>

Len & Libby Traubman

<http://traubman.igc.org/>

CHANGING LIVES IN THE HOLY LAND: Stories of loss, vision, and hope

<http://traubman.igc.org/changenight.htm>

