

Education Without Borders

In 2001, HCT initiated a major international student conference based on the radical premise of inviting the most creative students of the world to present their perspectives on education and global issues to university and academic leaders, deans and professors. This conference was called *Education Without Borders* (EWB) and was deemed a huge success by all participants. To date, this biennial event has now been organized six times in the UAE by the HCT.

EWB is all about breaking down the borders between students of different nations and cultures and between students and academicians with regard to learning. EWB also creates networks across cultures in order to understand and generate solutions for some of the world's greatest challenges.

Under the theme of *Innovative Solutions to Global Challenges ... Diverse Perspectives; Unified Action* the 2011 conference continued the work of the 2009 EWB conference by having 1000 student delegates from 291 universities in 131 countries looking at some of the world's most urgent man-made and natural issues currently facing the Earth and its population. They worked with leaders in the business, technology, education and humanitarian sectors to develop a commitment to action.

Each of the final 1000 student delegates chosen produced an abstract of their topic of interest and ideas. From these works 36 international student papers were selected for presentation by the authors. These student presenters were selected through a rigorous judging process, which saw close to 4000 student applications whittled down to 700 paper submissions, then down again to the final 36 international presenters.

EWB 2011 proved to be the biggest in the conference's short history, with a diverse range of ideas, students, and mentors. Awards were presented to students with the best papers in each of the six sub-themes of the conference.

To assist the students in their deliberations and solutions the HCT convened a panel of more than 100 distinguished mentors from around the world, and from a plethora of fields, including H.H. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, former President of Sri Lanka, Dame Marjorie Pearson, Chief Executive, Pearson UK, Sir Robert Swan, Polar Explorer and an Environmental Leader, Anuradha Koirala, founder of Maiti Nepal, Adora Svitak, 13 years old, teacher, speaker, activist and author, Dr. Mark J. Plotkin, President of the Amazon Conservation Team, USA and Anand Kumar, founder of Super 30 India to name a few. This conference also saw the participation of some of the world's most prestigious universities and seats of learning.

At the EWB 2007 World Forum, His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al Nahayan, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research for the UAE and Chancellor of the Higher Colleges of Technology, declared the establishment of the Education Without Borders Regional World Forums, in addition to the biennial World Forum, to focus on region-specific challenges faced by leaders of academia and industry.

The first Regional Forum was launched in North America and took place in New York City in October 2008. This highly successful event was the forerunner to three more regional forums: the South Asian Forum in New Delhi, the European Forum in London, UK and the Latin American Forum in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The mission of the EWB World Forums is to bring together leaders representing educational institutions, governments and a diverse range of local and international industries, to discuss strategic issues and trends of our time and to reframe higher education in the context of increasing globalization and internationalization.

The next *Education without Borders* students' conference is scheduled for 24-29 March 2013. For information on past and present EWBs please refer to the website www.ewb.ae