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**Subject:** Make a Connection Monthly Update (April 2007)  
**Date:** Friday, April 27, 2007 4:42:43 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)

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Dear Partners,

Greetings from a warming Baltimore where spring has finally arrived.

You probably noticed our monthly updates are getting fuller. Distributing a consolidated message is our way to avoid inundating your inboxes with various messages throughout the month. Please take the time to review the email in its entirety. As always, we welcome any feedback or suggestions for improving these updates.

Warm regards,  
Make a Connection Team

## Make a Connection Monthly Update April 2007

### In this month's issue:

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### **Recent Event: Maximizing Investments in Life Skills Development for Youth**

IYF, together with Nokia and the Forum for Youth Investment hosted a one-day symposium on April 17 in Washington D.C. on the central role that life skills education plays in young people's success in life and work. The event, which brought together over 80 US and international professionals, featured the findings from Brandeis University's global study of the Make a Connection program as well as other research from within the US. There was a very positive response to measurement and participants were eager to dialogue on the data and its implications for better programs and policies for young people. Summary notes from the event will be circulated in the near future.

### **Make a Connection Learning and Evaluation Plan Challenge Grants**

This is a reminder that limited Learning and Evaluation Plan Challenge Grants are now available through IYF. Partners who have an interest in conducting more in-depth studies and/or utilizing more innovative, rigorous measurement techniques that their program budget would otherwise not allow (i.e. utilizing mastery skill testing, control groups, comparison groups, etc.) are encouraged to apply for these supplemental funds. More information on the grants can be found on the Extranet at (<http://www.makeaconnectionextranet.org/ProgDocsMonitoring.html>). If you have any questions please email Susan Pezzullo ([spezzullo@iyfnet.org](mailto:spezzullo@iyfnet.org)) and Michelle Szechenyi ([mszecheny@iyfnet.org](mailto:mszecheny@iyfnet.org)) and copy your regional manager. The deadline for applying for these funds is June 30, 2007.

### **Technical Assistance Available for Data Collection and Analysis**

IYF has retained an evaluation expert, Tom Leavitt (who you will remember from the Brandeis study), to provide partners with technical assistance related to the design or implementation of Learning and Evaluation plans. If you would like to request support from Mr. Leavitt in designing or using data collection tools, selecting samples, setting up a data base or conducting data analysis, please email Susan Pezzullo ([spezzullo@iyfnet.org](mailto:spezzullo@iyfnet.org)) and Michelle Szechenyi ([mszecheny@iyfnet.org](mailto:mszecheny@iyfnet.org)) and copy your regional manager. You should explain briefly how and when you would like Tom to help your program.

### **Partner Exchanges**

We encourage you to take advantage of Make a Connection funds available in 2007 to support international exchanges between programs. For more information on the exchange fund, please read the attached guidelines. If someone from your program (staff or beneficiaries) is interested in an exchange with another country this year, please contact your regional manager by 31 May 2007 to discuss it further. <http://www.makeaconnectionextranet.org/ProgDocsExchanges.html>

### **IYF Financial Report Guidelines**

New guidelines on financial reporting and disbursements were added to the Extranet. These resources are meant to clarify the information we need in order to review and process your reports in a timely fashion. <http://www.makeaconnectionextranet.org/ProgDocsExchanges.html>

### **Call for YouthActionNet™ Fellow Nominations**

You should have now received an email from IYF requesting your assistance in nominating outstanding young leaders for the 2007 YouthActionNet™ Fellowship Program. Recipients of this fellowship will receive a grant for their project and will be invited to spend a week together in Washington, D.C. – learning from one another and participating in training workshops customized to meet their learning needs. Due to the nature of your programs, we would encourage each of you to nominate at least one extraordinary individual for this fellowship. The deadline for application is **May 15th, 2007**. If you are nominating a young social entrepreneur, please submit your nomination form or contact Ashok Regmi at [ashok@iyfnet.org](mailto:ashok@iyfnet.org) by April 20<sup>th</sup>. For more information please consult the YouthActionNet™ Website ([www.youthactionnet.org](http://www.youthactionnet.org)). Many thanks in advance!

### **Upcoming Events**

The New Perspectives Foundation (NPF) is co-hosting the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Festival of Volunteers in the Tver region of Russia from 17-20 May 2007 **and you are invited to attend**. The festival is an opportunity to showcase youth-led initiatives and celebrate volunteerism. More details about the event are included in this formal invite <http://www.makeaconnectionextranet.org/NetworkMessages.html>. Contact Victoria Davrukova with questions at [V\\_Davrukova@npf.ru](mailto:V_Davrukova@npf.ru).

### **Local Events Calendar**

To help us all keep abreast of country program activities taking place throughout the year, we've developed a network-wide Events Calendar. Visit the Events Calendar to learn more about program launches, graduation ceremonies, trainings, and celebrations. The calendar will help us identify potential events to cover for communications purposes. Please send your IYF country manager updates as they become available. <http://www.makeaconnectionextranet.org/index.html>

### **International Human Rights Internship Program 2007-8**

The International Human Rights Internship Program's (IHRIP) mission and work are based on the belief that human rights activists have knowledge and skills, as a result of their day-to-day work, that are important to the success not only of their own work, but the work of other activists and organizations, whether in their own or in other countries and regions. The human rights movement – in specific countries and regions as well as internationally – is strengthened through the exchange of this knowledge, experience and expertise. In line with this conviction, IHRIP makes grants available to human rights organizations in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, the Caribbean, East and Central Europe and CIS countries to enable their staff to undertake professional development exchange projects. Visit <http://www.iie.org/ihrp> for application details. Deadlines for applications are 31 August 2007 and 31 December 2007.

### **Staffing Transitions**

Michelle Szechenyi, Regional Manger for Asia, Africa and North America, will be out of the office on maternity leave beginning 30 April 2007 and returning in August 2007. In her absence, contact Kim Ascoli at [kim@lyfnet.org](mailto:kim@lyfnet.org) with any questions or concerns. We are all very excited to welcome the new arrival to her family!

Susana Casaurang, the program manager for the Posta Joven program at Fundación SES in Argentina, is leaving her position to focus on her psychological practice. We welcome Rolando Kandel to the team! He will be starting on 1 May. And good luck to Susana!

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### **Partner Profile: Make a Connection Thru Art Featured on Television in Texas**

Make a Connection Thru Art was featured by Channel 8's Good Morning Texas on March 29, 2007. Select the link below to view the segment and learn about how the program is utilizing local artists to build life skills and encourage students to identify with themselves and express their points of view in a creative and constructive environment. <http://www.wfaa.com/video/gmtgeneral-index.html?nvid=132014>

### **Youth Profile: Alejandra**

Alejandra is a participant in the "Cámara! Ahí nos vemos" program implemented by Fundación Rostros y Voces (RyV) in Mexico. You can read her profile on the extranet at <http://www.makeaconnectionextranet.org/NetworkMessages.html>

