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# Friendship Ambassadors Foundation

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*For the Greenwich \* Post written 10/27/08*

## **YOUTH BAND PERFORMS ON UNITED NATIONS DAY**

The *Youth Band for United Nations* launched its premiere concert appearance under director and conductor John Yoon in Sacred Heart University's Edgerton Theatre last Friday, October 24 as part of the university's United Nations Day celebrations. Conductor John Yoon teaches music at Greenwich High School; Sacred Heart University is located in Fairfield. The Youth Band is a project of local organization Friendship Ambassadors Foundation (FAF), located in the Greenwich Arts and Senior Center in town. FAF formed the youth music project when it arrived here back in 2006. The project has grown into an excellent ensemble of youth musicians from Greenwich High School and elsewhere who perform in support of UN goals.



A small but enthusiastic audience of 100 or more applauded the Youth Band, who have developed a diverse repertoire that included a lively *Suite of American Dances*; *Of Sailors and Whales*, a majestic musical illustration of the Moby Dick story; and a cheerful Spanish piece entitled *Pepita Greus*, among others. Their big, strong sound was a hit with the audience, which was peppered with young and old alike.

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“As we have a focus on the United Nations,” Mr. Yoon explained to the audience from the stage, “I think it is important that our repertoire is diverse and global in scope.”

The United Nations and its supporters commemorate UN Day each October 24 with the *One Campaign* taking the lead. The One Campaign at Sacred Heart University unites students dedicated to making poverty history while spreading awareness about other issues that affect humans throughout the world. SHU students Mike Fazzino, the leader of the ONE Campaign also the “(Red)” Chapter at Sacred Heart University, and Greenwich resident Diana Sena took a lead role in organizing the event. Diana Sena has recently reestablished the Environmental Club at Sacred Heart University.

Friendship Ambassadors Foundation Executive Director Patrick Sciarratta was the keynote speaker and focused on public events for youth and adults that invite people to learn more about the overall goals and mission of the United Nations. Refreshments followed and featured two home baked birthday cakes inscribed with best wishes for the UN.



Mr. Sciarratta spoke about the Greenwich based foundation’s work at the UN, particularly focusing on its free, annual Youth Assembly at the UN. Last year the 5<sup>th</sup> annual youth assembly drew nearly 1000 youth leaders, ages 18-26 from 62 countries, to the UN for the three-day gathering and featured presentations by Arun Gandhi, Reverend Jesse Jackson, Kathy Ireland, Olympic medalists, and many other prominent speakers and workshop leaders.

“The Youth Assembly is a unique glimpse inside the UN, features culture and the work of the Youth Band for United Nations as well as many other performers from around the world,” Mr. Sciarratta said at one point in the talk “It is a direct way to encourage youth led development in support of the UN’s Millennium Development Goals - and we hope all young people sign up when pre-registration begins again later this fall.” Youth Assembly at the United Nations registration info is available at: [www.faf.org](http://www.faf.org).

He closed with an introduction of the new youth band ensemble:

“Allow me to take the opportunity to introduce Conductor John Yoon and the Youth Band for United Nations. This is a new ensemble that springs out of the Friendship Ambassadors Foundation project to create youth music ensembles that perform for volunteer service or in relation to United Nations events and functions. In the past our related Youth Symphony traveled

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to New Orleans several times and donated 67 instruments to young children who lost theirs in hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

“We have had a day named in our honor by mayor Ray Nagin of New Orleans, with honorable mention by the US Senate and an article in the *Sunday New York Times*. Our new Youth Band for United Nations is currently considering two potential options for a summer program, one in France as part of a sister city relationship we have built together, or to accept an invitation from Jordan to make concerts there as a peace building effort in 2009. So, without further ado, please allow me to introduce, the Youth Band for United Nations and Maestro John Yoon!”

And so the concert began and was hailed by all as a tremendous success and great start to the season that may include a visit to Greenwich’s new sister city, Vienne, France and possibly elsewhere within the year. Keep posted for more news about the travels, concerts, and service efforts of this new ensemble of local young artist in town!

The Youth Band for United Nations is a project of Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, Inc. 299 Greenwich Avenue, Greenwich. FAF also worked to create the Greenwich Vienne Sister city project with First Selectmen Jim Lash and Peter Tesei, Daniel Vock and the Alliance Francaise, and Greenwich Choral Society among others, in 2007 and 2008. FAF ([www.faf.org](http://www.faf.org)) is a not for profit tax exempt organization with formal relations at the United Nations Department of Public Information and as an Operational Partner with UNESCO in Paris.



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