

## UPF and WFPW Melbourne, Australia hold their Second Peace-Building Seminar

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Melbourne, Australia -- Organized by UPF-Australia and the Australian chapter of the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFPW), the second peace-building seminar in a series of four explored the challenges faced by Australian families and the skills needed to meet these challenges. These seminars have become very popular with community and service organization leaders to augment their professional development.

Kosina Hanson presented on the topic "The Neuroscience Behind Relationships and How Emotional Intelligence Can Be Practiced in the Home Environment." Ms. Hanson is a social worker supporting young families experiencing violence in the home. Her work seeks to restore and strengthen the family by encouraging positive and safe relationships. She explained that human beings are deeply connected on an emotional level and expressed the need for a new societal movement emphasizing human connectedness.

In her presentation on "How Family Trauma Affects Psychological Adjustment in Adulthood," Taniya Jayasinghe spoke about the effects of trauma on individuals and within families, explaining the nature of trauma and how to cope with it. Ms. Jayasinghe is a counselor and a member of a crisis assessment team that assesses teenagers for physical violence and treats them for personality and anxiety disorders. She also facilitates workshops for teenagers dealing with self-esteem, anger management and body image issues.

"Family Well-Being and Functional Behaviors" was addressed by Anne Bellavance, who is the president of WFPW-Australia and sits on the board of WFPW-International. Her presentation looked at the dysfunctional aspects of human nature that can cause conflict and discussed how to turn these around to create unity and peace. She explained how maladaptive strategies to cope with life become habitual and are believed to contribute to many, if not all, emotional disorders.

Randall Apps, who is director of the UPF branch in Geelong, spoke on the very important topic of "Building Bridges Between Interfaith Communities." He described the security and emotional support that he and members of the interfaith community provided the Geelong Mosque members in the hours and days after the Christchurch Mosque massacre.

During his presentation on mindfulness and peace building, Dr. John Bellavance, vice president of UPF-

Australia, focused on cultivating the following abilities: living in the moment; focusing on a task; taking on challenging tasks; being resilient; forgetting yourself; and focusing fully on another person.



At the conclusion of the seminar, Dr. Bellavance and Will Abdo of UPF-Victoria presented the Ambassador for Peace award to Hussam Cheebo. Mr. Cheebo was the 2009 recipient of Victoria's Multicultural Award for Excellence. His contribution to the area of multicultural media is immense, particularly in the Arabic language. His service to migrants in the settlement process over the years has also been outstanding.

