

Creating perspectives for educational projects worldwide

WOW-Day 2013: students support other students

Berlin, 13/6/2013-JH. Each year, from Berlin to Riga, from Bangkok to Buenos Aires, thousands of Waldorf students around the world collect donations through the „Waldorf One World“ (WOW) campaign. For many years now, Waldorf initiatives worldwide are thus receiving vital support – and the trend is rising.

Since 1994, WOW-Day participation has been steadily increasing: Back then only 12 Waldorf schools participated, in 2012, however, already 244 schools and institutions joined forces on WOW-Day. “Through this campaign students learn what a far-reaching effect their commitment can have” says Olivia Girard, organiser of the event, “whether it is through an organised charity run, a bake sale or another fundraising activity.” It is therefore very important to the students to get active again this year on September 26 2013, in order to create equal educational opportunities for other children and adolescents.

Many initiatives benefit from the donations that are helping people in multiple ways: In Israel, children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds study together. At the first Arab Waldorf School, the children learn to play together and interact without prejudice on a daily basis. In Haiti a school was opened in the countryside after the major earthquake, allowing children to attend school outside of the capital Port-au-Prince. In São Paulo, Brazil, children and teenagers suffering from extreme poverty get the opportunity to escape the influence of drugs and violence with the help of specific school lessons, tutoring and workshops.

WOW-Day money also supports social therapy and curative education projects, especially in countries where there are few opportunities for people with disabilities. In Medellín, Colombia, for example, disabled children and adults have the opportunity to live in a community and benefit from lessons teaching them the basics of craftsmanship in weaving, baking and carpentry. In another facility in Lahore, Pakistan, some 140 disabled people are able to earn a living in a textile workshop, a woodworking shop and an organic bakery. Finally in Georgia, children and adults have prospects for a better future by living and working together in the TEMI community.

The WOW-Day campaign is coordinated by the Friends of Waldorf Education in cooperation with the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education (ECSWE) and the German Federation of Waldorf Schools. Last year about € 372,000 were raised by students and 100% of this money was forwarded to benefit Waldorf and social initiatives in 25 countries. The increasing trend is expected to continue with the 2013 campaign “your initiative counts” and an even higher amount of donations will likely be raised, hence creating more educational prospects.

The Friends of Waldorf Education

The Friends of Waldorf Education assist more than 600 Waldorf schools, kindergartens, curative education facilities and social projects worldwide and support them in financial and legal issues. In addition to the WOW-Day, they promote educational sponsorships, emergency pedagogy campaigns and voluntary services. Donations will be forwarded 100 percent to the intended institutions. The association is not financed through general donations, but is supported by sponsoring members and donations that are specifically intended for administrative purposes.

Federation of Waldorf Schools in Germany

The currently 234 German Waldorf schools have joined to create the Federation of Independent Waldorf Schools. The Federation is located in Stuttgart, where the first Waldorf school opened in 1919. The organization leaves the autonomy of the individual Waldorf schools untouched, but rather works on common tasks and interests.

European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education (ECSWE)

The European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education includes 26 national associations and represents more than 680 Waldorf schools throughout Europe with over 147,000 students.

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