

#### In 2007:

- **Education Development Center**, one of UEF's global partners, has accepted to take responsibility for program development and technical support.
- **GAID** (the **Global Alliance for ICT and Development**) an off-shoot of the United Nations ICT Task Force has signed a partnership agreement with UEF.
- The **Synergos Institute** is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the development of effective, sustainable and locally based solutions to poverty. Working with partners, Synergos' mission is to mobilize resources and bridge social and economic divides to reduce poverty and increase equity around the world. Synergos established the Global Philanthropists Circle, a network of leading international philanthropists dedicated to eliminating poverty and increasing equity worldwide.
- UEF is developing its **well-being framework** of indicators for the inner/subjective aspects on a continuous basis. A first paper has been produced: "*Reflections on Well-Being for Education*".
- A **partners' meeting** was held in New York in March attended by Education Development Center, European Institute of Education and Social Policy, GAID, International Partnership Network, Madariaga European Foundation, United Nations Fund for International Partnerships and World Education.
- The **UEF Board meeting** also took place in New York in March and was held on the premises of the United Nations.

Since 2005, UEF has made presentations at the following conferences:

- **Futures of Learning**, organized by International Futures Forum and Scottish Executive in Glasgow (June 2005) and by the European Institute of Education and Social Policy in Paris (Nov. 2005).
- **World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)**, held in Tunis (Nov. 2005) for which UEF was part of the UNESCO delegation.
- **International Conference on Integrated Value Education** Bangalore (June 2006).
- **International Partnership Network**, 8<sup>th</sup> International Partnership Conference in Calabria (Oct 2006).

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#### A brief history of the UEF ...

The first discussions about a universal prize for education took place in 1999 between Daniel Kropf, the chairman of the Education for Life foundation, and Lucio Attinelli, a former director of the Public Relations and Special Events Division at Unesco who founded and directed ADC New Millennium and was the General Coordinator. The organization was based at the Unesco headquarters in Paris and also in Valencia (Spain). This is where they organized the first symposia, 'The Challenges of the Third Millennium' and the 'Universal Declaration of Human Duties and Responsibilities', with the support of Unesco and the Spanish authorities who wished to develop the image of Valencia as a location for international events.

In 2000 the first proposal for a 'Universal Prize for Education' was presented by ADC in a short document prefaced by Michel Serres who argued that « *Pour l'avenir de l'individu, de la famille, de la nation et même de l'humanité en général, l'investissement le plus urgent est celui de la formation.* » ("For the future of the individual, of the family, the nation and even of humanity in general, the most urgent investment is that of education"). It put forward the idea of a prize for education which would be equivalent to the Nobel prize and which would: "*reconnaître et mettre en valeur des qualités et des réalisations éducatives, avec un intérêt spécial pour l'encouragement à la solidarité, la responsabilité et au développement humain.*" ("recognize and make visible educational qualities and achievements, with a special interest for those which foster solidarity, responsibility and human development").

Daniel Kropf was inspired by this idea as he believed it had potential for significant social contributions beyond the philanthropic work in which he was already engaged. At this time, there was no prestigious prize for education, comparable to the Nobel Prize, and education tended to be increasingly under-valued by society. ADC wanted to promote an idea of Lucio Attinelli of a "*porteur du savoir*" and in that way to contribute to rehabilitating education. For impact value, a prize of not less than one million dollars was envisaged and it was to be awarded at a high level ceremony with full media coverage (like the Oscars). However, before launching the program and the award, it was crucial to agree on the underpinning concept which proved to be a long and complex process. Two broad directions were possible: a humanistic perspective arguing in favor of the influence of culture on human development, and another which highlighted the universal aspects that apply across cultures. By the spring of 2002, the issues of agreeing on the concept and clarifying the basis on which it could be taken forward had blocked the process.

In the early summer of June 2002, Daniel Kropf and Marwan Awartani met at an 'open space' meeting organized in Rome by Education for Life with the Dionysia Centre and with the support of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As an innovative educationalist Marwan Awartani, a university professor of mathematics who had founded a school in Palestine, was interested in the idea of a universal prize for education. Within a few months he and Daniel had decided to work together. They spent the next year getting to know each other and evolving the design together. They also organized a meeting of the original Universal Education Prize group held in Rome (November 2003) to look for common ground, but by early 2004 a decision had been taken to go ahead separately. Daniel and Marwan decided to develop their project based on the notion of "*la société pédagogique*" (education by all) which became fundamental to the vision of UEF. At this period Daniel and Marwan also met Corinne Evens, President of the Evens Foundation, who became a co-founding partner. The **Universal Education Foundation** was established in May 2004.

### **Development of the concept and design**

Over the period from 2002 to 2005 the concept underwent substantial transformation, especially during 2004-2005 when it moved away from the original notion of a single prize of a very large amount of money with nominations made by heads of government, leaders of large organizations, etc. It evolved towards the idea of self-nomination and

story-telling for regional awards of smaller amounts, so that more than one initiative could be selected. The concept also broadened from a primary focus on education to encompassing four learning environments: education, health, media, and ICTs, all of which have an impact on children and their well being. Thus, from 2005 on, the vision of the foundation became: '**Education by All for the Well-Being of Children**'.

UEF was introduced to potential partners at the annual meeting of the European Foundations Centre in Greece in 2004 and a pre-launch presentation was made the following year at the EFC meeting in Hungary. This was the real start of the partnership building process. The first of the current partners was the Madariaga European Foundation. Multi-sectoral partnership became a central organizing and funding principle.

### **Program of activities**

During 2005, Marwan and Daniel continued discussions with individuals and organizations in many countries and participated in various international meetings to present UEF's concept. Residential meetings were organized on well-being and for the foundation's partners. This latter meeting led to the definition of UEF's Principles. The interaction and co-creative reflection during these meetings contributed to fine-tuning the vision, values, purpose, goals and the specific activities. Through these interactions, UEF moved to the idea of recognizing and showcasing inspiring initiatives as support for their future work rather than awarding prizes. The UEF program currently has three inter-related core activities: the **Voice of Children**, the **Elham Inspirational Program** and the **Learning for Well-Being Forum**. (See brochure)

During 2006 the **Voice of Children Initiative** was piloted in three countries in the Middle East (Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan) and the Elham Program is being launched in Palestine in 2007. (See insert) The pilot program is also being launched in Wales in 2007 and the first Learning for Well-Being Forums will take place in 2008 in Wales and Palestine.

In 2007 it was decided that the movement for '**Education by All for the Well-Being of Children**' could be best developed through the creation of country-based organizations which will be licensed to implement the UEF program of activities (See insert on the License).