

**The YJI Insider, Vol. 8
Thanksgiving 2014**

Just for friends of Youth Journalism International, the *YJI Insider* aims to provide a behind-the-scenes look at this Connecticut-based educational charity and its talented students around the globe.

**Washington, D.C. trip:
YJI students meet,
collaborate, and
friendships bloom**

When YJI students from different parts of the world meet each other, something perfectly normal – and wonderful – happens. They talk, laugh and cheerfully pose for photos. They share ideas, experiences and meals. As they collaborate, they learn about each other and friendships inevitably take root.

Besides teaching the elements of journalism, bringing diverse groups of young people together in a peaceful, productive way is what YJI does best.

Van Nguyen of Hanoi, Vietnam, now a student at Smith College, and Mirwais Kakar of Kabul, Afghanistan, both new arrivals to the U.S., met Tamar Gorgadze, a native of the nation of Georgia who grew up in Virginia and New Englander Mugdha Gurrām, who was born in India. Sydney Hallett, an American from St. Louis, completed



WASHINGTON SCENES: In the photo above, YJI students Mugdha Gurrām, Tamar Gorgadze and Van Nguyen. Below, left: YJI alum Hila Yosafi-Lehman with students Van, Mugdha, Tamar and Mirwais Kakar in front of a portion of the Berlin Wall at the Newseum. Below, right: YJI student Sydney Hallett.

this delightful group of bright and eager young journalists.

Some of them attended the National Scholastic Press Association’s annual conference, where YJI had an exhibit booth, but all of them walked the streets of Washington together and explored the Holy Grail of journalism – the Newseum. They tried new foods, learned to navigate the Metro and

soaked in the breathtaking view from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. They loved it all, but what made it special was meeting each other, the students said.

“I can feel the warmth of a family here,” Van said.

Generous support from friends of YJI – and if you are reading this, that means YOU – made this possible.

Thank you.



Thank you for 20 years of friendship, support and love

Sitting in an Ethiopian restaurant in Washington, D.C., Sydney Hallett, a St. Louis high school senior, couldn't contain her excitement. About to dig into exotic cuisine and surrounded by fellow YJI students who hailed from around the world, she noticed that she was the only one who didn't speak at least another language besides English.

That didn't stop Sydney from communicating with her new friends, though. She drank it all in and flawlessly devoured her meal using the spongy Ethiopian bread, learned to navigate the subway and discovered, at the Newseum, just why the Berlin Wall was such a big deal to so many people. If you haven't read her piece about it, it's worth a look. It's at yjiblog.org.

Sydney later said she'd been nervous at first, but realized right away that in YJI, she was among friends. Jackie Majerus, YJI's co-founder, led the trip with Hila Yosafi-Lehman, a YJI alum from Bristol, Conn. who took time away from her job and young son to help chaperone.

So whether you've read the work of YJI students since 1994 or just started this year, whether you offered sage business advice as YJI grew, let your child explore journalism through YJI or talked up YJI to friends and colleagues, you've made a difference.

If you are reading this right now, you played a part in carrying YJI through this, our 20th year.

Thank you for all you do for Sydney and her fellow students around the globe! Without you and other friends, Sydney would not have connected with her YJI peers this month and there wouldn't have been a Toronto Tour in June that offered unforgettable experiences and collaborative journalism.

The Toronto Tour, which took students around Lake Ontario, inspired two donors to decide that YJI ought to have its own vehicle for such outings. This generous pair, who wish to remain anonymous, bought the organization a wonderful van that holds up to eight people.

YJI is on literally a roll!



Hila Yosafi Lehman, Van Nguyen, Mirwais Kakar and Sydney Hallett walking in Washington this month.

Of course, most can't give a van, but as one cherished friend says, "Every little bit helps." Thank you for your love and support, in whatever ways you can give it. It is appreciated!

Do you use Amazon? With one click, You can make Amazon give to YJI

What if you could wave a magic wand and make Amazon donate some of its profits to your favorite youth journalism organization? Now you can, and you don't even need a magic wand.

Amazon's charity program, called "Amazon Smile," will give a small percent of the purchase price if you select Youth Journalism International as your charity of choice. Amazon recently approved YJI, a 501(c)(3) educational charity, for this program.

Please select YJI as your preferred charity at Amazon! This does **NOT** add any cost to your bill.

It's fast and easy to set up: Go to www.smile.amazon.com. Log in on your account (or create one, which requires only your name and email address). Then type in Youth Journalism International in the box for your preferred charity.

The only thing you need to remember after that is **when you shop at Amazon, to go to www.smile.amazon.com rather than to Amazon directly**. Otherwise, Amazon won't make the donation. Thank you!!!

Donor's Corner

Wanted: Contest Sponsors

YJI's annual Excellence in Journalism contest is heading into its fifth year and we're on the hunt for a sponsor. If you know of a company, institute or foundation that might like to help showcase the best work in print and multimedia by student reporters, artists and photographers worldwide, please let us know.

Please, if you can, pass the enclosed brochure along to a young person who might want enter or to your local high school journalism department or to a potential sponsor.

More than 20 professionals serve as judges each year, reviewing entries from teens the world over. So far, winners have come from 24 U.S. states and 28 countries.

