



Please note: This is a document currently going out to the 56 addresses that I have for people who attended the Regional Meeting, perhaps at a later date I will use some of the same info to share with others who were not able to attend the meeting, but this thought is still in the works....for now, I just want to follow up with you who I met last weekend..... Amy

1st Midwest Regional Meeting

June 2009

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So you want an equation



**We had a great time, and hope  
you did too!**

Special thanks to POA!!

Dear Friends,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your presence at the 1st Midwest Regional Meeting in Chicago.

Truly for me, the best part was the opportunity to meet new friends, and reconnect with those I rarely get to see from Washington.

I value the support and encouragement our chapter receives from POA, and I look forward to working with and seeing you all again in the future.



Thanks for taking time out of your life to make a statement and apply action to your thoughts,

Amy

Keynote Address: Brand Latin America by Esther Cepeda, included a charge to each one of us to alert the media whenever possible - and what better time

than now, after a significant POA event, to take advantage of a pertinent opportunity to spread the word about Partners of the Americas. We all love and believe in this organization, so it is our responsibility to help raise awareness and encourage POA to become a familiar name throughout the Americas.

Below is a sample Press Release framed to the W/NP Chapter, but can be easily tailored to fit your respective chapter. Please let me know if you would like the word format and you are free to use any, all or none to make it convey the message you would like your community to know about.



For Immediate Release

June 30, 2009

### Wisconsin represented at 1st Midwest Regional Meeting

"Getting to know you" is a lyrical description of the premier event that took place in Chicago this past weekend. Partners of the Americas (POA), one of the largest volunteer organizations in the Western Hemisphere, hosted the first Midwest Regional Conference on volunteerism that featured the power of citizen diplomacy, the primary force in bringing together the two great continents of the Americas and Central America.

Wisconsin-Nicaragua (located in Nelson Hall on the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point campus), Iowa-Mexico, Illinois-Sao Paulo, Brazil, Indiana-Rio Grande de Sul, Brazil, Kansas-Paraguay, Michigan-Belize, Minnesota-Uruguay, Missouri-Para, Brazil, Nebraska-Piaul/Matto Grosso do Sul, Brazil, Ohio-Parana, Brazil, and Honduras-Vermont, represented the breadth of international affiliates that presented the best of the best in intercultural communication with the singular purpose of bringing people and ideas into a closer working relationship for the good of our hemisphere and the global community.

The spirit of volunteerism and what one individual can accomplish in grass roots relationships was the theme of every session, workshop and discussion. "One highlight of the conference was the inclusion of youth leaders from Wisconsin and Nicaragua; having the students participate in discussion panels clearly brought to realization how valuable events like this Regional Meeting are in fostering and developing leadership skills among teens," said Amy Wiza, program director for Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners.

Person to person diplomacy is nothing new but easily subordinated or forgotten when the events of central government dominate the news. Partners of the Americas with the help of the Illinois-Sao Paulo, Brazil chapter successfully raised the role of citizen diplomacy to a prominent level as ten associate POA chapters gathered to share their best practices in fulfilling their destiny of cultural understanding and exchange.

The enthusiasm for getting to know others through understanding one another's culture and offering cooperative opportunities to meet each other's needs was the big "take home" reward for attending this unique and life changing conference. The 62 attendees discovered that working together in their own communities and through international exchanges everyone benefits and a higher quality of life is achieved. This 2-day conference has ignited a stronger spirit of international responsibility for every citizen who accepts their role of goodwill in the global community.

No one can doubt the tremendous impact this international gathering of motivated citizens will have on their home communities here in the US and across the hemisphere. Friendships have evolved, ideas have been planted, plans have been created and commitments have been made that will bring tangible results as citizen diplomats return home and resume their volunteer efforts. Well-done Partners of the Americas for their vision and initiative in promoting volunteerism and citizen diplomacy.

*Partners of the Americas began in 1964 as the people-to-people component of President John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, and has since evolved into a private nonprofit organization. W/NP is one of 95 chapters throughout the United States. Areas of work include education, cultural exchanges, healthcare, and the environment. There is more information on Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners on the Web at <http://wnp.uwsp.edu>.*



It's no secret the Regional Meeting was a bittersweet weekend for me. My mother and I worked closely together and her tragic untimely departure from my life is a very difficult transition - normally we attend these types of events together for sure. My father has been equally involved in his emotional and technical support all along, and thank God I still have him!

To aid in your understanding of the Volunteer Fellowship award, I felt it important to provide you a bit of background. Due to various circumstances, including keeping to a time schedule, I neglected to share with you one of the most important statements Steve made at my mother's memorial service.

It is pasted in below and I likely could not have read it aloud anyway.

Thanks again for your understanding and attention during the award presentation, much appreciated.

Sherin Bowen Volunteer Fellowship

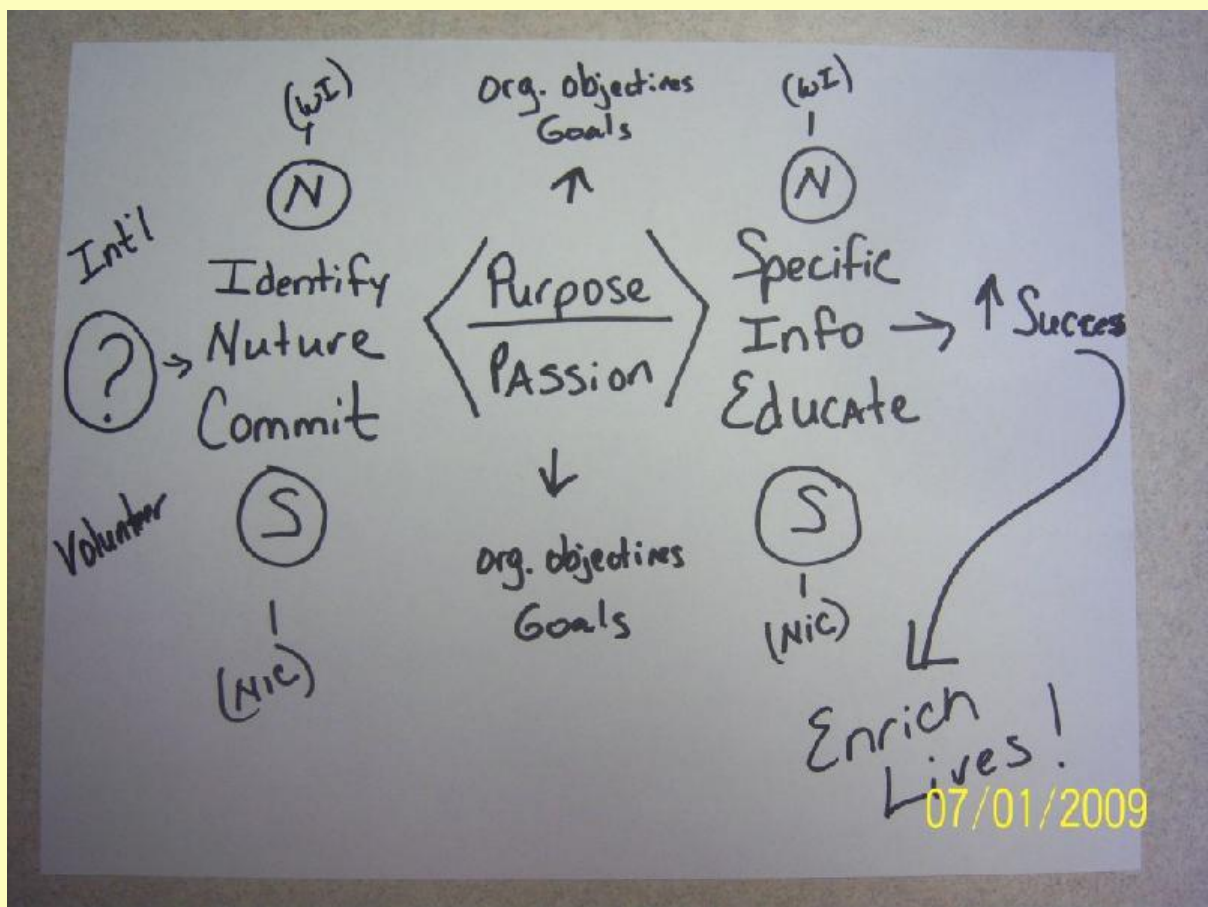


**HER GIFT TO NICARAGUA AND TO ALL OF US:** Few of us know what to make out of her accident in Nicaragua. Does this inform us that the risk is not worth it and we should stay home? I think Sherin would want us to view this as the ultimate gift she had to give to Nicaragua, one that will inspire all of those who knew her and want to emulate her. I know that many of you will agree that we will honor her memory by carrying on her legacy and leadership. - Steve Vetter, March 2009



So you want an equation that works.....

Steve has been relentless in asking what is the equation for Wisconsin, well, there really isn't one. However, as I sat and listened to the comments made throughout the various discussions at the Regional Meeting, I came up with this diagram that provides an illustration of what we do in Wisconsin (and likely what many of you also do) ....I was going to share it with you at the meeting, but time was not our friend and there was only so much we could do. If you want a narrative, just let me know and I'll be happy to elaborate.



Thanks for taking the time to read through this, as mentioned during the conference, it's true that W/NP does function at a high capacity, but only because of a concerted effort among many people who believe in a team effort. Any of the POA chapters can function like this given the right mix of passion & purpose.

Take care everyone, and please feel free to contact us if we can be of assistance. We are all in this together!

Sincerely,

*Amy*

Amy L Bowen-Wiza  
Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas

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