

From: J <fez1321@gmail.com>  
Date: October 2, 2010 2:34:55 PM CDT  
Subject: Letter of Reference

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jason Capecchi. I am currently a freshman at Georgetown University and have been given the privilege of writing on behalf of the peace group ARK and its director, Judy Maghakian. I have been a member of ARK since 2007, after being encouraged by my sister Teresa, a member since 2003, to apply. Since that time, I have undergone an incredible amount of personal growth thanks to the relationships, knowledge, and experience that Judy and ARK have helped me cultivate.

Judy Maghakian, the Project Director, is a woman of innumerable accomplishments. While ARK is perhaps her most innovative and unique program, it is in no way the extent of her abilities. In all her work, Judy focuses on the empowerment of individuals through direct involvement and action (Architects), partnership and networking (Relationships), and personal experience and implementation (Knowledge). The three other programs that she has helped found - Liberty Plaza; People, Inc.; and The Loft - are evidence of Judy's ability to envision projects and see them through. ARK is no different. In ARK, Judy has brought together peacemakers from seven countries across the globe to give them the opportunity to share ideas, foster friendships, and stand in solidarity with one another.

Although Judy is the director of ARK, she is by her very nature a servant leader. ARK is comprised of experts, enthusiasts, and activists, all of whom Judy succeeds in giving some level of responsibility. ARK is not just a time to think theoretically about the practice of peacemaking, it is an experience in which we all partake in the trials and triumphs that result from active collaboration and engagement. It is Judy who cultivates this creative dialogue, but each member of the ARK family is encouraged to grow and develop as a leader through this process.

In this way, ARK is truly unique. I have attended many summits on diversity and human rights, but none of them so actively engage the participants as ARK does. ARK is not a utopia; however, Judy's realization of this fact has allowed for a more constructive environment than any I have ever been in. We are encouraged to creative conflict, to active evaluation, and in doing so we all gain experience that is overwhelmingly relevant and immeasurably valuable to our theme of peacemaking.

In addition, it is vital to view ARK as an evolving process. The ARK my sister first experienced in 2003 is not the same one I experienced in 2007, and the next summit will bring about even more changes. ARK's dynamic activity is truly reflective of the diversity of its participants, which gives me great faith that ARK will flourish in a myriad of circumstances for many years to come.

ARK is something that I live each and every day of my life. It gives me something to strive for, something to reflect on, something to encourage me to make a difference with my life. I hope that ARK will continue to galvanize enduring peacemaking, as I am eternally grateful to Judy and the ARK program for who they have helped me become.

Sincerely,  
Jason Capecchi