

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Boston Area Returned Peace Corps Volunteers

Virginia Swain to be given Outstanding Service Award in Intercultural Understanding October 24 by Boston Area Returned Peace Corps Volunteers

On October 24 at the 25th anniversary of Boston Returned Peace Corps Volunteers at Marino's Restaurant in Cambridge, Worcester counselor, mediator and consultant Virginia Swain will receive the award for outstanding service in intercultural understanding.

A former Peace Corps volunteer in Liberia, West Africa, Swain is being awarded the Third Goal Award, given to those individuals who, through continued service to their communities, have exemplified the Third Goal of the Peace Corps, to promote a better understanding of other people on the part of the American people by promoting intercultural awareness and understanding. The award states, "Virginia has made it her lifelong commitment to support a just, sustainable, intercultural and multiethnic global peace."

Current leadership, intercultural and multiethnic conflict management training programs she is involved with include: *Coordinating peer mediation and teaching conflict skills to students from 30 cultures at Burncoat Senior High School in Worcester, with support from Worcester Community Action Council and Massachusetts Attorney General's Office.

*Training cross-sectoral emerging and existing leaders at the United Nations and Rhode Island in a Reconciliation Leadership™ Certificate Program that begins November 28, 2003 for community, institutional and global challenges. She partners with the Under Secretary-General for Least Developed Countries, former Ambassador from Bangladesh, Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, to co-sponsor the five-module Program. The fourth course of the Program has been piloted at the United Nations, Designing and Implementing Interventions for Global Change, and brought seventy-five participants from fifteen countries in the first year of five courses at the UN. (www.global-leader.org, click on upcoming). Participants from all sectors inside and outside the United Nations are eligible to attend.

Swain also has a Worcester counseling and consulting practice where she provides services for adolescents, adults, couples, families, teams and institutions. She specializes in adolescent, parental and adult anger, women's leadership issues resulting from changing roles in society and introducing change in resistant systems.

Additionally, Virginia is Founder and Director of the New York and Worcester-based Institute for Global Leadership. The Institute was founded after September 11, 2001 when Swain was in New York during the World Trade Center Attack. The Institute joined the Global Compact, an initiative to bring business into dialogue at the United Nations begun by Nobel Peace Laureate Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Through the Institute, Swain provides leadership, team development and dispute resolution for leaders and teams in conflict and in need of intercultural understanding. The Institute provides resources for a new leadership, Reconciliation Leadership™ for the personal and professional goals of emerging and existing leaders for a post-September 11 world. The resources include mentoring in career and life direction, cultivating leaders who help their colleagues through effective transitions, training leaders committed to a just, sustainable, intercultural and multi-ethnic peace and providing dispute resolution services for community, institutional and global challenges.

Swain, a former Human Resources Manager at Pepperidge Farm, a division of Campbell Soup Company, was also in sales, marketing and public relations in other professional positions. Swain's work in business, conflict management and counseling in local and global settings on five continents inspired the new leadership model. Swain did her master's thesis project at the United Nations. Entitled *Celebration for the Children of the World*, the project was designed to build community between all the different sectors of the United Nations community. Over ten years, Swain further developed the Celebration model as a Peacebuilding Process of Reconciliation, a public inquiry process for severely conflicted situations (i.e. with refugees from Rwanda and ex-Yugoslavia.) Swain was hired by the United Nations to implement her leadership and development model in the Mindanao, Philippines crisis where she trained Christian and Muslim peacemakers.

As an adjunct faculty member at Lesley University, Salve Regina University, and Clark University, Swain has taught courses in global management, negotiation, mediation, cross-cultural conflict and leadership.

She co-founded the Center for Global Community and World Law with her husband, Dr. Joseph Baratta, History and Political Science Professor at Worcester State College, which supports the goals of the UN Charter through research, education and publications. And she served on the executive committee of the Coalition for a Strong United Nations, which offers public education in partnership with the John F. Kennedy Library.

Swain has also extended her reach beyond the U.S. For example: She co-facilitated workshops at the Global Forum conference at the 1992 UN Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, and at the 1995 UN Social Development Summit in Copenhagen. She was also involved in preparations for the 1996 UN Beijing Women's Conference.

Swain has published many articles on global leadership, peacebuilding, and development. Her new book, entitled *A Mantle of Roses: A Woman's Journey Home to Peace*, is being published this December by Xlibris (www.global-leader.org, click on News). In an excerpt from the Introduction, she writes: "I am an ordinary woman with extraordinary experiences. My story begins in 1979 when I felt a leading I couldn't ignore...Because I have a certainty of what I am being led to do with my life, I understand now how I can make a difference in the world."