

For Immediate Release

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**Central Michigan University Professor Organizes
International Peace Education Project**

*Highlights of Ongoing “Piece of the Palace” Project to Occur in The Hague,
Netherlands*

A delegation from Central Michigan University (CMU) will travel to The Hague in the Netherlands this August for a range of activities commemorating the Centenary of the Peace Palace. The CMU group consists of Dean Pamela Gates, Assistant Professor of Philosophy Andrew Blom and Professor of Philosophy Hope Elizabeth May. Dan Bracken, a videographer from CMU Public Broadcasting (WCMU), will also be on hand, filming for an upcoming documentary.

The Peace Palace was built in 1913 with funds from a donation made by celebrated steel magnate and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. It is home to a number of international judicial institutions, including the Permanent Court of Arbitration, the International Court of Justice and the Hague Academy of International Law, which attracts law students from all over the world every summer.

The trip and subsequent “Piece of the Palace” project were organized by CMU Professor and Attorney Hope Elizabeth May.

May created the “Piece of the Palace” project in order to broaden the reach of the Peace Palace Centenary so that students and a wider public beyond The Hague (Netherlands) are educated about the ‘peace through law’ approach symbolized by the Peace Palace and the history of the 19th century Peace Movement.

There are three different components to the project:

- 1) A student conference in The Hague on the topic of "Peace Through Law"
- 2) “Pro Concordia Labor”--a public event on the eve of the Centenary in Delft, Netherlands
- 3) “Points of Light”--an educational outreach component involving 30 communities throughout the world.

One of the guiding principles of the “Piece of the Palace” project is E.M. Forster's line from *Howard's End*: “Only Connect.” The project seeks to use the Centenary to not only

to "connect the dots" historically and conceptually (the Centenary of the Peace Palace is also the 50th Anniversary of Martin Luther King's 'I Have a Dream Speech'), but also to forge personal connections among people working for the same values but separated by institutional and disciplinary silos and also by physical geography.

The Conference:

On August 25-27, an international conference entitled "Peace Through Law: The Development of An Ideal" will take place at Park Hotel, Den Haag. The conference is convened by The International Criminal Court Student Network (ICCSN). Professor May serves on the Board of Directors of the ICCSN.

This historic conference offers undergraduate and graduate students and early professionals/academics studying or working in the field of international law an opportunity to both present and discuss ideas. Participation will also ensure what May calls "a teachable moment" by allowing attendees a role in the Peace Palace Centenary in an educationally-enriching way.

Conference speakers include 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Leymah Gbowee; Donald Ferencz – son of Nuremberg Prosecutor Benjamin Ferencz; sociologist Mary Jo Deegan, and others from around the world. The conference will be attended by students from China, Portugal, Ireland, Australia the UK and the US, amongst other countries.

To visit the conference website and the call for papers, visit <http://www.iccsn.com/peacethroughlaw/>.

"Pro Concordia Labor"

On August 27, "*Pro Concordia Labor*" (For Peace I Work) will be held at Oude Kerk, Delft, Netherlands.

This event was organized to commemorate the legacy of Bertha von Suttner and to provide education about the ways in which women's experiences with armed conflict have helped shape international law. The event will feature addresses by 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Leymah Gbowee; Director of Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice Brigid Inder; and U.S. Ambassador for Global Criminal Justice, Stephen J. Rapp.

In 1889, von Suttner's anti-war novel *Die Waffen Nieder!* (*Lay Down Your Arms!*) made her an international celebrity. A brief employment with Alfred Nobel in 1876 is credited with inspiring Nobel to create the Nobel Peace Prize. In 1905, von Suttner was the first woman to be awarded with this prestigious prize.

On August 28, 2013, during a private Centenary celebration, a bust of Bertha von Suttner will be unveiled at the Peace Palace. This historic moment is the first time that a statue of a woman will be placed in the Peace Palace. 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Leymah

Gbowee will unveil the bust. Gbowee was the last woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, an honor that she shared with Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Tawakkol Karman. May arranged for Gbowee to unveil the bust.

“The aim of *Pro Concordia Labor* is to educate and inspire so that people understand the poignancy and significance of the unveiling of the Bertha von Suttner bust that will happen on the following day. The event has been organized to promote a deeper understanding of the significance of the Peace Palace Centenary and to ‘connect the dots’ between the unveiling and the recent developments concerning women, peace and international law,” said May.

For more information on “Pro Concordia Labor,” visit <http://www.proconcordialabor.com/>.

“Points of Light” Outreach Project

The final component of May’s “Piece of the Palace” includes an educational outreach project that involves 30 different communities around the world. The project takes the anniversary of the Peace Palace beyond The Hague - to 30 different locations throughout the world - identified as 'Points of Light'.

In exchange for a 'Treasure Box' full of materials on Peace, International Law and connected themes, representatives at each “Point of Light” develop activities aimed at educating their community about the inspiring story and the important themes connected to the Peace Palace and the subsequent peace-through-law tradition.

Activities throughout the world will occur throughout the Fall of 2013. “Points of Light” in Moscow, Idaho and Valladolid, Spain engaged in activities in April and May of 2013.

For more information on Points of Light, visit <http://www.pointsoflight.nl/>.

Centenary of the Peace Palace

On August 28, the Centenary of the Peace Palace will be celebrated. It is also the 50th Anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream Speech" and the U.S. March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

The Carnegie Foundation has organized a private ceremony at the Peace Palace on the centenary. His Royal Highness, King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, and U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon will be among the distinguished guests. The CMU delegation of May, Gates, Blom and Bracken will also be in attendance. Professor May will introduce Nobel Laureate Leymah Gbowee before the unveiling of the Bertha von Suttner statue.

Although there is no public celebration planned in The Hague on the official Centenary, Point of Light representatives in Dayton, Ohio, have planned peace-themed activities to commemorate the day as an official “Celebrate Peace Day.”

To learn more about Centenary Commemoration, visit <http://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/peace-palace-centenary/>.

Background and History

“The Piece of the Palace” project has been a long journey for CMU Professor Hope May. Although she began working on the project in July of 2012, she says the journey really began with her first visit to The Peace Palace.

“My first visit to the Peace Palace was actually with 5 students from Central Michigan University,” May recalls. “I had seen pictures of the Peace Palace; I knew that there was a court that operated in the Peace Palace--the court of the United Nations called the International Court of Justice--and that’s basically all I knew. When we got to the Peace Palace, I was shocked to see that it was on a street called Carnegie Lane...and as we went onto this tour, I learned about the United States’ role in the building of the Peace Palace which was really the building that made The Hague the center of International Peace and Justice.”

The Peace Palace was built in 1913 with funding from American entrepreneur and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. The building was originally built to provide a symbolic home for the Permanent Court of Arbitration, a court created to end war, created by treaty at the 1899 Hague Peace Conference.

The Peace Palace became a lasting symbol of the ideals of a new worldwide peace movement. The history of the movement, and the palace itself, have surprising ties to mid-Michigan and to Central Michigan University: both CMU President E.C. Warriner and CMU President Charles Grawn served as leaders of the pre-World War I Peace Education movement connected to The Peace Palace.

“Warriner was the President of the Michigan branch of the American School Peace League before and during his Presidency at CMU,” says May. “While serving on the League, he was also superintendent of Saginaw schools, and as superintendent, he used that power to disseminate to teachers the free publications that were produced by the United States government. So there was a moment an awakening of public school teachers and deep interest in the peace movement. Peace Day [May 18] was celebrated because that was the day on which the 1899 Hague Peace conference opened.”

May says the longtime effort by the nations of the world—including the United States--to come together to realize peace through international law is often overlooked in history. The “Piece of the Palace” project is an effort to change that.

“This is really about connecting people,” May says. “Not only is the moment a powerful one that connects people to each other, it also connects people to the story of the Peace Palace. At least for me, being connected to that story has had a profound influence on my life.”

“There’s this historical lesson that needs to be told,” she adds. “But ultimately the project is for the sake of understanding ourselves; the ultimate project is identity and American identity. And in order to do that – to construct an identity rich with understanding - which is a project of every generation, you’ve got to include this moment in history.”

“I’ve learned, working on this project that you can do a *lot* by yourself. But I tell my students you can’t do anything *great* by yourself. To do something great you absolutely need other people. So, true, I’m sort of like the driving force. But it’s sort of a myth and it’s a mistake to think that other people aren’t instrumental and just as important.”

“Piece of the Palace” is generously funded by the Planethood Foundation, The Global Institute for the Prevention of Aggression, The Department of Philosophy and Religion and The College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences at Central Michigan University, and by contributions from private citizens in the United States. Additional support provided by the Mid-Michigan region of the American Red Cross, Touro Law Center, Skylight Pictures and Schulberg Productions.

Media interviews and photographs are available upon request. For more information on The Piece of the Palace project, historical peace efforts, Bertha Von Suttner, Pro Concordia Labor or The Points of Light Project, contact Hope May (in Holland) at : + 0627412958 or at hope@pieceofthepalace.com.