



NOVEMBER 2020



THE NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL EXTENDS THE SAFE SYSTEM INNOVATION GRANT AWARDED TO SARA’S WISH FOUNDATION AND THE UMASS TRANSPORTATION CENTER WITH ADDITIONAL FUNDING!!!

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the loss of ridership and funds for the Motor Coach industry, SWF and the UMass Transportation Center have been awarded additional funding to complete our Road to Zero Innovation Grant to “Increase Seatbelt Usage on Motor Coaches.” We are planning to complete the Grant in 2021.

Introducing a number of the exciting people and companies that Sara’s Wish Foundation is working with on this NSC Grant!



Mike Waters – Service Delivery Director for Coach USA/Megabus



Thy Dang – City Manager and Operations Supervisor for Greyhound Bus Lines Inc. San Francisco



Samantha Onnen – General Manager for Santa Barbara Air Bus



Chris Crean – Vice President of Safety and Security at Peter Pan Bus Lines



Steve Harbert – Safety Director for Concord Coach Bus Lines



Also Introducing...

Michael Plotnikov is the Senior Project Leader from the UMass Transportation Center, on this National Safety Council Grant. He is at the Peter Pan Terminal in Springfield, Mass. pointing out the Logo for the Campaign to Increase Seatbelt Usage on Motor Coaches – “Be Safe, Sit Click and Ride!”



SWF continues the support of the Forum with the goal of ensuring that as many study abroad leaders as

2015 Global Humanitarian Award recipient Dr. Nahid Bhadalia, an infectious disease specialist, assumes national prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis



Nahid is an associate professor at the Boston University School of Medicine, and the medical director of the Special Pathogens Unit at Boston Medical Center. On February 9, 2020, Nahid published an op-ed for The Atlantic warning about the burden of the emerging COVID-19 pandemic on healthcare systems based on her experiences as a physician on the frontlines of past epidemics. She called for the need for the international community to invest more in healthcare in the most vulnerable

countries to maximize the likelihood of containing outbreaks. Even after COVID-19 reached the status of a pandemic, Nahid continues to stress the importance of containment and mitigation strategies for healthcare workers, governments, and citizens, advocating also for the importance of COVID-19 testing in containing the virus.

Nahid is a regular contributor to MSNBC and other news outlets during this pandemic crisis. Thank you, Nahid!

possible have received the necessary training in “health, safety, security and risk management” in Module 4 of the curriculum applying the Standards of Good Practice in Education Abroad. SWF is a partner with the Forum and donates \$5000 annually to continue this important training.



Seatbelt Retro-fit Update

Dave McLaughlin, Vice President at American Seating in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is hopeful that the seatbelt retro-fit testing will continue on track when the Pandemic subsides. They are currently working with the NFI Group Inc. (New Flyer), that is the largest bus manufacturer in North America and IMMI that does the crash testing in Indiana. The UMass Mechanical Engineering Department developed the design for the seatbelt retro-fit.

Award Recipients Reflect on the Impact of SWF on Their Lives



Dear Mrs. and Mr. Schewe,

Sara and I could have been good friends. I am also a former scholar-athlete and world wanderer. In fact it was in South Africa, where I spent my junior year that I developed the passion that led me to you, and ultimately

to where I am today.

Years later I interned with the World Health Organization, writing about the psychosocial needs of youth living with HIV. Back in Boston, I connected with Next Step and helped design a program for youth living with HIV focused on their leadership, life-skills and peer community. We called it the One Love: No Longer Voiceless conference.

We needed funding. If South Africa was a crash course in finding purpose, grant-writing was a crash course in finding resilience. I got rejected a lot those first few months and I took the blows hard. I nearly gave up many times. **Then Wendy and Sara's Wish Foundation came along.** You were my first grant and the value of your confidence in me far outweighed any amount of money you could have donated. **Your investment told me that someone out there thought I had a good idea. It gave me the confidence to keep going** and provided the leverage we needed to crowd in the remaining funds to get that first program off the ground.

All my best,
Rena

Rena Greifinger has continued her work in global health – and particularly the health of women and youth – to this day. After many years working on youth-led programs and advocacy around the world, she now leads a collective of bold women philanthropists who are helping to catalyze innovation in women's health. She also continues to work with Next Step as a member of the Board of Directors.

Dear Wendy, Anne and Charlie,

Fifteen years ago, I was the recipient of a Sara's Wish Foundation grant at a turning point in my life. A grad student at NYU, I had decided to work in Siberia for a semester. I was born in Soviet Ukraine and came to the U.S. with my family as political refugees. I think something about growing up in America during the cold war, and the unshakeable feeling of outsidership this experience left me with, had much to do with it. **I used the money from Sara's Wish to purchase a camera and computer gear for the project I had developed: to document how grassroots groups across Siberia were putting micro-USAID grants to use.**

In 2019, I happened upon a news clip of the residents of a city in central Siberia asking Canada for asylum as environmental refugees. Nine massive open pit mines and three coal processing plants had opened, plunging the city into a state of ecological emergency, with sky-high rates of asthma and cancer. Life expectancy tumbled to nearly the lowest level in Russia. I decided to return to Russia to document the human cost of Russia's coal industry and the incredible work of the city's only independent journalist. **I see this project not just as continuation of the work I began with funding from Sara's Wish in 2004, but as its culmination, for this film has the potential to raise awareness of Siberia's unfolding environmental catastrophe, and garner support for the activists fighting it, at a global level.**

With warmth and gratitude,
Alina Simone

Alina Simone is an independent journalist and filmmaker. Her writing has been featured in a range of publications including the New York Times. The author of three books, Alina has also been a regular contributor to BBC's "The World." Her film "Ice on Fire" is set to be launched in early 2022.



Alina shooting on site in central Siberia at the ruins of a still-toxic, experimental coal plant that lies at the edge of a residential neighborhood.

Visit the Sara's Wish Foundation website to read the full transcripts of Alina's and Rena's letters. They are so inspiring! www.saraswish.org]



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