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# ClassACT

**Achieving Change Together**

## August 2021 ClassACTions Bulletin

The rising of Sirius in the night skies usually implies those sultry, lazy, hazy (and crazy) days of summer, but ClassACT is busy gearing up for fall. We hope you have had a chance to relax and reconnect with family, friends and your community and are now ready to get re-involved. Whether on a local, regional or global level, there is much to do regarding justice and civic engagement, the environment, education, and healthcare. ClassACT will continue to provide opportunities for you to participate in our efforts in these areas. By sharing your knowledge and talents with a Bridge Project, attending a forum, volunteering to do a task or, yes, making a donation you are helping ClassACT achieve its goals of classmate connections and collaborations to positively change the world.

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### **ANNOUNCING OUR OCTOBER #CLASSACTFORUM TOPIC**

**Climate Change and Water Crises: Drought, Flood, Contamination ... and  
What We Can Do About It**



*Photo from [Campden FB](#)*

Human impact on the planet is being compared to the meteor that struck Earth and wiped out the dinosaurs – we have truly entered the Anthropocene. A changing climate acts first and foremost through the water cycle which together with human demands are putting unprecedented stress on the reliable availability of water. Its amounts, timing, and quality for humans, other species, and ecosystems have been severely disrupted. Extreme weather events in the summer of 2021 alone run the gamut from wildfires in Siberia and the American West, to unprecedented rainfall events and floods in Germany, China, and the U.S. Gulf Coast, to sea snot (marine mucilage) in the Sea of Marmara off the coast of Turkey. These and other events impact water availability, quality, quantity, and timeliness around the world. ClassACT HR73's next Zoom Forum is: **Climate Change and Water Crises: Drought, Flood, Contamination ... and What We Can Do About It**. Bringing together an expert panel to discuss these disparate problems, we aim both to attain greater understanding of the immense scales of the challenges to both global and local water security and to begin to chart a way forward for our future actions.

Watch for the date and details in our September Newsletter!

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## **CLASSACT BRIDGES**

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### **New Bridge Connection Formed: An Example of ClassACT's Work**



*Understanding Our Differences speaker in a Newton (MA) School (Photo credit: Understanding Our Differences)*

One of ClassACT's major goals is to be the connecting bridge between classmates who can provide expertise and other classmates who are in need of it. **Jeff** and **Marcia Herrmann '73/'74** recently asked for assistance for ClassACT's Bridge, [Understanding Our Differences](#), a national leader in disability awareness education. UOD's interactive school-based programs educate communities to value and accept people of all abilities. ClassAct HR73 introduced Jeff and Marcia to **Bill Strong '73**, a partner at Kotin, Crabtree and Strong, LLP who practices Intellectual Property Law. Bill is advising Understanding Our Differences on IP Protection and helping them to update UOD's contracts in light of UOD's new digital and video materials.

As a reminder, if your organization needs an expert, ClassACT may be able to help. Contact us at [classacthr73@gmail.com](mailto:classacthr73@gmail.com).

Speaking of Bridge connections needed.....

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### Seeking Assistance from Healthcare Professionals, Architects and Vocational Educators for Projects in Kenya and Ghana



*Second Osiligi Medical Facility, photo from **David Weeks '73***

Nestled on the rim of the Rift Valley, the [Osiligi](#) Medical Dispensary and the Narok Health Department provide maternal care and emergency support to the Maasai women of the Punyua clan. To complement this medical facility, **David Weeks '73** and his Maasai site manager have been in the process of constructing another medical facility that will house a pharmacy, dentist office, vision center and traditional medicinal lab. With its stone frame and room partitions, this facility has a roof covering and work has begun on finishing the interior. Each of the rooms needs to have equipment installed. Although David has already consulted with a local pharmacist, dentist and ophthalmologist in the Baltimore/Washington area for equipment needs, **he**

**is seeking to collaborate with professionals who can provide guidance in public health education and the delivery of basic dental and ophthalmological services.**

While the second medical facility is being completed, David is planning to develop a third medical building that will include a hospital ward and rooming accommodations for the staff associated with the Osiligi Medical Dispensary and the Osiligi Medical Complex. **He would appreciate collaborating with one or more professionals with experience in the design and development of a hospital ward. He has a preliminary vision for this facility and has connected with an architect who will create the plans for construction.**

Hope for improved personal health has already found its place among the Maasai in the Narok region of the southwest corner of Kenya with the operation of the Osiligi Medical Dispensary and the progress that has already been made in the construction of the Osiligi Medical Complex for pharmaceutical, dental and ophthalmological services. David is grateful for classmates who have contributed to the development of his Maasai medical facilities and **he is eager to discuss his bridge project with professionals who can provide guidance in health program management and hospital construction.**



*Osiligi Medical Dispensary, photo from **David Weeks '73***

In addition to his work in Kenya, David is working on plans to centralize the [Salih Self Development Center](#) in Kumasi, Ghana. Great progress has been made in moving towards consolidating the vocational and public health programs of this center. In the past year, land near the city of Kumasi has been purchased and a well has been drilled. This two-story facility surrounding an atrium will have classrooms on the ground floor for the two existing Salih vocational programs in sewing and computer design. There will be two additional large multipurpose rooms to accommodate skill development in the industrial arts. Training in carpentry, plumbing, electricity and welding will be offered. The students participating in these vocational programs will gain valuable workplace skills. The ground floor also

will provide space for public health presentations and will house a couple of offices for consultation on personal health care. The second floor of the Salih Center will have a conference room, a café restaurant for residents and accommodations for the center manager, vocational instructors and visiting student/teacher or professional delegations.



*Plans for the Salih Self Development Center, from **David Weeks '73***

David has been working with Ibrahim Salih, President of the Salih Self-Development Center, on the design of the Salih Center, which is modeled upon the design of a caravansary center used to host trans-African trade caravans in the Medieval period. **He welcomes collaboration with classmates interested in architectural design, vocational training in African culture and African public health concerns especially for an impoverished urban demographic.**

Please contact [weeks@glenelg.org](mailto:weeks@glenelg.org) if you're interested in getting involved with any of his projects.



### White Pony Express: Feeding the Hungry and Saving the Planet



*White Pony Express driver Dario Gusman unloads a truck full of surplus food for recipient organizations in Contra Costa County, by Lauren Militello*

ClassACT Bridge White Pony Express, sponsored by our classmate **Emily Fields Karakashian '73**, has received recognition in the San Francisco area press for exemplary work in feeding the hungry during the pandemic. With the help of classmate **Rob Lawrence '73**, who consulted early on in board development, the organization has taken off. New Executive Director Eve Birge, who hails from FEMA and the US Department of Education, describes the WPE process as “like Uber for food rescue.” Volunteers pick up surplus food from restaurants, farmers’ markets and grocery stores and deliver it to food pantries and distribution centers. WPE not only helps feed the hungry, but since rotting food produces carbon dioxide and methane, it is positively impacting climate change.

“... the Bay Area’s White Pony Express (WPE), founded by Dr. Carol Weyland Conner in 2013. WPE picks up 15,000 pounds of fresh, healthy food every day, delivering the equivalent of 12,500 meals free of charge to agencies that provide nourishment to those living on the margins. In just 7 years, the organization has rescued and delivered more than 14 million meals, keeping the equivalent of 303 tons of carbon dioxide out of our atmosphere,” writes Birge.

Kudos to all involved — especially our classmate, Emily! To read the SFGate article, click [here](#), and for more information on White Pony Express, click [here](#).

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## UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY OF GLOBAL WARMING, CLIMATE SCIENCE, AND POLICY



*Click above to watch the video (video credit: **Rick Brotman '73**)*

Remember the first Earth Day we celebrated in 1970 on the banks of the Charles? Many of us were inspired by that day, but our classmate **Sharon Tisher '73** has devoted her career to it. Sharon teaches environmental law and policy at the University of Maine and has developed A Climate Chronology, a digital timeline for understanding how climate science and policy has evolved. Not only have students and lay people been impacted by her work, but colleagues in her field also have recognized its importance. In a reviewing, A Climate Chronology, Michael Mann, Distinguished Professor of Atmospheric Science at Penn State University and author of “The New Climate War,” says,

Sharon Tisher’s A Climate Chronology is a most engaging excursion into key events in the historical development of climate science and policy. With training as both a trial attorney and teacher of environmental law and policy at the University of Maine, Tisher brings a clear eye and sound analysis to her presentation of the crucial milestones. Each entry has brief narratives, references and links to research reports, news, and commentary, facilitating the exploration of connections and the disconnections between climate science and climate policy. This work couldn’t be more important as we approach the 200th anniversary of the initial discovery of the “greenhouse effect.” It will undoubtedly be a valuable tool, as Tisher hopes, for research, contemplation, and action. I very much look forward to following its continued development.

Click [here](#) to see Sharon's profile on ClassACT's website, which includes **Rick Brotman '73**'s three-minute video featuring Sharon discussing her work, A Climate Chronology.

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### ACKNOWLEDGING CLASSACT'S ZOOM FORUM "STARS"



*Moderator **Sylvester Monroe '73** and panelists from our Racism and the Criminal System Forum*

Last June, we described the development and production of the ClassACT forums and recognized all those who worked so hard behind the scenes to produce them. This month we want to acknowledge the HR73 "talent"-- who served as moderators and panelists, along with a few extraordinary moderators/panelists who are 'class adjacent' (HR72 and HR74).

Twenty-eight of the 53 people who served as panelists and moderators for the forums are HR73 classmates. It is a tribute, not only to the breadth and depth of expertise within our class, but also to the willingness to give time and talent. So thank you to all of these classmates for sharing their skills, expertise, and perspectives with ClassACT and the world! Here they are listed in order of appearance: **Jono Quick, Helen Hershkoff, Steve Milliken** (participated twice), **Therese Steiner** (moderated twice), **Patty Potter, Bob Waldinger, Henrietta Lodge, Dick Friedman, Tom Volpe, Rick Wolff, Sylvester Monroe** (moderated twice), **Prentiss Taylor, Vivian Lewis, Al Franken, Bill Kristol, Rick Melvoin, Marion Dry, Jerome Harris, Peter Kazaras, Charlene Jones Marchant, Johnson Lightfoote, Debbie Winn, Ken Chien, Ryan O'Connell, and Jim Harbison.**

Add to those folks HR74 members: moderator extraordinaire A'lelia Bundles; panelists Mary Bassett and Emily Mann; and HR72 panelist Nadine Strossen, all of whom we would like to make honorary classmates!

ClassACT forums will resume in October. The forums are free and open to the public on Zoom. In addition, the videos of all of the forums reside on our website, and are accompanied by a wealth of resources for further exploration. You can click [here](#) to view any of our previous forums! We encourage you to use the forums and the resources as educational tools.

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### **THE GLUE THAT KEEPS OUR "ACT" TOGETHER**

With 13 forums, monthly bulletins, board of directors meetings, communication committee meetings, an active website, fundraising appeals, the Benazir Bhutto Leadership Program and many more moving parts and personalities, ClassACT could not function without the help of three remarkable women behind the scenes. Below we introduce and celebrate these special members of our team and thank them, especially Diana, for their support of our efforts.

Diana Lobontiu has been ClassACT's Executive Administrator for almost four years. She has provided insightful support, organization and expertise to all aspects of the organization. As the sole administrator until recently, Diana

has done everything for ClassACT from website maintenance, to correspondence, to scheduling board meetings, to running forums. Diana is a Wellesley graduate. She is playwright and actor and just finished a playwriting intensive at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. This fall, despite having a two-hour commute from her apartment in New Jersey, she is looking forward to starting a playwriting MFA at Brooklyn College. She admires ClassACT as “a form of alum engagement that isn’t just ‘donate back to the institution’ which is rare and great to be a part of!” Check out her website for any artistic updates at [www.dianalobontiu.com](http://www.dianalobontiu.com).

Katie Marinello, social media coordinator, has been helping ClassACT with our social media strategy since April 2020. A digital native, this talented woman finds tweeting, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram second nature. Katie is a 2011 graduate of Trinity College and runs [KT World Communications](#), LLC, a social and digital media consulting company. She also works with Justice Aid and **Ryan O’Connell**’s gerrymandering project. Katie lives in Maryland with her cat, Peach, and an ever-changing array of foster cats. “I love the class of 1973!” says Katie. “It’s really exciting to see how you complement and challenge each other to do more.”

Kate Freed is a new and welcome addition to ClassACT’s team. Beginning this July, she has taken the role of our new Administrative Coordinator, and will be working with the board chairs, board, and committees on administrative tasks, communications and logistics for special events. Kate worked at the Harvard Alumni Association for 19 years. She has two boys under the age of 10 who keep Kate and her husband busy. “I am thrilled to be working with the great HR Class of 1973!” Kate says. “I love that classmates want to use their expertise for good.”

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### Interested in helping ClassACT?

ClassACT is built on classmate participation and we are interested in having every classmate as a member of our ClassACT community. If you are interested in learning more about ClassACT and how you can be involved, please visit our [website](#) or send us an [email](#).

While encouraging the sharing of time and willingness to work together, ClassACT also welcomes financial support. To support our work in this way you can donate below.

[Donate Here](#)

Please add [ClassACTHR73@gmail.com](mailto:ClassACTHR73@gmail.com) to your contacts so future messages don't end up in spam or some other odd spot in your inbox.

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