

GLOBAL BIOETHICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

BY APRIL PONTO, Research Assistant

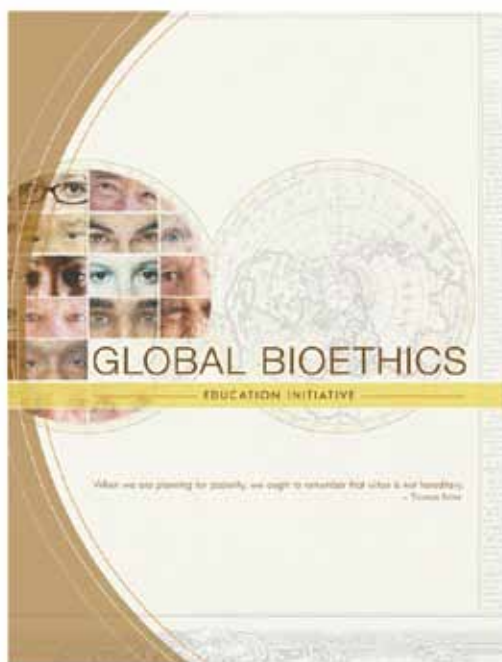
In 2009 The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity launched the Global Bioethics Education Initiative (GBEI), a groundbreaking program dedicated to cultivating principled international bioethical thought. In keeping with the Center's vision of promoting global bioethical awareness, CBHD is investing in both rising and established international professionals and scholars who will further advance contextually sensitive Christian bioethical engagement globally. The Center's long-term vision for GBEI is to cultivate an international network of individuals and groups committed to Judeo-Christian Hippocratism.

Along with this, the Center desires to see the formation of worldwide, self-sustaining, bioethical organizations and committees to illuminate countries with little or no Christian bioethical presence. The Center desires to achieve this goal by investing in scholars committed to a Judeo-Christian worldview and the wealth of the Hippocratic tradition in order to promote an approach to bioethics that advocates the principled practice of medicine and a morally responsible use of technology.

The Center is pleased to work with Dr. Jameela George (2009 GBEI Scholar) who received a grant for her work in India. With the grant money she received from the Center she was able to mobilize a bioethics consultation in Chennai, India entitled "Christian Response to Ethical Issues in Healthcare Practice." As a direct result of her work, a growing number of physicians in her country are now sensitive to these issues and have joined together to create meaningful dialogue surrounding the bioethical issues in their country. In addition to this, Dr. George is in the early stages of pioneering a national center for bioethics. Her work has united both Catholics and Evangelicals in the country to work together to create this vital organization.

The Center's friendship with Dr. George has opened the door for Paige Cunningham to lead a team to teach a bioethics course for medical doctors in India this fall. The course is geared toward equipping men and women in medicine on pressing bioethical issues and addressing issues which are specific to India. Through this visit, the Center along with Dr. George, hope to establish contact and network with medical professionals in India to learn more ways the Center can engage other countries in the bioethics conversation.

Dr. Megan Best (2009 GBEI Scholar) has also received a grant from



the Center for her work in Australia to study Christian perceptions of assisted reproductive technology. The Center has enabled Dr. Best to pursue this research with hopes of replicating this study in several additional countries, as well as eventually publishing the findings in a major peer-reviewed journal. Dr. Best is also working on a guidebook for Christians on issues in reproductive ethics based in part on studies during her time with the Center.

Through the Global Bioethics Education Initiative, the Center desires to develop relationships and networks of encouragement, support, and mutual learning. In keeping with this, Janne Nikkinen, DTh was named the 2010 GBEI Scholar. He visited from the University of Helsinki this summer to share and further develop his research especially in the fields of nanotechnology and healthcare rationing. Scholars at the Center were enriched by his

participation and input, including a stimulating roundtable that he facilitated with Center staff on rationing. Dr. Nikkinen was grateful for the experience as well as the feedback he was able to receive from CBHD on his current research.

CBHD is currently accepting applications for 2012 from scholars interested in promoting bioethics in their local context. Scholars spend one month of concentrated research and strategic planning at the Center. During their stay, scholars will spend time collaborating with other scholars and fellows from the Center, and working on informing and presenting their ideas as well as fostering dialogue in various bioethical arenas. After their stay with the Center, scholars are invited to submit proposals to compete for the modest grants. To learn more about GBEI and the application process please visit the Center's website at <http://cbhd.org/initiatives/global-bioethics-education-initiative>.

The inauguration of GBEI has been made possible by a limited three year strategic gift. It would be a shame for GBEI to expire just as it is gaining momentum. *We need your help in making it possible to continue this dynamic initiative.* If you are interested in advancing Christian bioethics worldwide through the Global Bioethics Education Initiative, please consider making a gift to the Center specifically to fund this initiative by contacting Paige Cunningham at pcunningham@cbhd.org.

If you are or if you know of an international bioethics scholar who you believe would be a worthy candidate for this initiative, please contact Jennifer McVey at jmcvey@cbhd.org. ●●●