

## Humanity's Role: Insights from WFWP USA's Eco-Peace GWPN Webinar

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Every year, nations convene for the [UN Climate Change Conference](#) (COP), a global platform dedicated to addressing the pressing issue of climate change. As COP commenced its 28th session on November 30, WFWP USA hosted a GWPN webinar titled, "Eco-Peace: The Responsibility of Humanity." This virtual event sought to delve into the crucial role humanity plays in environmental stewardship, emphasizing our collective responsibility and exploring pathways to fulfill it. The webinar featured three women who are leading in their communities, whose stories and insights on the topic greatly impacted the audience.

To open the program, WFWP USA President Kaeleigh Moffitt introduced three main points of Mother Moon's philosophy on the environment:

A peaceful and harmonious environment was the original design of our Creator.

Humanity has an unfulfilled responsibility to take care of the environment.

Eco-peace requires multilateral and multi-faceted teamwork.

The first speaker to share was Lynette Two Bulls. Lynette, of Oglala Lakota/Northern Cheyenne descent, is the Co-founder and Executive Director of Yellow Bird Life Ways Center in Lake Deer, Montana, within the Northern Cheyenne Nation. As a cultural consultant and storyteller, she passionately preserves her elders' wisdom, specializing in intergenerational knowledge, food sovereignty, and empowering youth through history and trauma healing.

Lynette shared with the audience some of the Native teachings about the Earth she was taught from her Elders, and which she seeks to impart to the younger generation. "When we end our speech, or our prayer...at the end we always say "mitakuye oyasin"... it's an acknowledgement of our connection to everything in the circle of life...we see them as relatives...we are deeply connected." Yellow Bird Life Ways Center is therefore where she works to reconnect people to their roots as Natives, which is deeply connected to the Earth. "We are connected to the Earth," she shared, "like we were connected to our mother through our umbilical cord." Therefore, one cares for the Earth like we care for our mothers, and really ourselves, because we are one. "We all have a responsibility in our circle of life...each one of us has a gift to offer the circle of life."

Next to speak was Dr. Manulani Meyer. Dr. Meyer, part of the Aluli ohana, a diverse group dedicated to Hawaiian education and justice, holds a Harvard Ed.D. in Philosophy of Education (1998). As a global keynote speaker, writer, and evaluator of Indigenous PhDs, she specializes in indigenous epistemology, contributing to global awakening. Currently serving as Konohiki for Kūlana o Kapolei and Co-Founder of Niu Now, she champions cultural agroforestry to revitalize Hawaiian culture, promote ecological

conservation, and enhance food security and healing.

Dr. Meyer immediately opened the hearts of all with a native Hawaiian melody and greeting, which created a deep spirit of connection and authentic gratitude. Dr. Meyer shared how 25 years ago her life was changed when her Elder told her, "the Earth is not a metaphor for our mother, the Earth is our mother." And just as the Earth is feminine, Dr. Meyer emphasized the power and significance of women in this area, giving an energizing message on the need to uplift one another as women to address the needs of our time. She then went on to share how closely aligned she saw her indigenous teachings to the three points from Mother Moon. On the first point, Dr. Meyer shared how this idea is exactly "the indigenous mind," explaining how they believe that "if we don't have the Earth at our center...of our principles and values, we are not going to last," which is inherent in the Hawaiian term for continuity, mauō. On the second point, she shared the Hawaiian value of Aloha 'Āina, meaning "love of the land" which is being challenged in this modern age. On the third point of multifaceted teamwork, she shared a third Hawaiian term of similar spirit, 'auamo kuleana, meaning "collective transformation through individual excellence."

The final speaker was Rev. Carol Pobanz. Rev. Pobanz, a spiritual leader with over 45 years of ministry experience, has led churches for two decades. Beyond traditional roles, she actively engages in interreligious and art-based service projects worldwide. As a member of the Universal Peace Federation/Religious Youth Service, she has contributed to initiatives across the United States, Europe, Central America, and the Caribbean. Founder of PeaceIN, a cultural exchange project fostering international friendships through communal arts, Rev. Pobanz has also co-directed three projects in Puerto Leda, Paraguay, home to the Eco-friendly Sustainable Development Settlement founded by Rev and Dr. Moon.

Inspired by the deep sharing of the previous two speakers, Rev. Pobanz decided to share lessons she has learned through a series of four short stories on projects she has worked on. The first story was about a project in Honduras, her first project. She shared how while initially she saw those she was serving as poor and ignorant, her mindset was shifted when she saw a young boy cleverly fix a wheelbarrow in a matter of seconds with a spare piece of wire. "I realized God has given every one of us abilities, strengths, intelligence...to do what we can...and we can learn from one another."

The second story was about a mosaic art project she had helped design of a composite drawing from children for the side of a mosque in England. She was there with children from around the world and across religious traditions. One of the Muslim boys shared at the end, "We are all like the mosaic. We are all broken pieces but when we work together we can become something beautiful." To this Rev. Pobanz added, "through the mosaic making, I realized our connectedness."

The third story was about visiting the Leda community in the Pantanal. While there, she recalled a moment when two birds fearlessly landed on her car and stared at her, not even aware that they should be frightened by humans. "It is just a profound experience to dwell in the pristine nature as well as amongst people who are striving for divinity."

Her final story took place during a 40-day workshop she took her family to in Jardim, Brazil. She was told of the incredible beauty of the Amazon, yet while there, it rained nearly every day, and muddy clay was everywhere. "I tried to clean it, to manage it, to control it...I was making war on it...when I attacked it with water and soap, I tended to spread it around more and make it more difficult to deal with. Then I realized that if I left it alone, the inherent character of dirt is to dry up...and I could just sweep it out of the room," she shared. "I learned...if you're patient, if you love your enemy, if you study your enemy...understand its nature, if you make friends with it, then you can easily make harmony with it." To summarize, Rev. Pobanz shared that it is through the lived experience trying to harmonize with people, community and nature that inner peace naturally comes.

The webinar went on to feature a round table discussion before President Moffitt concluded the event.

To watch the recording of the webinar click [HERE](#).