

**Pomona Valley Chapter UNA-USA February Meeting**  
**Tuesday, March 17, 2015 5:30 PM**  
**Porter Hall, Pilgrim Place, Claremont**

**Introduction:** Mel Boynton, Chapter President, welcomed approximately 50 members and guests. He described the UNA-USA as dedicated to supporting the ideals of the United Nations. Mel encouraged membership, both new and renewals. He then thanked Julie Steinbach for the refreshments, Katie Gerecke for setting up the UNA display in the Claremont Public Library and Charlene Martin and her committee for arranging the program. Our Chapter intern, Sharon Musa, was recognized for conducting the annual high school essay contest. Copies of the entry form were distributed. Mel and Katie have begun interviewing college students to select those who will be Chapter Interns for the coming 2015-16 school year. Mel then asked for volunteers to staff the UNA booth during Claremont's celebration of Earth Day, Saturday, April 18.

**UNA-USA Events:**

**Tuesday, April 21, 7 PM, chapter meeting: Karl Haushalter "Combating HIV/AIDS and Other Infectious Diseases" at Hahn Hall, Pomona College (High School Essay Contest Winners will be announced.)**

**Saturday, May 2, 11 AM Southern California Division meeting at Napier Center, Pilgrim Place**

**Tuesday, May 19 5:30 PM chapter meeting: Cal Poly Pomona Model UN presentation at Porter Hall, Pilgrim Place**

**Sunday - Tuesday, June 7 - 9 Annual National meeting in Washington DC**

**Tuesday, June 16, 5:30 PM Update of National Meeting, Porter Hall, Pilgrim Place**

Other Organizations

Thursday, March 26, PM Claremont Energy Challenge at Rose Hills Theater, Pomona College

Tuesday, March 31, 7 PM The American Institute for Progressive Democracy's Income Inequality forum at Rose Hills Theater

Saturday, April 11 12 PM "Save Our World" Environmental & Social Justice Special Event at Monte Vista Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Montclair

**Program:** Mel introduced Dr. Barbara Aswad, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology from Wayne State University and author of several books on Arab culture. Dr. Aswad described the work she had done in her academic and professional life. She reviewed some of the terms used in anthropology, defining "ethnocentrism" as not accepting of enculturation and seeing one's own way as right. This attitude, she stressed, can lead to stereotyping. With these parameters given, Dr. Aswad then began describing Arab culture. It is, she said, one of male privilege because of its patrilineal descent system. While Americans identify equally with relatives of both mother and father, in Arab culture the children find identity with their father's relatives (a handout was discussed). So, as the family is the basic social group, socialization occurs with one's father's relatives. Muslim Arab culture gives inheritance and child custody rights to males more so than to females so as to maintain family strength. Women, and polygamy is accepted, are responsible for the upbringing of young children and girls. Thus, both females, mother and daughter, are held accountable for a girl's behavior. Christian Arabs have no polygamy and equal inheritance. Since the Arab Spring uprisings, ISIL, drought and other causes of unrest, Arab women are in crisis. Of especial note: one-third of the people killed in the Syrian conflict have been women, also, the rise and fall of the literacy rate in Iraq coinciding with the turn towards a religious state. Dr. Aswad discussed a second handout from United Nations that gave data about many countries and their maternal mortality, politics and education rates.