

School of Public Affairs



S·P·A·update

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CHRISTINA ARNOLD AND HER PASSION

Christina Arnold, 29, was born in India, the daughter of expatriate Americans. She spent the first 21 years of her life in South and Southeast Asia, where she encountered exploited children on a daily basis. Arnold remembers as a child being on the beach in Sri Lanka with her family where she observed foreign men, many of them European, with young Sri Lankan boys, clearly not their sons. “It was during the 1980s when sex tours were quite common,” says Arnold. “I didn’t understand why it happened or why children were exploited like that, but the images burned into my head.”



Christina Arnold, second from left, meeting with children in Thailand.

It was that experience that led Arnold (BA/SPA/2004) to become an advocate and activist on behalf of persons exploited due to poor economic conditions and organized crime. Many of these people are known today as trafficked persons. In 1999, she founded Project Hope International (PHI). Through this non-profit organization, she mobilizes support for many grassroots anti-trafficking organizations and facilitates the communication of accurate information on best practices in anti-trafficking between U.S. policy makers, NGO's, diplomats, and funding agencies. She has been invited to the White House, lectured internationally at conferences, think tanks and universities, published articles, and organized awareness raising events.



In Cambodia, Arnold observed children, such as this boy, scavenging in a garbage dump for items to sell. Photos this page courtesy of PHI.

In 2003, while in her junior year at AU, Christina Arnold (BA/SPA/2004) was recognized for her humanitarian efforts when she won a Truman Scholarship. The prestigious award is given to juniors with exceptional leadership potential who are planning a career in public service. Paula Warrick, American University’s director of the Office of Merit Awards, met Arnold early in the application process and was very impressed.

“Christina is tenacious, pragmatic, goal-oriented, and engaged in social issues in a way someone her age would not normally be,” says Warrick. “The Truman Scholarship is tremendously competitive, but the nature of the scholarship matches the nature of our student body.” Candidates must

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present examples of demonstrated leadership, a commitment to public service, and academic excellence.

The Truman Scholarship provides \$30,000 of which \$3,000 may be used for the student's senior year tuition with the remaining \$27,000 to be used for graduate study. Arnold plans to go to law school in a couple of years to further assist trafficked persons, but first wants to make sure that Project Hope International is on solid footing and sustainable as a dynamic consulting group..

In the meantime, this summer when she goes to Thailand, Arnold will be accompanied by SIS professor Julie Mertus and 16 graduate students who will be studying and interning with organizations involved with anti-trafficking and tsunami relief.

Locally, within the coming year, PHI will open a transitional housing unit, to serve the unmet housing needs of victims of trafficking in the greater Washington, D.C. area, in collaboration with local NGO's.

“Christina has the will to succeed,” says



Christina Arnold with her daughter Cheryl. Photo by Jeff Watts for AU

Warrick. “She’s inspired by the children she’s met at orphanages and in shelters.”

Arnold is clearly grateful for the mentoring and support she and Project Hope International continue to receive from American University. Last fall the University provided her with office space for PHI on the

Tenley campus that she’ll be able to use well into 2006. “AU has been absolutely incredible. A lot of universities have catchy mantras, but AU’s ‘ideas into action, action into service’ is very real and means commitment to public service.”

To find out more about Project Hope International, please visit www.phi-ngo.org , contact Christina Arnold at christina@phi-ngo.org or call (202) 330-2800.

NEW DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Candice Nelson has been appointed the new chair of the government department at the School of Public Affairs. She takes on her new responsibilities in June, when she succeeds Saul Newman who is going on sabbatical. (The post rotates every three years among senior faculty.)

Nelson, an associate professor of government, will remain academic director of the Campaign Management Institute in addition to her new responsibilities.

Nelson joined the AU faculty in 1990 after stints at the Brookings Institution and on Capitol Hill. She is currently finishing a book called *Current Diagnosis: The Health of American Campaigning*. The research for the book was funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts

and includes surveys of consultants, party elites voters, and others. Her co-author is David Dulio, an AU Ph.D and professor at Oakland University in Michigan. She is also the co-author of *The Money Chase: Congressional Campaign Finance Reform* and *The Myth of the Independent Voter*, and co-editor of *Campaigns and Elections American Style*, *Campaign Warriors: Political Consultants in Elections*, and *Crowded Airwaves: Campaign Advertising in Elections*, as well as numerous other articles and books.

Candice Nelson is a graduate of Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts and received her Ph.D from the University of California at Berkeley.

SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE

Maureen McTeer, a former first lady of Canada and an internationally renowned legal expert on surrogacy and genetic ethics, is completing a distinguished scholar-in-residence semester at SPA's Women and Politics Institute.

McTeer is a lawyer and the author of four best-selling books. She currently serves as a member of the Clinical Ethics Committee at the Ottawa Heart Institute and is a member of

the McMaster University's Sex/Gender and Cardiovascular Disease Research Advisory Board. During the spring 2005 semester, McTeer has taught “The Politics of Reproductive Technologies and Genetics” and “The Politics of Equal Rights for Women: Comparing the U.S. and Canada.”

Her husband, Joe Clark, was prime minister of Canada from 1979 to 1980.