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### *Watertown*

## **Watertown High School Graduate Alex Sklyar's Project Provides American Documentary Film On Nagasaki Peace Movement**

**On Campus**

*Submitted by Alex Sklyar, Nagasaki-America Peace Project, on 2010-05-23.*

This summer, Alex Sklyar, 2006 graduate of Watertown High School, and 2010 graduate of Colgate University in Hamilton, NY, will be carrying out the Nagasaki-America Peace Project with his Colgate classmate, Carolina van der Mensbrugghe. Inspired by their respective experiences working, visiting, and living in Nagasaki, Japan, Alex and Carolina have been moved to action by the city's continual efforts across generations to educate and prevent further nuclear disasters.

The Davis Projects for Peace initiative was designed by philanthropist Kathryn W. Davis. Now 103 years old, Mrs. Davis encourages motivated youth to create and implement their ideas for building peace throughout the world in the 21st century. Each of the more than 100 projects receives \$10,000 in funding.

"Kathryn Davis was motivated to establish Davis Projects for Peace because she felt a great sense of urgency about an elusive goal: peace in the world. She felt frustrated that older generations had failed in that great quest. Kathryn's vision has motivated young people, and they have drawn inspiration from Kathryn," said Executive Director of the Davis UWC Scholars Program Philip O. Geier.

From July 1 until August 11, Alex and Carolina will be filming a documentary on-site in Nagasaki, Japan.

"Through our efforts, we hope to foster necessary cross-cultural dialogue on peace, with the belief that preserving the memories of the hibakusha (atomic bombing survivors) and activities otherwise unknown to western audiences will foster seeds for change," commented Alex and Carolina.



Alex Sklyar

Origami cranes in the Nagasaki Peace Park. Alex Sklyar and Carolina van der Mensbrugghe will also be making an offering of 1,000 origami cranes.

While on site, they will be keeping a text and video blog. Ultimately, they will be creating an interactive website and DVDs covering their findings for individuals and educational institutions across the United States.

Alex explained further, "I hope that our efforts can reach the teachers and students in the local community in particular. By gaining access to the history and culture of the city of Nagasaki, the peace activism of the citizens of Nagasaki, and the stories of the atomic bombing survivors, we hope that American students will in turn be motivated to participate in the international peace activism movement and engage in active cross-cultural communication."

Carolina furthered that, "it is important to connect with, learn from, and exchange ideas with individuals from other parts of the world who desire peace and share these findings on a larger scale."

"We are eager to hear from any interested American high school teachers, college professors, administrators, and students who want to be a part of this project," said both. You can email them at [nagasakiamericapeaceproject@gmail.com](mailto:nagasakiamericapeaceproject@gmail.com).

"My many years have taught me that there will always be conflict. It's part of human nature. But love, kindness, and support are also part of human nature, and my challenge to these young people is to bring about a mindset of preparing for peace instead of preparing for war," said Kathryn Davis.

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