



Students Going Global

Yes, Queen Isabella - the world is indeed flat.



Sharreen Hardy, CEO and Founder

Almost any student of science or history knows that for many years, the conventional wisdom of humans was that the world was flat. Various writers extending as far back as 300 years B.C., including the great Greek philosopher Aristotle, theorized that the earth was spherical in shape. However, it was Christopher Columbus, with the financial support of Isabella I of Castile and her husband Ferdinand II of Aragon, who rendered the debate, as to whether the world was round or flat, moot. Consequently, in 2005 when author Thomas Friedman first published *"The World is Flat"*, it must have caused quite a bit of consternation, particularly in scientific and academic communities.

However, upon closer examination we ultimately appreciated that the title of this best-selling volume about globalization was simply a metaphor suggesting that the world of commerce is more akin to a level playing field as a result of global trade. Upon speaking with Sharreen Hardy, the CEO and Founder of **Students Going Global** (<http://www.StudentsGoingGlobal.org>), which currently serves the Detroit, Michigan metropolitan area, one might gain the impression that Ms. Hardy also feels that the world is flat. She believes that high-achieving, low income students, who have the opportunity to spend some time abroad in their youth, will be better equipped to compete with students with better financial resources and support at their disposal, and thus the playing field will be leveled. She already refers to the trips as "life-changing educational tours."

Furthermore, through theories, concerning education today, books or curriculum is insignificant, unless it is accompanied with practical examples and application in the real world. Ms. Hardy has a background as a high school teacher and counselor in the Detroit Metro area spanning a 15 year period. She recently formed the Section 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation and is introducing her global initiative to the world, which teaches 21st century skills (Global competence, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving). She currently wears many different hats: Founder, Executive Director, International Cultural Club Director, and Tour Group Leader. In this era of constant bickering among politicians about the role of government in education, and to what extent parents have a role in and responsibility for their children's education, Hardy has taken a page out of the *"It Takes a Village"* playbook.

She has run an "end around route," circumventing the political noise and associated dirt pile, and is actually taking charge and doing something. Contrast that with the "talking

heads" on the constantly expanding number of news shows who have lots of criticism to share, but little to provide in the way of solutions. **Students Going Global** anticipates reaching out to Detroit's brightest students from low income backgrounds, who maintain a standard of excellence, and ultimately attracting more and more stellar performers, while breaking down social, economic, and cultural divisions.

Ms. Hardy speaks of 3 important goals: (a) Provide a broad range of knowledge and experiences to better prepare the students for college and careers in today's 21st century global economy; (b) Provide a competitive edge when they apply for admission to institutions of high learning and scholarships; and (c) Stimulate the intellectual ambition and curiosity of the students which will result in greater academic success. There is one consistent comment you will always hear from people upon returning from their first trip outside of the United States – "I wish that I had done it earlier in life."

Those of us fortunate enough to have traveled abroad always feel that those who made those trips at an earlier point in their lives had an advantage in terms of dealing with, and appreciating, the complexities of the human condition. **Students Going Global** is scheduled to take its first group of 12 deserving students to Costa Rica in July of 2017, with an emphasis on science, and they plan to take a second group to Egypt in 2018, to study history and the beginning of civilization. While the effort is currently limited to the Detroit area, Ms. Hardy plans to expand her campaign by joining forces with similarly minded individuals in other major inner cities throughout the U.S.

Those of you interested in volunteering your time and energy, or contributing financially to this worthy and innovative cause, or if you simply desire to receive more information concerning this "movement," can simply contact Ms. Hardy by calling her at 248.905.3752 or sending an e-mail to sharreen@studentsgoingglobal.org. All of us should be motivated in this effort to make the world flat, or at least level the playing field for those who have little in the way of financial resources, but who have much in the way of ambition and desire. After all, there is a line which the United Negro College Fund uses which is so on point, to wit: *"A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste."* Let's make sure that we get the maximum societal benefit from these young people.

Article written and submitted by a very impressed **Students Going Global** advocate.