

## About Your Speaker: Stephanie Downs Hughes

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A public educator and business sociologist who enjoys developing new services, programs and products with venture, client, and civic groups, Stephanie Hughes Ph.D. has worked out of offices in the Boston, Pittsburgh and Chicago areas. Each is home turf along with Appleton, Wisconsin, where she was raised and began an interest in the Spanish and Latin American cultures and language.

Dr. Hughes has been speaking up for the United Nations and several of its Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs – including Servas and Citizens for Global Solutions) since 1990, and has served as a UN Envoy via the Unitarian Universalist UN Office. In the interest of promoting constructive communication among diverse people, in 1996 Stephanie founded the Diversity Dinners program, which she continues to direct to this day. The local program has grown steadily; and she assists people in other parts of this country and around the globe to establish Diversity Dinners or other programs where they are.

Following the attacks of 9/11/2001, serving as a founding board member of the county-wide DuPage Peace through Justice Coalition, Stephanie spearheaded the startup of Just Views – monthly free public film showings followed by group discussion about the most critical social issues of our time. She directs DuPage-area film fests periodically and the second Friday evening Just Views series which is on-going -- while providing to inquirers from elsewhere help to set up and run production-anchored programs suitable to their own areas.

As a free lance management/marketing consultant and a writer/editor, SDH remains available for varied research and development and other project work that can be quite unlike these examples: Investigation of competitive resources and potential users for new technology for automated speech and speech recognition. Design and conduct of "Faces of Oppression" workshops focusing upon seven "isms" that have caused social and economic problems. Set up of a program to teach communications and business skills to students from abroad.

As an undergraduate, Stephanie Downs attended Bucknell University in Lewisburg, PA, majoring in English and Spanish. Her masters in communication and a Ph.D. in sociology are from Boston University. Her on-going study, research and public speaking range broadly -- from identity group relations and conflict resolution to partner, team and friendship skills; and from new roles for the mass media, for the UN, the ICC, and a national Department of Peace to voting system and campaign reform.

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In the course of a varied career, Stephanie Downs Hughes has taught sociology and communications at Boston University and business at Robert Morris College, Pittsburgh PA. With the international consulting firms Synectics, Inc. and Arthur D. Little, Inc. she worked with Fortune 500 companies such as Xerox, Consolidated Edison, and Quaker Oats; with large associations such as the American Chemical Society and the National Association of Realtors; and with government agencies such as NASA and EPA. As a free lance consultant, she has worked with mid-sized for-profit organizations such as Mellon Bank; and with not-for-profit organizations like the American Cultural Exchange Language Institute and the College of DuPage; on non-traditional start ups, such as the Enterprise Explorations Network, and the venture group for Lessac technology. For years, Stephanie directed Mother Nurture. In the early days of the Internet, her desktop-published catalog had the distinction of being *banned* in cyberspace for a short time: it pioneered development and marketing of aids for *breast* feeding mothers.

Stephanie long has been active in community organizations and on special task forces and organizing forums, salons, and study groups to promote constructive exchange and creative deliberation. She has been on the board of the American Humanist Association West of Chicago chapter since 2001. She served on the board of the Naperville League of Women Voters for years, and as its President from 2001-2004. She served on the continental board of the UU UN Office. She continues to run forums and workshops as time permits and has conducted programs at national and international conferences. She represented the International Association for Religious Freedom at the Parliament of the World's Religions in 1993. SDH promotes the Global Negotiation movement -- to teach basic negotiation skills for everyday use everywhere -- to disseminate values and skills for non-violent conflict management and collaborative planning.

Stephanie, sometimes with husband Duncan and their two sons, has enjoyed cross cultural exchanges via UN-NGOs, Sister Cities, Peace Bridge, Rotary, YMCA and Unidas para Vivir Mejor. The Hugheses continue to enjoy hosting visitors from many parts of the world. Native American histories and friends and travel and reading into Latin America have expanded SDH perspectives.

Other membership organizations that Stephanie has grown and led in include the Scouts, Kappa Kappa Gamma, NOW, Planned Parenthood, Diversified Parents Assn, DuPage Voices for Racial Justice, Naperville Neighbors & Newcomers. Others she has subscribed to include PBS & NPR affiliates, Air America, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Southern Poverty Law Center, Unitarian Universalist Association and Service Committee, People's Resource Center, Alliance for a Sustainable Future. "Think globally, act locally", "People before profits" and "Negotiate with all to meet the needs of all" apply!