



# Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing®

## United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Advocates Training

The purpose of this event was to provide training on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to develop a deeper understanding of the SDGs and be connected with organizations through which we can be the SDG advocates. Following this training, a certificate of completion was provided.

The training was held on 1 October 2016 in Toronto, Canada.

### Report submitted by Aden Hamza, STTI United Nations Youth Representative

The event equipped me with the education and tools necessary to become an advocate for the SDGs to my wider community. I also received a certificate from this one-day training.

First, Ravi Karkara, the Senior Advisor Strategic Partnership and Advocacy to the Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director for UN Women, explained the positive impacts of the Millennium Development Goals and the lessons learned. Although the MDGs did create significant change for developing countries, there were also concerns:

- A top-down process was used to identify targets.
- The goals were only targeting developing countries.
- Significant marginalized groups were left out (e.g., persons with disabilities).

The SDGs learned from this and created the largest global consultative process that the UN had ever done, called the MY World Survey. The MY World Survey was a consultation with individuals and communities that asked them to rank various issues in level of importance. Approximately 9 million people participated from 9.3 million countries, with 80 percent of the surveys completed “offline” – meaning in paper format, which shows that marginalized communities who didn’t have access to internet were also part of the process. All of the information was collated and synthesized and was the primary information used to choose the 17 SDGs (all of the information is available at [www.worldwewant2030.org](http://www.worldwewant2030.org)).

The new SDGs also focus on the 5Ps:

- **People**
- **Planet**
- **Prosperity**
- **Peace**
- **Partnerships**

The 17 SDGs can be reviewed at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>.

The SDGs were agreed upon in 2015. Our goals as youth advocates:

1. Communicate SDGs, particularly to marginalized communities.

2. Action towards SDGs now. Act local.
3. Hold government and decision-makers accountable to the SDGs.

Example: You can advocate that your city joins the Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces initiatives, which works to ensure public spaces in municipalities are safe for women and girls:

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/creating-safe-public-spaces>. Contact: Safe Cities Global Team, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, UN Women — [safe.cities@unwomen.org](mailto:safe.cities@unwomen.org).

Also, MY World 2.0 will be launched shortly and focusing on holding organizations and governments accountable to the SDGs.

The training also created concurrent breakout sessions:

### **Session1 – Sustainability is Everything – Kate Seselja**

Website: [www.thehopeprojectnow.com](http://www.thehopeprojectnow.com)

Kate discussed the importance of personal sustainability and mental health. The SDGs are our opportunity to wake up society from the overwhelm that they experience in their daily lives.

Quote: “Overwhelm is the thief of passion and purpose. It creates apathy and it’s the precursor to addiction and mental health struggles.”

1. Awareness: We need to recognize the prompts of understanding and take the time to hear and see something that impacts us.
2. What I need – Self-care is often confused with indulgence with selfishness. We need to train ourselves to be present.
3. Authenticity – Communicate more vulnerably, as it opens space to decrease judgment and break stigmas.
4. Keep eyes forward.
5. Everyday mindfulness.

She highlighted that we need to harness and nurture empathy for those that are struggling to cope. “No one screws up their life on purpose – The failed awakenings are those people that society has mismanaged/handled their pain.”

Also, that as advocates and humanitarians we need to develop sustainable passion – by being intentional and not reactive. Our own self-esteem and worth should not be wrapped up in a project or our work, we also need to take care of ourselves.

### **Session 2 – Melinda Rooke**

As a volunteer and activist, Melinda shared her experiences working on behalf of artists and creating spaces for youth artists. Partnering with youth made her realize that they had many positive qualities for activism, such as a clear focus on action and steps with clear instructions to affect change. Also they were effective at sharing the information and working with civil society to achieve their goals. There is a lot to learn from youth activism and civil society, and both should be active partners in the SDGs.

### **Session 3 – The Use of Social Media for Advocacy – Steve Lee**

Social media is a great tool for advocacy. Because there is so much output and noise on social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook), we need to be strategic in how we advocate by working together and developing networks around advocacy campaigns. Key features for advocacy on social media:

1. Be brief.
2. Be consistent. Focus on the purpose and build a track record of credibility. Consistency in communication builds trust with your followers.

Remember: Social media is a means to an end; if it is not meeting the intended outcome, then change the strategy.

I believe these ideas and strategies provide an avenue to advocate and educate our STTI members about the importance of the SDGs.

Reports/Information collected from MY World Survey: [www.worldwewant2030.org](http://www.worldwewant2030.org)

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>

Example Initiative: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/creating-safe-public-spaces>

Contact: Safe Cities Global Team, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, UN Women — [safe.cities@unwomen.org](mailto:safe.cities@unwomen.org)