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**THE WOMEN'S DESK
OF THE INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL OF LIBERIA**

**AWARDED INAUGURAL GREELEY PRIZE
FOR CHAMPIONING PEACE BUILDING & AIDS AWARENESS**

(KYOTO, JAPAN, August 27, 2006)—For its groundbreaking efforts to make women of faith part of the peace-building process in war-torn West Africa, the Women's Desk of the Inter-religious Council in Liberia has been named the inaugural recipient of the Dana McLean Greeley Memorial Prize. The prize will be presented at 2 p.m. on August 28, Room A, Kyoto International Conference Hall.

“We are profoundly grateful for the meaningful work of these women to promote peace among different religious communities in a region that has been torn apart by civil war, corruption, HIV/AIDS, and poverty,” said Dr. William F. Vendley, Secretary General of *Religions for Peace*. “Their grass-roots efforts are an honor to Dana Greeley, who devoted his life to disarmament, human rights, and the dignity of women and men all over the world.”

The Rev. Dana McLean Greeley (1908–1986) was a principle founder of *Religions for Peace*. He is best known for the 1961 Unitarian-Universalist merger and for his abiding friendship with Nikkyo Niwano (1906–1999), founder of the six-million-member Buddhist sect, Rissho Kosei-kai (RKK). Niwano said that his friendship with Greeley changed him personally and moved him toward inter-religious activism for world peace. The Greeley prize, established by the Greeley Foundation, honors groups that work to fulfill Greeley's dream of a peaceful, tolerant and just world through multi-religious dialogue.

The Women's Desk is a multi-religious network that promotes religious tolerance, rallies to reduce gender and sexual violence, increases awareness of HIV/AIDS, and advocates for

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children. Established in 2004, the Desk was created to bring Christian, Muslim, and indigenous women into the peace-building process of Liberia and West African and to provide them with the support and material resources to become leaders in their communities. The Women's Desk is active in four counties of Liberia—Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Margibi and Bong—and builds confidence in inter-religious cooperation. In the coming year, the Women's Desk plans to address domestic violence and sensitization on the issue of female genital mutilation.

“This training has changed my life completely,” said Vera Dennis, a regional training participant on conflict transformation and leadership in Sierra Leone. “It has given me hope, even though my country is full of hopelessness brought about by fourteen years of darkness and of war. I will do all I can to ensure that women of faith work together for peace.”

The *Religions for Peace* Eighth World Assembly (August 26-29, 2006) convenes almost 500 senior religious leaders from every region of the world and all major faith traditions to address the power of religious communities to confront violence and advance shared security. Assembly delegates come from the *Religions for Peace* network of more than seventy national and regional affiliated inter-religious councils and groups.

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