

# **Beyond Boundaries**

## **A Service Pilgrimage ~ People Place Planet**

### **Introduction**

Beginning in June of 2009, a small group of leaders of diverse ages and backgrounds began an international service pilgrimage called Beyond Boundaries (BB). The pilgrimage is moving through a number of places, centers and communities in the United States, Europe, Asia and Oceania that are exploring the frontiers of creative, peaceful, and regenerative life. Overall, the Beyond Boundaries pilgrimage is a commitment to experiential education, cross-cultural exchange, leadership development and a deep personal and collective inquiry into the pressing issues and needs of our times. Participants will learn from the people and places visited, offer their service and various gifts, listen in deep inquiry in the spirit of council, and bring home valuable information, insight and gifts to share upon return.

### **Project Background**

We live in a time of increased tension and concern over the future of our planet, the wellbeing of our children, and the sustainability of our ways of life. Indeed, we live in a time of re-shaping and reconsidering, a time when the planet appears smaller than it ever has, and is awakening to its own limitations, a time when it is wise to take stock of our past decisions, and prudent to consider which ideals and systems to move forward with and which to leave behind. Many ideas and design systems are attempting to do just this, to guide us toward a future that will support the wellbeing of the many and not just the few. Sustainable, holistic, regenerative...many adjectives today are attempting to describe a commitment that is in some ways very old and very simple: to live in awareness of the generations to come, to live with care for the earth and all beings, to live with heart and truth, to live in remembrance of the gifts that are to be shared. This is not religion or politics but common sense. It goes beyond definitions of class, culture or nation; it goes beyond boundaries. *How* to do this is one of the most challenging and pressing questions of our times.

The Beyond Boundaries pilgrimage is designed to provide an integrated and experiential learning opportunity to explore this very question and other pressing issues. It will be a cross-cultural exchange and investigation for a small, intergenerational group of leaders concerned with how we can best move forward with this commitment not only as individuals and communities but as a species. We are not looking for *the answer* but rather some "best practices" being employed by innovative, thoughtful, and concerned citizens across the globe.

### **Our Key Questions and Areas of Inquiry include:**

- Who is pioneering effective models for peaceful, connected and regenerative ways of life? What can we learn from these people and what can we offer them? How can we integrate the different strands together, creating the best potential outcome for *all*?
  
- Given our increased awareness of the interdependence of the international community and the natural world, how can we live in right relations now and for generations to come?

-- What does it mean to be a Global Citizen? What does it mean to “Go Glocal,” or to think and act locally *and* globally simultaneously?

### **The Inspiration and The Way of Council:**

In 1980, Gigi Coyle, team leader and visionary behind *Beyond Boundaries*, was inspired to embark on a year long walkabout, traveling to projects and communities in the U.S. researching what were then considered ‘alternative’ systems, meeting and learning with individuals and groups committed to sustainable living practices and the healing of self, others, and the planet. This journey seeded Gigi’s life work focused on healing and has included projects in international citizen diplomacy, council leadership and training, and service as a vision quest guide and trainer for the School of Lost Borders. Today, Gigi is called to pilgrimage again, to connect many of the people and places pioneering alternative living systems that can offer us viable choices as we go forward as a global community. Based on 30 years of accumulated relationships with individuals and organizations all over the globe, Gigi has developed *Beyond Boundaries*, inviting a small intergenerational group to join her on this international pilgrimage.

### **Program Overview**

Throughout the world there are key places, people and centers dedicated to a living exploration of the many frontiers of viable system designs for humanity. These people and projects are re-creating communities that offer potential solutions and directions for future development by creating and embodying sustainable and regenerative living systems, restoring people’s balance with the natural world, working through domestic and cross-cultural differences, and enhancing spiritual wellbeing. *Beyond Boundaries* pilgrims will journey to several of these places, including: The Ojai Foundation in California, Tamera in Portugal, Auroville in India, Findhorn in Scotland, Damanhur in Italy and the Biosphere Foundation in Indonesia. As well, each pilgrim will visit a number of other projects and places during the independent study time, based on their specific areas of interest and inquiry. And all along the way we will listen for the ways we can connect with and support the indigenous peoples who have been living these principles despite centuries of repression and genocide. How to carry forward the best of the ancient wisdom while opening to the guidance and intelligence of our times? Each center that we will visit is a pioneer in the work of social and ecological design, and a regional hub for convening seekers, students and teachers in the realms of health, spirituality, sustainable & regenerative living practices, and the building of new societal structures based in peace, reconciliation, and shared human rights.

By journeying to these sites, our intention is to give away the best of life practices and skills we know, as appropriate and as requested to do so, while learning from others, and deepening into a practice of cross-cultural community living. At each site, we will not only visit and exchange information, but also join in events and participate in community undertakings. Further, as we are increasingly aware of the need to use scarce resources wisely, and further called to limit our international travel because of its true cost to the environment, we are deeply aware of the need to make this journey count on many levels. Given its carbon footprint, literally and metaphorically, we hope to plant trees all along the way. We are inspired to be a multi-talented team and bring a unique set of skills as well as curiosities to a ‘mission’, in the best sense of the word, to elicit the voices of both youth and elders in council, and bring those voices home, back

to our people. And last but not least, we are part of a prayer of reconciliation and healing that has been and will continue to be part of our work everywhere we go.

### **Process Before Product**

The journey is not a “results-based” project, though we know that many planned and unplanned results will emerge; too many times people, *especially Americans*, go with a formula, a pre-determined outcome, and miss the genuine opportunities that arise along the way. With each community, we will sit in Council, listening to the vision, knowledge, dreams and experience held therein. We feel there is something important, particularly as Americans, to going and listening, to practicing council with the land and its people and letting an exchange emerge that will reveal the future outcomes. Thus, rather than pre-determining the outcome from this pilgrimage, we have generated a commitment to bring our learning home in the best possible way given what we witness, learn and experience, collectively and as individuals.

### **Support and Financial Contributions**

Beyond Boundaries is made possible by the generosity and support of many people who share in the vision and spirit of the journey. To make this pilgrimage possible, we have raised \$150k. We have only 50k left to raise thanks to the generosity of dozens of foundations and individuals! This is very exciting and encouraging for all of us, and we are working hard to raise the remaining funds. So far, people have been very gracious and excited to support a project that is focused on long-term thinking and solution-based, holistic development. Your added contribution will bring us that much closer to our goal and help to strengthen the support network for the Beyond Boundaries participants and relations with our international collaborators. Contributions can be \$1 up to 50k and all are valuable and necessary for Beyond Boundaries to make the most effective contribution it can. In-kind gifts and donations are also welcome. Whether your contribution is financial, personal or hands-on, thank you for your support and being a part of this dream.

### **To Donate**

Beyond Boundaries is a project of the Biosphere Foundation, a non-profit 501 (c) 3 ([www.biospherefoundation.org](http://www.biospherefoundation.org)). General donations to Beyond Boundaries or to a particular participant must go through the Biosphere Foundations tax ID number (86-0686472).

All gifts are tax deductible, and an official thank you letter from Biosphere Foundation will be sent for your tax records, (also, a copy of our detailed budget and tax exemption letter can be sent on request). To contribute money to a specific participant, be sure to put the participant’s name in the memo section of the check or include a note. You may also direct wire transfer funds into the account, to do that contact Sierra at: [sierra@pcrf.org](mailto:sierra@pcrf.org).

**All checks should be made out to “Biosphere Foundation” and mailed to: S. Silverstone, Beyond Boundaries, Biosphere Foundation, Box 808, Big Pine CA 93513**