

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Sue McFarland at 413-577-2486, smcfarland@acad.umass.edu

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- WHAT:** UMass Asian Arts and Culture Program and PeoplesBank Launch Pennies for Peace Campaign as Part of the Theatrical Presentation of “Three Cups of Tea”
- WHEN:** Now until October 27th, 2010
- WHERE:** PeoplesBank locations and, on the night of the performance, October 27th, at Bowker Auditorium
- TICKETS:** Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or go online to <http://www.umasstix.com/>
- IMAGES:** To download images relating to this press release please go online to <http://www.fineartscenter.com/centerwide/pressRoom/>

THE UMASS ASIAN ARTS & CULTURE PROGRAM AND PEOPLESBANK PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL "PENNIES FOR PEACE" CAMPAIGN—AND ASK FOR LOCAL PARTICIPATION

The Pennies for Peace campaign is tied to the *New York Times* best seller, *Three Cups of Tea*, by Greg Mortenson. The book recounts the true story of renowned humanitarian Greg Mortenson who, following a failed attempt to scale Pakistan's K2 Mountain, went on to found girls' schools throughout Pakistan and Afghanistan. This touching story has inspired students across America to collect pennies for Dr. Mortenson's Central Asia Institute's "Pennies for Peace" project, which continues to build schools across central Asia.

A theatrical performance of “Three Cups of Tea,” Produced by American Place Theatre, will be presented by the Asian Arts & Culture Program on Wednesday, October 27th at 7:30PM in Bowker Auditorium on the UMass campus. The Asian Arts & Culture Program and the event's sponsor, PeoplesBank, are asking area children to join with tens of thousands of other children around the world who share the vision and dedication to empower communities through education in remote areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Between now and October 27th, children are encouraged to bring their pennies, all amounts accepted, to the performance itself or to PeoplesBank locations that have self-service coin machines. There, the pennies will be deposited into the Pennies for Peace™ account. Each child who makes a contribution will receive a pencil as a symbol of the campaign. To find a PeoplesBank branch near you that has a self-service coin machine, please visit <http://www.bankatpeoples.com/home/branch/>.

How can a penny bring peace? It doesn't buy much in America. But in the villages of Pakistan and Afghanistan, it can buy a pencil, start an education, and

transform a life. In a region where terrorist organizations recruit uneducated, illiterate children, that pencil can empower a child to read, write, and learn. The Pennies for Peace program's goal is to encourage children, who are ultimately our future leaders, to learn the value of philanthropy by collecting pennies for global peace. It can also serve to broaden their cultural horizons and allow them to become members of a global family dedicated to peace.

The pennies that area children collect can add up to a real difference:

- 1 penny = a pencil
- 2-3 pennies = an eraser
- 15 pennies = one notebook
- \$20 = one child's school supplies for one year
- \$50 = one treadle sewing machine and supplies
- \$100 = maternal healthcare supplies for one year
- \$300 = one advanced student's annual scholarship
- \$600 = one teacher's annual salary
- \$5,000 = support for an existing school for one year
- \$50,000 = one school building and support for up to five years

Children in over 400 mountain villages in remote northern Pakistan and Afghanistan are on the waiting list, hoping to learn in a new school. The UMass Asian Arts & Culture Program and PeoplesBank hope area children can help build a bridge of peace, one penny at a time, offering alternatives to the cycle of terrorism and war.

For more information, visit <http://www.fineartscenter.com/asia/>. For tickets to "Three Cups of Tea," call 413-545-2511 or 800-999-UMAS. Tickets may also be purchased online at [our secure online box office](#).

ABOUT PEOPLESBANK

PeoplesBank is the largest mutually chartered bank in western Massachusetts and a leader in green values, sustainable energy financing, and charitable giving. Founded in 1885, the bank takes its responsibility to the environment seriously and has financed more than \$35 million in wind, hydroelectric, and solar energy projects in recent years. In addition to its LEED registered office in Springfield, PeoplesBank will build green offices in Northampton and West Springfield in the near future. PeoplesBank—a passion for what is possible.bankatpeoples.com

ABOUT PENNIES FOR PEACE

The Pennies for Peace campaign is a program of Central Asia Institute (CAI), founded by Greg Mortenson, author of the #1 *New York Times* best seller, *Three Cups of Tea*. CAI is a registered §501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that promotes and provides community-based education and literacy programs, especially for girls, in

remote mountain regions of Central Asia. Founded in 1996, CAI has built, to date, nearly 100 schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which serve more than 28,000 students, 14,000 of whom are girls. Greg's story and more information about CAI can be found on the web at <http://www.ikat.org/>.

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