

Roots of Peace Recognized as VACS Champion at DialogueNEXT, Pioneering the Role of Agriculture in Promoting Peace

Two Angolan Women Deminers Join International Women's Month Celebration in Washington, D.C., Marking Historic Moment for Gender Equality in Agriculture

WASHINGTON, D.C., UNITED STATES , April 1, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At DialogueNEXT in Washington D.C., a pivotal moment unfolded as Heidi Kuhn, founder of Roots of Peace and 2023 World Food Prize laureate, proudly announced the organization's recognition as a Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS) champion by the Department of State. VACS, a global movement envisioned by Dr. Cary Fowler, Special Envoy for Food Security appointed by President Joe Biden, aims to promote sustainable agriculture practices through a focus on nutritious, climate adapted crop varieties and investment in healthy, fertile soils.



From left to right: Elizabeth Whitlow, Executive Director of the Regenerative Organic Alliance; Laura Turner Seydel, Director at Turner Foundation; Violet Grgich, CEO of Grgich Hills Estate; and Heidi Kuhn, Founder of Roots of Peace and 2023 World Food Pr

This accolade underscores Roots of Peace's dedication to advancing food security and sustainable agriculture in conflict-affected regions worldwide.

In the midst of the inaugural DialogueNEXT event by the World Food Prize Foundation, a beacon of hope shines on the agricultural landscape. As 2026 marks the first-ever Year of Women in Agriculture, the stage is set for transformative conversations.

Heidi Kuhn emphasized, "Empowering women in agriculture isn't just about gender parity; it's about securing food for generations. Women produce 50% of the world's food. It's time to recruit, promote, and empower them."

Joined by leading voices in Washington, DialogueNEXT championed the integration of youth in agriculture, showcased the remarkable journey of Ngoie Mulanda Grace and Janete Malichi, two Angolan female MAG deminers, and applauded the resilient efforts of organizations like Roots of Peace in demining, replanting, and rebuilding.

Violet Grgich, CEO of Grgich Hills Estate and one of the few female leaders in the wine industry in the United States, highlighted the critical role of female farmers. She celebrated the upcoming International Year of Women Farmers in 2026, emphasizing the importance of increasing female participation in the industry. Violet Grgich remarked, "As a female leader in the wine

industry, I'm honored to celebrate the International Year of Women Farmers in 2026. It's imperative that we recognize and elevate the vital contributions of women in agriculture, paving the way for a more inclusive and sustainable future for all."

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Roots of Peace is a proud VACS Champion. Since 1997, our vision to turn MINES TO VINES has transformed war-torn lands into thriving farmland - cultivating peace through agriculture."

Heidi Kuhn, founder of Roots of Peace and 2023 World Food Prize laureate

Elizabeth Whitlow, Executive Director of the Regenerative Organic Alliance, emphasized, "In the realm of regenerative organic agriculture, the increasing engagement of women highlights the transformative power of education in fostering gender equity. With just 2% of the population shouldering the responsibility of feeding the remaining 98%, it's paramount that we empower women and champion inclusivity in regenerative organic practices to cultivate a sustainable and resilient agricultural landscape for generations to come."

DialogueNEXT aims to amplify female voices, forging alliances and solutions to global hunger. However, with the

gender gap projected to persist for over 150 years, urgent action is needed to empower women and ensure gender equity in agricultural policies.



ROOTS of PEACE

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HEIDI KUHN, FOUNDER, ROOTS OF PEACE

Heidi Kuhn, founder of Roots of Peace and 2023 World Food Prize Laureate

Violet Grgich called for the recruitment of more women in agriculture, advancement of technology and regenerative organic farming practices, empowerment of community leaders, and prioritization of girls' education, particularly in underdeveloped regions where technology alone is insufficient.

As Heidi Kuhn aptly stated, "Education intertwines agriculture, health, democracy, and societal progress. Let's empower communities and pave a path where no one is left behind."

ABOUT ROOTS OF PEACE

Roots of Peace supports the world's most vulnerable farmers and traders, removing the remnants of war and restoring agricultural productivity and prosperity. Roots of Peace is a humanitarian organization dedicated to the removal of landmines and the subsequent replanting and rebuilding of war-torn regions. Founded in 1997 by Heidi Kuhn, the goal of Roots of Peace is to turn minefields into farmland and support victims of landmine accidents.

ABOUT GRGICH HILLS ESTATE

Grgich Hills Estate was founded after Vintners Hall of Fame inductee Miljenko "Mike" Grgich first earned world-wide recognition when the 1973 Chateau Montelena Chardonnay that he crafted won the 1976 Paris Tasting, beating the best of France, and drawing international attention to the Napa Valley. Mike then partnered with Austin Hills of the Hills Bros. Coffee family in the pursuit of creating the best wines in the world, and chose Independence Day, July 4, 1977, to launch their family-owned-and-operated winery. Today, Grgich Hills Estate is 100% estate grown and Certified Regenerative Organic through the Regenerative Organic Alliance (ROA), a leading force in the Regenerative Agriculture movement worldwide. Referred to as "Organic Plus," regenerative farming is a science-driven approach focused on no-till soil management, building organic matter to sustain microbial life, incorporating livestock and biodiversity, and caring for people who work in the fields and winery. It is a key component of combating climate change and reducing greenhouse gas pollution. In 2022 Grgich Hills Estate was recognized as one of the world's "Top 100 Wineries" by Wine & Spirits Magazine.

ABOUT THE WORLD FOOD PRIZE

The World Food Prize is an international award that honors individuals who have improved the quality, quantity, or availability of food worldwide. The Prize was founded by Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, recipient of the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize, for his work that contributed to increases in agricultural outputs, which was termed the Green Revolution. Since then, the Prize has been awarded to 53 worthy individuals during the Norman E. Borlaug International Dialogue. The Dialogue, also known as the Borlaug Dialogue, is a week of events dedicated to an issue surrounding food insecurity or hunger each year.

ABOUT THE REGENERATIVE ORGANIC ALLIANCE

Founded by Rodale Institute, Dr. Bronner's, and Patagonia in 2017, the Regenerative Organic Alliance (ROA) is a nonprofit organization that oversees the certification standard, promotes, and supports Regenerative Organic Certified® farmers, farms, brands, allies, and partners. Combining

the best practices from USDA Organic, Fair Trade and high-bar animal welfare standards, Regenerative Organic Certified® is a revolutionary umbrella certification for food, fiber and wellness ingredients, products, and brands. The Regenerative Organic Certified® framework goes beyond current certification criteria and sets the highest standards in the world for soil health, animal welfare, and farmworker and social fairness.

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