

# Mobilize and March:

## *Renewed Energy in the Population Movement*

*by Natasha Abbas, Development Assistant*

A new year often brings with it many transitions, and that holds true for Population Connection in 2005. We are extremely pleased to have our former executive director, John Seager, step up as president of the organization. This turning point was the perfect opportunity to reflect upon how we can best work towards our mission of achieving a sustainable balance between the Earth's people and its resources.

We realize that there are countless challenges ahead with the re-election of George W. Bush, but that motivates us to work even harder to increase awareness of the threats to our environment and our reproductive health rights. As a response to the challenges posed by the administration, we are trying to re-energize the national Population Movement, and we are extending our outreach nationwide as far as our resources will allow.

In the coming year we intend to mobilize the Population Movement by connecting with as many activists, members, educators, students, and concerned citizens as possible. Our members will be hearing from us more than ever as we implement new projects in new cities, increase our outreach on campuses, administer a greater number of teacher trainings for our Population Education program, and appeal to members of Congress harder than ever.

Our strength as an organization lies in our members, and the power of the Population Movement depends on the willingness of each member to bring the knowledge and tools concerning overpopulation to as many people as possible. It's amazing how many people are unaware of the threats that we face as a result of the world's increasing population.

When we talk about population we are talking about so much more than numbers; we are talking about defending women's reproductive health rights, the complex link between population growth and our environment, reforming policy that restricts access to reproductive health care and promotes the transmittal of HIV/AIDS, restoring funding of international health and development programs, and we are talking about working to improve the quality of life for the world's most vulnerable people.

We can't emphasize enough how important it is for our members to spread the knowledge they have about



Annika Rudback, a member of Population Connection's Campus Program, teaching ultimate frisbee to a group of girls in the village of Makak in Cameroon. Annika is spending a semester in Cameroon working on youth reproductive health issues, including HIV/AIDS awareness and protection.

*Photo courtesy of Annika Rudback*

population and to foster dialogue and events in their communities. Your help in publicizing and organizing events is invaluable and we encourage you to organize Friendraisers (small meetings designed to provide your friends and neighbors with information on overpopulation) or meetings with your local congressional representatives.

Countless members have been vital in continuing our work in local communities throughout the United States—and around the world. Two members of our Campus Program who attended Capitol Hill Days in 2004 went on to work for reproductive health projects in South America and Africa. Our campus activist in Cameroon worked extensively with the Youth Development Foundation on projects involving youth and reproductive health. We recently had a District Activist Network (DAN) member in Tennessee convince his governor to issue a proclamation in support of the "A Mother's Promise Campaign." The proclamation called for the U.S. government to uphold its financial commitments made at the 1994 Cairo Consensus on Population and Development to improve the quality of life for women and families. These are just a few examples of members who have taken the initiative and made a huge impact on the work that we do.

We are busy lining up a number of exciting events across the country in the next few months and we would love to have your help. If you are interested in participating in an event in your area, please contact Kelly Rand at [krand@popconnect.org](mailto:krand@popconnect.org), or to organize a Friendraiser, contact Natasha Abbas at [natasha@popconnect.org](mailto:natasha@popconnect.org) or 202-332-2200.