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**For Immediate Release**

March 24, 2005

**Global Citizen Journey To Build First Niger Delta Library and Bridges of Understanding  
Seattle Event April 10th**

SEATTLE, March 24, 2005 – Global Citizen Journey (GCJ) today announced plans to bring 20 delegates from the Northwest to Nigeria this November. Participants will help build the first library in the “creeks” region of the Niger Delta and take part in a program of sharing aimed at replacing cultural barriers with bonds of understanding.

GCJ, a Seattle based nonprofit, is partnering with African host organization Niger Delta Professionals for Development (NIDPRODEV) to bring the group to the village of Oporoza in the heart of the oil-rich Niger Delta. The delegates will spend three weeks living and working with Nigerian participants from a diverse mix of geographical areas, tribes and religions. The library they build will provide vital learning resources for the entire region, which has only 40% literacy. The few families with resources send their children to boarding schools in the city, while the community struggles to retain students and attract teachers, who are challenged to teach without books.

In addition to the library project, group members will participate in daily workshops to deepen relationships, share stories and develop cross-cultural communication, compassionate listening and conflict resolution skills. Cultural activities will include music, the arts and visits with local dignitaries.

Pacific Northwest businesses, schools, religious organizations, community groups and professional associations are invited to sponsor delegates and actively involve their memberships in the learning opportunity the journey affords. GCJ founder and executive director Susan Partnow commented: “Global Citizen Journey cultivates a sense of responsible world citizenship, leadership and a network of relationships with our global neighbors. Returning delegates will share their experiences with others in the Puget Sound area and beyond. We are designing the project to encourage deep, enduring connections and impact beyond the experience of the trip itself. We’re seeking a diverse group of delegates, representing a range of professions, skills and networks, to share in this exciting grassroots peace-building adventure.”

GCJ and NIDPRODEV hope the journey will draw attention to the conflict-ridden Niger Delta, which multinational corporations have developed into the sixth largest oil-producing region in the world, causing significant environmental and economic challenges for the area’s indigenous tribes. NIDPRODEV founder and acclaimed peace mediator, Joel Bisina, who is from the “creeks” region, commented: “Nigeria is Africa’s largest nation and considered the leader in political and economic issues. Continued social and economic unrest there could have a deeply destabilizing effect on both the African continent and the global community. We hope that a more complete understanding of the real story behind the impact of oil production over the last 45 years will motivate people to address these issues before they become a crisis.”

GCJ trips are designed to promote cross-cultural understanding and educate the public about little-known regions of the world often ignored by mainstream media. A second trip to Africa is planned for 2007, to rebuild homes in Burundi, a country ravaged by years of ethnic conflict.

The public is invited to the first in a series of “Get to Know GCJ” events on Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. at the Community Living Room, SE corner of 35<sup>th</sup> and Phinney Ave. N. in Fremont, hosted by GCJ organizers, including NIDPRODEV founder Joel Bisina. Refreshments, music, information and a hands-on taste of the GCJ experience will be provided. To learn more about this event, sponsoring or applying to be a delegate to Nigeria, please contact Susan Partnow at 206-789-8697 or susan@partnowcom.com.

*Global Citizen Journey, [www.globalcitizenjourney.org](http://www.globalcitizenjourney.org), is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building cross-cultural understanding and global connectedness by bringing people of diverse cultures together to work on community projects, develop leadership skills and create sustainable communication networks. GCJ evolved from international grassroots efforts including The Compassionate Listening Project and PeaceTrees and is a project of Earthstewards Network 501(c)(3).*

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