



## get out the **VOTE**

**YogaVotes—Off the Mat, Into the World's latest initiative**—is “a call to action for yogis to bring their values and their principles to the ballot box.” This nonpartisan movement seeks to mobilize the nationwide yoga community of 20 million to engage in the political process as a constituency, believing that conscious, empowered, and active involvement at the political level is an extension of a mindful, compassionate yoga practice.

YogaVotes is just one way that yoga makes its presence known in this election year. The Oasis, a collaboration between Seane Corn and Arianna Huffington, is a place of respite that offers yoga, massage, healthy refreshments, a lounging area, and even mini-facials for convention goers. A welcome refuge during the 2008 Democratic convention in Denver, the Oasis will offer its services again this year—at both conventions.

YogaVotes and the Oasis are part of a larger effort to bring mindfulness practices into the world, so that when politicians “are making decisions, they can make them from a centered, aligned, inclusive place,” says Corn. “We are here to live inclusive and compassionate lives,” she says, “but we can’t do that unless we engage in our communities.” Follow them on Twitter (@yogavotes) or visit [offthematintotheworld.org](http://offthematintotheworld.org). —*Dulma Altan*

## Angels in Haiti



**LISA RUEFF, A YOGA TEACHER AND A HUMANITARIAN,** recognized her call to action when she saw reports of the hardships the Haitian people endured every single day. “I knew that yoga would make a deep impact on the people of Haiti and their recovery from this tragedy.” In May 2010, she visited the town of Jacmel and began teaching yoga to local children. When she wasn’t teaching classes, Rueff assisted local nurse practitioner Bonite Affriany. “Bonite is the Mother Teresa of Jacmel,” says Rueff. “Every week, I saw her feed 300 orphans who had no place to go.” Affriany dreamed of building a center to house, feed, and educate the children. “Bonite had the land and the permit,” she says, “but all of her money went to feeding the kids.”

Rueff returns to Haiti several times a year, organizing group volunteer trips to the country. Thanks to her efforts and those of Affriany, the new Jacmel Children’s Center will open mid-2013. For the latest developments, visit [jacmelchildren.org](http://jacmelchildren.org) or join Rueff October 15 when she travels back to Haiti ([yogaventures.org](http://yogaventures.org)). —*Sarah Kent*

## WATER Sacred Life Sustainer

One in eight people on the planet lacks access to clean drinking water.

Every 20 seconds, a child dies from a waterborne disease.

Lack of access to clean water claims more lives annually than all armed conflict.

Santa Fe-based yoga teacher Josh Schrei is doing his part to change those stats. He plans to do 3,000 sun salutes around South India’s sacred Arunachala Mountain October 5–7, 2012, to raise money for the local communities there. His daring act of kindness is in collaboration with [water.org](http://water.org), an organization that provides clean drinking water to those in need. Get more information and help him raise \$25,000 by donating at [give.water.org/f/sunsalutes](http://give.water.org/f/sunsalutes). —*S.K.*

## Greener Pastures in Mexico



In the lush, rugged mountains of Serra Norte de Puebla, citizens of Jonotla, Mexico, welcome the return of Himalayan Institute volunteers who established a branch of the Institute on the outskirts of town two years ago. These volunteers join efforts with local staff members and students from Jonotla University as they work to reverse the rural exodus from family farming. Some of their ongoing projects include:

**Living Classroom** in which they demonstrate how to use sustainable agricultural practices, such as crop diversification, heap composting, and land management, to revitalize the soil.

**Community Center** where they teach classes on yoga, healthy nutrition, and organic gardening as a means to help reduce obesity and diabetes.

**Microenterprise** in which they form cooperatives to share equipment and transportation, supporting commercial farming as a viable option. Learn more at [himalayaninstitute.org/humanitarian/mexico](http://himalayaninstitute.org/humanitarian/mexico). —S.K. ■