Emory 21 Days of Peace will culminate on September 22 with a discussion featuring Marguerite Barankitse, world-renowned Burundian humanitarian and founder of Maison Shalom. When Burundi’s terrible civil war erupted in 1993, Barankitse witnessed and was the victim of murderous attacks. She found herself caring for hundreds of children who had no one to care for them, prompting her to found Maison Shalom, a complex of schools, hospitals, and a network of care extending throughout Burundi, focusing on children’s welfare and rights while challenging ethnic discrimination. The scope of her action as well as the fact that she protects all children without consideration of their origin, Tutsi or Hutu, brought her praise from all corners of the world.

She is the winner of many international awards, including the Opus Prize, which recognizes unsung heroes who are conquering the world’s most challenging problems; the Prize for Conflict Prevention, presented to her by Ambassador Kofi Annan and awarded annually by Fondation Chirac, launched in 2008 by former French president Jacques Chirac; a $1.1M Aurora Prize for awakening humanity, an award given to humanitarians in memory of the Armenian genocide; and the Voices of Courage Award of the Women’s Commission for Women and Refugee Children. She holds an honorary degree from Emory University.