



PEACE PLAYERS

2021 IMPACT REPORT





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DEAR FRIENDS,

When I first joined PeacePlayers 15 years ago, I recognized a concept with tremendous potential – using basketball to bring people together across divides, turning hostile relationships into cooperative ones. I sincerely believed in the power of meaningful people-to-people contact to shake up the dynamics of conflict – so much so that I set aside my aspirations in academia in order to explore how basketball can change the world. But in all these lofty musings, I focused on the individual – how we could challenge stereotypes and other harmful conflict narratives, one participant at a time. At that point, I didn’t dare entertain the possibility that a medium as simple as basketball could be a tool for influencing others outside of our Programs.

And yet, 15 years later, I look at what all of our sites and global initiatives are accomplishing on both the individual and the community level, and I am just in awe. The constant motivation of every coach, coordinator, manager and youth leader to grow, learn and adapt is a constant source of inspiration for me.

In the past two years since I transitioned from the role of Managing Director of PeacePlayers Middle East to a global role as Executive Director, I have had the pleasure and the privilege to visit every one of our sites. In all of our more established sites, I have met numerous people who have referred to themselves as “PeacePlayers Lifers,” young people who grew up in the program and are now leading the way for the next generation of PeacePlayers – like Nas, who has gone from participant to coach, to international fellow and for the past four years has served as the Executive Director of PeacePlayers South Africa. Currently, 65 percent of local staff across the globe are made up of dedicated local leaders who grew up within our programs, who know first hand about the potential of basketball to transform communities and who have the skills to make that happen. I have also met so many young people who are

dedicating their lives to peacebuilding and equity – and all of them said it was the result of what they learned and experienced in PeacePlayers. This is what systemic change looks like.

If I had to choose one phrase to sum up the past couple of years, it would be “global collaboration.” The Friendship Games have been a huge catalyst for these global connections: behind the scenes, staff from all sites have been collaborating across all functions. Thanks to these global connections, youth all around the world know our core values, and how to apply them in their daily lives. On a recent trip to South Africa and Northern Ireland, I heard so many PeacePlayers talking about feeling like they were part of something bigger: not just a team, not just an after school program –but a collaborative global movement, the sum of our combined experience, expertise and passion. In this, our 20th year, we are continuing the journey from people-to-people to people-to-community, focusing not only on individual impact, but also on how PeacePlayers across the world can influence their societies and the institutions that govern them. We are continuing to invest in our local sites all the while prioritizing collaborative global connections. We are continuing to build global initiatives that will deepen our impact through alumni engagement, and widen our reach through global technical assistance. I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished in the past 20 years, and excited about what is to come. We thank you for making this journey possible and hope you’ll join us for what’s next.



In solidarity,

KAREN DOUBILET

Executive Director, PeacePlayers





OUR MISSION

To unite divided communities through sport



OUR VISION

Individual and communal connections
creating a more peaceful world



PEACEPLAYERS...

Fosters connections in divided communities

Builds skills in cooperation, inter-personal
relationship building, and conflict transformation

Empowers youth to be leaders in their communities
and advocates for peace around the world

Nurtures a sense of global belonging

...THROUGH SPORT

WHERE WE WORK

PeacePlayers operates in diverse conflict and post-conflict settings across the globe. Each site has a distinct history and culture, and while all programs adhere to our programmatic standards, each site is unique.



OUR GROWTH

● Early Years (Before 2016) ● Expansion to US Cities (2017)

OUR HISTORY

2001 - 2006

PLAYING FOR PEACE

2000
Playing for Peace
founded by Sean Tuohey

2001
Established
South Africa

2002
Established
Northern Ireland

2005
Established
Middle East

2006
Established
Cyprus

2007 - PRESENT

PEACEPLAYERS INTERNATIONAL

2007
Playing for Peace
becomes PeacePlayers
International (PPI) to
reflect our global
movement

2015
PPI launches its
first program in
Washington, D.C.

2018
PeacePlayers
United States
launches year-round
programs in
Baltimore,
Brooklyn,
Detroit,
Chicago, and L.A.

2019
Founding of the
Friendship Games
by Ed and Penelope
Peskowitz

2008
PPI launches its first
program in New
Orleans

2017
Partnered with Nike
to launch programs
in five U.S. cities and
established PeacePlayers
United States

2021
PeacePlayers
Celebrates
20 Years

2011 - PRESENT

SPORT AND PEACE INNOVATION NETWORK

Sport and Peace Innovation Network (SPIN), our training and consulting initiative, has served organizations working in 15 countries spread over five continents, including:

2010
South Africa: Indigo Youth

2011
Morocco, Ireland & Bulgaria:
Anatomy of Peace Training;
Tajikistan: International Sports
Programming Initiative;
Kyrgyzstan: Innovations in Coaching Kids

2011
Argentina: Sports and Peace
Innovation Network Training

2013
Chicago: Peace on the Court;
Yemen: Promoting Youth Civic
Engagement;
Brazil: Sports and Peace Innovation
Network Training; **Switzerland:**
UN Sport for Development Camp

2014
Ethiopia: Worldwide
Orphans Soccer League;
Sweden: UN Sport for
Development Camp

2015
Portland: Peace on the Court;
Northern Ireland: Sport and
Diversity Program;
Kansas City: Police Athletic League;
Bosnia and Herzegovina: Youth
Sports Coaches Training

2018
Rwanda: Partnership
with Ubumwe Sports
Initiative (USI)

20 YEARS OF ACCOLADES

30 November 2004

Rescuer of Humanity Award,
Project Love

1 March 2005

Sportsmanship Day Award,
Institute for International Sport

1 April 2006

Partner, Clinton Global Initiative

3 July 2007

Dave Cullen and Trevor Ringland:
Arthur Ashe Courage Award, The
ESPY Awards (Northern Ireland)

18 February 2008

Brendan and Sean Tuohey: Laureus
Sport for Good Award, Laureus
World Academy

18 May 2008

\$1,000,000 Challenge Grant, The
American Ireland Fund

7 June 2008

Island-Wide Cooperation Award,
Cyprus Civil Society Organization
Awards

16 June 2008

Presidential Visit, President George
W. Bush (Northern Ireland)

4 June 2010

Shortlist, Best Sport for Conflict
Resolution Award, Beyond Sport

6 March 2011

Recipient of Prince William and
Catherine Middleton's Royal
Wedding Charitable Fund
(Northern Ireland)

April 2011

PeacePlayers Receives Technology
Donation and Acknowledgement in
Honor of the Royal Wedding

28 October 2011

2011 NGO for Peace of the Year,
Peace and Sport (Middle East)

3 May 2012

Shortlist, Best Sport for Conflict
Resolution Award, Beyond Sport

4 September 2012

Earn 4-Star Rating from Charity
Navigator

1 May 2014

PPI's U18 Girls Win Israeli National
League Championship for the
Southern Division

19 May 2014

Vice President Joseph Biden Visits
Cyprus

9 October 2014

Basketball Game at White House
with National Security Advisor
Susan Rice

7 March 2015

Heni Bizawi (Middle East) Speaks at
Clinton Global Initiative University
of Miami

5 October 2015

Receive Charity Navigator 4-Star
rating for 4th year in a row

3 December 2015

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry
Visits Cyprus

19 October 2016

Beyond Sport Summit and Awards,
Sport for Conflict Resolution Award

14 November 2016

Reflections of Hope Award from
The Oklahoma City National
Memorial and Museum

January 2017

Nike and PeacePlayers Launch
Equality Campaign and National
Partnership

13 September 2017

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
(RWJF) Sports Award

3 June 2018

Institute of International Education
(IIE) Victor J. Goldberg Prize for
Peace in the Middle East

23 May 2018

Sports Business Journal Celebration
of Service Award

25 September 2018

Kwazulu-Natal Recreation Body of
the Year (South Africa)

Fall 2019

U.S. Director of Programs and
Partnerships Sally Nnamani
Featured in Nike's Air Force 1
Campaign

24 January 2020

Flax Trust Arts North Belfast
Community Leadership Award
for a Sporting Group Making a
Difference

21 June 2020

Youth Leader Javonn Islar
(Brooklyn) awarded Billie Jean King
Youth Leadership Award at 2020
ESPYS

November 2020

PeacePlayers United States is One
of Four Organizations Awarded
the Collective Impact Award for
Reducing Racial Inequality Through
Sport

November 2021

1st Annual KwaZulu-Natal Youth
Business Awards - 2021 Youth
In Sports Award Recipient (South
Africa)

November 2021

KwaZulu-Natal Department of
Sports and Recreation Awards -
2021 Recreation Body of the Year
Award (South Africa)

PEACEPLAYERS CYPRUS COLOR THE COURT PROJECT

Court 2 Nicosia (Agios Antonios)

Color the Court aims to create a colorful, safe place for youth
in Cyprus to learn the game of basketball – on a court that they
helped create in collaboration with volunteer local artists.

CONTINUING TO LEARN AND GROW IN 2022

Our Organization-Wide Journey with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

In November 2018, a few PeacePlayers employees formed a DEI working group to address the complex dynamics that emerged from starting programming in the U.S.

Through this research, it became apparent that there was a need to confront DEI issues globally, both organizationally and within the communities in which we work.

PeacePlayers engaged a leading consultancy (VISIONS) to support us in deepening our awareness, focusing on a more inclusive culture and integrating a DEI lens into all aspects of our organization.

The DEI Progress We Aspire to Make This Year and Beyond



Diversify our Global Board, Making it Representative of Our Global Organization



Create and Implement a “Staff Wellness” Framework That Pays Special Attention to Emotional Well-Being, Mental Health, and Mental Illness



Align HR Practices with DEI, Ensuring Transparency in Pay Scale and More Equitable Recruiting Processes



Diversify Local Funding in Each of PeacePlayers’ Sites, Aligning with Partners who Share Values and Vision



Embed DEI Practices into Local Program Models, Creating Safe Spaces and Ensuring Diverse and Equitable Curriculum and Activities for All

Leveling Up Our Monitoring and Evaluation Efforts

PeacePlayers has continued to be an industry leader in Monitoring & Evaluation. Over the past year, significant investments have been made to elevate our standards even further. This has included three focus areas:

Integrating a DEI lens into Monitoring & Evaluation

Over the past year, we have worked with a consulting firm to continue the work towards more inclusive and equitable M&E practices. This has included the reconstruction of local and global indicators (impact measures) and the formation of a global M&E team with representatives from each of PeacePlayers’ year-round sites.

Partnership with AamDigital and TolaData

We have piloted a number of data collection tools and instruments, which will lead to the launch of a new software to streamline our M&E practices.

Investment in Key M&E Capacity

PeacePlayers has begun the search for a Director of Impact who will sit on the Global Support Team. The position will allow us to continue developing our M&E department while building up local capacity.

“The team at TolaData have loved working with PeacePlayers this year. It’s exciting for us to collaborate with an organization that really understands the potential to be gained from its data and wants to find ways to make its monitoring as effortless and streamlined as possible for its staff.”



JO BENNETT

CEO, TolaData

“The tools that we are developing with Toladata and Aam Digital will allow us to draw conclusions about the impact of our program in ways we never have before. We can view data per project or per participant gender, geographical location, ethnicity, or really any characteristic that may influence the type impact we are having. We will know which project, in which location, is having the most or least positive impact on which target group. This knowledge will be invaluable in creating best practices and adapting programming to participants’ diverse needs and challenges.”



GITHA COHEN-MARKENS

PeacePlayers Middle East

PEACEPLAYERS' RIPPLE EFFECT IN ACTION

PeacePlayers affects change at the interpersonal level, the systemic or community level, and at the global level. Our participants experience deep, personal change, which then creates ripple effects in their community and ultimately in the world.

AJ McMinn Breaks Social Barriers in Northern Ireland Through Camogie

There's a certain way that AJ McMinn of PeacePlayers Northern Ireland wants her story to be told, and it's definitely not "Protestant girl plays Catholic sport of camogie."

"I felt like the more we said Protestant girl plays camogie, we instantly separate the two. We've separated me into a box, and the sport into a box. I wanted it to be something positive because that's what it's been in my life. So I was like, I don't want it to instantly divide a reader from my story because I just want this story to change one person's perspective or influence one person to go and pick up a hurl, whether they are Catholic or Protestant. Because I love the sport."

Even though for AJ -- who grew up in PeacePlayers programs and has since gone on to become a sessional coach and more recently, a project coordinator -- sport is something that brings joy and unites people, not everyone in Northern Ireland feels that way. Sport is one of the many ways in which people identify their side in the conflict. Gaelic sports, like camogie, have traditionally been the sole territory of people from a Catholic background. For many people, it's not just a game. It's about identity, about nationhood, and about the scars of decades of bloodshed. And so, it may not come as a surprise that many people feel very strongly about keeping things the way they are.

"At the start of it, we had to bring a police presence to training because of threats and we've had to move trainings. And just a lot of people weren't happy with it at the start." With all of the drama surrounding her new team, AJ asked

"When I'd seen the backlash or the positivity I got from it, I was like, 'yeah, I'm just going to keep going with this.' And the more hatred I got towards it, the more I wanted to do it, the more I was like, No, I'm going to go and do this. And I was just kind of like, 'You can't tell me what to do.'"

AJ MCMINN

PeacePlayers Northern Ireland

herself if Camogie was worth it. "And I was like, you know what? This is completely worth it."

AJ and her team did face a fair amount of backlash, but received even more support.

AJ's team is part of a club that intentionally recruits kids from different traditions. As part of her involvement with the club, AJ has also started coaching younger Protestant and Catholic children in Gaelic sports. By playing and coaching Camogie, AJ's not just opening up new opportunities for herself, but she's creating them for countless other people in Belfast as well.

"Not only am I bringing more culture to my own life that I can pass on to them, but I'm also showing them that you can do what you want, regardless of what people think. So if me going to training twice a week and playing a match once a week for my team is going to make someone down the street from me go and pick up a football, then, so what? Let's just go and do it."



PeacePlayers Cyprus Makes Space for Refugee Youth

After a meeting with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) in Cyprus in 2019, the team at PeacePlayers Cyprus was forced to consider a very important question – what happens to the youth refugees coming to the island? With the outbreak of the refugee crisis, millions of people have been displaced from their homes and have had to flee to foreign countries to seek shelter. As the closest landmass to both Africa and the Middle East, Cyprus has the highest number of refugees (relative to its size) of any EU nation. Refugee youth on the island face a battery of challenges - from being put into the education system without knowing the local language, to having to live without their parents or other family members, who often get left behind, and blending into the Cypriot community, which doesn't always welcome these young people with open arms.

According to Jale Canlibalik, Managing Director of PeacePlayers Cyprus, after hearing the stories from UNHCR, they “sank lower and lower” into their chairs, thinking about how these kids are overlooked by the government and by other institutions, including PeacePlayers. “Even though our aim is not working with refugee kids, and we were not excluding kids in the traditional sense, it felt like we were part of the problem as well.”

Although PeacePlayers Cyprus had always focused on the divide between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, refugees also experienced their fair share of conflict on the island. “Cyprus is a very small island. Anybody that comes from the outside community is viewed very negatively. I generally think that Cypriots are against outsiders, because our education system perpetuates this level of racism, not just Greek Cypriots against Turkish Cypriots [and vice versa], but also other outside groups as well,” shares Jale. “This was an additional issue for the refugee youth that they have to deal with.”

Since that meeting in 2019, PeacePlayers Cyprus has made a point about reaching refugee youth.

This shift started with an integrated Greek Cypriot-Refugee team, located near a shelter for refugee families to make activities more accessible. PeacePlayers also partnered with agencies working with refugees to actively recruit youth to summer camps, where they had the chance to “feel like a normal kid and not have to worry about what’s going on in their everyday life.” Jale knew that this was a great opportunity for everyone in the camp. “The idea is not that it is refugee kids or Cypriot kids, but it is PeacePlayers youth. There is no differentiation between them.”

As the next step, Jale thought about the need for representation. “We need to make sure that these kids have a coach that they can look up to and a coach that they can communicate with, somebody that speaks their language.” As a first step to solving this, PeacePlayers hired an Arabic speaking coach to make sure that the language barrier will not be an obstacle for bringing many of these kids together. For other languages, Cyprus hopes to build the capacity of current participants from refugee communities, so they can one day coach and serve as a bridge to other kids who speak the same languages.

Bringing together youth from diverse backgrounds is not an easy task. Jale knew that it was going to be a slow process, and having the right foundation in place was what really mattered.

“It is not about ticking boxes, it is not about saying ‘Yes, we care about refugees.’ It is actually providing the space and representation.” This shift has really made a mark on the team. “It is a whole new direction, one that makes us feel very proud of the organization we are.”

JALE CANLIBALIK

Managing Director, PeacePlayers Cyprus



Community Conversations with the Detroit Pistons and PeacePlayers: A Megaphone for Detroit Youth

In order to bring real, lasting change to systematically sidelined, exploited and neglected American communities, you need to bring everyone to the table. More importantly, you need to bring youth to the table.

This is the spirit behind the Detroit Pistons' Community Conversations, led by PeacePlayers Detroit, a series of youth-driven conversations around change. "The idea was really just about bringing people together to talk about the issues that are plaguing the city and develop solutions in real time as a community that can work together," says Jasmine Cooper, Director of PeacePlayers Detroit, who leads the Community Conversations, with the support of the Detroit PeacePlayers and Pistons staff. At the Community Conversations, young people from PeacePlayers and beyond are joined by Pistons players, coaches and leadership, as well as local government representatives, educators, police, non-profit leaders, and anyone else who wants to be "part of the change."

In an effort to support the city of Detroit and surrounding communities, the Pistons, PeacePlayers and the community of Detroit decided to come together to lift up issues that are specific to Detroit. The challenges facing Detroit residents, particularly Detroiters of color, were not new, but during the pandemic, inequities in education, healthcare, and other resources made it an especially critical time to come together. And what makes the conversations exciting is that they bring together the right people to make the changes needed.

Instead of deciding for the community, PeacePlayers and the Pistons asked — that's why that first session was devoted to hearing from different people what they wanted to change in their community. Jasmine says that the first session in the fall of 2020 "was just around what

are some of the issues that Detroit is facing, as it relates to young people. On that very first conversation we had kids, we had different police officers, different [city] council members, just a variety of people that represent the community." Throughout the discussions, there were a few topics that kept coming up — education and a lack of equitable opportunities were two of the big ones.

Another thing that came out of the discussion, "We recognized that there was a tremendous lack of youth voice and the acknowledgement of letting young people tell us what they need and what they want."

Through the Community Conversations, young people in Detroit finally got a platform to share their experiences and their grievances to an audience who wanted to hear, and one that could really help them make a difference. Jasmine shares that at the first conversation there was a boy in fifth grade, who opened up about his struggles at school. "He spoke so eloquently about how, when he was in the third grade, he felt he was just passed up to the next grade and his teachers, no matter how much he tried to reach out for help, they didn't provide that support. He's 11 years old and able to identify something that's critically wrong with the system, and that's when I realized that these can be really powerful. I think that's what kind of generated the spark of the Pistons or other people who wanted to use their voice."

After that first session, the conversations were planned responsively to the needs of the hour. Fall of 2020, elections were approaching, so PeacePlayers and the Pistons got folks together to talk about voter rights and how to stand up to voter suppression. Fast forward to summer of 2021, schools are getting ready to return to in-

person learning. PeacePlayers and the Pistons hold a conversation around the challenges surrounding going to school during a pandemic. Other topics have included mentorship and mental health. But the meetings aren't all talk. At every Community Conversation, young people and community leaders decide together on a plan of action to see what changes, large or small, they are able to make happen when they leave the confines of the session.

Arn Tellem, Vice Chairman of the Detroit Pistons, and member of PeacePlayers' Board of Directors has found these meetings to be inspiring:

"As you look back on the past couple of years, there has been so much sadness and heartbreak. If you look at the positive things that have happened, the fact the [Pistons] players have found their voice and are using it in a constructive way, and speaking out on issues that are important to their community, with all the bad this has been good. PeacePlayers have been a huge part of it for us in providing a constructive way to bring disparate people from our organizations together in our community, and have these powerful conversations where you hope constructive action can result from these conversations."

ARN TELLEM

Vice Chairman, Detroit Pistons



IMPACT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Seeing the Fruits of Our Labor, Creating a Future of Hope for All South Africans

A LETTER FROM DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS NASIPHI KHAFU

DEAR FAMILY,

I am so grateful to have had another year filled with so much hope and endless possibilities, even in times of unprecedented challenges. Unlike any other year, we started seeing the fruits of our labour come to fruition: we got the hard earned recognition of two major awards — 2021 Recreational Body of the Year, named by the KwaZulu - Natal Department of Sports and Recreation; and the 2021 Youth in Sport Award at the KwaZulu - Natal Youth in Business Awards.

And our labors have been abundant; regardless of the challenges posed by Covid-19 lockdown, or the July's civil unrest, which left 300 people dead, and created severe food and job insecurity for countless others, we continued to be there for all our youth and communities, whether virtually or in person. Though our resilience has been tested throughout the year, our team has consistently come through for the entire PeacePlayers South Africa family, leveraging partnerships to gather resources and deliver them, house to house, to all the participants that were in dire need. Thankfully, because of the Friendship Games and the collaborative work that already existed across PeacePlayers sites, we were able to find innovative ways to show up for all our participants the way they needed us to.

Another way in which we have challenged the unequal distribution of opportunity in South Africa is through academic scholarships. By forming partnerships with prestigious high

schools and universities, we have been able to give participants from under-served communities access to sports scholarships. Jacques and Olwethu, two PeacePlayers alumni, gained scholarships to study and play basketball at University. Both young men ended up playing an instrumental role in their team's winning of the 2021 University Sport South Africa National Championship. Although competition and winning have never been our primary goal, competitive successes raise our profile, and increase interest among other potential partners, which in the end leads to more opportunities for historically excluded youth from the townships and inner city.

In closing, I would like to extend my gratitude to all of our supporters, board of directors, PeacePlayers, global support and leadership teams, our local office team, our youth coach-mentors, the communities we serve, other partner NPOs, parents, guardians and, of course, our participants, who continue to trust us to make the best decisions and provide the best opportunities for youth. We promise to be relentless and build a lasting legacy of change-makers who will build a more peaceful and inclusive South Africa.

Best regards,

NASIPHI KHAFU

*Director of Strategy and Partnerships
PeacePlayers South Africa*



91%

of Leadership Development participants are confident in their leadership skills among friends, peers, and family.

88%

of participants made a friend from a different community through the program.

IMPACT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Witnessing the Power of Young People to Push This Place Towards a Better, More Shared Future

A LETTER FROM MANAGING DIRECTOR GARETH HARPER

DEAR FAMILY,

Where did that year just go..? It's been really challenging and frustrating, but absolutely amazing all at the same time! As we in Northern Ireland have been trying to make sense of and cope with the fall-out from Brexit, arguments and confusion over the NI Protocol and fears about the creation of a border in the Irish Sea have seen people take to the streets in what often become violent demonstrations and unrest. Unfortunately, our young people here in Northern Ireland are, perhaps, more affected than anyone else by uncertainty regarding the future and the confusion that comes with great political shifts.

On the flipside, every day, I witness the power of young people who push this place towards a better, more shared future. I have been close to tears of pride and joy on numerous occasions. From watching our youth become young adults committed to bringing people together in Northern Ireland, whether it is by studying conflict resolution or human rights law or by choosing peace building as a career - to seeing the impact we are having not only on our participants but on their families as well. I have had the privilege of receiving the most wonderful, heartfelt feedback from the parents of some of our participants.

The challenges and the successes of the past year have also led us to invest in thinking about what we want to achieve in the next five years and beyond. As we enter our 20th year of work in Northern Ireland, we have developed ambitious plans to expand and scale our impact. By 2026, we will be touching every part of Northern Ireland

and engaging over 5,000 children and young people annually. This year, we have already expanded to three more of Northern Ireland's 11 District Council Areas. In addition to our well established programming in Belfast, we have launched Twinings and Coaches Development Programmes in Mid and East Antrim, Ards and North Down and in Mid Ulster, where we have established effective collaborations with youth groups and with local government partners.

Our new strategy goes beyond just creating impact through programme delivery. We believe that to truly address the problems in Northern Ireland, we must do more to intentionally tackle the structural barriers to peace and reconciliation that young people encounter, even when they desire change. Segregated education; divided neighbourhoods; the sports we play and teams we support; the churches and youth groups we attend; the political parties we vote for, the news we consume, and the attitudes and mindsets of parents and other significant adults all represent significant barriers to change and further progress. Going forward we will have an increased focus on directly tackling these barriers that stand in the way of young people as they strive to create profound change. We are building a resilience and capacity that will help Northern Ireland to deal with these challenges in the future.

We are proud of this 'wee difference' we are making, so we are!

Best,

GARETH HARPER

Managing Director - PeacePlayers Northern Ireland



96%

were open to making new friends from different religious backgrounds, and all of them said they would like to stay in contact with the new friends they made outside of programmes.

100%

said they wanted to be involved in peace building activities with young people from different backgrounds in the future.

100%

got along well or very well with participants from a different religious background, and 70% of them attributed this to their experience with PeacePlayers!

IMPACT IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Continuing to See the Humanity in Each Other, Through Lockdowns and Wartime

A LETTER FROM MANAGING DIRECTOR NETA PATRICK

DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS,

2021 was a year full of ups and downs. It started with a nationwide lock-down, and continued with the fourth general elections held in Israel in the span of two years. Compounding what was already an unstable social and political atmosphere, a violent escalation between Israel and Hamas ignited mid-year. While Hamas rockets and Israeli bombardments surged, Arabs and Jews clashed on the streets more violently than they had in decades.

We, Palestinian and Israelis alike, found ourselves angry and saddened by the violent incidents that immersed the area, including several mixed Arab-Jewish cities, such as Lod, Jaffa and Haifa. We wondered where we could find the hope necessary to break the cycle of violence. As a team, we at PeacePlayers talked about what was happening, and we found hope in one another, and in our participants. We shared stories about conversations that were happening between Palestinian and Israeli participants, even during the peak of these violent events, and we were able to bring our kids together at our home court at the Jerusalem International YMCA – even before a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas had even been declared. These are the things that kept us going.

Not only were Palestinian and Israeli participants able to continue to see the humanity in each other during this crisis, but they were also able to see the faces behind the ceaseless news reports laying blame to one side or the other. The brave friendships that these young people have forged

on the basketball court helped us make it through the events of this past May.

Since then, our programming has continued to grow. This year, we reached 500 young people from more than 20 communities and are working non-stop to rebuild and strengthen the relationships between Jewish and Arab youth. We feel that our work is more important today than it ever was. We believe that we are presenting an alternative, that we are proving that it is possible to live together in peace. We believe in building personal and community relationships slowly and steadily, and that those relationships will continue to echo throughout the region in the years to come. In order for that vision to become a reality, we launched a crowdfunding campaign in October to support our activities. During this campaign, 300 people, 40% of whom came from our local communities, donated a total of \$197,000 to support our vision. Many people who had never donated opened their hearts and told us that, just like us, they believed in the importance of building a foundation of positive relationships between Jews and Arabs – that they, like us, believed that another way was possible. That another way was necessary.

With hope for a peaceful new year,

NETA PATRICK

Managing Director - PeacePlayers Middle East



75%

of participants are girls and young women.

90%

of field staff are program alumni.

90%

of participants have a positive self-esteem score.

80%

of participants express self-confidence in their ability to serve as leaders.

IMPACT IN CYPRUS

Reimagining the Meaning of Community in the Face of Border Closings and the Refugee Crisis

A LETTER FROM MANAGING DIRECTOR JALE CANLIBALIK

DEAR FRIENDS,

This past year has taught us a lot about the vital role that we, as PeacePlayers have in our community and in the lives of our youth. Our programming, like many others, had to shift and adapt to the crisis climate subsequent to the COVID-19. As an organization that relies on bringing Cypriots from the north and south sides of the island, it was especially difficult that border checkpoints closed to reduce the spread of the virus.

We, as a team, came up with creative ways to connect our youth from across the border should the checkpoints remain restrictive. Fortunately, they reopened after almost a year of severe restrictions, and we were able to host our first Summer Camp in two years in July 2021, which was a huge moment for us. After being kept apart for nearly a year, it was a special moment for us when all the kids came together like no time had passed. When they all came together, they hugged and they were calling each other “brother, sister,” and all these high fives and played music together. The fact that no time had passed for them, it was a powerful testament to the strength of their friendships to transcend the divide, and remain strong even while apart.

In addition to the changes our program underwent due to the pandemic, we have also undergone another major strategic shift. Over the last two years, we have come to understand that as an organization devoted to seeing people as people, there had been a group of people that

we ourselves had not been seeing fully - Cyprus' sizable refugee population. We made the decision to change this, to be more accessible and inclusive, to provide opportunities to those overlooked by the government and local communities. It has enhanced our program and scope, it has made us more aware of the importance of diversity and inclusion, shifting our ethos to becoming more equitable.

Working with new, diverse groups of people comes with challenges of language, cultural differences, and just being there for young people who have experienced their share of trauma. But embracing these challenges has been a means of building up our capacity, to continue to learn, evolve and grow – to reimagine what we can do as a team and organisation. We continue to remain the only inter-communal peace and sport organisation in Cyprus, and with this comes huge responsibility to continue to provide an empowering support network for our youth. It has been an interesting year and we look forward to the successes and challenges that this new programming year will bring us, and we look forward to welcoming both new and veteran participants and seeing them grow as a single team.

In peace and solidarity,

JALE CANLIBALIK

Managing Director - PeacePlayers Cyprus



PeacePlayers Cyprus participants are

5 TIMES

more likely to meet someone from the other community before the age of 12.

80%

of Leadership Development participants believe they can stand up for what they believe is right, even if their friends disagree.

In the last four years, PeacePlayers Cyprus has grown the percentage of coaches who are alumni by

70%.

IMPACT IN THE UNITED STATES

Continuing to See the Humanity in Each Other, Through Lockdowns and Wartime

A LETTER FROM ADAM JOHNSON, THE INCOMING
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PEACEPLAYERS UNITED STATES

DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS,

Our world is slowly moving out of the grips of the global pandemic after nearly two years of incredibly trying times. Despite the challenges, our PeacePlayers US team persisted and was able to bring programming and support in our five communities across the United States. From the relaunch of our Summer Camp in all five cities to the Community Conversations in Detroit, PeacePlayers US did not stop developing youth to continue making communities more united, just, and equitable.

As the incoming US Executive Director, I am ecstatic to join a team that has demonstrated for nearly a decade that we can make change in communities. My journey at PeacePlayers is starting after a decade as a public educator. I intend to use the lessons I learned during my tenure as an education leader to accelerate the pace of change in our US cities. My goal is to help develop leaders who exponentially impact their individual communities.

Although the pandemic was a challenge we faced collectively as a country, COVID-19 impacted our low-income and communities of color more severely. Whether it was inequitable access to healthcare, disproportionate joblessness, or the higher COVID-19 mortality rates, COVID-19 amplified the inequalities PeacePlayers and our Youth Leaders are laboring to eliminate.

As a father, community advocate, and mentor, I believe every child deserves access to two fundamental things: a safe and supportive community to help unleash their potential and access to opportunities to help them thrive. As a result of PeacePlayers' work in 2021, our communities have taken steps to further provide those two fundamental components to children.

As we reflect on 2021, there have been tangible results from our work that position us to help make our communities more equitable, and yet we know there is still more work to do. The work we have done and intend to do is only possible because of the continued commitment from supporters like you. The PeacePlayers US staff, coaches, and I are grateful for your partnership. We look forward to working shoulder-to-shoulder with you in 2022 to continue building more peaceful and equitable communities.

In partnership,

ADAM JOHNSON

Executive Director - PeacePlayers United States



90%

of Brooklyn Girls LDP participants were once in the Peace League (ages 8-12).

75%

of Chicago youth indicate new confidence in their leadership skills after their first year with PeacePlayers.

750+

youth reached across the US.

LIVING INTO OUR CULTURE OF GLOBAL COLLABORATION

PeacePlayers Core Value: Culture of Collaboration

"Collaboration has made us a better organization. Everyone brings unique and powerful ideas to the table, ideas that might not work in one site alone but if acted upon as a group, are powerful and transformative. The shift in our structure towards more collaboration has created a united, cohesive organization that truly feels like a global movement."



JAMIE ASANTE-ASARE

Global Support Team, Director of Operations



8+

hours a month where over half of peaceplayers staff are joining global team calls to connect, and share experiences and resources in all areas of organizational management.

PeacePlayers ensures global representation by having committees of staff from our international sites that work together across the network on various programs and projects. Below, members of our team from around the world share what it means to them to collaborate through these global committees.

Culture Committee

5 Members

The culture committee is focused on projects that help and ensure that we live into our core values: Culture of Collaboration, Inside-Out Transformation and Seeing People as People. This includes projects such as: On-boarding, Core Values Training, and Performance Management.

"There is a global consistency with our core values, everyone is working on similar goals/activities linking all of us together and creating a global movement. Yes, each site is doing their own thing based on their local community issues, but on the other hand everyone is working toward the same goal. We can contact our colleagues from the other sites to share materials on youth development, coaches trainings, policies etc., and we learn from each others experiences."

"The most enjoyable part of collaborating in the teams I am involved with is mainly just connecting with other staff, in other sites and simply getting to know them as people and not just PeacePlayers workers!"



DEBBIE BYRNE

Northern Ireland,
Operations Team Manager



STEPHANIE NICOLAS

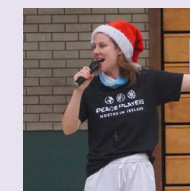
Cyprus, Internal Operations Manager

Coaches Training Committee

6 Members

This committee is responsible for dreaming up what global coaches training looks like at PeacePlayers. The training program that we developed will be utilized internally and by other sport for good organizations around the world that will partner with us through SPIN.

"I think being able to feed local knowledge into our global conversations and vice-versa was really beneficial, offering opportunities for informed, outward minded conversations. Having the chance to work with such a diverse group of people has also been a really great way to practice, live into and see the first-hand benefits of our core values."



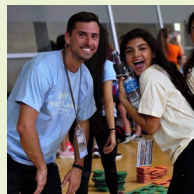
JOANNE FITZPATRICK

Northern Ireland, Core Programming and Curriculum Specialist

Friendship Games Committee 8 Members

The Friendship Games are an annual, global PeacePlayers initiative, founded by Ed and Penelope Peskowitz. Youth from across PeacePlayers sites participate in monthly events to build connections, friendships and learn about each other's cultures before participating together in the weeklong event of the Friendship Games. See page 34 for more information.

"Our Friendship Games Planning Team currently has over 50 years of PeacePlayers experience (and there are only 7 of us on it!) Getting to work with such dedicated individuals who have poured so much into this organization and to Sport for Development as a whole is rejuvenating and a constant learning experience. The passion we all have to ensure youth are at the center of the Friendship Games is palpable, and it makes me very excited to hopefully be together for the games next year!"



JOE SMITH

Global Support Team,
Director of Global Growth

Global Leadership Team

Site Directors of our International Sites, plus Directors from GST

PeacePlayers' collaborative work is anchored by the Global Leadership Team. This team, composed of Managing Directors from all five sites, PeacePlayers' Global Executive Director, and our Founder, lead strategic decision making for the organization – giving equal representation and voice to all sites in shaping our future.

"PeacePlayers United States is young in comparison to our other four PeacePlayers sites. Because of this we are learning so much from the more tenured sites and are able to avoid some of the growing pains and learning by failing that often comes from launching a new organization. We have been able to take those learnings from our partners around the world and adjust and implement in ways that are most beneficial and impactful to the young people in our five cities and beyond."



DAVID CASSE

Head of US Strategy and Operations

Monitoring and Evaluation Committee 5 Members

The Monitoring and Evaluation Committee is responsible for impact measurement and learning throughout the organization. Last year, the committee created a global log frame with cross-cutting measures that will enable us to measure impact consistently across the organization. In addition to organizational learning, the data is leveraged for marketing and communications to demonstrate our impact.

"It's cool to see that what might work with kids and coaches in one site, like Northern Ireland, can be taken and used in another site, like South Africa. Sometimes it works for us, sometimes it doesn't, but we can still use that learning to readjust and make it work for our participants. Our journeys to the goal may look slightly different for each site, but what is important is we're all moving towards that same goal of peace and equity."



SIFISO MTHEMBU

South Africa, Head of Programmes
and Board Member

Marketing and Communications Committee 5 Members

The Marketing and Communications Global Team works together to ensure that PeacePlayers' MarComms are globally inclusive and representative of all of our sites, and to lead collaborative efforts that highlight our impact, such as digital campaigns, impact reports, video clips and other types of collateral.

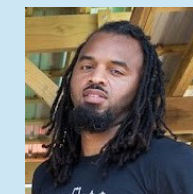
"It has been really incredible to meet people from other sites, not only knowing more about them but also getting first-hand accounts of what is happening at PeacePlayers sites around the globe. The team always has this positive energy, it truly feels like everyone is there to learn and to support one another."



TAHILA PIMENTEL

Middle East, Communications and
Development Associate

"In a lot of instances, I am learning as I go, and having such helpful and understanding teammates has been most beneficial for me personally. I really appreciate the extra time put in to make sure we all are on the same page and accommodating everyone on the Marketing and Communications team."



**LEBARON
"DOCK" LEATH**

United States, Project Coordinator

TOGETHER, MEMBERS FROM ACROSS OUR ORGANIZATION LAUNCHED THE **PLAY IT FORWARD PODCAST**

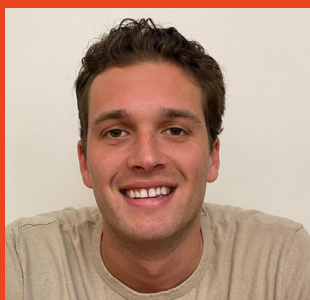
Taking advantage of PeacePlayers' global network and platform, the Play It Forward podcast uses the voices and stories of people working in their communities and networks to promote peace and equity. Through the lens of activism in sports, our podcast features conversations with youth leaders, community organizers, industry experts and those using sport as a tool for positive change around the world.

Hosts



CHINNY NWAGBO

Interim Director
PeacePlayers Baltimore



EMMETT SHEPARD

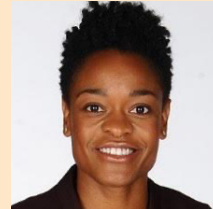
Play It Forward
Podcast Coordinator

Season 1 Notable Guests



Arn Tellem

Agents of Change



Alana Beard

Sweat Equity



Sophia Papamichalopoulos
Dream Chasers

Brian Levenson
Preparation Meets Performance

Len Elmore
Athlete Activism:
The Power of Your Authentic Voice

Courtney Charles
Play It Forward

Tim Rasmussen
Sound of Metal

Hana Mire
Nations Hope

Alisha Greenberg
Sport Philanthropy

Chad Ford
Dangerous Love

Season 2 Notable Guests



Amadou Gallo Fall

The Power of Basketball



Batouly Camara

WAKE Up World!



Fred Turner

Beyond Sport

Dan Grunfeld
By the Grace of the Game

Joanne Pasternack
I am more than an Athlete

Nasiphi Khafu
A PeacePlayers' Journey

Damien Mander
Akashinga

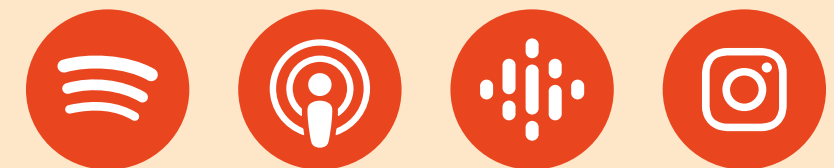
Don Showalter
Youth Development

Tim Rasmussen
Klaus

Trevor Ringland
The Light at the End of the Troubles

Karen Doubilet and Dr. Sarah Hillyer
Women at the Center of Sport, Peace and Society

Omar Brown
BIG Dreams in the BIG10



@Playitforwardpodcast

<https://peaceplayers.org/playitforwardpodcast/>

PEACEPLAYERS' GLOBAL INITIATIVES

The Friendship Games

The Friendship Games, PeacePlayers' first-ever Global Initiative, is an event bringing together participants from across our global movement for a week of basketball, leadership, and cultural exchange. The program, generously co-founded by Ed and Penelope Peskowitz in 2019, connects and mobilizes PeacePlayers youth leaders from our five international sites around the globe for a joint program of basketball, leadership training and cultural exchange.

In 2021

Youth from all over the world came together from August 2-6 for our regional and global summer Friendship Games - a week full of music, fun, learning, cultural exchange and competition. Youth in some of our sites, including the Middle East and Northern Ireland, were fortunate to be able to meet face-to-face for the games with other youth from their site, each in an overnight retreat setting. They connected with all of the other sites virtually for challenges in which they showcased their knowledge about the cultures and historical backgrounds of the other sites, and gained advocacy skills in addition to working on their basketball skills.



"One of our proudest achievements is the relationships that have been developed among our young people across our sites and I think the Friendship Games demonstrates not only our common humanity but that we are all part of something bigger than ourselves."

BRENDAN TUOHEY

Co-Founder and President of PeacePlayers



"It doesn't matter if we don't speak the same language. If we can communicate with each other, that's enough for us to be together."

OLWAMI ZUNGU

PeacePlayers South Africa

Looking Ahead to 2022

We are extremely hopeful that in the coming year we will finally be able to bring our youth together in the Middle East for the first in-person Friendship Games. We are keeping our finger on the pulse, constantly surveying changing pandemic circumstances, travel regulations and other COVID-related ordinances to ensure that we are doing everything in our capacity to make the in-person Friendship Games happen from July 29th to August 3rd, 2022.



The Sport and Peace Innovation Network

With a seed investment from the Laureus Sports for Good Foundation, PeacePlayers created a second global initiative, the Sport and Peace Innovation Network (SPIN) in order to share the methods and resources we have developed using sports to bridge divides and cultivate leaders in diverse cultures and contexts around the world.

An Update from Our SPIN Partner in Rwanda

PeacePlayers is entering the fourth year of our partnership with Ubumwe Sports Initiative (USI), in Rwanda. During that time, USI has scaled their impact exponentially, growing into new communities. Even amidst unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19, the youth, coaches, staff and support system at USI has shown resilience and grace as they consistently show up for each other and their communities. Here are some of the highlights from this past year:

USI **grew from engaging four communities to seven**, engaging with an additional 450 participants.

USI hosted their first in-person camp since 2019, which included over **800 participants and 40 coaches** across seven provinces in Rwanda.

USI established a long-term partnership with **FERWABA**, the governing basketball body in Rwanda.

USI established a partnership with **Friends Peace House**, a local organization focused on conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

CLAUDE NSHIMIYIMANA

Head of Programs. Claude has been instrumental in the development of USI's program since 2011.



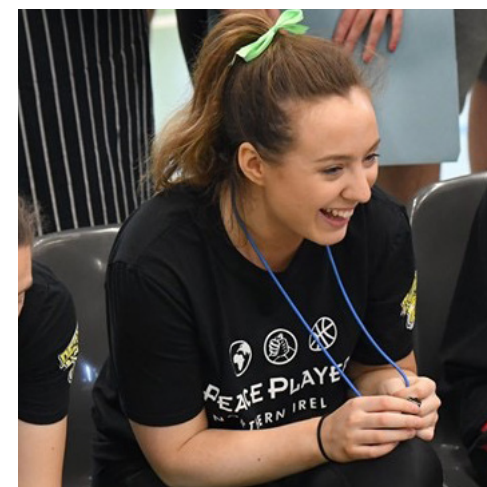
ANNOUNCING AN ALL NEW YOUTH-LED GLOBAL INITIATIVE, COMING SPRING 2022

As a result of sustained participation in long-term meaningful programming, PeacePlayers has a cadre of young leaders who are ready to make meaningful changes.

"I felt passionate about reconnecting with old alumni to continue to create positive change throughout each of our sites. It was the right time to get out of my comfort zone with a different role to what I'm used to within the organization. Overall, I cannot wait to team up with participants and coaches as we continue to educate and inspire the next generation of leaders across the globe."

SOPHIE KENNEDY

Alum of PeacePlayers Northern Ireland



"I have a strong belief that if you invest in people, you invest in the sustainability of the organization. This [new global initiative] is a platform to create and empower individuals, so I would love to be part of the creation of something that can affect a lot of positive change in and around our sites."

NOLUTHANDO MANDISA MSWELI

Alum of PeacePlayers South Africa



"PeacePlayers has changed my life, it taught me a lot. I just want to encourage other and younger Palestinian kids to aspire for a better change and I hope someday I'll be the person that I as a kid always searched for. And to basically walk them through their journey."

MALAK AYOUB

Alum of PeacePlayers Middle East



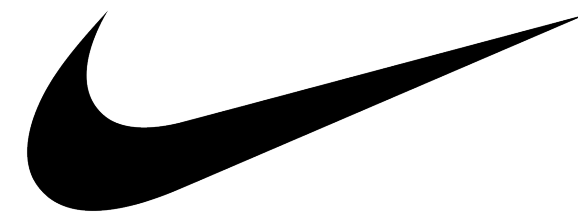
PEACEPLAYERS CYPRUS COLOR THE COURT PROJECT

Court 4 Caglayan Park

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AT



Content doesn't reflect USG/USAID's views



PEACEPLAYERS CYPRUS COLOR THE COURT PROJECT
Court 1 Yeni Bogazici



PEACEPLAYERS

**BUILDING A GLOBAL
YOUTH PEACE MOVEMENT
THROUGH SPORT**

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