Welcome!

LFFP has been keeping very busy this summer! We’ve just wrapped up 10 weeks of summer programming all around the DC-Maryland-Virginia area and closed out this year’s Peace Camp season. Inside this issue, you’ll find details on all that we’ve been up to this summer and be able to keep up-to-date with us as we share other announcements and reminders, as well as personal reflections from our staff and others in our community!
This summer, LFFP welcomed over 536 children, youth, and adults to Circle Up with us as we hosted 6 weeks of our Summer Peace Camps under the theme “Circle Up For Peace.”

At Peace Camp, our campers and counselors were invited to learn new tools and practices for developing and maintaining social-emotional wellbeing and solving conflicts nonviolently. Each day, campers explored these concepts by rotating through different interactive sessions, such as art, cooperative games, peace circles, and peace museum sessions. The campers were also encouraged to explore their own gifts and talents throughout the week, with the hope that every camper sees his or herself as a peacemaker. Special guest sessions were also incorporated each day, with each guest leading activities like yoga, origami mindfulness, movement and presentations about their own life experiences.

With your help, we were able to give 272 scholarships to campers who may otherwise have been able to Circle Up with us on this journey of peace this summer. We thank you for your continued commitment and support, and hope you stay involved with our fall programming!

Thank You to our TASSC Drivers!

Each year, LFFP invites Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC) families to send their children to Peace Camp so that they can have the much needed opportunity to experience, learn, and practice peace with us. While we provide the scholarships, safe, reliable transportation is still needed.

We’d like to take this opportunity to thank Bob Cooke and Helen Schietinger for organizing a team of drivers and making camp possible for our campers who come from TASSC families!

Bob Cooke is member of Pax Christi, a long time LFFP Peace Partner, and a member of many other peace organizations. Helen is a long-time volunteer with TASSC and says there she sees how much children of asylum seekers can benefit from Peace Camp.
Counselor Spotlight - Nora, Tessa, Sarah and Sabela

We are always so happy to see our campers return year after year, moving through the program and growing from campers, to counselors-in-training, to counselors. One of our long-time camper families, joined us once again this summer and even brought their cousin who was visiting from Spain! The sisters shared with us their Peace Camp experiences, now that they themselves have become CITs and counselors.

Even after having done Peace Camp for almost as long as I can remember, it still feels like a home to me. I always feel welcomed with open arms, and I love working with kids. It feels sometimes like if I can make one child smile every day, then that’s a part of making at least a little difference in today’s world. For my sister, Tessa, Peace Camp is also like family, and every year, with new campers as well as old, it feels to her like the community never really changes. For my other sister, Sarah, Peace Camp has always been a place where she can always make new friends and feel comfortable in being herself even in times of doubt.

- Nora, Counselor

GWU Freshman Day of Service

On August 24th, we hosted 48 students from George Washington University. Every year for the last 6 years, GWU has partnered with Little Friends For Peace for their Freshman Day of Service, and we had the most beautiful day this year! After getting to the know the students through a Peace Circle, we divided them into 3 groups.

Jerry Park led gardening in both the front and back of Perry School Community Services Center. GWU freshman got to plant flowers in our flower beds and helped weed the garden in the back parking lot. All of this work would be challenging for LFFP to do alone which is why it was the perfect opportunity for the college students to help!

Another group of students helped paint the walls outside our Peace Room in Perry School. MJ and Jerry Park opened the Peace Room in 1999 and the art work out in the hallway was definitely out of style! We are so happy that GWU sent their students with all the equipment they needed to prime the walls and we will have a local DC artist paint a mural with our students one day this fall!

One of the highlights from Freshman Day of Service was the Community Day held by the Perry School outside Tyler House. Tyler House is where many of the students we serve live and it is just down the street from Perry School. There was music, food, dancing, hula hoop contests, face painting, and jump roping. The college students were key in helping us interact and engage with the young children living in Tyler House. We look forward to hosting GW Freshman Day of Service next year!
Summer of New Beginnings: LFFP Builds New Partnerships

By: Milan Essex

This summer, LFFP had the exciting opportunity to begin building a partnership with Michigan Park Christian Church to enrich their Summer Camp program. Having already built solid connections with the adjacent Chance Academy, MJ and our Summer Peace Team entered this new opportunity with many ideas to help foster a peaceful environment within the church community.

At Michigan Park Christian Church, the LFFP summer staff teamed up with the church staff and youth counselors to help facilitate peace-oriented camp activities and rotations for 4 groups of campers. Though the camp was a program of its own, we were lucky enough to put on a 2-week mini-Peace Camp with an amazing team and group of campers! In typical Peace Camp fashion, campers went through their rotations of Art, Cooperative Games, Peace Museum, and Peace Circle. Strong bonds were fostered between campers and counselors, and new peace tools were introduced into the programs every day curriculum. Campers also had the opportunity to engage with volunteers from Encounter the Gospel, a Christian leadership initiative.

It was a very enriching experience for both LFFP and Michigan Park staff for it proved to be an eye-opening experience in how our tools for peace apply in our workplace. New thoughts and plans for partnership are already under way for next summer, so stay tuned for more updates and new beginnings in our mission to cultivate a worldwide community of Peace!
This fall, we say goodbye for now to our intern Brinda!

Personal Reflection by Brinda Gopal

Brinda is a graduate from The University of Sydney, Australia with a Bachelor’s of Science majoring in Psychology. As of this fall, she will be continuing her studies of psychology at VCU in Richmond, Virginia. In 2016 whilst studying abroad at George Washington University, Brinda began volunteering for LFFP’s afterschool program at the Perry School Community Service Center. Finding this experience eye-opening and rewarding, in January 2019 Brinda began a role as an administrative intern at LFFP after relocating to the US permanently. Through her 8 months at LFFP Brinda has assisted in facilitating a number of the programs as well as providing support to any ongoing projects.

"At the beginning of this year, I reached out to MJ moments after deciding to make a permanent move from Australia to the US. It was a stressful period of my life but I was excited to be reacquainted with an organization that allowed me to grow into a more compassionate and aware person. Over the past 8 months, I have participated in many of LFFP’s programs including the Perry School After School Program, the sessions at the Father Mckenna Center, the in-school Peace Classes and the Summer Peace Camps. In addition to this, I was exposed to the hard work and dedication that is put into creating programs which make a difference in the self-esteem and communication skills of the people we work with.

Before this year, I would have never predicted that I would be doing work such as helping create a Month of Peace in a local neighborhood (Mt Rainier), being a counsellor at a camp which immersed children in the language of non-violence and conflict resolution, or having frank and productive conversations about mental health with homeless men.

It has been a truly transforming 8 months and a perfect way to both transition from one country to another as well as transitioning to one stage of my life to another. I treasure the friendships and connections I’ve made along the way; I have honestly never met anyone like the people who work at and work with LFFP. I am sad to leave but am also excited to keep in touch!"
10th Annual Fall Fundraiser
October 4th, 2019 - 7pm
Church Hall - Georgetown
1070 Wisconsin Ave NW, WDC 20007

Join LFFP as we celebrate another inspiring summer of peace camps spreading joy, love, and simple conflict resolution practices to hundreds of youth throughout the DMV!

In place of our annual boat cruise, this year we will be having a Land Cruise and hosting our fall fundraiser at Church Hall in Georgetown. Join us for an evening of connecting, celebration, and fun, all in support of our mission of peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

Ticket sale proceeds will go towards funding our after-school program for low-income youth in DC.

To register, visit https://lffp10.eventbrite.com. For any other questions or donations, please contact Caity Dee at c.dee@lffp.org

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Volunteer Orientations
128 M Street NW, Room 235, Washington, D.C. 20001
September 12, 2019
September 17, 2019
6:00pm

Oasis Reflection Day
September 20, 2019
9:30am - 2:30pm
15400 Old Marshall Road
Acokeek, MD 20607

Join us for a day of letting go, listening and connecting as we circle up and enjoy nature.

Upcoming Workshops
September 21, 2019
Minfulness Tools For Parents
4:00pm
Sun & Moon Yoga, 3811 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22207

September 24, 2019
Live Peace, Teach Peace
6:30pm
128 M Street NW, Room 235, Washington, D.C. 20001

Upcoming Circles
September 30, 2019
Practicing Peace in Daily Life
7pm
128 M Street NW, Room 235, Washington, D.C. 20001

For more information, fees, or to register for these and other events, visit the upcoming events page on our website (www.lffp.org)
Welcome to the Newest Members of our Fall Team!

Grant
Program Intern
I am finishing up my senior year at Eastern Mennonite University, where I will receive a degree in Social Work. I was part of the Track and Field team, where I was a 4 time NCAA National qualifier. I am currently interning with LFFP this fall semester through the university's Washington Community Scholar’s Center program, and I am looking forward to everything! I am extremely passionate about working with youths and teens. My goal is to be a mentor and role model to young African American males through life skills and sports.

Is-hag, our new CSP fellow

"In 2003, when war broke out in Darfur, Sudan, I was 15 years of age. I saw my village burning, people dying and women and girls sexually assaulted. My family and I scattered. For a week, I searched for my family, moving from village to village and still they were nowhere to be found. However, hatred and anger started to grow within me and eventually, I decided to join the rebel training camp so that I could get revenge by killing those who had caused everything I had been through and witnessed. Those catastrophic events were strong forces driving my emotions and I became more and more aggressive and extremely violent in rebel camp. Sooner or later, my mother identified my location, picked me up and decided to send me to a safe place where my father lived. I am the eldest son in my family of 12 siblings and my parents forced me to leave Sudan for a safe environment hoping for a better future. Despite the war, they worked very hard to support me so I could complete my studies and I co-founded One-Youth-One-Heart-Initiative (OYOH).

My parents played an important role in shaping my life. Since then, I have carried with me the values of tolerance and peaceful co-existence, values that have not applied to a Sudanese child soldiers. I believe that children should prevent from violence and have the right to education and to go to school and change their lives. I realized that lack of education and awareness raising campaign to prevent use of and violations against children in Sudan is a huge challenge. I believe that peace education is therefore a way through which awareness can be raised and peace messages can be spread to prevent self and community distraction between youth from different ethnic groups and group social dispute in my home community."

Is-hag Salih hails from Darfur, Sudan. He is a youth community advocate. In 2015, Is-hag co-founded OneYouth OneHeart Initiative (OYOH), a youth led initiative that aims at bridging the gap between refugee youth and national youth. Is-hag worked for years in refugee settlement in Uganda. He has experience in fostering innovation and creating a safe environment for discussing conflict resolution and techniques through training for youth. In 2018, he received his Bachelor's Degree in Information Technology from the University of Cavendish Uganda.
Message From Our Director

Dear LFFP Friends,

LFFP is celebrating another successful summer of providing safe spaces for children and adults to Experience, Learn and Practice Peace. Thank you all for your support, help and partnership in helping us say yes to 377 children to come to Peace Camp!

There is great need for safe spaces where young and old can share thoughts and feelings, restore conflict without judgement, fear or violence.

LFFP is committed to bringing Peace Circles to schools, churches, communities and workplaces to help lower anxiety and un-peace and help create a culture of peace. Let us all continue to rewire, reset and renew and flip the script to: "Breaking News: Seeds of Peace are growing and Peace is on The Rise."

Looking forward to seeing you all at our upcoming Land Cruise this October 4th, from 7 to 10 pm. We invite you to join us and Circle Up, hop on the Peace Train, play some cooperative games and join the peace dancing and bring a friend to join the Peace Circle!

Peace on the journey,

MJ Park (with Jerry)
Executive Director

"Enjoy the journey and try to get better everyday. And don't lose the passion and the love for what you do." Nadia Comaneci

Live Peace, Teach Peace: Best Practices and Tools by MJ and Jerry Park

MJ and Jerry Park drew on 35 years of peace building experience to produce this comprehensive teaching toolbox. It includes instructions for making and using their signature Peace Train, themes and activities for a full week of Peace Camp, a treasury of 27 time tested win-win games, peace hero biographies, peace songs, inspirational posters, and a list of books and other resources for all ages.

Learn how to disarm youth, spouses, bullies, and self with good habit-forming techniques, win-win games, and more!

To order your copy, visit the "Books and Publications" section of our website! Also available in Spanish.

FALL 2019