



Little
FRIENDS For
PEACE

Quarterly Newsletter



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Welcome!

This fall, our work at Little Friends For Peace has looked different from the past, but even with our virtual format and limited in-person activities, we have continued to spread peace to the Washington, D.C. community and beyond.

Inside this issue, you'll find details on all that we've been up to this season, including program highlights and reflections, along with other announcements and reminders of upcoming programs and events!

Stay in Touch!

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Fall Programming Highlights!

Virtual Peace Programs



Given the current circumstances, LFFP has transformed programming to make it virtual and limited in-person so that people are able to be a part of our wide variety of offerings from the comfort and safety of their own home or outside wearing masks. Despite the circumstances, this Fall, we have been able to continue with our Peace Circles, academic enrichment sessions and our variety of event offerings, such as the Yoga and Peace Workshops, The International Peace Summit and our Halloween Community Builder.

In a time in which we all need each other more than ever, the ability to see everyone, even virtually through Zoom, has given all of us in the LFFP community a sense of unity and community. Although we miss seeing everyone in-person, we are grateful to continue our work virtually, and for the dynamic energy, empathy and compassion that fills our Peace Circles. It is times like these that highlight the power of community, unity and connection. And so, together, we look forward to continue building a community, world and future filled of peace, love, compassion and empathy.

Balancing your Wellness Wheel with Tools of Peace and Yoga

This fall, we have had the opportunity to put together a 4 week series on Peace and Yoga, co-led by our intern Kelly Stickney. Each session covered one peace tool that we can implement into our daily lives that will help us to find a sense of peace and calm.

During these sessions, we had the opportunity to focus on the importance of mindfulness in challenging times and on the mind, body and spirit connection on our journey as peacemakers.

We are grateful for the opportunity to strengthen our mind-body connection and cultivate peace together through yoga.



Highlights from the Alexandria Soccer Association

A highlight of this Fall has been our work with the Alexandria Soccer Association. The ASA School+ is a 9 week, all-outdoor, weekday activity and education experience that aligns with public and private school's virtual learning programs. LFFP's role is to enhance social-emotional learning for students throughout their school day. The ASA is next to the students every step of the way - sharing joys and challenges in this new virtual environment! As counselors, they help students navigate technology issues, assist with schoolwork, and equip students with the tools they need to practice healthy conflict resolution and pursue a life of mindfulness. School+ has met the needs of busy parents amidst COVID and has ensured that students are able to socialize with other students, grow as individuals, and find community.



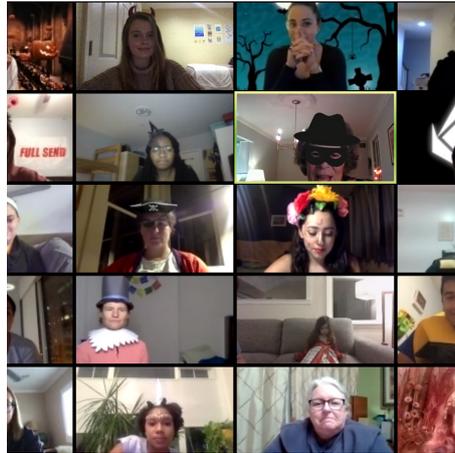
Gonzaga Student Reflection By Eamon Passey

In a world that is characterized by violence, hate, and division, it can seem as though peace will never be attained. How does it stop? When Ms. MJ Park said that “violence ends where love begins,” I was taken aback. In Ethics last year, we learned all about the methods of nonviolence and the teachings of peacemakers like Martin Luther King Jr., which emphasized love and peace; however, although I had taken those lessons to heart, I had never heard someone put it so succinctly and so powerfully. I realized that our world actually shouldn’t be characterized by violence, hate, and division. It should be characterized as a world that is lacking in love.

Throughout Ms. MJ Park’s discussion, she talked about how all of her students, even the ones who were initially “peacebreakers,” really were amazing, creative, and kind kids. It was more so just that they lacked a support system. In fact, Ms. Park told us the story about one of her students who ended up in prison. It was not because he refused to listen to what he learned from Ms. Park, but it was because his mom was a drug dealer and he had no one to lean on. “Violence ends where love begins.” We all need to be that person that someone can lean on, loving everyone around us no matter what they did in the past, because there is a little good in everyone. Once we recognize that, violence and hate will end.

Highlights from our Halloween Community Builder

As a community, we came together virtually to celebrate Halloween. During this event, we dressed up in costumes and focused on strengthening our community through yoga, a Peace Circle, and a Halloween-themed dance party at the end of the night. We even had the opportunity to listen to talented members of our community as they performed virtually. Throughout the event, there was a sense of energy and unity, which filled our buckets with joy and happiness. We look forward to more community builders in the future!



Reflection from Donna Cameron Implementing Peace in your Profession

What a year 2020 has been! Who knew?!

Family challenges early in the year were already in play: then came March 11--the day our country shut down. We had no idea how long; what would change; who we would lose to Covid-19; when [if ever] things would return to normal.

Having known MJ and Jerry for over 20 years, I knew for sure that it would be a blessing to attend their virtual Peace Circles. I signed up for my very first one on Monday, March 23. Check-ins, themes, and watching strangers become virtual comrades followed. When the country experienced our second pandemic highlighting centuries of racial mayhem, Peace Circles continued to provide inspiration and tools for making peace practical.

The 4-week series Practicing Peace When Working for Racial Justice gave me an idea: What would happen if I extended my own experience with Peace Circles to under-represented and disadvantaged students interested in careers in medicine at my university setting? Thanks to the leadership, the idea grew into an 8-session, Peace-Circle look-alike! Now that we are nearing the end of those sessions, students report experiencing some of the same benefits I enjoyed. From the Peace Circles I suppose I finally learned "What is mine to do" and God helped me do it.

Thank you, MJ, Jerry and Caity!

Volunteering with Little Friends for Peace across the Globe

Our programs would not be possible without the dedication and spirit of our volunteers! This issue's volunteer spotlight features Camille, Netra, Jose, Leena and Michelle. We are so lucky to have volunteers working with us virtually from the United States and abroad.

"My name is Camille and I am a junior at The George Washington University majoring in International Affairs. I am on the Executive Board for the Black Girl Mentorship Program and Young Black Professionals in International Affairs.

This is my first semester volunteering with Little Friends for Peace, but so far, I love it! I have gotten to tutor so many amazing members of our Peace Club on Tuesday and Wednesday. Through LFFP, I have met some of the funniest, most creative, and smartest kids. They are so committed to LFFP's message of peace. All my fellow volunteers have been such an inspiration, and I have had so much fun getting to know you all!"



"My name is Netra Ranganathan and I am a freshman at The George Washington University this year. I am majoring in Public Health on the pre-med track. I am from Houston, TX but have been raised in Dubai, UAE for almost all of my life.

I was introduced to LFFP through one of my community service inclusive classes this semester. I found myself really drawn to the message behind LFFP and what it stood for. Rather than just completing hours of service for the class, I hope to gain more out of my experience with LFFP and not only help others through the process, but also grow as a person myself and learn more about myself through helping others. I am extremely excited to go through this journey!"



"My name is Jose Rodriguez, and I am a freshman at George Washington University. I am from Puerto Rico and I am currently living here given that everything is virtual. I learned about LFFP through my university writing course. As part of the course, I am working as a volunteer with the organization.

I initially heard MJ talking about LFFP during a Zoom panel and all of the volunteering options that it offers. I was very interested in attending the Peace Circles, and I now attend them, as well as the tutoring sessions. I really like the mission of LFFP, building peace in communities, and what it stands for and how they serve. I look forward to continuing to volunteer this semester."



"My name is Leena Zitoun and I am a freshman at GW majoring in Biological Anthropology with a French minor on a pre-med track. I am ethnically Tunisian but was born in Roscoe, Illinois and I lived there for twelve years before moving to Singapore, where I have been living for the past six years. I genuinely feel a sense of home in all of these places and the exposure to these vastly different cultures has shaped me significantly.

After hearing MJ speak about the variety of work that LFFP does and why it was created at a virtual service event, I fell in love with it. I was warmly welcomed by Grayson who was extremely helpful in answering any of my questions and whose passion for LFFP was contagious. Since the nature of living in Singapore, where the time difference with the U.S. is 13 hours, and doing everything virtually can easily be isolating, the community aspect of LFFP attracted me to it even more. I know that the work LFFP does is essential, especially in these current times where everyone's inner peace is vulnerable. I am so excited to continue to work with LFFP!"

Caring, Connecting and Learning from Each Other Internationally

Personal Reflection by Michelle Macias

Michelle, a current volunteer with Little Friends for Peace, is a specialist in International Relations, Human Rights and Humanitarian Work. Her life mission is to advocate for sustainable development goals, youth and women's empowerment, human rights, gender equality, and building and partnering meaningful relationships. Michelle is currently the Goodwill Global Ambassador for Mexico and has been working on awareness campaigns in favor of vulnerable groups, inclusive peace education, gender equity, and improvement of people's quality of life.

"For me, LFFP has meant a transformative adventure both on a person level and within my relationships with myself and others. I have been fortunate to bring LFFP'S Peace Circles and peace practices to my work, community, and friends, and to create more joyful, peaceful, transparent, cooperative, and united communities through the mission of growing together in the path of living and teaching peace at a core level.

LFFP has created a safe space that has made me experience the quarantine in a different way. Despite being in a virtual platform, I have been able to make new friends and participate in different projects that have made an impact at a grassroots level in the different communities around the world by caring, connecting and learning from each other, addressing mental health and self-care, peace culture education, gender equality, inclusion and caring for our planet. **In LFFP I was also empowered to bring peace to my city of Celaya, Mexico, one of the most conflicted zones, by gathering my community to train in peace practices, how to bring true change, and how to address conflict as an opportunity.**

It has also meant a way to bond with the Man Up Campaign and the persons I work with. We have been able to get to know each other better and explore creative ways to achieve our goals. With this, a great alliance has been born between Little Friends For Peace and Man Up Campaign to bring inclusion, peace, and gender equality to different projects, programs, and platforms in order to spread the word and make peace happen."



MATCHING CAMPAIGN

NOVEMBER 24th- DECEMBER 1st

Our Board and good friends have agreed to match every dollar up to **\$30,000** that is donated between November 24th and December 1st.

We are so grateful for our LFFP community and to have been able to continue our work in a virtual setting. 470 people have taken part in 55 circles, which are continuing to be held every week.

In order to continue this work that we are doing virtually and the in-person programming that we hope to return to in the near future, we need support from everyone in our LFFP community.

Please help us in spreading the word to your friends and family of the work we do! We are so appreciative of everyone's support.

Campaign Link: <http://cfp-dc.org/YcfH>

Have any questions? Please reach out to Caity at c.dee@lffp.org

What can your gift fuel?

\$75

covers the cost of one hour of mentoring students at the Perry School.

\$150

covers the cost of half hour Virtual Peace Circle for DCPS students.

\$250

covers the cost of one Virtual Peace Circle for adults at the Arlington Jail.

\$300

covers the cost of one Virtual Training in Conflict Resolution and Nonviolence Practices.

\$600

covers the cost of a four week Virtual Peace Course for Parents.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Practicing Peace in Daily Life

Wednesdays- 11/18, 12/2, 12/16

7:30 pm-8:30 pm

Peace Circle for High School and College Students

Tuesdays from 6 pm-7 pm

Continues until the end of the year

International Peace Summit

Thursday, November 13th,

7:00 pm-8:15 pm

All programs take place on Zoom

Email us at littlefriendsforpeace@lffp.org to sign up!

LFFP Matching Campaign

November 24th-December 1st



For more information, fees, or to register for these and other events, visit the upcoming events page on our website (www.lffp.org)

Message From Our Director

Dear LFFP Friends,

Every day I find myself saying the quote by Dan Forester: "I am too inspired to be tired." Despite the many challenges in our world, LFFP has been gifted with over 30 volunteers who are helping teach peace in virtual intergenerational circles this fall. I find the circles powerful as they provide a safe place for people to become self-aware of their emotions, feel connected to others, and learn tools to practice peace.

Post-election, I hope we can all circle up and cultivate relationships built on respect, curiosity and listening to one another's stories. During these challenging weeks and beyond, we need the tools to stay balanced and to listen with interest to the stories of people from all persuasions.

Pete Seeger says: "The patchwork quilt is really a symbol of the world which must come: one new design made out of many old designs. We will stitch this world together.... don't give up."

Peace,
MJ

MJ Park (with Jerry)
Executive Director



"I'm too inspired to be tired."

- Dan Forester

"We will stitch this world together... don't give up."

- Pete Seeger

Give a Gift of Peace this Holiday Season!

Looking for unique gift ideas for you and your loved ones this holiday season?

Visit our website to explore our Peace Shop, where you'll find creative ways to spread a little bit of peace to your coworkers, family, and friends! We have Peace tool cards, bookmarks, apparel, and other special gift ideas available, as well as our signature Live Peace, Teach Peace manual.

Visit www.lffp.org/store.html today to find the perfect gift!

