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OVERVIEW OF PEACEJAM FOUNDATION

PEACEJAM MISSION

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PeaceJam Overview

The mission of the PeaceJam Foundation is to create a new generation of young leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities and the world through the inspiration of Nobel Peace Laureates. PeaceJam is a non-profit organization with its international headquarters located in Arvada, Colorado. Since its inception in 1996, almost 500,000 youth have participated in the PeaceJam program, engaging in over 310,000 service projects in their communities. PeaceJam has ten U.S. affiliate offices and international offices and international affiliate's offices in South Africa, Costa Rica, India, Guatemala, Argentina, Mexico, United Kingdom, and Kenya with plans to expand to Canada and East Timor. Members of the PeaceJam Foundation include Archbishop Desmond Tutu, The Dalai Lama, Rigoberta Menchú Tum, President Oscar Arias, Aung san Suu Kyi, Jody Williams, Sir Joseph Rotblat, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, José Ramos-Horta, Máiread Corrigan Maguire, Betty Williams, and Shirin Ebadi.

Other PeaceJam Programs

PeaceJam Juniors: The PeaceJam Juniors Program is a standards-based curriculum for ages 5-11 that explores the childhood stories of 12 Nobel Peace Laureates and the character traits they embody. Students study the personal experiences of these amazing world leaders and then engage in service-learning projects that address needs in their local community. As a result, students gain academic and social skills including leadership, conflict resolution, problem solving, and character development.

PeaceJam Leaders: The PeaceJam Leaders Program is a new standards-based curriculum for young people between the ages of 11 and 14. It explores the adolescent stories of 12 Nobel Peace Laureates and the strategies they used to overcome problems in their lives and their communities. Through this age-appropriate curriculum, youth explore their own identities and reexamine the choices they make including their role models and the peer groups to which they belong. Youth also develop leadership and problem-solving skills while engaging in service-learning activities that address local needs.

PeaceJam Juvenile Justice: The PeaceJam Juvenile Justice Program is designed for incarcerated youth and youth recently released from the juvenile justice system. This curriculum addresses issues of gangs, drugs and alcohol, domestic violence, property theft and other risky behaviors. Participants develop skills in the areas of civic responsibility, reconciliation and leadership while being challenged to rewrite their life stories, reevaluate their role models and learn the power of peace.

PeaceJam Scholars: The PeaceJam Scholars Program is a college-level program where college students serve as mentors for participants at PeaceJam Youth Conferences, support local PeaceJam groups, and study international issues connected to the work of the Nobel Peace Laureates with opportunities to engage in service and research that extends that work into the community.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Evaluation data indicate that school engagement, community engagement, attitudes toward peace and non-violence, and personal and social outcomes such as a sense of life purpose and respecting the views others increased as a result of participating in PeaceJam.

COMPONENTS OF THE PEACEJAM AMBASSADORS PROGRAM: BUILDING THE FUTURE OF PEACE TODAY!

The PeaceJam Ambassadors Program centers on the lives and work of 12 Nobel Peace Prize Laureates introducing the concepts of peace, root causes of violence, and oppression through a critical thinking and case study based curriculum. The program aligns with best practices in the field of service-learning, leadership development of critical thinking skills.

STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

PeaceJam Ambassadors Program is a standards-based curriculum designed for youth ages 14-19. Each lesson is aligned to National Learning Standards. Each PeaceJam Affiliate is working to align the curriculum to their respective state's standards. We encourage you to align the curriculum to your district standards or grade level expectations as part of the planning process. For a listing of U.S. and International PeaceJam Affiliates, visit www.peacejam.org.

SERVICE LEARNING-CONNECTIONS

Service-Learning is a teaching method that combines academic learning with community service. Students of all ages assess the needs of their community (school, neighborhood, or world) and design and carryout service projects that address those needs. Teachers use service to teach new concepts and skills or to provide an authentic context for applying newly learned knowledge. Youth are encouraged through journaling and discussion to develop their own service-learning activities. See Chapter Sixteen for additional Service-Learning resources. In 2006, the Nobel Peace Laureates launched the Global Call to Action with the youth of the world which guides the service-learning activities in this curriculum.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The PeaceJam Ambassadors Program is also aligned with leadership skills including communication, goal setting, problem-solving, community engagement, and critical thinking.

We encourage you to adapt the PeaceJam Ambassadors Curriculum to fit with your education goals, learner outcomes, and school and district priorities. Please contact us with questions and comments

STRUCTURE OF PROGRAM

PeaceJam Ambassadors curriculum is designed for youth between the ages of 14 and 19 and can be implemented either as a part of an academic or elective class, as an after-school program or in and out-of-school community or faith based organization. All that is needed is an adult facilitator - - a teacher, facilitator, parent, nonprofit worker, etc. – who will implement the program with youth.

PeaceJam Ambassadors has three components:

Education

Our general approach in this curriculum is to stimulate students' critical thinking skills and research abilities and to promote reflection. We have a desire to give thoughtful, idealistic youth the opportunity to test their ideas with each other and with a recognized world expert, a Nobel Peace Laureate.

Because teachers and youth workers will be applying this curriculum in many different contexts, we have made it as flexible as possible. We have presented a series of activities for each core area. Sponsors should cover each of the chapters in this curriculum, but may choose different activities in doing so.

Inspiration

Students participate in a case study of a Nobel Peace Laureate's life and work. Case Study is the preferred method of teaching in many law and business schools because it organizes what a student is to learn into a real-life framework that requires real decision-making. Youth will have opportunities throughout the program to study not only how the Laureate won the Nobel Peace Prize, but also to consider how they might have acted in some of the same situations the Laureate faced. What were the skills, knowledge, and personal attributes that allowed the Laureates to do what they did?

PeaceJam has been conceived as an apprenticeship to bring together a Nobel Peace Prize winner to help coach and consult with high-school aged youth. Since a central goal is to help foster a new generation of potential peacemakers and Nobel Peace Prize winners, the metaphor of apprenticeship makes sense. The apprenticeship puts youth in the position of learning the skills, attitudes, and knowledge of a master peacemaker.

Action

After having studied the life and work of the Laureate, students are given a chance to discuss, debate, and educate others about the current situation and status of the Laureate's work. We want to put students in the authentic position of being peacemakers-thinking like them and proposing solutions to actual problems.

Students will generate ideas for their own projects within the framework of the Global Call to Action. What differentiates many youth programs from one another is the role and responsibilities that youth have. If PeaceJam were only a program to learn about the Laureate, the youth role could be very interesting but still passive. Instead, PeaceJam offers young people a very real opportunity to make a difference in their own school, neighborhood, community and the world.