



HANDS OF PEACE

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



"People don't get along because they fear each other. People fear each other because they don't know each other. They don't know each other because they have not properly communicated with each other."

-Martin Luther King, Jr.



Dear Friends,

I am thrilled to share with you this report chronicling a very special year for Hands of Peace, the pinnacle of which was the launch of our second Summer Program site in San Diego. Our teens and adult volunteers have continued to inspire hope— person by person, and moment by moment. We see this hope in the beautiful peace mural created by our Chicago participants, in the candlelight vigil to victims of violence led by our Israeli and Palestinian alumni, in our teens' dynamic participation in Alumni Club overnight seminars, and in our American volunteers' vibrant discussions of politics, inclusivity, and global engagement. Yet 2014 was also a year of heartbreaking circumstances: Israelis and Palestinians were literally at war as our teenagers boarded planes to the United States, and our Middle East teens went home to an ever-more-entrenched reality.

One story encapsulates the humanitarian values and quiet leadership that HOP instills in our teens amid this ongoing tragedy. Shortly after our Summer Programs began, Israeli ground troops entered Gaza— a signal that the war was escalating and massive casualties were imminent. The news reverberated into our San Diego lunchroom: participants clutched their phones to check for updates and divided into national groups, whispering in their mother tongues. Many worried about loved ones in harm's way, questioned their involvement in a dialogue program, or felt guilty for having fun while others suffered back home.

HOP staff convened the group and called for a moment of silence to recognize all those who were suffering and dying. Many began to cry. Spontaneously, an Israeli and a Palestinian participant stood up and bowed their heads. Another participant did the same. Within seconds, the whole room— participants, staff, and host families— rose without words. We stood together in heavy silence, collectively mourning the unfolding tragedy yet honoring the rarity and specialness of the bond that had developed among our group. We knew that we as individuals were powerless to stop the bloodshed. But we also knew that our example of peace on a small scale demonstrated the possibility of peace on a broad scale.

Thank you for making these moments possible, and for helping to empower Israelis, Palestinians, and Americans to re-think their assumptions, lead with compassion, and rise above fear and distrust that preclude genuine understanding. Together we are modeling what coexistence looks like, and I hope we can count on your continued support.

Salaam, Shalom, Peace,

Ashley Bates
Executive Director



INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING ONESELF, UNDERSTANDING THE OTHER

Below is a poem written by Wael Omar, a 17-year-old Muslim Palestinian who met Israeli civilians for the first time during the Hands of Peace (HOP) Summer Program. His poem—as well as countless essays and speeches produced by HOP participants over the years— shows the complicated feelings and dark histories that our teens are struggling to confront. Before committing to work for peace, they must grapple with these tough issues in a safe, open-hearted dialogue environment:

I am a Palestinian who is denied the right to go home
I am an Israeli who is finally home
I am a Palestinian who is in an identity crisis
I am a Jew who had an identity crisis
Lost my land, got kicked out of my house and not able to go back
My grandfathers were kicked out, but I finally made it and went back
I lost my son by a Zionist who took my land
I lost my grandfather just because he was a Jew
Once upon a time there was green in Palestine, but it all turned to fire bombs and red sand
Now we are here, Israel will go back green
Blood that we see is the reason for our tears
Joy and happiness of us being back here is the reason for all those tears
I am the battle cry of freedom
I am the battle that fights terrorism
I am the battle cry of liberty
I am the battle cry of survival
Our children are full of fear

Our children are full of fear
Do not deprive me from my children's smile
Do not deprive me from my children's smile
Keep your tanks, helicopters and soldiers away
Keep your Qasam rockets and suicide bombers away
from my children's school
from downtown
Many years we have spent away from home in refugee camps
Many years we have spent in the ghettos of Nazi Europe
in Lebanon, in Syria, in Jordan, in the West Bank
in Germany, in Poland, in Lithuania, in Ukraine
treated like animals
treated like animals
Everywhere we go we would hear the same:
Everywhere we go we would hear the same:
Go for him!
Go for him!
He is Palestinian!
He is a Jew!

Courageous teenagers like Wael are able to write poems like this because they have been challenged to see the conflict from the perspective of "the other," because they have had their own suffering recognized, and because they feel empowered to help create a better future. HOP provides this safe space and growth opportunity for 70 teenagers every summer and for hundreds of alumni and adults throughout the year.



"For two years, Hands of Peace has been a place where I am surrounded by people who I truly love, and who truly love me. That is one of the biggest gifts I have in my life."
-Tamar, Jewish-Israeli participant



MISSION

Hands of Peace is an interfaith organization developing peace-building and leadership skills in Palestinian, Israeli, and American teenagers through the power of dialogue and personal relationships.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Our organization incorporates a Summer Program, a Leadership Program for second year participants, and a year-round Follow-Up Program for Middle Eastern and American alumni. The annual Summer Program lasts 18 days and is conducted in Glenview, IL and Carlsbad, CA. Intensive daily dialogues about the conflict are led by professional facilitators. The teens also learn about the different religions represented, and participate in educational and social activities. Visiting participants from Israel and the West Bank of Palestine are hosted by generous local families.



OUR IMPACT & ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2014

- All Summer Program participants expanded their worldviews, deepened their understanding of “the other,” and questioned their stereotypes through **35 hours of professionally facilitated** dialogue focused on participants’ personal experiences in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Hands of Peace successfully launched our **second Summer Program site in San Diego**, with full funding from local individuals, foundations, and social media initiatives. We inspired and educated over 300 guests at our sold-out Farewell Banquet.
- Our **Chicago Summer Program** had another extremely successful year and also attracted a sold-out Farewell Banquet audience of 300 guests.
- **2014 Summer Program highlights** included hiking adventures, a portraiture workshop, team-building ropes courses, dialogue with Mexican students at the U.S.-Mexico border, dialogue with students from inner-city American neighborhoods, and much more!
- HOP was recognized by *Slingshot: A Resource Guide to Jewish Innovation* as **one of the 21 “most inspiring and innovative organizations”** serving the Midwest Jewish community.
- **HOP grew our social media presence:** We gained 1,200 new Facebook followers, featured weekly Facebook posts, and won a \$10,000 grant from KIND Snacks for the non-profit with the most Facebook votes.
- Thousands learned about HOP teenagers’ perspectives and stories through **media coverage in an assortment of print and video outlets**—including the *Associated Press*, *Chicago Tribune*, *San Diego Union Tribune*, WGN television, KPBS television, *Rotary International*, and *Ha’aretz*.
- Sliding scale tuition meant that **no one was (or is ever) turned away for inability to pay**. No participant paid more than \$900 (including all airfare and expenses), and 17 participants paid \$500 or less.
- Summer Program participants once again created and directed their own film shorts about the dialogue and coexistence process. These **powerful films** can be viewed at www.hands-of-peace.org/video-clips.
- **Generous in-kind donations** of facilities, meals, snacks, and supplies deepened our community connections. Our **host families** in Chicago and San Diego made the biggest in-kind gift of all: opening their homes and hearts to our Middle East teenagers and staff.
- **Hundreds of individuals and community organizations**—including videographers, artists, yoga instructors, mosques, synagogues, churches, Zumba instructors, hula hoop dancers, musicians, chefs and actors—donated their unique talents and services.
- Our robust Middle East Alumni Club Program included **four overnight seminars in Israel** benefitting Israelis and Palestinians from seven different years of Hands of Peace.
- **Highlights of these Middle East Alumni Club seminars** included a trip to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, two alumni-led community service projects, tours of a settlement and a Palestinian refugee camp, Q&As with diverse speakers, and continued dialogue about alumni’s personal experiences and perspectives.
- **Highlights of American Alumni Club activities** included two community service projects, 10 dialogue meetings, and alumni presentations at more than two dozen community events.
- Supporters in Chicago, San Diego, and Israel participated in our various **Adult Education Program** offerings—including five film dialogue nights and eleven speaking events.
- Hands of Peace supporters from the United States took part in our **dual narrative tour of Israel and Palestine**.
- Our pre and post-program **evaluative surveys** once again found that participants developed an increased willingness to **think critically** about the role of their own “side,” along with an increased **ability to question** stereotypes, current events as portrayed by the media, and the history they were taught in school and through their communities.
- **More than 450 teenagers** have benefited from the rare HOP Summer Program experience since 2002. Our graduates continue to undertake courageous peace work in their home communities (see our *Alumni Magazine* for some of their stories!).



GOALS OF DIALOGUE SESSIONS

- Help participants develop skills to effectively communicate with people of diverse backgrounds and opinions.
- Equip participants with knowledge and skills that enable them to think critically about the master narrative that has shaped their thinking about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Help the participants accept that they can be both pro-Israel/Palestine and pro-peace.
- Instill in participants a commitment to get involved in organized peace-building activities and/or service projects that bring together people from different national, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds.



TESTIMONIALS

"Hands of Peace opened my eyes (and my heart) to a conflict that I didn't really know that much about, and taught me that no matter what side you believe in, we have to all work together to create a chance for peace."
-Seth, American participant

"We have been blessed to be part of HOP for so many years. It has been so rewarding to see the growth in all of the teens as well as the growth of the host families and many volunteers (ourselves included!)."
-Gail and Jim, host parents

"Hands of Peace has opened my mind to understand that the truth has several faces."
-Fadwa, Palestinian participant

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTERS

The following organizations provided financial or in-kind support in 2014:

Am Shalom

Anonymous foundations

Bahai Temple

Ben & Jerry's

Border Angels

Café Lucci

Carlsbad Musallah

Christ Presbyterian Church of Carlsbad

Clark Family Foundation

Community Foundation of Louisville

Congregation Solel of Highland Park

Congregational Church of Jefferson Park

Congregational UCC

Deerfield First Presbyterian Church

Encinitas Coastal Rotary Club

Evanston Blue Print Company

First Giving Frontstream Co.

First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette

Gelber Family Foundation

Glenview Community Church

Harley-Davidson Financial Services

Illinois Tool Works

Islamic Foundation North

JAMS Foundation

Jersey Mike's Subs of Carlsbad

Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego

Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation

J-Serve

Kids for Peace

KIND Snacks, LLC

Kiwanis Club of Glenview

Kraft Matching Gifts Program

La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Club

LaSalle Street Church

Luna Grill of Bressi Ranch

Mondelez International Foundation

Moonlight Cultural Foundation

Mystic Grill of La Mesa

Nordson Corporation Foundation

Oakton Community College

Old Globe Theater

On the House Foundation

Optimist Club of Deerfield

Pacific Ridge School of Carlsbad

Palomar Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Peet's Coffee of Bressi Ranch

Perry Family Fund

Pfizer Foundation

Phoebe R and John D Lewis Foundation

Pick Up Stix of Carlsbad

Pizza Port of Bressi Ranch

Price Family Foundation

Pure Burger of Bressi Ranch

Rotary Club of Glenview-Sunrise

Roti Restaurant

Rubios of Bressi Ranch

San Diego Foundation

San Diego Zoo and Safari Park

Skoll Global Threats Fund

Soroptimist International of Fallbrook

Souplantation of Bressi Ranch

Sunshine Charitable Foundation

Tariq Khamisa Foundation

Temple Solel of Cardiff

Tin Leaf of Bressi Ranch

United Church of Christ / Global Ministries

Watts Atelier of the Arts

Weil Family Foundation

Wines for Humanity

Woman's Club of Carlsbad

WorldLink Program in USD's Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice

World We Want Foundation

Xtreme Fun of San Diego





FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

REVENUE IN 2014 FISCAL YEAR: \$569,262

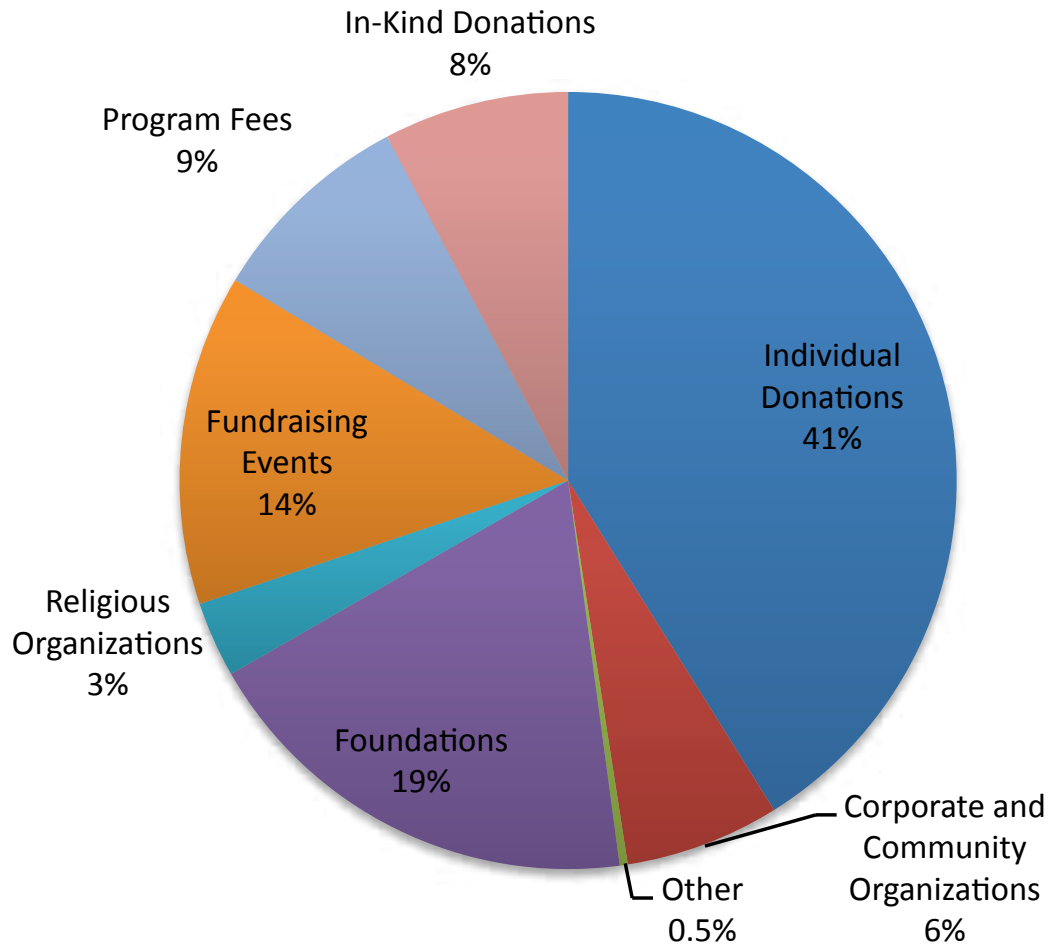
Individual Donations	\$234,013
Foundations	\$107,200
Fundraising Events	\$78,374
Program Fees	\$49,350
In-Kind Donations	\$43,879
Corporate and Community Organizations	\$36,624
Religious Organizations	\$17,918
Other	\$1,904

EXPENSES IN 2014 FISCAL YEAR: \$465,266

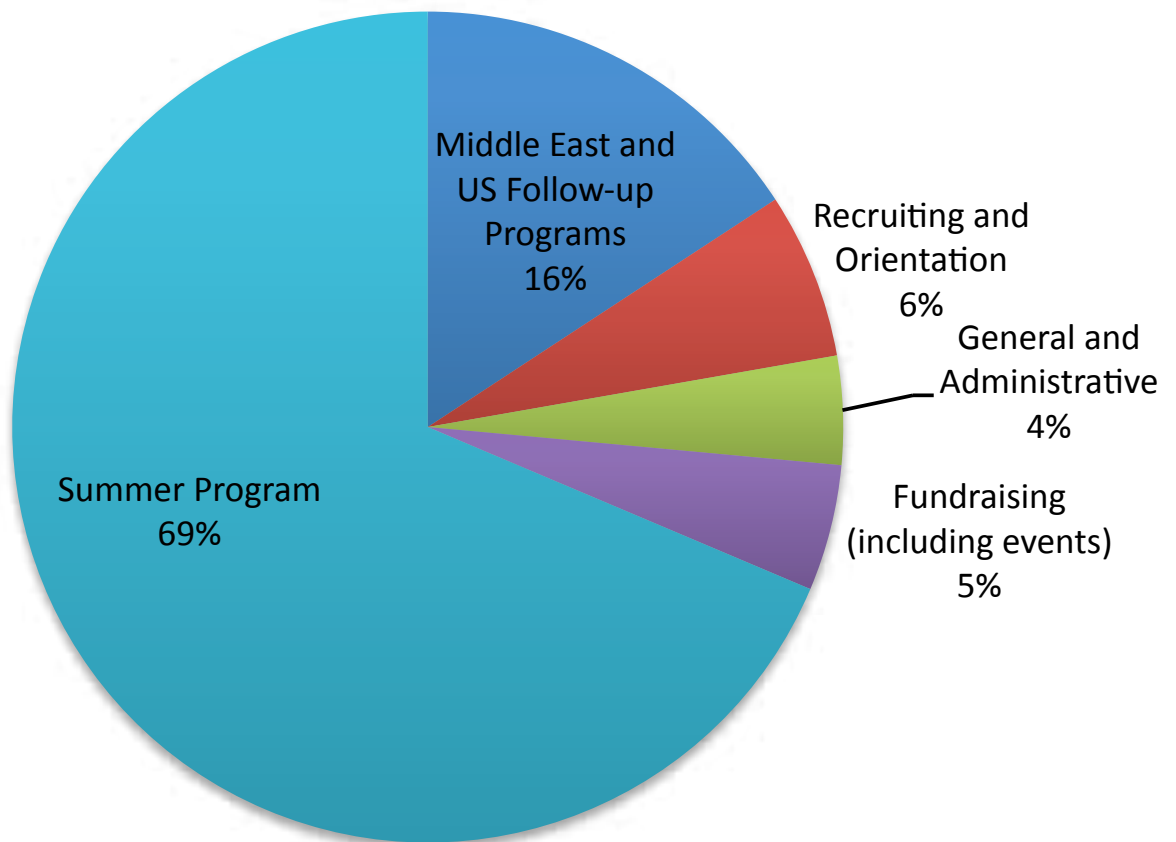
Summer Program	\$306,750
Middle East and US Follow-up Programs	\$70,518
Recruiting and Orientation	\$28,902
Fundraising (including events)	\$21,950
General and Administrative	\$18,890

"In my daily life, I keep dreaming about when the next Alumni Club seminar is going to be. I feel it's the only place where I can speak my mind about the conflict and how it affects my reality. Every time I leave the seminars, I know that hope still exists."
 -Jasmine, Palestinian Citizen of Israel participant

REVENUE IN 2014:



EXPENSES IN 2014:



TESTIMONIALS

"Hands of Peace has shown me that people from totally different backgrounds with radically different opinions are still willing to come together to make a change."

-Iddo, Jewish-Israeli participant

"Hands of Peace taught me that it takes a group of people to change an individual, and an individual to change the world."

-Anna, American participant

"HOP taught us that we are important and our voices do matter. It taught us to face our fears, to say what we believe in, to believe in ourselves and it taught us the meaning of friendship. It taught us to never lose hope!"

-Yasmeen, Palestinian participant



"Now I understand that if we hang onto the past, we will not be able to improve the future. What happened in the past we cannot change. We need to accept that and try to move forward to a solution."

-Shira, Jewish-Israeli participant

A SAMPLE SUMMER PROGRAM SCHEDULE

8:30 AM: Host families drop off participants

8:45 AM: Xls (second-year participants) lead the morning icebreaker game

9:00 - 11:30 AM: Dialogue

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM: Kosher/halal lunch

12:30 - 3:00 PM: Drama workshop

3:30 - 5 PM: Xls lead small group discussions of religious diversity in preparation for visits to church, synagogue, and mosque

5:00 PM: Time for host families to do a fun activity with their guest(s)

A SAMPLE MIDDLE EAST SEMINAR SCHEDULE

9:00 AM: Palestinians and Israelis arrive at seminar

9:30 AM - 12:00 PM: Tour of Jerusalem's Yad Vashem Holocaust museum

12:00 - 1:00 PM: Lunch

1:30 - 3:00 PM: Tour of Deir Yassin

(site of massacre of Palestinians in 1948)

3:30 - 5:30 PM: Community service tactile art project with blind children

6:00 - 7:00 PM: Dinner at hostel

7:00 - 9:30 PM: Dialogue

9:30 - 11 PM: Social time and desserts



TESTIMONIALS

"Before Hands of Peace, every participant thought that we have different suns that shine down on us. After Hands of Peace, we became closer, and we realized that the same sun shines down on all of us."

-Hadeel, Palestinian Citizen of Israel participant

"I learned how to think, to respect, to doubt, and to listen. I learned about my country, my government, and mostly about myself. And I made friends for life, too!"

-Noomi, Jewish-Israeli participant

"I've learned that true, loving friendship overcomes identities, religion, and politics."

-Alyssa, American participant



"It's so important to send our future generation to such programs, so they will have a better future than we had."

-Basma and Yahiya, parents of a Palestinian participant



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sarah Busch

Henry G. Conroe, M.D.

Larry Feder

Mindi Frankel

Franklin Gelber

Gretchen Grad, Founder

Karen Henken

Jane Hund

Bev Shurman Lavitt

Lisa Leger, Treasurer

Kelly Mellos

Jenny Parker, M.D.

Wendy Rhodes, Chair

Danya Saleh

William Sullivan, Esq., Secretary

Ashley Bates, Executive Director (Ex-Officio)

HANDS OF PEACE SAN DIEGO

3308 Calle San Blas • Carlsbad, CA 92009

773.620.9731

ssilk@handsofpeace.org

HANDS OF PEACE CHICAGO

1000 Elm Street • Glenview, IL 60025

224.406.5045

abates@handsofpeace.org