Empowering young people to be leaders of change
“Hands of Peace gave me more power to understand and communicate with people whatever their origins are. You may face a lot of difficulties, but then you will know that these things are not difficulties... these things are just other people’s perspective. It is the BEST PROGRAM EVER!”

– Bashar, Palestinian

“Hands of Peace taught me how to be a leader. It encouraged me to start making a change in society and appreciate my life. It also taught me how to be a man of values like mutuality, respect, and determination. It taught me that if you believe in the change you are making, everything is possible.”

– Shahar, Jewish Israeli XL
DEAR FRIENDS,

How do you get to “there” from “here”? That is the question everyone involved in the Israeli/Palestinian peace process continually asks. To understand the answer, one needs to first address what “there” looks like. At Hands of Peace, 2016 was a transformative year in many ways. At the heart of our transformation was the creation of a new, more focused mission statement. “Peace, equality, freedom, and justice” for all Israelis and all Palestinians. This is our “there”. This is why we exist.

To support our mission, Hands of Peace embarked on an important expansion of our core programs. In the United States, our San Diego site grew to full size in just its third summer. Now Chicago and San Diego each have capacity to support 44 teenage peacemakers every summer.

In the Middle East, we have expanded opportunities for these new alumni to join with hundreds of their Hands of Peace predecessors in moving from Dialogue to Action. In early fiscal 2016, through the support of a major donor, we launched a pilot Leadership program allowing many of our alumni to participate in new and innovative projects on the ground. The leadership skills they develop, along with the meaningful connections they build within the Hands of Peace community, help our alumni prepare to be the leaders of the next generation. We could not be more proud of them for their hard work and dedication.

This program growth was intentional, thoughtful, and strategic. For many years, Hands of Peace had been building financial reserves to fuel a future expansion. Indeed, 2016 represented the first time in the organization’s 14-year history that expenses exceeded revenues and were met by spending a portion of our reserves. We are committed to remaining good stewards of the generous contributions of our supporters, and we are confident that the additional expenses during 2016 reflect the desire of our donors to strive to continue working towards a just and lasting peace, one piece at a time.

In Peace,

Rick Rosenfeld
Executive Director
Hands of Peace is an interfaith organization that empowers young people to raise their voices as leaders of change. Through the power of dialogue, Palestinians, Israelis and Americans partner to achieve peace, equality, freedom and justice.

Hands of Peace believes the future depends on the leadership of the next generation.

At Hands of Peace, we share these common values:

We believe the existing conditions among Israelis and Palestinians are unacceptable and the way to create impactful and lasting change is through developing future leaders who are committed to positive and just peace.

We believe the solution to disagreement begins with dialogue among individuals, which leads to mutual respect, tolerance, understanding and ultimately, action.

We believe in the same freedoms for all people, including freedom of movement, freedom from fear, freedom from violence and oppression.

We believe that all sides of the conflict deserve justice, equality, self-determination and basic human rights.

We believe in our common humanity and the sacred value of each human life. We mourn the loss of life of each individual and family in the region and share their pain and suffering.

We believe that investing in leadership of the next generation is the way to tolerance, understanding and fundamental transformation from division to peace.

This is why we exist.

“Hands of Peace has deeply affected, impacted, and developed my personality and behavior as a human being, and it made me a person I did not know existed in me. I learned to be committed and constant. Hands of Peace gave me the right tools, so I could continue in the path of peace, because it is only the beginning.”

– Ahmad, Palestinian Citizen of Israel

“My life is different because of Hands of Peace. I see the world as my neighborhood and people world wide as my neighbors. I see people as people not just numbers or part of a statistic. I see beyond stereotypes and molds.”

– Genevieve, American XL
Hands of Peace has been empowering our participants to become leaders of change since 2003. We are excited to share the path that four of our outstanding alumni have taken, and to show how they are making the choice to move dialogue to action every day.

**Fadwa, 2011 Palestinian alumna**

Hands of Peace was Fadwa’s first experience with different nationalities and allowed her the courage to critically analyze the situation she was living in, as “HOP encouraged me to break the taboo of meeting the enemy and I realized I can be Palestinian and raise the voice of my people without losing my identity as a Palestinian.”

By raising her voice, Fadwa truly believes that she is doing something positive. Taking a facilitation course for Palestinians and Israelis, she is challenging herself to look at situations where conflict arises. The next step for Fadwa is to pursue a masters degree in human rights, because she has decided to be a force of influence for positive change, and is working diligently to achieve that goal!

**Or, 2006 Jewish Israeli alumna**

Hearing about Hands of Peace for the first time, Jason realized that even though he had grown up with Israel as an important part of his Jewish identity, he was drawn to deepening his understanding of Israel and Palestine.

After volunteering for a year with young Ethiopians that live in Israel and Palestinians that live in Israel, Or spent over 4 years travelling the world and working in different peace programs internationally. She returned to Israel and worked for Coalition of Women for Peace, and is currently working for Windows for Peace, an organization that helps facilitate dialogue between Israelis and Palestinian youth.

**Samar, 2007 Palestinian Citizen of Israel alumna**

Initially disappointed that some of her fellow HOP participants supported the Gaza war, Samar took a step back from dialogue, but soon realized that without engaging and speaking about the issues, no change can happen. This propelled her to change her mind about emigrating in search of a better future, and instead to find that better future in Israel.

After completing a masters degree in International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, Samar began volunteering at Mossawa Center – the Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens in Israel, where she now works as the coordinator of International advocacy and resource development. In 2016, Samar joined a program called “Training for Change Agents for Future Politicians”. This program strives to bring together promising young people for dialogue and negotiations in the hope that the future generation of leaders and politicians from all sides will be ready to end the conflict and establish sustainable peace.

**Jason, 2013 American alumnus**

After his first summer with Hands of Peace, Jason began studying Arabic and is now attending Georgetown University as an Arabic and Economics major. His outreach includes working for Georgetown Jewish Student Alliance, studying abroad in Amman this fall, working as an editorial assistant for the Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, working in Jerusalem for Member of Knesset Erel Margalit, an Israeli Labor politician, and an internship for ALLMEP (Alliance for Middle East Peace). Jason continues his quest for knowledge by continually pursuing interfaith and intercultural experiences.

Even as a young girl, Or always believed that education was a way to create peace and reconciliation. After multiple visits to the West Bank, she learned about Hands of Peace and knew it was something she had to be a part of. What she liked most was “the fact that you left Israel/Palestine for a neutral space that allowed you to create hope in a difficult and complex situation.”
How do you measure the impact of Hands of Peace on the participants, their families, and their communities? You measure with both statistics and with stories.

The statistics are impressive:

- 85 Palestinian, Israeli, and American teens participated in our summer program in 2016, a 15% increase over 2015. 64 were first year Hands, and 21 returned for our second year leadership XL program.

- Applications for these spots reached an all-time record with significantly more applicants than available space.

- Attendance at our three Middle East seminars increased 25% over 2015.

- For multiple years, researchers from University of Chicago Booth School of Business and University of California, Berkeley Haas School of Business have found that HOP participants showed statistically significant, positive change in their attitudes from pre-HOP to post-HOP.

The stories can fill a book:

- An American and a Palestinian Citizen of Israel partnered to create a social media pen pal program between their Jewish American and Palestinian schools, touching 50 people.

- Israeli teens took the bus to a Palestinian Israeli town for the first time in their lives for lunch with a Hands of Peace family and area alumni from other delegations.

- Dozens of Palestinian alumni repeatedly crossed checkpoints into Israel for two day seminars to keep working toward freedom, equality, justice and peace.

- American alumni in Chicago worked on creating Social Injustice/Bystander Intervention training for local adults, while their San Diego counterparts worked on projects focusing on police and community relationships.

- To date, Hands of Peace has engaged more than 500 young people. Many alumni have made the choice to continue their work in non-profit, peace and government organizations around the world.

And the pieces keep being written.
At Hands of Peace, we stand for creating impactful and lasting change by developing future leaders who are committed to a positive and just peace.

Each summer Hands of Peace brings a group of Jewish Israeli, Palestinian Citizens of Israel, and Palestinian teenagers to Chicago and San Diego for a 19-day, dialogue-based experience. They are joined by a comparable number of American teens from Jewish, Christian, Muslim and other faith backgrounds.

Our program teaches team-building and leadership skills, helps the participants learn about different cultures and religions, guides them in learning about the conflict from different points of view, and encourages them to take action to incorporate peace building into their personal lives.

The foundation of our summer program is a comprehensive group dialogue process, run by trained facilitators who understand the intricacies of conflict and are equipped to support the participants. Dialogues are structured to take individual participants on a journey that includes:

- Exploring the conflict together
- Exposure to each other’s narratives and faiths
- Sharing of personal stories for greater understanding of our individual differences and common humanity
- Planning individual and group projects that move dialogue to action

**The Summer Program is only the Beginning!**

A critical component of the Hands of Peace experience is the Alumni Club, and the ongoing activities it provides for Middle East and American participants. The Middle East Alumni Club keeps participants connected in a variety of ways: quarterly retreats for all participants from all years of Hands of Peace, uni-national meetings for each delegation, and service activities.

The US Alumni have monthly meetings and attend local lectures and events related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They are involved in recruiting new participants, outreach efforts, and arranging and conducting presentations to various organizations and congregations.
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All cash donations can be viewed on our website. This report lists cash donations $500 and over that were received 10/1/15 - 9/30/16. Donations received after that will be reflected in our 2017 annual report.
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Revenue in 2016 Fiscal Year (10/1/15 - 9/30/16)

- Individual Donations: $200,125
- Foundations: $215,600
- Special Events: $112,015
- Program Fees: $75,057
- In-Kind Donations & Miscellaneous Income: $46,808
- Corporate and Community Organizations: $5,419
- Religious Organizations: $28,944
- Total Revenue: $683,968

Expenses in 2016 Fiscal Year (10/1/15 - 9/30/16)

- Summer Program: $422,370
- Middle East and US Seminars: $152,309
- Recruiting and Orientation: $38,248
- Indirect Fundraising: $101,874
- General and Administrative: $75,333
- Total Expenses: $790,134

Hands of Peace experienced accelerated growth in 2016, in both revenues and strategically managed expenses. For the first time, annual expenses exceeded annual revenue and were met by utilizing cash reserves. The Board of Directors anticipated this might occur and agreed it was prudent to deploy reserves in this manner. Emphasis on continuing to accelerate revenue growth will be an organizational priority in 2017. All financial benchmarks are in line with the organization’s strategic plan for managed, sustainable growth.

“Hands of Peace changed my life and helped me try to understand that there are two sides for everything, and sometimes there isn’t absolute truth, and if we want to build peace, we have to consider the other side.”
– Yoav, Jewish Israeli

“I have learned to listen so much more and accept and respect different opinions. I have grown to realize that everything has more than one or two or three stories. I will fight for my rights and for others’ rights as well. I am going to do my best to be as kind and understanding as I can be toward anyone I meet.”
– Reham, Palestinian Citizen of Israel
HANDS OF PEACE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND YEAR ROUND STAFF

First row (left to right) Michele Arnison*, Wendy Rhodes (Chair), Rana Haddad (Palestinian Citizen of Israel Regional Manager), Hamutal Blanc (Jewish Israeli Regional Manager), Larry Feder

Middle row (left to right) Hoda Barakat (Palestinian Regional Manager), Debby Fosdick, Jessica Judge Schott (Advisory Board), Bev Shurman Lavitt, Kelley Grimes*, Kim Lande, Gretchen Grad (Founder), Rhonda McCarty (Chicago Site Director)

Top row (left to right) Roy Gordon (Director, XL Program), Thomas Aldrich, Rick Rosenfeld (Executive Director), William Sullivan (Secretary), Mindi Frankel (Marketing Consultant), Danya Saleh, Julia Duerst (Chicago Program Director)

Not pictured:
Hank Conroe, M.D., Nabiel Fareed*, Frank Gelber, Husam Jubran (Director of Facilitation), Julie Kanak, Lisa Leger (Treasurer), Kelly Mellos, Jenny Parker, M.D., Sarah Heirendt (San Diego Site Director), Eileen Maurer (San Diego Program Director), Scott Silk*

*Joined Board of Directors in 2017

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Seated: Rhonda McCarty, Hamutal Blanc, Hoda Barakat, Gretchen Grad, Gail Tatsuda, Mariam Abdoudayem, Casey Chiappetta

Standing: Julia Duerst, Rick Rosenfeld, Roy Gordon, Rana Obeid, Or Sturman, Vera Ginburg, Essam Qadri, Yonatan Yakir, Raja’a Aldanaf, Sewar Farraj, Mina Reingold, Adam Heffez

SAN DIEGO SUMMER STAFF
Bottom Row: David Hines, Brooke Shupryt-Knoop, Scott Silk, Eileen Maurer, Husam Jubran, Shaden Tubalieh, Sarah Heirendt, Amira Massarwa

Top Row: Raanan Mallek, Daniel Darby, Noa Reggev, Marina Yanay-Triner, Tamer Omari, Hanadi Hittini, Hazem Salameh, Mindy Frankel

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