

Exciting News! My Children's Book is Here - *Forever Life*

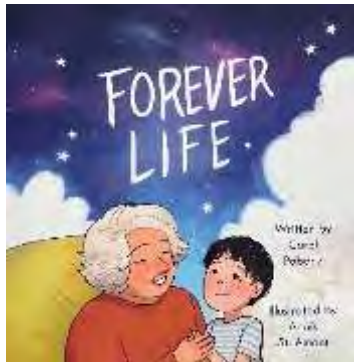
Carol D. Pobanz

May 30, 2025

Hey Everyone,

Wanted to share some exciting news - my children's book is officially published! It's called *Forever Life*, and I'm really proud of it. A story about my family.

<https://foreverlifebook.com/>



Forever Life is a tender and reassuring story that helps young readers or anyone who has experienced loss understand life, love, and loss in a gentle and comforting way. The story follows Charlie, who is grieving the loss of his mother, as he has a conversation with his wise Gramma.

In Gramma's comforting way she explains the concept of three lives: the first life, which takes place before birth in the womb, where a baby is surrounded by warmth and water, preparing for the second life on Earth, where people learn how to love, grow, and share with family and friends, preparing for the third life. The third life, which is eternal life in Heaven, where LOVE becomes the breath of existence, and spirits reunite.

Through this touching explanation, Charlie learns that his mother, though physically gone, is still present in spirit, watching over him. The story reassures all readers that love never disappears - it only grows, guiding us toward our own FOREVER LIFE.

Thanks for your support!

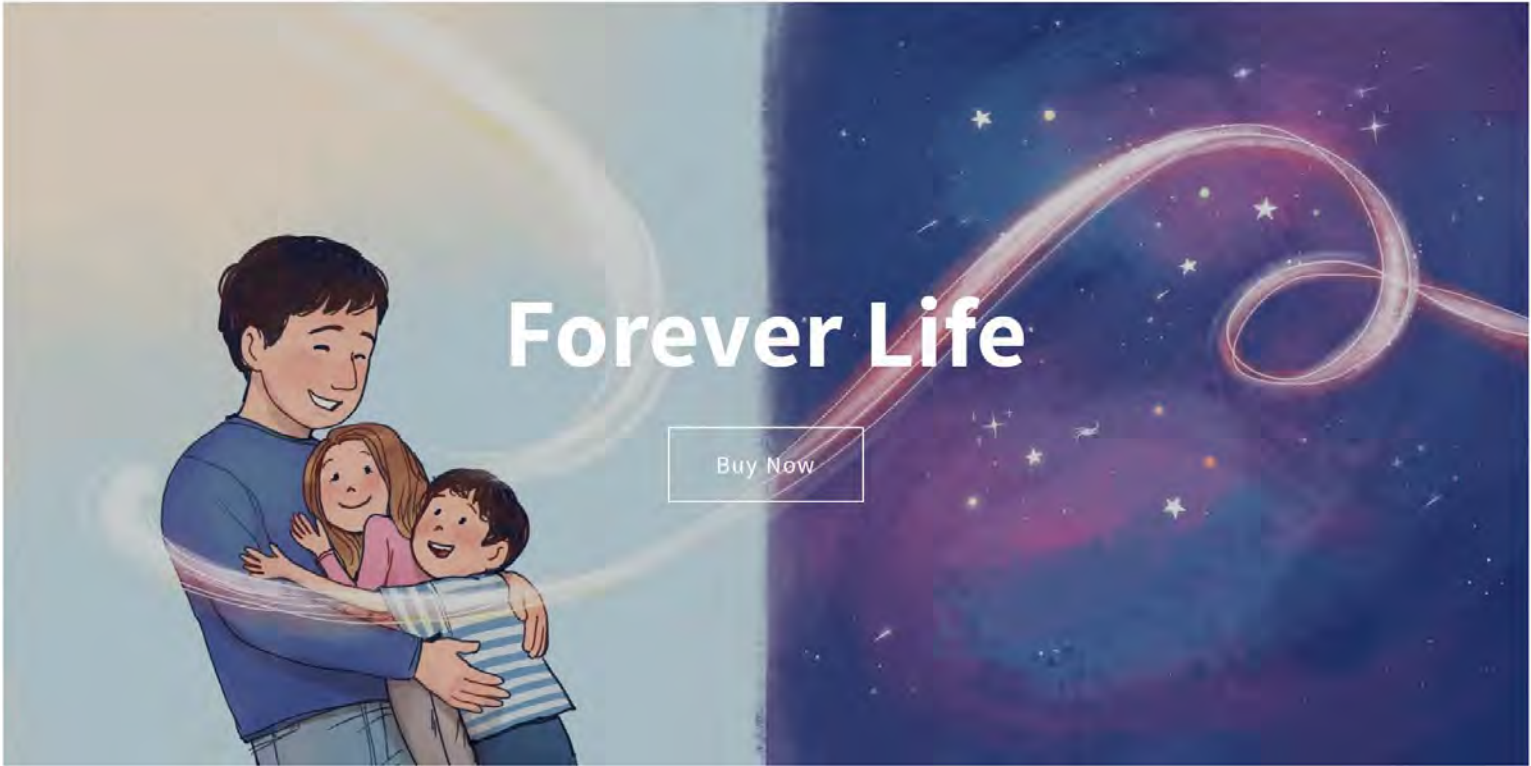
Best,

Carol

Carol D. Pobanz

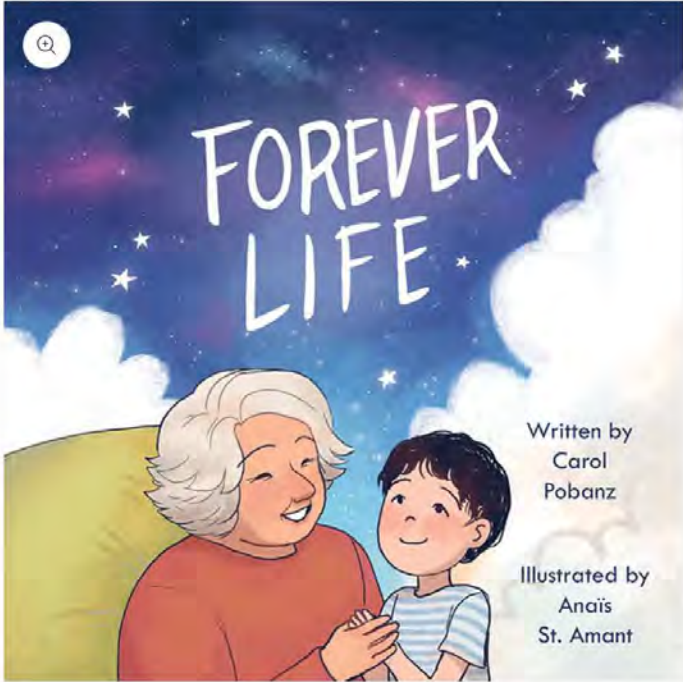
"I want to know God's thoughts; the rest are details."
- Albert Einstein

www.peaceinproject.com



Forever Life

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Forever Life

Forever Life is a heartfelt children’s book that helps young readers or anyone who has experienced loss understand life, love, and loss in a gentle and comforting way. The story follows Charlie, a child coping with the loss of his mother, as he has a conversation with his

wise Gramma.

In Gramma’s comforting way, she explains the concept of three lives: the first life, which takes place before birth in the womb, where a baby is surrounded by warmth and water, preparing for the second life; the second life, which is life on Earth, where people learn how to love, grow, and share with family and friends, preparing for the third life; and the third life, which is eternal life in Heaven, where LOVE becomes the breath of existence, and spirits reunite.

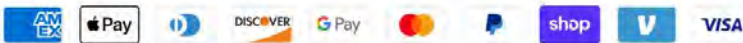
Through this touching explanation, Charlie learns that his mother, though physically gone, is still present in spirit, watching over him. The story reassures all readers that love never disappears—it only grows, guiding us toward our own **FOREVER LIFE**.



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It's not about the pieces
**BUT HOW THEY FIT
TOGETHER**

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**Where cultural and philosophical differences are your
contribution...not your point of opposition**

People often think that politics moves the world, but that is not the case. It is culture and the arts that move the world. It is emotion, not reason that strikes people in the innermost part of their hearts. When hearts change and are able to receive new things, ideologies and social regimes change as a result.

-- Sun Myung Moon

UPCOMING PROJECT

To apply visit our [Upcoming Project](#) page





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Kingston, Jamacia

ABOUT

Find out about our organization, mission, our methods, and the results of our work.

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Ready to take the next step? You can become a contributor to our cause, or participate yourself.

[Find Out How →](#)

APPLICATION HONDURAS PEACE PARK 2017 PIX

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About

WHAT WE DO

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Upcoming PeaceIN Project

DECEMBER 29, 2019 - JANUARY 11, 2020



Honduras Peace Park Announcement

December 29, 2019 - January 11, 2020

Consider coming to Honduras to help create a peace park. The goal of the project is to create awareness for the need for a united community across the Americas. This is a project to foster friendship, collaboration and solidarity with the peoples of the Americas as we strive to develop a Culture of Peace.

Highlight video January 2017: [Click Here](#)

Update August 2017: [Click Here](#)

Update August 2018: [Click Here](#)

August 2018: we continued to make improvements to the El Way Peace Park that was started in January and August 2017. We worked together with the local city government to build this park, and model a community of cooperation.

The project will begin in the colonial city of Comayagua to celebrate the new year. This is an exciting and unique cultural experience - including music, dance, street jugglers and stilt walkers, crafts and the national New Year's countdown on the second oldest working clock in the world.

On New Year's Day we will travel to our project city Tela, Honduras newly established as an International City of Peace internationalcitiesofpeace.org

During the next project, we will:

- Refurbish concrete benches and structures with ceramic mosaics - using designs contributed from youth and students from the Americas
- Engage in dialogue with city officials about Tela's development as a City of Peace.
- Landscape the lawn and garden areas
- Hold a community gathering to celebrate our friendship and cooperation
- Visit local cultural and tourist attractions

In addition, participants will have the opportunity to share in a culture different than their own and use creative problem solving while working in teams with volunteers from North, Central and South America.

Participants will be responsible for a project fee of \$500. (which will cover room, board, in country travel, and project activities.) They are also responsible for their flight to and from San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Participants will be met at the airport by a staff member.

If interested please apply for Peace Park Phase 2 - Part 2 [HERE](#)

Please forward any questions to Carol Pobanz at PeaceINproject@gmail.com

APPLICATION HONDURAS PEACE PARK 2017 PIX

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February 20, 2017

Honduras Peace Park Project

PEACE WORK IN 2018- PEACE PARK IN TELA, HONDURAS

AUGUST 10-22, 2018

...The Continuation of a Park of Peace in Honduras

This year the co-directors Mario Salinas (Honduras) and Carol Pobanz (USA) created a trinity with Laurent Ladouce, a French supporter of the project who suggested that the city of Tela, Honduras consider becoming an International City of Peace. In turn, the project organizers suggested this possibility to the city administrators where upon they happily accepted the challenge.

The following is part of the proposal made by Laurent:

1. How can Tela become an international city of peace?

Each city of peace is a unique answer to a unique question. Tela has to see itself as a city which encapsulates the essence of the Honduran question. And the Honduran question is itself part of the Central American question.

Tela has to become a smart city in promoting good practices for a culture of peace. And it has to bring positive and creative answers by mobilizing its population. It has to do so not for self-promotion, but in order to give hope and start a new culture, a new paradigm in Honduras.

In 2012, Honduras had the highest murder rate in its history. It also had the highest murder rate in a non-war country. Cities such as San Pedro Sula and the Tegucigalpa have registered homicide rates among the highest in the world. The violence is associated with drug trafficking since Honduras is often a transit point, home to a number of urban gangs, mainly the MS-13 and the 18th Street gangs. It is useless to blame anyone or anything for this.

The authorities of Tela and the population have to determine that they will take responsibility to show that another culture, another way of life is possible in Honduras. The city was once the epicenter of the 1954 general strike, and this movement was an attempt to transform the political, economic and social culture in the country.

We are confident that the city of Tela is a good place to start building a new image of Honduras.

Forging new partnerships and leadership

The election of a new Mayor to the City of Tela this year brought a new and powerful partner to the building of this park. We were able to work very harmoniously with the municipality this time around. The Mayor's son – a young architect helped to design additional installations for the park. Though this municipality is not financially strong, the people gladly offered their sweat equity.

community is not immediately strong and people getting excited about the project, and they also later willing to cooperate with us in organizing a Peace Road March and Rally.

Youth leaders: Nurllyn Salinas, Edgar Castillo and Alejandro Castro Buscas acted as Program Manager, Art Director and Work Coordinator, respectively, demonstrated the rising strength of youth as they successfully carried out their assigned tasks.

The Project

Phase 2 – Part 1 included five USA participants (one Brazilian born) and nine Hondurans. Returning to the Tela Peace Park for a third time since its inception in January 2017, we continued to build the Only One America Peace Park. This project, which was held from August 10 until August 22 took on a greater significance since it occurred just four days after a UPF Summit in Brazil, and embraced the same theme “Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Human Values.” The project concluded with a Peace Road Rally and a community gathering based on that theme. In addition, Mario and Carol also emphasized in the education portion of the project the importance of the individual’s unique value, the cooperation of all as a group and the shared benefit to the group as well as the community.

Accommodations were very near the beach again; therefore, we were soothed each night and woken each morning by the sounds of the rolling Caribbean waves, as well as by the sounds of the many tropical birds (and not-so-tropical rooster) indigenous to the area.

The park has been maintained by the community members who are more and more evident as the park develops. Our undertaking this time around was the installation of a Peace monument, landscaping, a mosaic bench and the building of a pergola or arbor over the gazebo. As we worked in the park and shopped at the local businesses, many words of gratitude were offered by community members, together with the assurances that they and their families will continue to enjoy the use of the park. What was once a dirty lot is now a bustling meeting place for children and families during both the day and evening.

Daily we were surrounded and assisted by the children who frequented the play facilities. Many were eager to mosaic and paint and otherwise just be around the participants. Participants worked on the project during each of the nine days from 8:30am until 4:00pm, when we returned to our lodgings to enjoy free time at the pool, on the beach or exploring the local shops for a snack.

The project concluded with a Peace Road march from the Central Park in front of the City Hall down to our One America Peace Park. Approximately 400 students from five local schools marched carrying signs with messages of hope, while bands played and sirens blared as a police cars heralded the way to the park. Marchers assembled with community and general attendees as the gazebo was inaugurated by the city Minister of Culture, the Mayor’s son representing the Mayor’s office, project co-directors and youth entertainers offering song and dance. The Rally concluded with the video presentation introducing Peace Roads International.

Following our service work, participants gathered for reflection. Some participant comments included:

“I take Tela away in my heart, and (at the same time) I leave my heart in Tela, in the heart of the children. I feel I have accomplished so much to have taken part in this peace park project. I received so much joy from the children, the parents and the neighborhood people.”

“I am greatly satisfied because I have served others and see the happiness in the people, but mostly I feel satisfied because the work was done from the heart - not feeling pain from the effort and sacrifice.”

In Conclusion

The bonds we have forged in this community are substantial. We look forward to the inclusion of future participants as well as the return of those individuals already engaged and embracing the vision of One America.

Plans are being made to take another group to Tela during either the Winter or Spring break 2019 to continue the project. Projects are tentatively scheduled for

two times a year until 2020 or until the park's completion. For more information or to donate, please contact Carol Pobanz at: carolpobanz@gmail.com.

PEACE WORK IN 2017- PEACE PARK IN TELA, HONDURAS PHASE 1 - PART 2

AUGUST 2017

At the beginning of 2017 the UPF PeaceIN UNA SOLA AMERICA / ONLY ONE AMERICA Project began with participants from the USA, Brazil and Honduras. The hope was to instill a vision in the hearts and minds of the local community, as well as in the hearts of inter-American youth who created this “visible seed through art” – a vision to promote brotherhood, solidarity and cooperation among all peoples of the Americas (North, South, Central and including the Caribbean) to interact as one nation and as one people.

When we arrived in the city of Tela, the small community park offered to us by the municipality was seemingly inactive, and appeared to be neglected, greatly in need of care and repair. Little by little the PeaceIN volunteers in cooperation with community members, worked together to clean the area and to formulate a plan for its future development.

With hard work, creativity, some ingenuity, a bit of color and some artistic investment, we began to see the area gradually transforming into a beautiful park.

During Phase I in January and Phase II in August, the whole working area was prepared, an obelisk was built, the benches were variously repaired, replaced dressed and/or painted. The sidewalks were also painted – becoming a “quotation for peace” runway, a three-swing set was installed for the children, and a gazebo base was erected to be finished during another visit in 2018.

Though the community was not financially well off and the municipality could not afford to contribute any funding, after our last visit in August, the mayor proposed to build a tree house which is now finished. In addition the proposed pathways throughout the park have all been paved, and the artificial grass carpet for the playground was installed. Also, the park is now fully illuminated for nighttime activity. All of this is thanks to the efforts of the mayor of Tela, Mario Fuentes, together with the support of private institutions that have agreed to contribute to this cause for the benefit of the five neighborhoods around the El Way Park, in the city of Tela, on the Atlantic coast of Honduras.

With our partners collaboration, we are able to witness more happy faces as a result of everyone's contributions, support and prayers.

HONDURAS PEACE PARK PROJECT - PHASE I PART 1

DECEMBER 28, 2016 – JANUARY 10, 2017

Cosponsored by FFWPU New Jersey and Northern California and PeaceIN – a project of UPF

Theme: Una Sola America – There's Only One America

Goal: To create a park designed and built by young people from North, South and Central America, representing their solidarity.

History of the Project

Many years ago, UPF founder, Rev. Moon spoke about building Peace Zones on the borders of nations. My mind caught this idea and I began to think that though it might be difficult to create an entire “Border of Peace,” perhaps we could build “Parks of Peace” on the borders where nations, even conflicting nations could engage in cultural exchange – music, dance, visual arts, sports, a conference center, etc. I thought at that time that these parks should be built by young people from those bordered nations so that the park would be a reflection or expression of their solidarity.

For years, I spoke about this vision and created art/service projects around that vision but I never actually got close to creating the park. Finally, last year I made a trip to Honduras together with a friend, Mario Salinas, to look for a place to

establish this park. To our delight, the mayor of Tela, Honduras suggested the use of four properties from which we chose a small property to create our first park. The theme of the park is “Una Sola America” – “There’s Only One America.”

This location was significant to us in that it is in Honduras, which is at the center of Central America, which is the center of the Americas. The property we were given was a small park, generally in disrepair and otherwise locally known as El Way Park – The Way Park. In Spanish, the meaning is The Y Park because it has a triangular shape since it is situated at a Y – or forked intersection – the meeting of five neighborhoods, and was the rail station stop that connected the country’s major port cities.

The Project

The project was attended by 17 participants from North, Central and South America, who gathered first in the colonial city of Comayagua where we were housed by the mayor of the city in the Hotel Plaza Futura. There our orientation was held covering topics of problem solving, creative solutions and leadership. We also visited local sites including the Catedral de Comayagua bell tower and clock – the second oldest working clock in the world. The mayor arranged a city tour for us on seven-seat bicycles. Meals were prepared in a local home so that our North American participants could experience the local culture first-hand.

Since the project dates included New Year’s Eve, we joined the crowd in Central Park Square to ring in 2017 with music and dance, jugglers and stilt walkers, and lights and selling stands. It was a delight to see two of our participants, who were part of the local entertainment, play in a samba band. At midnight, we joined in the countdown to cheer as firecrackers sounded all over the city and fireworks lit the sky.

On New Year’s Day, we boarded our bus for Tela, our worksite city. Accommodations were very near the beach; therefore, we were soothed each night and woken each morning by the sounds of the rolling Caribbean waves, as well as by the sounds of the many tropical birds typical to the area.

The park we were given was littered and somewhat dilapidated. Community President Don Rafael was impressively invested in his community and was excited to refurbish the park. From the first day, the team took measurements and also solicited ideas from the community to find out what hopes and expectations they had. Don Rafael and others in the community quickly caught the vision of the project and invested themselves in the work with the same or greater fervor than even our participants. We were not on-site for more than 10 minutes when a little lady approached us with a cold bottle of cola and a package of cookies, and also offered her home for toilet breaks.

We worked diligently from morning until early evening to clean and prepare the area for our project activities, and by evening the space already appeared quite respectable. That evening, taking into account our vision and the needs of the community, our two teams met separately to finalize their proposed designs and, to our surprise, the designs were almost identical. They included mosaicking the benches surrounding the area, painting the road around the park, building a gazebo in the center to host community gatherings, entertainment, festivals, and or even marriage ceremonies. Five paths were proposed to lead away from the gazebo representing the five communities surrounding the park, and otherwise dividing the park into five distinctly landscaped areas to accommodate different activities. The vision for the park is that the five areas will eventually be landscaped with shrubs, grass and flowers. One area is reserved as a children’s play area. Finally, an old dead palm tree at one corner of the park was encased in cement to become the park sign – standing as a concrete obelisk declaring the park name on two sides, in English and Spanish: “El Way Peace Park”, Parque de Paz El Way, and proclaiming the unity of the Americas on the other two sides “Only One America” and “Una Sola America.”

Participants worked on the project each of nine days until 4:00pm when we returned to our lodging for either free time or, for special trips, which included horseback riding on the beach and a trip to Punta Sal (involving a speedboat tour, hiking in the rainforest, swimming and snorkeling, and a meal cooked on the beach).

Work completed

During this project the participants, together with the community, were able to do much of the foundational work – cleaning and clearing the park, repairing the broken roadway around the park and liberating the curb of six inches of hardened, accumulated dirt. They also removed a large broken bench along with three palm trees. The previously mentioned obelisk was created to introduce the park and three benches were mosaicked. Because two of our work days were rained out, we were unable to complete the mosaic work on the obelisk and the painting of the road. Therefore, three participants from a nearby town will be returning to the project area to complete this work together with the community during this next week.

Final visit

Before leaving the country, Mario Salinas and I returned to EL Way Park to survey the work done by the returning 3 participants. To our surprise they and the community members were excitedly working to finish the mosaic on the obelisk by flashlight, because it was already dark outside. The swing set had been erected, and one inspired community member offered to donate additional playground equipment for the park. The group was able to complete most, but not all, of the road design since they had run out of paint.

The following day the community gathered for a celebration and dedication of the children's play area. About 50 children were on-site with the adult community members. Edgar Castillo, one of the participants, was interviewed on national TV.

In Conclusion

In the past, when we have gone into a community and done a project, even actively working with the community members, our efforts were appreciated but the local people were not greatly motivated to continue these constructive efforts initiated from outside their community. But, in our current project in Tela, only a few of us came from the U.S. working with other young Honduran participants and we were able to considerably inspire the local community members to participate substantially to the point where they felt strongly motivated to continue making restoration efforts even after we had departed, thus, one of the exceptional things about this project is that the local residents were inspired to own the vision of the park and to continue to work enthusiastically and tenaciously to complete phase one. The local citizens truly owned the project.

Now, plans are being made to take another group to Tela in August to continue the project. Projects are tentatively scheduled for two times a year for the next 3 years or until the park's completion.

HONDURAS PEACE PARK PROJECT – PHASE 1 PART 2

Cosponsored by FFWPU and WFWP of New Jersey and PeaceIN – a project of UPF/USA and Honduras

August 7 – 17, 2017

Theme: Una Sola America – There's Only One America

Goal: To create a park designed and built by young people from North, South and Central America, representing their solidarity.

History of the Project

El Way Peace Park was begun January 1, 2017 as part one of phase one of the One America Park project. The theme of the park remains the same, "Una Sola America" – "There's Only One America." One special characteristic of this project is that it has a feeling of settlement and a long-term view, since we are returning to the same worksite over a three-year period. To our joy when we returned this time, we found that the local community had continued the upkeep on the park. There is almost no time in the day that children are not playing on the swings, and it was reported to us that many more people visit the park than ever before.

Thanks goes to FFWPU New Jersey and UPF/USA and Honduras for their continued support for this project. Very special thanks to Women's Federation for World Peace New Jersey who through their donation supported, either fully or partially the participant fee of the Latin American young adults. Finally, thanks to all individuals who supported through their generous donations affirming their

an incredible time supported through their generous donations affirming their solidarity with others in the Americas who are working for a peaceful and cooperative tomorrow.

The Project

This Part 2 project was attended by 14 participants from North and Central America, and was a full immersion into the local community. Our hotel stay was in Tela, and the local community provided support, including meals either in a local home or otherwise transported to our hotel. Community couple, Don Daniel and his wife Iris, with support from the rest of their family, became like parents to the group, treating us as an extension of their own family. Since our project was short, the orientation was held during the arrival evening and first work-day morning. Our orientation and daily inspirations covered developing creative solutions, becoming a public person and community building.

We began our days at 6:30am with daily inspirations, followed by breakfast, and then set out to work. Project Manager Macarry Hida-Pobanz kept the group on schedule and to task, resulting in the completion of all but one of our proposed projects, including the completion of the obelisk, painting of the sidewalks and peace quotes, mosaicking of two more benches, painting of the remaining benches (as a temporary covering until they can be mosaicked), painting of the swing set and whitewashing of the trees. One major goal for this project was the completion of the gazebo. Valiant efforts were made by all participants to complete this project, resulting in the digging and construction of the foundation. Because of unforeseen complications, the endeavor has been left to be continued by three Honduran participants in the following week to build the columns and to place the railings and roof. Returning participants from previous projects, Edgar Castillo and Alejandro Castro deserve a shout-out for their excellent leadership as Art Director and Work Coordinator, respectively.

One curious aspect regarding this project is that in both Part 1 and Part 2, we encountered time challenges that were remedied by local participant and community support, resulting in a more sustainable and stronger community bond, whereas in the past, projects were usually supported by government institutions with no real community ownership. In both cases, we have shown our commitment to accomplish what the days did not allow us to do. In Part 1 we had three days of bad weather therefore we organized for local participants to stay to complete the work, and in Part 2 we had three days in which the municipality froze our advancement as we waited for an official decision to be made and, again, we overcame the problem since participants were ready to stay and finish the intended work together with the community. Thanks to donations gathered through GoFundMe, we had the budget to be able to offer more and to continue investing.

On our first day at the site we received an invitation from the Mayor's office. Though the Mayor was out of the country, his personal assistant Elba Portillo, and the Director of the Office Against Violence, Dayana Castro welcomed the new group of volunteers to the city. Dayana also invited our group to take part in a youth march and rally at the Central Park that she organized in celebration of the UN International Youth Day. As part of the continuation of the celebration, city youth participated in our project for a few hours. TV reporters were on hand, and later in the evening, we were invited for an interview at the local TV station.

Community members and especially the children were always ready to help. Community President Don Rafael again made himself available to support and work together with our volunteers – always ready to direct the community families to bring, haul or provide what we needed.

Participants worked diligently on the project each of eight days until 4:00pm, when we returned to our lodging for free time and, later in the evening, for reflection on the day and planning for the next day. On our one free day, our group travelled to Rio Platano, Punta Izopo, for a kayak adventure into the mangroves, and then we later shared lunch and time at the beach.

In Conclusion

What most stands out about this project was the children. Of course, children are always at projects; they are the first to come out even before the mothers and fathers. But the thing we most noticed this time was the willingness of the children to work hard. They are unaffected by the social opinion that often influences older youth. Unlike myself who did my first service project at 40 years

old, and many of the volunteers who are in their early twenties, these children are being introduced to joyful service to others while they are 7, 8 and 9 years old. They eagerly dug and lugged, raked and painted, cut and cemented hour after hour. If we can instill a sense of joyful service in them now, what great men and women they will surely become in the future.

We are also grateful for the suggestion contributed by one of our community supporters to emphasize the visual representation of peace. Therefore, we painted the entire sidewalk with words of PEACE, characterizing the timeless desire of people of all ages to strive to create a world of peace. So, the park is educating whoever walks and stops to read the quotes about our vision of ONLY ONE AMERICA.

I look forward to returning to this community because it is not just another community – this community has made us a part of them. It is another home. Now, plans are being made to take another group to Tela in 2018 to continue the project. Projects are tentatively scheduled for two times a year for the next 2 years, culminating in an “Only One America” musical exchange and Youth Rally in 2019 (or 2020).

January 14, 2017

Last Blogs

Day 10: January 7th, 2017

Today was our adventure day. We spent the day going by boat to Punta Sal. There we went on a hike in the rainforest, swam through a tunnel in the ocean, went snorkeling, and had lunch at the beach. It was an exciting day for all us! We have two more work days before we conclude this trip. Depending on the weather we may or may not finish painting the sidewalks.

Day 11: Sunday January 8th

The weather changed today. Heavy rains poured down, and the sea swelled and it was impossible to work on the park. So, we spent the day practicing our performance, which we are planning to present to the community; and doing reflective activities to share and review our experiences.

Despite the weather we made the most of the day. Some participants even went swimming in the pool despite the storm. In fact, it was warmer in the pool than it was outside.

Day 12: January 9th

The heavy rains let up today long enough for us to go to the park for a final time to polish the mosaic benches. As we finished our work the rain began again - great timing! The participants felt some disappointment because we were unable to paint the sidewalk and mosaic the obelisk however, we made a plan for two of the Honduran participants to return next week and work together with the community to paint the sidewalk and finish the work on the obelisk.

We concluded the project with a community gathering at the Cultural Center not far from the park. There we performed a song titled "Colores de Esperanza" (Colors of Hope) and we danced to the song "Happy" by Pharrell. It was a very joyful event. The community people and project members took many photos together within a frame we made for the event. Others sang and danced with us creating a strong sense of solidarity. Everyone had the "time of their lives."

In the evening we gathered for two more reflective activities followed by a written evaluation of the project. Finally, we concluded the reflection exchange with a

evaluation of the project. Finally we participated in a flower exchange as we thanked one another for their contribution to the project. The next morning a short graduation ceremony was held on the bus with the handing out of certificates.

Pictures can be found on the Facebook page: "Honduras PeaceIN Peace Park Project"

The link to the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-2vsBvFq8c>

January 14, 2017

Day 8

January 5th, 2017

The benches have been a great success to gather the community together. We got more colored tiles and began filling in the surroundings of the designs we made yesterday. It took the whole day to work. People were passing by and helping out putting pieces of ceramic on the benches to create the designs. Children came to help and some stayed the entire day. More people came asking and commenting on what we are doing. One TV reporter came for an interview today and another returned to update his report. In the mean time part of the group worked on building an obelisk, a large rectangular form, that was put around a dead tree. Cement was poured into the form in order to create a rectangular pillar which we will put a mosaic design later this week.

In the late afternoon we each got to go horseback riding on the beach right by the hotel we are staying at. For some of the participants it was the first time in a horse and others not. This project has provided first time opportunities for many of the participants.

January 4, 2017

Day 7

January 4th, 2017

Day 7

Our designs for the mosaic were finally put into action. We chose three different designs to put on three of the benches. To start off we had to sand down all the dirt from the cement benches to make it easier to stick on the ceramic pieces. We drew the designs on the benches using chalk. One design consists of a dove and the words "Peace" and "Paz" on either side of the dove. The other says, "No hay Camino para la Paz. La Paz es el Camino" which means "There is no way to peace. Peace is the way". On the third bench there is a design of circles on the bench. Once that was complete we broke the ceramic tiles and placed them on the benches. We only placed the white tiles for the dove and letters. The tiles we have are white and different shades of brown. More of the community came today that were interested in our project. Many mentioned how grateful they are for the work we are doing. Children would walk around in curiosity. A little boy was on a small bike and his parents told him to say thank you. Two little girls who are sisters came up to watch us while also helping us place the tiles on the benches. They were very excited and eager to help. They came the previous days as well watching us and interested in what we were doing. Tomorrow we will continue filling in the designs with the colored tiles with the help of the local community. It's great to see the community coming together to help. They are all very impressed by our work because no one has been investing into the park for a long time.

January 4, 2017

Day 6

January 3rd, 2017

Today's project was to clear out the dirt in the cracks of the cement. It was tough work using a hammer and chisel to break the cement. We spent the entire morning hammering away preparing the foundation for painting and mosaics. Two more TV stations came to visit to get interviews. Interest in our project is increasing. When we first arrived at the park there was little activity. But now since we have been working here people are gathering around the park inspired by the activities. Faces light up when we say, "there is only one America" - any division between the Americas exists in our minds, as fear or misunderstanding. One man came out to say thank you for your help. We responded saying "we are working together with you, we are in this together" - "Una Sola America" (This is only one America). Neighbors came today with a tray of sandwiches, another came with coke and water, and yet another brought a bag of bananas for us. People here are warm and welcoming. A lady from the mayor's office came to visit after our work was complete for the day. She took us for a tour of a museum of Tela, explaining its founding and development. After work we were again able to enjoy the beach and pool. Our day ended in shared reflection on our impact in this community and with prayer.

January 2, 2017

Day 5

Jan 2nd, 2017

The first day working was focused on cleaning up the park. We gathered all the garbage, weeds, and newspapers around the park using brooms and rakes. It took us the entire morning to clear the majority of the trash into big garbage bags. On the sides and cracks of the sidewalk there was a lot of extra dirt which we broke apart using shovels and a pickaxe. The community came out to help us and also offer us drinks and snack! We showed our blueprint of the park to Raphael Ruiz, the leader of the community, which he really liked and agreed with. While we were there, two TV stations came to interview Carol Pobanz and Mario Salinas the leaders of this project. We will start tomorrow's work by putting mosaic designs on the benches and painting the sidewalk.

The rest of the afternoon we spent swimming, building sand castles, and playing soccer on the beach. Excitement was filled in the air as we laughed and enjoyed each other's company. In the evening we spent time creating designs for the mosaic benches around the park. There will be around 15 cement benches around the perimeter of the park. Overall it was a great way to start our project working at the park with the local community.

January 2, 2017

Day 4

Day 4: January 1, 2017

Traveling to Tela was a bumpy ride. We were able to get a bus donated to use for this trip that can fit over 30 people yet our group consists of only 15. The bus ride was a long 4 ½ hour drive but we were constantly surrounded by beautiful scenery and made the most out of it enjoying our trip together, taking pictures, listening to music, and sleeping. We passed by many mountains and hills, as well as a banana tree farm which looked like it would go on forever. Along the way we made multiple stops to stretch our legs and use the bathroom.

We finally reached Tela, Honduras in the afternoon where we met with Raphael Ruiz, the president of the small town in Tela called 'El Way' (The Way). We met at the park where we will do our project. While we were there we measured the perimeter of the park and brainstormed ideas on how to construct and design the park. This park is at the center of the town connecting to five different neighborhoods. The idea is that this park can be the central meeting place for the town in order to bring them together.

In the evening, we all came together to share the ideas we came up with and separated into two groups to format a blueprint of the park. It will take a 3-year period to construct the entire park which will consist of mosaic benches and floor, gazebo, garden, and a playground for the children. Tomorrow we will get started with cleaning up, prepping, and finalizing the designs for the mosaics.

The park represents bringing people together from different neighborhoods but at the same time it is representing the solidarity of the Americas.

January 2, 2017

Day 3

December 31st, 2016

New Years Eve in the City Town Square of Comayagua, Honduras

What a great way to end the year in Central America, sharing culture, and making many new friends. We began the day watching a video titled *Everyday Creativity* which went through 7 steps of creativity and problem solving. It gave us a new perspective to look at what creativity is and how to explore and develop our creativity for this project.

Year End in Honduras is huge like in every country, however Honduras huge is very warm and personal. Two of our participants were performing for the Comayagua celebration in a Samba Band. Throughout the night there was music and dancing, jugglers and stilt walkers, food and a lot of laughter for the celebration. Edgars mom, Bianca, prepared an outstanding buffet for dinner consisting of tamales, vegetables, tortillas, ribs, and chicken. On the way to the town square our group made stops to visit homes displaying their nativity scenes and 'old guy' mannequins (ano nievo).

As the year came to a close there were lots of noises and lights. As the countdown began excitement filled the air. The clock struck 12 midnight and the bells in the church began to ring, fireworks blasted off into the sky, lights were blinding, spot light designs moved across the church, people cheered and offered New Year greetings. The air was filled with joy hugging one another in celebration for the New Year. People danced and laughed amongst friends and family. It was a pleasant sight to see and a wonderful experience to be a part of all together. The mayor of Comayagua, Carlos Miranda Canales, invited us to the city town hall for socialization and food. He has been working and investing into the youth here in the community, including our group.

It was a festive night for us all enjoying each others company and ending the year on a good note! ¡Feliz ano nuevo! Happy New Year!

December 31, 2016

Day 2

Day 2 December 30th, 2016

Comayagua, Honduras

Today we spent the day involved in a variety of activities to strengthen our teams ability to work together and unite more as a group in preparation for the peace park project. We started the day hearing about how the project came about. The morning was spent doing a problem solving and brainstorming activity. The mayor of Comayagua who was inspired by the idea to build a Peace Park has been helping us make it a reality. A lot of the people here in the community are helping us make the dream happen through various donations. It is great to see everyone contributing to make this project..

The afternoon was spent exploring the central historic town in Comayagua. We first visited the famous clock called the Antiguo Reloj De La Catedral (The Old Cathedral Clock). It is the second oldest clock in the world and was constructed in the year of 1100. It was a great sight to see the clock and the great view the clock tower provided us. The next exciting activity we did was going on a bike tour. It was a bicycle built for seven - 7 bikes all attached to each other which made it an even more thrilling experience. It was the first time the city ever offered this experience to anyone. We all had to work together to make the bikes move since they were all connected. Many of us were laughing and screaming as we road around on the streets. We thought we would fall off because of the many quick and sharp turns we made but we did not! Along the way we stopped at different historic sights. It was definitely a memorable experience for all of us!

December 31, 2016

Our PeaceIN Peace Park Project – phase 1 has successfully began:

December 29th, 2016

Participants from North America traveled to the colonial city of Comayagua as local participants traveled from the south meeting for the first time as a group. The country is now preparing for the New Years Celebration. One of the ways that is observed is the making of the human mannequin that is called the "Año Viejo" (all year old guy). This mannequin is filled with fireworks that we look forward to seeing go off on New Years Eve! There is a bustle in the city as people are preparing for the year to end.

We began our orientation today getting to know one another by breaking the ice with games and coloring the mosaic on the back of the project T-shirts. A group from north and central America agreed to dismiss the idea of borders and divisions from our minds and to adjust our thinking to the theme of 'Una Sola America' (Only One America).

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APPLICATION HONDURAS PEACE PARK 2017 PIX

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January 23, 2016

Carpeting the Town in Peace

Nutley, USA— On June 14, 2015, the “Pathways to Peace” cultural exchange project was held in Nutley, New Jersey. The event, whose theme was “Peace is not simply the absence of war, but the development of friendships,” was a collaboration of the town of Nutley, the Nutley school district, the local Rotary Club, the Nutley Clergy Association, and UPF-USA.

From 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., Honduran students worked with American students to create a traditional sawdust street tapestry, or *alfombra* (“carpet”)—patterned after the *alfombras* created on the streets of Comayuga, Honduras every year—on Nutley’s main street, Franklin Avenue. Others created tapestries on the avenue using chalk. Nearly 400 people participated in the event, which also featured music, food and a performance of martial arts.

The keynote speaker, H.E. Mrs. Elizabeth Mary Flores Flake, Permanent Representative of Honduras to the UN, made an early appearance at the event. After arriving, she eagerly collected chalk, found an area on the street to work on and began designing her own chalk drawing of the patron saint of her hometown of Comayagua.

At the closing ceremony, a choir of about 150 local students sang “One World of Peace.” Afterwards, Amb. Flores thanked UPF and all the individuals and groups who helped organized the project. Nutley mayor Mr. Alphonse Petracco then presented a key to the township to Amb. Flores, who received it on behalf of the mayor of Comayagua, who was unable to attend the event.

The making of an *alfombra* is a devotional act in Comayagua tradition. Therefore, in closing, Mr. Petracco and Mr. Mario Salinas, director of UPF-Honduras, walked toward one another from opposite sides of the tapestry the youth had created to meet in “brotherhood.” Mr. Salinas then presented the mayor with a Honduran national costume as a gift.

The participants danced joyfully on the tapestry to conclude the activities.

During and after the project, many people, including Mr. Petracco, concurred that the project was not only beautiful, but extremely meaningful. At the Nutley Board of Commissioner’s meeting the following week, Mr. Petracco presented Mr. Salinas with a key to Nutley, and each of the three Honduran students who had participated in the project, framed proclamations honoring them for volunteering for peace.

A week after the project, the Honduran students were treated to sightseeing in New York city and Philadelphia, and visited the New Jersey shore and the Atlantic City boardwalk. They also enjoyed a tour of the UN headquarters, which was arranged by Amb. Flores. Amb. Flores later met with organizers of “Pathways to Peace” to discuss possible collaborative projects in the future.

March 29, 2014

In Honduras, It's Not about the Pieces, But How They Work Together

"It's not about the pieces... but how they work together" was the theme of an international, intergenerational service project from Jan. 7-16, 2014. "The Hope of All Ages Is a World of Peace" is the motto of UPF. Peace is longed for by all generations, but it needs substantial models to inspire others toward that possibility.

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March 29, 2014

In Honduras, It's Not about the Pieces, But How They Work Together

Comayagua, Honduras - "It's not about the pieces... but how they work together" was the theme of an international, intergenerational service project from Jan. 7-16, 2014. "The Hope of All Ages Is a World of Peace" is the motto of UPF. Peace is longed for by all generations, but it needs substantial models to inspire others toward that possibility.

This project began with a meeting with the mayor of Comayagua, who offered a warm welcome to our group to his city about 50 miles northwest of Tegucigalpa, the capital. However, the comfort of the mayor's welcome to the participants quickly melted away as reality set in and each person began to ask themselves, "Why am I here?" As often happens when people of varied languages, nationalities and ages begin to work together, there was a certain amount of waiting, adjusting and struggle as the group strove to pull together. Each day began with a short reading, prayer/meditation and a daily focus. Fortunately, two days were dedicated to "Patience," that is, patience with oneself and patience with others. I believe participants from both countries (Honduras and USA) would concur that creating harmony and cooperation requires effort and a great deal of patience.

The project was a complete immersion into the local culture, including a visit to a women's cottage industry, home stays and meals in the homes of community members, music, dance and a lot of friendship building. Our group offered assistance to two schools in the city of Comayagua and created a mosaic in which more than 100 community members participated; it was designed jointly by two young adults from Honduras and two young women from New Jersey.

One of the three projects was the building of a security wall around a school. A young mason, Alejandro, was asked to oversee the construction and to direct the group on how to measure the wall, mix cement and lay cinder blocks. He was quite agreeable to this proposal until he was told that a majority of the members were women. He confessed at the conclusion of the project that he thought co-director Mario Salinas was crazy when he made this request and that the proposal was totally illogical. However, he became unexpectedly aware of the power of youth, women and cooperation. He became totally enthralled with our curious group, and joined us for the rest of the project.

The mosaic, which now adorns the main boulevard of the city, depicts a troubled world, symbolized by a tree in arid soil, trapped in a bubble, and surrounded by a radiant ideal world of peace. Breaking the bubble was a drop melted from a composite symbol of peace and true love nourishing the arid world, and consequently bringing it new life. A "mosaic" of passers-by was invited to contribute to the creation, making the project not simply our project but truly a community project. Group or community art is a joyful and inspiring way to create openness and friendship.

The project was the result of cooperation between the Young Unification Ministry and Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) of New Jersey, UPF-USA, the municipality of Comayagua and the Global Women's Peace Network of Honduras.

During the project, the Global Women's Peace Network was invited for a TV interview that resulted in some good publicity as well as important connections with the local Lions' Club, who invited the women to cooperate with them in the future.

The program concluded with a “sisterhood” ceremony, sponsored by the municipality, in which women from several cities in Honduras were partnered with women from New Jersey. In this way, each of the North American women participants were matched to Honduran women. Seeds of friendship were planted during this activity and others. The young women from New Jersey had raised the funds for their trip to Honduras and are making a business plan for funding a project next year as well as inviting three Honduran youth to participate in a similar project in New Jersey.

Whether seen as a network or as a mosaic, the work of cooperation has begun, and a hope has developed to work together to take our first steps toward a world of peace.

Over the past 20 years, RYS initiated more than 40 "Friendship Americas Projects" in response to the challenge by its founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, to develop cooperative relationships among the people of the Americas. This project continued that work, with the additional focus of combining community-based service with a collaborative art project.

For a seven-minute video overview, click [here](#).

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