



Global Highlights

Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders for a Free Korea



Young North Korean escapees are preparing for more than a new life.
They are preparing to help build a future free Korea.

In his latest UPI opinion piece, North Korean escapee and Global Peace Foundation strategist Hyunseung Lee explains why investing in the next generation of leaders today is essential for the peace, freedom, and stability of tomorrow.

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Empowerment starts with learning

Through GPF Nepal, women are discovering that every new skill - from writing proposals to strengthening family relationships - can become a foundation for serving others.

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What does it take to turn a passion for change into real community impact?

Through GPF Kenya, leaders are gaining practical skills that help them transform ideas into initiatives that strengthen communities, protect the environment, and inspire others to lead.

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Real change begins with a conversation

Through GPF USA's Baltimore Cross-Community Reconciliation Project, people from different backgrounds are coming together to listen, build trust, and discover how honest dialogue can become the foundation for stronger communities and shared action.

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Can lasting peace be achieved without freedom?



GPF's invites us to look beyond denuclearization and imagine a future rooted in human dignity, shared identity, and hope. Discover why many believe a free and unified Korea is essential to building lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula.

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Hear From North Korea's Longest-Held American Prisoner to Advocate for Freedom



After surviving imprisonment in North Korea, Rev. Kenneth Bae chose to dedicate his life to those still living without freedom. Hear how his journey continues to inspire hope and support the vision of a peaceful, unified Korea through GPF's latest podcast.

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The Leaders a Free Korea Will One Day Need

Global Peace Foundation

June 20, 2026

Mr. Hyunseung Lee is a North Korean escapee, human rights advocate, lead program strategist at the Global Peace Foundation, and founder of the **North Korean Young Leaders Assembly**.

In his recent UPI piece, Lee highlights the need to invest in the next generation of North Korean escapee leaders as they prepare to help shape a **free and unified Korea**.

Read the piece on [UPI: ‘A free North Korea will need founders, too.’](#)

Support the [North Korean Young Leaders Assembly](#).

This July, the United States turns 250. There will be fireworks over the National Mall, parades down small-town Main Streets, and the familiar rereading of a sentence that still startles you if you slow down enough to hear it—that all people are created equal, born with rights no government may grant or take away.

I did not grow up with that sentence. I grew up in North Korea, where believing it could cost you your life. The state did not merely govern us; it tried to own the inside of our heads. Loyalty was measured, ranked, inherited. People were sorted at birth into classes of trustworthy and hostile, and the sorting followed you like a shadow you could never outrun. To imagine yourself as free—not someday, not in another country, but free by right, simply because you were born—was the most dangerous thought a person could have.

And yet some of us had it.

That is the thing I want my fellow Americans to understand as you celebrate this anniversary. The

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men who signed their names in 1776 had no army worth the name, no treasury, no guarantee they would not be hanged for what they wrote. What they had was a conviction so stubborn it outran their own safety. I have met that same conviction. I have seen it in young people who carried it across frozen rivers and through Chinese hiding places and past the constant threat of being sent back to die. They are North Korean escapees, and they are some of the most natural believers in your founding creed I have ever known—because they paid for the belief before they ever heard the words.

For years, I thought escape was the whole story. It is not. Tearing down a wall and building what stands in its place are two different acts, requiring two different kinds of people, and history is unkind to movements that master only the first. Liberation needs courage. What comes after liberation needs something rarer: people who have prepared themselves to lead, to draft laws, to sit across a table from the powerful and not flinch, to imagine a country in detail rather than only in longing.

When the regime in Pyongyang finally falls—and it will, because no system built on that much fear lasts forever—the dangerous question will not be how it ended. It will be who is ready to build what comes next. Will a free North Korea be handed to whoever is closest to the old machinery of power? Or will there be a generation of North Koreans, raised partly in freedom, who understand foreign policy and international law and the unglamorous mechanics of a functioning state, ready to take the pen?

That question is why I founded the [North Korean Young Leaders Assembly](#). Each year, we bring a small group of young North Korean escapees to the United States and put them in the rooms where decisions are made—across from lawmakers, diplomats, scholars, and human rights experts. We do it because I once needed exactly this and never had it. I had survived. I did not yet know how to lead. No one had shown me that the testimony of a person who escaped a dictatorship could move a senator or that a refugee could become a strategist, an advocate, a founder in waiting rather than a permanent victim of someone else's history.

The transformation is not abstract. I have watched a young woman raised in the “hostile” caste of North Korean society stand in a university seminar she could never once have dreamed of and discuss and debate policy with the poise of someone who knows this is exactly where she belongs. I have watched a young mother who spent years hiding in China, flinching at every knock on the door, learn to speak in a public hearing before the U.S. Congress so that others would no longer have to hide. I have watched a person who once believed he had no voice testify before officials in Washington and say aloud the truth he had risked his life to keep secret. None of them are finished. That is the point. They are becoming.

Americans sometimes ask why this should concern them, an ocean and a closed border away. The honest answer is the same one your founders would have given. The creed you celebrate this summer was never meant to be a private possession. It was a claim about every human being, including the twenty-five million still living inside the most closed country on earth, who cannot read this sentence and would be punished for thinking it. A 250th anniversary that means anything has to mean more than nostalgia for one nation's good fortune. It has to be a reminder of what the words were for.

There is also a practical stake. The future of the Korean peninsula—its peace, its stability, the shape of a region that matters enormously to the world—will be written in part by which North Koreans are prepared when the moment comes. Investing in that preparation now is not charity. It is foresight.

I think often about the asymmetry of that signing in 1776. A handful of people put their names to a document on behalf of millions who could not be in the room, and on behalf of generations not yet born. The signature was a kind of trust extended across time. The people I work with are trying to extend the same trust toward a country that does not yet exist—to speak, today, for the millions inside North Korea who still cannot speak, and for the free homeland those millions deserve.

This July, as you watch the fireworks, I would ask only that you widen the circle of who you are celebrating. Somewhere not far from those crowds, ten young people who chose freedom over fear will be sketching the blueprint of a homeland they were forced to flee. They are not asking to be rescued. They have already done the hardest part of that themselves. They are asking for what every founder needs: people willing to stand with them while they prepare to build.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, a few people picked up a pen and signed their names to a promise far larger than their own lives. They did not live to see it kept. That was never the point. The point was that the promise could outlast them—that the pen, once lifted, was meant to be passed from one hand to the next, to anyone with the courage to take it up.

Young North Koreans are reaching for that same pen.

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Empowering Women to Become Moral and Innovative Leaders in Their Communities

Robin McDonough
June 15, 2026

Women are the heartbeat of their families and communities, often working quietly and untiringly to create a nurturing home environment while striving to generate positive change. Providing them with the right tools and skills is essential to building their confidence and creativity. Understanding this, the Global Peace Foundation (GPF) Nepal sponsored several activities during March to bring women together to share experiences, connect, and gain the knowledge and practical skills they need to grow, learn, and become moral and innovative leaders. The activities were carried out under two programs: Saksham Nari Cohort II and Capacity Building of Women, both dedicated to empowering women.



Proposal writing workshop participants

Saksham Nari’s Cohort II continued with three capacity-building sessions: a two-day “Proposal Writing”

workshop on March 16–17, a “Values-Based Peacebuilding” session on exploring personal and shared values in peacebuilding in families and communities on March 24, and a hands-on “Digital Literacy” workshop on March 31. These sessions highlight the importance of combining technical skills with core values for women to create a strong and sustainable foundation.

The “Proposal Writing” workshop provided participants with the fundamental steps to

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participants with the fundamental steps to develop a clear and well-structured proposal. Reflecting on the session, participant Sudina Phuyal shared, “The session was very useful for me as I did not know about proposals before. This session helped me to know what a proposal is and its importance. I am now confident to draft simple proposals for the community projects. I am looking forward to more insightful sessions like this.”

In the “Values-Based Peacebuilding” session, the Saksham Nari fellows engaged in a reflective gathering on values, including empathy, respect, responsibility, and service, and how they play a vital role in shaping individual attitudes and everyday life. Participants took part in interactive discussions and activities that increased their knowledge and understanding of conflict transformation and strengthened their emotional awareness, inspiring them to become active peacebuilders in their families and communities.

“Digital Literacy” was the focus of the third session, where trainer Mamita Bhandari introduced

the fellows to the essential tools and practices for using digital platforms to communicate and learn in a safe and responsible manner. She also stressed the importance of building and maintaining a strong digital footprint. Participant Nitu Kumari reflected, “I truly gained useful knowledge from this session and look forward to applying these skills in my daily activities.”

The Capacity Building of Women program featured a series of structured sessions conducted in collaboration with Nepal Soka Gakkai International. A total of 59 women attended the sessions that included a three-day “Pickle Making” training on March 23–25, followed by a community service activity on March 26, a session on “Peace Begins in the Home” on March 27, and concluding with a session on “Strengthening Family Bonds through Love Language” on March 28. Each session was designed to enhance the women’s competence to navigate their daily lives by equipping them with practical skills, enhanced knowledge, and increased confidence.

The “Pickle Making” training provided the participants with both theoretical knowledge and practical hands-on experience. In addition to teaching eight types of pickle recipes, trainer Mira Kumari Bajgai equipped the participants with essential business knowledge and marketing techniques. Expressing gratitude for the training, participant Deepa Nepali commented on its dual nature, “The training not only taught us how to make pickles but also made us reflect on our importance within our own families.”

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Pickle-making training participants

The day after the training, participants took part in a community service activity, cleaning their

surrounding area. This shared effort fostered collective ownership and responsibility for creating a more sustainable and healthier environment, while also reinforcing the importance of community hygiene.

Family harmony is the foundation upon which community harmony is built. As such, the “Peace Begins in the Home” session engaged participants in a series of discussions to empower women with practical approaches to fostering peaceful relationships within their families and communities. Core values, including dreaming big, ownership, teamwork, and living for the greater good, were highlighted to emphasize the vital role women play in peacebuilding. Participants actively engaged throughout the workshop, sharing their personal experiences on how they maintain harmony and manage conflicts within their families.

Highlighting the importance of emotional connection within families, the final session of the program, “Strengthening Family Bonds through Love Language,” introduced participants to Dr. Gary Chapman’s concept of the Five Love Languages—Words of Affirmation, Acts of Service, Receiving Gifts, Quality Time, and Physical Touch. After taking a Love Language Test to identify their personal love language, participants engaged in discussions on how small acts of love help to create peace and harmony within families and communities. The session underscored how everyday behavior centered on empathy and communication can nurture happier, healthier relationships.

Both programs, Saksham Nari Cohort II and Capacity Building of Women, highlight the importance of empowering women with the knowledge and practical skills they need to become values-based, moral, and innovative leaders. By motivating women to take an active role in their families and communities, these programs lay the foundation for nurturing harmony and creating social cohesion and sustainable peace. The Saksham Nari sessions continue to empower women in April with sessions on financial literacy and soapmaking.

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Wairimu Mwangi
June 17, 2026

The Global Peace Foundation (GPF) Kenya continues to invest in youth-led transformation through its Youth Leadership and Environment Program, equipping young people with the skills, values, and opportunities needed to become ethical leaders and agents of sustainable change across Kenya. Implemented in partnership with the Chandaria Foundation, the President’s Fellowship – Chandaria Legacy Award Program has emerged as an influential platform for nurturing values-based leadership, strengthening civic participation, and advancing environmental stewardship among young people from all 47 counties of Kenya.

The initiative aligns with the vision of the Global Peace Foundation of building peaceful and cohesive societies rooted in the principle of One Family under God. Through mentorship, experiential learning, and practical leadership training, the program empowers youth to address pressing social challenges while contributing to sustainable development within their communities.

Building Youth Capacity Through Proposal Development Training

One of the program’s key interventions in April



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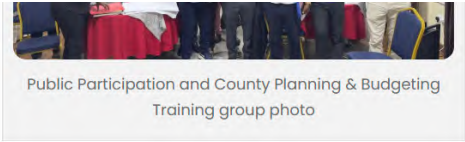
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2026 was a Proposal Development Training held under the President’s Fellowship – Chandaria Legacy Award. The training equipped 64 young leaders with practical skills in proposal writing, project design, and resource mobilization.



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The training responded to a significant capacity gap identified among participants. Baseline findings revealed that more than 63 percent of respondents lacked knowledge of proposal development, while over 76 percent had never successfully accessed funding for their initiatives. Through practical coaching, real-time mentoring, and structured proposal development exercises, participants gained the confidence and technical skills needed to develop competitive and results-oriented proposals.

For many participants, the experience marked a turning point in their leadership journeys.

“Before attending the training, I was in the process of establishing a mental health program in my community, but one of the greatest challenges I faced was securing adequate funding to support the initiative,” shared Iteyo Khaisia. “Through the fellowship training, I gained practical skills in developing structured, persuasive, and results-oriented proposals. As a result, I have now been able to prepare strong proposals that are currently under consideration for support.”

Similarly, Elizabeth Mokaya described the program as transformative in strengthening her professional and community development skills.

“The training helped me learn how to plan projects more strategically by carefully defining goals, preparing realistic budgets, and identifying measurable results before implementation,” she said.

“I now feel more confident in my ability to contribute to development initiatives and help bring lasting change to my county.”

For Flora Cherop Ngurialuk, Director of KAPCHIKATAT CBO, the program strengthened her ability to translate grassroots challenges into sustainable development interventions.

“The training equipped me with practical skills to design clear, compelling, and results-oriented proposals that can effectively communicate community needs to potential donors and development partners,” she noted. “I now feel better prepared to mobilize resources, build partnerships, and lead initiatives that can drive meaningful and lasting change within my community.”

The training also attracted emerging young leaders like Kelvin V. Mbithi, who emphasized the program’s role in helping youth move from ideas to action.

“The President’s Fellowship – Chandaria Legacy

The President's Fellowship – Chandaria Legacy Award has done more than teach me proposal writing; it has given me the tools to move from vision to action, and from passion to lasting impact,” he said.

Advancing Youth Participation in Governance and Civic Leadership



GPF Program Manager Mr. Vincent Ayako led a high-level panel discussion on “Partnerships: Collaboration for Impact” as part of #YouthSDGsWeek2026

Beyond technical training, the program also strengthened youth engagement in governance and civic

participation.

On April 23, 2026, GPF Kenya partnered with I Choose Life Africa to facilitate a youth training forum in Machakos County under the SEALS Program. More than 30 youth from multiple counties were trained on county planning, budgeting processes, public participation, and anti-corruption practices.

Led by Mr. Vincent Ayako, youth leadership and environment program manager at GPF Kenya, the initiative enhanced young people’s understanding of governance systems and strengthened their capacity to participate meaningfully in transparent and accountable development planning.

The program further reinforced its commitment to youth-centered development during #YouthSDGsWeek2026 held at the Kenya School of Government. During the national convening, Mr. Vincent Ayako participated in a high-level panel discussion on “Partnerships: Collaboration for Impact,” which explored the importance of inclusive partnerships, youth-friendly financing mechanisms, and greater youth participation in decision-making processes.

The engagement brought together more than 300 youth from across Kenya’s 47 counties and highlighted the growing need for development models rooted in shared ownership, accountability, and sustainable impact.

Expanding Environmental Stewardship Through School-Based Tree Nurseries

The program also continued advancing environmental stewardship through the Chandaria



Tree Nurseries Initiative.

In partnership with the Chandaria

Foundation, GPF Kenya commenced the construction of a KES 1.2 million tree nursery at St. Peter’s Senior School, Ndalù, in April 2026. The project marks the 22nd tree nursery established under the initiative since 2022.

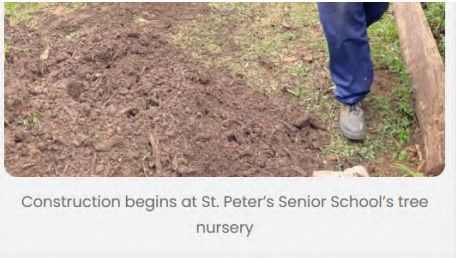
To date, the program has established 21 tree nurseries across 17 counties, directly benefiting 19 schools nationwide. The initiative supports Kenya’s national target of planting 15 billion trees by 2032 through a structured model consisting of 60 percent indigenous trees, 30 percent fruit trees, and 10 percent exotic species.

By actively involving students, teachers, and communities in environmental restoration efforts, the initiative is nurturing a generation of environmentally conscious young leaders committed to environmental resilience and sustainable development.

A Growing Movement of Youth-Led Transformation

Through leadership training, civic engagement, environmental action, and mentorship, the Youth Leadership and Environment Program by GPF Kenya demonstrates a holistic approach to peacebuilding and sustainable development. The program continues to cultivate a growing network of empowered young leaders equipped not only with knowledge and technical skills, but also with the ethical grounding and sense of responsibility needed to transform their communities.

Discover more about the [Global Peace Foundation’s Youth Leadership Development initiatives](#), which empower young people around the world to become ethical, innovative, and service-driven leaders creating lasting positive change in their communities and beyond.



Construction begins at St. Peter’s Senior School’s tree nursery

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Building Bridges in Baltimore: Fostering Dialogue, Relationships, and Community Action

Robin McDonough

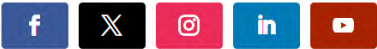
June 19, 2026

As co-coordinators of the Baltimore Cross-Community Reconciliation Project (BCCRP), Gail Hambleton and Alan Inman are utilizing their unique backgrounds and skills to cultivate peacebuilding and racial reconciliation in the city. Joining forces at the Global Peace Foundation (GPF), they have established a project team dedicated to delivering multiple peacebuilding initiatives in Baltimore—a city still coping with its racial history and striving for harmony among its diverse residents. Grounded in GPF’s vision of One Family Under God based on a foundation of our shared humanity, Gail, Alan, and BCCRP’s partners, stakeholders, and project team members are collaborating with local individuals and cross-sector organizations to transform relationships and create sustainable peace and social cohesion in Baltimore.

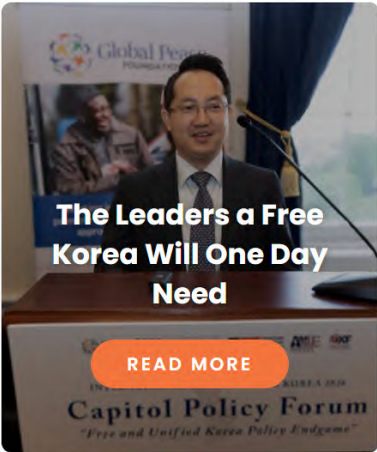
To learn more about Gail, Alan, and the BCCRP, visit [Exploring Life & Business with Alan Inman and Gail Hambleton of Global Peace Foundation – VoyageBaltimore Magazine | Baltimore’s Most Inspiring Stories](#)

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Beyond Denuclearization: Advancing the Vision of a Free and Unified Korea

Anu Lama

May 1, 2026

Speaking at the North Korea Freedom Week forum in Washington, Ambassador Robert Joseph, former undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, argued against denuclearization negotiations with North Korea. He stressed that such talks would give “lifelines” to a regime that “imprisons, tortures, and kills its own people” and will never give up its nuclear weapons. The argument was further strengthened in a policy report by the National Institute for Public Policy, chaired by Amb. Joseph, which concluded that denuclearization diplomacy has failed for three decades because of efforts to separate the nuclear issue from the regime’s nature.

Amid renewed debate over denuclearization and North Korea, the policy report on “free and unified Korea” emphasized that unification is not “an alternative to denuclearization but its completion.” Without addressing the structural division of the Korean Peninsula, neither the nuclear threat nor human rights issues can be resolved.

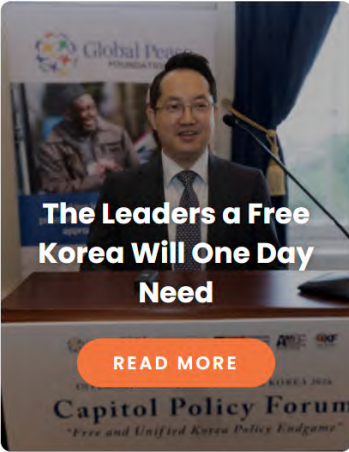
This aligns with Global Peace Foundation’s (GPF) long-standing advocacy for Korean unification, which calls for peace through reunification rooted in shared identity, freedom, and the aspirations of the Korean people beyond the 38th parallel. With various campaigns and initiatives, GPF advances the “One Korea” vision rooted in Hongik Ingan, meaning “for the benefit of all humankind,” and affirms that peaceful unification would result in lasting peace, regional stability, and human dignity not only on the Korean peninsula but also as a model for the world.

The North Korea Freedom Week discussions provided strong international validation for GPF’s

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“One Korea” advocacy, which promotes peaceful Korean reunification rooted in freedom, human rights, and shared Korean identity. The event further reinforces GPF’s position that lasting peace on the peninsula cannot be achieved through denuclearization efforts alone but through a comprehensive vision for a free and unified Korea.

Read the event coverage by UPI here:
https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2026/04/30/denuclearization-nonproliferation-negotiation-irrelevant/1501777590334/

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The Time to Build Global Peace is Now.

Together, we heal divisions and build hope.



Mission-Driven

The work we do at Global Peace Foundation demonstrates that unity and peace are not distant ideals, but actions we take together.

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The World Needs Peace

How do **you** want to support?



"Peace isn't just the absence of violence or conflict, but I think it's a state where people can come to their full potential. They can feel free to be able to be creative, to be giving, and reach a higher state than what they currently are."

- Risa Perea (USA)



One Korea Global Campaign

Support a Korean-led peaceful unification, envisioning a free and unified Korea that is nuclear-free and upholds freedom, democratic values, the rule of law, and human rights as an urgent goal.



Freedom of Conscience, Belief, and Religion

Support multilateral initiatives that provide education, awareness, and advocacy in addressing international religious freedom violations and domestic religious liberty infringements.



"This was my first time attending a training like this. I was happy to sit and learn with women from other religions. We discovered we share the same family origin...We left not just with knowledge, but also with friendship and peace."

- Aisha Yusuf (Nigeria)



Women and Families in Peacebuilding

Support the mentorships, networking platforms, and ongoing enrichment programs that uplift the values and dignity of women, support the development of service-minded leadership on all levels, and strengthen families.



Community-Driven Peacebuilding

Support community members, faith leaders, and local officials to establish dialogue, build trust, and forge lasting relationships by affirming universally recognized principles and shared values, which are the foundation for social cohesion.



"This initiative has made a significant impact on the lives of our residents, especially during this season of giving. It shows how collective efforts can bring meaningful change to communities in need."

- Mayor George D. Suayan of Candelaria (Philippines)



Development and Service

Support community-driven programs that empower community members and local organizations as assets and partners to lead in exploring sustainable solutions to meet local economic and environmental challenges.



Transforming Education

Support transforming the education ecosystem with inputs from the community, employers, and parents to build an engaging learning environment to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship, cross-cultural understanding, and peaceful schools and communities.

\$10

Other

Frequency

One-time

Donate

\$10

Other

Frequency

One-time

Donate



"Hearing stories from fellow youth around the world reminded me that peace is not just a political goal, it is something we can all contribute to through simple, collective actions."

- Devina Andreny Wongso (Indonesia)



Youth Leadership Development

Support providing programs for youth peacebuilding education, cross-community, and intergenerational dialogue, leadership development, and capacity-building.

\$50

USD

\$50

\$25

\$10

Other

Frequency

One-time

Donate



Community Safety and Preventing Targeted Violence

Support efforts on building resilient communities, raising awareness and sharing information about important safety topics, and helping prevent targeted violence, extremism, and terrorism.

\$50

USD

\$50

\$25

\$10

Other

Frequency

One-time

Donate

Activity

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Donated \$10.00 to Global Peace Foundation.

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Daniel Bessell 2w

Donated \$25.00 to Global Peace Foundation and generously covered the fees.

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jordan dale 5/10/26

Donated \$10.00 to Global Peace Foundation.

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Frequently asked questions

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