

faces of peace

the people behind our stories



Annual Report 2016-2017

Officers' Letter

During the past year, the world has witnessed unprecedented change on so many levels: societal, political, and environmental. We are bombarded with information on a daily basis, simultaneously pulling us together while, in some ways, driving cultures and people further toward isolation.

As we celebrate our 19th year, we are proud to remain steadfast in our commitment to building close, personal connections. While our global reach is broader than ever before, it is the personal stories of communities and individuals that demonstrate the full power of Play for Peace. In this annual report, we share these intimate stories of the people we touch through our work.

Growing as We Go

As we look ahead, we are committed to increasing the number of members we have and opening new clubs, with an emphasis on programs in the United States and with displaced people all over the world. And, in honor of the UN International Day of Friendship, we are challenging ourselves to create 10,000 friendships among children, teens, and adults from different sides of conflict. As such, we hope to open spaces for dialogue, collaboration, and partnership.

We are also harnessing the power of technology and social media in order to develop an app for our volunteers around the globe. This will help to collect necessary data, engage and train our volunteers on an ongoing basis, and support our community.

Our Successes This Year

In 2016 - 2017, our impact was both broad and deep, with measurable results across the globe. We are proud of our continued efforts in 14 countries as well as significant growth in new locations. See our timeline and recap of the year for a full overview, and read on for an inside look at the many faces that comprise Play for Peace. We are extremely proud of all we've accomplished this year and of all the people who make our work possible.



John Guarrine
Board Chair



Sarah Gough
Executive Director

Successes of 2016-2017



About Us

Mission

To bring together children, youth, and organizations in communities in conflict, using cooperative play to create laughter, compassion, and peace.

Vision

To ignite learning initiatives in regions around the globe, networking as one unified community that contributes to a more peaceful world.



Core Values

Where We Are



Clubs



Trainers



Volunteers

Australia	Volunteer
Cameroon	Volunteer
Canada	Trainer, Volunteer
China	Trainer
Czech Republic	Volunteer
France	Volunteer
Germany	Trainer, Volunteer
Greece	Club
Guatemala	Club, Trainer
India	Club, Trainer, Volunteer
Ireland	Volunteer
Israel	Club, Trainer
Japan	Trainer
Kenya	Volunteer

Latvia	Trainer
Mexico	Club, Trainer, Volunteer
Myanmar	Club, Trainer
Nepal	Club, Trainer
New Zealand	Volunteer
Pakistan	Club
Philippines	Club, Trainer, Volunteer
Senegal	Club
South Africa	Trainer
South Sudan	Club
Switzerland	Volunteer, Trainer
U.K.	Volunteer
United Arab Emirates	Volunteer
U.S.A.	Club, Trainer, Volunteer
Vietnam	Club, Trainer

Who We Are

Play for Peace is a strong, global community that includes more than 3,000 members of different nationalities, backgrounds, and beliefs.

-  **64 Trainers**
-  **180 Mentors**
-  **103 Volunteers**
-  **63 Clubs**

• We speak 35 languages

japanese **english** nepali
SPANISH *French*
arabic Hindi ITALIAN
german serbian
polish CHINESE

We create safe and inclusive spaces for learning that are open and welcoming to all dimensions of the human family.

Despite our differences, we all believe that through the power of laughter and play, we can build friendships across divides and come together in peace.



The Many faces of Play for Peace®

Some would say that the ever-present use of technology has brought us closer together. But so often, the true character of a person is lost without face-to-face contact or intimacy.

The work of Play for Peace profoundly touches children, youth, and communities in conflict in more than 14 countries. Their experiences blossom into relationships founded on understanding, compassion, and kindness. They are encouraged to move from isolation, fear, and violence to a place of inspiration, and connection.

In this annual report, we want to share with you so many people behind our stories: the people who do the hard work, who benefit, and how they all grow together in collaboration and peace.

WE CREATE
INCLUSIVE
LEARNING
AND WELL-BEING
DIMENSIONS

Our Community: Children and Teens

Few things provide a common link among youth like play and laughter. Play creates a gateway to moments when differences dissolve, fear melts away, and we see what connects us rather than what divides us. Here we share stories of children and teens from the past year. While some are growing up with extreme poverty and violence and others are affected by the refugee crisis, through Play for Peace they are choosing compassion and peace and learning to do so through the joy of play.



Guillermo

Ten-year-old Guillermo is from an indigenous farming family in Escuintla, Guatemala. Growing up in an area run by cartels, gangs, drugs, and alcohol, he was known in his neighborhood for being violent. However, once Israel, the local Play for Peace mentor, invited him to take part in Play for Peace activities, his behavior started to change. A defining moment for Guillermo came when he participated in community service with his local Play for Peace group. When drunks started to yell at and make fun of them from a local bar, Israel defended the group and kept encouraging them, saying that they have the power to improve their neighborhood. Israel is encouraged by Guillermo's transformation: **"He finds good friends in these types of activities. He has learned to live with kids that once wouldn't talk to him, and they have become friends."**



Mamadou

A 12-year-old boy of Guinean descent, Mamadou was living in an overcrowded shanty town outside of Dakar, Senegal, when he met local Play for Peace mentor, El Hadj. He was not attending school and was undocumented. After participating regularly in Play for Peace activities, he started to believe that he could become a good person, face many challenges, and help others overcome their difficulties. Mamadou once was rejected by the community for being poor, picking up scrap and selling it, and going frequently to gambling halls. Now, everything has changed. **"Thanks to Play for Peace, I attend school and have a birth certificate. The Play for Peace Senegal team gathers all the children after school so that we do not wander the streets. They put us in an environment where children are motivated and inspired to do their best."**



Jamal

A member of the Yazidi people, Jamal and his community experienced much death and destruction at the hands of ISIS. In 2014, his village was attacked, and thousands were killed or held in captivity. Finally, the Iraqi government opened a way out, so Jamal and other survivors walked for 60 hours from the North of Iraq to Syria and then from Syria to Kurdistan. They stayed there for one year without schools or homes. They were then smuggled into Turkey, and finally took a dangerous trip by boat to Greece. Once in Greece, Jamal became a Play for Peace youth facilitator at the Skaramangas Refugee Camp, which has had a lasting effect on him and members his community. He observed that through Play for Peace the people in his community made many friends and learned to speak English, which was very cool to see.

Today, Jamal has the strength and character to proclaim, **"We want only to stand together in peace and stop the destruction."**



Azhar

Azhar is an 18-year-old girl from Syria who currently resides in the Skaramangas Refugee Camp in Greece. Children at Skaramangas are from Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan—and before they started attending Play for Peace sessions they didn't know each other. Despite being displaced from their homes, they still find space to cherish one another, and together with volunteers and trainers, they are smiling and welcoming each new day.

When veteran Play for Peace trainers Swati and Agyat arrived at Skaramangas this past spring, Azhar would not even step out of her caravan, preferring to spend time teaching her younger siblings. Now Azhar is a regular participant in Play for Peace sessions and she even helps with translating, as she understands English as well as Arabic and Kurdish. Azhar hopes that one day she will be able to help the poor and the needy.

Our Community: Adults

There is no greater evidence of Play for Peace's impact than watching kids grow into adults who, in turn, take up the reins of our important work. Now that Play for Peace has reached its 19th year, we are seeing more young men and women give back to their communities, passing on what they learned as children.

Thozi Ndlazi



Growing up in Cape Town, South Africa, during the Apartheid era, Thozi Ndlazi is no stranger to discrimination. He was raised by a single mother with three other brothers, and the village he inhabited was predominantly black. Segregation was not only something he experienced but something that he learned—even in school. Thozi was initially skeptical about Play for Peace, but after a memorable training with co-founder Craig Dobkin, his interest was piqued.

Through a Play for Peace internship in Colorado, Thozi saw the need to spread the organization's methodology in his home country. Upon his return to South Africa, Thozi started a youth organization with other youth facilitators. He currently runs diversity camps and leadership development programs using Play for Peace methodology centered around the values of collaboration, trust, compassion, and tolerance.

Imroz Shaw



Imroz Shaw has been a beloved member of the Play for Peace community for over 17 years. She joined as a youth facilitator, then became a certified trainer and program coordinator, and most recently, held the crucial role of global operations manager. Simultaneously, she completed a bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's degree in international peace and humanitarian law.

Her most poignant memory is from 2006 when she worked in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands after a devastating tsunami. She recalls a young boy who had lost everything, his family, friends, and home. But in a Play for Peace session, he was finally able to laugh and let go of some of his sadness. Imroz was quick to realize the power of this experience. Today, Imroz is pursuing a juris doctorate degree in immigration law and international human rights.

Our Community: Local Partners

Play for Peace is fortunate enough to partner with several organizations around the globe that have a similar focus and mission. Through these wonderful groups we can better reach communities dealing with poverty, war, and natural disaster, and help change the lives of children through laughter and play.



Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA)

Play for Peace partners with HOLA, a not-for-profit organization that helps vulnerable youth. With the help of 12 teen youth facilitators, the group holds training sessions each week to learn new games and tips, and then one other day works with more than 250 elementary school kids from a local community overrun by poverty and crime. Play for Peace empowers them to work together toward a common goal, and to feel like their contributions make a difference.

The HOLA community includes immigrant populations from throughout the globe, including North America, Central America, Asia, and parts of Africa. While these populations are sometimes in conflict, here different cultures find commonality and learn about one another. Says one youth facilitator, **"We try to create harmony through group challenges and initiatives, reflection, communication, and collaboration. We want to send youth into the world with a greater understanding and appreciation of differences."**

Our Community: Mentors

Around the world, Play for Peace Clubs are forming in schools, organizations, neighborhoods, and communities with the support of Play for Peace Mentors. In these youth-led clubs, projects are launched in response to a local need with the support of an adult mentor. The outcome? Communities that are more unified, self-sufficient, and resilient in the face of challenges. Here is a success story from one of our Play for Peace mentors.

Runny Kayastha



Runny Kayastha began her career as a teacher, but after two and half years, she wanted a break to explore other options. Through the Global Peace Youth Corps in Nepal, Runny learned about Play for Peace, and later became a mentor. Although she was skeptical about the effectiveness of certain activities, she soon observed the way students became more cooperative and comfortable with each other. She ultimately learned to be creative in dealing with any resistance from participants as she taught them new ways of observation. In Nepal, an area with a multitude of ethnic and religious groups, she also found ways to approach cultural differences, including to encourage students to take pride in their various backgrounds. Her impression of Play for Peace? **"These games are not just games; they can teach you so many things that are useful in your life."**

Our Community: Trainers

Play for Peace trainers are diverse in nationality, gender, race, abilities, religion, and age, and collectively speak over a dozen languages. We have trainers located in more than 15 countries, and many who travel around the globe to conduct Play for Peace trainings. Here is one success story from our incredible trainer community.

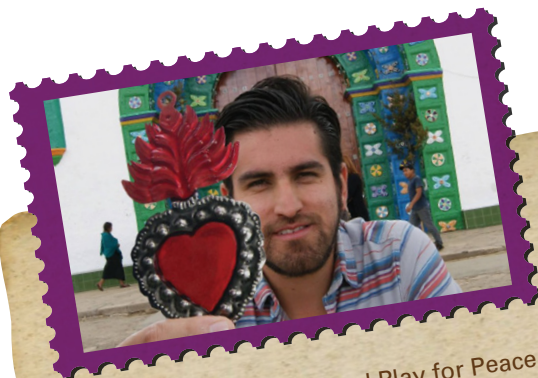
Ajat Shatru



After years of working as a lawyer and then in corporate sales, Ajat Shatru began his "third life" in India as a Play for Peace trainer, seeking to change the conditions of his local community. He immediately found deep purpose and fulfillment in training the next generation to find their own voices and help inspire more cooperation within their communities. His dedication to children and peace later led him on a 12-day journey across Nepal and Bangladesh to conduct Play for Peace trainings and share his commitment to Play for Peace's mission. But his work didn't stop there: Ajat recently brought his much-needed skills to work with youth in the Play for Peace club at the Skaramangas Refugee Camp in Greece.

Our Community: Volunteers

It is thanks to the support and dedication of more than 100 volunteers around the globe that Play for Peace is thriving and reaches communities worldwide. Our volunteers lend their time to help with fundraising events, communications efforts, translation, and more—all because they believe in our mission as much as we do. Here is the story of one of these exceptional volunteers.



Francisco Hueyatl

Francisco Hueyatl joined Play for Peace as a volunteer graphic designer, but soon began to realize that Play for Peace's mission spoke to him in bigger ways. In his words, "Play for Peace inspires hope and a window for us to peek into what a better society could look like." Also a professor, he had contact with young people every day, and saw that universities are fertile soil for inspiring new ideas and ways of thinking for them. Fast forward to February 2017, when Francisco facilitated Mexico's participation in the Compassion Games' World Interfaith Harmony Week. Nearly one hundred youths participated in 15 different groups, each tackling their own challenges. From his experiences, Francisco has found that, "Play for Peace teaches us that we can change, and instead of letting the sour flavor of negativity take over, we can see incredible opportunity."

In Recognition

We could not do the work we do without the incredible donations of time, talent, and expertise from those who make up the Play for Peace global community, including board members, staff, trainers, mentors, youth leaders, donors, and volunteers. **With tremendous gratitude, we recognize their contributions during the 2016-2017 fiscal year.**



Board of Directors

John Guarrine, Chair
Lisa Gelsomino, Vice Chair
Kevin Creely, Treasurer
Janet McDonnell, Secretary
Mark Havens
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Play for Peace Founders

Craig Dobkin
Michael Terrien



Advisors

Hema Pokharna, Ph.D.
Tom Smith, Ph.D.



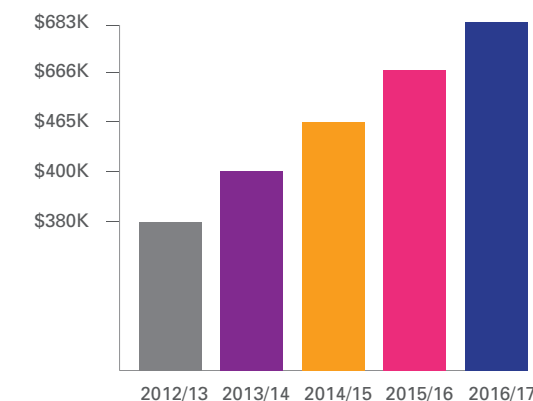
Staff Members

Sarah Gough, Executive Director
Imroz Shaw, Global Operations Manager

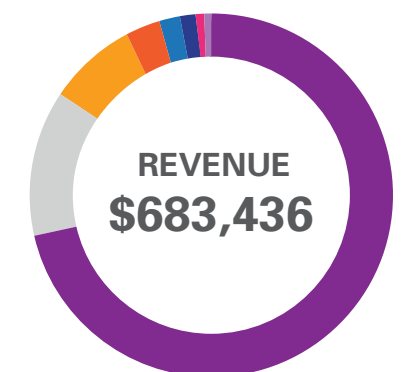
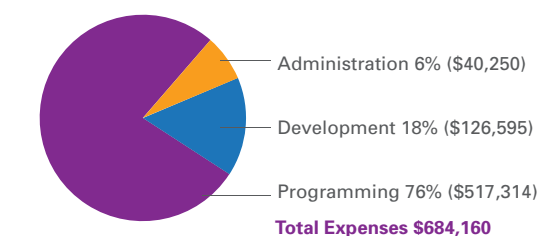
Play for Peace® Financial Statement 2016-2017

This report depicts Play for Peace financial activities for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2017. It has been reviewed by Dana & Co. and approved by Play for Peace board member and treasurer, Kevin Creely.

REVENUE GROWTH



HOW WE USE OUR FUNDS



- Events \$81,455
- Campaigns \$59,184
- Grants \$11,000
- General Donations \$16,340
- Training Workshop \$3,807
- Memberships \$7,400
- In-kind Services \$498,102
- Other \$6,148



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