



Connect locally - Empower Globally

news

Peace Geeks welcomed over 100 guests to its October 23rd Peace Art Exhibit & Launch, which featured three speakers, five performers and sixteen art installations.

The event explored the concept of peace through a diverse range of artistic expression and featured stories about exciting innovations in art and technology that are influencing social change in some of the most challenging corners of the world.

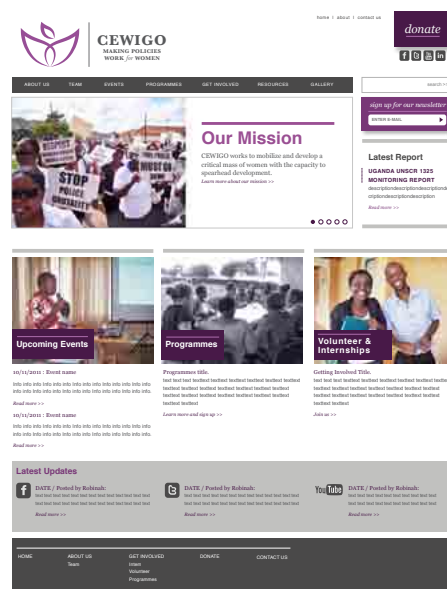
Since we started operations six months ago, we have started or completed several projects for two main organizations, the Centre for Women in Governance (CEWIGO) in Uganda (see featured project) and HarassMap in Egypt. For HarassMap, volunteer Reem Morsi worked on the video program, Jen Crane worked on a logo redesign, Shay Namazi led a print campaign, Constance Hummel and Rasha Hodaly worked on a team building project, and Sunny Shah has worked on an animation project. We are excited to start a new project with the Women's Advocacy Network, which supports and empowers women who have managed to return home after being abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda.

Peace Geeks would like to welcome several new volunteers to the team, including Lindsay Macintosh and Birgitta von Krosigk who will manage Human Resources, Corey Barr, who will lead fundraising and graphic design volunteer Neeveen Bhadur.

Finally, we are pleased to announce our founding Board, which will first meet in January and will include Bill Black (retired CEO and corporate director), Wayne Thompson (Ernst & Young), David Wotherspoon (Fasken, Martineau, DuMoulin, LLP), Richard Smith (Simon Fraser University), Lewis Evans (Marketing consultant), Soudeh Jamshidian (Environmental policy expert) and Ron Laufer (International elections expert).



current project



In December 2011, Peace Geeks wrapped up a project with the Uganda-based Centre for Women in Governance (CEWIGO), located in Kampala, Uganda, which works to strengthen the participation of women in leadership positions in the national government. This project began when Peace Geeks volunteer Cheryl Loh - who is completing her 3rd year of Graphic Design at Emily Carr – approached Peace Geeks looking for an organization we were working with that could benefit from her course deliverables for one of her classes. We matched her with CEWIGO, and between September and December 2011, Cheryl designed a new CEWIGO logo; created new business cards and letterhead; developed a comprehensive style guide to help with all CEWIGO communications; redesigned CEWIGO's annual report on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women, Peace & Security); developed a great new website (<http://www.>

www.cewigo.org), and; produced a short animation that tells website visitors who they are, what they do and how they do it. In addition to Cheryl, Peace Geeks volunteers Scott Nelson, Renee Stephen and Catherine Winters played an instrumental role in coding the design and getting the content management system up and running. More recently, Scott has been training CEWIGO staff and their tech support company TruIT on how to manage the content and administer their new website. They will eventually be self-sufficient. In the meantime, Peace Geeks will continue to answer any outstanding questions they have to strengthen their technology and communications capacities. *It has been a great collaborative effort with CEWIGO blending student partnerships with the PeaceGeeks mandate of improving technologies to create positive change.*

peace art

Soudeh Jamshidian

PEACE IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST COMPLEX CONCEPTS in human history. It can be understood simply as a state of harmony, or characterized as the lack of violent conflict, or it can be as complicated as the battle for sustaining life and hope and humanity in zones of conflict.

No matter how complex it seems, peace is a genuine human and personal concept that can be communicated beyond the boundaries of

culture and language. Similar to peace, art is a universal language that can bypass the political, cultural and language barriers to touch the deepest of human feelings.

I was going to write about the role that art can play in building peace but I decided to share a picture with you and tell a personal story; A very simple story that made me realize how a painting can lit the sparkle of hope.



I took this picture in May 2010 in Kabul. It was a beautiful spring day and the morning rain had washed all the dust from the city's face. The sky was so clear and the sun was shining but the unpaved streets were now muddy, making it harder for pedestrians to commute. I was in an armored UN car, feeling too privileged for not walking in the traffic, that I noticed this scene; A disabled man sitting right next to one of concrete security walls in Kabul City Centre. The concrete security walls are quiet common in Kabul. You can see them around embassies, ministries and the presidential palace. But this one had something really special: paintings with messages of peace and freedom! The man has a small scale in front of him, trying to make a



small living from it and the sign above his head says: Peace, People's Wish. This neighborhood in Kabul had experienced numerous suicide attacks and explosions but right in that moment, I was hit by the power of art. Those random simple paintings in one of the most dangerous parts of Kabul had an important message of hope, for everyone, not only the Afghans but also for the aid workers, UN and NGO members, staff of the companies and even the soldiers. Through the days when life seems so tough, a small painting can be a messenger of hope, a common dream that might otherwise be forgotten - for "some day that we are all going to live in peace".

peace tech

Rick Havlak

POLLIT is a new tool designed by California-based InSTEDD (Innovative Support To Emergencies, Diseases, and Disasters), an organization that produces open source software to help humanitarian organizations to help improve health, safety and development. The goal of pollit is to makes it easy for NGOs to connect and engage communities in planning and monitoring of community programs and policies.

Using only a mobile phone and a computer, Pollit allows organizations to poll constituents using text messages from any text-capable cell phone. Pollsters just need to create a poll using Google Forms, and Pollit automatically sending one question at a time to a specified list of mobile phone numbers. As recipients reply, their responses are recorded in a Google Spreadsheet and can be analyzed on their phone or easily exported to other applications, eliminating the need to manually record responses.

Here are some examples of how we think Pollit tool can help organizations working on peace, accountability and human rights:

- **Identifying community needs:** Before the start of a project, Pollit can allow you to perform baseline polls, survey communities to identify priority issues, and highlight issues your organization may not be aware of.



Image source: <http://pollit.instedd.org/>

- **Evaluating program success:** You can then use Pollit to check in with communities and collect feedback on the effectiveness of ongoing programs and continuously improve delivery and impact.

- **Knowledge assessment:** You can also use Pollit to follow-up with participants after an educational program has completed to evaluate and strengthen learning, as well as identifying students or topics where more focus is needed.

For more information about Pollit, or to download this and other InSTEDD technologies, visit their website at instedd.org.

KNOW ABOUT THE TOR PROJECT?

Tor is a tool that is used to enable secure, anonymous browsing experience. Click [here](#) for a video about tricks and tools various governments use to disrupt Tor.

success stories

PEACE GEEKS IS VERY EXCITED ABOUT SEVERAL RECENT SUCCESSES FOR BOTH OUR ORGANIZATION AND OUR TEAM MEMBERS.

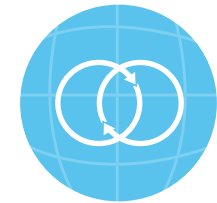
First, we are thrilled to congratulate Cheryl Loh who won the 2011 Jim Rimmer Scholarship for Design for her print and web design work for the Centre for Women in Governance. See Current Projects for more details on this project. In addition, we are excited to congratulate volunteer Carey Hoffman was also able to use Peace Geeks as a reference when applying for jobs upon graduation from BCIT. Carey was able to land a great job with an innovative organization called ActiveState, which focuses on dynamic language applications.

As an organization, Peace Geeks is also starting to draw more attention from different sources. We are expecting to shortly receive project submissions from interesting organizations all around the world, including from South Korea, the Phillipines, the Gulu region of Northern Uganda and the Amazon. These groups are working on issues ranging from trafficking in persons, deforestation, reconciliation and capacity-building around issues affecting indigenous communities worldwide. We are excited for what we know is going to be a great first year ahead!

get involved

Peacegeeks has a growing team of talented volunteers with various professional backgrounds.

From law to human resources, applied science to information technology gurus, we have a group of individuals willing to share their skills with global organizations working on peace and human rights.



Do you want to join a network of individuals dedicated to global change? Register as a volunteer with PeaceGeeks!

[Register online \(click here!\)](#) to join the volunteer database and once you are accepted, you can apply to specific projects as opportunities become available. Whether you are working on harassment issues in Egypt, assisting with operations, or helping to fundraise for the organization here in Canada, your contribution is an important part of PeaceGeeks success.

PeaceGeeks recognizes that your time is valuable and we are able to accommodate schedules with flexible timelines and online meetings with your Project Manager and client organization.

If you have a desire to be a part of change, have an impact, and connect with new cultures and individuals then we want to learn more about you!

Want more information? [Visit our website.](#)

Ready to join us? Email a statement of interest to recruiting@peacegeeks.org

contact us

WWW.PEACEGEEKS.ORG

Renee Black

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
renee@peacegeeks.org

Rasha Hodaly

PEACE GEEKS ADMINISTRATION
rasha@peacegeeks.org

Lindsay Macintosh

PEACE GEEKS HUMAN RESOURCES
recruiting@peacegeeks.org

Scott Nelson

PEACE GEEKS TECHNOLOGY
scott.nelson@peacegeeks.org

follow us

