The Cyprus Friendship Program Reorganizes for 2018

The Cyprus Friendship Program has proudly entered its 10th year. We have served our mission well and have touched the lives of over 700 teens, not to mention their families and friends. We have helped the teens gain confidence in their understanding of history by seeing various perspectives and given them the skills to continue their peace building efforts. We have created a forum for them to forge lifelong relationships with their pairs, American host families and fellow campers. Host families have opened their homes and hearts to the teen participants as a way to contribute to the betterment of others.

CFP’s Mission Expands

At the close of 2017, CFP was seeking ways to improve our efforts of bringing the divided communities of Cyprus together. After much retrospection and strategic planning, and thanks to an engaged and experienced board of trustees, it was agreed that the time was right to expand our reach and become more of an international peacebuilding organization—providing us with the opportunity to combine our Cypriot teens with teenagers from other areas of the world in conflict. Rather than build volunteer coordinator groups in these other conflict areas, CFP will partner with existing peace organizations to offer home stays as an extension of existing peace camps. CFP will also work to expand our camps in Cyprus. This summer we are conducting a two week pilot program on the U.S. east coast with our first partner, the Jerusalem Peace Builders (JPB). (See article.) The U.S. west coast will proceed with our usual month long Cypriot program. Should all go well, as expected, we will begin mixing Cypriot teen pairs with pairs from Israel and Palestine in 2019.

CFP’s Core Mission Strengthens

Changes have been occurring in our traditional program as well. This year, five new Cypriot Coordinators and four new U.S. Area Coordinators have joined the CFP team. (See articles.) Maui, Hawaii has been added as a new CFP region. A new organizational structure is being tried in Cyprus—a single team with individualized responsibilities, rather than a parallel bi-communal sharing of duties. The U.S. is working to educate and strengthen host families as “discussion facilitators” to their teens and in the various approaches to conflict resolution.

We at CFP are excited and energized by our new opportunities. If you are interested in joining the team or have suggestions to further expand the U.S. areas, please contact:

newsletter@cyprusfriendship.org
The 2018 Cypriot Coordinator Team

Simge Kahvecioglu, Lead Coordinator
Simge has been a CFP Coordinator since 2009. She is a Mathematics teacher at a public secondary school in Nicosia. She is also a member of The Bi-communal Technical Committee on Education and has been involved in peace making on the island since her teenage years.

Georgia Argyrou, Database Coordinator
Georgia completed her BA in Social and Political Sciences at the University of Cyprus and her MA in Cross Cultural Communication and International Management at Newcastle University. She currently works at the University of Nicosia for the Erasmus+ Programme.

Maria Asvesta
Maria has been teaching economics and business classes for 27 years. She is currently the Assistant Head of the English School, Nicosia with special responsibilities in the field of Student Voice and Diversity/Citizenship Education. She has special interests in Human Rights/Peace Education and has been a contributor to a book published by Palgrave in 2013 titled Integrated Education in Conflicted Societies.

Fuat Emirtaneoglu, Camp Coordinator
Fuat, a 2010 CFP Alum, practices law in Cyprus. He is actively involved in youth work and bi-communal activities as well as matters concerning democracy, freedoms and the environment.

George Koumandaris, Camp Coordinator
George lives in Larnaca. He is an active hiker and involved in a variety of youth related activities in Cyprus. He attended the Pascal English School and graduated in 2009.

Çise Sakalli, Communications Coordinator
Çise has been a CFP Coordinator since 2009. She teaches English at a public secondary school in Nicosia and has been involved in peace efforts since she was a teenager.

Ioanna Skordi
Ioanna teaches Greek at The Junior and the Senior School, in Nicosia, with BA, MA, and PhD studies at the University of Cyprus and at King’s College London. She has been a journalist and enjoys working with young people and promoting education and learning.
The 2018 U.S. Area Coordinator Team

Don Guziewicz, Executive Director

Don, a retired engineer, has been Executive Director since 2016. He has been active in CFP since our inception in 2009 and was active in our Northern Ireland program for many years before.

Wendy Acosta, Maui, HI Coordinator

Wendy is our newest coordinator, in our newest region. She is a Specialty Food Manufacturer and active volunteer and Rotarian. She has over 35 years of experience with exchange students from around the world. What motivates her? “Some people come into our lives for awhile, and leave. Others come into our lives and stay in our hearts forever. May our CFP experience become a forever ohana.” (family)

Kim Bell, Transportation Coordinator

Kim has been managing our teen travel since 2009 and did the same for our Northern Ireland program. She is semi-retired in Pennsylvania.

Bo Dean, New Hampshire Coordinator

Bo, a retired air traffic controller, is currently working as an ESL instructor in Manchester, NH. Happily married for 21 years to Nancy and proud father of three children, he has been involved with CFP over the last 6 years.

Vern and Tammy Haas, Oregon/SW Washington Coordinator

Tammy and Vern have been a part of CFP since 2012. Vern works for the Veterans Administration as a Property Asset Manager and Tammy is a Sales Manager for an insurance company. Tammy has been a Rotarian since 2002 and will become CFP Executive Director starting January 2019.

Tom McCarthy, DC Metropolitan Coordinator

Tom, a Financial Advisor for over 30 years, has been the MD Coordinator since 2009 and was active in the Northern Ireland program. An active Rotarian, he serves on the Board of Directors of four non-profit organizations.

Becky Stirn, San Francisco, CA Coordinator

Becky pursues professional commitments to start-up companies in the areas of technology and health care as well as a lifelong commitment to community service. Much of her pro bono work has been in the fields of building multicultural/multinational relationships, promoting conservation and supporting eye health.
News From Cyprus

CFP 2018 Snapshot
145 Applications
24 teens to U.S. Residency
50 teens to CFP Camp

U.S. Residency Teens
Campers

Update from Nicosia

With change comes opportunity! Forced to re-register the local NGO to conform with new legal requirements, the CFP team in the Greek Cypriot community has used this bureaucratic challenge as a chance to bring in additional members and supporters. Thanks to the commitment of a base of 20 old and new “founding members”, the process is near completion and will allow the NGO to proceed with its plans for a series of community based initiatives in areas such as the environment, music and culture. Its goal is to bring alumni from CFP and other bi-communal leadership and youth programs together with other adults and parents committed to peace-building to engage in dialogue and to implement activities that highlight collaboration, including over the dividing Green Line. The NGO’s new president, Ms. Xenia Constantinou, was one of several NGO members to participate in the Family Day orientation event for the 2018 U.S. teens.

Cyprus Friendship Club at The English School in Nicosia

The English School, a long time CFP participating school and one of the few bi-communal high schools, has begun a new student club whose main mission is to promote friendship between the Cypriot communities. It will be open to all students but CFP students are expected to join because of their experiences and sensitivities. The Club will meet weekly after school and programming will include activities and perhaps even a weekend workshop.
From Israel & Palestine, 
meet our first Partner in Peace

Jerusalem Peacebuilders

When CFP and JPB began the discussion on working together, it quickly became clear that our two organizations shared similar philosophies and programs. We have worked together to develop CFP activities that complement the JPB camps and to define dietary guidelines to help our host families.

This summer, CFP host families in New Hampshire and the Washington DC metropolitan area will welcome teen pairs from Israel and Palestine for two weeks following JPB camps. The teens going to the DC area will be ages 15—16 and will have just completed a two week camp experience at Yale University focusing on service learning and helping others. The teens going to NH will be ages 17—18 and will have completed a two week camp in Brattleboro, VT focusing on leadership training and conflict resolution.

JPB Teen Profile:

- 90% come from private schools—schools are usually religious
- there is some economic diversity
- JPB provides camps for 4 age groups—many teens will attend multiple years
- teens will be paired as Israeli/Arab or Arab Muslim/Arab Christian

Mission: Jerusalem Peacebuilders (JPB) is an inter-faith non-profit organization with the mission of creating a better future for humanity across religions, cultures, and nationalities. Our programs focus on uniting Israeli, Palestinian and American youth and adults and providing them with the opportunities and skills they need to become future leaders for peace in the global community.
The current volcanic activity on the island of Hawaii (also known as the Big Island) in the State of Hawaii, is in the news and CFP wishes to reassure the teens who are being hosted in Maui and their parents that they will not be in danger.

The State of Hawaii is comprised of many islands. The five largest (and youngest) islands are now inhabited, including the Big Island, which is larger than all other islands combined. **The Big Island is the only island with active volcanoes.** People living very close to Kilauea have potential hazards like lava flows and noxious gases. People not living close are safe. Mike and Phyllis Robinson, a current CFP host family, lived on the Big Island of Hawaii within 38 miles of Kilauea for 28 years and, despite multiple eruptions, they were never at risk.

The island of Maui is the closest island to the Big Island, but does not have an active volcano. Any impact of Kilauea’s eruptions on Maui would be clouds of volcanic emissions, called VOG. These are similar to smog (smoke and fog), which is normally formed by automobile emissions in places like Bangkok, Beijing, and Los Angeles. Because the State of Hawaii is in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, winds quickly disperse any volcanic gases and VOG so that they usually bypass Maui entirely. To our knowledge there has been no record of dangerous gas clouds reaching the communities on the Big Island, much less other islands in Hawaii including Maui.

Wendy Acosta, Maui’s Area Coordinator, has lived on Maui for many years and previous to this she lived very near Mt. St. Helen’s which erupted in 1980 in the U.S. state of Washington. Kilauea is a much smaller volcano and its current eruptions are much less than the Mt. St. Helen’s eruption. As Wendy monitors the situation, a fellow Rotarian in Maui, who works for emergency services, will provide her with quick and accurate information. All host families in Maui are long-time residents and know what to do in case of an emergency. The following website earth.nullschool.net is a good resource that monitors wind direction, air particulates etc.

Please be assured that the CFP program on Maui will not suffer nor put our teens at risk from what is currently occurring on the Big Island. Regardless, CFP leadership and area coordinators are sensitive to the concerns and we will keep a close watch on the activities.
Some CFP 2018 Teens

The following comments are taken from a few of the teens letters of introductions to their host families:

“I would like to begin by saying that I am extremely grateful for welcoming me to your home this upcoming July and that I appreciate all your efforts and contributions toward the fulfilment of this event very much.”

“The excitement I feel about this whole adventure and experience I’m about to be a part of is indescribable and thank you for being a part of this beautiful process of peacebuilding.”

“Thank you in advance for all the care, time and energy you will provide for me and my pair during our stay in the States. I’m looking forward to an amazing experience with you.”

“Before I started to introduce myself I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart and appreciate your hospitality. You will help the Cypriot teens from the both communities to take further steps in contributing peace building in our tranquil island so I also want to congratulate you for volunteering to help

A 2017 CFP Teen Alumni Perspective

I will always tell you that Cyprus Friendship Programme is a life changing program. We not only participate in workshops but CFP also teaches us, we are Cypriots. The programme helps us to understand the value of peace. Furthermore, we also learn how to be a respectful person. We get a lot of experiences from the programme, for example we accept our differences such as languages and religions. We work together for reunification, to build a bridge for the rest of Cypriot Communities to interact with each other. We meet a lot of friends; new friends bring new friendships, new adventures and one more step towards peace. Generally, peace means members of CFP.

I’m Hilmi and this year is my 3rd year in the program. I got a lot of experiences which are very important for all Cypriots who want peace on the island. I met many Greek Speaking Cypriot and Turkish Speaking Cypriot friends in this programme. After CFP and our USA journey in 2017, we still arrange meetings and we participate in a lot of workshops to support peace. I still contribute to CFP and help my coordinators. I also prepared some presentations about the CFP. I focus on CFP very well, because CFP is the last chance for all Cypriots to reach peace. Nowadays, I also focus on similarities between two Cypriot communities. I extremely believe that these similarities will bring peace. In addition to this, I am designing some projects about this topic that I can share with others!

Peace always be with you...

Hilmi Arica
Have you made your 2018 donation to support CFP?

To donate by credit card, please visit www.cyprusfriendship.org

To donate by check,

In the U.S., please mail your check to: Judy Marsh
Treasurer, CFP, Inc.
8048 Cindy Lane
Bethesda, MD 20817

In Cyprus, please contact:
North: treasurn@cyprusfriendship.org
South: treasurers@cyprusfriendship.org

Please support the 2018 CFP program:

♦ Help with the travel costs for the Cypriot teens
♦ Help with the travel costs for the Israeli/Palestinian teens
♦ Help provide funds for the U.S. workshops and teen activities
♦ Help provide additional educational materials for our host families

This is my advice to all people and CFP teens:

Share your smile with the world. It’s a symbol of FRIENDSHIP and PEACE.

Thank you

Contribute to CFP with Stock

CFP now has the ability to receive stock transfers as contributions. Those wishing to do so should have their broker make a DTC transfer to:

Charles Schwab
DTC Code 0164 Code 40
Cyprus Friendship Program, Inc.
Account # 5901-6287

Cyprus Friendship Programme, an organization of volunteers cooperating from both the north and south sides of Cyprus, and the Cyprus Friendship Program, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in the United States, share the mission to promote peace and understanding in Cyprus by bringing together teenagers from both sides of the divide with future leadership potential, encouraging lifelong friendships among them, and extending these friendships to their friends and families.