



Nova Scotia **Voice of Women for Peace**

2015 PeacemakeHers Leadership Camp for Young Women Final Report

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Summary

The Nova Scotia Voice of Women for Peace (NSVOW) held its 3rd annual PeacemakeHers Leadership Camp for Young Women at Thinkers Lodge National Historic Site in Pugwash Nova Scotia on September 18-20, 2015. Participants and facilitators enthusiastically received the Camp, and many of the 2015 participants have remained active within NSVOW. Four of them joined the delegation of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNC60) in New York in March 2016. Support for this delegation, in the form of financial assistance and mentorship, was provided by NSVOW. One of the four young women also put together a team of four young people who were chosen from among 200 applicants to represent Canada at the J7 Youth Summit hosted by Japan in April 2016, in advance of the 42nd G7 meeting. This Summit was created to hear the voices of youth on the future of the environment, economy and other important topics for our societies and our world. In addition, two of the 2015 campers are members of the 2016 PeacemakeHers Planning Committee and will be attending the 2016 Camp as presenters.

Voice of Women for Peace History and Description

Nova Scotia Voice of Women for Peace (NSVOW) is both a registered Nova Scotia Non-Profit Society and a Chapter of the national organization, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW).

Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW) has worked diligently for over half a century, playing a crucial role in opening up political space for Canadian women. Muriel Duckworth co-founded Nova Scotia Voice of Women for Peace (NSVOW) as a chapter of Canadian VOW in 1962.

VOW's mandate is to “provide a means for women to exercise responsibility for the promotion of world peace and justice, through education of themselves and others to take an equal part in the democratic process of decision making; and to cooperate with women throughout the world to create the mutual respect and understanding necessary for the peaceful resolution of international conflict.”

In Nova Scotia, VOW members define peace broadly. As early as 1962, they expressed the need to include social issues in their quest for a peaceful world as they understood that the causes of violence were linked on a continuum, from local to global, and all were equally important to address. For example, NSVOW, led by Muriel Duckworth, created an Education Group locally for the purpose of studying systemic causes of racism and how to challenge them. Tutoring systems were offered to African Nova Scotian students, and political actions carried out by NSVOW resulted in more inclusive hiring practices in Halifax. Globally, during the Vietnam War, VOW brought Vietnamese women to Canada to connect with Canadian and American women, refusing to see other women as their enemies. NSVOW's other activities over the years have included creating opportunities for women to collaborate in peace building, such as holding vigils, organizing peace conferences, developing educational materials, writing news releases and editorials, and sponsoring films, speakers, and public events.

In 1977, Canadian VOW gained Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) observer status at the United Nations. Every year VOW takes a delegation of its members to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York. For the last several years, young women who have participated in VOW's annual peace camps have formed part of the delegation. Participants of the 2013 and 2015 NSVOW PeacemakeHers Camps joined the delegation in those years.

PeacemakeHers Background

PeacemakeHers 2015 was NSVOW's 3rd successful PeacemakeHers Camp. This three-day residential experience facilitated inter-generational dialogue and relationship building amongst the young participants and NSVOW volunteers.

Thinkers Lodge National Historic Site was retained as the setting for the Camp, as it is a site that continues to promote the cause of peace. Thinkers Lodge is the birthplace of the Canadian peace movement and the international nuclear disarmament movement, making it a significant and inspirational location. Bringing women to Thinkers Lodge is significant; the first gathering consisted almost entirely of men. Our young women's camp both restores the balance and empowers women to take a strong role in furthering peace and social justice within communities at both the local and global levels.

PeacemakeHers Background (cont'd):

One of the foundational principals of PeacemakeHers is accessibility and inclusion; therefore, every aspect of the camp is free of charge to the participants, with transportation subsidies also being an important component of accessibility. The generosity of our funders allows NSVOW to make these principles a reality.

Purpose and Principles of PeacemakeHers

The purpose and principles of the camp have been discerned and are reflective of the mission of VOW.

The purpose is to engage, inspire and educate young women to become active leaders in peace making, providing an opportunity for VOW to build capacity for young women to become involved in women-centered peace-building efforts through the incorporation of a critical feminist analysis framework.

The following principles guide the program:

1. The essential role of women's voices in peace making and peacekeeping
2. The need to include women in decision-making at all levels of government, including national and international peace negotiations
3. The importance of including a feminist analysis, especially with respect to developing an understanding of peace and conflict through making links to personal lived experiences
4. Support for a paradigm shift from the belief that security is achieved through fear, domination and violence, to the belief that long-term security is only possible with cooperation and peaceful forms of conflict resolution
5. The importance of community and networking, which builds capacity, provides mutual support, and encourages diversity within the peace movement
6. The importance of understanding peace in the context of global peace movements, including UN Resolution 1325, which mandates women's participation in the peace process, and the Nuclear Weapons Convention to abolish nuclear weapons, as well as other global issues such as social justice and the environmental sustainability.

Presenters and Program

PeacemakeHers over-all facilitator was Shakira Weatherdon, who also gave two workshops: "Goal Setting" in which each participant received a personal workbook, and "Positive Peace: Exploring Equity and Inclusion." Catherine Martin opened and closed the camp, and gave the workshop "Treaty of 1752" which chronicled the relationship of the Mi'kmaq people with the settler government.

The following NSVOW members gave presentations: Linda Christiansen-Ruffman presented "Feminism, Peace and Gift-Giving Economy", Mary Rigby facilitated "The Blanket Exercise" on indigenous history in North America, Nancy Covington gave the workshop "Nearly Everything Nuclear", Heidi Verheul involved participants in "Making Peace with our Environment" and Mary Purdy, led "Heartfull Yoga." Other workshops were "Craftivism" an art/craft workshop facilitated by Penny Burton and "Drumming for Empowerment" led by Kadajah Photiades.

Presenters and Program (cont'd):

The final afternoon of the camp was dedicated to sharing the camp experience with NSVOW members, funders, and community supporters, including 97-year-old Betty Peterson, a long-time NSVOW member and activist, as well as representatives of two of our funders: Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute (DBDLI) and Mount St. Vincent University's Alexa McDonough Institute for Women, Gender and Social Justice (AMI). NSVOW member Sandy Greenberg sang peace songs. [See full Program in Appendix A]

Successes

Thinker's Lodge was, as it had been in the two previous years, a perfect spot for a peace camp. The setting is idyllic, on the beautiful North Shore of Nova Scotia. Sitting on the deck, looking out at the water you take in the beauty, quiet and peacefulness. A short walk to the end of the road, and you can find yourself swimming in soothing salt water or sitting on a sandy beach. The deep history of peace in the historic house, Thinkers Lodge, makes you feel that you are indeed part of history. The modern "Lobster Factor" is a comfortable and spacious setting for meals and workshops.

The wholehearted and eager engagement of the participants and their expressions of appreciation at the final presentation of the camp made the planning committee very happy. Four of the participants were inspired to be part of the VOW delegation to the UNCSW60. Their enthusiasm spilled over to two of their friends, who joined the delegation to UNCSW60. To fundraise for their New York trip, the six young women organized, cooked for, publicized and ran a fund-raising dinner, performance and silent auction, and launched an online fund-raising Indiegogo campaign.

In addition, NSVOW provided another leadership opportunity for one of the campers. Through the National VOW Board of Directors we learned of an opportunity for young Canadians from ages 15-17 to represent Canada at the J7 Youth Summit in Japan. This information was passed on to our youngest camper whose "team" was selected, from over 200 applicants, to attend the Summit.

Another camper in the 2015 cohort has become involved in several NSVOW and related activities. She has also lent her expertise as a filmmaker to a peace project led by one of our Board Members.

The next event involving the young women who went to UNCSW60 will be **PeacemakeHers Inspire Hope** – a talk back by the campers about the 2015 PeacemakeHers Leadership Camp for Young Women, the delegation to the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) in New York, and the participation in the J7 Youth Summit in Japan – to be held on June 6, 2016. The 2016 Camp will also be publicly announced.

Two of the campers have joined the planning committee for the 2016 PeacemakeHers and will be attending the camp as presenters.

Challenges

With Thinkers Lodge being unavailable in August, the 2015 PeaceMakeHers camp was held in September. This proved to be a steep challenge, as many prospective camp participants were involved with school, work, volunteer commitments and other activities at that time. Two weeks before the camp, we were fully booked with 15 participants. Ten of them dropped out in those last two weeks before the camp for the aforementioned reasons as well as for other personal reasons. We were, of course, disappointed, but realized that if we empowered even one young woman, our camp would be a success. We were able to open the camp at the last minute to high school students from Pugwash, who attended several workshops, as well as two other young women from the area.

Another challenge was fulfilling our desire for PeacemakeHers to present an opportunity for dialogue and peer learning among various groups in Nova Scotia, including African Nova Scotia and indigenous young women. With the support of the Buddy Daye Learning Institute, as well as our facilitator and planning committee members we reached out into the African Nova Scotia community. We did have one African Nova Scotian young woman register, but she had to withdraw because of illness. We also reached out to the indigenous community through Aboriginal Centres at Dalhousie and Mount St. Vincent Universities, as well as through Catherine Martin, indigenous filmmaker and Nancy's Chair at Mount St. Vincent University. We had one indigenous participant register, a Mount student, but she had to withdraw as her school workload was much heavier than she had anticipated.

Future Plans for 2016 PeacemakHers Leadership Camp for Young Women

We have booked Thinkers Lodge for August 26-28, so that many of the attendance problems discussed above can be circumvented.

We are starting our outreach for participants earlier than in the previous year, and hope to have an even more diverse participation. We will again engage Shakira Weatherdon as our Facilitator, and we are starting the planning of our program and presenters.

Our fundraising has already begun. We received a substantial donation from the Sisters of Charity of Halifax, and a small donation from NSPIRG. We will be reaching out to our former sponsors as well as new organizations and individuals in our quest to empower young women to be peace leaders.

We are planning for more participants in 2016. There are beds for 15 at Thinkers Lodge, and with the addition of air mattresses, we can house at least 20 in the Lodge. Given our goal of increasing attendance at the 2016 camp, we will be reaching out to Saint Mary's University, a 2013 sponsor, to provide transportation from Halifax to Pugwash. NSVOW will also be providing subsidies and coordinating transportation for participants coming from outside the Halifax area, as well as calling on our sister organizations in neighbouring provinces to assist their participants with transportation.

In order to help us with our planning and organization, NSVOW applied for and was successful in receiving an 8-week Canada Student Job position. The student will be publicizing and helping to organize the camp, as well as carrying out fund-raising activities. In addition, the National Coordinator of Canadian Voice of Women for Peace will join the PeacemakeHers planning committee, offering logistical support in publicizing and registering participants.

APPENDIX A
PeacemakeHers Leadership Camp for Young Women
2015 Budget

INCOME:	Budget	Actual	In Kind
VOICE OF WOMEN			
Nova Scotia Voice of Women	2,500	1,000	
PeacemakeHers (retained from 2014)	1,770	1,770	
Canadian Voice of Women	-	-	30 (peace pins)
VOW Members Donations	1,000	-	
Individual Members	-	725	
New Brunswick VOW	-	300	
EXTERNAL FUNDERS			
Cyrus Eaton Foundation	2,500	2,500	
Exchange	-	807	
New Funders	1,300	-	
Delmore Buddy Daye Learning Institute	-	1,700	
Indiegogo	-	567	
United African Canadian Women's Association	-	150	
Canadian Physicians for Research & Education in Peace	1,000	1,500	
NS Advisory Council on the Status of Women	2,000	1,000	
Pugwash Park Commission	1,000	600	
Mount St. Vincent University	1,000	500	
Canadian Pugwash	500	500	
Alexa McDonough Institute (Mount St. Vincent University)	500	250	
START Program Employment Incentive	<u>5,000</u>	<u> </u>	
TOTAL INCOME:	20,070	\$13,869	
EXPENSES:			
Program Administrator:			
400 hours @\$15/hour	6,000	2,500	
Accommodations	2,500	3,000	
Facilitator	2,000	2,000	
Food	1,200	801	
Cook	300	300	
Transportation	1,000	800	
Travel Subsidy to UN and VOW AGM	1,000	1,200	
Videography	1,000	-	
Goal Setting Workbooks	815	815	
Honorariums	750	450	1,500 (10 x \$150)
Promotion	200	405	
Insurance	200	294	
Program Supplies	200	142	
Report Printing and Mailing	100	100	
Website	100	100	
Office Supplies	100	-	
Gifts	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$17,515	\$12,957	
Surplus		912 (retained for 2016 camp)	

APPENDIX B

PeacemakeHers Leadership Camp for Young Women: 2015 Program

Friday: “We can say "Peace on Earth". We can sing about it, preach about it or pray about it, but if we have not internalized the mythology to make it happen inside us, then it will not be. “ Betty Shabazz

TIME	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR(S)
12:00	Arrivals	-
12:30 – 1:00	Informal Meet & Greet	-
1:00 – 2:30	Lunch	-
3:00 – 4:00	Official Opening	Sandy Greenberg Catherine Martin Shakira Weatherdon
4:00 – 4:15	Break	-
4:15 - 5:45	Session 1: Feminism, Peace and the Gift Economy	Dr. Linda Christiansen-Ruffman
5:45 – 7:00	Supper	-
7:00 – 8:30	Session 2: Treaty of 1752	Catherine Martin
8:30 – 9:00	A Place of Peace: Tour of Thinkers Lodge Pugwash	Teresa Kewachuk
9:00 – 9:30	TED Talk VOW First 30 Years	Mary-Wynn Ashford Sandy Greenberg
9:30 – 11:00	Free Time	-
11:00	Quiet Time	-

Saturday: “There can be no peace without understanding.” Senegalese proverb

7:15 – 8:00	Heartfull Yoga	Mary Purdy
8:00 – 9:00	Breakfast	-
9:00 – 10:30	Session 3: Blanket Exercise	Mary Rigby Catherine Martin
10:30 – 11:00	Break	-
11:00 – 12:30	Session 4: Nearly Everything Nuclear	Dr. Nancy Covington
12:30 – 2:00	Lunch and Free Time	-
2:00 – 3:30	Session 5: Craftivism	Penney Burton
3:30 – 4:00	Break	-
4:00 -- 5:30	Session 6: Positive Peace: Exploring Equity and Inclusion	Shakira Weatherdon
5:30 – 7:00	Supper and Free Time	-
7:00 – 8:30	Session 7: Drumming for Empowerment	Kadijah Photiades
8:30 – 10:00	Bonfire: Story/Song Circle	Shakira Weatherdon Kadijah Photiades
10:00 – 11:00	Free Time	-
11:00	Quiet Time	-

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Sunday: "You can never leave footprints that last if you are always walking on tiptoe." Leymah Gbowee

7:00 – 7:30	Heartfull Yoga	Mary Purdy
7:30 – 9:00	Breakfast	-
9:00 – 10:30	Session 8: Making Peace with our Environment	Heidi Verheul
10:30 – 11:00	Break	-
11:00 – 12:30	Session 9: Now What: Goal Setting for Change	Shakira Weatherdon
12:30 – 1:00	Break	-
1:00 – 2:00	Lunch with Guests	-
2:00 – 3:30	Closing & Presentations	Sandy Greenberg Sarah Morgan Shakira Weatherdon
3:30 – 4:00	Packing & Departure	

Appendix C

PeacemakeHers Leadership Camp for Young Women

Camper Evaluations

While our full-time campers were small in number, their appreciation and excitement about the PeacemakeHers Leadership Camp for Young Women experience was large.

Seen as 'life changing' and a 'once in a lifetime opportunity', the campers who took part in this weekend residential program arrived with a commitment to learn and experience in an unfettered environment.

All noted the fact that the Camp was free as a critical factor in their decision to attend.

They also commented that the Camp being a women-only event attracted them to be there. All remarked on the value of the intergenerational interactions – the knowledge shared among presenters and participants, the mentorship relationships established and the wisdom imparted. Speaking to the value of these interactions, it is notable that relationships between some organizers/presenters and campers have deepened into important life connections, which are continuing into the next PeacemakeHers Camp.

Generally, the campers enjoyed all aspects of the weekend. In particular, they were in awe of the Thinkers Lodge facility and grounds and its historic significance to the Canadian Peace Movement. Being able to relax on the deck, swim and be in the peace and quiet of Pugwash was a bonus for all – organizers, presenters and campers, alike.

There was a common feeling of a need for more down time. Many of the presentations and experiences were deeply moving and/or intense and academic in their content. As well, much of the information was new to every camper. The workshops and presentations which are key to the intention of the PeacemakeHers Leadership Camp for Young Women are not often addressed in schools or workplaces frequented by these young women. Consequently, scheduling of processing and relaxing time may need to be adjusted for our 2016 Camp.

Positive aspects of the weekend included attention to diversity, building awareness through the presentations and community building. All participants said they would encourage their friends to attend in 2016 and encouraged us to schedule the program prior to commencement of the school year and spread the word among diverse groups.