



Problem Statement

Global prosperity and world peace are not impossible tasks unfit for humankind. Abject poverty can be eradicated. Children need not die of starvation or preventable diseases. Employment opportunities can grow despite any job-eliminating tsunami triggered by advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning. The youth bulge that has swelled populations under 15 to 41% in Africa, for example, can become an energetic workforce for domestic industries reducing incentives for the young to migrate to richer pastures and cause social disruptions at home and political disruptions in host countries.

The piecemeal solutions of policymakers or philanthropists are not the answer. Essential is a holistic approach invoking the fundamentals responsible for building civilization or saving it. Creativity and empathy are undeniably the most salient attributes because creativity cultivates ideation, discovery and invention while empathy grows compromise, concord and collaborative innovation. These attributes nurture new entrepreneurs to mindfully leverage latest technologies and grow employment opportunities. These attributes also empower peacemakers to reverse the rising trend in violence worldwide—the economic cost of which has risen to \$14.8 trillion according to the 2018 Global Peace Index report.

The development of creativity and empathy must start early, however, with schoolchildren. That is, before the well-documented “4th-grade slump” in creativity gains a foothold and stunts the next generation's creative development and before sectarian tensions or social prejudices muddy the “mirror neurons” responsible for empathy.

ICAF

For the past two decades, ICAF has been on a mission to democratize creativity and develop empathy universally for global prosperity and a peaceful future.

Incorporated in the District of Columbia in 1997 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, ICAF serves American children as their national arts organization and the world's children as their global arts organization. ICAF employs the arts because creativity and empathy are both rooted in the arts—children's universal language.

ICAF's flagship program, The *Arts Olympiad*, has grown into the world's largest initiative for schoolchildren's creative development. The Arts Olympiad winners convene for three days on The National Mall at their *World Children's Festival* (WCF) where ICAF imbues their creativity with empathy and instills 21st century leadership qualities. The Arts Olympiad is free-of-charge and the WCF is free and open to the public. Widely recognized as children's “Olympics,” the WCF is a global celebration of “Creativity, Diversity, and Unity” in our nation's capital.



“Children's America Mural”



“Children Washington”



“Children's World Mural”



Intervention for Creative Development: 6th Arts Olympiad

Problem Statement: E. Paul Torrance (known as “father of creativity”) discovered in his longitudinal and cross-cultural studies that around the 4th grade, evident displays of creativity often diminish as children become more conforming to the adult world, less likely to take risks, and less playful and spontaneous than in earlier years. Once this slump gains a foothold, it can consolidate and continue beyond school years, becoming a barrier to human creative development and economic prosperity.

Intervention: The Arts Olympiad Lesson Plans inspire schoolchildren to embrace the *Artist-Athlete Ideal* of a creative mind in a healthy body (*mens sana in corpore sano*). This new identity awakens the dormant “inner artist” in young athletes and the slumbering “inner athlete” in those not athletically-inclined and thus vulnerable to obesity risk. By linking imagination with embodiment, the Arts Olympiad liberates a natural tendency towards creativity and good health.



The 6th Arts Olympiad is currently taking place in schools worldwide, organized by ICAF throughout the United States and by ICAF's international partners in nearly 100 countries.

Owen Omozore (age 10, New York City)

Impact: The Arts Olympiad works by focusing on students aged 8 to 12—a cohort vulnerable to declining creativity and rising obesity. Students’ revised self-image solidifies when they depict themselves as “artist-athletes” in their paintings, drawings or digital art as part of the Arts Olympiad school art contests. Schoolteachers report that students’ identity development, removal of implicit biases, and inclusive classrooms are among the important Arts Olympiad benefits.



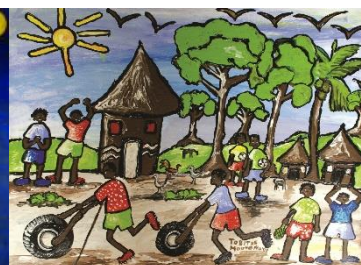
Arjaa Raju (age 12, Illinois)



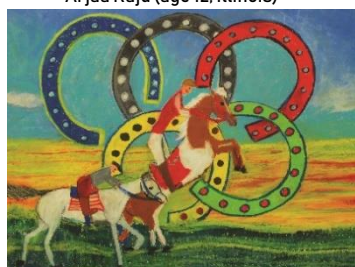
Diana Nabulsi (age 11, Texas)



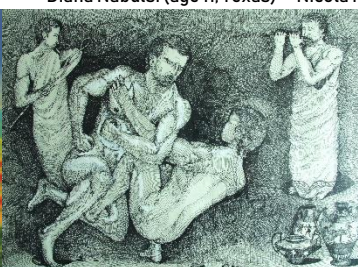
Nicola Roos (age 11, South Africa)



Tobithe Jason William (age 10, Cameroon)



Erkut Atik (age 12, Turkey)



Denys Kovalchuk (age 12, Ukraine)



Farwa Nawaz (age 10, Pakistan)



Dannie Quiros (age 11, Costa Rica)

Intervention for Empathic Development: *6th World Children's Festival*



Problem Statement: How to develop empathy in our bitterly divided country and conflicted world?

Intervention: Learning is a biological activity that causes neurons to create new connections and strengthen the interconnections. The brain filters all new information and often discards what challenges existing knowledge. To encode empathy requires finding the right pathways that form a new pattern of neural activation that flares “mirror neurons.” ICAF arranges a setting of global community on The National Mall where multiple modalities are employed to produce synesthetic stimulations that make the World Children’s Festival (WCF) a somatic experience for delegates and attendees. The WCF become a treasured memory that can influence comportment and performance.

The WCF setup includes an exhibition gallery for the Arts Olympiad works, the “World Stage” for electrifying performances, and ten different pavilions for workshops and activities based on STEAMS education which ICAF has pioneered to integrate STEM disciplines with art (the ‘A’) and sport (the second ‘S’) for creativity and health.

The WCF opens with “Health & Environment Day” to emphasize commonalities, followed by “Creativity & Imagination Day” to enhance delegates’ creative potential, and culminates with “Peace & Leadership Day” to inspire positive social change.

The 6th WCF is scheduled to take place on The National Mall for three days in July 2020. ICAF’s plans include young artists collaboratively producing the “*World Children’s Earth Flag*” for the first human mission to Mars and young performers and musicians cooperatively producing a grand finale that weaves into a single amazing performance their aptitudes and talents.

Impact: ICAF identifies some of America’s and the world’s most creative and talented children through the Arts Olympiad and brings them together at their WCF for empathy workshops and leadership training. When these schoolchildren go back into the world, they will make choices, large and small, to bring humanity together on the side of humanity, thus bridging racial, religious and national divides.





Other ICAF Programs and Publication

ICAF's *Healing Arts Program* revives natural disaster victims' faith in nature and *Peace through Art Program* restores trust in humanity of child survivors in conflict zones.

ICAF has published the ad-free *ChildArt* quarterly since 1998 to deepen young readers' creative expression, cultural appreciation, and global competencies.

Overall Impact

Since 1997, approximately 5 million children have participated in and benefited from the Arts Olympiad and ICAF's other programs. An estimated 2.5 million people have attended ICAF's festivals and exhibitions held in major cities worldwide. Nearly one million readers comprise the total *ChildArt* quarterly readership since 1998.

By fostering creativity and developing empathy, ICAF fulfills six of the 27 Social Development Goals (SDGs) of 2030 UN. ICAF's endeavors reduce poverty, promote good health, bring quality education, ensure gender equality, reduce inequities, and build peace in communities and the world at large.

- The Arts Olympiad and the WCF are exemplary cases of U.S. cultural diplomacy, engaging the world's children and winning them over.
- U.S. military families in the Greater Washington Area serve as host families for the international WCF delegates.
- The United States Olympic Committee has granted ICAF an exclusive license to use the 'Arts Olympiad' mark.
- ICAF is independently ranked among the 25 Top Children's Charities in the U.S.

This [music clip](#), [magazine](#), and [website](#) describe the WCF and this [magazine](#) shows its transformational impact.

Research and Thought leadership

- On repairing our world: [SchoolArts](#)
- On building peace: [The Lancet](#)
- On developing creative communities: [The Creativity Revolution](#)
- On global cultural change: [Journal of Urban Culture Research](#)
- On international education: [Journal of the Association of State Boards of Education](#)
- On global digital divide: [International Monetary Fund](#)





INTERNATIONAL
CHILD ART
FOUNDATION

Key Achievements (1997–2018)

- 1997 – ICAF incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in the District of Columbia
- 1998 – Produced the first-ever national children's art festival in U.S. history
- 1999 – First ladies of Costa Rica, Liberia, and Ecuador open the 1st World Children Festival
 - *Visions of the New Millennium* exhibition at the UN Headquarters in New York City
 - The White House New Millennium Celebration art exhibition and activities
- 2000 – Hosted "The First Ladies Forum" at UN Millennium Development Summit in New York
- 2001 – The Drucker Foundation and Frances Hesselbein honor ICAF for innovative leadership
- 2002 – *Peace through Art Program* organized with support of the Cyprus Fulbright Commission
- 2003 – Washington, DC Mayor proclaims 9/11/2003 as "Children's Peace Day" at the 2nd WCF
 - First-ever children's art exhibition at the World Bank/IMF Annual Meetings in Dubai
 - Organized Qatar Foundation's first-ever educational symposium in Doha
- 2004 – The Arts Olympiad included in New York City's Candidature File for 2012 Olympics
 - *Exemplary Humanitarian Service Award* at the World Culture Open in Seoul
- 2005 – *Destruction, Reconstruction and Prevention* program at the World Bank
- 2006 – *Arts Olympiad Exhibition* at Palace of Stupinigi at the Turin 2006 Winter Olympics
 - *Children of Katrina* exhibition at Museu da Cidade in Lisbon
 - *European Children's Festival* at the Olympia Park in Munich
- 2007 – "World Children's Award" instituted at the 3rd WCF, conferred on LEGO as first recipient
 - Aspen Institute's *Cultural Diplomacy Forum* in Paris
- 2009 – *Children of Katrina* exhibition at the *Education Without Borders* in Dubai
- 2010 – International children's panel at Global Competitiveness Forum in Riyadh
 - Healing Arts Program in Haiti and Chile for child victims to cope with traumas
- 2011 – W.K. Kellogg Foundation receives the "World Children's Award" at the 4th WCF
- 2012 – *Arts Olympiad* exhibition at the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa
- 2013 – *Children's Tribute to Nelson Mandela* exhibition at THEARC in Washington, D.C.
- 2014 – Cannes Lions international competition to design logo for the World Children's Festival
- 2015 – 5th World Children Festival at The Ellipse next to The White House
- 2016 – Research project on ICAF's history and experiences launched
- 2017 – *ChildArt* magazine issue on brain and art with Johns Hopkins' Brain Science Institute.
Reviewed in *Leonardo*
- 2018 – *ChildArt* magazine issue on architecture with the American Institute for Architects

Beliefs and Advocacy

ICAF believes in the child's right to be creative and empathetic; respects children's imagination as a most precious resource in the universe; regards that art produced by children is the most honest and purest form of human creative expression; and advocates that every contemporary art museum must devote one room and every business one single wall to displays of children's art.

Funding

Adidas, Chevron, CVS Health, Galeria Kaufhof, Faber-Castell, Hilton Hotels, LEGO, Safilo USA, S.C. Johnson, Target Corporation, Wacom, and the Walt Disney Company have supported ICAF in the past. Recent private foundations include Claire and Theodore Morse Foundation (Los Angeles) and the Singing Field Foundation (New Hampshire). Most of ICAF funding comes from creative and empathic professionals.

Testimonials by Leaders



"The Arts Olympiad, produced every four years by the International Child Art Foundation, presents each of us a unique opportunity to involve young artists from our Congressional Districts in an event with important national and international implications."

- Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, Chair, Congressional Arts Caucus

"What you are doing reflects such a refreshingly integrated view of children's development—a much needed perspective in a time when children's growth and learning often seem to be approached in a very reductionistic, fragmented way."

- Dr. Martha Farrell Erickson, University of Minnesota



"We can all learn from the children of the world and realize that our next generation has the passion, creativity and empathy to shape the future and build a better world."

- Vice Admiral John P. Currier, U.S. Coast Guard

"For all of us, the beauty and thoughtfulness of these works offer powerful evidence of the breadth and depth of the global conversation that is cultivated and perpetuated through children's art. Thanks so much for sharing these images with us and for the important work you do."

- Dr. Jessica Hoffmann Davis, Harvard Graduate School of Education



"We are thrilled to bring a LEGO building experience to the world's largest celebration of creativity and imagination on the National Mall. What ICAF does to encourage a child's inner creativity is something we passionately admire and are proud to support, because we believe children who are exposed to creative activities from a very young age go on to become the world's most meaningful contributors."

- Michael McNally, LEGO Brand Director



I am grateful to organizations like the International Child Art Foundation that gives us the opportunity to see the world through the eyes of our nation's young people. I encourage you to continue to support programs that help children to discover their talents and believe in themselves.

— Hillary Clinton —

Testimonials by Beneficiaries

"I had never had anything happen to me like my experience with the ICAF (and haven't since). That may have also been what planted the seed in my parents' and my head that art was a thing that I could one day do for my livelihood."

- Eric Huber, filmmaker in Bluff City, Tennessee



"The ICAF has had a significant effect in making me more confident, more creative. I cannot thank ICAF enough."

- Dr. Hina Inam, Cardiothoracic Surgeon in Karachi, Pakistan



"The fact that children from all the world are expressly invited to contemplate these horizons, to channel their creative energy and their most personal interests within a frame of international collaborative work, is, I believe, one of ICAF's key contributions, for which we should be immensely grateful."

- Dr. Alejandro Goldzycher (Ph.D. English Literature) in Buenos Aires, Argentina



"The ICAF gave me my first introduction to being a member of the international community. It gave me the opportunity to meet people from all over the world that shared my love of art, and in doing so, taught me at a very young age that creativity has no bounds and that ideas only get better when we share them with people with different world experiences."

- Dr. Viviana Astudillo in Toronto, Canada.

"When I was chosen to be on the ICAF Youth Board, it bolstered my ability to find common good amongst people around the world."

- Parth Koushik in Texas



"The moment I stepped onto the National Mall and saw the World Children's Festival happen right in front of me, all of my insecurities and fears of being in that new place faded away. I realized that it wasn't a competition of talents anymore, it was a world of children, a place of knowledge and most of all, a nation of friendship. That festival helped me evolve as a young artist."

- Teodora Lazar in London, UK



"The ICAF has tripled my esteem as an optimistic African artist and also it has tripled my hope as an artist."

- Matovu Musana in Kampala, Uganda



"Talking to all the kids and looking at their paintings inspired me a lot. I learnt to never stop doing what I like. Art is not just art, it is communication, inspiration, point of view, and a bridge that links us all up."

- Chung Kei Ting in Hong Kong

ICAF Leadership

INTERNATIONAL
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FOUNDATION

Ashfaq Ishaq, Ph.D.	Founder and Chairman
Katty Guerami	Treasurer
Ali Fracyon	Secretary

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Sandy Carter, Vice President, Amazon Web Services, Cupertino, California
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Richard Clar, Interdisciplinary Artist & Director of Art Technologies, Healdsburg, California
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Dr. Bakhtiar Mikhak, MIT Media Laboratory, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Kathleen McHugh, founder of Community Arts Programs, Seattle, Washington
Dr. Mihai Nadin, Ashbel Smith University Professor, University of Texas at Dallas
Daniel H. Pink, Speaker and Author, Washington, DC
Rory Pullens, Executive Director of Arts Education, Los Angeles Unified School District
Dr. Danica Radovanović, web scientist and digital media specialist, Belgrade, Serbia
Donald M. Rattner, AIA, Creativity Architect, New York, New York
D. Paul Schafer, Founder and Director, World Culture Project, Markham, Canada
Dr. Candace Jesse Stout, Professor, Department of Art Education, The Ohio State University
Dr. Brenda K. Wiederhold, The Virtual Reality Medical Institute, Brussels, Belgium
Liu Yang, member of China Artist Association, senior craft artist and editor

In Memoriam George Rodrigue (1944–2013) artist, author, and children's dream-maker.

Youth Board

Maria-Fernanda Aguirre-Broca – Aruba	Katia Lazar – Belarus
Angel Alexiev – California, USA	Tamara Mamedova – Azerbaijan
Chathura Sooriya Arachchi – Sri Lanka	Dianna Mazzone – New York, USA
Viviana Astudillo – Canada	Ana-Maria Mitrea – Romania
Margaret Eloisa Ticlla Ccenhua – Peru	Matovu Martin Musana – Uganda
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Elliott Frank – Colorado, USA	Sora Nithikasem – New Jersey, USA
Alejandro Goldzycher – Argentina	Carmen Ortiz – Louisiana, USA
Natalia Hoosova – Slovak Republic	Fadhil Ahmad Qamar – Indonesia
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Rune Kondo – Japan	Claudia Suteu – Romania
Paarth Koushik – Texas, USA	Michael Wong – New York, USA
Attila Kovas – Hungary	Victoria Yin – Massachusetts, USA
Ella Gordon-Latty – New Zealand	Kaung Myat Zaw, Myanmar

Your donation will help democratize creativity and develop empathy universally for global prosperity and a peaceful future > <https://ICAF.org>