



## Problem Statement

Two trends, each propitious on its own, could spell disaster for the world since they are concurrent. First, advances in automation, artificial intelligence and machine learning will boost productivity but these new technologies can also bring a job-eliminating tsunami. Second, the recent youth bulge has swelled populations under 15 to 41% in Africa and 26% in the world, while world population is projected to grow to nearly 10 billion by 2050. An energetic workforce will boost productivity but what happens when the young have no jobs?

The unemployed millions may try to migrate northwards—from Africa to Europe and from Central and South America to the United States and Canada, causing new social disruptions and revival of nativism of old. Violence is already getting worse across the world and its economic impact reached \$14.8 trillion, according to the 2018 Global Peace Index report. In the United States, more than 215,000 children have experienced gun violence at school since the Columbine High massacre in 1999, as reported by the Washington Post.

Unlike the 20<sup>th</sup> century when progress was chiefly intelligence-based, prosperity this century is primarily creativity-driven. Creativity kindles ideation and invention, which fuels new business development so the young entrepreneurs can gainfully employ themselves as well as others. Essential though for collaborative innovation and social harmony is empathy because it breeds mutuality and makes compromise tolerable. Creativity and empathy are hence salient human attributes. Their development, however, must start with schoolchildren—before the well-documented “4<sup>th</sup>-grade slump” in their creativity gains a foothold or ingrained prejudices discolor their “mirror neurons” responsible for empathy.

## ICAF

Founded in 1997 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, ICAF’s mission is to democratize creativity and develop empathy universally as building blocks for global prosperity and world peace.

Since creativity and empathy are both rooted in the arts, ICAF serves American children as their national arts organization and the world’s children as their global arts organization. ICAF’s *Arts Olympiad* has grown into the world’s largest schoolchildren’s creative development program and its *World Children’s Festival*—held every four years on The National Mall—has become the children’s “Olympics” which develops mutual empathy to bridge cultural, national, racial, religious and social divides.



“Children’s America Mural”



“Children Washington”



“Children’s World Mural”

## School-based intervention: 6<sup>th</sup> Arts Olympiad

**Problem Statement:** How to democratize creativity when children face a “4<sup>th</sup>-grade slump” in their creativity? E. Paul Torrance (known as father of creativity) discovered in his cross-cultural and longitudinal studies that around the 4th grade, evident displays of creativity often diminish as children become more conforming, 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, affecting the creativity of adults.

**Intervention:** Change students’ self-image from jocks, nerds or techies to “Artist-Athletes” —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 who are not athletically-inclined and thus vulnerable to obesity risk. By introducing students to the “Artist-Athlete Ideal,” the Arts Olympiad liberates the natural tendency toward creativity and good health by linking imagination with embodiment.



The 6<sup>th</sup> Arts Olympiad is currently taking place in schools worldwide until the end of 2018. ICAF promotes the U.S. Arts Olympiad, while its international partners organize their national Arts Olympiads.



Owen Omozore (age 10, New York)

**Impact:** The program 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. Approximately 87% of students surveyed embraced the “Artist-Athlete Ideal” and pledged to foster their creativity and adopt healthy lifestyles. Schoolteachers report that students’ identity development, removal of implicit biases, and inclusive classrooms are among the important benefits of the Arts Olympiad.



Arjaa Raju (age 12, Illinois)



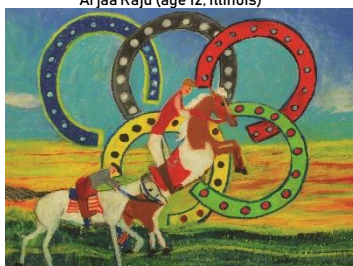
Diana Nabulsi (age 11, Texas)



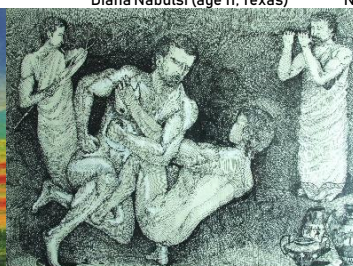
Nicola Roos (age 11, South Africa)



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)



## National and Global Intervention: *6<sup>th</sup> World Children's Festival*

**Problem Statement:** How to develop empathy universally in an increasingly divided and conflicted world where the nativism and the prejudices inculcated in children discolor their “mirror neurons” responsible for empathy?

**Intervention:** Learning is a biological activity that causes neurons to produce new connections and strengthen these interconnections. To encode empathy requires finding the right pathways that form a pattern of neural activation to burnish the “mirror neurons.” A setting of global community where multiple modalities are employed for synesthetic stimulations can then create the somatic experiences that become treasured memories.



The 6<sup>th</sup> Arts Olympiad winners representing their U.S. school districts and nearly one hundred countries will convene on The National Mall for three days in July 2019 as official delegates to the *6<sup>th</sup> World Children's Festival* (WCF). The WCF setup includes the World Stage for electrifying performances, an exhibition gallery for the Arts Olympiad works, and ten different pavilions for workshops and activities based on STEAMS education which integrates STEM disciplines with art (the 'A') and sport (the second 'S') for ideation, perseverance and teamwork.

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

On the last day, the young artists will collaboratively design and produce the “*World Children's Earth Flag*” for the first human mission to Mars. The young performers and musicians will cooperatively produce a grand finale that weaves into a single performance their amazing personal talents.

**Impact:** When the children go back into the world, the WCF experience becomes their constant lodestar, guiding them as empathetic creators, discoverers and entrepreneurs. Free and open to the public, the WCF can attract up to 50,000 attendees whose attitudes change for the better. Surveys show that 93% of the official delegates consider the WCF a life-changing transformative experience while 96% of attendees view the WCF as a nonpareil wholesome celebration of creativity, diversity, and unity.





## Other interventions

ICAF's *Healing Arts Programs* revive natural disaster victims' faith in nature while *Peace through Art Programs* restore trust in humanity of children in conflict zones.

ICAF's *ChildArt* magazine, published ad-free since 1998, deepens young readers' 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 2,500,000 people have attended ICAF's festivals and exhibitions held in major cities worldwide. Nearly one million readers comprise the total readership *ChildArt* quarterly since 1998.

By fostering children's creativity and developing their empathy, ICAF fulfills six of the 27 Social Development Goals (SDGs) of 2030 UN. Our work reduces poverty, promotes good health, brings quality education, ensures gender equality, reduces inequities, and build peace in communities and the world at large.

The Arts Olympiad and the World Children's Festival 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 festival's international delegates. The U.S. 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 United States.

This [music clip](#), [magazine](#), and [website](#) describe the festival and this [magazine](#) shows the 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](#)

## Funding

Businesses that have supported the ICAF or sponsored the WCF include Adidas, Chevron, CVS Health, Galeria Kaufhof, Faber-Castell, Hilton Hotels, LEGO, Safilo USA, S.C. Johnson, Target Corporation, Wacom, and the Walt Disney Company.

Private foundations that have most recently provided grants to ICAF include Claire and Theodore Morse Foundation (Los Angeles) and the Singing Field Foundation (New Hampshire). Most of ICAF funding comes from creative and empathetic professionals.

## Sample of achievements

- 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> World Children's Festival
  - 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 3<sup>rd</sup> World Children's Festival, which children confer on LEGO as the very first recipient
- 2008 – 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 4<sup>th</sup> World Children's Festival
- 2012 – *Arts Olympiad* exhibition at the 21<sup>st</sup> 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 – 5<sup>th</sup> 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

## Evidence based beliefs

Having worked directly with children across the U.S. and around the world since 1997, ICAF advocates that:

- a child's imagination should be viewed as a most precious resource in the universe.
- schools should grow the child's imagination, foster creativity, and develop empathy.
- artwork by children are a most honest and purest form of human creative expression.
- contemporary art museums should devote a room to children's art.
- exposure of professionals to children's art can awaken their creative "inner child."
- art by children should adorn offices and workplaces to boost creativity.



## Testimonials



*"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, 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, United States 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 —

## What beneficiaries say

*"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, TN



*"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, 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, high school senior in Texas, USA



*"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, 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, high school student 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, middle school student in Hong Kong

## ICAF leadership

Ashfaq Ishaq, Ph.D.  
Katty Guerami  
Ali Fracyon

Founder and Chairman  
Treasurer  
Secretary



INTERNATIONAL  
CHILD ART  
FOUNDATION

## Business board

Sandy Carter, Vice President, Amazon Web Services, Cupertino, California  
David Croslin, former Chief Technologist, Hewlett-Packard  
Marcia Minter, VP Creative Director, L. L. Bean, Inc., Freeport, Maine  
Mauro Porcini, Chief Design Officer, PepsiCo, Purchase, New York  
Lisa Russell, Chief Investment Officer, Peak Trust Company, Phoenix, Arizona  
Susan Sheffield, Design Director, Target Corporation, Minneapolis, Minnesota  
Peter Tichansky, President/CEO, Business Council for International Understanding, New York, New York

## Academic board

Gültekin Bilge, Artist/Painter, Scotland  
Dr. B. Stephen Carpenter II, Professor of Art Education, The Pennsylvania State University  
Linda Cato, Artist and Arts Curriculum Designer, Tucson, Arizona  
Wook Choi, Founder, Oogie Art, Wook & Lattuada Gallery, New York, New York  
Richard Clar, Interdisciplinary Artist & Director of Art Technologies, Healdsburg, California  
Sergey Eylanbekov, Sculptor, Long Island, New York  
Dr. Sara Kapadia, Claremont Graduate University, Los Angeles, California  
Aldona Kaczmarczyk-Kotucka, Artist and Art Educator in Rybnik, Poland  
Dr. Cathy Malchiodi, Founder, International Art Therapy Organization  
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  
Anguel Alexiev – California, USA  
Chathura Sooriya Arachchi – Sri Lanka  
Viviana Astudillo – Canada  
Margaret Eloisa Ticlla Ccenhua – Peru  
Kei Ting (Fiona) Chung – Hong Kong  
Eliott Frank – Colorado, USA  
Alejandro Goldzycher – Argentina  
Natalia Hoosova – Slovak Republic  
Anna Carolina Israel – Brazil  
Natasha Janner – Oregon, USA  
Rune Kondo – Japan  
Paarth Koushik – Texas, USA  
Attila Kovas – Hungary  
Ella Gordon-Latty – New Zealand  
Katia Lazar – Belarus  
Tamara Mamedova – Azerbaijan

Dianna Mazzone – New York, USA  
Ana-Maria Mitrea – Romania  
Matovu Martin Musana – Uganda  
Stanislav Nedzelskyi – Texas, USA  
Sora Nithikasem – New Jersey, USA  
Carmen Ortiz – Louisiana, USA  
Fadhil Ahmad Qamar – Indonesia  
Rebecca Rumfelt – Missouri, USA  
Adelina Rupolo – Australia  
Claudia Suteu – Romania  
Michael Wong – New York, USA  
Victoria Yin – Massachusetts, USA  
Kaung Myat Zaw, Myanmar

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