



## **HANDA INTERNATIONAL SPORTS PROMOTION SOCIETY: SPORTS AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIPS**

The International Sports Promotion Society (ISPS)<sup>1</sup> Handa Young Leaders Fellowship Program for Sport, Peace, and Development was launched in May 2014 at the third in a series of global summits on Sports Values Summit for Peace and Development, at the United Nations in New York. ISPS supports action-focused pilot projects and relevant research and communications by inspired young leaders who see sports as an avenue to promote development and peace. Projects are to link sports with peacebuilding and local and national social and economic priorities, especially in conflict-affected and marginalized communities. Mike Tindall and Peter Phillips serve as honorary ambassadors. Lord Moynihan, Katherine Marshall (WFDD), and Grant Jarvie (University of Edinburgh, Sports Academy) were the initial selection committee and mentors.

Young leaders were to submit proposals falling in one of three categories:

1. Practice-based, where the young leader uses the funding to initiate a new project or further develop an existing one;
2. Research-based, where the young leader travels to and observe and analyze one or more existing programs, presenting findings in such a way that they engage the widest audience possible;
3. Or a combination of research and practice.

An initial group of six fellowships were awarded at the December 2015 Sports Values Summit in Cape Town, South Africa. The proposed projects were to focus on South Africa, Ethiopia, Guatemala, and Lithuania (the latter with global reach). The pilot projects reflected a diverse group of ideas and were led by several young leaders who had participated in the Handa-supported Sports Summits.

Grants (maximum \$10,000 each) from ISPS Handa supported activities in 2016 and (with some delay in finalizing grant arrangements) 2017. Recipients were required to report on activities and on expenditures. Appropriate communication about the activities was a grant condition, in order to promote the types of activity involved. Approved proposals and fellowship research were to be shared online and through personal presentations with global audiences, thus strengthening the network and knowledge base of young leaders working in the field of sport for peace and development.

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<sup>1</sup> International Sports Promotion Society, a Haruhisa Handa venture, was founded in 2006; its inspiration is

## Recommendations for the future

*Recommendation 1* The experience with the first set of ISPS Handa Sports Fellowships was possible, demonstrating the significant potential for seed grants to carefully selected young leaders. The program is well worth continuing

*Recommendation 2* The award of ISPS Handa Sports Fellowships remain part of program of successive Sports Summits

*Recommendation 3* That the valuable insights provided by the final report should strategically and widely circulated and publicized

## 2016 Fellowships

Five fellows carried out their projects during 2016 and early 2017 (funds were disbursed mid 2016). One awardee (Michelle Sikes) did not provide the necessary information to finalize grant arrangements; while her project work appears to have proceeded independently, Sikes did not receive a grant. Activities under the five projects are summarized below.



*Photo of Dr. Handa and fellowship recipients in Cape Town.*

***Adam Fine, “Small sided Futbol for the Intellectually Impaired in Cape Town, South Africa”***

The South African Fives Futbol organization, a national non-profit organization founded in 2008 by social entrepreneur Adam Fine, focuses sharply on delivering a positive social impact. The organization has opened Fives Futbol pitches in prime locations across South Africa, which serve both schools and corporate markets. The aim is to be accessible for social impact interventions in local communities. Corporate social investment is a deliberate objective. The organization has various corporate and charitable backers, including ISPS (International Sports Promotion Society).

Fives Futbol received a \$10,000 grant from ISPS Handa in 2016 to run a season long program for children with special needs, and notably those who are mentally challenged. The program was successfully executed. It reached children from 19 schools in the metropolitan area of Cape Town, playing 14 competitions over 6 months.

Funds from the grant were used to provide facilities and coaching to the students, many of whom came from very poor areas, and to organize a special program for teachers in the schools, which lack any sports facilities. Some funds went to hire other staff, such as a videographer/photographer to help raise awareness of the program, and to provide food and drinks for the children. The teachers used the program to provide an incentive for good behavior and studying and observed real health benefits to the students. Teachers were highly supportive of the program and played in a “teachers vs. celebrities” game during the finals, a very popular event.

Fives Futbol plans to continue and expand the program and specifically to seek broader participation by disadvantaged and disabled children in its other facilities in South Africa. It has set a standard in sustainable intervention without government help.

In a related program ISPS Handa supported a trip to Thailand for the winning team. Additional funds have allowed this program to continue; this year’s team went to China.

The ISPS Handa support made it possible to launch this program, which has now garnered support from other foundations and donors. It is a successful example of seed money launching an effort that now sustains itself.

Fives Futbol generally and this specific program has received considerable media coverage as a positive example of entrepreneurship.

***Dina Buchbinder, “Education for Sharing”***

The mission of Educacion para Compartir, a non-profit organization, founded in 2007 by Dina Buchbinder and Yizreel Urquijo, is teaching young children core values of teamwork, fair play, gender equality, tolerance, respect, empathy, and responsibility, through play. It operates in several Latin American countries as well as the United States.

The ISPS Handa grant of \$5,000 to Educacion para Compartir supported a program in Guatemala. Its objective was teaching the values that the program promotes to more than 250 girls and boys and 12 teachers in a school located in Aldea Nuevo San Antonio, Malacatán, San Marcos. From July to October 2016, children were led with sports and play to learn about the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and put in practice civic values. During eight sessions, girls and boys played, reflected, and acted to benefit their community, identifying local problems and thinking about creative solutions. In this way, they became agents of change, capable of transforming both local and global conditions. Parents participated in one session to see what their children learned and how they could reinforce this process at home.

An interesting session involved the elaboration and exchange of "treasure boxes," in which girls and boys receive and send a box with many cultural symbols that define and make them proud of being part of a specific culture. Children of Malacatán received a box from Mexico and sent one to Argentina.

The program brings professional athletes, called Ambassadors, to inspire the children. José López, a professional swimmer, shared with them the importance of incorporating values, including fair play, responsibility, and respect in the practice of any sport. At the end of the program, children become Ambassadors, which means that they share with their community what they have learned, hoping to work together to build a better San Marcos.

**Figure 1: Selected results from interviews with children before and after participation in Educacion para Compartir**



The organizers interviewed the children before and after the program to measure changes in attitudes, as well as participation in sports. This follows Educacion para Compartir's methodology. The results were positive (see Figure 1). Testimonies were gathered from participants.

*“Sports for Sharing taught me that girls and boys can play together, and that, if we want to make changes in our community, we have to work together, accepting others' ideas,”* said Pablo Lucas, age 10.

*“I was so excited to learn how to swim, because it is a sport that I have always wanted to practice. Now, I want to practice it every day and have fun in the pool with my friends,”* recalled Claudia Mazariegos, age 12.

### **Ashley Johnson “Peaceplayers International for Women in South Africa”**

The primary mission of PeacePlayers International (PPI), headquartered in Washington, D.C., is “uniting, educating and inspiring youth.” The core belief is that “children who can learn to play together can learn to live together.” PPI-SA has been operating as an NGO in Durban since 2001, and currently works with over 500 youth from around KwaZulu-Natal. Its team of coaches collaborate with schools and local communities to establish basketball teams, coached by local leaders with a focus on life skills and values based learning. Among the PeacePlayers programs around the world, the girls in the PPI-SA program face the highest school drop-out rates, highest rates of youth unemployment, and often feel a lack of hope in creating and directing their own futures. Disenfranchised youth denied the skills needed for healthy constructive adult lives are at higher risk for dangerous activities, including drug and alcohol abuse, risky sexual behavior, and crime. Moreover, with few positive role models to demonstrate paths towards success, many youth do not see the benefits of education and professional development.

Under the ISPS Handa grant, Ashley Johnson Ndir worked with the PPI-SA team to establish the Empowering Young Women Through Basketball initiative, starting at the beginning of the 2017 South African school year.



With the goal of empowering women through teamwork in basketball, the initiative worked to improve coaches' and participants' leadership skillsets both in terms of personal development and development as a leader and role models to others; to provide an avenue of employment and empowerment of young females; and to improve perceptions of gender equity amongst Durban youth. A cadre of young female leaders were trained to be coaches in their community, with a focus on positive youth development and coaching principles. Community engagement was an important feature. Coaches led basketball training and life skill sessions during the school year for the girls teams established in the local schools and established a mentorship circle between PPI-SA management, PPI-SA female coaches, and PPI-SA female participants. The end of the season will be celebrated with a PeacePlayers Girls' Festival

A pre-evaluation (disseminated November 2016) highlighted that PPI-SA's major strength is the "positive relationships between coaches and participants; this allows the coaches to serve as role models and key influencers among their teams." Coaches found the PeacePlayers' coaches training useful, but would like to see more emphasis on, "positive youth development coaching and life skills education rather than just basketball drills." The evaluation underscored negative perceptions regarding gender equity currently exist amongst PPI-SA program participants and coaches. The review recommended therefore that gender equity be incorporated into the life skills curriculum alongside the basketball trainings.

To evaluate the progress made thus far, PPI-SA staff surveyed participants and program director Nasiphi Khafu held focus group discussions with participants and coaches. Findings included positive feedback on the coaches training sessions, seen as being critical to personal leadership development. Attendance was excellent, with an average attendance rate of 77 percent for players at training. Notable findings include: 93 percent of coaches and players stated they developed and maintained positive relationships with their coaches/players; 91 percent of participants claim to have developed greater confidence in their leadership skills; and 65 percent of participants indicate both genders are equally capable of coaching and playing sports.

These statistics speak to the strength of the activities in reaching the overall outcomes and goals of the initiative. However, much remains to be accomplished. Long-term success in empowering young women through basketball in and around Durban would only be reached if the particular girls focused initiative can receive funding to continue. Looking ahead, the entire team at PPI-SA, the female coaches hired through the funding from ISPS Handa, and the girls who received basketball and life skills training through the initiative, would each like to explore the possibility of continuing the Empowering Young Women Through Basketball initiative.

***Michael Crawley, "Training Injured/retired Athletes for Post Running Careers"***

A problem endemic to the sports world is what happens to those who devote their life to sport only to find that they are never good enough to make a living. For the major sports, such as football (soccer), the problem disappears for sportsmen at an early age when the individual learns that he or she is not going to make it. This is a significant issue in Ethiopia,

where the myth is that there is something about the physical characteristics of Ethiopians (and Kenyans) that make them naturally good runners. The truth is that training at high altitudes, characteristic of both countries, gives an advantage when the athletes train vigorously and follow a nutritious diet; however it is no guarantee of success at competitive levels. The myth is pervasive among young men and women from these countries, while only a small number can make a living as a professional runner, partly because it is not a mass sport with tens of thousands of well-paid athletes.

Michael Crawley received a grant of US\$8,650 from ISPS Handa to pilot an effort to assist aspirants towards realistic career paths. Working with a company in Ethiopia, the effort involved training massage specialists who could remain in the sport and make a decent living. Crawley also helped runners find other occupations, with the proceeds of the grant funding trainings for four massage therapists, a bus driver, a bus driver's assistant who hands out water to runners during races, and a barber. It also supported English lessons for a number of successful runners so they could survive when they raced abroad. One is proficient enough to give interviews in English.

One beneficiary is Fasil, who learned to become a barber in six months. He moved to Addis when he was 16, and was working as a laborer during the day and a security guard at night for his first two years in the city, before he became curious about the runners heading into the forest and decided to follow them on some runs. He had been training for a couple of years when Crawley met him but still hadn't had any success running, and was still working as a guard at night, which was "not perfect" when he was training during the day, he said. He had only completed two grades at school because he had to tend to his uncle's cows in Gondar. That meant that he needed to choose a vocation that did not require him to have completed school. They settled on him becoming a barber because it is a sociable job, and he could still use the networks he had built up with runners to find clients. It also meant he could continue to run in the mornings, and he was less exhausted for his training.



*Fasil*

***Gintarė Zarkova, “Empowering women through sport”***

Ms. Gintarė Janulaityte-Zarkova sees herself as an advocate for human rights and equality, for world peace, security, and de facto development, standing strongly for women empowerment. With the ISPS Handa grant of \$6,000, she purchased a computer and developed a website-platform (<http://www.diplomatica.eu>) to “shine a bright light on Women in sports, diplomacy, politics, business, culture, and daily life from different original angles.” The ultimate aim is to reach wide audiences starting from 16 years of age, throughout the world, who can read and write in English.

The website “DiplomaticA” was launched recently and has just a few stories written and posted. Remaining funds (some US\$2000) are to be used for website maintenance, graphics, server fees, storage in Internet.

This summary report, authored by Katherine Marshall, WFDD Executive Director and Senior Fellow at Georgetown University’s Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs, is a part of the World Sports Values for Peace and Development Project. The Sports and Human Development Fellowships were awarded at the 2015 World Sports Values Summit for Peace and Development, in Cape Town, South Africa, which forms part of a series of annual international symposia aimed at highlighting the positive roles that sport can play in furthering the cause of peace and human development. The event was co-sponsored by the International Sports Promotion Society, Worldwide Support for Development, WFDD, University of Cape Town, and the University of Edinburgh. Address questions to WFDD ([info@wfd.us](mailto:info@wfd.us)).