

Mattie Stepanek Peace Foundation

Mission, Vision, Values, Mottos

Our Mission

**Continue Mattie's work of cultivating
"pathways to peace" by educating and empowering
youth, adults, and communities as they:**

- ♥ **explore and choose peace,**
- ♥ **embrace personal and collective purpose, and**
- ♥ **engage in conversation and play.**

Our Vision

- ♥ **Inspire** → Connect ongoing generations with Mattie's messages of hope and peace.
- ♥ **Inform** → Spread understanding of what peace is and how it can begin and grow.
- ♥ **Nurture** → Encourage awareness of "*Heartsongs*" – or purpose within and with others.
- ♥ **Educate** → Support youth and adults in practicing peaceful characteristics and choices.
- ♥ **Motivate** → Move individuals and communities from attitude to action with peace.
- ♥ **Connect** → Create opportunities for people to celebrate peace in community.
- ♥ **Cultivate** → Facilitate conversations that promote inner and community peace and wellness.

Our Values

- ♥ **Peace:** Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of harmony and cooperation. Violence – which is unhealthy – interrupts peace and does not resolve issues. Mattie's Foundation helps people explore "pathways to peace" so that we can be with others – in kind, nonjudgmental, support ways – even if we disagree with others.
- ♥ **Purpose:** Purpose within and with others – or "Heartsongs" – correlates with contentment, gratitude, and success and promotes feelings of validation and belonging. Regardless of challenges and differences, we need to be "okay" with who and how we are and with who and how others are – as unique individuals in the "mosaic of humanity."
- ♥ **Play:** Play is a global aspect of human development and well-being that fosters growth and creativity, social connections and happiness, resilience, and collaboration. Coping with challenges and "storms" – and celebrating life – personally and in community – strengthens our ability to envision and shape a peaceful and purposeful future.

Our Mottos

"We have, we are a mosaic of gifts - to nurture, to offer, to accept." - Mattie J.T. Stepanek	"Think gently, speak gently, live gently, and the world will be touched gently by the essence of your existence." - Mattie J.T. Stepanek	"Remember to play after every storm!" - Mattie J.T. Stepanek
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Our Pathways2Peace™



Mattie's Three Choices for Peace™

Reflect... make peace an attitude – want it. Be a peace seeker!
Respond... make peace a habit – live it. Be a peace maker!
Reach out... make peace a reality – share it. Be a peace bringer!



Learn more about Mattie J.T. Stepanek and Mattie's Peace Foundation
www.MattiesPeaceFoundation.org



Mattie Stepanek Peace Foundation



Foundation Strength

Stability & Security

Board of Directors
Peace Guides & Ambassadors
Partners & Collaborators
Donors, Grants, Endowment

Matties J.T. Stepanek

Timeless & Universal Messages

Peace – Purpose – Play

Educate & Empower people to:

- explore peace as a choice,
- embrace purpose within & with others,
- engage in conversation & play.

Pathways2Peace

Three Choices for Peace
Reflect, Respond, Reach Out
Seek Peace, Make Peace, Bring Peace
Connect, Chat, Celebrate

Outreach & Growth

Information & Inspiration

Peace Certification
Interactive Website
Social Media Platforms
Masterclass Sessions
Podcast Series
Virtual Peace Museum

Programs & Materials

Education & Recreation

Peace Networks & Clubs
Mama Peace Chat Sessions
Peace Day & Toast2Peace Events
Heartsongs2Mosaics Workshops
Peace Through Poetry & Art
In-person & Virtual Peace Activities



Mattie Stepanek Peace Foundation
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Peace. Purpose. Play.



Mattie Stepanek Peace Foundation Strategic Plan for Years 2026-2030

Our Mission

Continue Mattie's work of cultivating "pathways to peace" by educating and empowering youth, adults, and communities as they:

- ♥ **explore and choose peace,**
- ♥ **embrace personal and collective purpose, and**
- ♥ **engage in shared conversation and play.**

Goal 1 → Ensure Foundation Infrastructure and Stability

- ♥ **Objective 1** – Strengthen Board of Directors & Core Team membership.
- ♥ **Objective 2** – Diversify funding and income resources to ensure fiscal stability.
- ♥ **Objective 3** – Seek endowment benefactor(s) for long-term sustainability

Goal 2 → Engage & Equip Individuals & Communities

- ♥ **Objective 1** – Continue creating meaningful educational and recreational materials and activities.
- ♥ **Objective 2** – Enhance social media activities and increase virtual interaction opportunities.
- ♥ **Objective 3** – Advance partnerships and replicate Foundation activities in more locations.

Goal 3 → Expand Capabilities & Outreach

- ♥ **Objective 1** – Develop a "Peace Matters" Master Class program.
- ♥ **Objective 2** – Develop and launch an audio/video "Peace Matters" podcast series.
- ♥ **Objective 3** – Develop and debut the "Mattie's Virtual Peace Museum" Project.

"Peace is possible... choose peace!"

Mattie J.T. Stepanek

Learn more about the late teen poet and peace ambassador Mattie J.T. Stepanek:

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A Time for Compassion — and Courage

As 2025 began, Mattie's Peace Foundation embraced the theme, "***A Time for Compassion.***"

Early on, we launched a new interactive website and partnered with the Muhammad Ali Foundation to promote compassion as an *attitude that leads to action*.

As spring arrived, we were busy designing new educational materials on compassion and peace; exploring Mattie's "*For Our World*" passage line by line; and facilitating in-person and virtual *Mama Peace Chat* sessions, *Pathways2Peace* workshops, and collaborative *Partners4Peace* meetings.

During the summer, we celebrated what would have been Mattie's 35th birthday with an international *Toast2Peace on Peace Day*. Hundreds who gathered in Maryland and on Prince Edward Island were joined by people in 20 countries online, who all chose to "*raise a glass or grateful hands and connect with purpose*" – together, for peace.

As we moved into autumn, we re-launched our Peace Club and Peace Certification programs with new community forums – that will be facilitated by Peace Guides who participated in our Train-the-Trainer P2P workshop.

In every season, we have connected youth and adults around the globe with Mattie's timeless and universal messages – that hope is real, and that peace grows through purposeful, compassionate choices.

But with every passing season this year, we have also recognized that global challenges are intensifying.

As we begin looking forthward to 2026, our new theme – "***A Time for Courage***" – will build on the spirit of compassion.

People need compassion now more than ever – and now more than ever, compassion needs courage.

It takes courage to choose positivity, to believe in humanity's goodness, and to commit to compassionate action – especially in challenging times that interrupt personal and community peace.

Our 2026 planning includes new materials and interactive resources, a *Peace Through Poetry & Art* program, a *Peace Matters Masterclass* series, advancing our *Mattie's Virtual Museum* project, and so much more.

We'll also strengthen our Foundation by diversifying funding and expanding both our Board of Directors and our Coordinators and Ambassador teams to sustain our *Pathways2Peace* mission.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who supported us in 2025 with time, talent, and treasure. Every grant, every sponsor, every partner, and every volunteer matters — to us, and to the many lives touched by our work.

And we thank you in advance for continuing to support our work, and for choosing compassion, and courage — and for believing in peace.

Peace matters, and so do you.

Jeni Stepanek, PhD ("Mama Peace" - President & Founding Chair)
Stacey MacKinnon, PhD (Vice President) Carly Zucker (Secretary) Jim "JJ" Jackson (Interim Treasurer)
Timothy Bellavia, PhD (Director) Christopher Meyers (Director) Noah Striker (Director)

**The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation is a volunteer-based
501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization created in 2005 to continue
the work of the late teen poet and peace activist, Mattie J.T. Stepanek.**

During Mattie's "almost 14 years," he penned seven NY Times Bestselling books of *Heartsongs* poetry and *Just Peace* essays and served as an ambassador for many peace and disability organizations. Mattie died in 2004 due to complications of a rare neuromuscular disease, but his timeless and universal messages continue to inspire millions of local and global neighbors.

We educate and empower youth, adults, and communities as they:

- **explore and choose peace,**
- **embrace personal and collective purpose, and**
- **engage in conversation and play.**

We develop and offer educational and recreational resources, programs, activities, and events that encourage peacemaking as a deliberate choice for individuals and for our world.

Our Pathways2Peace program includes (a few samples):

- **Resources** – books, Mattie's Message cards, Peace Tips Guide, interaction website, social media, Mama Peace Posts, podcast (in development)
- **Activities** – Mama Peace Chats, For Our World Campaign, Peace Through Art & Poetry, Kindness Campaign, #PeaceRocks, December Prayer Project, Virtual/Global Peace Trees...
- **Events** – Peace Day celebrations, Toast2Peace gatherings (in person and virtual), Heartsongs2Mosaics workshops, webinars, Peace Matters Masterclass...
- **Clubs & Networks** – Chat & "VIP" club levels and Certification networks – various benefits



Mattie's Peace Foundation is a volunteer-based non-profit organization.

We really on the generosity of local and global neighbors
who choose to share their "time, talent, or treasure" with us
to further our mission of continuing Mattie's "pathways to peace."

Our strengths:

- **Loyalty** – a dedicated Core Team of Peace Certified Directors, Coordinators, Ambassadors
- **Perseverance** – 20+ years of continuing Mattie's peace mission even during challenging times
- **Resilience** – team members who weather storms and programs with sustained global relevance
- **Creativity** – transform Mattie's messages into meaningful programs that support diverse groups
- **Integrity** – high-profile reputation endorsements and excellent Program Expense Ratio ratings

Our needs:

- **Fiscal Diversity/Support** – shifting from transactional fundraising to sustainable income streams
- **Accounting Support** – a Treasurer with ability to ensure legal compliance and a sound budget
- **Administrative Support** – assistance with correspondence and other organizational tasks
- **Social Media** – consistent, engaging sharing of Mattie's messages and Foundation programs
- **Technical Support** – maintaining website and developing podcast and other virtual activities

Do you have a strength and skill that meets our needs?

We would love to hear from you!

www.MattiesPeaceFoundation.org INFO@MattiesPeaceFoundation.org



The Mattie Stepanek Peace Foundation OVERVIEW & HIGHLIGHTS OF WHAT WE OFFER **Pathways2Peace (P2P)**



PROGRAMS & NETWORKS – free or for fee

- **Mattie's Peace Network** – free registry – receive e-Peace Updates
- **Peace Clubs** – fee – (“Chat” & “VIP” levels with various benefits)
- **Peace Certification Program & Network** – fee – includes mentored journey
- **Partners4Peace (P4P)** – collaborative activities (businesses & groups – mutual benefits)
- **Foundation Peace Ambassadors** – representative activities with mutual benefits

ACTIVITIES – free

- **For Our World Campaign** – fall outreach – virtual
- **December Prayer Project** – early winter outreach – virtual
- **Peace Trees** – early spring outreach – virtual
- **Poetry Contests** – spring/summer outreach – virtual
- **Kindness Campaign** – summer outreach – virtual
- **#MakePeaceTheNews** – year-round – virtual
- **#PeaceRocks** – year-round – in-person (or independent activity)
 #MeghanRocks – February // *#KindnessDragonRocks* – June-August

EVENTS – free or for fee

Club members & Certification participants receive 2-6 free passes (varies per level)

- **Mama Peace Chats** – many topics virtual and in-person – for youth & adults
- **Morning Coffee Chats** – many topics – virtual gatherings
- **Afternoon Tea Chats** – many topics – virtual gatherings
- **Book Chats** – about Jeni's book and/or about Mattie's books – virtual & in-person
- **Poetry Chats** – about specific Mattie poems / themes – virtual and in-person
- **Toast2Peace** – virtual and in-person (several times a year in various locations or Zoom)
- **Keynotes** – Mama Peace / Dr. Jeni Stepanek – virtual and in-person
- **School (or Group / Community) Visits** – virtual and in-person
- **Peace Through Arts & Poetry (Peace TAP)** project – in partnership with My Hero
- **Poetry Contests** – Foundation events in partnership with My Hero Foundation - virtual
- **Heartsongs2Mosaics** – workshops & sessions – virtual and in-person
- **Pathways2Peace** – workshops & sessions – virtual and in-person
- **P2P Train-the-Trainer Workshops** – various topics – virtual and in-person
- **Peace Certification** – virtual and in-person – mentored journey in a peace theme
- **Peace Day - #PartyWithAPurpose** (in person only / multiple locations)
- **P4P Activities** – co-hosted events in various locations – virtual and in-person

RESOURCES – free & fee items (Club & Certification folks get some freebies or discounts)

- **Website** – inspiration, information, videos, photos, “In the Room” interactive
- **e-Peace Update** (free monthly mailer – information & inspiration)
- **Books** (Mattie's & Jeni's – for sale)
- **Mattie's Message Cards** – about 30 topical/thematic peace cards; 3 new ones each year
- **Peace Tips Guide** – for Peace Certification Journey
- **Peace Tips Supplements** – for Peace Certification and/or workshops
- **Teacher Tips & Lesson Plans** – for Peace Certification participants & Club members
- **Poetry Links & Templates** – for Peace Certification participants & Club members
- **Peace Activity Certificates** – available on request for participation in seasonal activities
- **Peace Plan Template** – for Peace Certification participants
- **Mama Peace Posts** – social media, e-Peace Updates, special messages for youth & members
- **Foundation social media platforms** – Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram
- **Foundation Podcast** – hosted by Mama Peace – in development
- **“Peace Matters” Master Class** – in development – will link to Peace Certification Program
- **Peace Shop** – shirts, cups, message cards, quote boxes, posters, bookmarks, rocks, etc...