The Olive Branch

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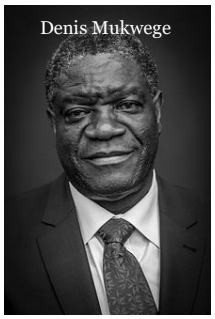
CENTER FOR PEACE & CONFLICT STUDIES
www.bsu.edu/peacecenter

The Olive Branch is a publication of the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies at Ball State University. Every issue, we shine a spotlight on people, events, campus groups, conferences, and organizations who are working towards a more peaceful world.



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NOBEL PEACE PRIZE 2018 AWARDEES

In October 2018, Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the Prize to these individuals for their significant efforts to end sexual violence as a weapon of war at national and international levels. This article will discuss the notable work of both these peace activists.

Denis Mukwege: Congolese Gynecologist and Global Activist

Denis Mukwege is a Congolese gynecologist who believes that "justice is everyone's business" (Norwegian Nobel Committee, 2018). He specializes in the treatment of women that have been raped by armed rebels in his home country and has been working to fight injustices that women in his community have faced. Throughout his life, he has strived to help treat women and girls not only medically but help them spiritually and emotionally as well. Further, he is a global advocate for women, and a role model for all men. He has made a significant impact on women's lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and is working to address the global prevalence of sexual violence in wars and armed conflict.

Mukwege started his career in pediatrics, moved on to obstetrics, and then finally focused on gynecological surgery. He made this shift after he observed that most of his patients were victims of brutal rapes that involved forced penetration and mutilation. Further, these specific acts of sexual violence were a byproduct of the civil war taking place in the DRC. It is at Panzi Hospital, which Mukwege founded in 1999, where he and his staff help survivors process their physical, emotional, and spiritual trauma. The hospital treats survivors with physical wounds, along with providing legal and psycho-social services to its patients.

In 2011, Mukwege founded a center called the City of Joy in the DRC, along with Eve Ensler. This center is a transformational leadership community for women survivors of violence. Women who have experienced violence—sexual and otherwise—in their lives heal their trauma in this transformative space. According to a survivor and staff member of the City of Joy,

> "The therapy lets women understand that the rape was not their fault. The life skills and leadership training help them gain confidence, and the nurturing atmosphere enables them to build support networks that last long after the program finishes…People think that, after being raped, you are just a victim. What City of Joy taught me is that life goes on after rape. Rape is not the end. It is not a fixed identity" (Baker, 2016).

Denis Mukwege is an activist that women and girls need, especially in a patriarchal world where gender inequality and violence are the norm. His work is a global symbol for ending sexual violence in environments of war and armed conflict. Upon receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, Ensler wrote in her Guardian piece that Mukwege said he "shares this award with women survivors and activists around the world who have for decades worked to end the scourge of sexual violence. Survivors not only need recognition, but they need reparations and an end to impunity" (Ensler, 2018). Mukwege is not only a healer of women—he is an advocate in his attempt to raise awareness for survivors of these brutalities.

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Nadia Murad: Sexual Violence Survivor and Human Rights Campaigner

Nadia Murad is a survivor in every definition of the word. At the age of 19, she was kidnapped by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and forced into sex trafficking. After escaping their control, Murad became an activist and is the first Iraqi to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her outstanding contribution to human rights, specifically focusing on eradicating sex crimes in environments of violence.

Murad was born in 1993 in Kojo, Iraq. Her family is Yazidi, a group considered an ethnoreligious minority in the Middle East. Living in a quiet farming village called Kocho, Murad dreamt of becoming a teacher or a makeup artist. Unfortunately, these dreams were put on hold when ISIS viciously raided Kojo on September 15th, 2014, with the intent of wiping out the Yazidi population.

The ISIS terrorists killed over six hundred men, children, and elders in her village. The militant organization then kidnapped over six thousand young women, Murad included—finally selling them into sex slavery with Murad being sold to a captor in Mosul. She was brutally punished by her captor when she tried to escape. Fortunately, she eventually gained her captor's trust and escaped when he left a door unlocked. Murad ran to her neighbor's house and remained hidden there for weeks until she was smuggled out of the ISIS controlled territory.

> "My story, told honestly and matter-of-factly, is the best weapon I have against terrorism, and I plan on using it until those terrorists are put on trial. There is still so much that needs to be done. World leaders and particularly Muslim religious leaders need to stand up and protect the oppressed" (Murad, 2018).

In February 2015, Murad found refuge in Germany and began to tell her story. By December, she was speaking to the United Nations Security Council about the dangers of ISIS and sex trafficking, marking the first time the Council had debated on such matters. This is especially significant because she dismissed her Yazidi community's social norms that require women to be silent and ashamed of their traumatic pasts. Hence, to help women and children who have been victims of genocide and sex trafficking heal themselves and their communities, Murad created Nadia's Initiative. This organization is currently helping thousands of people around the world by acting as an advocate for individuals who have suffered from sex crimes.

In November 2017, Murad published a memoir titled *The Last Girl: My Story of Captivity, and My Fight Against the Islamic State*, which details her harrowing life experiences, including the loss of six out of nine brothers, and her mother in the ISIS attack on her village. Murad has published her book in multiple languages in an effort to reach a broad audience. Further, she hopes to make an impact on current and past victims of sex trafficking in environments of war and armed conflict. She does this by validating traumatic experiences of others and encouraging them to tell their own stories. Her book is an inspiring story of how anyone can make a difference in the world, and how to stay strong despite obstacles.

Murad is an inspiration to victims of sex crimes across the globe. She has transformed her own traumatic life events into a positive uprising for human rights. Her work has helped thousands of affected women to recover from their own trauma. We are sure we will hear more from her, given her strong will and passion about her cause. Murad is only twenty-five years old, and we do not think she is going to stop any time soon.

References

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LEADERSHIP THROUGH SPORTS PROGRAM IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Sports—a topic which commonly drives competition, was used to promote peace and inclusiveness in the Indian cities of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh in October 2018. Ball State University professors Dr. Lindsey Blom, Dr. Lawrence Gerstein, Dr. Lawrence Judge, and Dr. Sushil Sharma, along with Dr. Anjali J. Forber-Pratt from Vanderbilt University and Dr. Meredith Whitley from Adelphi University came together to implement and facilitate a workshop entitled *Leadership Through Sports Program for Jammu and Kashmir*. Specifically, these individuals implemented a curricula designed to teach leadership, social inclusion, conflict prevention and resolution, wellness, and countering violent extremism to coaches and physical education teachers from Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh. Additionally, the 5-day workshop was organized to strengthen ties between the people of the U.S. and India. The project was funded by a grant from the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India.

Working with 20 individuals, the program facilitators engaged the participants through didactic and experiential teaching strategies. The team building activities, discussions, and role-playing generated discourse among participants. Moreover, the activities promoted direct contact between individuals from regions in conflict, which helped address their existing biases in a non-intrusive manner. Through this workshop, individuals belonging to all three locales—which have historically had conflict—were encouraged to interact and build relationships while setting aside their differences. Therefore, the workshop activities had the potential to change negative attitudes of its participants. In the words of Dr. Gerstein, "sports and physical activity is an excellent way to decrease stereotypes and prejudice and increase respect between groups of people thought to have conflict."

One tangible workshop occurrence which effectively demonstrated the reduction in negative attitudes of some participants toward others follows. At a point during the workshop, one Hindu coach strongly revealed that he required girls who wore a *hijab* (head covering worn in public by some Muslim females) to remove this covering while playing sports. Over the next few days of the workshop, he was exposed to various activities and sessions that emphasized social inclusion and conflict resolution skills. Finally, on the next to last day of the workshop, this coach along with the other participants had the opportunity to work with young girls wearing *hijab*…which he did without any complaints! This example illustrates how the workshop helped participants recognize their biases and strive to overcome them.

In addition to fostering positive relations between communities in conflict, the *Leadership Through Sports* program also aimed to make sports more inclusive for youth with disabilities. This goal was reached by including a focus on sports and disabilities in the training sessions, as well as the strong presence of one of the workshop facilitators, Dr. Anjali Forber-Pratt. Dr. Forber-Pratt is a U.S. Paralympic Gold Medalist in wheelchair racing, who has done extensive work in helping to create inclusive sport and schooling opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Bermuda, India, Zambia, and Ghana. Her active engagement with the coaches and teachers provided a positive role model for including people with disabilities in sports. In fact, at the end of the workshop, almost all the participants voiced that they would actively recruit youth with disabilities to play sports in the future!

Upon completion of the workshop, the participants devised an action plan to implement within their own communities using the techniques learned from the facilitators. By enacting their plans, it was hoped that participants' communities that have experienced violent extremism could become equipped with the means to provide their youth with more peaceful, enriching, and positive opportunities and relationships. While the participants learned from the workshop facilitators, the latter were enriched by the attendees as well! As articulated by Dr. Blom, "I feel that I am becoming more culturally sensitive and understanding because of this work. I think I also understand the cycle and situation of poverty differently than I did before I started this work."

The first phase of the project was completed in October 2018, and the Leadership Through Sports Program in Jammu and Kashmir will continue until May 2019. The second phase is designed to facilitate mentoring relationships between the participants, program leaders, and other U.S. coaches. The participants will communicate with the U.S. staff through Skype sessions and other forms of social media. Upon the successful completion of the second phase, there is a possibility for the workshop facilitators to return to India to help the participants further sustain their action plans. All in all, the Leadership Through Sports Program for Jammu and Kashmir was successfully conducted to create acceptance, promote peace, and bring individuals from diverse cultures together.

Image description: Dr. Forber-Pratt and workshop participants speaking with young girls

Image description: Workshop participants coaching girls in *hijab* on the basketball court

To view a video from the workshop, click here!

YOU CAN GIVE THANKS TOO!

For our November Event, the Peace Center decided to give back to our Ball State community. The center partnered with Student Voluntary Services and the Student Government Association to hold a donation drive for our on-campus food pantry, Cardinal Kitchen (CK)! Our intention was to focus on collecting canned food items. We hoped to collect and raise enough resources to create 50 grocery bags to provide food and resources to BSU students faced with food insecurity.

Donation boxes were placed in 16 locations all around campus including the Office of Student Life Lobby, North Quad, Bracken library, the Rinker Center, and many others. The drive ran from November 12th through November 16th. In an effort to eradicate food insecurity, CK offers an accessible location to procure food and resources for BSU students. Another goal for the drive was to raise resources for CK, and in turn, increase resources for the Ball State community. In fact, we received over 200 contributions in the form of canned food and toiletries…We thank all individuals who participated in this drive and made it a resounding success!

Image description: Donations boxes for the drive

Image description: Over 200 donations collected

OFF-CAMPUS GROUPS

- A Better Way
- AWAKEN
- Edible Muncie of Delaware County
- Islamic Center
- Muncie Action Plan
- Muncie Human Rights Commission
- Muncie Interfaith Fellowship
- Muncie OUTreach
- National Alliance on Mental Illness
- YWCA
- Whitely Community Council
- United Way of Delaware County
- Blood N Fire

ON AND OFF CAMPUS EVENTS

Tuesday, December 4 **Kwanzaa 2018 celebration hosted by the Multicultural Center - 5:30 PM**

The Multicultural Center offers programs and events which support and advance the university's commitment to cultural diversity. The Kwanzaa Celebration is an annual event hosted by the Multicultural Center. Kwanzaa is a traditional African American cultural holiday celebrated in December. The Center invites all to come and learn more about the principles of Kwanzaa, and enjoy a traditional meal to celebrate.

Wednesday December 5th **Rinker Center's Cultural Exchange - 12:00 PM**

The Rinker Center for International Programs hosts culture exchanges each week where a student or group of students presents information on a country. Students native to the country lead most of the cultural exchanges, and every week the exchange highlights a different country. The majority of exchanges provide an overview of the country and its culture with time set aside for a question and answer session. The Rinker Center and the Multicultural Center sponsor this event.

Thursday December 6th **Light Up Dwntwn**

Light Up DWNTWN, powered by Indiana Michigan Power, will be held on First Thursday, December 6, from 5 -8 p.m. throughout Downtown Muncie. Galleries, restaurants and retailers invite you to spend the evening with them as we kick off the holiday shopping season.

Friday December 7th **It's a Wonderful Life—7:30 PM**

Muncie Civic Theatre presents It's a Wonderful Life on the Mainstage December 7-22. Based on the holiday classic film, George Bailey has given up hope, until his guardian angel forces him to confront a world in which he doesn't exist. This timeless classic spotlights the profound impact we have on each other. Underscored by the music of the season, this heartwarming holiday tale of redemption shows us, "No man is a failure who has friends."

ON AND OFF CAMPUS EVENTS CONTINUED

Saturday December 7th **The Nutcracker—7:30 PM**

Emens presents the age-old tale of Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker. A new collaboration between the Department of Theatre and Dance and School of Music. With live music by the Ball State Symphony Orchestra, performers will tell the story of Clara, the Mouse King, and the Nutcracker Prince. Join us for this unique and unforgettable kickoff to the holiday season.

Wednesday, December 12 **Blood-N-Fire Muncie Ministries Food Pantry - 3:00 PM**

The monthly BNF Ministries Food Pantry serves to assist families that are struggling to put enough food on the table and make ends meet. This program is open to the public, and all are welcome. Volunteers are also welcome and encouraged. Additionally, Blood N Fire hosts community meals every Saturday. Doors open at 4 p.m. and the meal is served at 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 12 **Blood Drive - 11 AM**

As one of the community service projects of the Ball State Staff Council, the Angels for Life Committee has been working with the Indiana Blood Center since 2008 holding blood drives on campus. Each month, the American Red Cross at Ball State hosts a blood drive for the Ball State and Muncie communities. All of the proceeds donated will be transported to Ball Memorial Hospital. Donating blood provides an opportunity to make a difference in somebody's life.

Friday, December 14th **The Nutcracker Ballet 7:30 PM**

Welcome to Anderson Young Ballet Theatre's production of The Nutcracker. This full length ballet, set to the beautiful score from Tchaikovsky, is a Christmas classic. Make this performance part of your Holiday tradition

ORGANIZATIONS

International Justice Mission

IJM is a global organization that protects the poor from violence in the developing world. IJM fights by rescuing victims, bringing criminals to justice, restoring survivors, and strengthening justice systems. The group meets Tuesdays at 6:00PM in the Student Center, room 301.

Cardinal Kitchen

Cardinal Kitchen is Ball State University's campus food pantry. The pantry is located on the second floor of the Multicultural Center and is available for use to all undergraduate and graduate students. The pantry is open the last three Tuesdays of every month from 5:00-8:00PM. Its mission is to ensure that no Ball State student goes hungry on our campus.

MOSAIC

MOSAIC is a social justice peer education program whose mission is to engage undergraduate students in open dialogues focused on diversity and social justice topics to promote awareness, change, and inter-group understanding.

Global Brigades

Global Brigades is an international non-profit organization that empowers communities to meet their health and economic goals through university volunteers and local teams.

Feminists for Action

Feminists for Action is a group dedicated to the empowerment of women, men, and children through advocacy and education. They strive to educate others about issues in the global, national, and community level. They encourage thought-provoking discussions and work to organize events to benefit feminist causes. FA meets Tuesdays at 6:00PM in Burkhardt Building room 220.

Ethnic Theatre Alliance

The purpose of Ethnic Theatre Alliance is to explore worldviews of cultures, diversity, and social justice in order to educate members through Fine Arts. They do this in accordance with the Ball State University mission to create a community for the members to learn and develop worldview cultures so they may become better artists and people.

ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUED

Ball State University Social Justice League

The Ball State University Social Justice League (SJL) is an organization of students and faculty members united by their commitment to social justice. The SJL seeks to change social institutions, political and economic systems, and governmental structures that perpetuate unfair practices, structures, and policies in terms of accessibility, resource distribution, and human rights.

Student Action Team

SAT is an organization made up of general members and housing and residence life representatives. This organization is dedicated to volunteering and supporting Ball State University. SAT meets 4PM on Mondays in the Kinghorn multipurpose room.

Spectrum

Spectrum's goal is to provide an anonymous, healthy and safe place for Ball State University students and surrounding communities who are discovering their sexual orientation to help find an understanding network of support. Spectrum meets Thursdays at 8:00 PM in SC 310. Prior to meetings, they meet to have informal family dinner in the Tally at 6:30PM.

OXFAM America

Oxfam America is a global organization working to right the wrongs of poverty, hunger, and injustice. Oxfam saves lives, develops long-term solutions to poverty, and campaigns for social change.

Students for Life

Ball State Students for Life (BSSFL) is committed to the protection of all human life; from conception until natural death. They strive to educate members and the Ball State University community about why they value life in all its forms. They strive to respond with love, compassion, and support to those who suffer from restrictions of life. BSSFL meets every Wednesday from 6:30-8PM in the Whitinger Business Building room 142.

Call to Action

Call to Action (CTA) is a student organization at Ball State looking to educate and create awareness of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) political issues at the local, state, and federal levels in order to einfluence others to take positive action. CTA has meetings on Mondays at 7:30PM in Teacher’s College room 108.

BSU COUNSELING CENTER SUPPORT GROUPS

Every year, hundreds of students, faculty, and staff members use the services of the Counseling Center at BSU. This comprehensive services office provides free and confidential psychological and career resources to students. Call (765) 285-1736 or stop by Lucina Hall, Room 320. All support groups start the week of 9/10/18.

Understanding Self and Others

Group members explore patterns of relating to self and others by discovering understanding and acceptance of themselves and others. Discussions vary greatly from depression, anxiety, relationships, family concerns, eating issues, alcohol abuse and/or personal growth. The groups thrive on diversity as members discover the common bond through emotional experiences. This group has sessions multiple times a week. Mondays 1:00-2:30PM. Wednesday 1:00-2:30PM and 3:00-4:30PM.

Weight Not, Want Not

Weight Not, Want Not is a supportive group for women with eating disorders or body image struggles who want to explore effective ways of coping. Its time is to be determined by availability of group members.

Safe Haven

This therapy group provides a safe place for LGBT students to explore and discuss patterns of relating to self and others by discovering understanding and acceptance of themselves and others. Topics of discussion vary greatly from coming out, finding support, relationships, family concerns, depression, anxiety, and/or personal growth. Safe Haven meets every Tuesday from 2:00-3:30PM.

Surviving and Thriving

Surviving and Thriving is be aimed to help sexual assault survivors. In this group, students share their experiences, find ways to cope, and gain perspective. The time for this group is to be determined by availability of group members.

Life ProTips

This four week workshop is meant to help better understand your thoughts and feelings to better overcome the daily challenges of life. This group meets on Mondays 4:00-5:00PM.

Building Resilience

This four week workshop helps you learn useful skills to empower you to build resiliency when things feel out of control. Meets on Mondays 3:00-4:00PM.

ABOUT US

The Center for Peace and Conflict Studies is an interdisciplinary center whose mission is to pursue research on structural and direct forms of violence and conflict; to implement nonviolent strategies to resolve conflict; to offer mediation services to individuals, groups, and organizations; and to train people in conflict resolution, mediation, peacebuilding, leadership, meditation, and sportspersonship skills. The center also pursues public diplomacy, sports diplomacy, and cultural exchange as part of local, regional, national, and international projects designed to promote mutual understanding, appreciation, cooperation, and respect. Our services include monthly events, newsletters, the Social Justice League, the Muncie Interfaith Fellowship, meditation classes, mediation training and services.

Staff Members

- Director: Lawrence Gerstein, Ph.D.
- Research Fellow: Gerald Waite
- Curriculum Coordinator: Steven Hall, Ph.D.
- Outreach Coordinator: Beth Messner, Ph.D.
- Graduate Assistant: Aashna Banerjee

To include your events in the newsletter, please write to abanerjee@bsu.edu

Come visit us!

310 McKinley Avenue, Muncie, 47306
White house located across the street from the campus shuttle bus stop at the BSU Student Center!

9 AM-4 PM: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
9 AM-5 PM: Tuesdays and Thursdays.
Do drop by!

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