

# Interns for Peace

---

Creating the Impossible

Interns for Peace is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to fostering understanding, trust and respect between the Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel.

Interns for Peace is a training program for community workers interested in creating joint activities for Jews and Arabs, such as education projects, sports camps and clinics, art fairs, joint industry projects, and community development.

Interns for Peace was founded in 1976, as a positive response to the negative events of "Land Day" on March 30, 1976. It was active until the late 80s.

In 1985, interns were working in 25 communities, reaching over 8,000 participants.

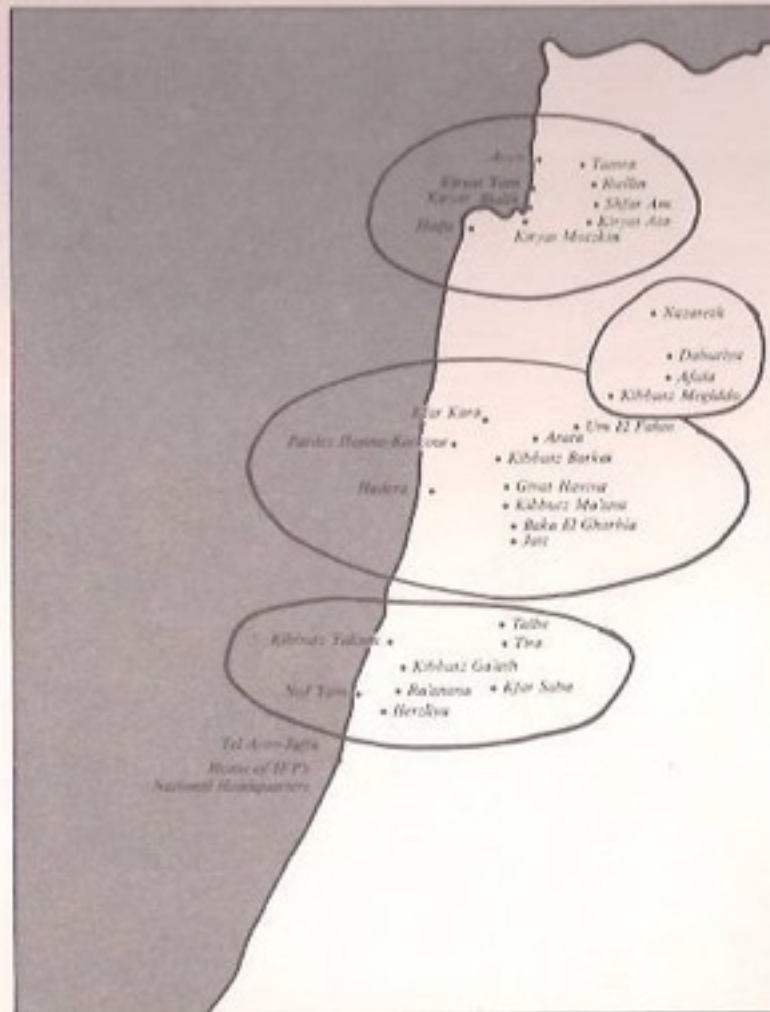
## First Order of Business:

In order to re-establish IFP in the fabric of Israel in 2012, I would get busy hiring new “interns” (community workers dedicated to creating activities to foster Jewish-Arab understanding, respect and dialogue.)

Once interns have been hired and have completed their two month training program, learning community organizing and conflict resolution skills, we will be ready to reinstitute some of the projects that IFP initiated in the 80s.

To bring IFP up to date, a website, a Facebook page, and a Twitter account will all be created. New marketing material will be printed.

Interns for Peace:  
 Four Regions of  
 Activity for Jewish-  
 Arab Interactive  
 Programs, 1985



Areas of community activity. المناطق التي تجري فيها فعاليات جماهيرية. מחוזי קיבוצים פעילותיים.

Interns for Peace originally worked only within the 1967 borders of Israel, and did not do activities with residents of the West Bank or Gaza. To bring IFP into the current political era, we would rekindle connections in the Occupied territories as well as within the 1967 borders.

As the new program director, I would re-establish contact with the towns where IFP was originally active, and spread out from there.

Israel is a small country, where news travels quickly by word of mouth. Utilizing historic cultural communication modes, we would announce IFP's re-opening. We would also take advantage of modern technology, using our website, Facebook page, Twitter, YouTube, radio, and cable television talk shows.



"Spent as a Common Language" program – earning a well-deserved rest during the first national Jewish-Arab soccer camp, held in Petah Tikva in August 1986.

הרבי חנה קנטשה משתדקת: משתדקו בעסקי חברה הגדו - היהודי  
השומר בני האון הבדי גברי יי וקנטשה 1986. אס יי בשאח לטקפה.  
בעסקי בחול בעד הגר יוד.

היחידה הישראלית - ישראלית בעד הגר יוד  
השומר בני האון הבדי גברי יי וקנטשה 1986. אס יי בשאח לטקפה.  
בעסקי בחול בעד הגר יוד.

Interns for Peace Soccer Camp for Jewish and Arab boys.

Starting in 1984, Interns for Peace ran successful soccer and basketball camps and clinics, and cross-cultural soccer events.

As part of the 2012 reopening of IFP, we would reach out to current Jewish and Arab soccer and basketball players. Working in conjunction with the National Community Center Organization (*Tnu'at HaMatnas*), we would set up a series of summer camps and sports clinics for Jewish and Arab youth. In respect of cultural norms, we would run separate camps for boys and girls.



"Education for Democracy" program – a "orange-and-mouse" game in Africa helps break the ice at a meeting of Jewish and Arab schools.

תוכנית "חינוך לדמוקרטיה" – משחק "תפוח וארנב" עוזר לשבור את הקרח במפגש של בתי ספר יהודיים וארבים באפריקה.

תוכנית "חינוך לדמוקרטיה" – משחק "תפוח וארנב" עוזר לשבור את הקרח במפגש של בתי ספר יהודיים וארבים באפריקה.

# Interns for Peace Education for Democracy Programs



Interns For Peace “Education for Democracy” model paired Jewish classes with Arab classes. Interns set up a series of meetings between the classes throughout the school year. Activities were structured in such a way that the children could get to know each other with a minimum of talking required, in order to ease the potential discomfort of speaking in a foreign language.

IFP’s education program was extremely successful. The program was begun in 1980, and by 1986 40 Jewish classes were matched with 40 Arab classes, matching over 3000 children.

Israel’s Ministry of Education cited IFP’s education program, asking schools unrelated to IFP to adopt similar models.

As the new program director, I would meet with top Education representatives to renew the “Education for Democracy” project. The interns would get busy re-establishing contact with principals and schools.



Shmuel from Kiryat Ata and Adnan from Tamra in a relay race to help build a public park in Tamra

Community Development projects were always an excellent tool to facilitate a cross-cultural interactive activity. Jewish and Arab children would work together to create a playground out of an empty lot in both a Jewish town and an Arab village.

Meeting with current community leaders, the interns would compile lists of potential community development projects that groups of citizens could implement.

Reeva Segal



*(left) Farhat Igbaris, director of Israeli operations, with Rabbi Bruce Cohen, International director.*

Graduates of Interns for Peace are often asked, "Do you really think that your work made a difference? Look at the Middle East, it is still a mess. If anything, things are worse."

Gershon Baskin was an American from Smithtown, NY. He was in the first group of interns that joined the program in 1978. Gershon went on to establish an organization called IPCRI, Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information.

Gershon was also the only Israeli that Hamas representatives were willing to talk to regarding the Israeli POW, Gilad Shalit.

Gershon was the contact between the Israeli government and the Hamas officials.

After years of delicate negotiations, Gershon succeeded in arranging for Gilad Shalit's release.

Cleaning up the Middle East mess takes time. Interns for Peace started the process, and graduates of the program are amongst those who are keeping it

When Rabbi Cohen passed away in 2010, there was talk of reviving the program in Israel. Connections in the West Bank and Gaza had been made in the 90s and an office had been opened in Gaza to coordinate programs. But the ever-changing reality in the Middle East made programming difficult.

In many ways, anti-Arab sentiment is at its strongest in Israel now. Likewise, cross-cultural, grassroots activity for tolerance and acceptance is also at its strongest. It is a good time to re-open Interns for Peace and begin training a new generation of cross-cultural activists.



Salaam U'Shalom

By Joanie Calem

[Click here to listen to this song](#)