



Students For Peace:

Effecting Change in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict



Prospectus

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Overview

Students for Peace is a conference that will take place at Yale University, in the Whitney Humanities Center, on the 22nd of April 2018. Students from US college campuses will gather to discuss the conflict and their role in promoting constructive dialogue in an attempt to promote peace. To do so, they will receive input from politicians, academics, local, and international peace advocates throughout the day, engaging in workshops and stimulating each other to think about creative and innovative proposals.

This conference is a reaction to the heated and often unproductive conversation surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Frustrated with the circuitous and fruitless nature of the dialogue both on college campuses and in the national sphere, we hope to work with experts on the conflict, peace advocates, and professors to develop actionable strategies towards creating change and working towards achieving a solution to the conflict.

Format

Participants

Eligibility: Any current student at Yale University or the United States Military Academy will be eligible to apply. Preference will be given to those with a background in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, specifically past and current PDLI, MERED, and OneVoice Fellows.

Selection: Applications will be sent out mid-February.

Size: The conference will consist of approximately 40 students along with 15-20 speakers, moderators, and panelists. The Opening Address and Documentary Screening will be open to the public.

Schedule: Sunday, April 22nd

8:15- 9:00 am: Registration and Breakfast

9:00-9:50 am: Opening Address: Remarks given by Keynote Speaker

10:00-10:50 am: Action Panel: Activists in various fields and from different sides of the conflict will discuss ways of affecting change

11:10-12:00 pm: First Workshop

12:00-1:00 pm: Lunch Break

1:00-1:50 pm: Second Workshop

2:00-2:50 pm: Third Workshop

2:50-3:15 pm: Coffee Break

3:15-4:45 pm: Creation of Action Plans

4:45-5:30 pm: Presentation of Action Plans followed by Closing Remarks

7:30-9:30 pm: Documentary Screening

Format

Workshops

Setup: Students will break into groups of approximately 12-15 people to discuss concrete ways to work towards peace. Each workshop will be led by a moderator and will focus on one topic:

1. **Change on campus** - How can we become drivers of change on college campuses as students and academics? How can we encourage productive discourse in an environment of confrontation and hostility? What are the most productive ways to create dialogue on campus?
2. **Change in America** - How can we affect American foreign policy as students? Do we have a role in determining the United States' approach to the conflict? What means are the most effective in the US political arena (petitions, protests,..)?
3. **Change in Israel and the Palestinian Territories** - How can we create change on the ground as students? What opportunities are available on the ground, in the summer and beyond? How are people on the ground shaping the possibilities for peace? How can we sustain groups on the ground advocating for peace from the United States, and from our college campuses?

Goals: At the end of the three workshops, each group will have an opportunity to create an action plan. The plans can focus on one of the strategies discussed in the workshops or combine them. The groups will share their respective action plans at the end of the conference.

PDLI, MERED, and OneVoice: A Bit More About Us

PDLI, MERED, and OneVoice are three organizations on Yale's campus that aim to foster dialogue and understanding surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Peace and Dialogue Leadership Initiative (PDLI), an organization created in 2014, seeks to create a space for nuanced discussion regarding the US' role in the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. To do this, PDLI brings students together for dinners, lectures, debates and mobilizes them if an issue arises on campus that touches upon the US's Middle East Policy. The capstone of the initiative is an opportunity for outstanding college students and military cadets to visit Israel and the Palestinian territories. PDLI's first trip took place in the summer of 2014 and included 21 students from Yale University, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Georgetown University, and the University of Pennsylvania accompanied by both a Lt. Colonel and a Professor.

The OneVoice Movement is a global initiative that supports grassroots activists in Israel, Palestine, and internationally who are working to build the human infrastructure needed to create the necessary conditions for a just and negotiated resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. OneVoice on Campus is a college fellowship program active on 21 campuses across the Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, New England, and Northeast regions. Our aim is to cultivate and train a team of engaged students throughout the country capable of harnessing the energy on campus to advocate for an end to the Israeli occupation and a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Through a series of weekly discussions and debates, MERED sets out to fill in a void that Yale campus has in regard to approaching the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to fill that void in a productive, pro-peace voice. MERED's unique composure and diversity of backgrounds allows the members to think outside of the box, and hopefully, go on to inspire the world to do as MERED's members do, Israelis, Arabs, Jews and Palestinians all coming together. Participants in MERED share a common goal yet have very different political opinions, which help the organization in its cause to promote peace and resolution of the conflict.