For our Davis Project for Peace, we developed and facilitated a community leadership workshop for youth in Haiti.

Our community partner, GOALS, is a sport for development organization based in Leogane, Haiti. GOALS uses soccer to engage children in three communities around the city, where they provide educational and community service programming. At the time that we were connected with GOALS, they were looking to expand their leadership development programming. We were excited about the opportunity to build on an existing program with local buy-in and student engagement.

This program was intended to help students recognize their leadership potential by learning to think critically about their community and encourage civic engagement through community involvement and change making.

Approach to Peacebuilding

Peace is the freedom from fear of instability, whether that be on the national or community level. Peace is reached when there is harmony among and across communities, personally and communally.

Our project was designed with the belief that building the leadership capacity of young people can contribute to peace by equipping youth with the communication and critical thinking skills essential to maintaining harmony within their communities. Leadership development enables the next generation of changemakers to make the world a more livable, equitable, and peaceful place.

Project Outcomes

In the short term, participants in the program already exhibited their increased leadership ability on the soccer field by more effectively working with their peers.

If the workshop is successful long term, participants should be able to internalize the needs of their community by actively listening to community members. They should in turn be able to voice those concerns back to the community as well as to outsiders in a positive and productive way. This is the first step in initiating and enacting community-driven change.

Takeaways

Our time in Haiti gave us the greatest confidence in the potential of youth to inspire community progress from a young age. This lesson reinforced our commitment to peacebuilding and motivated us to continue to circulate our curriculum among other Haitian development organizations.

“The people I met during my time in Leogane have both the passion and intelligence to make a difference for their communities. It was incredible to help the students in our program become more aware of their own potential and begin believing in themselves as true changemakers.” - Sabrina Leon Landegger

“Leadership is central to peace and progress worldwide. By encouraging leadership development among youth in Leogane we were able to contribute to community stability, and grow as leaders and global citizens ourselves.” - Rebecca Hinkhouse