



# peace

## a global call to action

PeaceJam - bringing young people together to make a difference.

by **Luke Bell**

PeaceJam was founded by Dawn Engle and Ivan Suvanjiëff in 1996. Living in Denver, Colorado, Ivan saw a gang of armed young boys on his way to work one day. Having approached them to talk, he was fascinated to discover they appreciated the non-violent efforts of Desmond Tutu. That moment was the moment Peacejam was born in Ivan's head. If this gang of armed youths could get excited about non-violent change, anybody could.

Peacejam is a global initiative bringing young people together with Nobel Peace Prize winners to try and tackle some of the toughest issues facing our planet. Laureate members include Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama, as well as a number of other prominent Peace Prize winners. These international leaders have identified ten problems they feel are at the root of global suffering and have called on young people to try and solve those problems. They have issued the following call to action: "We ask the young leaders of PeaceJam, and the youth of the entire world, to join us in a Global Call to Action. For the next ten years, we invite them to



Dawn Engle & Ivan Suvanjiëff



Jose Ramos Horta



Adolfo Perez Esquivel with PeaceJam members

work side by side with us as we address ten fundamental issues. These ten core problems are at the root of much of the suffering in our world, and we believe that young people can mobilize to make a difference in these ten key areas."

The initiative works a bit like a franchise with schools and youth groups setting up their own PeaceJam groups. Each year in the UK, a different Nobel Peace Laureate comes to Bradford University, home to the world's largest University Department of Peace Studies. They spend a weekend of debate and activity with young people from around the UK, with the help of student mentors and volunteers. This year sees President of East Timor, Jose Ramos-Horta, attend on the 5th, 6th and 7th March. Peacejammers will be given the floor to present their own Global Call to Action projects and share what has inspired them to engage in PeaceJam UK. Visit [www.peacejam.org.uk](http://www.peacejam.org.uk) to learn more.

## Howard Zinn: a peace activist to the end

Howard Zinn was a university historian, political activist and author of over 20 books. He sadly passed away, aged 87, in January 2010. Author and philosopher, Noam Chomsky, described Zinn's influence, "His writings simply changed perspective and understanding for a whole generation." Here are some inspiring words, from the great man himself:



"To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places - and there are so many - where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvellous victory." *Howard Zinn (August 24, 1922 - January 27, 2010).*