



# Annual REPORT 2019

Creative Learning



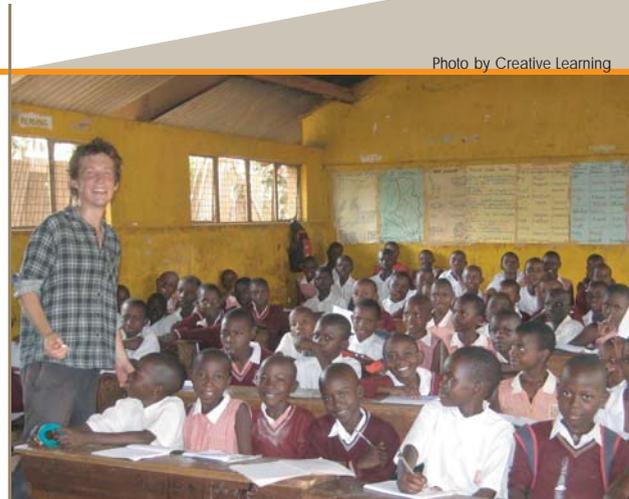


SHAPING LIVES!

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Photo by Creative Learning



# A MESSAGE to OUR SUPPORTERS

It's been an exciting and busy year at Creative Learning. Besides our ongoing work in education and human rights, we added a major initiative during 2009: America's Unofficial Ambassadors. This program is nothing if not ambitious. What we hope to do is to improve the relations between America and the Muslim World in the most basic way—by Americans and Muslims working directly together on projects and problems of immediate and practical value. Furthermore, we will be doing these activities in their countries and in their local communities. We have brought a talented and energetic director, Ben Orbach, aboard to lead this effort which is based on his and my past work in communities in the Middle East. I urge you to find out more about this project in this report, on our website and on Facebook. The Board and I are enthusiastically committed to America's Unofficial Ambassadors and I hope you will become supporters as well.

Please take a look at all the great things going on at Creative Learning and be amazed, as I am, at how our small staff can accomplish all that they do. As in past years, my special thanks to Carola who is the glue that holds Creative Learning together as an organization.

  
William J. Kruvant  
President

Photo by Creative Learning



# OUR BOARD of DIRECTORS AND STAFF

## Board Members

Jeff Weiss (Chairman of the Board)

William J. Kruvant (President)

Marta S. Maldonado (Treasurer)

Dolores Bartning

George Mandelbaum

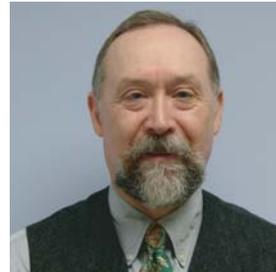
## Our Staff

Lynn Sheldon (Senior Associate)

Carola Mandelbaum (Management Associate)

Benjamin Orbach (Project Director)

Jeannie Rose (Intern)



From top to bottom - Jeff Weiss,  
William J. Kruvant, Lynn Sheldon,  
Carola Mandelbaum, Marta  
Maldonado, Benjamin Orbach,  
and Francia Torres



# OUR ORGANIZATION and MISSION

## Mission

Creative Learning is dedicated to helping those in need, especially the oppressed and those with least opportunity. Our emphasis is to directly help families and communities, particularly those who have been victimized, recover and improve the lives of its members. We work to enhance the capacity of local organizations around the world to defend and protect Human Rights.

## Vision

Creative Learning implements viable, small-scale projects that produce concrete and measurable results. We work with partners. We are facilitators. We provide resources and services to let our partners carry out their missions, including financial and technical assistance, capacity building, and consulting on their strategic and tactical plans.

## Our Values

- We believe in empowering people
- We promote opportunity for all
- We celebrate pluralism and tolerance.
- We value flexibility and openness to innovative ideas.

Photo by Ben Orbach



# Forensic Assistance Project (FAP)



Photo by Creative Learning

The FAP increased the capacity of the FAFG (Forensic Anthropology Foundation) in Guatemala to operate their newly established DNA processing laboratory and improved their ability to collect samples and information related to victims of human rights violations. The FAP also strengthened the capacity of the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF) to increase the number of identified remains and gather more evidence that could be used in legal proceedings. The FAP improved their ability to collect samples and information related to victims' of human rights violations.

## PERU

*In 2009, DNA testing under FAP has allowed the identification of 63 persons. The remains of these people have been returned to their families for proper burial.*

## GUATEMALA

- Since 1992, FAFG has conducted 1,218 investigations in 688 communities, recovering a total of 5,800 skeletal remains. At the mass grave cemetery in Guatemala City, La Verbena, FAFG has collected information on 3,171 bodies and has determined that at least 889 of the unidentified bodies belong to people who were forcibly disappeared during 1979 and 1983.
- FAP has supported the creation and operations of a new international accredited DNA laboratory in Guatemala City, with the capacity to test over 350 samples monthly.

## OBJECTIVES

**In Guatemala:** Support the Guatemala Forensic Anthropology Foundation's (FAFG) DNA laboratory operations and ability to positively identify thousands of victims of disappearances and mass killings; improve ability to conduct forensic operations and use DNA sampling and processing to analyze remains and reference samples.

**In Peru:** Demonstrate the power of genetic analysis to improve regional capabilities for positive identification of thousands of victims of disappearances and mass killings; -improve the ability of the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF) to build institutional capacity in forensic anthropology to uphold the principles of democracy and promote human rights; -support results that help identify victims' remains, illuminate the history of tragedy, and find the truth about what happened.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

### In Guatemala

- The DNA Laboratory in Guatemala City will be accredited according to international standards, will be fully staffed and operating at optimal level,
- FAFG will collect 200 buccal samples and 50 skeletal samples per month;
- FAFG will establish new DNA testing approaches and develop an expanded database to include a wider cross-section of family references
- FAFG will conduct training for staff on use of cutting-edge forensic techniques

### In Peru

- The Office of Missing Persons in Ayacucho will be expanded; DNA analysts will be trained by international experts;
- DNA samples (buccal and skeletal) will be tested and outsourced;
- FAFG will support the collection of ante mortem data by the National Council of Reparations
- EPAF will expand their Forensic Database.

FAP is Innovative: Links modern-day techniques with need to identify thousands of "disappeared" Guatemalans and FAFG organizational ability to function in tenuous human rights environment.

FAP is Sustainable: FAFG expertise to be utilized in geographic areas that were devastated by extreme violence during the conflict era and where thousands of people remain missing. EPAF helps GoP overcome lack of information as obstacle to reparation benefits.

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## America's Unofficial Ambassadors (AUA)

With America's Unofficial Ambassadors, Creative Learning launched a new initiative in the fourth quarter of 2009 that will bring together grassroots activists and communities in the United States and throughout the Muslim World to create partnerships that alleviate the root causes of terrorism and improve America's standing in the world. Since 9/11, our country has approached the problems posed by Islamist terrorism with diplomatic initiatives, military campaigns, and foreign assistance. All are necessary policy responses to this struggle, but missing from these combined efforts is the contribution that private American citizens can and must play to participating in our own national security. Efforts from the bottom up foster people-to-people relationships that help to alleviate core human development challenges, like combating illiteracy among women and training youth in employable skills. At the same time, such high impact service dissipates negative stereotypes between Americans and Muslims and improves relations between the United States and Muslim-majority countries.

With a three-pronged approach over the next two years, the Unofficial Ambassadors project will raise the awareness of Americans to the role that we can play, enable access to legitimate service opportunities, and support the quality of existing and new partnerships.

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## OBJECTIVES

- America's Unofficial Ambassadors, written by Project Director, Ben Orbach, a book of impact stories about Americans who are doing extraordinary work in support of local leaders combating these challenges. Through the mechanism of this book, Creative Learning will create a platform to reach American citizens at universities, in places of worship, and at community centers and to raise awareness for the role that they can play. This book will inspire professionals, graduates, students, and retirees to join this effort.
- A directory of 70 recommended organizations that work in Muslim-majority countries in the fields of education, unmet human needs, rights and justice, and creative expression and that send or host American volunteers in these countries. This directory will be published in America's Unofficial Ambassadors and on Creative Learning's Online Community Forum. The directory will provide access to opportunities for citizens who are interested in contributing service but who lack links to people and organizations in the Muslim World.
- An Online Community Forum of unofficial ambassadors who have volunteered or worked in the Muslim World. This community will be a resource for linkages and best practices and bring together prospective volunteers with advisors and mentors. Within a year of its launch, the forum will have more than 1000 unofficial ambassador members. We anticipate building this forum into a social networking platform that continues to inspire American citizens, students and new graduates in particular, to serve in the Muslim World.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CL began the first phase (planning and fundraising) of the AUA project in the 4th quarter of 2009 with funding from a La Paz Fund grant. The planning and fundraising phase will continue into the first quarter of

2010 with an active process of applying for foundational grants, soliciting support from private donors, and seeking other opportunities for core funding for the project's first 24 months. Other project activities include book research and development of a methodology for the Directory of Organizations. CL expects to bring on a team of graduate school interns to work on the Directory as well as the Forum in the first quarter of 2010.

- *In Yemen, only 59 percent of adults are literate.*
- *In 2008, 23 of the 42 countries Freedom House ranked as "not free" were Muslim-majority countries.*
- *The population of Middle East and North Africa countries will grow from 311 million in 2000 to 445 million by 2020.*



Guatemala Defend  
the Defenders Program (GDD)

**G**DD enhanced the capacity of partner human rights (HR) organizations to develop and improve their capacity to provide better security for their staff and improve their effectiveness as they advocate for human rights.

## OBJECTIVES

GDD provided technical assistance to key Guatemalan civil society defenders of human rights to achieve the following objectives:

- Develop and improve their internal capacity to provide better security for their staff; and
- Improve their ability to more effectively advocate for human rights.

## RESULTS

- Reduced potential danger to HR defenders,
- Increased capacity among the selected HR defenders,
- Enhanced Government of Guatemala political will to combat impunity related to HR defenders and threats against them.

GDD is innovative, sustainable and has a demonstrated impact: GDD implemented a program based on best practices and lessons learned from international human rights defenders' experiences and monitoring from local HR groups. The project assisted four HR groups that receive threats and analyze data sources to identify trends, geographic areas and motives for threats and attacks.

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# School-2-School: Uganda



Photo by Katherine Wall

**S**chool-2-School is a nationwide campaign developed by Creative Learning to raise funds for children's education in post-conflict regions around the world. One hundred percent of the funds donated are used to procure school materials that aid children in learning in new and creative ways. We identify a recipient school and ship early childhood education supplies to the students there with the support of an American school. We believe this is a very enriching experience for the children in both countries: students exchange letters and photos. It also provides an opportunity for the community to become actively involved because teachers and parents play a crucial role in the fundraising efforts. Thanks to our partners, School Specialty and Paxton International, we are able to procure and ship the goods at a reduced rate. The distribution is performed by generous, on the ground volunteers at Creative Associates International.

School supply kits meet basic classroom needs with items such as pencils, paper and notebooks, but also include sports equipment and school supplies, aiding the young children, many of whom have lived through the turmoil of war, to have the opportunity to learn through play.

## OBJECTIVES

Through the School-2-School Initiative, Creative Learning seeks to assist the efforts of local educators in post-conflict countries to create the best possible environment for their students. Our experience has shown that play therapy is helpful for children that have gone through a traumatic event.

- *This is CL's fifth School-2-School Initiative.*
- *The most popular school supply shipped through S-2-S is paint.*
- *The population of Uganda is 32 million.*
- *35% of Ugandans live on less than \$2 a day.*
- *67% of Ugandans can read and write; but only 58% of females can.*
- *940,000 Ugandans have HIV/AIDS.*

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2009, Creative Learning, Inc. launched School-2-School Uganda, a campaign to raise funds for Railway Primary School in Kampala, Uganda. Students at Robinson Secondary School in Fairfax, VA will learn about Uganda and hold several school and community wide fundraisers. Students from the Student Government Association Leadership Class will lead fundraising at the school.

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Photo by Katherine Wall



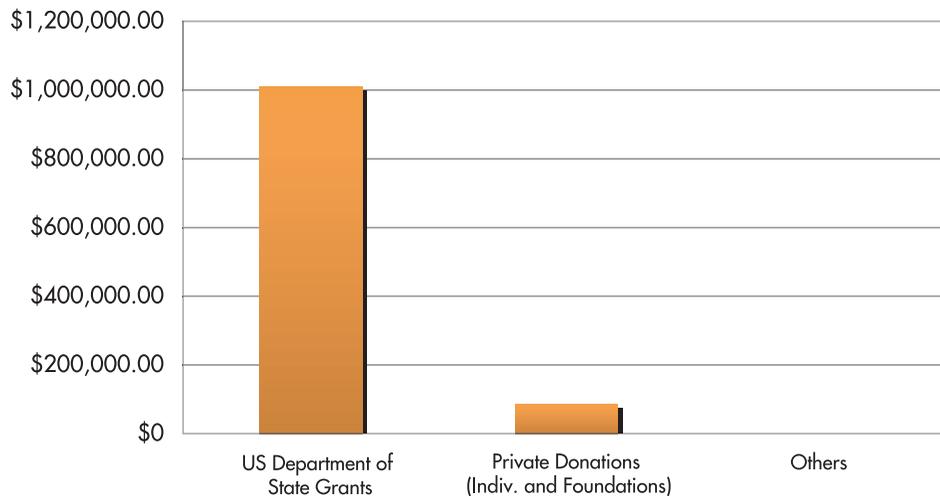
# Financial Report

Over the last 5 years, Creative Learning managed grants for over 4 million and has implemented projects in Latin America, the Middle East and Africa. From the very beginning, Creative Learning made the determination to keep its administrative costs down, and in some cases, disbursed 100% of contributions received to support survivors and families in need.

As most of our business is with the U.S. Government, it is important for CL to establish an official overhead rate for U.S. Government grants and contracts. During 2009, Creative Learning applied for a "Negotiated Indirect Cost Recovery Agreement"—NICRA for short—based on the audited costs of the organization.

Below are a few charts that illustrate our financial picture for 2009.

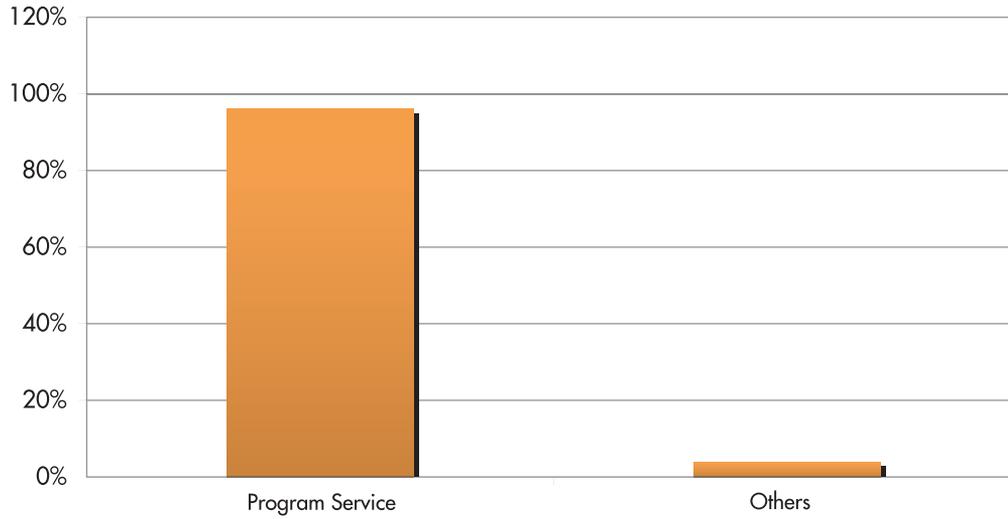
## Sources of Support and Revenue in 2009



## Sources of Revenue

US Department of State Grants	\$1,010,353.00
Private Donations (Indiv. and Foundations)	\$86,150.00
Others	\$56.46

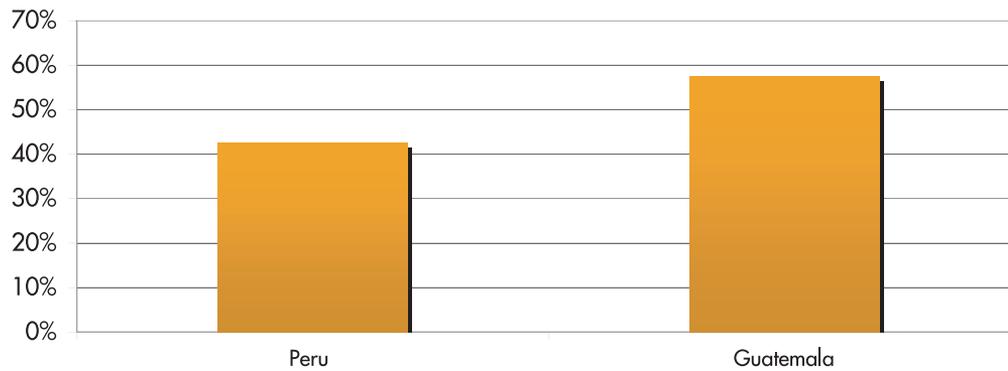
## How we used our Funds in 2009



### How we use our Funds

Program Services	\$ 1,046,561.00	96%
Others	\$ 42,811.00	4%

## Where we spent our grants in 2009



### Where we spend our grants

Peru	\$ 318,310.00	42%
Guatemala	\$ 430,834.00	58%



## Benjamin Orbach

Project Director,  
Creative Learning



What is America's Unofficial Ambassadors, and why is it important?

The AUA initiative is important for both global and national reasons. From a global perspective, if we as citizens don't take an active role in supporting the positive changes that we want to see in the world, those changes just won't happen. There currently aren't enough stakeholders in the development of open societies that create opportunities for all of their citizens. It is a mistake to think that strategically targeted foreign assistance in conflict zones or focused diplomatic efforts on issues of global importance – like with Israel and Palestine – will solve these human development problems. Achievements on these fronts will of course help, but so much more has to happen for girls to learn to read in Mali or young men in Yemen to be able to find jobs and afford to marry. From a national perspective, our country is fighting two wars and only a relative handful of our society has contributed some type of service to what is the struggle of our generation. At the same time, the stereotyping of Muslims at the popular level in some places in the United States is something out of the darker days of our history. As Americans, we need this initiative not just as a component of the overall effort to protect our national interests, but we need to become Unofficial Ambassadors to renew our civil society and to understand again how our national history of struggling for equality enables us to play a unique role in today's world.

When did you start thinking about the need for greater US civilian engagement with the Muslim World?

When I was a graduate student traveling around the Arab World after 9/11 and living in Jordan and then

Egypt with the start of the war with Iraq, I began to realize the impact that civil society can have in international relations and in development. While our nation went to war with Iraq and frankly scared and angered so many people across the Muslim World who saw this action as unjust and harmful to civilians, I was still welcomed into people's homes and lives. Students in Jordan wanted to study English with me. Syrian artists wanted to discuss US policy with me. And Egyptian cooks wanted to be friends. Regardless of my government's policy choices, there were openings for people-to-people relationships of substance and impact. I realized that while I couldn't make a difference in questions of war and peace, I and countless other Americans could make a difference in the day-to-day issues that determine a person's quality of life and future.

How do you expect the project to grow?

These first 18 months of the project are very important. We are building our platform to raise awareness among Americans for this kind of service and to increase Americans' access to credible opportunities with organizations in the Muslim World. Once we are successful in building this platform, the project's potential is unlimited. We are planning to encourage and support 1000 Americans to do some kind of short-term service in the next three years. Our hope is that 10 years from now that the option of service in the Muslim World is something that college students think about as a summer possibility, that professionals think about as an alternative vacation, and that seniors consider as a viable post-retirement path of service.



## Jeff Weiss

Chairman of the  
Board of Directors,  
Creative Learning



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Tell us how did you become involved with Creative Learning?

I have been appreciative for many years of the generous philanthropy of the Kruvant family here in Washington and also reaching out to some of the developing world's most disadvantaged people. Where people need help, the Kruvant's are ready to help, to be of service. So several years back I felt honored when Creative Learning President Bill Kruvant, an economist and humanitarian, asked me to join CL's board of directors. As a former Peace Corps volunteer teacher in India, and Peace Corps director in Seychelles, and later Director of the political asylum program at the Justice Department, I must say that Creative Learning has great staff, and a diverse, talented multicultural set of volunteer board members, idealists and hardnosed realists all at the same time. That combination is rare, but that type of staff and board is necessary to be effective, nimble, creative when working with local organizations overseas to deliver good results to oppressed, poor families and communities whose human rights are threatened.

How has CL evolved in 2009?

As I see it, Creative Learning demonstrated in 2009 that we can successfully work on three complementary fronts as a not-for-profit 501.c.3 organization. With wonderful assistance from the Kruvant family we continued our fundraising and donations of materials and money for education and humanitarian relief projects. Further, we proved ourselves a trustworthy, valued partner to the State Department as we continued to implement, with our in-country partners forensic anthropologist teams in

Guatemala and Peru, for the identification of the disappeared victims of human rights abuses, helping to dignify their deaths. Additionally, Creative Learning's President and Board made the decision, and the staff and several dedicated interns began doing the research and planning for launching a new, exciting initiative, America's Unofficial Ambassadors. This project's goal is to improve the relations between America and the Muslim world by increasing the number of American who do short-to-medium term volunteer projects in Muslim majority countries in the fields of education, unmet human needs, rights and justice, and creative expression. So in 2009 we have been successfully multi-tasking as we work to be of creative, noble service to families and communities at home and aboard.

What changes would you like to see for CL in 2010?

Well, I know that all members of Creative Learning are keen to obtain a final Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) in 2010. In 2009 we worked diligently towards achieving this goal, because obtaining a NICRA is important to any entity that does government contracting, as it provides the flexibility needed to effectively run both projects and the organization. Once obtained this will be a good change and step forward. Also, we want to establish an advisory committee for America's Unofficial Ambassadors project, to help move this project closer to realization. Finally, we would welcome the opportunity to apply our experiences and lessons learned in Guatemala and Peru to a third country.

# Creative Learning 2009



Designed by: Angela Aldave

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