



# ANNUAL REPORT 2011



Creative  
Learning

teach  
learn  
volunteer





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# Message from the President

Another—and very eventful—year in the life of Creative Learning has passed and our efforts continue to bear fruit. Our signature program, America's Unofficial Ambassadors (AUA), is expanding. During 2011, AUA efforts were concentrated on raising awareness among Americans that volunteering in Muslim-majority countries was a worthwhile and practical thing to consider. We did this through the Directory of Recommended Organizations on our website and through partnerships with other organizations in the volunteer-sending industry. We are expanding the number of Mosaic Fellowship recipients to ensure that some worthy volunteers are able to do service who would otherwise not have the funding to do so.

In addition, we've aligned our School-2-School program with AUA in an exciting partnership between a school in Colorado and one in Jordan and will shortly be sending an outstanding young teacher to the Jordanian school along with some high-tech teaching tools. Finally, we are gearing up for AUA to increase the number of Americans doing service through direct programming. We hope by next year to have programs started in Jordan, Indonesia, and Tanzania (Zanzibar). We see this effort as the primary activity for AUA in the foreseeable future.

Finally, our human rights' forensic work in Guatemala and Peru continues with considerable success. We remain committed to strengthening the local forensic anthropology teams with a South-South approach and training program that builds regional capacity in DNA analysis. We appreciate the trust that the Department of State continues to show in our work in this area.

I would like to extend my special appreciation to Cecilia Closs, a board member and an attorney, who contributed so many volunteer hours on



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complex and sensitive issues of liability, insurance, and other issues. Without her efforts, Creative Learning could not do its international work. Lastly, I want to reiterate my appreciation and thanks to our Board and our core staff—Carola Mandelbaum and Ben Orbach—who continue to be the engines that drive Creative Learning and without whose efforts none of this would be possible.

William J. Kruvant  
President

# Board of Directors and Staff

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## Our Mission



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*Focusing on communities with pressing human needs, Creative Learning enhances the capacity of local organizations around the world to improve the lives of people in their communities. Through the creation of people-to-people partnerships, we are especially dedicated to protecting human rights, supporting economic and social development, and building peace.*

## America's Unofficial Ambassadors

*"AUA  
increases  
access to  
quality  
volunteer  
opportunities  
in the Muslim  
World."*



Photo by Creative Learning

The America's Unofficial Ambassadors initiative is increasing the number of Americans who volunteer in education, health, civil society, and youth empowerment throughout the Muslim World. AUA is raising Americans' awareness that we can each make a difference in helping to create new opportunities in human development while building mutual understanding. We are increasing Americans' access to quality volunteer opportunities in Muslim-majority countries, and we are improving the impact of volunteers' service. The people-to-people partnerships we create are building a better future.

## Objectives

- Raise awareness that Americans can volunteer in human development in the Muslim World and build people-to-people partnerships that have an impact and build mutual understanding
- Increase access to short-term, quality volunteer opportunities in the Muslim World
- Improve the impact of volunteers through direct AUA programs
- Build a sustainable initiative that creates people-to-people partnerships between America and the Muslim World for years to come

## Achievements

2011 was a landmark year for AUA. With our public launch in March of our website, [www.unofficialambassadors.org](http://www.unofficialambassadors.org), we transitioned from concept to actual program. AUA's 2011 accomplishments included the following:

- Publication of the AUA Directory of Recommended Organizations, the premier resource for researching short-term volunteer opportunities in development in the Muslim World. The AUA Directory profiles 59 leading organizations that send or host volunteers in 40 different countries. It is available, for free, on the AUA web site. 800 people searched the AUA Directory between March and December of 2011.
- Traditional and online outreach that raised the awareness of tens of thousands of Americans to this concept of volunteer service. The AUA website had more than 12,000 unique visitors in its first nine months; the AUA blog had more than 5000 visits in its first seven months; and the AUA Facebook page had close to 1000 fans by the end of 2011.
- Launch of the Mosaic grant program which in Year 1 supported seven under-represented Americans to serve as unofficial ambassadors in Bangladesh, Jordan, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, and Senegal. These recipients blog and give presentations about their experience.
- Launch of the AUA Network in September which offers a structured mentoring program for new volunteers; a monthly webinar series with leaders in the fields of development, cross-cultural engagement, and relations between America and the Muslim World; and free online resources to improve the impact of volunteers across a range of sectors. 51 volunteers joined the AUA Network in 2011.
- Raised \$389,000 of support from individuals, a corporation, and a foundation

- Joined the Aspen Institute's Partners for a New Beginning, a public-private partnership between corporations and NGOs seeking to implement President Obama's Cairo speech.

## WHAT'S AHEAD FOR 2012?

Creative Learning expects 2012 to be an even bigger year for AUA as we consolidate the initiative's gains, continue to grow our capacity to implement larger programs, and further develop our internal structure to become a sustainable initiative. As we plan for 2012, AUA's top priorities include the following:

- Advancing towards our goal of 1000 Americans committing to volunteer in the Muslim World in the next five years and building the AUA Network into a vibrant community of volunteers dedicated to building peace through service
- Doubling the number of Mosaic Grant recipients, implementing our first "Building Peace by Building Homes" volunteer trip, and beginning the planning process to implement other direct programs in focus countries such as Indonesia and Jordan
- Increasing our number of "volunteer voices" blog posts, AUA community presentations, and other online and traditional outreach to further raise awareness for the concept of building mutual understanding through volunteer service
- Updating the AUA Directory and maintaining it as the leading resource for researching short-term volunteer opportunities in development in the Muslim World
- Establishing a Development Committee that will take the lead in raising funds for AUA and creating an endowment

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# AUA Network members



Photo by Creative Learning

*"I'm there to teach. I'm there to learn. I'm there to listen to the stories and share my own.... No matter where we call home, we all share a need to feel loved, cared for, important. We all want to experience happiness and we have a responsibility to each other to work toward a better today within this framework. Volunteering abroad allows us to live out this dream in real time."*

— Lindsay Michael, 2011 AUA Mosaic Grant Recipient.

*Lindsay Michael taught English and art in the Palestinian Territories with Project Hope.*

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*"I have found that the people are all similar. We laugh, we cry, we eat, we drink, and we sleep. I know for certain that some things are universal among all human beings whether I am in Morocco or America."*

— Shibrika Pansy, volunteer, 2011 Mosaic Grant recipient who volunteered in Rabat, Morocco by teaching English to adults and organizing games and other activities for street children.

# School-2-School

*"School-2-School: a partnership for teaching and learning from each other"*



Photo by Creative Learning

School-2-School (S2S) is a cultural exchange and educational development program that enables schools in the United States to partner with elementary schools in countries emerging from conflict or facing the challenges of poverty in the Muslim World. This year's program will continue the success of six previous S2S partnerships in Afghanistan, Iraq, Philippines, Panama, Uganda, and Bolivia.

Through S2S, the US school raises funds to support the purchase of school supplies to benefit a specific school abroad, the host school. The S2S program provides an excellent opportunity for American students to learn about different cultures, as well to connect with fellow students from around the world. In an exciting addition to the S2S program, during 2011 Creative Learning has support the trip expenses for a volunteer from the US school to visit their host school abroad as an Unofficial Ambassador for up to four weeks in the summer of 2012.

Creative Learning welcomes applications from public and private schools in the United States at the elementary, middle, or high school level. A teacher, administrator, or other educator can serve as a school's point of contact and/or unofficial ambassador for the proposed partnership with a school in the host country.

### ***About this year's program: Queen Noor School in Jordan***

This year, and through 2012, the S2S program will benefit the Queen Noor High School in Al Wehdat, Amman, Jordan. The school has 750 students from grade 8 to grade 12 (age 13-18) and the number of students in each class ranges between 40 and 58 per class.

Based on the current needs of the Queen Noor School in Jordan, the S2S program will fundraise for the purchase of an Interactive White Board. Many of the teachers at the Queen Noor School are ICT literate and use ICT in different disciplines and the lead teacher is looking forward to connecting with the teacher in the US. The target fundraising goal is \$5,000.

The S2S is a unique program that exposes students to cultural tolerance and global awareness by connecting them to their peers in a school in the Muslim World. By creating positive grassroots connections with the citizens in the Muslim World, the US-based school will take a leading role in building peace and dispelling harmful stereotypes associated with America and the Muslim World, both overseas and at home. And for the US school's unofficial ambassador, the S2S program is a unique opportunity not just for personal and professional development but to directly support education programs in Jordan while dispelling stereotypes about America.

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# Regional Forensic Assistance Network (RFAN)

*"RFAN provides training to analyze remains and identify victims of human rights violations in the region"*



Photo by Creative Learning

**Statement of Work:** The RFAN increases the capacity of Latin American indigenous forensic organizations to use DNA analysis and systems, established at the Guatemala Forensic Anthropology Foundation (FAFG) laboratory in Guatemala, to enhance their abilities to analyze and identify victims of human rights violations. RFAN will give all participant organizations access to civil society-based information sharing network promoting South-South cooperation and capacity-building.

## Objectives

Strengthen the capacity of forensic anthropology organizations in Guatemala, Peru and El Salvador to identify victims of armed conflicts through DNA analysis.

## Expected Results/Outcomes

- *Search for missing and disappeared in urban areas* –recovering the missing from the Guatemalan civil war buried in urban areas and identifying them by DNA analysis.
- *Regional training with DNA laboratory access* – Pro-Búsqueda in El Salvador and the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF) trained to collect and analyze DNA samples and to analyze these samples in FAFG's DNA lab. Pro-Búsqueda and EPAF able to analyze raw data, make comparisons and manage data in their own countries.

**RFAN is Innovative:** RFAN links modern-day forensic analysis techniques to identify thousands of “disappeared” which were previously unidentifiable due to lack of DNA analysis capacity among Latin American forensic organizations. FAFG, as regional leader, will build technical capacity through a South-South approach while empowering and training other Latin American geneticists to raise their technical expertise.

**RFAN is Sustainable:** FAFG will work to develop a dependable revenue stream from outside sources requiring DNA processing services to ensure laboratory sustainability. FAFG will establish itself as a regional training center for ISO 17025 certified DNA analysis.

**RFAN has Demonstrated Impact:** FAFG will continue to produce breakthroughs in applying DNA processing in developing countries and share knowledge and experience with sister forensic organizations to improve identification of victims of forced disappearance in the region.

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# Peru Forensic Assistance Project (PFAP)

**"PFAP:  
reinforcing  
the right to  
know the  
truth"**



**Statement of Work:** The PFAP will take advantage of the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team's (EPAF) recent organizational growth and expanded geographic focus to enable EPAF to further establish itself as the primary civil society entity with the capability to implement the Peruvian Government's "missing persons" mandate while adhering to Rule of Law procedures to recover the remains of victims of forced disappearance and other human rights abuses that occurred during the 20-year internal armed conflict.

## Objectives

- Empower the families of the 100 victims of disappearances as the principal advocates to recover the remains of those Peruvians.
- Create a positive impact on long-neglected populations in the Pampas-Qaracha river basin through combination of restorative and retributive justice approaches.

## Expected Results/Outcomes

- Nationwide effort to promote the "right to know the truth" accomplished;
- Identification of the disappeared of Peru receives increased attention and awareness demonstrated in Peruvian media;
- Use of DNA technology to identify the remains of 100 victims; and
- EPAF develops no less than 3 cases of forced disappearance.

**PFAP is Innovative:** Addresses basic human rights issues in a long-neglected area of Peru. Establishes community relationships based on trust in the Pampas-Qaracha river basin that will serve as a platform to encourage other types of needed assistance to flow into the area.

**PFAP is Sustainable:** EPAF works towards great independence by developing fund raising strategies and using the compassionate content of the program to appeal to a local and international audience.

**PFAP has demonstrated impact:** EPAF continues to advocate for equal treatment of human rights cases, regardless of who the perpetrators of the crime were. Civil society has a key role to play in the reconciliation process and obstacles, such as investigating and acting on cases of forced disappearances, highlight the lack of transparency and openness on the part of the government to openly and effectively confront their past and promote the healing process in the more remote parts of the country.

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# FINANCIAL REPORT

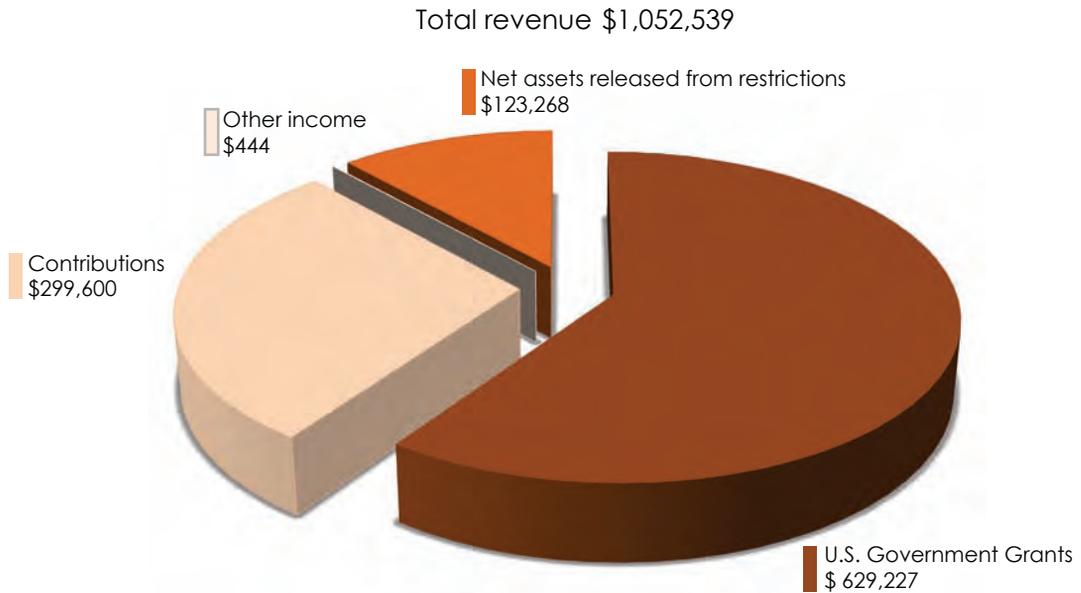
Over the last 6 years, Creative Learning has managed grants for over 5 million dollars and has implemented projects in Latin America, Middle East and Africa. From the very beginning, CL made the determination to keep its administrative costs down, and in some cases disbursed 100% of contributions that we received to support children's education.

Although most of our business remains with the U.S. Government, in 2011 we've seen a significant increase in the amount of contributions received to support the America's Unofficial Ambassador's program. This support came from individuals, corporations and foundations.

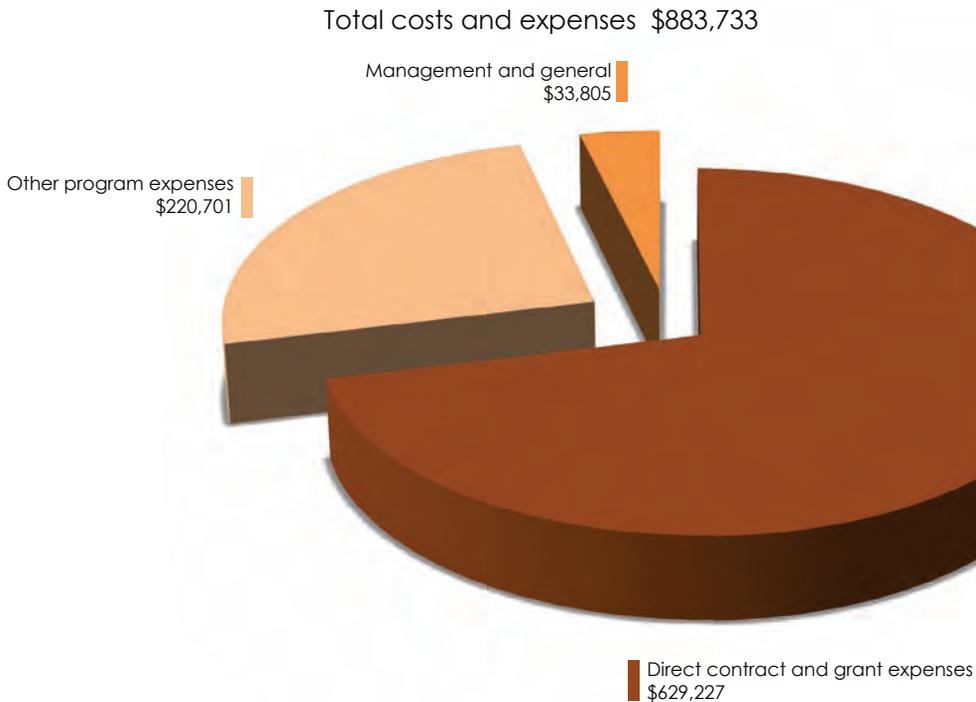


Photo by Creative Learning

## SOURCES OF FUNDING IN 2011



## HOW WE USED OUR FUNDS DURING 2011



## INTERVIEW

### **You recently travelled to Guatemala for a monitoring review of the Regional Forensic Assistance Program, and you visited the FAFG DNA laboratory and witnessed the exhumation work in Antigua. What are your impressions on the work that RFAN is supporting?**

As a Grants Officer Representative at DRL, I travelled to Guatemala to oversee project implementation and ensure regulatory compliance under the Regional Forensic Assistance Network (RFAN) project. Since May 2011, this innovative program has sought to increase the capacity of Latin American forensic organizations and recover and identify victims of forced disappearances in Guatemala. As the project comes to a close, there have been concrete gains and significant progress in achieving grant objectives.

Although it was difficult to come face to face with the extremely violent nature of the Guatemalan Civil War, the trip was extremely rewarding and inspiring. During interviews with forensic anthropologists from the Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala (FAFG), I was shown how analysts determine causes of death, reconstruct the scenarios surrounding killings, and utilize DNA analysis to identify victims and return them to their families.

While visiting exhumation sites in Antigua and at La Verbena cemetery, I was struck by the commitment of the project staff to satisfy the innate need to recover what has been lost, rectify wrongs committed, and seek closure from painful situations. That impression was only strengthened during the rest of the trip, and I was happy to witness the exchange technical of technical skills between Guatemalan, Peruvian, and Salvadorian DNA analysis specialists. That transfer of knowledge has been crucial to the success of the project and has left Latin American forensic organizations better equipped to exhume and identify the remains of victims of armed conflict.

### **Why do you think it's important that the US Department of State support the forensic investigation of the Disappeared in Guatemala, Peru, and El Salvador?**

The US State Department is committed to promoting human rights and justice in the Western Hemisphere. The identification of missing persons from armed conflicts in Guatemala, Peru, and El Salvador is a crucial step in helping the citizens of those countries achieve their quest for justice and reconciliation and giving closure to the families of victims. The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) is proud to partner with Creative Learning and the three organizations under the project – the Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala, the Asociación Pro-Búsqueda de Niños y Niñas Desaparecidos, and the Equipo Peruano de Antropología Forense – in achieving these goals.

## Alex Covington

Program Officer

Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor

US Department of State



## INTERVIEW

**Through a State Department grant, Creative Learning has supported the work of EPAF in Peru, including psychological support for the relatives of those victims of forced disappearance and DNA testing of remains. Why do you think this is important and how do you go about explaining this very complex process to the relatives of the victims?**

Unfortunately, the issue of the disappeared in Peru has completely fallen off the radar screen, when we talk about the disappeared we relate automatically to Argentina or Chile but not to Peru. Recent calculations estimate that over 15,000 people went missing during the internal armed conflict (1980-2000).

After many years of waiting without answers, family members are benefitted from a project that addresses the issue from a holistic perspective, that is, supporting the families through debriefing of traumatic memories and providing means to cope with pain and anguish and whenever possible, using technology such as DNA to identify the remains of their loved ones once they are recovered from clandestine graves.

Perhaps the most important element of this project is the fact that people have the right to know the whereabouts of their loved ones and if dead provide them with decent burial, failure to do so extends the agony and becomes an incomplete mourning process in which cumulative stress takes a toll on survivors through depression leading eventually to death.

EPAF consults with communities when they are interested in participating in a process of remembrance that may lead to uncover painful memories and may however also shed light on the whereabouts of their loved ones, wondering in a world that does not belong to the living or to the dead.

### **What impact is EPAF's work having on local communities?**

EPAF's main accomplishment has been empowering communities through the understanding that no matter how difficult the past or present be, there are ways by which they can be assisted. In addition losing the fear to remember and understanding that those memories can also assist in identifying their loved ones and dignify them through a proper burial.

## Jose Pablo Baraybar

Executive Director

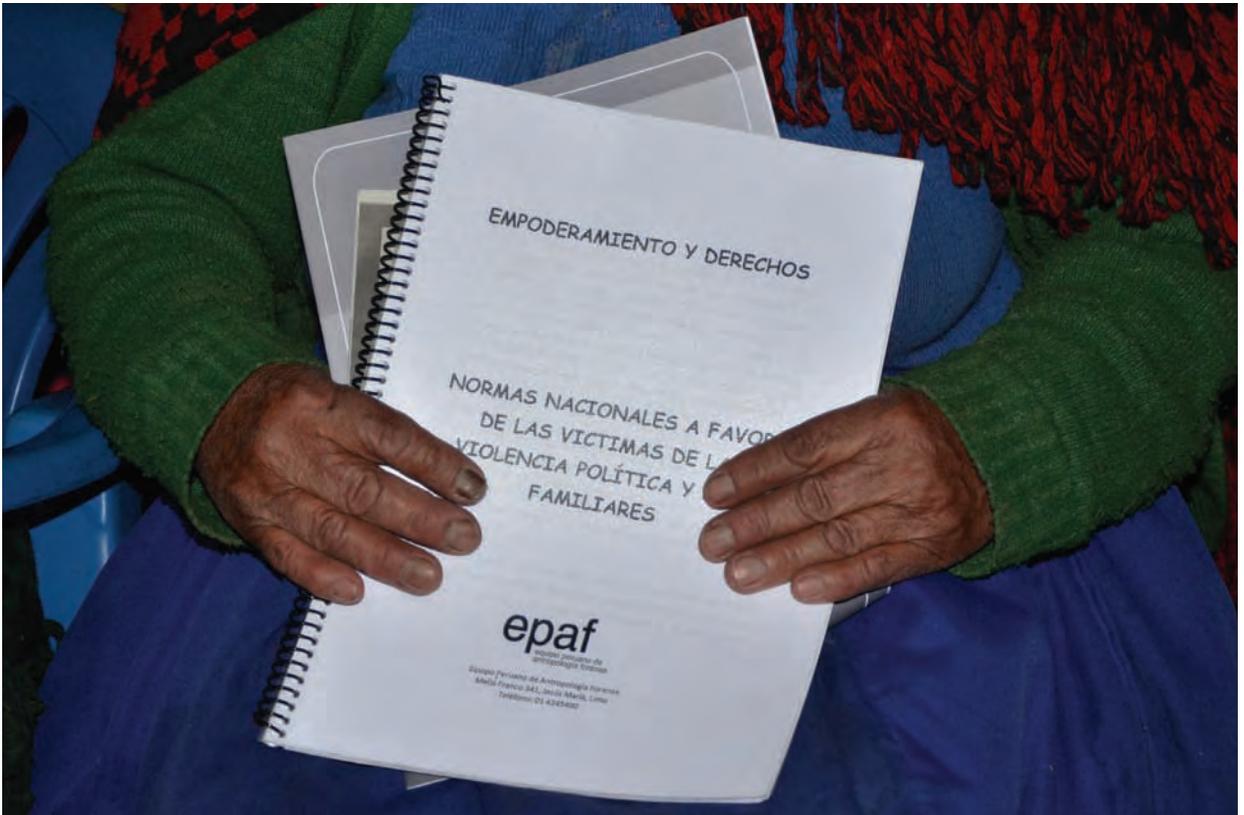
Equipo Peruano de Antropología Forense (EPAF)



## PHOTO GALLERY



American Unofficial Ambassadors/Photo by Creative Learning



Peru Forensic Assistance Project/Photo by Creative Learning



American Unofficial Ambassadors/Photo by Creative Learning

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