



# ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023

The Peaceful Village Program



*Roots Up*

Prepared By:

MSIP - The Peaceful Village Inc.

# Message from MSIP – TPV Inc. Board Chair

Message from the Board Chair  
MSIP- The Peaceful Village  
Annual General Meeting  
December 11, 2023

I would like to extend a heartfelt welcome to everyone as we come to another successful year end for The Peaceful Village. Once again, we have seen amazing growth, development, and successes in our organization and especially all the students.

Things are almost back to normal, and since our normal is pretty awesome, I want to share some of the results of the hard work, passion, and commitment of our staff, volunteers, and of course, the students and their families.

We had an enrolment of 957 youth registered across all the sites. I'm happy to report we had a high school graduation rate of 95% in 2023 compared to the provincial average of 87.4%, and we were able to provide \$ 150,000 in scholarships.

I am especially pleased to announce we have been asked to open another school site, and I hope to see that happen sometime in 2024. None of this would be possible without the financial assistance of our many partners and very generous funders.

I would also like to thank all the members on the Board of Directors for their dedication and passion in supporting our organization, especially Tharmala for all her hard work assisting me as Vice Chair for these past seven years. This was Tharmala's final year on the Board, and I wish her all the best in her new adventures.

I expect 2024 will be our best year ever, until 2025.

Robert Vlahos, Chair

# Our Vision

At MSIP, we don't embrace a sanitized version of social justice. Rather, we appreciate the challenge, discomfort, and messiness of how people achieve their potential. Our work is to encourage schools and communities to act out for renewal in diverse ways that suit their contexts. We recognize that working for social justice in education requires both courage and vulnerability to re imagine, reconsider, and recreate powerful learning opportunities and relationships with students.

Manitoba School Improvement Program – The Peaceful Village Inc. is a not-for-profit, non-government, independent organization that is dedicated to the advancement of education to marginalized youth, particularly immigrants and refugees in Manitoba and to assisting such youth in achieving their potential.

# Our Mission

# Our Values

**Youth-led:**  
Aspire and design for establishing youth ownership by engaging and responding to the voices of youth and families.

**Collaborative:**  
Individuals, funders, organizations, schools, and advocacy groups collaborate and meet to ensure success of youth education.

**Flexibility:**  
Flexibility in our program to suit the voices and needs of youth and families.

**Community-Based:**  
Our focus, mandate and staffing are Community-Based, community focused, and community-empowered.

## **Our Goals**

- Provide educational assistance (academic assessment and tutoring) to youth to strengthen their English language, literacy, numeracy and other academic skills.
- Facilitate access to higher education through provision of scholarships.
- Promote positive social connections by providing a safe place for youth to learn together and assist them transitioning to Canadian society.
- Assisting the families of youth in developing a sense of belonging in Canadian society by providing English language instruction to parents and hosting community events (such as Village Kitchens).
- Facilitate positive mental health among youth by providing opportunities for them to explore their talents (through passion projects).
- Facilitate community movement toward universal safety via embracing of cultural diversity by educating the community about The Peaceful Village program and its value to the community.

The Peaceful Village Program is centered in a human rights and social justice framework, where we believe that

- the aims of public-school education are to build more peaceful, democratic, healthy and joyful communities.
- youth, particularly newcomer youth and their families face many barriers when they enter the public school system in Canada.
- participants (students, families, educators, program staff, other community organizations) must work together to help public schools actualize the aims of public education in Manitoba.

## **Program Model**

We aspire to improve educational outcomes, expand possibilities, and support our youth in the Peaceful Village along with their individual paths to achieve their full potential and success. Our focus is to reduce the negative impact of external factors that affect the educational success of our youth in our community.

# Executive Director Report

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests, funders, members of the board of directors, parents, staff of the Peaceful Village program, principals, teachers, and most importantly, the bright and talented students who make our program thrive. good evening,

It is both an honour and a privilege to be part of this annual general meeting today as the Executive Director of our esteemed organization. As we gather here virtually for our Annual General Meeting, it's a moment to reflect on the remarkable journey we have undertaken over the past year and to cast our vision forward for the exciting times that lie ahead.

Firstly, let me express my heartfelt gratitude to each one of you: the dedicated parents who entrusted their children to our care in the critical after-school hours, the committed staff, and, of course, the incredible students who bring life and energy to our program. Your unwavering support and enthusiasm fuel the success and growth of our program.

Over the past year, we have witnessed outstanding achievements and milestones that make us immensely proud. **957 students** were enrolled across the seven Peaceful Village sites; \$150,000 worth of scholarships was handed out to all the eligible students; **60 students** graduated with high school diplomas with a **95% graduation rate**. This is an incredible achievement, which we are very proud of as a collective. Our students have not only excelled academically but have also demonstrated creativity, resilience, and a passion for learning that goes beyond the classroom. Whether it's in passion projects, sports, or community service, our students have shown a commitment to excellence that sets them apart.

Our dedicated team leaders and staff have played a pivotal role in nurturing and guiding our youth. Their tireless efforts, innovative support methods, and genuine care for each other have contributed to the positive and enriching environment that defines our program.

As we look ahead, our vision remains clear: to continue providing a holistic and stimulating educational experience that empowers our students to reach their full potential. We are committed to fostering a love for learning, promoting critical thinking skills, and nurturing the values of teamwork, respect, and responsibility.

None of this would be possible without the continued support of our funders, school partners, parents, and the larger community. Your involvement, feedback, and partnership are invaluable to us. We encourage you to actively participate, share your ideas, and be a part of the journey as we shape the future of our organization together.

In conclusion, I want to express my deep gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of our organization: funders, our board of directors, principals, parents, teachers, students, and our dedicated staff. Together, we are creating an environment where dreams are nurtured, talents are honed, and futures are shaped.

Thank you for your commitment, dedication, and belief in the power of education. Let's continue working hand in hand to make our organization a beacon of inspiration and excellence.

Thank you.

# Highlights

## 2022/2023 Graduates and Scholarship Recipients Overview

In June 2023, 304 Peaceful Village Program participants earned scholarships towards post-secondary education studies and training which can be claimed upon graduation from high school.

2022/2023 was a successful academic year in the Peaceful Village Program. 60 youth participants in the Village graduated from high school. Breakdown of each site are shown as below:

### 2022/2023 Graduates

Community Site	12
Glenlawn Collegiate	13
Gordon Bell High School	16
Fort Richmond Collegiate	14
St. James Collegiate	5

With a total of 304 scholarships distributed to youth across the sites, the total amount of scholarship distributed was \$115,700.00

### 2022/2023 Scholarship Amount Distributed

Acadia Junior High	33 Students	\$ 6,600.00
Community Site	30 Students	\$ 14,500.00
Glenlawn Collegiate	41 Students	\$ 18,700.00
Gordon Bell High School	57 Students	\$ 25,100.00
Fort Richmond Collegiate	56 Students	\$ 26,900.00
Hugh John MacDonald School	52 Students	\$ 11,350.00
St. James Collegiate	35 Students	\$ 12,550.00







# Highlights

## YMCA Youth Exchange Program

Winnipeg Art Gallery

In April and May, 25 of our youth and 3 staff participated in a week-long exchange in Winnipeg (hosting) and Collingwood, Ontario (visiting), courtesy of the YMCA Exchange Program.



Niagara Falls



## Our Learning Centre

Learning Centers continue to create an instant friendship network for our students. Our learning centers are all open to in-person program. Our learning centers offer academic, social support (including tutoring, language, nutritious snacks/meal, bus tickets). All our learning centers are staffed with culturally diverse staff and volunteer staff.

Below are the opening hours of our learning centre:

Community Site Gordon Bell High School Hugh John MacDonald School	Monday - Friday 4:00pm - 7:00pm
Acadia Junior High Fort Richmond Collegiate Glenlawn Collegiate	Tuesday - Friday 4:00pm - 7:00pm
St. James Collegiate / George Waters Middle School	Wednesday - Friday 4:00pm - 7:00pm

In addition, the Community Site is open to students and parents from 9:00am – 12:00 noon on Saturdays, school breaks and summertime.



## Passion Project

Passion Projects take place virtually and in-person during the Learning Centre time, where each student has the opportunity to enrich aesthetic learning experiences and reinforce their core learning. It allows youth to express themselves in artistic language that cross language barriers and facilitate expression and engagement through music, arts, dance, drumming, drama, cooking, sports opportunities and etc.





# Community Celebration & Recognition of Learning



Our community celebration and recognition of learning event is an annual event where we celebrate and recognize the hard work of our youth. It is an event where all the students, families, and community members come together and celebrate. On this day, we hand out scholarships and send off our graduating students. The last year event was well attended, with over 400 people in attendance.







This community kitchen enables us to prepare hot meals for over 800 youth across our seven Peaceful Village sites.



# Community Kitchen



A photograph showing a room with a Christmas tree in the background, decorated with lights and ornaments. In the foreground, there are numerous blue food hampers, some of which are filled with items like a box of Cheerios cereal. The hampers are arranged in rows, and the scene is brightly lit.

## Food Drive

The Peaceful Village continues to run the annual food drive to ensure that many of our underserved youth and families have enough to eat over the holidays.

Our December 2022 food drive was a success where we were able to pack over 500 food hampers. We are thankful to all our generous donors and supporters.



## Summer Program 2023

Summer program in the Peaceful Village creates unique opportunities for youth to develop their confidence and acquire new skills. This year, all the seven sites combined activities, and the villagers had opportunities to know one another and embrace the fact that we are “*One Village*” despite our different locations. Over 150 youth registered and participated during the summer program. Most of our youth had opportunities to attend field trips as well as involved in the community. The summer program was capped with two nights camping experience at Spruce Woods Provincial Park, where 25 youth participated.







## Community Garden Initiative

Every summer through a partnership with the Kinsmen All Saints, the Peaceful Village Program used their land located in St. Vital to provide family garden plots. We are also thankful to Uncle Ernest Braun for providing garden plots for the same purpose over the past 14 years. The program provided seeds, equipment, transportation (in some cases), and water. The gardening initiative allows families to grow organic produce that will carry them through the colder months as well as address food security.



**What  
we  
have  
learned  
this  
year**

Working with our funders and supporters is about both finances and building relationships.

A solid team is a solid foundation.

Collaboration among parents, teachers, staff members and community is of utmost important to ensure success of our students.

All students have the ability to succeed given the right support and motivation.

Partnership and collaboration are a process that is never finished. Not something you do but something you live

A youth led organization empowers youth through youth participation in all areas of program.

Leadership comes from the courage to step out on faith, showing others that they too can step out.

Focused time for tutoring, homework help, balanced with activities gives youth the opportunity to do both instead of having to choose.

# Testimonies

“Joining the Peaceful Village was the best thing for me. I met people that I would never have been in contact with regularly even though we are in the same school, and that just helped me know more people who liked the same things that I did. Making these new friends just made me feel better about myself because I lacked confidence in my poor English.” -- Participant

“I gained a lot of confidence when I joined the program, as I was able to complete my homework before going home, as there is no one at home to help me with home as my mom is at work and comes late always. My friends also encouraged me and the staff too. This program really gave me a lot of confidence and I feel I will graduate from high school and go to university from the support that I get from here.” -- Participant

“This program happened to be in my new school helped me a lot to receive continued academic support and my overall self-confidence, and my quest to graduate from high school with good grades. I was devastated when my family told me that we were moving out of downtown, as the idea of me missing the connections I gained in the Peaceful Village. Thankfully, my worry was short-lived, as my new school has Peaceful Village.” -- Participant

“This program really helped me discover that I am capable to achieve in my studies. I am loving school now and I come to the school every day and the program. The staff are really good, they help me with my schoolwork, provide snacks and bus tickets. I am very happy of the Peaceful Village. I want to graduate from high school and make my parents and the staff of this program happy too. The staff are hardworking and care about all the student that come here.” -- Participant

“Peaceful Village meets the needs and expectations of my family when they provide some school materials and programs that can help our children study well. When they provide some food to children and the staff are providing materials that they can use in real life. They meet in those ways. Sometimes they provide money to help with children’s needs. They really meet my family’s needs. Families need assistance in education. They meet our needs 100%.” -- Parent

# Our Team 2022/2023

## **MSIP Board of Directors**

Chair : Robert Vlahos  
Vice Chair : Tharmala Tharmalingam  
Member : Monika Vashisht  
Jennifer Taylor  
Stephanie Yamniuk  
Jacob Woodbeck  
Bunmi Afolobi  
Tom Lurvey  
Ex-Officio : Kevin Lamoureux

## **Administration:**

Executive Director : Daniel Swaka  
Community Liaison : Michael Roberts  
Executive Assistant : Thaw Re Moon  
Program Assistant : Xianhui Ho

## **TPV Team Leader**

Community Site : Michael Roberts  
Gordon Bell High School : Kelly Logan  
Glenlawn Collegiate : Michael Howell  
Fort Richmond Collegiate & : Odik Opap  
Acadia Junior High  
Hugh John MacDonald School : Ibrahim Mohamed  
St. James Collegiate / : Mahendra Adhikari  
George Waters Middle School  
Adult Program : Batista Kwajok



# **Funders and Partners**

**Your supports make our success possible!**

**Province of Manitoba**  
**Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada**  
**United Way of Winnipeg**  
**The Winnipeg Foundation**  
**Thomas Sill Foundation**  
**The Richardson Foundation**  
All Saints Kinsmen Club  
Pembina Trails School Division  
Louis Riel School Division  
Winnipeg School Division  
St. James-Assiniboia School Division  
Gordon Bell High School  
Hugh John MacDonald School  
Glenlawn Collegiate  
Fort Richmond Collegiate  
Acadia Junior High  
George Waters Middle School  
St. James Collegiate  
Winnipeg Police Service  
Sexuality Education Resource Centre  
University of Winnipeg  
University of Manitoba  
Newcomer Education Coalition  
Manitoba Association of Newcomer Organization

# Community Development Tutor

Abdelaziz Mohamed

Abdelrazik Saleh

Abdulrazzak Jahmoun

Adnan Kadhim

Aimhanosi Shaibu

Amanu Torben

Anjolaoluwa Olawole

Anmol Singh

Elaiza Sales

Eleham Fetu Bereda

Esther Oluwadare

Eveline Kabuha

Farah Cheah

Goodness Oyediran

Hermela Araya

Jima Ali

Jostin Asuncion

Justin Tongun

Kamau Kiano

Karen Gonzaga

Kim Junseok

Leah Aidiu

Leo Ovensari

Marainne Shaibu

Marta Gebru

Micheal Ewashko

Nardos Andemichael

Nyakiyobe Nyamuco

Oyinkansola Banjo

Philip Loro

Rachelle Kabuha

Salah Saoud

Samira Rukaj

Sansom Kahsay

Sara Tesfazghi

Siem Kahsay

Selam Tesfazghi

Selina Gerezgiher

Siddhanta Poudel

Souline Bouskly

Sumaya Abdullahi

Tecleab Misgun Tewelde

Thomas Boomer

Tran Du Ngoc Nguyen

Yined Yosief

Yuriy Yamchuk



# Volunteers

Aimee Halldorsson

Alexander D' Aoust

Amelia Martin

Arabella Rosaldo

Austin Harvey

Brooklynn Fischer

Bryn Siemens

Cadence Riach

Don Sebastian Panganiban

Faith Catherine Ridd

Halle Fortier

Hayley Santos

Jake Sawatzky

Jane Hildebrand

Jordyn Lenton

Kaitlyn Zacharias

Kara Dreiedger

Katelyn Benson Van Walleghem

Kolbie Leochko

Krista Rose Yaskiw

Lauren Teller

Madison Major

Madison McDonald

Matthew Stipanovic

Payton Hooper

Sara Rossen

