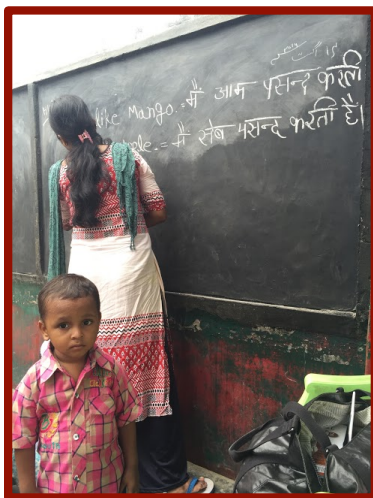




Growth Resources Action Community Empowerment

## GRACE Cares 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



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# Letter from the President

## GRACE Cares 2016

In 2016 GRACE Cares worked hard to accomplish its mission in all aspects of its work:

*GRACE Cares' mission is to partner with local heroes and communities on small- scale community development projects that make a difference by empowering people to improve their lives. We do this with respect to local cultures and traditions. This is accomplished by helping to build healthy, educated, just, peaceful and productive communities. GRACE Cares provides expertise, funding, and support for health, education, peace and social justice, cultural preservation, and economic development projects.*

**Growth:** Our Partner Projects continued their work in their respective communities. The Lucknow Project continues to grow and are establishing an after school program as well as entrepreneurial opportunities for local women. The Watha Project that joined us in 2015 continues to grow and develop their film *The Last Dance* with two film shootings completed this year.

**Resources:** GRACE continues to grow its ability to provide technical and financial assistance to small projects that would not have other recourses. Our team of volunteers and interns are making a difference around the world. We hope many of reading this can join our team!

**Action:** Partner project B4 Peace took action around the globe this year with art-peace performances across the US and Europe. The 100 Flowers of Peace banner was even carried to the 2016 DC Women's March by GRACE Cares Staff and supporters- where it joined thousands others in a march for women and human rights.

**Community:** GRACE Cares has an amazing community that spans across continents to make transformative social change. From Vermont to New Orleans to the Dominican Republic to Guatemala even over to Pakistan and India across to Rwanda and Kenya the GRACE Cares community works tirelessly to strengthen our home communities. Included in this international family are you- our supporters and allies!

**Empowerment:** The funny thing about empowerment is that it is a two-way street. Through our work at GRACE Cares empowering local heroes and communities we, ourselves, supporters and allies are also empowered. Through our collaboration and your support, we feel daily empowerment to continue working to establish a world and home that we believe in and can be proud of

With gratitude,

Zoe Kopp, PhD, MPH, President



## B4 Peace

**Background:** GRACE Cares believes it is important to promote arts and education projects that develop individual and community awareness on the importance of peace. By doing so, they join citizens across the globe to reflect on decisions that impact the lives of vulnerable people. We agree on an agenda that respects the rights of humans: the right to be free to live peacefully wherever we want to be.

Since 2011, GRACE Cares has partnered with Vermont based artist Namaya on B4 Peace to hold art installations, workshops and performances designed to bring attention to often overlooked conflict and suffering across the globe. B4Peace rigorously uses the healing power of art to engage people to reflect on human rights.

**Activities:** B4 Peace took to the road in 2016 with a tour of *War is a Racket*. Namaya brought this production around the country to Houston, Texas; Washington DC; Asheville North Carolina and Brandeis University in Boston, MA. See part of the show here: <http://namayaproductions.com/war-is-a-racket/>



Peace Leviathan: Christian Jaffe

B4 Peace received an invitation from the Tehran Peace Museum present the Iran Peace Project Summer of 2016 “Building a Bride of Rainbows.” Due to visa issues the B4 Peace team was not able to make it to Iran. However, a successful Peace with Iran Day was held at the B4 Peace Art Studio in VT and art on peace with Iran was submitted from artists worldwide and shared with the Tehran Peace Museum by video.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDucpTvSuOI>

**Future:** In April 2017 B4 Peace will present *Building a Peaceable Community: Integrating Art, Word, Performance for Social Change* at the International Museum of Peace in Belfast, Ireland. Preparations have begun for a three-week gallery opening at the New Orleans Art Center in 2018. This event opens on January 13<sup>th</sup> and closes

February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Namaya will be showing his *Pornography of War* collection as well as hosting an Artist Invitational *Building a Peaceable Community* in addition to these events there will be a Youth Art Invitational that calls for the youth of New Orleans to submit and perform their peace art with the theme *What you say, What I say: What is Your Vision of New Orleans?*

Invite the B4 Peace team to collaborate with you and your community on a Peace Art Project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDucpTvSuOI>





## Kali to Kali

**Background:** The Kali to Kali Project (Village to Village Project) has supported children in rural Pakistan by creating a better learning environment with good infrastructures and school supplies. The aim was to increase the number of children in school, improve the quality of the school and ensure that they continue to attend school. Kali to Kali hopes to be able to partner with local heroes in additional communities around the world. Kali to Kali launched a program in Rwanda in 2015 with partner organization ANA Rwanda.

**Activities:** Since 2015 Kali to Kali has partnered with local NGO ANA Rwanda, which is stationed in Kigali. Together the organizations created the Rwanda Water Project, and have successfully raised enough funding since 2015 to build six water tanks among 4 different districts. Currently the process has begun for construction of a 7<sup>th</sup> water tank, with the 8<sup>th</sup> water tank halfway funded up at this point. Furthermore, we have assembled over 100 fruit and vegetable gardens among these districts.



**Future:** Providing sustainability in these communities is vital, in addition to improve the health and success for these communities to maximize their growth and potential. We thank and appreciate everyone that has helped us along the way and those who continue to support us through our marvelous endeavors. From the words of Les Brown, *“Help others achieve their dreams and you will achieve yours”*, we will always continue to give back and work among and for the people to make sure they continue to strive and prosper. Future plans include continued development work in Pakistan and Rwanda.



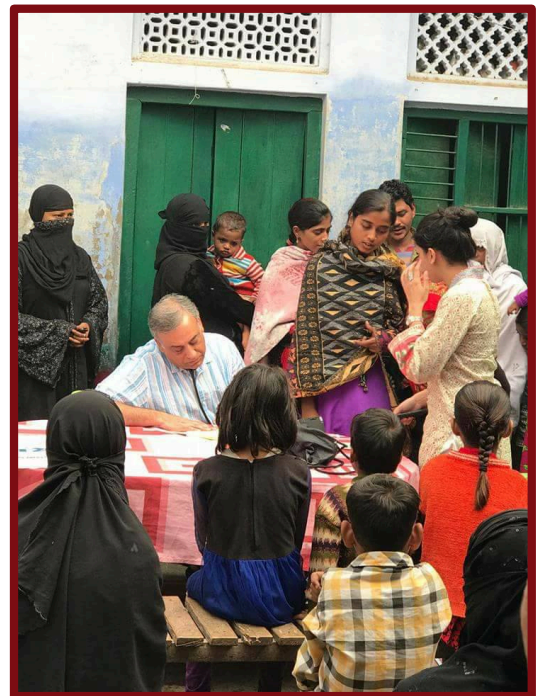
## Lucknow

**Background:** India's high population has been posing a great challenge to the government including nonprofits willing to reduce the widening disparities in the education and health sectors. The best available estimates in education report that among grade 5 students, 53 percent cannot read at a grade 2 level, while 46 percent cannot solve a two-digit subtraction problem. Worst still, 75% of health infrastructure, medical man power and other health resources are concentrated in urban areas where 27% of the population live. None of these factors can individually be held responsible for the trend, but taken together they build a story of economic decline due to vulnerability.

In 2008, Nazeela Nasseri, a U.S citizen of Indian descent decided to take action after recognizing the need for basic education and healthcare through a visit with her maternal grandfather to the Amethi region. She began travelling to India annually and spending 8 weeks over summer vacation teaching English in the school for girls in Amethi. The Lucknow project was eventually established to introduce an Intensive English Program within schools in the region. Nazeela's sister Afshan Nasseri is now the director of the Lucknow Project.

**Activities:** The Lucknow team completed both educational and medical trips to Lucknow and the rural villages surrounding the city several times in 2016.

**Future:** In August 2017 Afshan and two students from McGill University will be traveling to India to team up with a local high school St Francis College to create an after school program with the current Lucknow partner schools. As well as developing this program Afshan and her team will be collaborating with *Lucknowbytes*, a popular blogging platform to promote the project and engage local volunteers.





## Mayan Traditional Medicine

**Background:** In Guatemala, the two predominant health systems are the official or formal and the Mayan Traditional Medicine. The latter is still the most approachable for the prevention and cure of the community's sicknesses, with much focus on the common and cultural illnesses. Although this is the 21st century, there are still challenges for the practitioners of Traditional Medicine which include recognition and practice on a national and global context.

Through research and giving back, Mayan Traditional Medicine seeks to be viewed as an integral contributor to health, from its vision and management to local organizational activities.



**Activities:** The shop for materials and medicinal plants is now operational for Mayan priests. The materials for the store were identified, quoted and purchased. The shop is located in the community of Pacanal 1 "B", in the land and house of one of the members of the group as her contribution to the group.

The store sells the materials used during the Mayan ceremony and for treatment of common Mayan diseases. There is always supervision by President

Don Antonio Tziquin for proper administration. Venancia Dionisio has held meetings and provided education at the store on medicinal plants. The shop is open 3 days a week and is attended in shifts by 3 traditional therapists.

18 therapists have benefited from the store as well as four communities and neighbors. The result of the work they give their patients has positively impacted on the families and society that come for consultations. The store is becoming a "small clinic".

The cost of the store project that was delivered to the board is the amount of \$990.40 (Seed Fund own store) With the sale of materials has reached \$1,097.57 to date. The most sought after materials and medicinal plants have been identified and the materials have been purchased, transportation and expenses paid for those who have made the purchases.

In April 2016, there was the visit of Zoe Kopp and Dr. Namaya, which was a great encouragement and motivation for the group. Drs. Kopp and Namaya provided strategic planning and technical assistance.







# Project Hearts

**Background:** Prior to being officially recognized as a Dominican NGO in 2011, Project Hearts existed informally in the personal service of founder Rubén Ottenwalder. After nearly 30 years away from his hometown, Rubén had followed the call to return to Baitoa and serve his neighbors in whatever ways he could. Often this took the form of providing food and clean water or building houses, but Rubén sought to meet all the needs he witnessed in his community. In 2007 GRACE Cares began partnering with Rubén, exponentially increasing his impact on the people of Baitoa.

Since 2011, Project Hearts has been refining its mission to ensure we are working in such a way as to truly empower our communities. For this reason, we are focused on addressing critical needs that fall into three primary categories: health, economic development & education.

## WASH: Highlights from 2016

- We distributed 171 tinacos (water tanks) and 79 water filters.
- This impacted 183 households and 768 individuals (247 of whom are children).
- Thanks to the donations we received, we were able to provide \$15,140(USD) in financial aid to families to help them access clean water.

## Health: Highlights from 2016

- 64 workshops were given throughout 4 communities, which impacted 3,296 adults and 1,824 kids.
- We had 7 women graduate from the Community Health Leaders Program, which is a year-long training course where participants learn detailed information on a variety of health topics, from water safety to nutritional health to how to take blood pressure & give shots. There are now 20 total graduates from the past 3 years.
- Our CHLs conducted home visits with 110 families, impacting approximately 385 individuals.

## Education: Highlights from 2016

- Throughout the year the number of participants more than tripled, growing from 252 individuals in February to over 1,000 individuals in December.
- We began the year with groups in 11 communities, and by December had groups meeting consistently in 17 communities.
- Through these groups staff were able to impart knowledge of many socio-emotional





topics, including healthy personal relationships, communication, depression (important, since there has recently been an increase in suicide in Baitoa), leadership, and family interactions

- Staff also conducted 1,120 home visits, and Community Leaders conducted 122 visits.

**Future:** In 2017 plans continue with focus on its Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programs as clean water is such a priority for the community. Other health and education programs will continue, but our main focus is to raise \$15,000 to hire a WASH expert and expand subsidies of water tanks.



## TROLL Trust

**Background:** The TROLL Trust is an extension of our commitment to provide better education and healthcare needs to children living in impoverished communities within South East India. We have subsequently developed a fruitful partnership with administrators at the CMC Hospital in Vellore through which school uniforms, supplies and notebooks have been distributed to children.

**Education:** In 2016, we continued our support for two orphanages at Nambikkai Illam and the special needs children at the Holy Cross Home. These children are being cared for and receiving schooling by a devoted staff of nuns at these two orphanages. In July 2016, school supplies, uniforms, and hygiene items were provided to the 200+ children at the Nambikkai Illam orphanage and Holy Cross Home. These items were distributed by the personnel at the CMC Hospital. Each orphanage is committed to providing for the educational needs of the children. These supplies help to meet the children's ongoing needs while at the orphanages.



**Future:** Unfortunately, due to health concerns of our local hero and partner 2016 is the last year the TROLL Trust will be operating. We thank all the community members and other supporters of the TROLL Trust that have worked to make change in the lives of these children.



# Watha



**Background:** Traditionally hunter gatherers are seldom documented. Gareth Roriston, a former Conservation Manager, will present on the Watha community of Galana, Kenya — their history, traditional culture, survival techniques, and current issues faced by the community as they homogenize into modern Kenyan society, at the potential expense of losing their history and cultural identity. In particular, the Watha's long history of elephant hunting as a way of life, in the face of the well-known crisis facing African Elephants today. The Watha are now a disenfranchised people.

The purpose of the documentary is to inform and develop interest in this essentially unknown or highly misunderstood culture. These days the misinformation and mystery isn't limited to the outside world, but also the youth of this small tribe as they fall out of touch with their roots and heritage as a result of changing lifestyles and poverty. Proceeds from *The Last Dance* will be used to address maintaining the Watha's sustainable traditional life and to address their health and education needs as they adapt to modern life

**Activities:** Gareth Roriston and local leader Guyo Badiva have teamed up to produce his documentary, *The Last Dance*, on the Watha tribe, a surviving community preserving the ancient Watha culture. With funding and advisory support from GRACE Cares, Guyo Badiva has incorporated the Watha Community Benefit Organization so that all documentary production benefits the Watha Tribe. Two shoots were completed in 2016, one in January and the second in October.

In this first shoot roughly two hundred community members gathered to take part. Traditional dances were filmed and explanations of their meanings were documented. Elders of both genders were interviewed about their lives and the sudden changes that have occurred regarding lifestyle as their traditional hunter-gatherer existence was outlawed. Some of these interviews



will be used in the final film and those that aren't will be catalogued and handed over to the community for their own archives.

The October shoot's purpose was to capture the Watha doing what they are famous for; Understanding wildlife behavior. Footage of the Watha tracking and approaching elephant on foot was captured. The issue of elephant poaching by the community was a consistent theme along with strategies to resolve the issue.

**Future:** Filming of the Last Dance is scheduled to continue into 2017. Plans are in place for a third shoot whereby clear footage of the Watha approaching elephant will be captured. A small community living in another area who now subsist on small game and honey will be sought and interviewed. Issues of security and other relevant topics will be explored with this group.

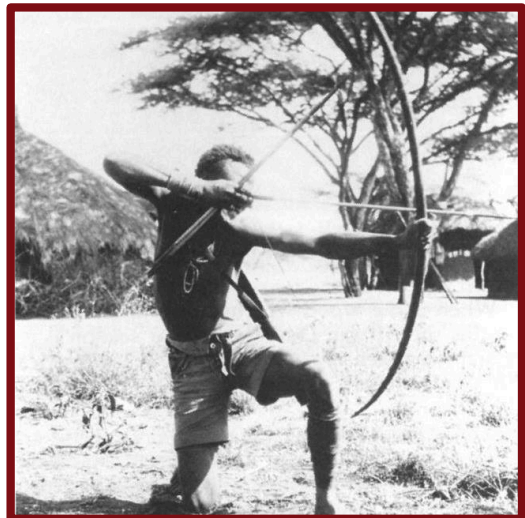
Please follow these links to see sneak peeks of the Last Dance film.

Teaser 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60J3Xcx2z7s&t=1s> Teaser 2:

<https://youtu.be/wkbxi-wwamQ>

Follow the Last Dance documentary journey at their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Watha.Info/>





## Financial Statement

In 2016, GRACE Cares had a total of \$176,394.24 in donations with other income and refunds resulting in a total operating budget of \$184,774.53. We gratefully received \$24,396.08 in individual donations, \$25,478.16 in corporate donations, and other major donations received equaling \$126,500.00. Our total expenditures in 2016 were \$192,574.70

We are proud to say that \$172,939.85 of our income went to programs. That is, 90% of expenditures went directly into our programs. Of the remaining expenditures \$20,001.23 went to administrative, management and contract costs.

Our detailed financial review is available upon request at [info@gracecares.org](mailto:info@gracecares.org).

## We are grateful for the generosity of our 2016 donors and volunteers:

### *Individual Donors*

Ann Desmarais  
Brian Kolak  
Carol Bowen  
Carolyn Smith  
Christopher Evans  
Cristobal Garcia  
Christian Jaffe  
David Moczulski  
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