

Recommendations for Peace Building Activities for City of Seattle and Forward
Saira Chambers
8-20-2016

When considering the events and history of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, hibakusha, and nuclear nonproliferation efforts, though I am not new to this issue, history, or initiative I found myself reflecting on this trip by understanding how many perspectives and narratives coexist, overlap, and converge when interpreting this endeavor of peace building and mutual understanding. Through each individual I met during my time in Hiroshima, I found a new history, a new interpretation, and a new truth. The reasons for these differences of course are influenced by a multitude of factors such as geographical location, personal experience, and exposure to this issue.

It is through my past, and current experiences working in peace building and nuclear nonproliferation groups that I find that using the arts to convey difficult, autonomous, and human-driven ventures flourish. This also reflects my understanding of these issues as a multifaceted convergence of narratives that asks each individual to reconcile truth and understanding for themselves. Through the arts, or any other interactive community-driven means I feel the exposure and education of these important events and realities should be focused/belong.

When considering recommendations for the City of Seattle, due to the strong and impressive community already built there that is so invested in this work the approach to support is quite straightforward. They simply need more support. These are educated and motivated individuals who get things done. They need more resources and official support to propel their efforts into new successes. The event From Hiroshima to Hope is already quite successful and seems to draw the Mayor in an unofficial capacity, and his Deputy Director will speak at the event. However, the Mayor's official presence and support at this, and other events like it, would be invaluable to the progression of the event that draws region wide crowds and organizational support. Other organizations in the area would also benefit having by having a listening ear in the city such as Ground Zero, who self funded 14 King County Busses to draw the public's eye to the Kitsap Bangor Naval base where the largest facility with armed nuclear weapons in the country resides, just 40 miles away. My recommendations to the City of Seattle are to emerge itself into these communities and find out how they can support them. The Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience is also planning similar programming that

would be a great partnerships for the City of Seattle. Moreover, I hope the office recommends another participant for the Hiroshima and Peace Program next year. When meeting with the extremely helpful and wonderful individuals at the City of Seattle, I even met a young woman intern who would be a wonderful asset to this program and to help maintain a relationship thriving with the City of Hiroshima would bolster this effort.

As I have left the city to return to my own Mayor's for Peace affiliate, Chicago, I have my hands in many efforts already. Organizing the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Exhibition, supported by the Cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and hosted by my own organization, the Japanese Culture Center of Chicago, I will be organizing this month long exhibition from the ground up, start to finish. I secured the attendance of both the Consulate General of Japan and President Truman's (the President who dropped these bombs) grandson Clifton Truman Daniel. Both will be active members, and I am now attempting to secure the attendance of the Mayor. Moving forward I am establishing the Japanese Culture Center as a firm supporter of Mayor's for Peace and Chicago area efforts for nuclear nonproliferation. I will do this by offering the Center as a venue for peace building events and efforts, as well as a resource for local university student groups to call upon when they wish to organize their efforts.

On a more personal level, after the current exhibition on loan from the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum ends at the Japanese Culture Center, either through the Center or another museum in the city I hope to secure the Toshi Maruki murals in the future for an exhibit as it is through this artwork that I understood the importance of this work and issue. It is my dream to share this with others. It is also my dream to include as many perspectives, voices, and visions regarding peace as possible. This would be the heart of my recommendations to my city and Hiroshima. The ability to continually include new thoughts, dreams, and insights on peace when organizing efforts would be the largest imperative. In doing so not only are more personally invested in the process and outcome, but the future of this important mission isn't guided by one single voice. It is led by a team who can build something greater than any one could do alone. I am grateful beyond words for being given the opportunity to do this with the Mayors for Peace program. I sincerely hope that if anyone in the future would like to include my voice I will always be a resource. Always. I will also always be looking for others to collaborate and dream with. I feel this is how the future of peace is built.