

100 Projects for Peace
Final Report - Summer 2007
projects@kwd100projectsforpeace.org.

Title: "Soccer for Peace" (see: soccerforpeace.wordpress.com)
School: Luther College, Decorah, Iowa 52101 (www.luther.edu)
Student(s) Information:

Katy Fiedler	United States	Did not attend UWC.
Godson Sowah	Ghana	Did not attend UWC.
Chelsea Koenigs	United States	Did not attend UWC.
Emily Jacob	United States	Did not attend UWC.
Joel Martin	United States	Did not attend UWC.
James Langholz*	United States	Did not attend UWC.

***Faculty Adviser.**

1. **Project Summary:** Describe location, timeframe, participants, other funding involved, scope of work, and goals intended.

Five Luther College students and one faculty adviser participated in the Soccer for Peace project. Phase one of the project included organization, project awareness and a promotional "Soccer Mania" day on Luther College's campus in May, fundraising and promotion of the project. Godson Sowah, Soccer for Peace team member and Luther College student representative to the Board of Regents, presented the project proposal to the Board at their spring meeting.

The time frame for the project was July 6-July 23 in Accra, Ghana. Our goal for the project was to generate enough additional funding to match Kathryn Wasserman Davis's initial grant and with in-kind contributions included, this goal was met. The primary purpose of the additional fundraising was to include as many students as possible with this project. We received additional donations from alumni and friends of Luther College (see budget numbers for details).

There were several broad goals for this project including the heightening of awareness of issues in Africa generally on Luther College's campus and in the Decorah Community. The second goal was to use soccer as a way to engage middle school students in Ghana around the issues of conflict resolution generally and the tribal conflicts in Ghana specifically. Finally, since the majority of members of this project team are future teachers, an additional goal was to broaden these future teachers' worldview with the hope of passing on their knowledge, skills, and attitudes they attained from this project to their future students.

2. **Project Results:** Self-evaluate the project; your assessment should enumerate what goals were and were not accomplished.

The broad goals of the project were all met. The initial phase implemented in Decorah, Iowa brought the issues in Ghana to the attention of other students on Luther's campus. In addition, through the soccer equipment drive and work with Decorah High School soccer players, the awareness goals of the project were successful in the Decorah community as well.

The goals of the project were enthusiastically embraced by the students and by the teachers in the schools in Ghana where we worked. Working with over 150 students in middle schools during the workshops and with over 500 students participating and attending the soccer tournament, many students experienced the potential of using sports for the greater good within the country. The specific issues of the tribal conflicts in Northern Ghana were discussed extensively with middle school students. Our team also appeared on several TV and radio programs while we were in Accra increasing the exposure to the project significantly throughout Ghana.

Finally, the experience was "life changing" for the students and future teachers involved from Luther College. We visited many schools, we talked with many teachers, and the members of the team experienced firsthand the problems and promise of Ghana and Africa. There is no question this will have significant impact on their approach to teaching their future students.

3. **Implications:** What are the project's implications for peace? What are the future prospects for the project? What have you learned

The implications of peace as a result of this project are many. Already, the John Haavad Schools in Accra have made a commitment to continue on with this project next year and beyond utilizing their own teachers and their own resources. The team has been contacted by several other schools about information and possibilities of replicating this project in other locations. There has been frequent communication with the Luther College students and with the workshop and tournament participants already since returning to the USA.

We have all learned that Ghana is poised for becoming the leader of democratic nations in Africa and that they have education at the front and center of their efforts to further bring their country more fully into this leadership role. We have learned that resources are not the determining factor, necessarily, related to academic success. We were struck by the motivation level and "hunger for education" that the Ghanaian students demonstrated during our time there. Finally, we learned that we gained more than we likely contributed related to this experience. We have much to learn from Ghana about hospitality, sense of family, hard work, and living a life of hope and optimism.

