Doves Olympic Movement

Cyprus
Dr. Alexis Lyras
Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

Design and assess theory-driven sport initiatives and provide evidence of the positive impact of Olympism in regions where exist conflict.

About You

Location

Project Street Address
Project City
Project Province/State
Project Postal/Zip Code
Project Country

Your idea

Sport
Other

Year the initiative began (yyyy)
2005

YouTube Upload

<object width="425" height="355"><param name="movie" value="http://www.youtube.com/v/jmcgIh1FkY8&rel=1"></param><param name="wmode" value="transparent"></param><embed src="http://www.youtube.com/v/jmcgIh1FkY8&rel=1" type="application/x-shockwave-flash" wmode="transparent" width="425" height="355"></embed></object>

Project URL (include HTTP://)

www.dovesolympicmovement.com

Positioning of your initiative on the mosaic diagram:

Which of these barriers is the primary focus of your work?
Few effective tools for personal improvement

Which of the principles is the primary focus of your work?
Include through sport

If you believe some other barrier or principle should be included in the mosaic, please describe it and how it would affect the positioning of your initiative in the mosaic:

The Doves Olympic Movement, which was founded in 2001, is a theory-oriented sports initiative, inspired by the philosophy and principles of the Olympic Movement. The Doves Project rests on the idea that Olympic education can be used as a useful tool to promote human development and social change. In practice, the Doves Olympic Movement created an interdisciplinary project that uses sports as a tool towards achieving the following educational objectives:

- Learning of fundamental values and human rights
Facilitating personal and societal development
Promoting global citizenship
Raising environmental awareness
Developing long-lasting cross-cultural friendships
Facilitating peace, understanding and collaboration across cultures and diverse populations
Promoting technological literacy
Promoting healthy lifestyles
Developing conflict management and problem solving skills
In effect, developing active citizens that care and act upon the problems they face in the society in which they live

For the attainment of its goals, the Doves Olympic Movement implements summer camps as well as activities and workshops for parents, children and instructors, thus aiming for those agents that have the most influence on the development of the younger generations i.e. parents, educators and peers. Over the last three years, the Doves Project has organized a number of activities that have brought together for the first time in Cyprus’ sport history, more than 500 children and 50 instructors from the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. Further, the work of the Doves Olympic Movement is based on the latest scientific findings and it conducts its own research, aiming at building bridges between theory and practice, while investigating in depth the effects of sports and education on human development and social change.

Innovation

What is your signature innovation, your new idea, in one sentence?
Design and assess theory driven sport initiatives and provide evidence of the positive impact of Olympism in regions where exist conflict.

Describe your innovation. What makes your idea unique and different than others doing work in the field?
Provide interdisciplinary sport initiative by using a blend of sport, arts, music and cultural enrichment program, known as Olympism, to promote inter ethnic tolerance, personal development and social change.

What are the existing barriers, the biggest problem, your innovation is hoping to address/change?
For more than three decades, Cyprus has been a divided island. Greek and Turkish Cypriots have been living in their own separate communities with practically no contact or communication. Compounding this state of affairs is the fact that the two communities are also separated by differences in religion, ethnicity and language. This form of separation is contributing to a level of mistrust, fear and insecurity, which has made it difficult for the two communities to live and work together in peace.

Delivery Model: How do you implement your innovation and apply it to the challenge/problem you are addressing?
Conduct Summer Camps and year-long initiatives to promote the concept of active and caring citizens. The following paragraph portrays the foundation of the International Youth Camp that took place in Cyprus last summer. The program’s triptych included athletic, educational, and cultural activities. The camp participants had the unique opportunity to practice their favorite sport. In addition to the athletic and educational activities, the participants were able to express themselves through artistic activities such as dance, music, pottery, and painting. The educational component of the camp included presentations and workshops of a number of different topics including Olympism, community service, computer technology, environmental awareness, human rights, and global citizenship. Furthermore, the participants had the chance to attend fun language lessons and have their first contact with the main languages spoken by other campers, i.e. Greek, Turkish and Arabic.

How do you plan to grow your innovation?
Affiliation with similar projects, disseminate evidence through (a) media, (b) scientific conferences and (c) publications in scientific journals, (d) replication of similar projects in other locations and (e) provide consulting support to similar projects around the globe.

Impact

Provide one sentence describing your impact/intended impact.
Promote cross-cultural tolerance, social perspective taking, academic efficacy and develop local-global active citizens.

What impact has your innovation had to date/or what is your intended impact? Exactly who are the beneficiaries?
The Doves Project is constantly evaluating the impact of its program. The aim of the ongoing scientific evaluation is to ensure that the program continues to have a positive impact on the personal growth and development of participants. Additionally, our aim is to the provide evidence of the positive impact Olympic education can have in a cross-cultural setting, and create conditions for the successful replication of similar projects in other communities around the globe.

The results of our scientific evaluation indicate that our program has had a significantly positive impact on the children who participated in our activities. In summary, the activities of the Doves Project facilitated (a) positive changes on the participants’ social perspectives, (b) increased their positive attitudes and behaviors toward cross-cultural understanding, friendship and interaction, (c) increased their academic efficacy, (d) increased their technological literacy, and (e) global citizenship behaviors.

How many people have you served directly?
More than 500 children and 50 instructors over the last three years.
How many people have you served indirectly?
More than a thousand

Please list any other measures reflective of the impact of your innovation?
- Sense of Community
- Cross-cultural interaction
- Social Perspective Taking
- Collective Efficacy
- Academic Efficacy
- Global Citizenship
- Empowerment

What are the main barriers to creating or achieving your impact?
Sustainability and continuous funding

How is your initiative financed (or how do you expect your initiative will be financed)?
Funding from UNOPS, UNDP-ACT and USAID.

If known, provide information on your finances and organization.
Funding from UNOPS, UNDP-ACT and USAID (Approximately $400,000 over the last three years). The project is funded until August 2008.

What is the potential demand for your innovation?
The present project can be replicated in other regions around the globe by utilizing the detailed documentation and evidence of the psycho social impact of this project. It is also suggested that this project can also be applied other populations (at risk youth, juvenile delinquency, etc).

What are the main barriers to financial sustainability?
Year by year funding after submitting grant proposal to a number of international institutions (e.g. UNOPS, UNDP, EU funding).

The Story

What is the origin of this innovation? Tell us your story.
I worked for 12 years as a coach, consultant and coordinator in national sport development programs in Greece and Cyprus. In 2002 I went to the USA to attend the program of Sport Management and Sociology, inspired and driven by the spirit of the Athens 2004 Olympics. My main focus of my graduate work was to explore ways in which the institution of sport can serve societies around the globe, by healing and resolving a number of social problems such as cross-cultural intolerance, racism and juvenile delinquency. By the end of the first year of my studies I completed a theory oriented sport initiative which was the major assignment of the scholarship I received from the Olympic Solidarity (IOC). The sport initiative, called Doves Olympic Movement was a concept that became reality three years later, after submitting many grant requests in a number of local and international funding institutions. In 2005 I received the first grant from the UNOPS and since then we are constantly funded from UNDP-ACT and USAID. This project (is) was a lifetime experience for me since this was the first time in Cyprus sport history where Greek and Turkish Cypriot children came together, under the flag of Olympism, to play together and learn how to live together. Four years after the first contact, children who participate in our program implement year long activities. These children showed us how they “can be the change they want to see in the society the live in” (Ghandi).

Please provide a personal bio. Note this may be used in Changemakers marketing material.
Dr. Alexis Lyras is a visiting assistant professor at the University of Louisville. Lyras received his PhD and master’s degree in Kinesiology (Sport Management and Sociology) at the University of Connecticut, with the support from the Higher Education Scholarship for Sport Administrators, which is a program of the Olympic Solidarity of the International Olympic Committee. Lyras is the founder and the Principal Investigator of the Doves Olympic Movement.

How did you hear about this contest and what is your main incentive to participate? (this is confidential)
Another change maker Eli Wolf

Affiliation (please list all that apply)
University of Louisville, Doves Olympic Movement and University of Nicosia