

History of Beyond War 1982-1990

Behind the movement and the organization called Beyond War lies the [living history of a huge collective endeavor](#) that began in 1950. Beyond War emerged in the early 1980s when the grassroots educational organization Creative Initiative, based in Palo Alto, CA, turned its attention to the threat of nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union. Early efforts focused on educating about the crisis that was escalating during the cold war, including showing “The Last Epidemic,” a film about the effect of a one megaton hydrogen bomb dropped on San Francisco.

Beyond War developed a graphic way of showing what the reality was in the world at that time. With a BB pellet representing one million tons (one megaton) of TNT, people were asked to close their eyes and listen to the sound of the number of BBs that stood for all the bombs dropped in World War II, including the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Three BBs were dropped into a metal bucket – ping, ping, ping. Then, with eyes still closed, “here are the BBs that represent the nuclear arsenals of the U.S. and the Soviet Union today,” and 18,000 BBs would cascade into the bucket with a clatter that went on and on and on. The effect was overwhelming, often bringing tears and a typical comment, of “I had no idea.” At the height of the Cold War, Beyond War volunteers hosted thousands of “Interest Evenings” and hundreds of “Orientation Meetings” in living rooms across the United States and in Canada and Germany.

Through the work of Beyond War, citizens learned about the possibility of “nuclear winter,” which could have resulted if even a portion of American or Soviet missiles had been fired. This threat of nuclear annihilation formed the core of the idea, “war is obsolete.” Beyond War’s response to this threat was developed in reaction to Albert Einstein’s statement: “Everything has changed, save our modes of thinking, and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.” The most appropriate solution, Beyond War asserted, was to promote a new mode of thinking based on the principle “We are one.”

Thousands of people adopted this new mode of thinking and people from all walks of life joined the movement, volunteering to do everything from giving presentations to researching the logistics of “space bridges” to link audiences across the world. See a video history, “[Together We Can.](#)”

The [Beyond War Award](#) was given annually from 1983 to 1990 to honor the great efforts of humankind as it works to build a world beyond war. The award’s nomination and selection process attracted national and international attention, and many distinguished people, including Jonas Salk, Rosalyn Carter, and Andrew Young, served on the selection committee.

The first award was presented to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for their pastoral letter on peace. In 1984, the award went to the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and presented to the co-founders, Dr. Bernard Lown of the U.S. and Dr. Yevgeni Chazov of the USSR, via a live television space bridge between Moscow and San Francisco.



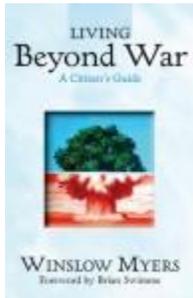
On January 29, 1985, more than 80 ambassadors to the United Nations attended a Beyond War-sponsored presentation by Dr. Carl Sagan and Dr. Sergei Kapitsa on nuclear winter. The ambassadors were told that even a limited nuclear exchange would threaten all life on the planet and no country would be exempt from the effects. At this time, more than 15,000 people were actively communicating the Beyond War principles in 12 states. There was start-up activity in ten other states, and 400 dedicated volunteer men and women were working full time on Beyond War.

The third Beyond War Award went to the Five Continent Peace Initiative in 1985. The leaders were Olaf Palme of Sweden, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Andres Papandreou of Greece, Miguel de la Madrid of Mexico, Raul Alfonsin of Argentina, and Rajiv Gandhi of India. Using every satellite available at the time enabled the leaders and audiences in every country to see and be heard. More than 50 million people worldwide viewed the program, the first event to link five continents. The following years' recipients were the Contadora Peace Process and the presidents of Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, and Mexico (1986); Peace Corps (1987); Presidents Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan (1988); Koinonia Southern Africa, Neve Shalom-Wahat Salam, and the Carter Center (1989); and Vaclav Havel, Earth Day, and Gro Harlem Brundtland (1990). [See videos of all the award presentations.](#)

In 1988 Beyond War opened an office in Iowato raise awareness of the need for a world beyond war within the presidential campaign. Beyond War worked with Soviet and Western scholars during the cold war years of 1985 to 1988 to produce a joint book issuing the challenge to build a world beyond war. *Breakthrough: Emerging New Thinking* was published in both English and Russian in 1988, and the authors jointly toured in both the US and Soviet Union. The newsletter *On Beyond War* was published for 7 years, then became *Timeline*, published by the Foundation for Global Community for another 14 years, until December 2005.

With the end of the Cold War, the tearing down of the Berlin Wall, and other hopeful signs of change, Beyond War went through a process of thoughtful examination and enlarged its focus to become the Foundation for Global Community (FGC). In order to truly move beyond war, humans had to discover the thinking and behavior, the values and processes that would enable a sustainable and resilient global system that works for all to emerge. [See the complete history of FGC and its predecessors from 1950 -2010.](#)

History of Beyond War 2004-2012



The attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 and the initiation of the war on Iraq reminded the world that neither war nor the risk of nuclear destruction had been eliminated. Former Beyond War volunteers began expressing to the Foundation for Global Community the need to re-establish the focus on building a world beyond war. A group in Eugene, Oregon, took the initiative and re-activated Beyond War, first as a project of FGC, then in 2004 as an independent non-profit organization.

The 21st century Beyond War took as its mission to explore, model and promote the means for humanity to LIVE without war. It continued the mode of grass roots citizen education, based on the Beyond War principles and practices, first using an eight-session study guide and later the 2009 book, [*Living Beyond War: A Citizen's Guide*](#), as discussion tools. It also initiated a “living beyond war” capstone course at Portland State University, which continues. Local groups sprang up, with volunteers conducting awareness building activities and educational sessions. Activities focused on building:

Worldview: from the separating frame of us/them to an inclusive frame of personal and global interdependence—celebrating personal and cultural diversity in an interdependent world.

Behavior: from polarizing, alienating, and dominating, to building relationships, working together, and addressing the needs of all – understanding conflict is inevitable, but war is not.

Infrastructure: from the systems, institutions, and allocation of resources that support war, to those that support sustainability and cooperation for the benefit of all life – championing the emergence of a new paradigm that works for all.

Beyond War continued activities related to the elimination of nuclear weapons and explored new areas for building the systems of peacebuilding, such as the international negotiations on Climate Change. It developed a library display project to promote the concept of living beyond war through the books we read. The core of its efforts remained urging everyone to become peacebuilders everywhere—in their own lives, their communities, and their nations.

Passing on the Beyond War Legacy

Seeing that new tools and “specialties” for communicating and educating in peacebuilding and peacelearning are emerging in many new and existing organizations, Beyond War determined in 2012 to pass on its legacy at the national/international level to three national organizations, while encouraging all of the local volunteers to continue their work.

Therefore:

1. The core of the beyond war educational mission now lies with the National Peace Academy, where Beyond War contributed its course materials and urged its course facilitators to connect. In addition, NPA established a Beyond War Scholarship Fund to assist everyday peacebuilders to pursue peacelearning in the cutting edge tools and skills.
2. Local Beyond War groups and supporters were urged to link up with [The Peace Alliance](#), to help build the grassroots national and international momentum to create and support infrastructures for peace and to transform the old war system.
3. The Beyond War Award legacy and the actual crystals now reside with the [Nuclear Age Peace Foundation](#), which is currently working to reestablish the award. In addition, NAPF will house and make available to the public Beyond War’s relevant hard copy archival assets, including the *Breakthrough* book and the newsletters *On Beyond War* and *Timeline*. Electronic copies of *Timeline* from 1998 through the 2005 final issue are available [at the FGC website](#).
4. The local group in Eugene, Oregon, that started the 21st century effort continues as a local/regional nonprofit entity, Beyond War Northwest. It maintains the organization’s business records and continues to update and promote the Beyond War Study Guide.

PRINT , Video and Archival Resources:

- To the extent possible, Beyond War has posted its video resources on the [Beyond War You Tube Channel](#) and has released them for public use.
- Related video resources are available at http://www.globalcommunity.org/pub_media.shtml and <http://traubman.igc.org/bw.htm>, and videos of the Beyond War Award Ceremonies are at <http://traubman.igc.org/bwaward.htm>.

Archival instructional materials can be found at <http://traubman.igc.org/bwarchive.htm>. Other archival materials are available at www.wagingpeace.org. The book *Living Beyond War*, published by Orbis press, will continue to be available from [Amazon](#), and study guides will be available through NPA.