

Peace Education Gains Popularity at Côte d'Ivoire College



Thanks to the efforts of enthusiastic siblings, the [Peace Education Program](#) (PEP) has been integrated into a college in Jacqueline, Côte d'Ivoire, giving students a sense of inner strength and hope as their country heals from social unrest.

The initiative started last year when Houphouët Nguessan, a student at the Lycée Professionnel de

Jacqueville (LPJ), invited his sister, Stéphanie Nguessan, to come back home from where she lives in France to help introduce school administrators to the program. The multimedia PEP course features video excerpts of [Prem Rawat's talks](#), which the duo had been enjoying together since childhood. They hoped Prem's message of peace would appeal to educators as they try to prepare Ivorian youth to build a more prosperous future.

"The LPJ welcomes students from all walks of life to prepare them for jobs and active lives. I wanted them to have the opportunity to hear Prem's message because it is filled with wisdom. I thought his talks could contribute to our education and help us prepare to enter the workforce," says Houphouet.

Stéphanie flew back to her native Côte d'Ivoire to meet with LPJ Director M. Nzi Nguessan and other faculty, introducing them to PEP via the The Prem Rawat Foundation website and [introductory videos](#). Struck by the simplicity of the program, LPJ administrators soon approved the course.

On leave from her human resources job in France, Stéphanie spent the remainder of her holiday working with school volunteers to offer the 10 PEP workshops to 400 students, teachers, and administrators.

Comments from participants made it clear that they found the program to be quite enriching and complementary to their more traditional classes.



"This course made young people aware of the possibility of inner peace. It develops the capacity of each person to transform, to be realized, and to work for universal peace," said a teacher.

“Self-knowledge is fundamental, and other forms of knowledge should follow,” said Mr. Ncho, another educator. “I think we need to include this program in our educational system to allow each and every person to truly know themselves.”

Campus support has grown since those first sessions.

LPJ Director M. Nzi Nguessan and other supervisors were so impressed with the program’s positive impact that they now want it to be offered to all incoming freshman. “My wish is that all newcomers to LPJ participate in the PEP so that our school is filled with students in peace,” says Mr. Brou Dagra Philippe, LPJ Inspector. So he invited Stéphanie back this school year to host trainings for staff and students to help make it happen.



She recently returned, and says that nearly 800 students and staff participated in the latest round of PEP workshops. A new “LPJ Peace Club” formed on campus with 300 student members who are inspired by what they learned in the course. They are currently making plans to facilitate the workshops to the rest of their classmates, their parents, and beyond.

“PEP participants talk to their friends about it, and now everyone wants to take it,” says Marc Komoé, an LPJ educator who oversees the student Peace Club. “We think this is a good program, and we salute all those who make it possible.”



While in Côte d'Ivoire, Stéphanie took the opportunity to introduce PEP to other leaders at nearby schools. The University of Abidjan recently agreed to start offering the program and she hopes more will follow soon.

Now back in France, Stéphanie is following up remotely on the connections and momentum she helped build in Côte d'Ivoire.

“I feel so fortunate to participate in this process,” she says. “I’m grateful to play a small part in supporting Prem Rawat’s tireless work to reach more people with this message of peace. It’s an amazing opportunity.”