

PEP on the move in Montenegro



The Balkan country, Montenegro, borders with several other ex-Yugoslavian countries: Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia. With a population of about 625,000, it has a short coastline on the Adriatic Sea and faces Bari, Italy to the West.

Longtime philanthropists, environmental advocates in Montenegro, and supporters of TPRF, Caroline and Janko Jovicevic, decided to introduce the Peace Education Program to national decision-makers and invite them to help identify the best situations in which to implement the program. The Jovicevics spent ten months making introductory presentations to leaders across a variety of sectors: Ministries of Justice and Education; UNDP and UNICEF, embassies; prominent NGOs dealing with youth, education and human rights; corporations; individuals; and the media.



In May and June, the Center for Civic Education, a respected NGO based in the capital, Podgorica, hosted the first PEP in the country. Forty-eight of the people who had seen PEP presentations by the Jovicevics and who had watched promotional interviews by Caroline on TV, filled the class space, leaving 20 others on the waiting list for the next program in October. Each one attended out of their own individual interest and some to also evaluate whether they would recommend a PEP for their own organizations. Hence, this first PEP has now become the seedbed for many others.

One attendee, a university professor and Executive Director of an NGO that supports education, asked to host a PEP for 15 high school teachers in October. In her letter to TPRF she stated, “The development of the ability to discover personal peace and commitment to the process of building inner values...is exactly what is lacking in our education system.” She wants to include PEP in the 2015 catalogue of elective courses offered to teachers countrywide.

Montenegro commands a politically strategic location in the Balkan region and hosts a number of regional embassies. The UAE ambassador has now proposed that some of her staff attend a PEP. The British Ambassador has already hosted a PEP presentation at the UK Embassy for 20 graduates of the UK’s Chevening scholarship program who hold leadership positions in business and the community.



One attendee enthused, “Yes, I would recommend PEP to my friends. The workshop is full of wonderful information and many gems that can be life changing. Prem Rawat is a very inspirational speaker, and I would suggest to my friends that they should be taking his advice. I left every session feeling uplifted, wiser, and more in tune with myself.”

Potential clients for the program are the lifelong learning and vocational education training sectors. Representatives will attend the next PEP for their personal interest and will assess the suitability of PEP for their organizations at the same time.

Caroline, who has facilitated the PEP as well as promoting it, remarked, “It is clear that satisfied workshop participants promote the program to their colleagues with passion and understanding. After a year of consistent focus and steady effort, there is an established demand for the PEP in Montenegro. The foundation is sturdy. We look forward to seeing what evolves.”