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this as an opportunity to learn from others as we foster public diplomacy.

In our own communities, national parks can serve as neutral ground for connection, understanding, and respect amongst our fellow citizens at a time when Americans are more disconnected and polarized than ever before. National parks were created by the people, for the people, embodying the utmost virtue of democracy. We collectively decided a little over a hundred years ago, with the creation of the National Park Service, that conservation, preservation, and protection of natural resources matter because future generations of Americans deserve to enjoy these special places.

Like the rest of the world, current and future generations of Americans, Canadians, and First Nations are tasked with daunting and complex challenges like climate change. National parks are often at the frontlines of such challenges. Unfortunately, national parks are some of the first places to experience the negative effects of warming temperatures. About one hundred years ago, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park had roughly 110 glaciers.⁵

Today, only 30 glaciers remain with these quickly shrinking. In recent years, wildfires have been more common and destructive, placing a heavy strain on park staff. As more foreigners visit Waterton-Glacier and other national parks, how can we use the parks as vehicles for productive conversations on our shared responsibility regarding the changing climate and conservation?

It may have surprised our U.S. National Park Service founders to know that many millions of non-Americans today are enjoying U.S. National Parks. Among those millions of non-American visitors are decision-makers, business people, academics, and foreign diplomats. These visitors leave to return home with new ideas about conservation and the value of untouched nature.

Sometimes, our parks even inspire the creation of parks overseas. For example, Hong Kong has established national parks to preserve its native flora and fauna. What started as a local affair has developed global dimensions. What began with an emphasis in preservation may play a more serious role in saving critical parts of our natural world and mitigating the more serious effects of climate change.

The parks are a tool of public diplomacy and can help foster a love of the environment. The shared experience of America's national parks by visitors from around the world might be one of the best tools for fostering endearing partnerships and protecting the environment worldwide.

I had the privilege of visiting Glacier National Park in Montana this past fall. The colors of the trees were incredible, and I let myself stand alone at the foot of a lapping turquoise lake. A glacier, as old as the earth itself, fed the lake. I remained still and in reverential silence for many minutes.

Soon, a family of beavers woke me from my reverie. They were swimming nimbly across the lake while carrying twigs in their mouths to build their winter lodge. A brown bear then appeared, ambling along the far side of the lake, unaware of my existence. I heard rustling in the bushes and trees around me and could make out several varieties of birdsong.

At that moment, I immediately recognized this place was a treasure and worth protecting in perpetuity. Glacier, like many of our national parks, is truly America's best idea.

Marya Skotte is the Senior Coordinator for Community Partnerships at the National Park Foundation (NPF), the official charitable partner to the National Park Service. Marya was selected as an Emerging leader in Conservation at the 2017 SHIFTx Festival for her work on NPF's Community Partnerships team. Prior to her time at NPF, Marya was an AmeriCorps VISTA at the International Rescue Committee in Oakland, California where she served as a financial coach for refugees and asylees resettling in the Bay Area. Marya holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Azusa Pacific University and recently completed HBX CORE, a business certificate program for working professionals through the Harvard Business School. Marya resides in Washington, DC and is an avid outdoor enthusiast and national park lover.



Teaching Humanity through the Murals of The Butterfly Project

Mitzi Salgado

Jonathan Shulman, the founding Director for the Center for Excellence in Citizenship at La Jolla Country Day School, tells us about his mission to help paint 1.5 million butterflies.

In 2006, Cheryl Rattner Price and Jan Landau started the Butterfly Project at the San Diego Jewish Academy as an international program. Their mission is to raise awareness of the over 1.5 million children who died during the Holocaust. The Project is a call to action through education and the arts, creating memorials that represent resilience and hope. The goal is to paint as many butterflies as the number of young lives taken during World War II and to display them in memoriam.

Last year, Jonathan Shulman and the students at La Jolla Country Day School spent an entire month learning about respect, citizenship, and dignity through the understanding of the butterflies to begin their own butterfly-painting project. The students at Country Day learned about the butterflies' role in nature as a symbol to explain their significance. Every teacher has a different approach to how they teach the significance of the Butterfly Project. Students learn about

their fragility, diversity, and role of the butterflies in their ecosystem. "Depending on their age, we teach our young students that each butterfly is different from each other, that they are beautiful, and deserve the same dignity and respect," says Shulman.

At Country Day, the goal of the Butterfly Project is twofold. First, for the students to collectively build a legacy, and second, to serve as a reminder that too many children are affected by war. Shulman explains that it is a celebration of the lives of children who were killed in political or ethnic violence. Most importantly, he adds, "it is about committing to the dignity of the individual when painting these butterflies [and forming these displays]."

Shulman expresses excitement knowing that students as young as three years old are painting butterflies the school will install, becoming part of this legacy at a young age. He says that as the students get older, they will come to understand what the butterflies represent in this context. As students grow, they will deepen their understanding of the heinous crimes that humans can inflict on one another. The hope is that these children will have a commitment to the dignity of every human life as a result of participating in the project.

Painting butterflies is only the start of this project. Once enough butterflies are completed, Mr. Shulman plans to cover the halls of Country Day School with large mural installations of the butterflies designed by each generation of students, starting with the first generation of students who painted 2,000 butterflies last November. Shulman hopes that these students will one day return to their alma mater and share with their children their pledge to uphold the mission of the Butterfly Project.



La Jolla Country Day School at their first Butterfly Day on November 9, 2018

Source: La Jolla Country Day School, San Diego, CA



Elementary students at La Jolla Country Day painting butterflies on Butterfly Day
Source: La Jolla Country Day School, San Diego, CA

Country Day does as much as they can to engage the students in the process of creating the murals. The students help to design the murals and assist in choosing where to display them on campus. Last November, Country Day students visited the Jewish Academy to get ideas on how they want to show the butterflies at their own school for the installation. Shulman views the Jewish Academy as a role model for leading the mission of the Butterfly Project, saying, "Everywhere you look, you see butterflies."

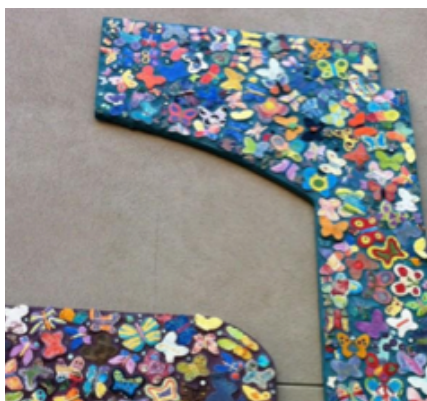
Shulman envisions the Butterfly Project becoming a part of Country Day's identity and hopes to ingrain its principles into the walls of the school. Shulman believes that, by displaying the butterflies, the school is sending a message to whoever walks through its doors: The school does not stand for hate. He explains, "The display makes it very clear where we stand on dignity and where we stand against hate." By taking a stance, the school is empowering present and future generations to live in a place where people respect the dignity of others. "You paint the butterfly, and that becomes your [symbol] of contribution [to] dignity and citizenship," says Shulman. The hope is that, if young people are taught this human right, they will assume responsibility for the treatment of others.

Since the project began, over 200,000 butterflies have been displayed worldwide. Thousands of people from around

the world have come together to paint a ceramic butterfly to honor a child. Students at Country Day have painted butterflies with students and instructors from India, Germany, El Salvador, and Panama before their school painted them on Butterfly Day, November 9, 2018. Country Day has a formal partnership with Bewegte Grundschule, a school in Cottbus, Germany and PANAMUN, the Model United Nations Conference held by the International School of Panama. A delegation of political leaders from South Asia even contributed to painting butterflies. In Fall 2019, students from Country Day will be visiting Bewegte Grundschule to paint even more butterflies. "[While there is] still a long way to 1.5 million, that's the point, they are a lot of people," says Shulman.

Shulman is on a quest to inspire as many people as possible to paint butterflies and display them around the world. For Shulman, the Butterfly Project brings together important principles of citizenship, dignity, and democracy, all while raising cultural and social awareness of a higher, better global society.

The purpose of creating these murals is to raise awareness and engender conversations that spark diplomatic collaborations, keeping us from repeating the past. For the Butterfly Project, that past is the 1.5 million lives that were taken during the Holocaust. The Project continues to raise awareness about one of the most horrific acts of violence in history, in a world where horrific acts of violence continue. In this context, the role of these individual ceramic butterflies sends a message about the decisions we make daily. We cannot forget that these events do not happen in isolation. The Holocaust could not have occurred without millions of people actively participating or living in compliance amidst



Picasso Meets Jerusalem Mural
Source: San Diego Jewish Academy, San Diego, CA



High school students and instructors painting butterflies
Source: La Jolla Country Day School, San Diego, CA

the horrific events.

As a society, we must memorialize tragedies like the Holocaust to remind ourselves of the past, to honor lives lost, and to positively shape the future. From the eyes of Mr. Shulman, such a powerful memorial can be as simple as a ceramic butterfly.



Mr. Shulman explaining the Butterfly Project in Panama during the PANAMUN Model United Nations Conference
Source: La Jolla Country Day School, San Diego, CA

For more information on the Butterfly Project go on their website: <https://thebutterflyprojectnow.org>

Mitzi Salgado is originally from San Diego, California. She grew up on the border of San Diego and Mexico. Now earning her Master's degree in International Public Policy and Management from the Price School of Public Policy, she recently launched the first student-run program focused on US-Mexico border policy, planning, and development at USC.

In the summer of 2018, she completed Price on the Rhine, an immersive program focused on German and European Public Administration with an emphasis on the European Union. Prior to attending USC, Mitzi worked in San Diego implementing in-class and after-school programs for low-income, minority students.

She earned a Bachelor's degree from the University of California, Riverside in Women Studies, and founded a service organization when she was 19 years old focused on empowering diverse women into leadership positions. Mitzi is currently the Co-Chair of Price Latino Student Association and an associate Leadership Director of Partnership for Equitable Los Angeles. Upon graduation, Salgado plans to work in the international development sector or in Human Rights creating better immigration policies in the United States.

