

2022 IMPACT REPORT



**GLOBAL
IMMERSION**

A LANDMARK YEAR

2022 was a landmark year for Global Immersion as we “relaunched” the organization into a world the pandemic has changed.

After 10 years of focusing 80% of our programming (immersion trips, webinars, and workshops) on the formation of *Everyday Peacemakers*, we pivoted to focus 80% of our programming (leadership cohorts, coaching, and workshops) on the formation of *Reconciling Leaders* who shape *Reconciling Communities*. At the request of our alumni across the country who were seeking more training, and with the wisdom of our trusted advisors, it was time to **grow wider by going deeper and slower with fewer.**

The journey of Everyday Peacemaking isn't a one-off program; it's a way of life that frees us to participate with God in restoring what's broken in us, our relationships, and our world.



"Grow wider by going deeper and slower with fewer."

Having built a full slate of “Public” and “Leadership” programming the past year, 2022 was the time to launch it into the world...and it was incredible! These programs were sustained by our dynamic Global Immersion team and co-facilitated in close collaboration with domestic and international partners.

We were able to expand our programming and enhance our reach like never before. As we all know, the work of peacemaking is never complete, so while we celebrate the successes of this past year, we continue to move boldly into our future. **Thank you especially to our EMBERS community of monthly supporters—your partnership makes this work possible.**

Jon and Jer



IN 2022: DEEPER & SLOWER WITH FEWER



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120%
GROWTH IN
LEADERSHIP
PROGRAMMING
IN 2022



LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMING

For faith leaders seeking to be formed as peacemakers

COHORTS



55
PARTICIPANTS

AUTHORS
HOSPITAL CHAPLAINS
PASTORS
PODCASTERS
NON-PROFIT LEADERS

“

"*Journey Home* has become a life marker for me—a distinction between the first half of my life and the second—and facilitated a deep spiritual shift that has helped me rediscover who I am and shaped me to be who I was created to be." Tommy Nixon

"*Journey of Hope* allowed me to recognize my place as a peacemaker and implement a greater vision for what that means in my neighborhood, in my work as a chaplain, in my art, and everywhere else. It gave me the space and time needed to show me that peacemaking can occur in all of these locations. *Journey of Hope* was the glue that helped integrate those aspects of my life with purpose and intention." Lin Preiss



COACHING

12
CLIENTS



The Evangelical Covenant Church



"Coaching from Global Immersion has had a significant, direct impact on our church community as well as me personally. There's no way I would have felt the ability to engage this season of major conflict even a few years ago."
Pat Little, New Community Church

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Practical tools to navigate relational conflict and grow into an *Everyday Peacemaker*

PODCAST

4000+

Episode downloads
from 34 countries

"This podcast was so good, and the consistent challenge to humanize those whom we lack grace for was really convicting. Thank you for the work you all do!"
- Podcast listener

MONTHLY PEACE

9

Issues with
long-form articles

"THIS is what we need to hear from Christians. I am so appreciating *Monthly Peace*. Please continue the noblest of work you do every day."
-Roger O'Sullivan

CONTEMPLATIVE
PRAYER

156

Virtual prayer gatherings

"I am astonished that a little community of love can be built across Zoom lines and the practice of silence and contemplation together."
- Jamie Alm



Podcast Co-Hosts:



Jon Huckins



Osheta Moore

Contributors & Guests:



Dominique D. Gilliard



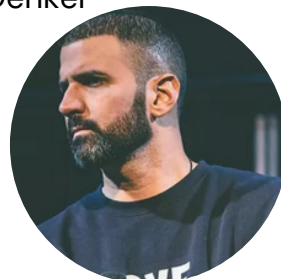
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Nikki Toyama-Szeto



Carlos A. Rodriguez



Shane Claiborne



Diana Oestreich

WHERE WILL YOUR PEACEMAKING JOURNEY TAKE YOU?

*Global Immersion emerged from the pandemic saying the world has changed, and so have we. Jesse's story embodies much of that change. A big part of the shift was a movement away from impersonal stories of faraway conflict and toward personal, intimate stories of real people working to be transformed so they can help transform the communities around them. Jesse's story is a beautiful, authentic example of the kind of peacemakers we work to support and the impact of your giving toward forming **Everyday Peacemakers** into **Reconciling Leaders**.*

Jesse's journey began right where he grew up—on the football field, at his home church, and in the streets of his community, but it didn't stay there. Jesse uprooted his life, traveled the world, traversed war zones, and witnessed horrific violence. Yet, the most infuriating and painful moments weren't in the war zones or refugee camps...



"I grew up in a diverse suburb of Minnesota but then went to a Christian college that was anything but diverse, and I just felt stuck," Jesse began.

That 'stuck' feeling is one we hear a lot from *Everyday Peacemakers*. For Jesse, it meant a growing sense of anger, betrayal, and resentment toward the Christianity of his youth. A star football player, Jesse's anger at the hypocrisy and tribalism he saw around him manifested itself around his teammates, other students, and his family and friends.

"As a way to escape the stuck feeling, I got connected with an org helping resettled refugees. Through volunteering, I learned that the world's largest Karen diaspora community were my neighbors. The Karen are a persecuted and oppressed ethnic minority in Myanmar. To be honest, I went into the relationships with refugees holding a lot of wrong ideas, like I was going to be the welcomer. Turns out, I became the welcomed in my own city as this Karen family loved me so well. That grew to hanging out several times a week, and at some point, we moved from friendship to kinship."

Jesse went on to write his senior thesis on the conflict in Myanmar. After college, he bought a one-way ticket to Thailand and lived on the border to continue to learn about the Karen refugee reality firsthand. Jesse built friendships with a number of Karen refugees, and over time, he and his new friends smuggled themselves into Myanmar so Jesse could visit their villages.

After the violent 2021 military coup, Jesse returned with supplies for the displaced. He and his Karen friends again smuggled themselves across the border, but this time a Karen soldier put a machine gun into his hands, saying he would need it. As the caravan cut a path through the jungle, Jesse and his friends had several brushes with the Burmese military.

At one point, they were caught in the crossfire as the Burmese military shelled the village where Jesse and his friends were staying.

"It was absolutely terrifying. I probably should have felt relief when we finally escaped the fighting, but it just sucked. It was so terrible. We knew that our group had shot and killed one of the Myanmar military soldiers, but there were no clapping hands in celebration; it was a somber experience. We were there to help the Karen, a marginalized, oppressed ethnic group, but the truth is those Burmese soldiers were also oppressed and under the boot of people in power. It was terrifying and terrible."

Jesse spent time processing and working through this stage of the journey with Jer Swigert, co-founder of Global Immersion.

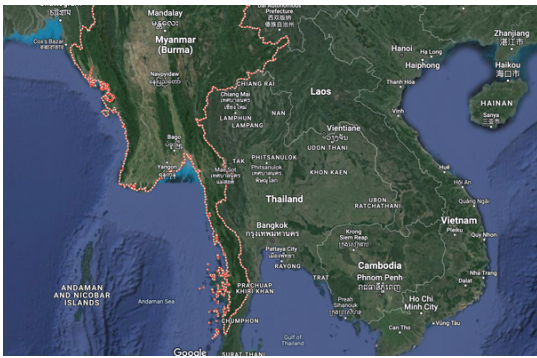
"Jesse is the ultimate example of the kind of leader we're looking to coach," Jer said. "He's teachable, passionate, and he sees his need to grow. I mean, here's a guy who was angry, disoriented, frustrated, had built enemy narratives in his mind, who had hurt people...but he asked for help. He stayed teachable when many just don't."



Alongside Jer, Jesse spent time processing carrying a gun on that first trip—he didn't carry one again—and his deeper understanding of the pain his Karen friends in Minnesota felt at being wrenched from home. But Jer also shepherded Jesse towards something powerful, something many people never realize:

"Peacemaking has to mean seeking the good of both sides—of all sides—because that's what it takes. If I'm serious about being a peacemaker, both sides of the conflict are worth the effort," said Jesse.

So Jesse journeyed back home to Minnesota, intent on becoming a peacemaker in one of the toughest conflict zones: his hometown. To support his formation as a Reconciling Leader, Jer invited Jesse to participate in *Journey of Hope*, one of Global Immersion's new leadership cohorts.



“For a long time, I felt bitter at US Evangelicals and the harm we’ve caused, particularly the hurts against people on the margins,” Jesse said. “But through *Journey of Hope*, I came to see that I need to make peace with the church, too. It’s worth it to reconcile because they’re my roots, and it’s worth it because US American Christians have a lot of power that could be leveraged on behalf of others.”

“I think everyday peacemaking really only works when we get close to people who are on the outside.” Jesse reflected. “That’s when you connect and commune in a way that leads to shared identity. We become less different, just human, and you take that journey from strangers to friendship to kinship.”

Initially for Jesse, moving toward people “on the outside” meant moving toward refugees. But he has grown into a peacemaker who understands it must also mean moving toward people *he* put on the outside. Through his time in *Journey of Hope*, Jesse has also begun to seek peace with the friends, family, pastors, and teammates he once rejected in anger.

Meanwhile, Jesse and his Karen friends started a nonprofit in St. Paul, MN, known as The Urban Village, serving the Karen community by accompanying youth as they connect, heal, and launch. And due to Jesse’s deep, relational commitment to this community, Jesse and Jer were invited to host some of the world’s top Karen leaders to explore what peace might look like in their homeland.

As an organization, Global Immersion has the honor of coaching *Everyday Peacemakers* all over the country like Jesse. These leaders don’t make the headlines, but their influence shapes local communities *and* mends global divides.

Jesse’s journey as a peacemaker took him across the street, into new neighborhoods, and ultimately around the world and into a war zone. Still, the toughest leg of the journey is often the return home as we confront our roots, our people, and ourselves to become true *Everyday Peacemakers*, working for our healing and the world’s shalom.



AN INVITATION TO DEEPEN YOUR ENGAGEMENT

We set out with ambitious goals for 2022, and while we are grateful for the impact made in both our public and leadership programming, we know this is only the beginning.

As this year comes to a close, **please consider how you might passionately and intently leverage your resources to continue growing *Everyday Peacemakers* and *Reconciling Leaders*.** You can make a one-time or monthly gift by following the link below. Or please don't hesitate to reach out to Jon or Jer directly for more conversation.

Donate: globalimmerse.org/donate

To talk more about your support:

Jon: jon@globalimmerse.org

Jer: jer@globalimmerse.org

We all have a role to play in the future we hope to create, and we are honored that you are fearlessly stepping into yours. Thank you for walking with us. Thank you for your help in growing the leaders that we desperately need. Thank you for investing in peace.



Photos: Journey of Hope cohort photos courtesy T.C. Moore.

YOUR SUPPORT ALLOWS
US TO **FORM LEADERS**
AND ENGAGE THE PUBLIC
IN THE CRITICAL PRACTICE
OF **GLOBAL AND LOCAL**
PEACEMAKING.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
GENEROSITY!

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