

Jerusalem **Peacebuilders**

2025 Annual Report



Co-Founder, Fr. Nicholas Porter and JPB ED, Dr. Elias Farah at the Peace Bridge in Derry, N. Ireland.

Founders' Message

Pivotal Year

Executive Director's Report

Nothing Less Than Momentous

Understanding JPB's Structure

Two Organizations, One Mission

Treasurer's Report

Ready for Continued Growth and Expansion

Staff Reports

EXCEL Teacher-Training & Youth Programs

2025 By the Numbers

Quantifying Our Impact

Impact Across the Holy Lands and America

37 Programs, Thousands of Lives Changed

Thank You 2025 Donors!

Investing in the Future

Looking Ahead

Summer Programs

Founders' Message

Dear JPB Family and Friends,

Without exaggeration, 2025 was a pivotal year in the life and mission of Jerusalem Peacebuilders. Staffing, operations, and finances all achieved new heights, despite the on-going Hamas-Israeli War and wider uncertainty in the region.

First, we successfully recruited a highly respected, highly connected, world class educator to be our new Executive Director. Elias Farah, PhD, LLM, formally began his leadership on 4 August in Derry, N. Ireland. He brings enormous energy, experience, and insight to the position. A native born-son of Israel, he offers outstanding professional leadership at exactly the time when the bulk of our staffing and operations now take place in the Holy Lands. His appointment also represents an important step in the de-colonization of our peacebuilding mission. None of this would be possible without the work of the search committee and its chair, Dr. Danna Kurtin.

Second, we integrated two additional staff members who warrant mention. A published poet and professional educator, Lily currently lives in Nazareth, Israel. She serves as the Co-Director of the EXCEL Teacher-Training Institute. As such, she led the first year-long EXCEL program in 2025. Her new responsibilities include teaching JPB programs in local high schools. In Houston, Blake Burns succeeded Deacon Will Parker as our Texas Educator. Blake is an accomplished sports coach, youth-worker and experiential education trainer. Like Dr. Elias, they each bring enormous energy, experience, and insight to JPB's mission.

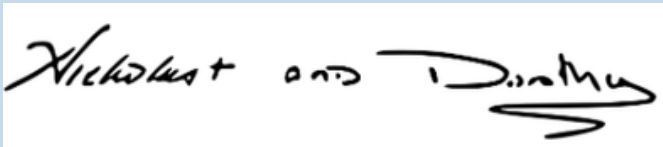


Third, in the face of bitter divisions both in the Holy Lands and the United States over the war in Gaza as well as an escalating conflict with Iran, we organized and led a full slate of six summer JPB leadership institutes for students and teachers across three continents. Lily Shehady and Sarah Benazerah led the two EXCEL teacher-training institutes in Jerusalem and Derry (N. Ireland). The EXCEL Institute in Derry was largely funded by Rotary International. For youth, Zak Adileh together with summer staff and volunteers led all four levels of our youth curriculum in the Houston, New Haven, Geneva, and Derry. Filled with success and challenge, these programs required significant financial and spiritual resources.

Fourth, none of these accomplishments would have been possible without the extraordinary generosity and involvement of our global JPB family. Thank you! For the first time, JPB income topped \$1,000,000. This level of giving together with a dynamic volunteer corps of facilitators, chaperones, chefs, and adolescent trauma specialists allowed JPB to operate exceptional programming.

In conclusion, 2025's decisions, activities, and finances represent a strategic investment that positions JPB well for peacebuilding and funding in the post-conflict reality that is currently unfolding. Dr. Elias thoroughly understands the opportunities before us, and thanks to your prayers and support, we demonstrated to participants, donors, volunteers, and partner-organizations that JPB possesses the capacity and exceptional leadership to execute our mission and to expand its impact significantly in the years ahead.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas and Dorothy" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Canon Nicholas and Dorothy Porter
Co-Founders

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Special thanks to all our staff members, volunteers, and board members whose tireless dedication to youth leadership formation makes JPB's educational programs possible. We remember two extraordinary volunteers who recently died: Bishop Thomas Ely of Vermont and Marilyn Geiger of Switzerland. They embodied the passion for peace that drives our mission.

Executive Director's Report

My role as JPB's Executive Director began in August 2025 at an important moment. Despite the war, the organization entered this period strong and steady, with well-established programs already in place. In the months that followed, hard work and careful planning translated these foundations into meaningful growth and expansion.

During the second half of 2025, JPB delivered 32 in-school courses in 23 Israeli schools, from Jerusalem to the northern village of Hurfeish, closing the year with over 700 graduates across Arab, Jewish, Druze, and Armenian communities. This represents a significant increase from 2024. Our programs in high schools have become the backbone of our work, strengthening year-round engagement, and creating a more efficient system for recruiting participants for our summer institutes. At the same time, the curriculum expanded from six to ten modules, adding units on human rights, the environment, and their impact on peace and stability. This development deepens the educational experience for students.

The EXCEL teacher program also reached new milestones. One program was completed in Jerusalem, followed by a second in Derry, Northern Ireland. A new cohort was selected in December, composed of 18 educators from across the country, representing Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Druze, and Circassian communities. Our EXCEL graduates impact approximately 15,000 students every year.





Alongside program growth, important steps were taken to secure official recognition for our programs within the educational system. The summer institutes were strengthened through improved staff training and a more thorough recruitment and preparation process. A pre-camp will be added at the end of June 2026 for all participants, and a new summer institute will take place in Nicosia, Cyprus. We are also forging new partnerships across the Holy Lands.

Our vision for the future is clear. By 2031, JPB will reach a cumulative impact of over 100,000 students through integrated programs for youth, educators, and communities. Over the next five years, we will scale up our in-school programs, expand EXCEL into other communities nationally and internationally, invest in staff development, and establish a permanent physical home for JPB that will house a school for training facilitators in peacebuilding and dialogue.

What gives me confidence in this vision is evidence. The growth of the past months demonstrates what this organization can achieve with clarity, commitment, and careful planning. JPB is building on its strong foundations and moving forward with purpose, and I am deeply grateful to our staff, board, partners, donors, and supporters in Europe, the Holy Lands, and the United States for making this progress possible.

With gratitude,

Dr. Elias Farah
Executive Director

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One Mission

Jerusalem Peacebuilders (JPB) is an interfaith, nonprofit organization with a mission to create a better future for humanity across religions, cultures, and identities. Integral to that mission is the belief that the future of Jerusalem is the future of the world. To that end, JPB promotes transformational, person-to-person encounters among the peoples of the Holy Lands.

JPB's interfaith programs unite Israelis, Palestinians, and Americans and provide them with the opportunities, relationships, and skills they need to become future leaders for peace.

A passion for peace drives our mission and partnerships power our programs.



Team Members



Dr. Elias Farah
Executive Director

Rev. Canon Nicholas Porter
President

Zak Adileh
Jerusalem-Area Co-Director

Dorothy Porter
Vice-President

Lily Shahadi
EXCEL Co-Director

Blake Burns
Texas Educator

Zohar Jacobson
EXCEL Program Facilitator

Hannia Arevalo
Communications Assistant

Sarah Benazerah
Senior Educator

Carol Perry
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Bruce Barrett
Treasurer

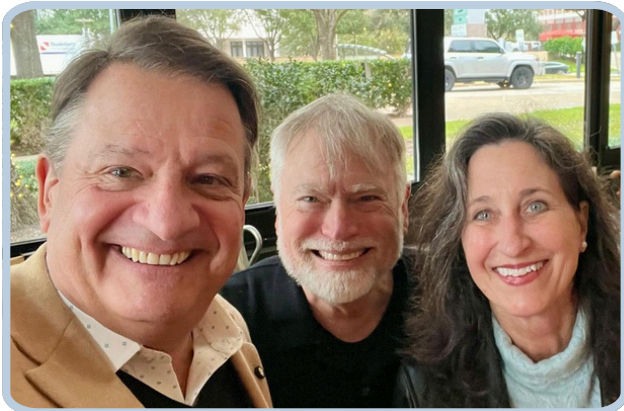
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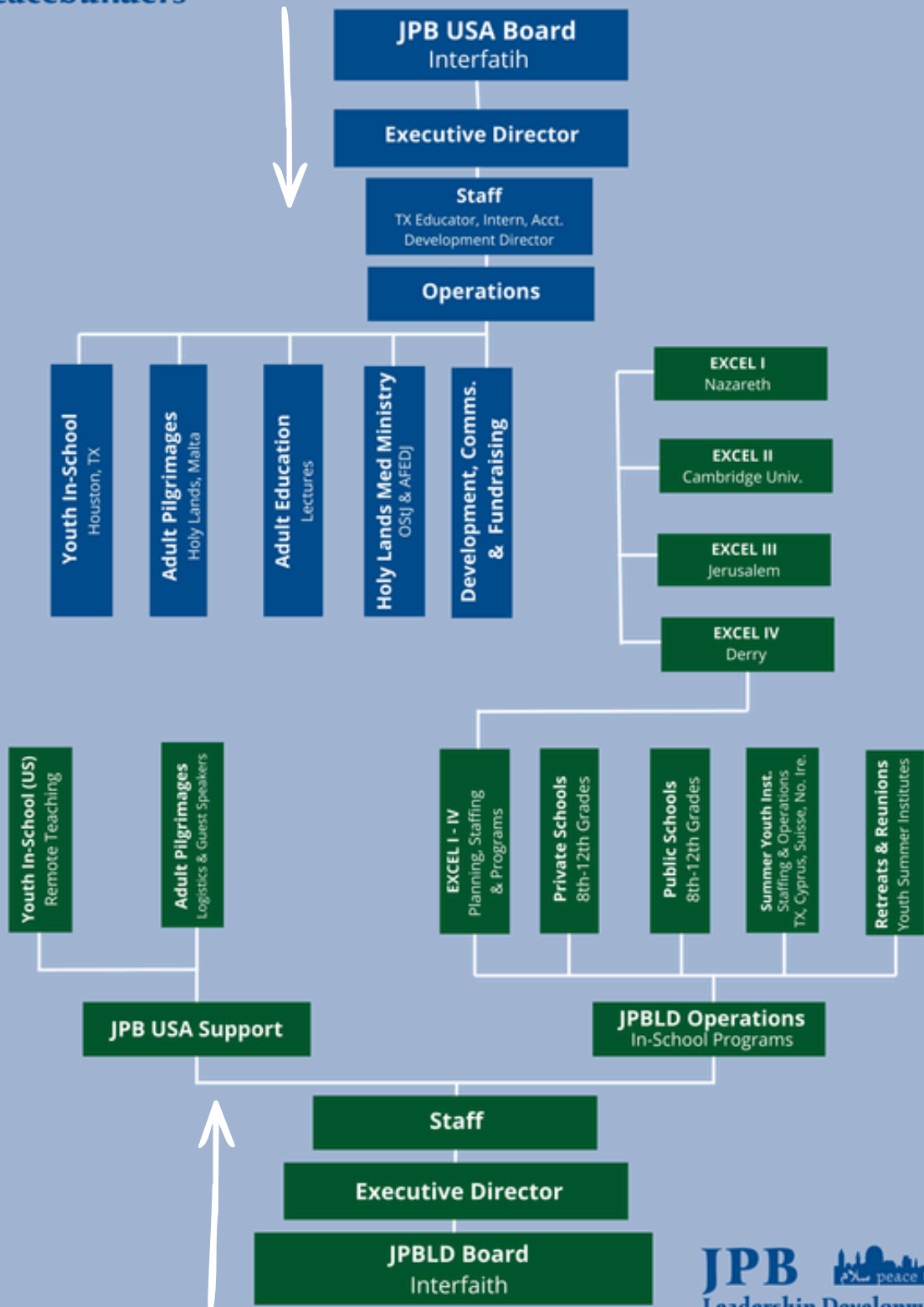
The Rev. Dr. Susan Lukens



Two Organizations One Mission



2025 JPB Org Chart





2025 Treasurer's Report

Jerusalem Peacebuilders' financial health is strong. We can be very proud.

We closed the year with \$557,392 dollars in cash, half of which is in FDIC insured interest bearing Certificates of Deposits. \$86,721 of this is set aside for the Kensinger Scholarship Fund for Girls. Historically, cash balances reach a zenith at year end, and reach their lowest in November of each year. Cash was very strong this year, and funds available for operations reached a November low of \$268,571, with \$100,000 of this held in an interest-bearing CD. This large cash cushion allows us to continue operations each year without concern for short term fluctuations due to war, changes in giving, or other threats to our financial stability.

We have no significant liabilities.

Total Sources of Funds from 2025 Operations were \$1,057,581.26, which is \$367,640 more than 2024. \$175,042 of this increase was from donations, and \$192,598 was from a growth in program activity and their related fees. This is a significant increase from prior years, as seen from the enclosed 8 yr Historical Review of Activities.

In 2025, Operating Income exceeded Operating Expenses by \$38,906.32, indicating that the majority of increased donations, fees, and grants were directed toward our mission in 2025.

It remains my pleasure to serve as your Treasurer. I wish to thank Carol Perry, whose hard work, expertise, and attention to detail is vital to our successful financial tracking, execution and maintenance of our financial systems. We could not do this good work without her.

Bruce A. Barrett
Treasurer
Jerusalem Peacebuilders

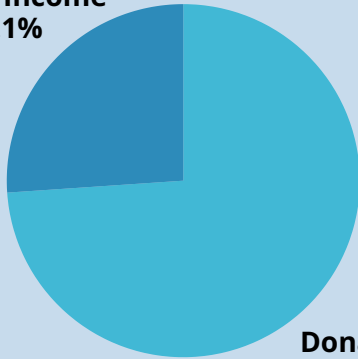
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2025 Financial Overview

The vast majority of JPB's support comes from individuals, family foundations, and worshipping communities. Operating income in 2025 exceeded expenses by \$38,906 to be used for investment in new programs and staff development.

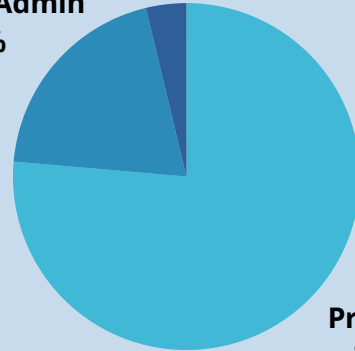
Revenue & Expenses 2025

Earned Income
26.1%



Donations
73.9%

General & Admin
19.8%



Programs
76.4%

2025 Income: \$1,057,581.26

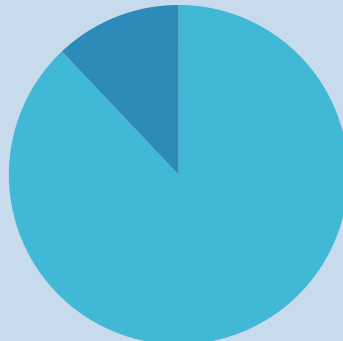
Donations: \$781,784.10 (73.9%)
Earned Income: \$275,797.16 (26.1%)

2025 Expenses: \$1,018,674.95

Programs: \$778,096.39 (76.4%)
General & Admin: \$202,289.90 (19.8%)
Development: \$38,286.66 (3.8%)

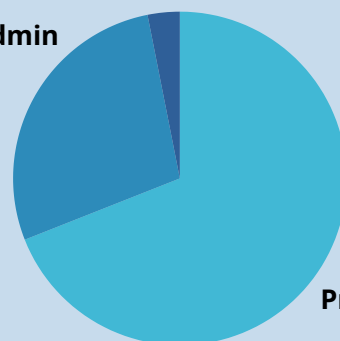
Revenue & Expenses 2024

Earned Income
12.1%



Donations
87.9%

General & Admin
27.9%



Programs
69%

2024 Income: \$689,941.15

Donations: \$606,741.94 (87.9%)
Earned Income: \$83,199.21 (12.1%)

2024 Expenses: \$542,059.14

Programs: \$374,082.41 (69%)
General & Admin: \$151,122.48 (27.9%)
Development: \$16,854.56 (3.1%)

EXCEL Teacher-Trainings

In 2025, the EXCEL Teacher Programs continued to empower educators across Israel to integrate peacebuilding, leadership, and high-level English instruction into their classrooms.

2024-2025: Through the EXCEL Teacher-Training Institute, 20 educators in Cohort 4 designed innovative bicommunal English-language curricula that promote communication, critical thinking, and mutual understanding through storytelling. Working with local and international experts, participants produced teaching units that they can now implement in their schools.

Despite multiple challenges, the cohort demonstrated remarkable resilience, completing their collaborative work and deepening professional partnerships and friendships. Pre- and post-program surveys showed significant growth in participants' confidence in conflict management, peacebuilding skills, and ability to engage thoughtfully with diverse perspectives.

The final level of EXCEL Institute in Derry, Northern Ireland, further strengthened this work. Immersed in the history of the Northern Ireland conflict and the Good Friday Agreement, participants met with grassroots peace leaders, engaged with Catholic and Protestant youth, and explored reconciliation models firsthand. These encounters fostered profound reflection on identity, historical narratives, and the role of education in advancing justice, peace and reconciliation. Data from our surveys confirmed an increase in empathy, openness to diverse worldviews, and commitment to partnership and cross-community work.

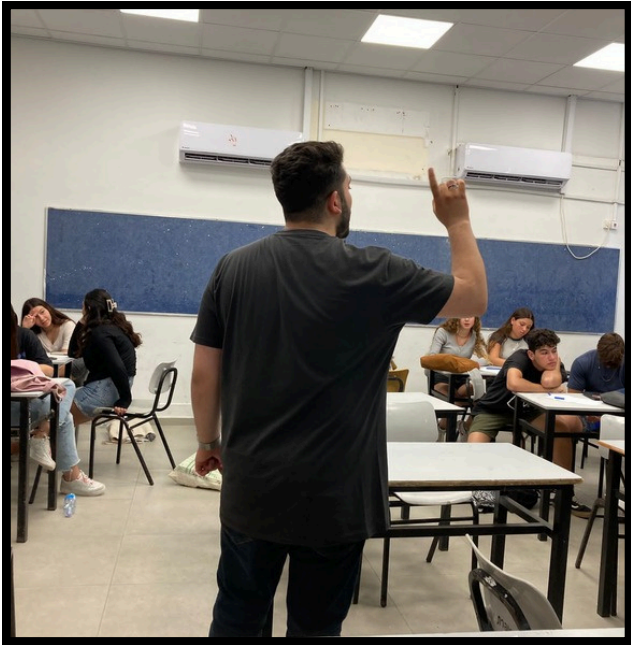
Building on this momentum, Cohort 5, our most diverse cohort to date, was selected in late 2025. Eighteen educators representing Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Druze, and Circassian communities, and regions across the country, began their journey together in February 2026. Their program will culminate in a professional training in Cambridge and London, equipping them to return to their schools as leaders of excellence, dialogue, and partnership.

Across all levels, EXCEL continues to demonstrate that when teachers are empowered with practical skills, support, and meaningful cross-community experience, they become powerful agents of educational excellence, understanding and sustainable peacebuilding.

Lily Shehady, EXCEL Co-Director
Sarah Benazerah, Senior Educator



Youth Programs



In 2025, despite many challenges and uncertainties, JPB's educators stayed committed to their mission. During the spring and fall semesters, our programs reached 654 students, a true reflection of our team's dedication and hard work.

Jerusalem Area Co-Director Zak Adileh led JPB's work in Jerusalem, teaching at the Tarkmanchatz Armenian School of Jerusalem, The Hebrew University Secondary School (Leyada), The Gymnasia Rehavia, and Rawad School for Arts and Culture. He also led online programs for Taha Hussein School and Ibn Khaldun School from Sakhnin, helping more students take part in our activities.



From March to August, Zak, together with the JPB team, managed the operations of four international summer institutes held in Houston, New Haven, Geneva, and Derry, serving a total of 71 participants. He handled recruitment, travel and visas, communication with parents, airport coordination, and program planning.

One special highlight was the 10-day leadership in Derry, Northern Ireland, which Zak personally led. During the program, the participants worked on their leadership skills, visited holy sites, enjoyed art workshops, and volunteered with local NGOs. This group of students has been with him since 2022, making their journey together especially meaningful. Their growth over four years shows the power of long-term mentorship, and Zak hopes they will continue to spread peace and understanding in their communities.



After the summer, Zak welcomed the new Executive Director, Dr. Elias Farah, and helped, together with the JPB team, shape the organization's future vision. They set a bold goal: to positively impact 100,000 students by 2031.

Zak Adileh, Jerusalem Area Co-Director

Houston Youth Programs

This year has been a year of transition and change not only in the organization of JPB, but also in Houston. On September 1st our Houston office transitioned from the leadership of Deacon Will Parker, to myself, Blake Burns. This year, along with a new Executive Director, Dr. Elias Farah, has seen the responsibilities of the office grow as well.

In-School Workshops: In 2025, JPB worked in eight Houston area schools teaching peacebuilding skills workshops in Christian, Jewish, and Muslim schools, as well as several with no religious affiliation. This also includes at least one school in which JPB has never been to before. In total, we worked with 255 students through our in-school program. We will continue to grow the number of schools we partner with in 2026 as we build relationships across the community.

Interfaith Youth Houston: This JPB-founded community program was active and thriving in 2025, with a strong leadership team and engaging educational events across the Houston area, and continues to do so. Our leaders include faith leaders from Houston Congregation of Reformed Judaism, Christ the King Lutheran Church, St. Mark's Episcopal, and community leaders from University of Houston, the Rain Drop Center, and the Muslim community at-large. Our community partnerships also included the Rothko Chapel, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Bridges Foundation, and Archeology Now. This program hosts events roughly every month during the school year, and sees 20-30 high school students per month.



Summer Discovery Institute: August saw the completion of another successful Discovery Institute at Camp Allen, outside Navasota, Texas, with twenty-three students from the Middle East and America, representing the Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Druze religions. Deacon Will Parker led the students through activities with international educators, local religious leaders, and interfaith prayers and services. To meet growing needs, we are adding three staffers from the Houston area.

Misc.: In addition to the above programming, ongoing and upcoming, I have been invited to and involved in several prestigious community events in recognition of JPB's work in the community. These events included a reception for the Spanish Ambassador to the United States, an interfaith pot-luck with 257 attendees (28 students), where I served as Master of Ceremonies, and other events at Rice University, the University of Houston, and the Houston Museum of Fine Arts.

All of our program areas are growing in Houston, as well as our meaningful and incredible interfaith work. The next year will continue growth in Houston as our reach becomes wider and deeper in our community.

Blake Burns, Texas Educator





USA Adult Formation

An essential element of Jerusalem Peacebuilders' mission remains promoting encounters between adult Americans and the peoples, cultures, and religions of the Middle East. We do this in two primary ways – through speaking engagements and organizing pilgrimages. In 2025, Fr. Nicholas and Dr. Elias led 18 presentations involving 1,324 adults across the United States. We also led two pilgrimages to the historic island of Malta, one in April and the other in November. Both pilgrimages and many of these presentations were made possible through our relationships with the Episcopal Church, St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, and the Order of St. John. The power of these experiences led participants to donate funds that allowed JPB to hire two additional educators and feed hundreds of starving refugees.



2025 Impact Numbers

Educational Numbers & Impact

Total number of programs: **37**

Total number of direct teaching hours: **311**

Total number of JPB participants directly impacted: **2,646**

Total number of students impacted directly by EXCEL teachers: **12,000**

EXCEL Teacher-Training Institute Participants

2025: 46 participants in 3 programs in Holy Lands, Derry, and Online

2024: 38 participants in 2 programs in: Cambridge University and Derry, N. Ireland

Youth In-School Teaching

2025: 1,322 students from 26 schools (Holy Lands & TX)

2024: 507 students from 14 schools (Holy Lands & TX)

Summer Youth Institute Participants

2025: 71 participants in 4 programs (TX, CT, Geneva, Derry, N. Ireland)

2024: 18 participants in 2 programs (CT & Geneva)

Interfaith Impact

Our community includes Jews, Christians, Muslims, Druze, and Alawi, with great variation in how faith is observed and practiced.



EXCEL Partners in 2025:

St. Catherine's College, Cambridge University

St. George's College, Jerusalem

North West Academy, Derry, No. Ireland

Oranim Academic College of Education, Israel

Retorika for Multiculturalism, Israel

US Embassy, Israel



Youth Institute Partners in 2025:

Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Geneva, Suisse

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church, Houston, TX

I Wage Peace, Milford, CT

Albertus Magnus College, New Haven, CT

St. George's College, Jerusalem

Bridges, Houston, TX

Interfaith Youth Houston, TX

Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism, TX

Camp Allen, Navasota, TX

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Data

JPB's quantitative and qualitative M&E data provides avenues to understand the impact of JPB's Summer 2025 programs—Discovery, Service, Leadership, Diplomacy, EXCEL in the Holy Lands, and EXCEL in Derry. The conclusion is that all were exceptionally successful.

EXCEL Teacher-Training Data

The Derry pre- and post-surveys indicated a significant change in the attitudes of the participants. The setting pushed participants to talk about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict since symbols from the conflict are all around. Agreement with the statement "I feel confident when discussing peacebuilding and conflict analysis when talking to other peacebuilding educators" rose from 46.2% to 69.2%. Despite the Holy Land's external challenges, the program had a significant and lasting impact. The pre- and post-surveys conducted during the program showed a positive change in the participants' perception of the other. The Holy Lands participants increased their agreement with "Viewing different perspectives as 'other' is harmful for communication and collaboration" by over 20%.

"After EXCEL I'm prepared to create more intentional spaces for dialogue in my classroom, spaces where students from different backgrounds feel seen and safe to share. In my school in Ma'alot we have students from many different backgrounds. This mix isn't always easy, but it's powerful. I want to use what I've learned to help my students not just coexist but *connect*. Through creative writing, storytelling, and empathy-building exercises, I hope to plant seeds of understanding that last beyond the classroom." - **EXCEL Participant**

Summer Youth Institute Data

JPB successfully conducted four Youth Summer Institutes, engaging close to 70 youth participants across the United States, Switzerland, Northern Ireland, and Israel. Discovery (Houston), Service (New Haven), Diplomacy (Geneva), and Leadership (Derry), cultivated the participants' empathy, leadership, and sense of agency. Surveys revealed measurable gains in responsibility, communication, and belief in peacebuilding. Across all programs, post-program data showed gains of over 20% in participants' sense of responsibility for conflict resolution and in their perceived personal leadership skills, alongside an increase of more than 23% in positive perceptions of those outside their own group.

"During the JPBLD program, I learned to improve my overall skills. For example, my communication skills and my leadership skills have improved greatly over my time here. Moreover, I have learned that people have different views than me and I have learned to respect them." - **Leadership Participant**

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Special Thanks

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