Partner with professors and students to develop and execute real-world, credible, and authentic campaigns to prevent hate and targeted violence.

Peace Mavericks
Peace Mavericks

Extremist and hate groups target impressionable youth with propaganda on social media. The Peace Mavericks program empowers university students to counter extremism and hate through the development and deployment of dynamic, integrated campaigns.

The McCain Institute will host a national competition where university teams work with a faculty advisor to research the target market and create a strategy designed to best reach and influence their peers. Each team receives a $1,000 budget to produce a real campaign that delivers measurable results. The McCain Institute selects the top three teams to compete at Arizona State University and win scholarship awards up to $5,000.

Past Peer-to-Peer campaigns included over 10,000 student participants in 75 countries and 40 U.S. states and reached over 230 million people via social media campaigns, campus movements, mobile apps, cultural activities, videos, lesson plans and more. The McCain Institute plans to pilot their first competition with at least 10 universities and grow the program over time to include dozens of universities.
Peace Mavericks Impact Model

**PROFESSORS**
work to guide the process

**EDVENTURE PARTNERS**
manages the process

**student**
resources
strategies
implement

**ACCESS**
campuses and communities

**CONNECT**
students to each other and larger society

**MOBILIZE STUDENTS**
changes to attitudes, perceptions and behavior

reduce hate and targeted violence

students impact students (P2P)

media
online

offline
**OPERATION250 (Op250) -** seeks to educate children, parents, and teachers about online safety and how to most effectively protect themselves from coming into contact with online violent extremism material and individuals. ([https://www.operation250.org](https://www.operation250.org))

Op250 developed an emotive video to show audiences the threat of being online and risks it poses to young children. The video was followed by a series of eight engaging and educational discussion-starters to help teachers and parents discuss terrorism. The multi-media campaign included an interactive social media presence and class room visits.

**Impact During Competition**

Open a dialogue and help educate teachers, children and parents about the issues of violent extremism

- Table Talk series with conversation starters based on eight facets of terrorism
- Printable tools for teachers to help facilitate in-class discussions
- Interview with Christianne Boudreau, expert and mother of an ISIS recruit who died in Syria
- Evidence based video developed on J.M. Berger's 5 step process of radicalization tactics
- Spoke with 150 students during in-class presentations about issues of violent extremism
- Handed out 500 informational cards to answer questions about violent extremism
- Social media interaction with other prevention initiatives including FATE and Mothers for Life

**Scaling Op250 Following Competition**

- Won top prize in UMass Lowell “Difference Marker” competition and received $65,000 start-up funding
- Featured as a case study in UN “Youth Led Guide on Prevention of Violent Extremism Through Education”
- Hosted Combatting Hate & Extremism: Fostering Inclusion in our Schools and Communities conference with over 150 attendees including school administrators, teachers, resource officers, counselors, police officers, state officials and community organizations
- Trained 250 educators from North Adams Public Schools on Table Talks
- Plan to conduct 24 classroom interventions around the state as part of a $1M National Institute of Justice grant award aimed at measuring the impact of Op250 educational program; evaluation conducted by Harvard University and Georgia State University

Click [here](https://www.operation250.org) to watch Recruited by Radicals video
Dare to be Grey (DtBG) - aims to put a stop to the polarization that is dividing our society by promoting an open debate. We have created a platform with room for personal stories and refreshing perspective. Anyone’s opinion can become the focal point of tomorrow’s debate. Dare to be Grey invites everyone to share their story and join us in going beyond simple black and white thinking. (https://www.daretobegrey.com)

Through a video series, photo campaign and offline activities, Dare to be Grey was able to mobilize civic-minded individuals to distribute the campaign’s vision to help reach the silent majority who share ‘grey’ ideas but have yet to show it.

Impact During Competition

Engage individuals to offer an alternative for the black-and-white fallacy, leaving no room for doubt, debate, nuance and empathy
- 466,000 social media reach across 45 countries
- 50 Colors of Grey video series of inspiring portraits of individuals impacting society in positive ways
- I am…Grey photo series on social media showing stories about importance of thinking and being in the grey middle
- Everybody Dares hub connecting grey oriented opinions, initiatives and content from 10 local partners and joint ventures
- Six day tour to six different cities to encourage people to take a stand against polarization and promote social media elements
- Hosted symposium titled ‘The breeding grounds for radicalization’ with 200 attendees
- In-class discussion with two local high schools about black-and-white thinking with mobile phone quiz upon completion
- Advisory role in seven other campaigns

Scaling Dare to be Grey Following Competition

- Students established a foundation, which received 337,000 EUR funding from the EU to implement ‘Project Grey’
- Expanded focus to include Belgium, Slovakia and pan-European audiences
- Developing a Big Data Dashboard
- Creating three social media campaigns with at least 75 published products
- Working to train 120 social workers dealing with online polarization
- Organizing a 2-day conference to present achievements of Project Grey and explore future option for implementation in other parts of the EU

click here to watch Dare to be Grey video
Choose Your Future (CYF) - help refugees and migrants find the best place to live and integrate more efficiently into their new community. (https://chooseyourfuture.fi/en/home/)

Through videos, football friendlies, food events, clothing drives, educational materials, and the development of a mobile app, Choose Your Future created opportunities for Finns and refugees to interact directly in a positive and uniting way aimed at reducing threats by helping people meet one another and diminish the struggles both asylum seekers and Finns have when trying to adapt in response to the refugee crisis.

Impact During Competition

Focusing on positive and possibilities instead of the negative and threats regarding refugees, asylum seekers and Finnish society

- 650,000 social media impressions
- Developed ‘About Turku’ mobile app for refugees to provide local, cultural, and resource information in both Arabic and English
- Raised awareness of issues related to the integration process with positive messages designed to unite individuals
- Hosted United by Football events where Finns and exchange students played football against asylum seekers and refugees to connect people through the unifying power of sport
- Hosted United by Food event during international Restaurant Day at reception centers where asylum seekers were able to share their cultures through food - profits were given to the Finnish Red Cross to provide leisure activities at local reception centers
- Organized clothing drive for asylum seekers in order to provide proper winter clothing for the changing season

Scaling Choose Your Future Following Competition

- CYF exists as a small, for-profit organization
- Won Open, a data-innovation competition organized by Regional Council of South-West Finland
- Won a Service Innovation contest organized by University Startup World Cup in Denmark
- Working to develop digital tool to help migrants find the best place for them to live and feel at home based on their needs in their new home cities
- Negotiating expansion of the digital tool to cities in Finland and abroad
- Developing new digital service in partnership with the City of Turku, Regional Council of Southwest Finland

click here to watch United by Food video
From Apathy To Empathy (FATE) - an attempt to change the way the current state of affairs and violence are accepted passively. FATE aims to transform the widespread indifference and resignation prevalent among people regarding the exacerbating degrees of extremism into more positive forces like concern, hope and activism. (https://www.facebook.com/fromapathytoempathy)

FATE developed a social media campaign focused on sharing positive perspectives, images of hope, and messages of support combined with offline events designed to bring people together through music, panel discussions, school visits, the reclaiming of public spaces and the use of tourism all to promote tolerance and peaceful coexistence and inspire action through solidarity and compassion.

Impact During Competition

Transform widespread indifference and resignation prevalent among people into activism through an anti-extremism campaign

- Over 46,000 people from 39 different countries took action on Facebook (posts, likes, comments, shares)
- Held event in LUMS courtyard to raise voice against the Peshawar attacks
- Visited Rehmat Ali Boyds High School to address the need for empathy; encouraged students to record their protests against extremism through social media
- Hosted interactive session on empathy with over 100 students through the LUMS Community Service Society Teach for Change program
- Organized a vigil in collaboration with Hum-Aahang in support of victims of Paris, Baghdad and Beirut terrorist attacks
- Collaborated with TurrLahor (tour company) to organize a special religious diversity tour to the walled city of Lahore to promote religious harmony
- Invited Ms. Asma Jahangir, founding member of Human Right Commission in Pakistan, to address, inspire and motivate LUMS students
- Used a concert event as an act of defiance amidst the fears of terrorism

Scaling FATE Following Competition

- Developing ‘UTOPIA’ video game to offer students a chance to build communities free from prejudice
- Conducting empathy education sessions at schools in Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad
- Launching FATE Chapters at a network of schools across Pakistan
- Accepted as an official member organization of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)
- Registered as an official trust in Pakistan
Women Against Violent Extremism (WAVE) - advocacy group based in Nigeria who seek to bring light to the plight of the woman and girls in the north-east insurgency crisis. WAVE conducts digital and non-digital efforts to promote girls education and protection, women’s rights and empowerment, and peace-building in north-east Nigeria. 
(https://wavenigeria.org)

Mobilized a network of 100 women which engaged over 10,000 women directly across Nigeria. WAVE campaign included videos, class room visits and community activities.

Impact During Competition

Engage young girls about unwittingly being recruited as a suicide bomber by Boko Haram

- 540,000 social media impressions
- Met with 200 girls displaced by Boko Haram with a security expert
- Working with IR Network, a local NGO, met with over 200 vulnerable girls in the towns of Mubi and Maiha
- Visited Mubi IDP camp on Children’s Day and conducted activities with over 100 girls
- Hosted a screening of short film produced by North East Regional Initiative (NERI), a Nigerian federal government initiative co-funded by USAID, to create awareness for effects and consequences of violent extremism
- Appeared on Channels Television, Nigeria’s most authoritative news channel with over 20M viewers

Scaling WAVE Following Competition

- Registering WAVE as a formal NGO
- Expanding WAVE100 WhatsApp Group members
- Creating WAVE comic book based on stories from interviews of women to instill pride, self worth, and encourage education in at-risk children
- Launching a story telling series of women from different walks of life who may have survived conflict or gone against gender stereotypes
- Fundraising project for IDP women and kids affected by the harmattan season (cold and dry wind) in northern Nigeria and raised harmattan gear (sweaters, blankets and lotion) and food in IDP camps in Yola, Adamawa and Jos, Plateau State

click here to watch A Girl Like Me video
Support for P2P Approach

P2P Identified as Best Practice

“There have been some successes (i.e. current prevention efforts), including in community education and public-private partnerships, such as the Peer2Peer (P2P) program. However, such successes are viewed as fragile, particularly because of concerns about whether the programs could be sustained.”

Practical Terrorism Prevention Report, Reexamining U.S. National Approaches to Addressing the Threat of Ideologically Motivated Violence, Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center and the RAND Corporation

“Credibility and trustworthiness of the individual, group or institute delivering the message or narrative is just as important, or maybe even more important, that the message itself.”

Radicalisation and Awareness Network (RAN): Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism Approaches and Practices 2017 Edition

“The key to producing more and better content is to reverse the top-down approach many governments instinctively favor, and -instead - empower young people and civil society to take the lead. This may happen through contest, grassroots funds, or project like Peer to Peer (P2P) which organises counter-speech competitions among university students.”

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Region, Professor Peter Neumann, OSCE Chairperson in Office’s Special Representative on Countering Radicalisation and Violent Extremism, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR), King’s College London

“While there are organizations that simply observe and report what they see, others are engaged in direct efforts in counter-radicalization, counter-recruitment, counter-intelligence, and more. Outside of tech companies, college students have been recruited in the fight against ISIS…EdVenture Partners has created a competition to promote anti-ISIS ideology via social and digital media.”

Hacking ISIS, How to Destroy the Cyber Jihad, Malcolm Nance and Chris Sampson with foreword by Ali Soufan

Community Partnerships

In previous semesters, EVP’s program has received financial as well as in-kind support from federal interagency partners including the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the National Counterterrorism Center, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice as well as private sector support from Facebook. Individual university teams have also enlisted the support of their academic institutions, foreign government ministries, local law enforcement organizations, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, and educational partners from K-12 institutions.
“I’m a big believer in this effort [P2P]. I think the chance that it will actually reach the right audience is much greater than anything put out by any government agency.” Jessica Stern, Ph.D.; Policy Consultant, Co-author of ISIS The State of Terror, and Research Professor, Pardree School of Global Studies Boston University

“I am extremely excited about the P2P program. It is timely, and being the victims of that terror attack, our students are more than ready to join other like-minded young people to counter terrorism, radicalization and extremism in our institutions and community around the world.” Dr. Abdulrahman Hamo, the Dean of Students at Garissa University of Garrisa, Kenya

“We have lost so many lives to extremism, too much blood has already been shed. And, if we can do something - mobilize people to stand together against it and stop them from turning towards it in the first place, then I feel like that itself would mean that we’ve achieved something greater in life, and for a greater cause.” Abeera Akhtar, Student at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) in Pakistan, P2P 1st place winner for FATE: From Apathy to Empathy

“To create the platform for the youth, to partner with businesses such as Facebook, and our government... is very inspiring. These are exactly the kinds of partnerships and collaborations that are needed to save lives. That’s what it comes down to.” Kia Scherr, wife and mother of Alan and 13-yr old Naomi, who were killed in the Mumbai terrorist attack on November 26, 2008, President, One Life Alliance

“Transforming this (extremist) ideology will demand a comprehensive educational campaign … It has to be thorough and ‘cool’ enough to bring young people in. The place to start ideally would be universities and secondary schools. An excellent model for inspiration is the Peer to Peer: Challenging Extremism project.” Jacob Udo-Jacob Udo, Ph.D., Professor, American University of Nigeria, advisor to 1st place P2P team, fall 2016 African regionals

“Great, great event. The event is on our Consulate Facebook page and the clip2together project shared our posting on their Facebook page. Over a dozen media reports on the project before and just after our press conference. This program is already having a big PVE/social media multiplier effect in Germany.” Jeffrey Hill, PAO, Consulate Frankfurt, U.S. Department of State
“Tolerance is now a trait that I have embraced, and I also make it a point to engage any of my peers who promote hate online, share baseless information without verification but just challenging them to look at it once more and think about what its impact will be.”

Abubakr H., Ugandan Muslim Youth Development Forum, Uganda

“This past semester’s P2P experience has been one of the first times in my life that I have been able to take a growing interest I have, such as counter-terrorism, and physically create something that (I’ve come to learn) can make a difference.”

Matthew L., University of Massachusetts, Lowell, USA

“Increased Confidence to Speak Out

“After participating as a Team leader of our P2P team, I learned how to explore new topics and do research outside my comfort zone as a Business student. The topic was both Interesting and unfamiliar, nothing about it in our curriculum or studies. I learned to lead a team and learned to listen and evaluate objectively their input. Our Involvement with P2P opened the door to a new field that we are now paying more attention to, we now share articles, attend events and speak up against extremism that come across us.”

Haythem R., Tunis Business School, Tunisia

“It was a great honor to be able to write and publish a video game and I hope to make additional efforts in mitigating the bystander effect all while de-stigmatizing the shame and guilt that follows bystanders.”

Tayler N. S., University of Maryland, USA

“As a result of my experience and research, I feel more qualified to talk to others about effective ways to fight terrorism in our community. I feel confident that I can share what I’ve learned with others. I feel a personal obligation to spread truthful information to others to stop the infiltration of misinformation. My goal for the future is to continue to enlighten those who have misguided views about social issues, such as Muslim immigration.”

Felicia P., University of Houston, USA

“P2P really lit a fire under my belly to be more outspoken about certain causes. My parents always urged me to keep my attitudes with respect to controversial issues, like gender equality or racism, to myself as it could lead to missed opportunities if a certain person does not agree with this view. The P2P project showed me how important it is to be outspoken, to raise awareness, to host debate. Now, I am no longer fearful to express how I feel and to speak out when injustice strikes.”

Tomas C., KU Leuven, Belgium
"I feel my personal and professional growth has been greatly accelerated by my P2P experience. By giving interviews to the most important media in the Czech Republic, or presentations to panel of experts in the Vienna secretariat of OSCE and for United Council in Washington (coming up in September), I have gained experience that I will never forget and which I can build on in the future."

Petr S., Masaryk University, Czech Republic

"I have become conscious of actions and inaction that fuel acts of violent extremism and hate speech and continue to transfer this knowledge to young people in my community. In an effort to counter violent extremism and hate speech, my team and I have formed an NGO and a club in the university to provide the platform for students to share their grievances (which can lead to violence) and collectively identify and solve social problems that fuel violent extremism and hate speech."

Isaac B., University of Ghana, Ghana

"Not only that we were to compete with 144 universities from around the world, what was challenging was how to invite our fellow Mindanawons and Filipinos to join and support our campaign. As the documenter in-charge of posting our photos, videos, and graphics, it was really important to make the best output possible. I like to use my camera as the paint for my blank canvas, showcasing my perspective and my art to educate, and empower the people. My P2P experience helped me in making good stories that could inspire, educate, and empower the people. My P2P experience changed my perspective in life. I was no longer stuck within the island of Mindanao. With the opportunity to present ourselves and our campaign, our P2P experience changed our lives and it will never be the same."

Kurt Anthony C., Xavier University, Philippines

"By participating in the P2P contest, I have made great progress in communicating. At the beginning, I was an introvert; at this moment, I have given dozens of lectures, I communicate with students, teachers, sometimes with the press and other experts I have had the honor to meet. I very much appreciate the opportunities that have come through P2P and Zvol Si Info."

Kateřina K., Masaryk University, Czech Republic

"As for the P2P Challenge, I found it informative and inspiring in many ways; although I am no stranger to the promotional use of social media, I had never before been involved in building an entire campaign, which I am sure will be useful for my professional future. Seeing people react to our campaign with such enthusiasm and positivity was not just reassuring, but an affirmation of our initial optimism that in their heart of hearts, and despite all the uncertainties of today’s world, people really do want to connect and meet one another peacefully."

Stephanie R., University for Sustainable Development Eberswalde, Germany

"The P2P experience was quite the adventure! Professionally, I gained insight and experience to so many aspects of planning and executing a campaign that will later give me more career confidence. Personally, I found my own perceptions and actions positively affected by our campaign."

Wendy P., University of Houston, USA
“I started graduate school with the expectation of starting a career in public relations. After this experience, I now have a more clear idea of my strengths and ambitions. I’d like to continue working on campaigns that can make a difference in changing hearts and minds of people.”

**Felicia P., University of Houston, USA**

“P2P made me realize I want to do something fulfilling that could actually bring along change in society. In September, I am starting as an intern for an important political party in Belgium. The choice of internship was directly influenced by the P2P experience and I truly feel that it will exert an everlasting influence on my professional career.”

**Tomas C., KU Leuven, Belgium**

“Personally this project made me realize my true potential. I felt that the work I did on this surpassed my expectations of myself and that in turn affected me professionally. I have since changed my career goals to be more real world, change-oriented. This project forced me to understand my potential as a leader rather than a follower, and my ability to be firm yet maintain great relationships with my co-workers/peers.”

**Abigail V., Rochester Institute of Technology**

“Going on my first real business trip, I was able to evolve from a professional standpoint. There’s something about wearing a suit every day, meeting elite leaders in your field of study, and being able to present your idea on such a highly researched topic. Throughout the semester, the opportunities the program gave me to become passionate about something I want to dedicate my career to blew me away. I am filled with anticipation for the next steps I get to take thanks to the connections and opportunities birthed through P2P.”

**Matthew L. University of Massachusetts, Lowell, USA**

“The P2P experience affected my career goals, it oriented me toward the international relations field as well as peace journalism and digital communication. Following the P2P competition, I participated in many conferences and gave a TEDx talk along with co-producing and coordinating “Youth Online,” a talk show affiliated to ACT. In my daily life, I continue to counter violent extremism and hate speech through volunteering with ACT, participating in workshops, sharing prevention strategies, spreading awareness, co-organizing trainings in this field, and working on publications tackling these topics.”

**Eva O., Notre Dame University, Lebanon**

“P2P has been a perfect example of what is the better way to teach our profession; doing something real that requires risk and effort, seeing the real impact and power that you could have, and practicing the abilities and skills that you will need in your future career.”

**Alejandro A., CEU Universidad San Pablo, Spain**
PROOF OF PERFORMANCE

EdVenture Partners (EVP) is uniquely qualified to work in partnership with the McCain Institute on the implementation of the Peace Mavericks program.

For 29 years, EdVenture Partners has experience working with over 900 universities throughout the world with leading brands and organizations such as U.S. Department of State, FBI, U.S. Department of Justice, Facebook, ADL, Toyota, Ford, Citi, Shell, AT&T, American Petroleum Institute, Lockheed Martin, Canada, Qatar, Morocco amongst many others.

Through its acclaimed Peer to Peer (P2P): Challenging Extremism and Facebook Global Digital Challenge, EdVenture Partners has mentored over 10,000 students in implementing over 700 counterspeech campaigns in over 75 countries, reaching over 230 million people and earning over 600 combined pieces of press and earned media.

Additionally, EdVenture Partners created and managed the National Security Internship (NSI) program for the FBI and U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Anti-Defamation League’s ADL: Innovate Against Hate program.

EdVenture Partners is a woman-owned, SBA classified small, privately-held, for-profit corporation.

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