

## Inside...

### FFI Program Issue

- Evolving programs
- Alumni coming together
- Finding team identity
- FFI event updates

*Past participants gathered for a group photo at the Middle East Alumni Seminar in February 2020. Completely planned and facilitated by alumni, this seminar brought together young people for a weekend of workshops.*



## FFI Global Alumni Strengthen Connections

### Bringing more than a little laughter and learning to our lockdown

By FFI Staff

It takes more than a pandemic to stop FFI's Global Alumni from staying engaged. If anything, it has allowed our alumni from all over the world to be more connected than ever. As soon as the countries we work in began going on lockdown, one of our Middle East alumni, Eden ('08), had the idea to host a virtual origami workshop for alumni. From there, he was able to plan a full week of virtual workshops, all led by other alumni. Since then, we have held over **90** fun and energizing virtual workshops led by alumni, community members, and staff that have focused on professional development, creativity, skill building, communication, and more.

FFI's Global Alumni have taken a challenge and turned it into an opportunity to make an impact. We are excited to see our alumni continue to virtually grow the Alumni Movement, find new ways to stay engaged, and build strong friendships with each other.



*Guest workshop leader, Alex Woodrow (top left), poses for a photo with FFI alumni and staff during a Zoom workshop. Alex is an author and the bassist in the band Our Last Night. Alex discussed his book, [You are the Rock Star](#), with alumni and led several exercises for the group.*

## New Date! September 17<sup>th</sup>

Join us in honoring Renee and Dan Plummer  
with the Eileen D. Foley Award!

Visit [www.ff.international/roast](http://www.ff.international/roast) for more information.





# Designing a Team Identity

## Using collaboration to create meaningful team logos

By FFI Staff

An important part of every FFI team's journey is the creation of their shared team identity. This February we implemented a new process for developing a team's name, slogan/mission, and logo with the goal of helping our participants better understand the process and create designs that truly reflect them. The new logo design session starts with picking three themes that represent the team. These common themes then act as a jumping off point for choosing a team name, slogan, and logo. The design they pick is then finalized and featured on their team shirts, name-tags, and more!

The most important aspect of the design is the FFI Decision Making Process they learn along the way. They will make many difficult decisions as a team in the months ahead, so their team shirt will become a reminder of a time they worked together.



## Middle East Alumni Seminar A Success!

### Planning a meaningful gathering

By Eden Neiberg, '08

A lot of my FFI friends had been asking about when we would have our next alumni seminar in Israel. It was highly anticipated. So, I opened a chat with some involved alumni, we chose a date, and then we started advertising and inviting alumni from all over Israel.

I was really excited to invite the 200+ alumni, many I didn't know before, as well as the 2019 teams I mentored last summer. It was important for alumni to plan this seminar so that they could have a proper welcome ceremony to the alumni movement. It was also important for us to contribute personally to the seminar.

Sadly, I got sick a few days before the seminar. I tried to ignore the possibility I might not be able to come for as long as possible because it was so important for me to be there. It was heartbreaking to have to stay home. While I was still recovering, I insisted on getting constant updates and keeping as many logistical responsibilities as I could from afar. We are lucky and grateful to have staff and senior alumni like my friend Amjad that could jump in at the last moment and make our dream come to life.

### Starting new traditions

By Amjad Shehadeh, '16

One of the outstanding highlights of the 2020 Middle East Alumni Seminar was giving the 2019 participants their FFI Certificates to officially join the Alumni Movement. The ceremony began with everyone forming a long line, starting with alumni from 2010 and ending with those from 2018, with the first closest to the door. When music started, the 2019 participants came out with surprised expressions all over their faces. The combination of the music and us standing there welcoming them clapping caused us all to become emotional very quickly! The tears started welling up in our eyes. We hugged them and presented their certificates to them along with their first FFI alumni t-shirts. It was clear that they, at that moment, figured out the FFI is not a year-long program but a life-long one! Everyone felt the connection as the older alumni welcomed these new alumni to the family.

That day, with their smiling faces and our warmed hearts, easily counts as one of the top highlights of not only the seminar, but the year. Just days after this weekend, all of Israel went on lockdown. To have spent my last "normal" weekend with FFI was a gift.



New alumni celebrate with their peers and FFI Staff at the February seminar.

# Communication and Leadership

## A message from FFI's Executive Director

There are a lot of things that can be said about the last couple of months and the COVID crisis that has impacted every one of us. FFI has a unique experience in that we are in constant communication with individuals around the planet on a daily basis and can see the impact in real-time. Wherever you turn, be it on social media or in person, you are encountering individuals and families that are experiencing something unprecedented in their lives and everyone has a story to tell. For some, it's the most important story they have ever told.

So, instead of offering up our "opinion" or "solution" to what's happening, I'd like to share the FFI Communication Agreements. These have helped young people navigate through the choppy waters of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, supported those living on the edge in inner-city Belfast, and seeded a new-found sense of community pride for participants in New Hampshire. They are posted in each of our campuses around the world and we think they are worth sharing with you all here. Feel free to share with a friend.

As you will see in this newsletter and on our website, our innovative and pioneering work of community service-oriented leadership development is ongoing and will continue through 2020 and beyond. FFI is built to work in times of crisis that transcend borders. I think most would agree that this pandemic has demonstrated that the work we do in developing empathetic leaders at all levels of society is not only nice to hear about, but it is, quite frankly, essential and needs to be valued as such. Finally, thank you for the patience, compassion, and love you are bringing to FFI, your neighbors, and everyone on our small planet, as we work together to see this through to the other side.

- Steve

## FFI Communication Agreements

1. **Breathe** before speaking...every time.
2. **Empty your mind before listening.**
3. Observe facts, without judgment. Observe feelings, without judgment.
4. **Raise** an index finger if you want to be recognized to speak. If you need to interrupt, interrupt with empathy.
5. If you are not feeling heard, let someone know you don't feel heard and ask **"Can you tell me what you heard me say?"**
6. If you need clarity in what someone else is saying, let them know you are confused and ask **"What I just heard you say is...?"**
7. You are responsible for **being as specific and clear as possible.**
8. Practice a **5 second pause** before replying.
9. **Use your imagination** -Try to understand where the person speaking is coming from.
10. **Finding the gray** - when you are in opposing positions work to find where you can come together.
11. **Show your work** - Be prepared to show how you came to your position or decision.
12. **Be mindful** of everyone in the room. Imagine your grandmother is listening to you.
13. **Marshall's Law** - Cheerfully saying **Hello, Goodbye,** and asking **Does anyone need anything?** when entering or leaving a room.
14. Receive both appreciation and advice with **gratitude and confidence.**
15. **The more I hear you, the more you'll hear me. The more we hear each other, the safer we will feel.**



A summery view of the ocean from the Wentworth By The Sea Country Club where the FFI Golf for Peace Tournament is held annually.

## FFI Golf for Peace Tournament

### Finding a path forward for fun and safety

By FFI Staff

FFI has been met with cautious enthusiasm for our annual golf tournament at the end of June. Therefore, we are closely working with the top-notch staff at Wentworth by the Sea Country Club to ensure that the tournament will follow best practices and regulations outlined by the state, and to keep our tourney on its original date.

We understand that for young people around the world to be prepared to tackle challenges after this pandemic, they not only need to receive our innovative leadership training, they first need to see the light at the end of the tunnel. We all have this need. While there are obvious unknowns, we believe that as long as we proceed in a cautious manner, follow guidelines, and understand that things are always in flux, that hosting this tournament is the right thing to do for those that wish to feel a sense of community (even if at a social distance).

As FFI relies on special events to support our work both in New England and around the world, the funds raised at this event will be especially crucial this year. **We hope you will consider supporting us on June 22<sup>nd</sup> for our annual Golf for Peace Tournament! Register at [www.ff.international/golf](http://www.ff.international/golf).**