



Thirty-four pairs of CFP teens just this week have returned home to Cyprus after having spent a month developing trust, understanding, and friendship with another while living with American host families. A week before, another 45 teens returned home after spending a week together in a camp in a Turkish-Cypriot village in the Greek-Cypriot south of the island. These teens are part of an ever-growing community of people seeking to bridge the divide on the island.

Started by HasNa in 2009, with ten pairs of teens, the program in the US expanded to thirty pairs of teens and became a separate US non-profit organization in 2011.

Over the years CFP teens and coordinators in Cyprus have shared their friendships with numerous presentations at schools, youth clubs, and other sites across the island. They have been on radio and TV programs on both sides of the divide. They have partnered with many different organizations, such as The Elders (including Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu, former president Jimmy Carter, UN peace negotiator Lahkdar Brahimi, and former prime minister Gro Brundtland, who produced a video featuring two CFP pairs of teens), the international Peace Boat, and Peace Players International.

While the focus of the program has been on the pairs hosted in the US and the teens attending a camp in Cyprus each summer and their many activities together, CFP has also stimulated many other groups and activities seeking to bridge the divide on the island.

Some examples include:

- In 2012 parents of CFP teens from both sides of the divide formed the growing CFP Parents and Friends Association to promote friendship and understanding between the two communities and to help support the program. (Contact Munir Mehmet [mehmet.munir@yahoo.com](mailto:mehmet.munir@yahoo.com) or Vladimiros Taliadoros [vladimta@cytanet.com.cy](mailto:vladimta@cytanet.com.cy) to join.)
- Since 2013 Rotary Clubs on both sides of the divide have worked together to support the program, joining numerous Rotary Clubs in the US.
- In 2013, some of the parents of CFP teens started a bi-communal Cyprus Women's Friendship Association to make and sell Cypriot arts and crafts. The group has expanded to include women who previously were not associated with the program. (contact [cmouzouri@gmail.com](mailto:cmouzouri@gmail.com) or [nilgunakin27@outlook.com](mailto:nilgunakin27@outlook.com) to get involved.)

- In 2013, several former CFP teens started “Kypris News”, an internet-based news service with teen writers and reporters from across the island. (Like Kypris News on Facebook to read their frequent postings.)
- This summer some of the 2009 CFP teens convened a meeting of former CFP teen participants. The result of the meeting has been the formation of a CFP graduate-run CFP Alumni Association in Cyprus open to all former teens. They held a large reunion of CFP participants from across all the years earlier this month (August). (Contact Idil Cazimonglu at [idilc@ymail.com](mailto:idilc@ymail.com) or Thalia Ioannidou at [thaliacy@hotmail.com](mailto:thaliacy@hotmail.com) for more information

CFP will always be an all-volunteer person-to-person program, but you can expect it to continue to grow and to stimulate other efforts to promote trust, friendship, understanding, and peace in Cyprus. In addition, as the years go by, more and more CFP teen participants will have increasing influence on the island as they start their careers and families. A hint of this already is the presence of a former CFP teen as a news commentator on Turkish-Cypriot TV.

It has been very exciting to see how much has been achieved in six short years.

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This series of messages is intended to keep the Cyprus Friendship Program family around the world better informed about the activities of the program, to provide perspectives on its impacts, and to offer some reflections on its background and context. It is intended to supplement and not substitute for the semi-annual newsletter and other communications by the program.

Please share these messages with others. A compilation of the messages are archived on the CFP website ([www.cyprusfriendship.org](http://www.cyprusfriendship.org).)

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