Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation

The Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation is a volunteer-based 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, created in 2005 to continue the work of the late teen poet and peace activist, Mattie J.T. Stepanek. During Mattie’s “almost 14 years,” he penned seven NY Times Bestselling books of “Heartsongs” poetry and “Just Peace” essays, and served as an ambassador for many peace- and disability-related organizations. Mattie died in 2004 due to complications of a rare neuromuscular disease.

The mission of the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Foundation is to further Mattie’s message of hope and peace by providing access to the message, promoting understanding of the message, and motivating people to action in sharing the message. Our vision is to offer educational and recreational programs, projects, activities, and resources that encourage peacemaking as a deliberate choice for individuals and for our world. We celebrate Mattie’s belief that “We have, we are, a mosaic of gifts, to nurture, to offer, to accept.” Like Mattie, we believe that “Peace is for all people!” and that “Peace is possible!”

Our Mission:
To further Mattie’s message of hope and peace by:

- Providing access to the message;
- Promoting understanding of how to apply that message to one’s self, to the community, and to the world; and,
- Motivating people to action in sharing that message.

Our Vision:
1. Encourage the concept of peace and understanding
2. Develop and implement plans for executing this mission and effectively using resources
3. Promote interest and peace education and research in local and state schools, and other areas
4. Facilitate citizen participation in the furtherance of this vision and these objectives, and
5. Cooperate with governmental and private groups in the furtherance of these objectives

Our Values:
The work of the Foundation reflects our values, which include

- Each person has a unique reason for being, and some gift/talent to offer.
- Hope is real. It begins with an attitude, and an attitude is a choice.
- Peace is possible. It grows from our choices in thoughts, words, and deeds.
- Peace is rooted in being ‘okay’ with who we are, which is possible when our basic needs are met.
- Peace grows when the basic needs of all people are equitably met.
- Peace is possible when we get to know our Community of neighbors
  --- our neighbors around the block and around the world.
- Education is essential to understanding the diverse needs of all people.
- Collaboration, communication, and mutual respect are essential to peace.
- Each person can make choices that touch the future in a hopeful, peaceful way.
- Celebrate Mattie’s philosophy: “Remember to play after every storm!”

Our Motto: “We have, we are, a mosaic of gifts – to nurture, to offer, to accept.”
Mattie J.T. Stepanek

The Root of Our Message:

The Three Choices for Peace®

Make peace an attitude – want it! Be a peace seeker!
Make peace a habit – live it! Be a peace maker!
Make peace a reality – share it! Be a peace bringer!
Mattie J.T. Stepanek

For more information about Mattie J.T. Stepanek or the Foundation, please visit www.MattieOnline.com or e-mail HeartsongBooks@gmail.com