

A Transformational Effect on World Peace

**An Interview with Daniel E. Doyle, Jr.,
Founder and Executive Director, Institute for International Sport**

EDITORS' NOTE In addition to his position at the Institute of International Sport, Daniel Doyle is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the World Youth Peace Summit. He graduated from Bates College and also served as a trustee there. He is a graduate of The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy at Tufts University and holds two honorary doctorates for his work in sports education. Doyle was a highly successful men's basketball coach at Trinity College. Sporting News named him as one of the most influential people in American sport and he has lectured at over 100 colleges and universities on behalf of the NCAA Foundation. Doyle is the author of the acclaimed novel *Are You Watching, Adolph Rupp?* He also wrote *The Encyclopedia of Sports Parenting*, which was placed into nomination for a Pulitzer Prize. His next book, the novel *An African Rebound*, will be published in 2012. Doyle is a regular guest on ESPN's *Outside The Lines* program and has received numerous awards, including the prestigious Terence Cardinal Cooke Humanitarian Award.



Daniel E. Doyle, Jr.

ORGANIZATION BRIEF Daniel Doyle founded the Institute for International Sport (www.internationalsport.com) in 1986 at the University of Rhode Island, and it is now considered by many to be the foremost sports education initiative in the world. Among the programs Doyle conceived at the Institute are National Sportsmanship Day and the World Scholar-Athlete Games. The institute's most ambitious program, the 2011 World Youth Peace Summit, will be held in Connecticut in the summer of 2011. It will bring together as many as 20,000 Scholar-Athlete Games graduates in a compelling program that will result in thousands of peace initiatives being implemented throughout the world.

When you look back to 1986 when you created the Institute for International Sport, what made you feel there was a need for the organization?

I had two transformational experiences. In March 1968, I was selected to play on a New England all-star basketball team that toured Europe. It was a time when Americans were not looked upon as welcome visitors as much as intruders because of the Vietnam conflict – we

had to walk through a picket line for one of the games we played. But it was enlightening to see how sport brought everybody together.

There was a wonderful tapestry of young men on that team. We had black kids, white kids, Catholic kids, Jewish kids, and Protestant kids, and we all bonded because we were together on a team playing in foreign countries.

We also engaged in many interesting conversations with people, some of whom had booed and picketed our existence, and would then

come to socials that were held after the game. I knew then that sports had this effect on people that went well beyond the court.

Over the 1980 Christmas season, when I was basketball coach at Trinity College, I took my team to Cuba. We were the first American team to go to Cuba since the revolution of 1959. It was during that trip that I decided to leave coaching and attend The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy at Tufts.

When you created the Institute for International Sport, what did you define as the mission and what were your key goals?

Our mission has evolved over time. We started with a program called Sports Corps where we sent young people abroad to work in impoverished areas.

But the biggest thing that happened in the early stages was our experience in Northern Ireland when we started a program in 1989 called Belfast United, where we brought equal numbers of Catholic and Protestant kids together and put them on the same teams. We had kids on the same basketball team from families that had committed acts of violence against one another and yet they bonded through a common interest. That resulted in the core principle of the World Scholar-Athlete Games, in which there are no national teams.

When peace was declared in Northern Ireland six years later, Belfast United was one of the first programs mentioned in speeches and news releases as something that had a profound effect on the thought processes of kids from both sides of the divide.

But, in 1982, when I wrote the paper at The Fletcher School that led to the institute, the idea of World Scholar-Athlete Games was always the objective.

In 1991, we decided to move forward with the planning of the games. The first event was in 1993 and we had 108 countries show up. It helped having strong support from Senators Claiborne Pell and John Chafee, and Bill Bradley as our Chair.

How has the range of programs you offer evolved?

The 1993 World Scholar-Athlete Games concluded with a closing ceremony at the Providence Civic Center, which sold out. That night, I realized it was not nearly enough to do this event every four years – we had to create an alumni base and bring them all back at a certain point.

So I started to think about having a reunion for our 25th anniversary in 2011, and over a period of time, the reunion evolved into what will be the World Youth Peace Summit.

I went onstage at the closing ceremonies in 1993 and told the participants, the idealism we feel in this building tonight needs to be developed into something beyond idealism – it needs to become an action-oriented program, something related to sport and peace. The summit is beyond sport. It will welcome peace projects that range from cochlear implants in Mexico City to inner city basketball programs in Connecticut.

At The Fletcher School at Tufts, the phrase one would hear a lot was “pathways to peace.” And a pathway to peace doesn't necessarily have to be so cerebral as nuclear proliferation – it can be a grassroots program.

What will result from the World Youth Peace Summit this summer will be the opening of the Center for Social Entrepreneurship, which will manage the thousands of peace initiatives that will come out of this summer's activities.

We have received a substantial grant from Alan Hassenfeld to open that center, and on July 3rd, at the closing of the World Youth Peace Summit, General Powell will be our speaker and we will have a ceremonial opening of a center that will go on to help cultivate and manage all of these peace initiatives.

Are you happy with the awareness you have created to get corporations involved?

I am. Our two major supporters have been Alan Hassenfeld and Atlantic Philanthropies.

One of the things I'm most proud of is the way my staff has dealt with the hurdles that are placed in front of every nonprofit. As a result, our creativity has been ramped up a few notches and I feel we're poised to have a transformational effect on world peace, which will be evident as these projects roll out. ●