



BRIDGING the Now & the Next

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

 JIMMY AND ROSALYNN
CARTER SCHOOL FOR PEACE
AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION
George Mason University

Mission

The Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution is a community of faculty, students, staff, alumni, and partners with a fundamental commitment to building peace.

Through the development of cutting-edge theory, research, education, and practical work, we seek to identify and address the underlying causes of conflict and provide tools for ethical and just peacebuilding on the local, national, and global stages.

the BRIDGING
Now
& **Next**
the

Values

At the Carter School, we recognize that conflict and social injustice are complex problems with many root causes which require multiple disciplines and perspectives to successfully address.

Our students come to the Carter School to learn from the leaders in peace and conflict resolution.

We teach our students to identify the underlying causes of conflict and equip them with the cutting-edge theory and practical skills to put their knowledge into action, whether that be at the local, national, or global level. We also impart a thorough understanding of the values that underly these practices. We understand that “how” is as important as “why.”

With a history spanning 40 years, the Carter School is a leading force in peace and conflict research by conducting an ongoing study of the nature, origins, and types of social conflicts and developing the requisite processes and conditions for the ethical and just resolution of conflict. In partnership with more than 2,000 influential alumni and partners across the world, the Carter School has built a network of change to transform the lives of those trapped in destructive cycles of violence and create a more peaceful and just global society.

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Reflecting Forward

Looking back on 2024, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve out my first term as Dean of the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution. This year's annual report, *Bridging the Now and the Next*, captures not only what we accomplished together, but also the foundation we have laid for the next chapter of our collective journey.

When I began my tenure as dean, I spoke often about the need to connect rigorous scholarship with real-world impact—to ensure that the Carter School remains a place where ideas and action meet. Over these first years, and especially throughout 2024, we have strengthened that bridge.

We continued to advance innovative teaching that prepares our students to navigate complex conflicts with courage, creativity, and compassion. Our faculty deepened their engagement in research that addresses some of the most pressing challenges of our time—from urban violence and forced migration to climate insecurity, digital harms, and democratic backsliding. Our centers, labs, and community partnerships expanded their reach, bringing Carter School expertise into dialogue with practitioners, policymakers, and communities around the world.

2024 was also a year in which we sharpened our identity and clarified our role within George Mason University and the broader peacebuilding field. We invested in new collaborations across schools and disciplines, strengthened our relationships with local and global partners, and elevated the voices of our students and alumni as practitioners and leaders in their own right. In doing so, we reinforced what makes

the Carter School distinctive: our commitment to working alongside communities to address the root causes of conflict and build just, sustainable peace.

As this report demonstrates, bridging the now and the next is not an abstract theme for us—it is our daily work. It is visible in how we connect theory and practice; how we accompany students from the classroom into their careers; how we move research findings into policy and programmatic change; and how we honor the legacy of President and Mrs. Carter by carrying their vision of principled, people-centered peacebuilding into new contexts.

As I begin my second term as dean, our focus is on scaling up this impact. “Scaling,” for us, does not simply mean doing more. It means doing what we do best with greater intention, coherence, and reach. In the years ahead, we will:

- **Deepen our academic excellence** by strengthening our degree programs, expanding interdisciplinary offerings, and supporting faculty and student scholarship that pushes the boundaries of peace and conflict studies.

- **Grow our global and local partnerships**, working closely with communities, governments, civil society, and multilateral organizations to co-create solutions that respond to the realities of conflict-affected societies.

- **Invest in our students and alumni**, ensuring they have the mentorship, networks, and resources needed to lead in government, NGOs, multilateral institutions, social enterprises, and grassroots movements.

- **Build a more sustainable institution**, through strategic fundraising, donor partnerships, and resource development that allow us to support scholarships, faculty initiatives, community engagement, and innovative projects over the long term.

In short, the next term is about moving from strong foundations to even greater reach and influence—while remaining grounded in the core values that have defined the Carter School since its founding: dignity, justice, inclusion, and a belief in the possibility of transformation.

None of this work would be possible without our community. I am profoundly thankful to our faculty, staff, and students for their dedication; to our alumni for carrying the Carter School into the world; and to our partners and supporters for believing in our mission and walking alongside us.

As you read this annual report, I invite you to see each story, program, and achievement as part of a larger narrative: how, together, we are bridging the now and the next—turning today’s efforts into tomorrow’s possibilities for peace.

With gratitude and renewed commitment,

Alpaslan Özerdem

Dean, Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution



REMEMBERING

President Jimmy Carter

(1924-2024)

39TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

*Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Humanitarian,
Co-Founder of The Carter Center, and Global Peacemaker*

A LEGACY OF

Peace, Justice, and Moral Courage

President Jimmy Carter devoted his life to advancing peace, defending human rights, and uplifting the most vulnerable. His vision, humility, and extraordinary moral leadership helped shape not only the global peacebuilding landscape but also the very foundation of the Carter School's mission and identity. His life's work continues to inspire generations dedicated to resolving conflict through dialogue, compassion, and justice.

Champion of Peace and Human Rights | Throughout his presidency and decades of service that followed, President Carter redefined what it means to lead. His efforts to promote peace—from the historic Camp David Accords to election monitoring, conflict mediation, and global health initiatives—have transformed countless lives and communities. Awarded the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize, he was honored for “decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development.”

Humanitarian Leader | President Carter's post-presidential work set a new global standard for humanitarian leadership. Through The Carter Center, which he co-founded with Rosalynn, he worked tirelessly to eradicate disease, mediate conflicts, support emerging democracies, and advocate for human rights around the world. His belief that peace must be lived—not just negotiated—continues to shape the heart of our work.

Inspiration to Future Peacemakers | President Carter's example endures as a guiding light to our students, faculty, and the global peacebuilding community. His life shows us that leadership anchored in empathy, integrity, and courage can change the course of history. The Carter School is honored to carry forward his legacy, educating the next generation of peacemakers who will build the just and peaceful world he envisioned.

In His Own Words | “Peace is not a passive state of acceptance. It is something we must work for, every day.”

Honoring His Memory | As we remember President Carter, we reaffirm our commitment to the values he championed—peace, justice, service, and the belief that every conflict holds the possibility of resolution. His legacy will continue to inspire and guide the Carter School today and for generations to come.

THE CARTER LEGACY SYMPOSIUM:

Celebrating President Jimmy Carter's Impact on Peacebuilding

Scholars, policymakers, and practitioners gathered to examine President Carter's enduring contributions to diplomacy and global peace.





M Jimmy and Rosalynn
CARTER SCHOOL
for Peace and Conflict Resolution
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Leading Change
Building Peace
Pursuing Justice

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS
GRADUATE PROGRAMS
RESEARCH

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS
GRADUATE PROGRAMS
RESEARCH

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A Celebration of Legacy and Leadership
JIMMY AND ROSALYNN CARTER
PEACEMAKERS AND LEADERS FOR CHANGE

CarterSchool.gmu.edu

POWERED BY PHILANTHROPY:

Expanding Peacebuilding Impact

Mason Now: Power the Possible is the first \$1B comprehensive campaign for George Mason University. This historic fundraising effort is rooted in the belief that the future is something we create, not something that happens to us. When all voices are invited to shape what's next, the future is closer than we think, what's possible is transformed into what is.

In 1980, when George Mason was a young institution, it launched the first Master of Science in Conflict Analysis and Resolution in the nation, and we evolved into the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution as we know it today.

\$16M+

2024

MASON NOW
POWER THE POSSIBLE

The first \$1B comprehensive campaign for George Mason University was rooted in the belief that the future is something we create, not something that happens to us.



During our early years, we focused on defining the field, building a curriculum, and establishing our position as leaders—all with the support of philanthropy. The Carter School transformed into an esteemed institution in only four short decades, and we were powered by the generosity of our partners and donors.

In 2024, we passed our midway point of this transformative campaign. With over \$16M raised for the Carter School, we are positioned to expand our impact even further.

This collective support is a commitment to this generation of peacebuilders and their work to create a future of progress and possibility. Thank you to the 736 donors and alumni who made gifts to the Carter School and Mason Now: Power the Possible! Together, we are shaping the world you want to see, and we invite you to continue with us for the journey ahead.

INVESTING IN OPPORTUNITY

Scholarships enable the Carter School to attract the best students and provide them with the most robust experiences, free of financial barriers. Every scholarship fuels a student's passion—passion that powers real change in the world. Scholarships are our top priority because they are a scalable investment in a better collective future. Each student recipient is better prepared to meet challenges, realize opportunities, and redefine what's possible.

We attribute much our growth as an institution to gifts of endowment. These permanent, self-sustaining funds empower the Carter School to fully deliver on our mission.

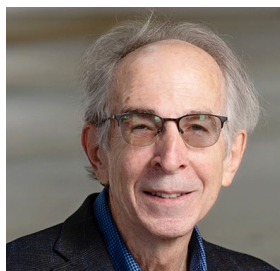
Our endowed faculty chairs are leaders in excellence, synergizing learning and action to create community within the school and beyond. Faculty guide and inspire students at a multiplier rate, so that support for one faculty member impacts hundreds of students and creates limitless opportunities for good.



THE VERNON M. LYNCH AND MINNIE I. LYNCH ENDOWED CHAIR FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

leads public dialogue and conversation around societal conflicts.

Solon Simmons



THE DRUSCILLA FRENCH ENDOWED CHAIR FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

empowers graduate students with professional mentorship.

Dan Rothbart



THE HENRY HART RICE ENDOWED CHAIR FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

connects Point of View with the world through research and practice.

Susan Allen, MS '95,
PhD '00



THE JAMES H. LAUE ENDOWED CHAIR IN WORLD RELIGIONS, DIPLOMACY, AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

builds pathways to peace through faith-based and spiritual touchstones.

Marc Gopin

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

Advancing Peace Together

Carter School Partners with U.S. Department of State on Conflict Prevention Research

The Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University was selected as an inaugural partner in the U.S. Department of State's Academic Centers of Conflict Anticipation and Prevention (ACCAP) initiative, led by the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations. Through this partnership, Carter School students conduct policy-relevant research on real-world conflict issues identified by the State Department.

Students in the Fragile States Policy course analyzed Global Fragility Act countries, producing projects on topics such as Women, Peace, and Security in Haiti, social network analysis in coastal West Africa, and communal mining impacts in Papua New Guinea. Carter School students became the first cohort nationwide to present their research at the U.S. Department of State, strengthening the link between academic research and policymaking.



Photos provided



Dean Alpaslan Özerdem (left) with team at Advance Youth Radio in South Sudan. Photo provided.

Carter School Dean Supports Peacebuilding Efforts in South Sudan

In February 2024, Carter School Dean Alpaslan Özerdem visited South Sudan at the invitation of Minister of Peacebuilding Stephen Par Kuol and NewGen Peacebuilders. During the visit, he engaged with government leaders, international donors, NGOs, and diplomatic partners to support national peacebuilding efforts as the country prepares for its first national elections following years of civil conflict.

Dean Özerdem provided strategic recommendations to strengthen the Ministry of Peacebuilding's policies and programs, with a focus on capacity development and sustainable peacebuilding. The Carter School also explored opportunities to support South Sudan through specialized training and graduate education programs designed to build long-term peacebuilding capacity among government and civil society leaders.

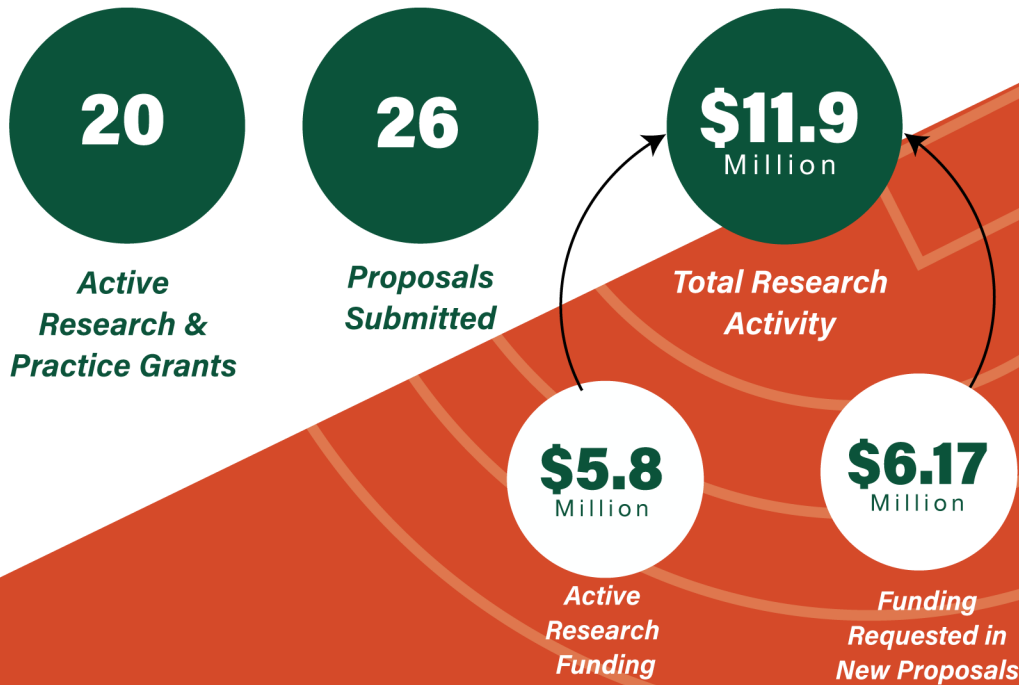


The Mason team visiting with the Minister of Youth and Sports in South Sudan. Photo provided.

RESEARCH AND GRANT FUNDING IMPACT

Advancing Peace, Democracy, and Conflict Resolution

Our FY24–25 research portfolio reflects strong federal confidence in the Carter School's leadership, with funding that advances peacebuilding, democratic resilience, and conflict transformation worldwide.



RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS

Peacebuilding & Conflict Resolution



Research on conflict prevention, mediation, and reconciliation.

Democracy & Governance



Projects exploring democratic resilience, social trust, and civic engagement.

Cultural Heritage & Historical Memory



Research preserving historical narratives and cultural sites.

Education & Leadership Development



Programs strengthening leadership and peacebuilding capacity globally.

FUNDING SOURCES & Major Funding Partners

Federal agencies account for more than half of awarded funding.
The U.S. Department of State remains the School's primary strategic partner.
Projects span global, national, and post-conflict contexts



FEDERAL
AGENCIES
≈ **60%**
OF FUNDING

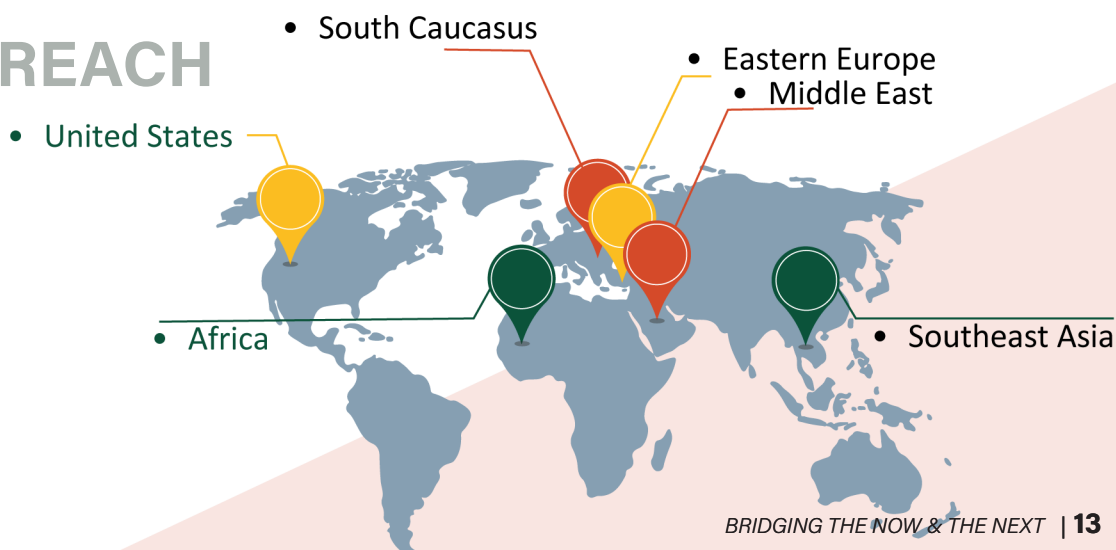
Foundations & International Organizations

- European Commission
- National Endowment for the Humanities
- Institute of International Education
- Society of Woman Geographers
- Other research partners

≈ **40%**
OF FUNDING

GLOBAL REACH

Carter School
research
partnerships
extend across
6+ global
regions.



PEACE LABS WITHOUT BORDERS:

Scaling to the Next

The Carter School Global Peace Labs Network

The Carter School launched the Global Peace Labs Network, an ambitious international initiative designed to tackle the world's most complex peace and security challenges through collaborative innovation. Building on the inauguration of the York Peace Lab in partnership with the University of York, the network will expand in 2025 with two new State Department-funded labs in Japan and Korea. Anchored by the Carter School's own peace labs—focused on peace engineering, environmental peacebuilding, transitional justice, narrative transformation, depolarization, and neuroscience—the network unites global academic partners under the principle “Stronger – Together.” This growing consortium strengthens research, teaching, training, and community engagement efforts worldwide, and continues to welcome new institutions interested in advancing scalable solutions for global peace.



Excellence in Action

Faculty, Student,
and Alumni Impact

2024

Dr. Charles Chavis Jr.
2024 Kay Family Award

Faculty

Dr. Charles Chavis Jr. was honored by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) with the prestigious Kay Family Award at the 2024 In Concert Against Hate for his exceptional contributions to civil rights education, racial justice, and Black-Jewish relations.

A professor in the Carter School and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and founder of the John Mitchell, Jr. Program for History, Justice, and Race, Dr. Chavis is nationally recognized for his scholarship on racial violence, community-based reconciliation, and bridgebuilding. His recent partnership with Operation Understanding DC expands experiential learning for high school students engaged in peacebuilding and social justice.

Charles Chavis.

Photo by Ron Aira/Office of University Branding



Student

Celine Apenteng,
Carter School Student and Intern
2024 Senior of the Year

Celine Apenteng, BA '24, Senior of the Year and currently pursuing a master's degree in international security and expects to graduate in May 2025. As an undergraduate, she served as vice president in Student Government, speaker of the Student Senate, a member of the President's Student Advisory Board, and co-chair of the Student Advisory Council for the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. Over the past year, Apenteng interned at the White House in the Office of Public Engagement and for the U.S. Department of State. She also works with the Carter School's John Mitchell Jr. Program for History, Justice, and Race to promote a more informed dialogue on the intersections between historical memory, justice, and racial reconciliation.



Faculty

Antti Pentikäinen
2024 Career Connection Faculty Award



Alumni



Kimiko Lighty, MAIS '10
Alumni Service Award 2024

Kimiko is the founding Executive Director and current Strategic Advisor to Restorative Arlington. As Executive Director, she led the design and implementation of the Heart of Safety Restorative Justice Conferencing Program. As a Restorative Justice practitioner, Kimiko strives to embody Ubuntu, the profound interconnectedness that calls on us to cultivate empathy, mutual concern, and grace.

Caroline Morin-Gage,
BA '10,
Distinguished Alumni Award

Caroline is a DEI consultant, specializing in training and facilitation. She is an organizer and facilitator with broad-ranging experience across a range of issues, from housing justice to cash bail to voting rights. Her experience includes policy, nonprofit leadership, and community organizing. Morin-Gage earned a J.D. from New England School of Law.

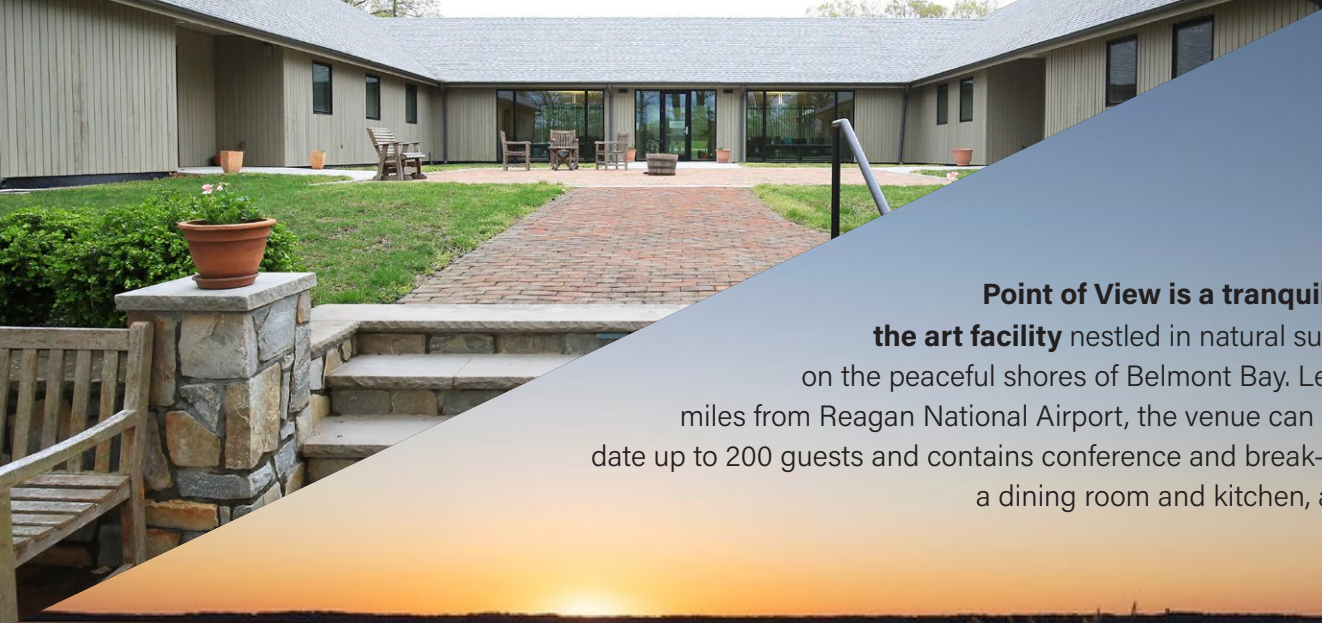


POINT *of* VIEW



In 2000, Edwin and Helen Lynch donated their family home and 120 acres of serene, woodland property in Mason Neck, Virginia, to the Carter School. They were among the Carter School's earliest champions, and their vision was to "provide space and support to groups and communities to transform destructive conflicts, heal, and reconcile."

Their vision became Point of View: A setting for reflective thinking and productive interactions, transformative connections, open dialogue, and reconciliation.



Point of View is a tranquil, state-of-the art facility nestled in natural surroundings on the peaceful shores of Belmont Bay. Less than 25 miles from Reagan National Airport, the venue can accommodate up to 200 guests and contains conference and break-out rooms, a dining room and kitchen, and library.



Drawing on the Carter School's expertise in conflict resolution, Point of View hosts in-person and hybrid events throughout the year. These events include domestic and international dialogues, conferences, problem-solving workshops, skills training, and facilitation support to local, national, and global organizations and communities - all guided by Carter School professionals.

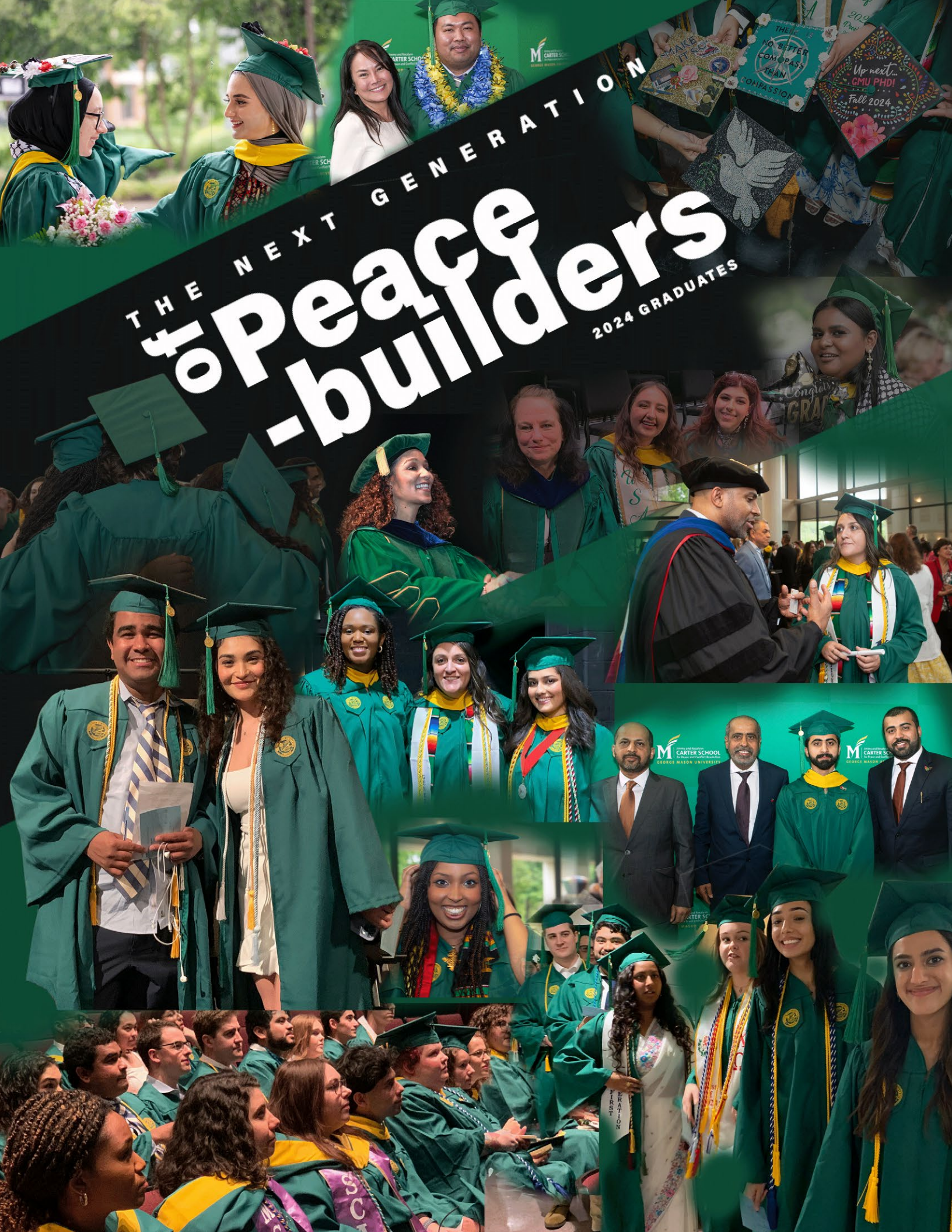
Your philanthropic gifts allow us to expand our

programming, provide fellowships for students and visiting scholar-practitioners, support faculty research, and host ensure groups that need a neutral can access this transformative venue. like Point of View, but do not have the resources to visit. Please contact the Carter School's Director of Development, Maria Seniw, at 703-993-8763 to explore all our giving and naming opportunities.

Please scan to To make a gift

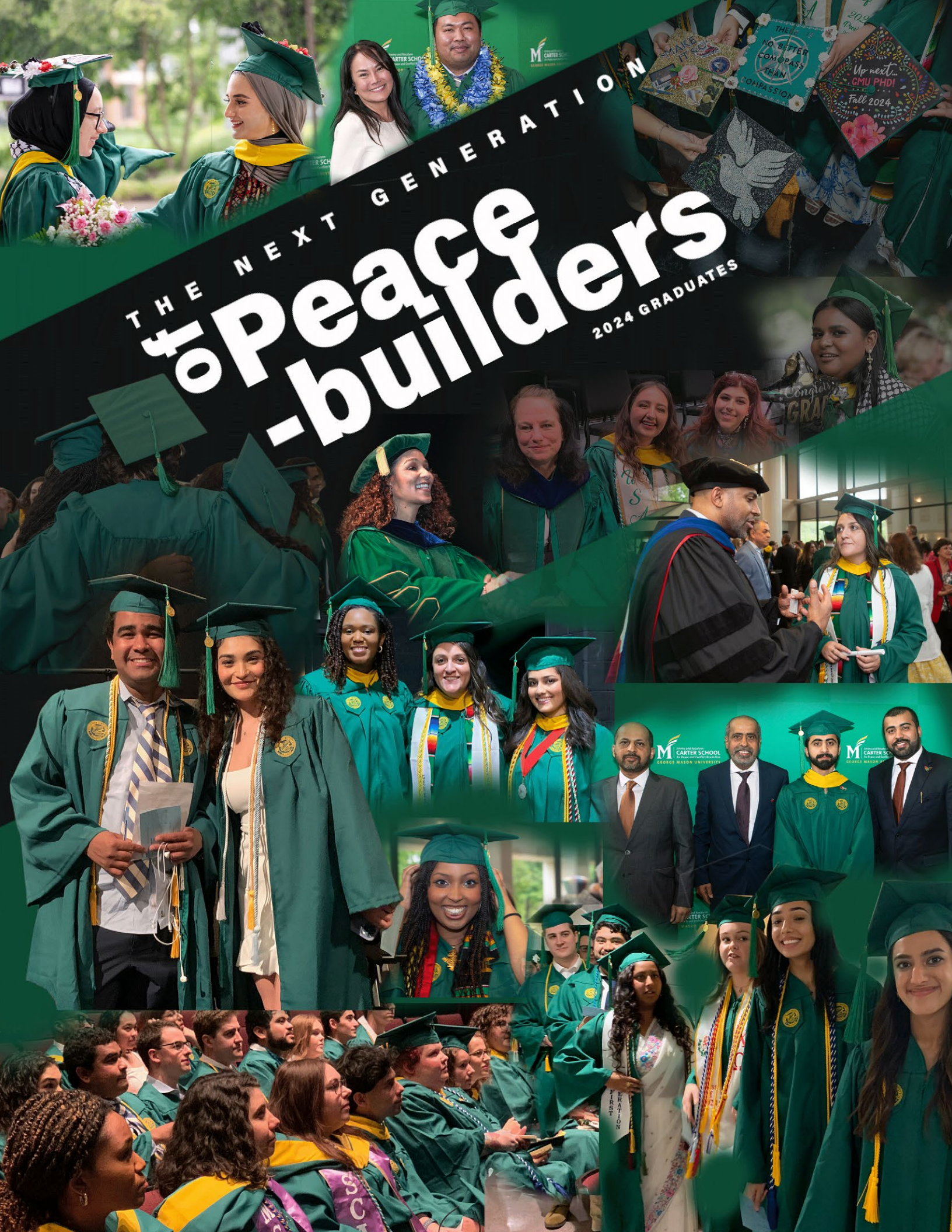


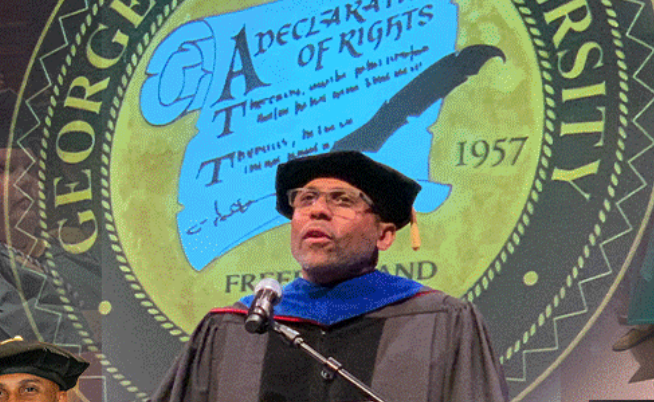
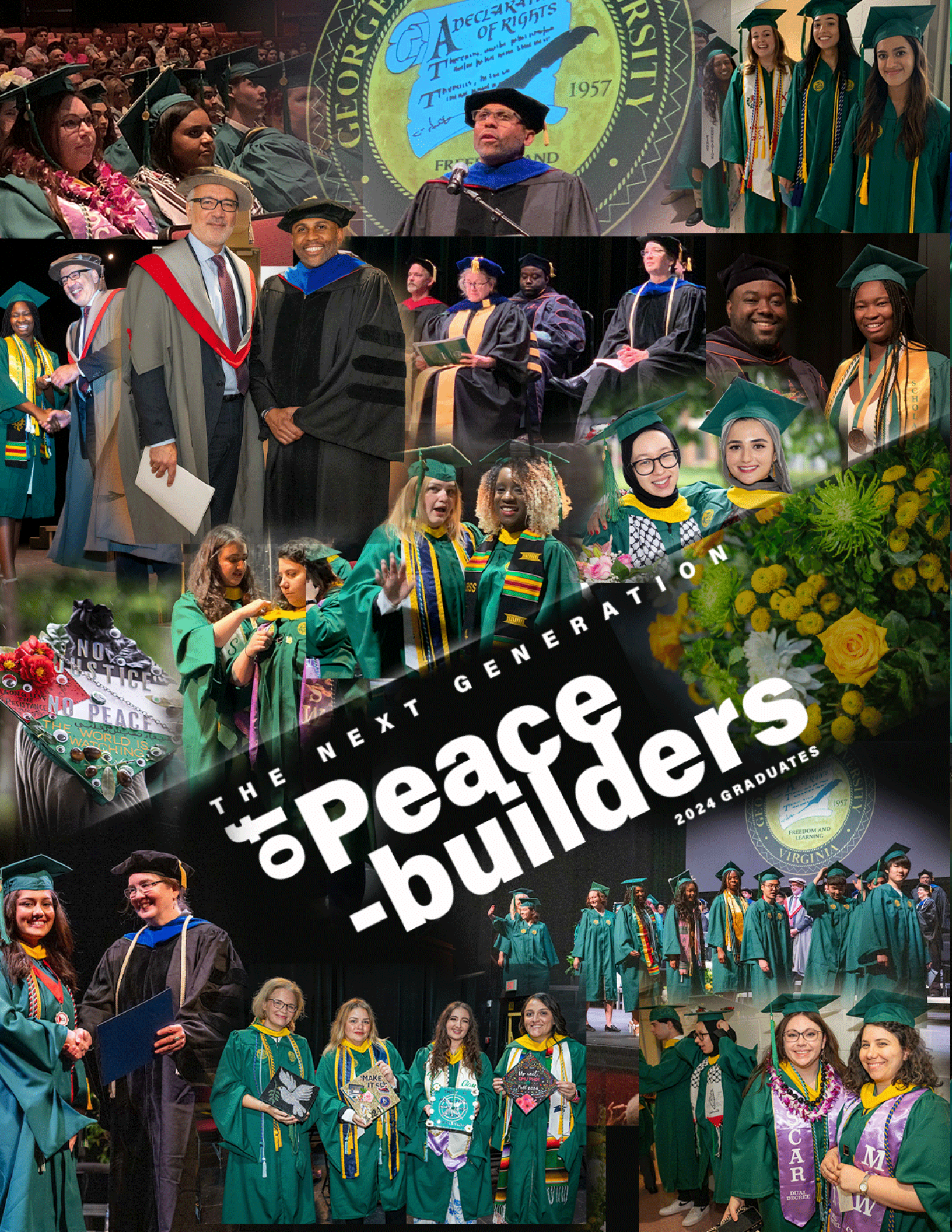




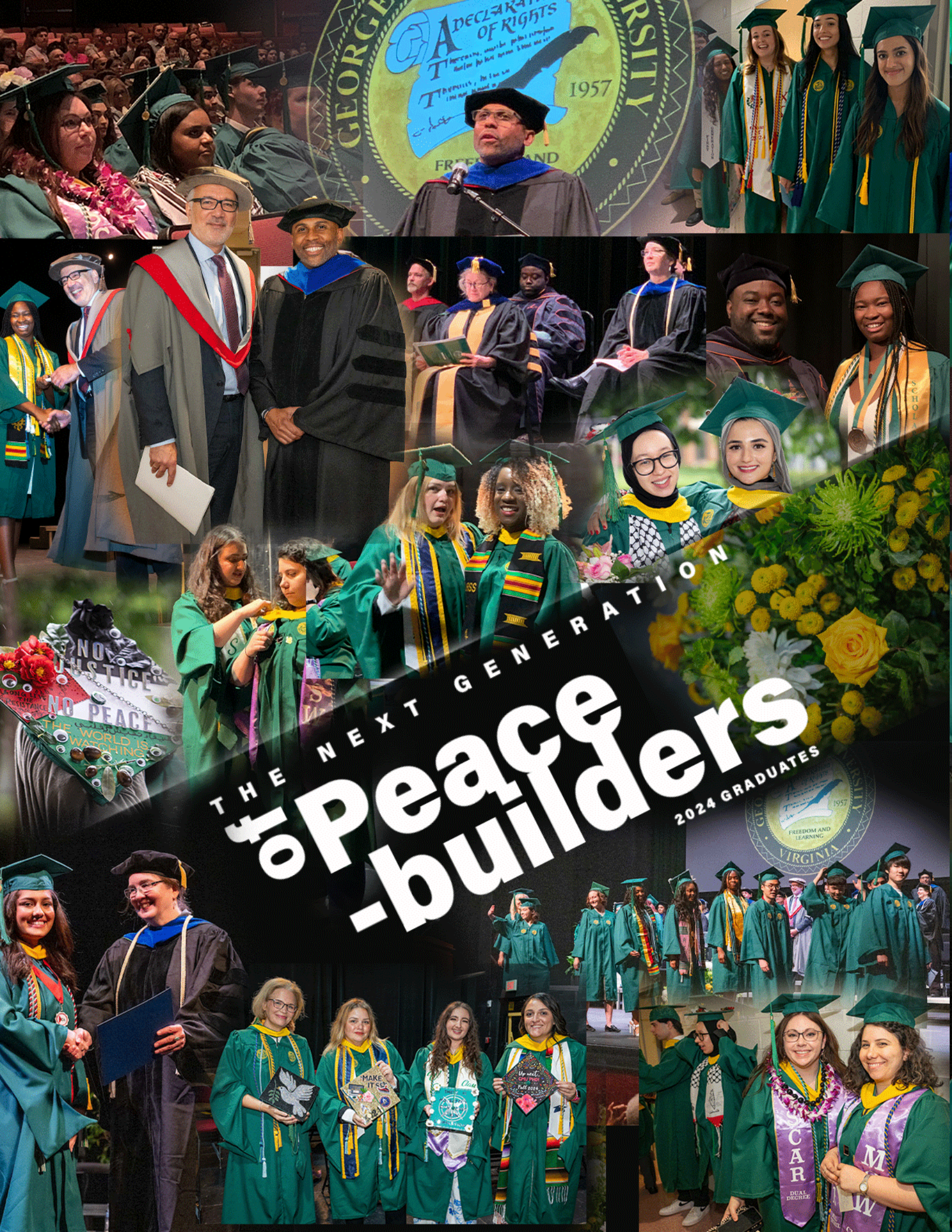
THE NEXT GENERATION to Peace-builders

2024 GRADUATES





THE NEXT GENERATION
of Peace-builders
2024 GRADUATES





TOP-RANKED PROGRAMS
ACROSS EVERY LEVEL —

Real-World Impact

no. 1

**UNDERGRADUATE
DEGREE PROGRAM
AT A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY**



no. 1

DOCTORAL DEGREE

no. 1

**ONLINE MASTER'S
DEGREE PROGRAM**

Peace and Conflict Resolution

STAY CONNECTED

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BRIDGING
the **Now**
& the **Next**

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LEADING
Change

BUILDING
PEACE

PURSUING
Justice



Original artwork submitted by
George Mason University students
for the Carter School's

2024 Peace Art Contest

The following pieces were selected as this year's winners.

NAME OF ARTWORK

NAME OF ARTIST

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. The Title includes the name of God in both Arabic and Hebrew, has no pronunciation, symbolizing the silence that often accompanies prolonged tragedies caused by human conflict | MOUSTAFA MOHAMMED |
| 2. MOHAMMED | RAFA DJAJAKUSUMA |
| 3. UNDER THE SAME SKY | HYOIN KIM |
| 4. BECOMING AGAIN | AVERY SHIPPEN |
| 5. WINGS OF HARMONY | ALEXANDER BENSON |