

**2011 Nobel Peace Prize Co-Winner Leymah Gbowee**  
**13th Laureate to Join the PeaceJam Foundation**

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**January 31, 2012** – The PeaceJam Foundation is proud to announce the addition of 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Co-Winner Leymah Gbowee as the 13th Nobel Peace Laureate to join their board of directors. PeaceJam is the only organization in the world to have so many Nobel Peace Prize Winners as active board members working together for a common purpose – engaging and empowering the youth of our world.

Gbowee, 39, led a peaceful women's movement in Liberia, which played a pivotal role in ending the Liberian Civil War. She and the women of Liberia also took a powerful stand against the use of rape as a weapon of war. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway in December of 2011, together with Co-Winners Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Tawakkol Karman.

Gbowee came of age in a war-torn country. After dealing personally with the displacement, chaos, and death associated with war, she began to believe that the women of her country would be willing and able to put a stop to the Civil War which was then raging in Liberia. After training as a trauma counselor and working with former child soldiers, she joined the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) and became their voice as they called for an end to war. Her outreach to both Christian and Muslim women created the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace movement, the efforts of which led to a meeting with Liberian military dictator Charles Taylor himself and the resuscitation of high level peace talks. The pressure they exerted was instrumental in pushing Taylor into exile and smoothed the path for the election of Africa's first female head of state. Gbowee is now leading the Liberia Reconciliation Initiative at the behest of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and she also serves as the Executive Director of Women, Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN-Africa).

The PeaceJam Foundation, an international youth development organization, was launched in Denver, Colorado in 1996. PeaceJam's education and action based program is built around leading Nobel Peace Laureates who work personally with youth to pass on the spirit, skills, and wisdom they embody. The goal of PeaceJam is to inspire a new generation of peacemakers who will transform their local communities, themselves, and the world. Since its launch in 1996, more than 600,000 youth have participated in the PeaceJam program, creating and implementing almost two million service projects. Over 200 PeaceJam youth conferences have been held in ten different countries around the world. Board members of the PeaceJam Foundation participate in the design of the PeaceJam curriculum, the structure of PeaceJam programs, and also host two-day youth conferences for teenagers who have participated in the PeaceJam program.

"We are incredibly honored to welcome Leymah Gbowee to the PeaceJam Foundation. She is a brave and strong leader and we look forward to sharing her past and future accomplishments with the youth of the world. Leymah Gbowee embodies the wisdom and the courage that so many young people are longing for in these important and challenging times," says PeaceJam Co-Founder and Executive Director, Dawn Engle.

“Leymah Gbowee is honored to join the very special group of Nobel Peace Laureates who comprise the PeaceJam board and she looks forward to helping to further PeaceJam’s invaluable work,” said Anya Lewis, Director of the Gbowee Peace Foundation USA.

As her first official action as a member of the PeaceJam Foundation, Gbowee will be the featured Nobel Peace Laureate at PeaceJam's 4th Annual Hero Awards Luncheon in Denver, Colorado on November 13th, 2012. At this event, Gbowee will honor a group of youth who have won the Global Call to Action Challenge. This award, sponsored by the Pearson Foundation, encourages young people to document their social justice oriented service learning projects and supports PeaceJam’s international mission of promoting the creation and implementation of one billion acts of service and peace by the year 2018.

“Meeting and learning from Leymah Gbowee will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Global Call to Action Challenge winners,” said Mark Nieker, Pearson Foundation President and CEO. “We look forward to the Annual Hero Awards Luncheon in November, and to working with Ms. Gbowee and with PeaceJam's inspiring board members in the months ahead.”

More information on the PeaceJam Foundation can be found at [www.peacejam.org](http://www.peacejam.org).

More information on the Pearson Foundation can be found at [www.pearsonfoundation.org](http://www.pearsonfoundation.org).

More information on Leymah Gbowee and the Gbowee Peace Foundation USA can be found at [www.gboweepeaceusa.org](http://www.gboweepeaceusa.org).

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