



How life unfolds:

### **Letters of Peace Spread Hope from the Unlikeliest of Messengers**

*Five survivors of unfathomable tragedies share their messages of peace with the world this holiday season*

MCLEAN, Va. (Nov. 1, 2016) – Recognizing the therapeutic power of creative expression through paper, the Paper and Packaging – How Life Unfolds™ campaign is partnering with five survivors of tragedy to share their messages of peace and to encourage the world to do the same this holiday season.

Each of the messengers committed to handwrite an open letter to the world, detailing their personal stories, the tragedies they have overcome, how they found peace and how they spread peace today. The Letters of Peace campaign encourages others to pause and read these inspiring handwritten letters during this season of hope, and write their own messages of peace using #lettersofpeace.

Our Letters of Peace authors are all survivors of great tragedies—events that shook families, communities and even the world—who have transformed trauma into inspiration, and who have, each in their unique way, dedicated themselves to helping others heal. They include:

- [Patrick Downes](#), Boston bombing survivor and trauma care advocate
- [Asia Graves](#), human trafficking survivor and anti-trafficking advocate
- [Cliff Molak](#), raising awareness of cyberbullying after his brother’s tragic suicide
- [Heather Egeland](#), Columbine survivor and advocate for peace
- [Jodee Blanco](#), bullying victim and author/activist

“The Paper and Packaging - How Life Unfolds™ campaign recognizes the ways letter writing can bring people together,” said Mary Anne Hansan, Paper and Packaging Board executive director. “These survivors choose peace every day and choose to see the world in a positive light. We hope their handwritten letters can inspire others to do the same. This program provides a platform for people to share their own messages on social media using #lettersofpeace.”

The campaign also partnered with experts in the field of journaling and creative expression to explore the benefits that paper-related activities can have on peoples’ physical and mental well-being. “Paper is taking on new significance as a means of helping people feel better by allowing them to express their feelings through writing and art,” states Jeremy Nobel, MD, MPH, president and founder of the Foundation for Art & Healing and faculty member at the Harvard Medical School. “A key benefit of expression on paper includes connecting with people in meaningful ways. Expression through the written word can build trust and bonds with others in unthreatening ways that help develop tools for living happier, more stable lives.”

Dr. Nobel goes on to say, “The Letters of Peace campaign describes the lives of some really remarkable individuals who have been able to move past their own loss, their own challenges, their own pain, and shares their stories on paper in a way that not only allows them to heal, but offers a healing opportunity to anyone that the campaign touches.”



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This observation is described by one letter-writer, Patrick Downes, "It feels like I'm engaging in a conversation with people. There is something so personal about writing something down. It's almost like an imprint of our DNA on paper, as a message from me to you." Downes, who survived the Boston bombing continues, "It captures another element of my story that may grab people who see the campaign in a different and unique way."

To learn more about the Paper and Packaging – How Life Unfolds™ Letters of Peace campaign, to read all five of the letters and to learn more about the power creative expression on paper can have on physical and emotional well-being, visit [www.howlifeunfolds.com/lettersofpeace](http://www.howlifeunfolds.com/lettersofpeace).

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#### **About**

The [Paper and Packaging Board](#) establishes and guides promotions designed to slow the decline in paper use and expand demand for paper-based packaging products. Almost 55 U.S. manufacturers and importers of these products collectively fund the board's efforts, including the *Paper & Packaging – How Life Unfolds™* campaign.

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