

## Partners in Profile

### David Krieger

#### President, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation United States of America

**David Krieger co-founded the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (NAPF) in 1982 and has since been serving as its President. He will step down from this position at the end of 2019. Under Dr. Krieger's leadership, the Foundation has initiated many innovative and important projects for building peace, strengthening international law, abolishing nuclear weapons, and empowering peace leaders. He is the author or editor of many studies of peace in the nuclear age. Dr. Krieger has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize on several occasions and is the recipient of many awards for accomplishments in peace. He is a father of three and enjoys tennis, hiking, and poetry.**

**The NAPF became a global partner of Green Legacy Hiroshima in 2013. The same year, a ginkgo and a camelia sapling from Hiroshima were carried to Santa Barbara and offered at ceremonies commemorating 6 August.**



Dr. Krieger with GLH Co-Founder and Coordinator, Dr. Nassrine Azimi, holding the saplings from Hiroshima

*How did you start this journey as an anti-nuclear activist? Did Hiroshima and Nagasaki's nuclear experience have any impact on your career as a nuclear disarmament advocate?*

The nuclear experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had a powerful impact on me. By visiting these cities at the age of 21, I gained a completely different perspective on nuclear weapons than I had learned in school in the United States. I would describe the U.S. perspective as one from above the mushroom cloud, primarily a technological perspective. The perspective of the nuclear-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, however, was from beneath the mushroom cloud. It was not technological; it was terrifying. It was a perspective of mass annihilation and suffering, primarily an ethical perspective. These two perspectives, technological and ethical, are vying for the future of humanity. My career as a nuclear abolition advocate has been based on choosing the ethical perspective of the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and challenging the perspective of technological hubris.



*When did you first learn about the A-bomb survivor trees of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? What meaning, message, and role do you see these trees carry, convey, and play regarding nuclear disarmament?*

I first learned about the A-bomb survivor trees from Nassrine Azimi about seven years ago. For me, these survivor trees represent hope and possibility for nuclear abolition. The message they convey is one of resilience and survival.

*How was your last visit to Hiroshima or Nagasaki? What was the most memorable moment(s) during your past visits? How can we better utilize the A-bomb survivor trees to unite people for nuclear disarmament and to educate the next generation about peace?*

My last visit to Nagasaki was six years ago, and to Hiroshima seven years ago. I have had many memorable moments in both cities, primarily in meeting with survivors of the bombings and with young people. I have been buoyed by the spirit of the survivors. In my view, the best use of the A-bomb survivor trees is to make a high-quality, short video telling the story of the trees along with stories of some of the human survivors, and then make the video available for classroom use to teachers throughout the world.

*GLH wants people to think more carefully about the relationship between nature and human beings as, many times, the impacts of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the plants, animals, and the environment are overlooked. In the nuclear age, many remain unaware of the potential damage to the environment of any nuclear war. Could you tell us more about what a nuclear war would do to nature and the whole ecosystem—and therefore on humanity in the long run?*

Omnicide, the death of all, includes all forms of life. It is a relatively new concept, made possible by the creation and development of nuclear weapons. A nuclear war could send temperatures plummeting into a new ice age, which could destroy most life on the planet; not only human life but all life. The soot from burning cities would rise into the stratosphere and block warming sunlight, leaving survivors of the initial blasts on a cold, dark planet, with potentially billions of people without enough food to survive. As the International Court of Justice pointed out in its 1996 Advisory Opinion on the illegality of nuclear weapons, the radiation effects of a nuclear war cannot be contained in either space or time. Radiation released from nuclear weapons will keep on killing across all boundaries far into the future.

*Technology development nowadays is a double-edged sword for mankind's future. How should we balance technological progress and human ethics? Where does nature fit in this equation?*

We need to learn the lesson that technological progress without commensurate ethical progress in the nuclear age poses the risk of omnicide. Technological progress without an ethical belief system for guidance is dangerous in the extreme. Nature, for which humans should be stewards, is equally threatened. It is incumbent on humans everywhere to up their ethical posture and assure that nuclear weapons are abolished before they abolish us and the rest of life on the only planet we know of in the universe that supports life. It is a tremendous responsibility that we must face squarely and accept for the sake of all life.



Dr. Krieger with his successor, NAPF's incoming CEO Rick Wayman

