

“Peace Train 2016”, USA

I understand I have not been responsible as I should have after returning from the trip and I am very thankful for your constant patience and understanding. You have been asking for further details about the trip and I hope I have provided them below. Again you have been very kind and generous; I thank you so much for it.

The Peace Train is a program and movement dedicated to bringing people together. Both Marilyn and Sharron along with supporters and financial backers have collaborated and created something amazing. They have created a mix of people who would have never otherwise come into contact with one another and created a family of people gathered for the purpose of creating peace in our land. There are topics I personally don't feel educated enough to talk about professionally but I understand the basics of violence between people who are different and the horrible consequences of their hatred. There is sadness over spilt blood, and a call for vengeance in the air but to answer the call is to only bring war and segregation between people who deserve to be respected and loved.

The media industry focuses on the bad and brings the worst to the screen which only adds fire to the fight against those wishing for amity. To advertise peace is what the Peace train strives to do, to fight the overwhelming wall of hate with their hope, love, and dedication. It was my job to help them achieve this. I was charged with video-logging their travels in this most recent tour along the East coast to not only film the performances of choir students gathered from across the country, but to show the development of relationships of the members. John Johnson, my mentor hired to film the project, taught me tricks and helped me navigate through the difficulties of filming such a large project. The work I did on this project was actually far different than anything else I have ever worked on. I was forced to be constantly on my toes and keep the camera rolling for as long as I could with my limited storage space and battery life. I wish more than anything that I could capture every second of the experience, and I also wished I could spend more time on the people I felt deserved more camera time. Sharon Katz, Marilyn Cohen, Wendy Quick, Nonhlanhla Wanda, Fred Miller, and many others are all wonderful people and had amazing stories to tell, they were all brought together as if by fate and taught me that anyone can make a difference, even if to only a few. It's always so breathtaking to find people who are so passionate despite the danger. They are truly brave.

Every day there were challenges, whether it be technical, mental, or physical there was never a dull moment. We worked on both indoor and outdoor venues, met important figures in I believe most states including UNESCO Center of Peace Chairman Dan Djoken, and were always on the move. Places we visited included the Museum of Natural History, Museum of Jewish History, and the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. We took tours through New York, New Jersey, Trenton, Philadelphia, and Washington DC. A few times the children were allowed to go with chaperones to visit places nearby to eat or walk around before or on a day without a performance. On these days I was allowed time to either catch up on sleep or pick a group to tour with. To transport all of the members of Peace Train they usually took busses or subway cars. The first performance in New York City at the Ethical Culture building was phenomenal and the passion of both performers and audience was strong throughout the entire tour all the way to Washington Monument in DC. I was unable to attend and record the final performance on July 18th at the South African Embassy, also in DC, due to the time of my departing flight back to California. I could not have been able to experience any of this or gain professional knowledge of this magnitude without the help of Women In Film or my school counselor Ms. Applebaum who brought this opportunity to my attention. The gratitude cannot be expressed in enough words

I hope I have written this professionally and that this is the information you wanted. I will write more specifically on any topic you choose if you feel it is appropriate or necessary.

Sincerely, Alexandria Van Horn