



Forest Whitaker

Forest Whitaker believes that, in order to attain peace and prosperity, communities and nations must heed the voices of their diverse and vibrant youth. He is the founder and CEO of the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative (WPDI). Through WPDI, he has developed the Youth Peacemaker Network, a global peacebuilding social network with hubs in South Sudan, South Africa, Uganda, United States and Mexico. He and WPDI are committed to providing educational tools and economic opportunities to young women and men in regions touched by violence and armed conflict.

Whitaker is also co-founder and chair of the International Institute for Peace, UNESCO Special Envoy for Peace and Reconciliation, and a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Advocacy Group. Whitaker is dedicated to cultivating youths' artistic talents. As a member of President Obama's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, he worked closely with elementary school students to demonstrate the limitless power of the arts to express their voices and creative energies.

In addition to his social activism, Whitaker is one of Hollywood's most accomplished and versatile figures. Through his production company, Significant Productions, he aims to support young, talented filmmakers. He believes that film can enlighten people across the globe and can start meaningful dialogues about important subjects. He has produced several award-winning documentaries that touch on a wide range of social issues. He has also received many distinctions for his acting, including the 2007 Academy Award for Best Actor for his portrayal of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in *The Last King of Scotland*, a performance for which he also received a BAFTA Award, SAG Award, and Golden Globe. In addition, Whitaker received the Best Actor Award for *Bird* at the 1988 Cannes Film Festival.