

# 5 local ways to help others worldwide

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Special to the Observer

We live in an age where more and more of us are trying to have an impact on the greater good. We recycle, volunteer or donate to causes that are important to us. Still looking for something to inspire you close to home? These five Charlotte-based philanthropic efforts might inspire you to help or start your own:

## PEACEPASSERS

[www.peacepassers.org](http://www.peacepassers.org)

*Founded in January 2008, PeacePassers strives for social change by using soccer to build unity across cultural and economic boundaries.*

**The story:** Candace Cooper, PeacePassers' founder and director, always packs one item when she travels: a soccer ball. "There is a connection with soccer and people that automatically bypasses cultural preconceptions. It is so simple but at the same time so powerful," Cooper says. "With travel, you learn that if you have a soccer ball in your hand, no matter where you are in the world you will automatically have friends."

**The specifics:** Used or new gear is donated and distributed throughout Central America and Africa. Donations of money offset shipping fees and help fund leagues in communities like San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua. PeacePassers also supplies soccer team "kits" for people willing to take an extra bag when traveling to an area that needs gear.

**A highlight:** Last summer, PeacePassers traveled more than 5,500 miles to distribute more than 300 soccer balls, 400 jerseys, 100 pairs of shoes and other organizational equipment in Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua.



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Candace Cooper is founder and director of PeacePassers, which works to build unity across cultural boundaries using soccer.