



# HACK FOR HUMANITY

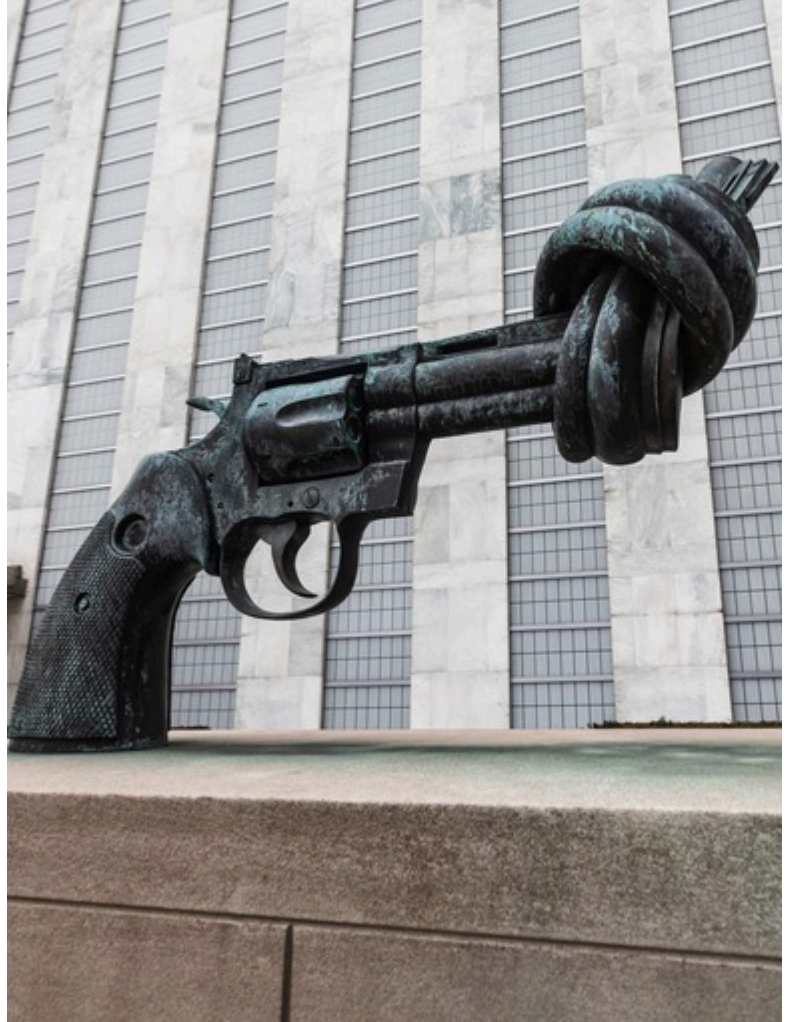
**2025 SUMMARY REPORT**

# ABOUT

2 DAYS  
5+ SUBTOPICS  
52 PARTICIPANTS  
12 TEAMS  
5 MENTORS  
\$3,000 SEED GRANT

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## **THEME: GLOBAL GUN VIOLENCE**



This year's competition will focus on the theme of global gun violence, which encompasses the wide-ranging effects of firearm-related harm around the world—and alarmingly, it is on the rise. According to Amnesty International, more than 600 people die every day from firearms globally. Many scholars now regard global gun violence as a public health crisis, as it disproportionately affects minority groups, worsens the mental health crisis, and sustains high rates of morbidity.

Students considered various subtopics such as:

- Illicit Gun Trade and Arms Trafficking
- Armed Conflict and Gang Violence
- Youth, Schools, and Education
- Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence
- Mass Violence and Extremism

Student teams worked together over the course of two days to develop creative ideas for innovative programs, systems, or technologies that address the urgent challenge of global gun violence .

# KEYNOTE LECTURE



**León Castellanos-Jankiewicz** is an international law scholar who specializes in arms trade and human rights. He is a Senior Researcher at the Asser Institute for International and European Law in The Hague, where he regularly advises governments on arms export policies, and has extensive experience with projects involving interdisciplinary research, multistakeholder engagement and advocacy.



His work focuses on identifying legal safeguards and risk mitigation strategies that can prevent wrongful weapons transfers from threatening human lives and the environment. He teaches international law at the University of Amsterdam, where he also supervises the International Law Clinic on Access to Justice for Gun Violence.

# MENTORS

SCHOLARS AND PRACTITIONER ADVISORS



**IEVA JUSIONYTE**

Director, Center for Human Rights  
and Humanitarian Studies



**ADAM C. LEVINE**

Associate Dean of Global Health  
Equity, Warren Alpert Medical School



**ESTEBAN SALMÓN**

Postdoctoral Research Associate,  
Watson School of International and  
Public Affairs



**KATE BIRKBECK**

Postdoctoral Research Associate,  
Watson School of International and  
Public Affairs



**MELISSA CARDEN**

Former Executive Director, Rhode  
Island Coalition Against Gun Violence

We had five mentors who were invaluable resources helping the teams workshop and transform their ideas into their final projects, with actionable and ambitious yet accomplishable goals. Each team met with at least one mentor, and many met with two or more. Each mentor had expertise in some area of global gun violence or related topics. Mentors helped the teams understand more deeply the issues and challenges students were dealing with. We are deeply grateful to our wonderful mentors for making Hack for Humanity 2025 a success!

# DAY ONE

After León Castellanos-Jankiewicz ' keynote presentation, students broke out into their twelve teams to brainstorm. Teams spent the morning engaging their creativity to imagine novel solutions to one of global human security's perpetual challenges.



In the afternoon, the teams narrowed down their ideas and met with their mentors for insight and advice. The teams spent the remainder of the day doing further research and problem-solving to determine the details of their proposal. They ultimately finalized their research through the development of pitch presentations.



Population

**Texas Risk Factors**

- In 2022, 57% of the deaths of pregnant women in Texas were due to violence, with firearms as the leading mechanism.
- Texas "prohibits anyone convicted of a felony and anyone subject to a domestic violence protective order from possessing a firearm"
- **HOWEVER:**
- Texas Senate Bill 1526 bans the enactment or enforcement of extreme risk protection orders (ERPOs), also known as "red flag" laws.
- Restricted access to reproductive care since *Dobbs v. Jackson* (2022) decision

**Harris County**

- Consistently reports domestic violence rates higher than the state average
- Reported the highest rate (2019) of domestic violence incidents between 2019 and 2020
- Memorial Hermann Texas Medical Center serves most pregnant women in the Houston area

THE WATSON SCHOOL of International



# PITCH PRESENTATIONS

FEATURING 10 STUDENT TEAMS

Twelve student teams composed of over 52 students in total spent a weekend designing solutions to global gun violence.

Each student team capped their weekend by giving a pitch presentation of their proposal. Our panel of judges evaluated each project for its design, potential, and ability to be implemented with the \$3,000 seed grant.

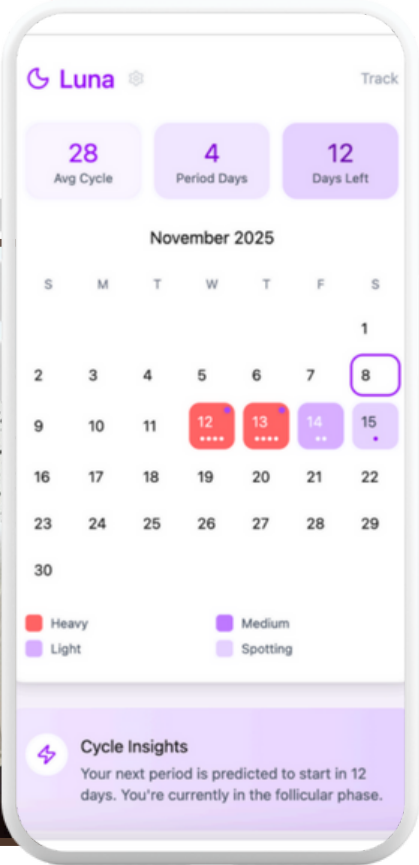
**1ST PLACE: Luna**

*A safety-tracking app to prevent gun-related femicides in Ecuador*



**MISSION**

Connect women at risk of gun violence in Portoviejo, Ecuador, to resources in a secure way that minimizes stigma and retaliation.



# PITCH PRESENTATIONS

## **RUNNERS UP**

### **Ghostbusters**

An innovative software tool that uses pattern recognition to flag high-risk 3D-printing designs associated with ghost guns.

### **Stop the Spiral**

A domestic violence education program for children in Rhode Island

## **ALL OTHER TEAMS:**

### **Camino Claro**

Addressing gun violence in Honduras through tracking and reporting programs

### **Protecting Two**

Reducing firearm violence against pregnant women through implementing screening protocols in standard prenatal appointments and connecting women at risk with local support services.

### **Focus for Firearms**

Partnering with local organizations to provide cities with community-driven solutions

### **Allwove**

Guns and Gender-based violence following the Libyan Civil War

### **Addressing Environmental Gun Violence in the Niger Delta**

An aqua-revival approach to disincentivise oil militants from attacking oil pipelines.

### **SafeArms Kosovo**

Using digital vouchers to connect community wellbeing with safe firearm registration

### **Harbor**

Mobile app and social program addressing suicide by firearm in rural communities

### **Pathways to Peace**

Preventing militia recruitment of vulnerable boys in Goma, DRC

### **Alba**

Connecting domestic violence victims with a network of support for legal and emotional violence



# THANK YOU!

We are deeply grateful for our generous support from the Hearst Foundation and the Watson School for International and Public Affairs. We would also like to thank all of our wonderful keynote speaker, mentors, and judges for sharing their wealth of knowledge and experience. Finally, a hearty congratulations to all of our participants, good work! See you next year!

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