

RESTORATIVE WORKS

2017 YEAR IN REVIEW



IMPACTING COMMUNITIES

IIRP ALUMNA ELLISSA COLLIER USES RESTORATIVE PRACTICES AT MURAL ARTS PHILADELPHIA



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International Institute
for Restorative Practices

BUILDING BRIDGES INSTEAD OF WALLS
FINDING COMMON GROUND WHEN WE DISAGREE

TOWARD A RESTORATIVE DETROIT
THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY

Photo by Steve Weinik

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HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A NEW CENTURY

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



I had the pleasure of representing the IIRP at this year's New York Times Higher Ed Leaders Forum. Racial equity, free speech, and the arrival of Generation Z on campus were some important topics that inspired a passionate discussion. However, higher education

is undergoing changes that are less obvious than these headline-grabbing themes. These changes might transform our entire concept of college, university and adult learning.

There is a widespread perception that the return on investment in higher education is unclear. Beyond the cost of tuition, recent research indicates that the learning experience frequently fails to reliably develop the competencies that students and employers value most.

The IIRP is a graduate institution designed for the 21st century. Learning centers on real-life, personal and professional challenges and projects. Most of our students remain engaged in their current job roles while they study.

The benefits of this education to the outside world can be clearly seen in these pages: helping adolescents avert violence and bullying; allowing communities to talk about their most divisive issues, etc.

Our courses are largely blended, asynchronous and online — allowing our students to participate from anywhere in the world.

Traditional, professor-centric classroom learning increasingly cannot compete with new tech-savvy, adaptive and blended learning. The next generation

expects an education experience that is engaging, flexible and student-centered.

Here, faculty-centric lectures have generally been replaced by faculty-facilitated online group engagement. Our mission and curriculum, while universally beneficial, are highly specialized. This is a strategic strength. It means that IIRP faculty are the world's leading experts in the ideas and competencies they teach. You can read about them in this magazine.

The future of higher education will encompass a wide range of smaller, nimbler, more specialized niche providers delivering competency-focused learning that is highly responsive to students' and employers' needs. There will be increased demand for skills-specific learning that teaches quantifiable hard and soft skills that employers value and students can use immediately.

“Learning at the IIRP centers on real-life, personal and professional challenges and projects.”

At the IIRP, simple governance structures, lean leadership hierarchies and a culture of innovation mean that we can devote time and resources to student support, content creation and innovative delivery methods. We focus on the things that matter most to our students.

Higher education needs are changing fast. In a future of greatly increased options, the IIRP will push this innovation curve by offering increased creativity and responsiveness to better meet the needs of 21st century learners.

John W. Baillie, Ph.D.
President



GROWING OUR SCOPE AND IMPACT: NEW FACULTY HIGHLIGHT RESEARCH, K-12 EDUCATION, LATIN AMERICA

Our student body increased by 135% between 2013 and 2017. This has allowed us to welcome four additional faculty members and enrich our students' education experience. Our new faculty bring decades of experience and knowledge in research, education, criminal justice and community work. And all have a deep commitment to expanding the mission of the Graduate School to develop the growing field of restorative practices.



Gina Baral Abrams, Dr.P.H., Director of Research and Program Evaluation and Assistant Professor, has been working to develop healthy communities as a public health practitioner, mixed-methods researcher, program evaluator and macro social worker for 20 years. Gina teaches

research methods in the online M.S.W. program at Boston University School of Social Work. She previously served in student affairs at Lehigh University and in health and wellness at Princeton University. She has been principal investigator in many research studies regarding health issues. "I am excited to engage with the committed and talented students at the IIRP Graduate School to further their learning and development as leaders and community builders," comments Gina.



Fernanda Fonseca-Rosenblatt, Ph.D, Assistant Professor, is Assistant Professor of Law and Criminal Justice at the Catholic University of Pernambuco, Brazil. Fernanda has a dozen years of experience teaching law and restorative justice and

conducting empirical research in Europe and South America. She is now completing a national study in Brazil on the potential for addressing domestic violence with restorative justice. She has presented at many national and international conferences and published numerous peer-reviewed articles and book chapters in the field of restorative justice. Adds Fernanda, "What I hope to bring to the Graduate School is more experience in research projects. Research is something that has to be common practice within the faculty."



Michael DeAntonio, Ph.D., Lecturer, is Executive Director of the IIRP model program, Buxmont Academy. He has three decades of experience as an educator and administrator in public education, from middle school science teacher to school principal to

Kutztown University Graduate School Instructor of Secondary School Administration. At Buxmont Academy, Mike is leading the initiatives combining academic and social and emotional learning to create a whole-student perspective. The Graduate School courses he teaches are very much in line with this work. Adds Mike, "I am honored to be a member of the IIRP faculty. I see no better opportunity to engage a global community of dedicated learners about the benefits of restorative practices."



A. Miguel Tello, Lecturer, is Executive Director of the Strachan Foundation, a family foundation that supports education and health projects throughout Central America. Miguel is bringing restorative practices training and consulting to NGOs, schools, churches

and criminal justice professionals across the region. He teaches people in remote, high-risk, high-need communities to build relationships and resolve conflict restoratively. He has also been instrumental in introducing restorative justice to the criminal justice system in Costa Rica. Miguel comments, "I'm delighted to be part of the IIRP faculty. Teaching here allows me to share the work of a variety of colleagues in the field while maintaining an ongoing scholarly dialogue with graduate students about developments and new ideas in restorative practices and restorative justice."

HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A NEW CENTURY: ALUMNI AND STUDENTS TAKE THEIR LEARNING OUT INTO THE WORLD

COMMENCEMENT 2017

"The graduates you see before you are the leading edge of a new and vibrant field within the social sciences," affirmed John Bailie, Ph.D., President, at the 2017 Graduate School Commencement. "Every day they are doing the difficult, inspiring, transformative work of improving civil society. And I have no doubt that each of them will continue to work tirelessly to improve their community. Going forward from today, they will be the professionals, leaders and role models the world so desperately needs." Craig Adamson, Ph.D., Provost, addressed the graduates: "We take huge pride in your successes. To be able to count on your expertise as relevant, practical and innovative agents of change — that's something no institution should take lightly."

*"Community is the antidote
to hate and fear."*

The Class of 2017 Master of Science graduates participated in the program from more varied and distant locations than ever before. The 16 graduates reside in seven US states from California to Connecticut, plus Trinidad and Tobago and British Columbia, Canada. They are attorneys, teachers, music therapists, violence prevention educators and more. All were driven to commit time and hard work to gain valuable competencies and interpersonal and intrapersonal skills relevant to their professions.

On behalf of their classmates, Commencement speakers Kevin Jones of Illinois and Kristin Wraight of Connecticut shared their journeys and their passion. "I am able to bring about whole community change because of the IIRP," declared Kevin. Kristin urged us to "get to know

Kevin Jones and
Kristin Wraight



our neighbors again, especially the ones who don't look like us." Because, she asserted, "Community is the antidote to hate and fear. When we lose our way and feel powerless to do anything, all we need remember is to reach out and connect with one another. This is the work that will heal the world."

NEW SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE TO MASTER'S DEGREE STUDENTS



Claire Sinclair

Claire Sinclair, a teacher for 21 years, employs restorative practices to enable the children in her kindergarten class to get to know each other and build empathy. She holds talking circles twice daily so they can share their thoughts and feelings. Melissa Ash, an outreach educator, runs workshops in middle and high schools to help students understand violence and bullying and identify signs to avert them. She helps them to build relationships, preventing bullying and violence from happening in the first place.

This year, a new scholarship was established in memory of Shawn Suzch, a man who overcame adversity with courage and gave his life for his country. Two IIRP master's degree candidates who share Shawn's personal determination to serve others were selected to receive the scholarship.



Melissa Ash

Discover inspired learning at the graduate level. Visit iirp.edu.

TRANSFORMING RELATIONAL HARM

IIRP alumni are expanding restorative practices beyond traditional dialogue processes. They're developing creative ways to integrate restorative skills and concepts with art, music and animal-assisted therapies.



Photo by Steve Weinik

Ellissa Collier, Graduate Certificate, '15, helps at-risk young people turn their lives around as Youth Restorative Practices Program Manager with Mural Arts Philadelphia. She and her staff of teaching artists work with youth who are homeless, delinquent or struggling with drugs and alcohol. Creating art improves students' coping skills and decreases their destructive behavior. And students used to being discounted and disappointed gain a sense of accomplishment and pride. Restorative practices enhance these benefits. "We were unintentionally labeling and stigmatizing students," Ellissa acknowledges. At the IIRP, she learned how to build relationships and treat students with empathy and compassion. She shared her learning with the Mural Arts staff, shifting their punitive approach. Now art projects have a restorative focus, helping students reflect on how to make positive changes in their lives. Ellissa tells of one student with serious drug and alcohol issues. The two of them painted side-by-side for nine months. Today, he leads Mural Arts workshops with students facing the same issues he once did. "That's the kind of experience I want for all our students," she affirms.

Lynette Reed, '10, is building awareness and a sense of safety with clients experiencing post-traumatic stress and other emotional difficulties, with horses as her "co-therapists." Horses pick up on compulsive behavior immediately, Lynette explains. "One mare — leader of the herd — is very clear. If a person talks obsessively about their 'stuff,' she will push them with her head. She's telling them: 'Be present.'" Working with clients in this way promotes self-awareness. They begin asking themselves: "Are my obsessive thoughts helping or harming me?" The mare also instinctively brings clients into her herd. They gain a sense of belonging and safety so they can explore their issues and begin to restore their relationships with people. "Horses gave a client with complex trauma a sense of connection and confidence, enabling her to open bonds she had closed," Lynette recalls. "She stopped attacking herself and set boundaries with her abusive mother." Lynette and her horses help people understand and overcome crippling feelings of shame, open up entrenched patterns and begin to build resiliency.



Michele Snyder, '10, is a music therapist who treats individuals experiencing mental illness in a psychiatric hospital. She helps them express anger and communicate their emotions through drumming. She has made this a circle process, so everyone takes a turn. Michele also asks patients restorative questions, enabling them to explore their feelings by considering how a particular song affected them in their lives. Keisha Martinez, '17, is also a music therapist. She works with prison inmates and at-risk young people in Trinidad. Participating in a talking circle, a prison inmate will commit to an action to heal relationships with family members he has harmed. He then beats a drum, signaling a contractual bond with the group. Everyone repeats his beat, supporting his commitment and healing. Keisha also worked with a young girl who ran away from home after being repeatedly raped by her stepfather. She encouraged the girl to write a song to sing to her disbelieving mother. This process enabled the girl to express painful feelings and, ultimately, to repair the relationship with her mother.

Keisha Martinez

A NURSING HOME THAT FEELS LIKE HOME

Maranatha House Aged Care Facility is taking a restorative approach to meeting their residents' needs. General Manager Debra Wells finds their success in approaching aging as a natural process instead of treating it as a "medical illness." To shift this thinking, Debra uses restorative practices, and is proud that staff are "having the right conversations with residents and their families instead of hiding behind red tape."



At Maranatha, located in New South Wales, Australia, each resident creates an Individual Care Plan collaboratively with staff. They decide on their sleeping, meal and pastime preferences. The plans are flexible, yet they meet or exceed all regulatory benchmarks and inspections. Debra holds weekly circle meetings with staff to problem-solve and improve practice. For instance, they strategized how to avoid using chemical restraints, a widespread nursing home practice with residents who lose behavioral control. Here, the practice is an absolute last resort. It's almost never needed because residents have real control over their environment.

Open lines of communication are maintained between management, staff, residents and families. Clinical

registered nurse Tracy Hornby, liaison between residents, families, doctors and pharmacists, shares information about conditions and treatments, as well as options for palliative and end-of-life care. "If there is a problem, we call a family meeting," states Tracy. "We invite them to get it all off their chest. We're saying, 'This is your loved one's home, and it's your home as well.'"

Australia's Terry O'Connell and Lyn Doppler have helped Maranatha House with restorative practices implementation since 2014. They assisted them in preparing a recent status report that showed staff felt supported by management and that they loved the residents. The hope is that Maranatha will be recognized as an industry leader, an exemplar of best practice.

ALUMNA HONORED

Ayesha Brooks, '16, received the 2017 National Association of Community and Restorative Justice Juvenile Programs and Services Award for her work in Los Angeles and Fontana, California, schools. Born and raised in the Compton neighborhood of Los Angeles, Ayesha has served her community with compassion and skill for more than 25 years. She has given students opportunities to reflect on their behavior and discuss strategies with their peers on how to handle situations differently. This has produced sustainable change, as each student takes an active role in resolving conflict. "I strive to be a role model in Compton because there is a need. I'm dedicated to improving the communities where I live and work," states Ayesha.



TRAINER SPOTLIGHT: GREGORY BALDWIN

Gregory is a passionate believer in equity for all students. As School Climate and Culture Specialist at the Alexandria City, Virginia, School District, he is overseeing restorative practices implementation. His goal is to nurture positive learning environments districtwide. When he was Dean of Students at T.C. Williams High School, restorative practices helped to significantly decrease out-of-school suspensions, particularly among black male students. By building relationships, they were able to prevent fighting and violence. Gregory is devoted to advancing Alexandria City. He grew up there and has worked with the school district for 24 years. "We want a restorative community," he asserts. "We're training parents, Parks and Recreation, churches. Restorative practices is as necessary for people as food and water."

NUNAVIK, QUEBEC, CANADA Kevin Cutler, instructor for IIRP Canada and IIRP graduate student, provided restorative practices training to eight Inuit First Nation schools in Nunavik, northern Quebec, Canada. He is also supporting schools in building community outside the schools. Kevin observed, "The social problems present in all communities — addictions, abuse, trauma, intergenerational trauma and suicide — are prevalent here. Restorative practices is seen as a key component in helping to address these issues."

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, USA The US (Federal) District Court, District of Massachusetts, has implemented a front-end program with a restorative justice component. The voluntary program includes individuals who have been arrested, charged and pled guilty to a variety of crimes, mostly gun- or drug-trafficking offenses. Although new, the RISE (Repair, Invest, Succeed, Emerge) program has been very successful. Before participating, offenders had few opportunities to consider their crimes as harms or the impact they've had on others. RISE invites offenders to participate in restorative practices alongside community members and surrogate victims, who have lost loved ones to drugs or gun violence. It also provides concrete ways for them to reflect, take responsibility and make amends. The impact on all has been profound. Judges have significantly reduced offenders' sentences, based on their overall achievements and their participation in restorative practices. Survivors also find healing while witnessing offenders' transformations. RISE is operated collaboratively by the Court's stakeholders. Allyson Lorimer Crews and Maria V. D'Addieco, of the US Probation & Pretrial Services Office, oversee the restorative justice component of RISE.

CALIFORNIA, USA St. Claire Adriaan, Middle School Director of Academia Avance, in Los Angeles, and Tommy Ramirez, Director of MAAC Community Charter School, in San Diego, are supporting students whose parents are threatened with deportation. St. Claire holds circles for students to express their concerns. Many are terrified that their parents won't be home when they get there. He encourages them to talk to their parents about their immigration status and make plans for what to do. He holds workshops for families, providing information about rights, resources and preparedness. And he prevented one student's father from being unlawfully deported, through a national media campaign. Deportation is a constant worry at Tommy's school, just a few miles from the Mexican border. Students tackle this concern in the classroom. They identify issues affecting them and their families, undertake research and create and implement action plans.

BARCELONA, SPAIN The University of Barcelona hosted restorative practices professional development with IIRP Australia's Terry O'Connell and Jean Schmitz, '16. The training took place during the vote for Catalan independence. In this time of conflict, when friends and colleagues aren't speaking to each other, participants relished the opportunity to express themselves in talking circles. "Dialogue is the only answer," Jean commented.

COLOMBIA IIRP Latin America instructors Manuel Delgado Chu and Marisol Ramírez are supporting the peace process after five decades of civil war. Members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia People's Army (FARC-EP) are being reintegrated back into their villages. In communities long traumatized by war and killing, families are frightened. Manuel and Marisol were invited by nonprofit organization Claro K C to facilitate restorative circles. These offer people a space to express their fears and concerns, so they can work together. "The circles have been extremely emotional, with crying and screaming," notes Manuel. "As facilitators, we bring the magic of the circle. It is not about us. It is about the people in the circle and helping them find their own ideas to meet their needs."

INTE

THE IIRP HAS PROVIDED RESTORATIVE PRACTICES TRAINING TO **17,433 PEOPLE** IN THE PAST YEAR.

ACROSS EUROPE The RESTORE project will support positive school climates in Europe through restorative practices. This innovative collaboration between training organizations supporting schools, local authorities and a research center will assist schools in becoming restorative organizations through a framework that can be reproduced in schools all over Europe. Belgian NGO LIGAND is partnering on the 36-month project with IIRP Europe, Eigen Kracht Centrale (Netherlands), CLUJ IDA (Romania), CRESM (Italy), Le Souffle (Belgium), and Marie de Lille (France), funded by the European Commission (the executive arm of the European Union) Erasmus+ program.

SINGAPORE Tan Wee Teck, Gayathri Raja and Randeep Singh, of the Singapore Prison Service, are addressing inmate conflict and behavior infractions restoratively. They are employing circles and restorative conferences when conflict occurs between inmates and when they violate prison regulations. Although the initiative is new, it has been successful in resolving clashes between inmates and addressing infractions. They hope to expand the endeavor to repair harm for inmates' family members and prepare inmates for reentry into the community. Restorative practices training was provided to the Prison Service by LCCS, Ltd., Singapore, an IIRP partner.

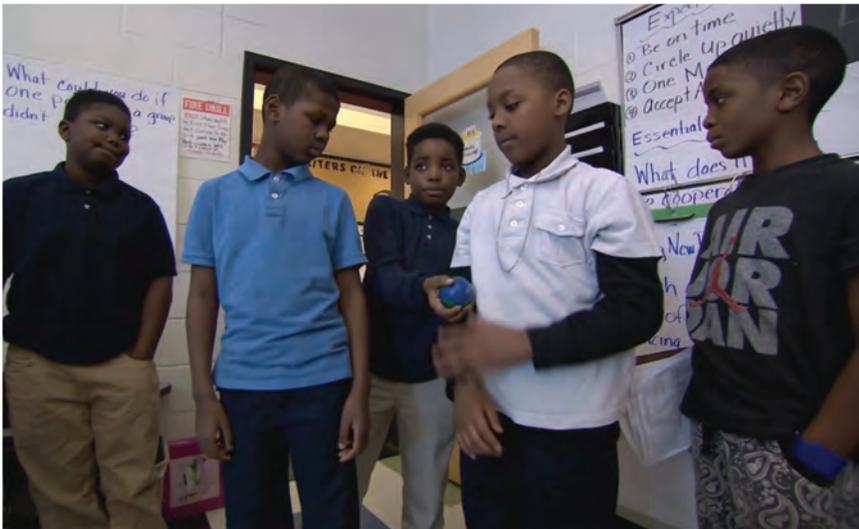
GUNBALANYA, NORTHERN TERRITORY, AUSTRALIA Kerrie Sellen and Grace Moncrieff, of Restorative Works Australia, are working in the remote Aboriginal town of Gunbalanya, where violence is rampant. Kerrie and Grace trained a 12-youth team to be leaders and address conflict in their community. These young people were about to be sent away for causing trouble. Now they are preventing and addressing intergenerational feuding and violence in their town. Instead of fighting, community members are talking through their concerns with circles and intentional conversations. The local elders are very pleased with this development. They say it's the way things used to be.

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION

ENHANCING STUDENT EQUITY IN PITTSBURGH SCHOOLS

Restorative practices is improving the climate in Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) and helping students get the support they need. Approximately half of PPS schools have implemented the practices, with instruction from the IIRP. The project, Pursuing Equitable Restorative Communities (PERC) is made possible by a grant from the US Departments of Education and Justice. The grant also supports a randomized controlled trial by RAND Corporation, investigating the impact of restorative practices on improving student-teacher communication, reducing out-of-school suspensions and narrowing the gap in suspension rates between black and white students.



One school seeing success is Faison K-5, which serves about 500 students in one of the city's most disadvantaged neighborhoods. Restorative Practices Liaison Doreen Allen developed a creative way to work with students involved in disruptions or fights. Instead of detention, they have "restorative lunch," eating together while learning new approaches to solving problems.

This includes sharing their issues in talking circles. In one circle, a girl in fourth grade who had been struggling at school shared that she planned to commit suicide. Her confession was met with concern and expressions of care. As a result, she was able to receive residential treatment before returning successfully to school. "We take circle time very seriously," Doreen affirms. "It's a time to connect, to flesh out what's really going on in a young person's life."

Keith Hickman, IIRP Director of Continuing Education, presented on the PERC project, with PPS administrators and a RAND researcher, at our World Conference, Learning in the 21st Century. Keith stressed that the IIRP's strong partnership with PPS has made a big difference. Sustainability has been "built on the front end" by ensuring early leadership involvement and through weekly phone calls by the partners. Geoffrey Grimm, a Research Partner with RAND, reported results of an IIRP survey of PPS staff. The survey questions were geared toward helping and understanding implementation, he noted. Results indicate high teacher "buy-in," "confidence in understanding restorative practices" and "perceived positive impact."

PPS has announced that they plan to implement restorative practices in all district schools to enhance educational equity for all students. RAND's report won't be released until spring 2018. Still, Dara Ware Allen, Ph.D., PPS Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services, states that suspensions are decreasing districtwide, and that the racial discipline gap is narrowing in the 22 restorative practices schools.

PARTNERING WITH COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY FOR THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

Aspiring school administrators from across the US are learning how restorative practices can improve school climate and culture at Columbia University's Summer Principals Academy. President John Bailie, Ph.D., and Provost Craig Adamson, Ph.D., taught "Basic Practicum in Conflict Resolution," as Columbia adjunct faculty, in the summers of 2016 and 2017. The student cohort serves a diverse range of urban districts. "These students are some of the most passionate, creative new principals in the country," comments John. "This program has them thinking about the future of education and the schools of the future. Rather than approach conflict as a power struggle, we taught them to take a problem-solving approach." After attending the students' final presentations, Craig observed, "Just about every one of them had some restorative element embedded in their new school plan. When we can bring restorative practices to a cutting-edge institution like Columbia Teachers College, we have influence with more folks who are doing pretty amazing things."

FINDING COMMON GROUND WHEN WE DISAGREE

"The first thing is to connect in a positive way," suggests Borbála Fellegi, Ph.D., IIRP Lecturer. "Don't start with points of disagreement. Establish that you are both human beings on this planet." This has become difficult, as we increasingly separate ourselves into social and political boxes, notes Borbála. And labelling people prevents us from listening. "We create a negative spiral by blaming and not accepting each other's feelings," she explains.

Borbála leads The Foresee Research Group in her native Hungary, a nation troubled by social, political and racial conflict. Resources for Hope, a video research project, is collecting life stories of all kinds of people. The Guerrand Hermes Foundation for Peace is collaborating with Foresee on this project, which aims to demonstrate that the answer to building healthier societies begins with listening.



Asking open questions can enable communication: "How do you feel about this issue? What are your fears?" The key is to not discount a person's fears or try to disprove them with objective facts, which only arouses shame and defensiveness. Instead, a restorative approach entails expressing compassion and asking what might make the person feel better.

"When people feel free to openly share their fears, their vulnerability, then we can start to exchange ideas," Borbála states. "We can create a positive spiral of reconciliation." The goal, however, is not to try to change people — or to agree. "We have to say: This where they are right now, and it's okay." The hope is that the "positive spirals" will spread.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATIONS

Stacey Miller, Ed.D., IIRP Trustee, is working to foster open communication on a college campus in the US. But, she notes, "About 50 percent of college students are really not in favor of free speech. They fear conflict and being uncomfortable. This generation is coming to campus unprepared for conversations on controversial topics."

As Assistant Provost for Inclusion and Student Success Services at Valparaiso University, Stacey monitors campus culture and climate, addresses bias and ensures everyone feels welcome and safe. To address the issue of campus free speech, she created the "Dialogue and Discernment Series." A wide range of panelists have presented their views on both sides of hot-button issues such as same-sex marriage, women's reproductive rights and immigration. In giving all voices a chance for expression, the series takes a restorative approach to communication. "This allows us to have conversations about irreconcilable issues — things that people are never going to agree on," Stacey explains. This enables students to build understanding and empathy with people they might normally avoid. The whole campus community has responded quite positively.

"I hope that, here at Valparaiso, restorative practices will provide us with a formalized framework to help both sides understand each other's perspectives," Stacey comments. She hopes the practices can be introduced in residence life to build community and address conflict.

FOSTERING BONDS BETWEEN REFUGEES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

In Romania, Vidia Negrea, IIRP Europe's Regional Representative for Eastern Europe and IIRP Trustee, is helping address tensions between Syrian refugees and local citizens. Significant cultural differences and the lack of a common language have bred a climate of fear and mistrust. Romanians don't understand why Syrians don't send their girls to school. And parents are afraid that the presence of Syrian boys is hindering their children's learning.

Vidia ran a restorative circle in a school classroom for Syrian fathers, Romanian parents, teachers and administrators to share their concerns. At first, the Syrian fathers wouldn't join the circle. So Vidia chose a stuffed toy bumble bee as a talking piece, making everyone laugh. She reminded participants that the circle was for the benefit of their children. Initially, people were guarded. But eventually the group feeling shifted, opening discussion of cultural issues, such as the fasting month of Ramadan. Ultimately, a Syrian father agreed to be an intermediary between the teachers and the boys' mothers.

Participants were pleased with the circle process and saw it as a way forward. Since the circle, there have been meetings between Romanian and Syrian mothers to share their culture, including a recipe swap. Vidia hopes that European Union and other funding will enable more work to build bridges between refugees and local communities throughout Europe.

DETROIT: THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY HEALING THEIR OWN CONFLICTS

Individuals are taking charge of their community, as restorative practices takes root in Detroit. The IIRP is collaborating with the nonprofit Black Family Development, Inc., to improve the lives of Detroit's families and children. The project, "Toward a Restorative City: Focus on Schools and Sustainability for the City of Detroit," is in its second year. Multi-year funding for up to five years is being provided by the Skillman Foundation.

One area of focus has been the Ninth Police Precinct. There, longstanding tensions were tearing neighbors apart. Residents felt unsafe in their homes. Incessant calls to police were unable to resolve the problems.

But community members have been coming together in monthly training sessions to tackle these issues. Police Commander Charles Mahone, a big believer in the power of restorative practices to heal relationships, has helped lead the sessions. He has made sure residents understand that the success of the program depends on them, insisting, "You can be the difference in your neighborhood!"

At the initial meeting, participants began by confronting each other with mistrust and anger. Then Charles asked each individual, "What has been the hardest thing for you?" Suddenly, as each person shared — residents, neighborhood leaders and police officers — the yelling stopped. People were actually listening to each other. Gradually, the mistrust and anger dissipated, replaced by understanding and empathy. For the first time, people felt a spark of hope for the future of their neighborhood.

Six months after that meeting, the number of calls to police dropped 95%. Aggravated assaults dropped 18%, after being up 12% the year before. The number of people participating in meetings is increasing. Individuals are seeing firsthand how they can heal their own conflicts and increase safety in their homes and neighborhoods through honest communication.

We're experimenting with different, more accessible storytelling with this project. Dan Archer, of Empathic Media, illustrated a community meeting.

One woman cursed out the group, insisting that her family had been persecuted on the block.



By the end, she expressed remorse and acknowledged that she had allowed her kids to wreak destruction on her neighbors.

I was trained in RP over a year ago and it feels natural.

It's another way to solidify the bond between our department and the citizens we serve.

I'm very open to new ways. When you cease to believe you can learn...

...it's over for you.



The main goal?

To develop community and manage conflict by repairing harm and restoring relationships.



NEW VOICES, NEW PERSPECTIVES



LEARNING IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A Restorative Vision October, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, USA

Colleagues old and new came together, creating a vibrant community of learning, sharing and mutual support. More than 370 participants attended from 13 countries, 34 US states and three Canadian provinces, including 129 new to IIRP events. We heard from leaders in the areas of student equity, social and emotional learning and including students with disabilities. We left with renewed energy to continue our efforts. As one participant affirmed, "Hundreds of thousands of children are impacted by our work!"

CONFLICT IN EUROPE: Meeting the Challenge IIRP Europe Conference May, Dublin, Ireland

The needs of refugees, preventing radicalization, childhood sexual abuse, racial violence and terrorism were some of the important issues addressed. About 170 people came from 16 countries, 10 US states and one Canadian province, including 96 who had never attended an IIRP event. We were honored to be welcomed by Frances Fitzgerald, Dublin Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Enterprise and Innovation, who pledged support for restorative practices in Ireland.



CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: Moving Toward a New Paradigm April, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Hosted by IIRP Canada, participants developed themes to guide the progress of the restorative justice movement. Practitioners and researchers discussed topics from support networks for prison inmates reentering society to community approaches to youth justice. More than 70 participants attended from across Canada and the US, including national and provincial officials and various First Nations representatives.

A RESTORATIVE JOURNEY: Transforming Relational Harm Symposium July, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, USA

Frida Rundell, Ph.D., IIRP Associate Professor, organized and led the Symposium. The 77 participants learned from a wide range of practitioners, exploring ways to transform trauma and restore hope. Several IIRP alumnae demonstrated how they are integrating restorative practices with art, music and animal therapy. Attendees also discovered self-care techniques to address stressful circumstances they might encounter in their work.



Come to a conference and be inspired!
Visit iirp.edu.

April 30–May 2, 2018 | Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Leading and Sustaining Change

October 24–26, 2018 | Detroit, Michigan, USA
Strengthening the Spirit of Community





STAYING TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

Five brothers and sisters are able to stay together as a family, thanks to a stable home environment provided by Community Service Foundation's (CSF's) Foster Care Program. The children were about to be separated by the foster care system when the family became

"They're excelling in school, participating in football and field hockey and playing saxophone in the school band. The oldest even has a part-time job."

homeless. Their parents were unable to care for them, a tragic illustration of the devastating US opioid epidemic. But now the siblings are thriving, with their CSF foster parents providing consistent, loving care. This is critically important for three of the children, who are on the autism spectrum. Restorative practices are allowing all the

children to express their feelings in a healthy way. "Now they're living good, normal adolescent lives," affirms Paul Karaman, Executive Director of CSF. "They're excelling in school, participating in football and field hockey and playing saxophone in the school band. The oldest even

has a part-time job." CSF is looking to provide a modest vacation experience for the siblings and foster parents, notes Paul: "something that could bring them even closer as a family." Paul and his wife have six children. He concludes, "I'd like to think that if something happened to me and my wife, our kids would be able to stay together."

FINDING HER VOICE

Tasha Jenkins is dedicated to improving foster care for children. She has a loving relationship with her young daughter, but she knows what it's like to grow up without a family's love and support. Tasha was left in the hospital at birth, a victim of the crack epidemic. For the next 18 years, she was shuttled between numerous foster homes from coast to coast. She became an angry young woman who got into trouble with the juvenile justice system repeatedly, just trying to survive.

In 2006, Tasha arrived at the IIRP model programs, Community Service Foundation and Buxmont Academy (CSF Buxmont), where she finally got the help and attention she needed. Thanks to a combination of support and accountability, she changed the course of her life. At her foster group home, she was assigned community service hours (as required by the juvenile justice system). At first, she fought this. But working with senior citizens at a nursing home, she realized she loved helping people. Soon she became a leader among her peers.

At Buxmont Academy, besides taking a leadership position, Tasha found success with academics for the first time. A special education teacher enabled her to address her dyslexia and conquer her lifelong problem with reading, opening up a new world of knowledge. Building on this foundation, Tasha graduated high school and then college, earning a degree in theater.



Continuing her desire to help others, she was certified as an American Sign Language interpreter. Today, Tasha takes an active role in the US Congressional Caucus, working to change legislation to improve foster care services. Her efforts have been recognized by national foster care programs, where she is often called upon to tell her story. "I'm going to help foster children until my last breath," she vows.

THANK YOU

The IIRP and its consortium of organizations appreciate all gifts, great and small. We want to acknowledge the following donors to the IIRP, the Restorative Practices Foundation, Community Service Foundation and Buxmont Academy who gave between July 2016 and October 2017 in support of our work to restore community.

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DONOR SPOTLIGHT: QNB BANK

Our thanks to QNB Bank, a longtime supporter of the IIRP model programs, Community Service Foundation and Buxmont Academy. This year, QNB donated \$2,000 to support student scholarships to Buxmont Academy, through Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Program. The EITC and Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) programs allow Pennsylvania businesses to direct their state corporate taxes to support educational opportunities for financially disadvantaged students. Buxmont Academy, an approved EITC and OSTC scholarship program, helps students improve academic performance and achieve social competencies for successful and happy lives.

Left: QNB Bank presents a \$2,000 donation to Buxmont Academy. L-R: Courtney Covelens, Commercial Loan Officer; April Donahue, Colmar Branch Manager, QNB Bank; Craig Adamson, President, Community Service Foundation and Buxmont Academy.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

"The IIRP has been a huge influence on my work with children and families. We've created a sense of mutual responsibility, and we deal with challenges and conflicts in a respectful manner."

"I never thought I would be able to afford a master's degree. If it weren't for the Pay-It Forward Scholarship, it would not have been possible."

— Dawn Squire, '17



MAKE A GIFT TODAY.