

Love thy neighbor as thyself.

Matthew 22:39

*Do unto all men as you wish to have done to
you and reject for others what you would reject
for yourself.*

Translated from The Koran

*Should anyone turn aside the right of the stranger,
it is as though he were to turn aside the right of
the most high God.*

Translated from The Talmud

*Sacred One,
Teach us love, compassion, and honor
That we may heal the earth
And heal each other.*

Excerpt from an Ojibway prayer

Can't We All Just Get Along?

Lima, Ohio

The study circles we facilitate are the missing links for our communities. Their value lies in a community and its leadership owning up to a problem and committing to a specific course of action: to carry the dialogue.

Contact(s)

David J. Berger, Mayor, 419-228-5462

Purpose

To foster interracial dialogue and activities that promote friendships and community improvement projects.

Background

In late 1992, Lima Mayor David Berger brought together the resources of the city's clergy, the Ohio State University at Lima, the media, and the Study Circles Resource Center to launch a major campaign to address racial divisions. Lima, a city of 46,000 with a black population of about 25 percent, is situated in a county whose population numbers an additional 110,000 individuals. The 1992 civil unrest in Los Angeles heightened racial tension in Lima and prompted a peaceful downtown march on May 1, 1992. On that same day, Mayor Berger brought together a group of prominent ministers who made a public plea for peace and unity. At this meeting, Mayor Berger realized that members of the local clergy rarely had the opportunity to work together and did not really know one another. He also realized that the ministers and their congregations could be a tremendous resource in bringing about racial reconciliation. From the events of this day, the Can't We All Just Get Along? program was born. The program relies on dialogue to effect changes and uses as its model the Study Circles Resource Center's dialogue methodology. The first series of study circles took place among the clergy. The focus was to provide a mechanism for people of diverse demographic backgrounds to get to know one another and examine how racism permeates and shapes the daily lives of Lima's citizens.

Program Operations

Can't We All Just Get Along? is a 4-week program that encourages dialogue so that individuals can explore racism as it affects their daily lives. Participants from predominantly white congregations are paired with people from predominantly black congregations in dialogue sessions. Program facilitators provide the group with techniques to keep the sessions focused and productive.

Outcomes

The program has involved more than 1,250 people and has taken place at 47 churches and the city's only synagogue. The initial program expanded to include non-church-affiliated groups such as business leaders, civic groups, and the general public. Youth participate in similar programs at their junior high schools and high schools.

The original church pairings have merged into 15 clusters that are governed by a council and chaired by representatives from Lima. Additionally, the program established the Resource Center for Violence Prevention in 1996 as a means of moving from discussion to action. The Center is implementing eight projects to promote diversity, one of which includes establishing a mediation center and organizing an annual diversity day. Local arts groups, including the Lima Symphony Orchestra, have established audience development committees to initiate outreach activities for people of color, and a branch of Key Club, the national community service organization with interracial membership, has been established at Lima Senior High School.

Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Boston

Somerville, Massachusetts

C o n t a c t (s)	Claire A. Carroll, Director of Refugee and Immigration Services, 617-625-1920
P u r p o s e	To provide social services to those in need, regardless of age, race, color, or creed.

Background

Catholic Charities, the social service agency of the Archdiocese of Boston, is dedicated to improving the lives of those in need in Eastern Massachusetts. Founded in 1903 as a child welfare agency, Catholic Charities has adapted its services to meet the changing needs of impoverished children, teens, working families, and senior citizens. Catholic Charities is the largest private provider of social service care in Massachusetts.

Program Operations

Catholic Charities offers 128 social service programs at 52 sites throughout the Archdiocese of Boston. The immigration and refugee department of Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Boston, teamed with AmeriCorps to create the Refugee Awareness Building Project to work on various refugee resettlement issues. Through in-kind donations, the Project offers assistance to newly arrived refugees in setting up their first homes in the United States, learning about American social systems, and cultivating their public speaking skills. The Project also exposes American high school students to refugees' experiences, expanding their world view; promotes racial and ethnic understanding; and encourages students to engage in community service. In

the Community Orientation Program, an established neighborhood network helps newly arrived refugees become acclimated to their communities. "Work groups" are created to encourage individuals to build a cohesive community. These work groups consist of community activists, landlords, small business owners, and refugees. Community Orientation Program staff convene work group meetings and encourage group leaders to apply for small grant funding. Small grants of \$200 to \$500 are extended to individuals and neighborhood groups who are committed to building strong refugee communities. The small grants help in developing the program and providing the resources for continuing these networks.

Outcomes

Through the energies of 2,000 volunteers and 1,400 staff, Catholic Charities provides direct care to more than 145,000 people each year. The 12 refugees who participated in the Refugee Awareness Building Project visited 6 high schools and spoke with 120 high school students. The high school students held furniture drives and collected more than 200 pieces of furniture for those in need. In 1997, Catholic Charities helped 8,695 immigrants and refugees assimilate.

Catholic Charities is committed to helping poor working families and individuals. Our mission is to serve those most in need, to advocate for justice and social change, and to convene other people of goodwill to do the same.

Congress of National Black Churches

Washington, D.C.

The church is still the most influential route to excellence and achievement. We need a shared vision and commitment to shape a future for our youth to reach their maximum potential that includes parents, teachers, religious leaders, and members of our community.

*Bishop John Hurst Adams
CNBC Founder*

C o n t a c t (s)	Sullivan Robinson, Executive Director, 202-371-1091
P u r p o s e	To empower communities by fostering unity, charity, and fellowship while establishing dialogue across denominational lines.

Background

In 1978, Bishop John Hurst Adams of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and representatives from other historic African-American denominations founded the Congress of National Black Churches (CNBC) to bring together black religious leaders to establish a dialogue across denominational lines. CNBC is a coalition of eight major historically black denominations representing 65,000 churches and a membership of more than 20 million people. These denominations include African Methodist Episcopal; African Methodist Episcopal Zion; Christian Methodist Episcopal; Church of God in Christ; National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.; National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.; National Missionary Baptist Convention of America; and Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. CNBC, the leading African-American faith-based organization in the Nation, empowers communities through collective action, technical assistance, training, and the development of replicable models.

Program Operations

Working with other ministries, CNBC promotes justice, wholeness, and fulfillment in the African-American communities it serves. To assess the aspirations of these communities as well as the problems they face, CNBC administers eight national programs: affiliate relations, children

and family development, church rebuilding and arson prevention, economic development, a national anti-drug and anti-violence campaign, national health, voter education and training, and theological education and leadership development. CNBC works to bring different racial groups together through its programs, especially its church rebuilding projects, in which 40 percent of volunteers are white.

Outcomes

CNBC's National Health Program joined with the Health and Social Service Council to develop several initiations nationwide, including a program that targets low immunization levels in preschool African-American children. Additionally, CNBC's Economic Development Program (EDP) currently operates in more than 100 churches in 15 cities across the Nation promoting programs that deliver comprehensive education, training, and technical assistance to first-time homebuyers. EDP also is an intermediary for the Housing Counseling of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, making its resources available to those most in need. Moreover, through its Children and Family Development Program, CNBC initiated Project Spirit, a church-based, afterschool program that offers a tutorial and living skills enhancement program for children ages 6 to 12 and parenting education for parents and/or guardians.

FAITHS Initiative

San Francisco, California

C o n t a c t (s)	Dwayne S. Marsh, Program Director, 415-733-8500
P u r p o s e	To promote dialogue and action among congregations that strengthen the economic, racial, and civic fabric of local neighborhoods.

Background

In November 1993, Joe Brooks, then The San Francisco Foundation’s Program Executive for Neighborhood and Community Development, met with 15 pastors, interfaith leaders, and directors of faith-based social action organizations to discuss the best way for the Foundation to connect with communities. They decided that the faith community was the answer because, as Brooks says, “When we began exploring new ways to get closer to the community, it was obvious that congregations were often the only credible, ongoing institutions in poor neighborhoods.”

When the Foundation surveyed faith organizations to determine the key needs and concerns of the faith community, the results indicated a strong interest in creating an interfaith alliance that would work with the philanthropic community to address the root causes of poverty and injustice. In May 1994, as a result of these efforts, The San Francisco Foundation created the Foundation Alliance with Interfaith To Heal Society—the FAITHS Initiative. The FAITHS Initiative is a multi-ethnic, interdenominational, interfaith population that includes churches, synagogues, and mosques. Its purpose is to promote social service and social action in the Bay Area faith community.

Program Operations

The FAITHS Initiative uses the creativity and resourcefulness of the religious community to extend the outreach efforts of The San Francisco Foundation beyond its traditional non-profit partners. According to Program Director Dwayne Marsh, the faith community sent the Foundation a powerful message regarding their mission: “We are not merely interested in providing social services and helping to fill the gaps resulting from cutbacks in government funding. We are concerned with the *prophetic*, with the systemic issues and root causes that lead to poverty and injustice.”

To achieve its goals, this group of faith organizations sponsors an array of services that includes leadership development, technical assistance, and networking activities in three key areas: race and community relations, economic justice and opportunity, and civic participation. FAITHS uses community forums as one method to get at these key issues. For example, in February 1998 the Community Partners Forum brought together 111 community leaders representing 40 congregations and faith-based organizations to identify and share resources to improve race and cultural relations. Additionally, the Initiative works with the media to increase its coverage of race issues. FAITHS

FAITHS has really opened my eyes to the powerful role that congregations play in helping to build community. That’s what this work is really about. It’s not about painting walls, it’s about building communities.

*Sam Lawson
Christmas in April
San Francisco*

FAITHS Initiative (continued)

also has convened a subset of the faith community to share participants' best practices for improving race relations and to receive training on effective community relations strategies. This subset is overseen by the Race and Community Relations Planning Team, which planned the FAITHS Initiative's first forum, "Race, Class, and Culture: Making Community Work in November 1996 and Beyond." In planning this event and the upcoming election, FAITHS brought together 256 congregation and community leaders to energize the work being done on issues of race, class, and culture.

Outcomes

The FAITHS Initiative has a network of more than 300 congregations in 5 counties. The 1996 forum brought together more than 270 clergy representing more than 10,000 families, and the FAITHS Initiative found that 90 percent of participants wanted more such community events. In addition to community forums, the FAITHS Initiative has established small grants ranging

from \$500 to \$5,000. These grants have helped initiate large-scale projects and specific community economic development training and technical assistance efforts for 70 congregations in the Bay Area. At the Community Partners Forum, for example, it was announced that a grant pool was available to the faith community to address race and community relations activities. At the same forum, a map of the network of organizations working on race showed 150 faith-based organizations by the end of the conference.

In addition to these efforts, FAITHS sponsored a collaborative effort to strengthen the community through the rehabilitation of 13 religious facilities serving local neighborhoods. The project united scores of congregation members, residents, community-based programs, small businesses, the corporate community, and the media. FAITHS also has established the Youth Leadership Development Program, which provides personal and professional mentorship for high school students throughout the Bay Area.

Glide Memorial United Methodist Church

San Francisco, California

C o n t a c t (s)	Janice Mirikitani, Executive Director of Programs, 415-771-6300
P u r p o s e	To operate empowering human service programs that help individuals break the cycle of poverty.

Background

For more than 30 years, under the direction of Rev. Cecil Williams and Janice Mirikitani, Glide Memorial United Methodist Church has demonstrated that there is strength in diversity. Reverend Williams operates according to the philosophy that by providing unconditional love, support, and human services for people of all races, ethnicities, cultures, classes, ages, religious faiths, and sexual orientations, a sense of community is built and negative cycles can be overcome. Since 1963, Glide has provided a broad range of human service programs that not only assist the poor and homeless but also strengthen self-sufficiency within individuals. Glide is located in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco, an ethnically diverse neighborhood of Asian Pacific Americans, Hispanics, blacks, whites, and American Indians. Glide describes this area as a densely populated district where most of the city’s homeless shelters and low-income apartments can be found. High rates of crime, extreme poverty, and intense drug activity characterize the Tenderloin, which also is home to a rapidly increasing number of poor children and families.

Program Operations

Glide develops programs that unconditionally value all members of the church and those they serve. Glide is, as the pastor says, “an extended family” of more than 8,200 members where “no prodigal is rejected, no dogma enforced, but certain commandments beyond the traditional 10 apply.” Everyone in the Glide family is expected to take personal responsibility for their actions, volunteer to work in Glide programs, and bare their wounds to the congregation and seek healing for them. Everyone is expected to reach across the traditional barriers of color, class, and gender. Glide empowers people to break the cycle of poverty and welfare dependence by offering multi-generational programs that develop job skills for people who struggle to achieve self-sufficiency. Glide operates 41 social service programs, including substance abuse recovery, job counseling, computer skills training, and health care services. Glide also manages a program that provides three free meals a day, every day of the year. The church serves an average of 3,000 meals per day. Glide Community Development, Inc.,

From the first to the sixth floor, each office and meeting room at Glide is inhabited by recovering people giving or getting care. They are dealing with some habit or substance they used to block out their feelings. Each day when folks walk through the door at Glide, they are choosing recovery; they are choosing life.

Rev. Cecil Williams

Glide Memorial United Methodist Church (continued)

a non-profit organization, constructed the Cecil Williams Glide Community House in 1997, an affordable housing complex that serves people recovering from addictions, homeless people, people living with HIV, and people traumatized by sexual and physical abuse. The nine-story housing community with onsite support services is located adjacent to the church.

Outcomes

Glide's church membership grew by 1,000 during 1997. It currently totals more than 8,200 parishioners: 40 percent black, 40 percent white, and a significant number of Asian and Hispanic immigrants. Glide creates opportunities and hope for those who are most often ignored, rejected, belittled, made powerless, marginalized, or excluded. In April 1997, Glide was featured in a *Life* magazine article, "A Church for the Twenty-First Century."

Interfaith Action for Racial Justice, Inc.

Baltimore, Maryland

C o n t a c t (s)	John C. Springer, Executive Director, and Rev. Frank Ellis Drumwright, Jr., Lead Organizer, 410-889-8333
P u r p o s e	To promote understanding and tolerance among people of diverse racial backgrounds and religious traditions and to strive to end racism and ethnic prejudice.

Background

Interfaith Action for Racial Justice (IARJ), Inc., was founded in 1979 and originally called Baltimore Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC). In 1994, CALC changed its name to Interfaith Action for Racial Justice to better reflect its mission and programs. On March 18, 1997, the organization launched a new 5-year initiative to increase interracial and interreligious understanding. This initiative, called “The Baltimore Metropolitan Area: A Call to Community—An Honest Conversation About Race, Reconciliation, and Responsibility,” works to build a sense of community in Baltimore City and surrounding counties and cooperation across class and racial lines in dealing with pressing economic and social problems.

Program Operations

IARJ was established in the belief that racial reconciliation must be discussed in the context of education, employment, housing, and transportation because race and these regional concerns are intrinsically linked. Roughly 135 organizations in the business, civil rights, education, ethnic, religious, and community sectors in the metropolitan area collaborated to form this coalition. The project is designed not only to foster racial reconciliation but also to strengthen the sense of community in Baltimore City and five surrounding counties.

IARJ brings people together as a first step toward solving racial differences, then addresses other key regional problems such as economic development and residential growth.

To lay the foundation for community dialogues on race, IARJ first organized the Call to Community Working Committee, a diverse group of 72 people charged with designing and organizing the project. This committee sets up conferences for county executives, commissioners, and mayors representing six separate areas of Baltimore to discuss the region’s future. The committee also organized a youth initiative involving 21 area colleges and universities, the State board of education, and other community organizations.

Outcomes

More than 500 people attended IARJ’s kick-off event on March 18, 1997. In 1997, 13 conversations on race relations were held, each including a group of 12 to 15 people that met in 6, 2-hour sessions. The number of study circles grew to 21 in 1998. Additionally, IARJ sponsored “Congregations Pairing and Caring,” which paired 24 religious congregations from many cultures and faiths across racial lines to build relationships and cooperate in social action. In 1998, the group also initiated an independent evaluation project to assess its effect on grassroots communities; this evaluation project will continue through 1999.

Our mission is to promote understanding and tolerance among people of diverse backgrounds and traditions and to strive to end racism and ethnic prejudice. We will carry out this mission by fostering dialogue, creating community, and engaging in action for justice.

Interfaith Action for Racial Justice, Inc.
(continued)

In recognition of its success in organizing, IARJ received the Central Maryland Ecumenical Council's 1992 Outstanding Service Award and was nationally recognized in *You Can Change America*. Furthermore, John Springer, IARJ Executive Director, was recognized by Baltimore's *City Paper* in November 1995 as one of "Ten People We Are Thankful For." The Center for

Living Democracy, a national clearinghouse of organizations working for change in the United States, selected Interfaith's initiative on "The Baltimore Metropolitan Area: A Call to Community" as one of 21 grassroots efforts nationwide doing particularly effective work in race relations.

Inter-Faith Bridge Builders Coalition

Utica, New York

C o n t a c t (s)	Rev. John E. Holt, 315-733-4227
P u r p o s e	To celebrate the cultural and ethnic diversity in the community and promote racial reconciliation.

Background

In 1995, a Utica newspaper, *The Observer Dispatch*, convened a group of local clergy to discuss race relations in the area. As a result of this meeting, the clergy formed the Inter-Faith Bridge Builders Coalition to advocate for racial peace and justice and ensure fair and equal treatment for everyone.

Program Operations

The Inter-Faith Bridge Builders Coalition has implemented numerous activities to effect change in the community. Of these, the most powerful effort has been the initiation of study circles of 14 to 17 people, led by a facilitator, that discuss race relations and racism as well as ways of changing racist attitudes and public policy. Each group meets five times during a 3-month period. It is the facilitator’s job to move the participants from the point of frank dialogue toward possible action steps.

The Coalition also organizes responses to incidents of racism and violence in the community. With an eye toward increasing the number of public forums available for constructive dialogues on race, the Coalition led a weekend-long cultural awareness event that included activities ranging from a speech by actress Yolanda King to an inter-faith prayer service for racial reconciliation. As part of its outreach objectives, the Coalition also

provides diversity and tolerance training and mediation of racial problems in public schools, an annual cultural awareness event, support for communitywide education on race, and support and advocacy for a civilian police review board.

Outcomes

To date, more than 700 people have participated in study circles, and involvement in Coalition events has been significant. After a violent racial incident in Utica, 500 people attended a prayer service for racial reconciliation. After the burning of an African-American church, more than 100 people attended a prayer service. Diversity and tolerance training has been given to area church groups and at two public high schools. The Coalition also has helped to mediate tensions between Bosnian and Hispanic students. Several pulpit and congregation exchanges have brought together churches from the city and the suburbs and have had an impact on hundreds of people. One exchange was attended by more than 150 people.

In response to the Coalition’s advocacy, the mayor of Utica has proposed a civilian police review board. Moreover, several public forums, attended by 50 to 100 people, addressed issues of race in school and government. The program has been highlighted in the Center for Living Democracy’s *Bridging the Racial Divide* and *Interracial Dialogue Groups Across America: A Directory*.

We hope those who deny racism exists will discover the social cost of racism and that those who are apathetic will become engaged.... We are working to be part of the solution!

Journey Toward Wholeness

Boston, Massachusetts

The work of becoming anti-racist and multi-cultural is deeply relational. Those of us already engaged in the process have learned much, but there is still much more to learn, synthesize, and share with others.

Contact(s)

Susan Gershwin, Anti-Racism Administrative Assistant, Faith in Action, Unitarian Universalist Association, 617-742-2100, ext. 642

Purpose

To build an anti-racist, multi-cultural, religious association that works to eradicate racism and all forms of oppression in institutions and communities.

Background

The Journey Toward Wholeness Initiative had a clear purpose when it was adopted by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) General Assembly in June 1997. By a nearly unanimous vote, the 3,000 General Assembly delegates agreed to carry forward the vision and strategy suggested by the UUA Racial and Cultural Diversity Task Force. The power and purpose of this initiative is clearly expressed in the Unitarian Universalist (UU) vision statement:

An authentically anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and multi-cultural Unitarian Universalist faith will be an equitable, pro-active, soul-transforming, prophetic force for justice within our congregations and our communities. This faith will be effective and accountable, both to itself and to our communities, through transformative spirituality, justice seeking witness, and action.

Program Operations

To put its vision statement into action, the UUA developed a task force to research and analyze how institutional racism functions in the UU movement. After 5 years of studying this issue, the task force developed an exemplary anti-racism transformational program to be used with UU

congregations. This model engages groups in the transformative process of becoming anti-racist, multi-cultural organizations as they move through six stages of a continuum. The first stage, called the exclusive stage, recognizes the racist status quo of dominance over and exclusion of racial and ethnic peoples. The continuum progresses through five additional stages: passive; symbolic change; analytic change; structural change; and inclusive. In the inclusive stage, diversity is an asset, and a congregation reflects the contributions and interests of diverse racial, cultural, and economic groups in determining its mission, ministry, policies, and practices. The Journey Toward Wholeness Initiative provides congregations and organizations with the resources, curriculums, programming, training, and consultation to move from stage to stage.

Using the 6-stage continuum model, more than 1,000 congregations, 24 districts, dozens of affiliate organizations, and more than 200,000 members have been encouraged to participate in anti-racism and anti-oppression programs and to develop anti-racism transformation teams. The UUA has authorized staff and leadership to develop the programs, allocate resources, and provide funding to promote the initiative. Furthermore, all UUA staff and board members are required to participate in anti-racism transformation training and to develop their work in consonance with the anti-racism initiative.

Journey Toward Wholeness (continued)

The UUA recognizes that sometimes the faithful response means choosing to accept being uncomfortable. The congregations and the individuals within them who participated in the transformative program certainly experienced some level of discomfort. The UUA, however, also understands that what provides the dominant culture with comfort may be what ensures its continued domination. In this case, those in the dominant culture must feel some discomfort so that others can feel a higher level of comfort.

Outcomes

The UUA Board of Trustees, the UUA Executive Staff Council, and several affiliate organizations, including the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, mandated anti-racism in their

mission statement. Almost 400 Unitarian Universalist leaders and staff and hundreds of congregations have participated in anti-racism transformation trainings as a result of the initiative. Moreover, hundreds of UU congregations that have participated in anti-racism training have established anti-racism committees. Many UUA congregations also are participating in citywide and interfaith organizations committed to racial justice. From sponsoring diverse cultural programs and peace camps, to advocating for legislation that helps eliminate poverty, to working to remove and prevent environmental pollutants in communities of color, to speaking out against racism, Unitarian Universalists are using their institutional power, in partnership with others organizing for change, to create a racially just world.

National Center on Black-Jewish Relations

New Orleans, Louisiana

One of the tragedies of our time has been the collapse of the black-Jewish alliance that played a key role in the civil rights revolution and the movement toward a more humane and just society in America.... We believe we will generate constructive ideas on how to energize, catalyze, and mobilize the black-Jewish coalition once again.

Contact(s)

Mildred Robertson, Office of Communications, Dillard University, 504-286-4711

Purpose

To engage students and community activists in discussions on ways to improve race relations.

Background

In 1989, Dillard University, a historically black college, founded the National Center for Black-Jewish Relations to reduce hostilities between members of the African-American and Jewish communities. During its first 8 years, the Center's activities were devoted to revitalizing the black-Jewish alliances that had been so successful during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. In 1998, the Center expanded its charter to focus on the new realities of the Nation's future. Because the country needs new models for producing a more just society, the Center asks African Americans and Jews what insights they can bring from their respective social experiences and intellectual traditions that can contribute to solving problems related to race and ethnicity.

Center's recognition that women's perspectives and gender issues often have been separated from race issues. In designing each year's conference, the Center ensures that information and insights circulate among university scholars, students, and people in the surrounding communities. The Center intends to spur discussions among historians, cultural critics, teachers, and others who will use these ideas and put them into practice.

Program Operations

Each spring, the Center sponsors an annual conference on a specific topic, with discussions, presentations, workshops, and informal interaction. The 1998 conference topic—"A Dialogue on Race from Women's Perspectives"—exemplified the

Outcomes

Each year, an average of 250 people attend the annual conference, which is free of charge. Most of the participants have been from the New Orleans and Baton Rouge areas, although some participants traveled from other parts of the country. Current plans for the Center include holding monthly meetings to encourage dialogue and to present student papers that examine opportunities for improving race relations. The purpose of this expanded structure is to create new networks so young, college-age African Americans and Jews can get to know one another and discuss problems and solutions.

Pacific Institute for Community Organization Oakland, California

C o n t a c t (s)	John Baumann, Executive Director, 510-655-2801
P u r p o s e	To help families build community organizations that encourage participation in the democratic system and to enable families to effectively address issues affecting their lives.

Background

The origin of the Pacific Institute for Community Organization (PICO) was in the summer of 1967, when two Jesuit seminarians, John Baumann and Jerry Helfrich, left their theologate in rural California and traveled to inner-city Chicago, where they attended the Urban Training Center, a program designed to educate the clergy and the religious in the skills of social involvement. After their training, the men became actively involved with community organizing in Chicago. In 1972, they returned to Oakland and began the work of bringing community organizing to the West Coast. This effort marked the birth of PICO. Central to PICO’s mission of empowerment is the development of individual leaders and congregations serving as institutional bases for community organizations.

Program Operations

PICO invests its resources in people and congregations, teaching them to successfully address the issues affecting their lives and communities. PICO believes that, through working together, people and congregations effectively bridge ethnic, cultural, and racial divides. Together they learn to appreciate the richness of one another’s cultural heritages. The glue holding the members of these organizations together is not the common work on common issues but, rather, the relationships shared by individuals and families based on common values and visions. Throughout the years, PICO has developed thousands of local leaders through its PICO Program of National Leadership Development. The Program is offered twice a year to organization representatives who are interested

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

RELIGIOUS

The PICO model enables families around the country to reach new plateaus of power to address the issues affecting their lives.

Pacific Institute for Community Organization (continued)

in joining the PICO network and to those who are currently members. The training covers areas of community organizing and leadership development such as research techniques, relationship building, organizational development and process, and an analysis of power structures. PICO also uses the PICO congregation-community model of community organizations in which congregations of all denominations serve as the empowering institutional base for community organizations. Core leadership teams are developed in each congregation, and these leaders do extensive outreach for individual and community needs to create a community vision, inviting families to participate in rebuilding the community. Leaders at all levels

are encouraged to articulate clearly the deeper values shared by all and also are encouraged to draw from their own religious traditions.

Outcomes

Today, more than 60 professional organizers are working in cities throughout the United States using the PICO model and network to empower local residents to take action and create safe, clean, and prosperous communities. The tangible results of these community-based groups are impressive and remind us that a group of ordinary people working together can do extraordinary things.

Racism Awareness Program

Akron, Pennsylvania

C o n t a c t (s)	Tobin Miller Shearer, Director, 717-859-3889
P u r p o s e	To dismantle racism in Mennonite and Brethren churches by providing training, education, resource development, and consultation.

Background

The Racism Awareness Program (RAP) was initiated in 1993 to create a nationwide network of Mennonite and Brethren individuals who would be committed to ending racism in their communities. RAP expanded its mandate to provide anti-racism training, education, resource development, and consultation to the Mennonite and Brethren congregants who have made that commitment.

Program Operations

RAP offers individuals racial awareness training workshops and provides consultation on racism to both individuals and institutions. Moreover, RAP sponsors the Damascus Road Project, which brings together eight five-member teams for a four-part annual training cycle. The training includes workshops on building team development, finding biblical reasons to eradicate racism, analyzing institutional racism, and developing anti-racism teaching and organizing skills. These sessions also prepare the teams to develop short-term (1- to 5-year) plans and long-term (10- to

20-year) plans on how to fight covert and overt racism and conduct full-day anti-racism workshops.

Outcomes

Since its inception, the Racism Awareness Program has trained 25 teams of people, held more than 110 workshops, and produced numerous articles and written resources. RAP staff maintain bibliographies and files on racism, and they collect resources to support anti-racism efforts. The Program initially experienced active resistance from people of power within the organization, which was overcome through prayer, the articulation of an equally powerful alternative vision, and the powerful experiences and realities provided by people of color in the community. The greatest “lesson learned” that RAP can convey to groups undertaking similar anti-racism programs is that they must be aware that there will be controversy and conflict during the transformation process. These deep-seated struggles can be overcome through education and training, spirituality, and a clear mandate from leadership to continue to engage in this long-term effort until it reaches fruition.

*In both church
and society,
the vision of
a fully gathered
community is not
yet realized. All
of God's children
do not sit as full
partners at the
table. Racism sepa-
rates, diminishes,
denies, kills. And
so we struggle.*

Tobin Miller Shearer

Students Together Opposing Prejudice

Sudbury, Massachusetts

If we don't see the stereotypes that we carry within ourselves, then we can't help anyone else. This program has helped us first to look inside ourselves and find our own prejudices and then to recognize prejudice in others and find ways to change that prejudice in them.

Allison Ball
Participant

Contact(s)

Sheila Goldberg, Coordinator, 978-443-3482; and Susan Murphy, Coordinator, 978-443-9166

Purpose

To help students identify and eliminate prejudice, discrimination, and racism.

Background

In January 1991, three religious congregations in Sudbury, Massachusetts, started the Students Together Opposing Prejudice (STOP) program to confront discrimination, prejudice, and stereotyping among junior high school youth. The congregations—one Jewish, one Roman Catholic, and one United Methodist—developed STOP in response to an anti-Semitic incident at a local public school. This incident—a swastika scrawled on a bathroom wall—followed several anti-Semitic and racially hostile incidents in the Boston area in the preceding months. STOP also seeks to make students aware of how stereotypes originate and are perpetuated and of what tools and resources are needed to become agents for change. As part of STOP, students also learn about one another's religious practices.

Program Operations

STOP consists of six 3-hour meetings that rotate among the different congregations. The first three sessions focus on helping students learn how to identify stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination. Students also learn the essential elements of one another's religions. Youth from the host

congregation introduce their faith to the visiting members. Through teaching one another about their religions, students begin to develop awareness and understanding about each other as individuals. Increased understanding begins breaking down stereotypes about other cultural and religious beliefs. During these sessions, additional facilitated activities help students express their own uniqueness, articulate their own cultural traditions, and share their individual and collective experiences of racism. In later sessions, students learn strategies for confronting prejudice. Students who have completed the program are invited to return as facilitators.

Outcomes

Since its inception in 1991, more than 200 youth have participated in STOP, approximately 25 each year. A number of students stay involved as peer leaders throughout high school. The program has been featured as a model on several Catholic television shows. Anecdotal surveys of participants show that the students carry the lessons learned through STOP into their everyday lives. Students are encouraged to consciously continue teaching the lessons of STOP to others by example.

Task Force on Racism

Chicago, Illinois

C o n t a c t (s)	James R. Lund or Sherwen Moor, 312-751-8390
P u r p o s e	To conduct long- and short-term projects to address racism within the Archdiocese of Chicago and to provide parishes and schools with the means to initiate or enhance efforts to combat racism.

Background

The Task Force on Racism within the Archdiocese of Chicago dates back to the early 1990s when the Illinois Catholic Bishops made a commitment to undertake a 3-year effort to address racism. At an initial statewide conference that examined racism’s effect on the institutions of society, the Archdiocesan Committee for Racial Justice was formed. A platform document resulted, outlining a systematic strategy to address racism in schools and parishes. When two racial incidents occurred in Catholic high schools, the Archdiocese accelerated its efforts and established the Task Force on Racism.

Program Operations

Projects of the Task Force are intended to affect individual attitudes and behavior as well as institutional practices in the workplace and in schools. One project focuses on creating a welcoming environment for students of all backgrounds and requires high schools and elementary schools to revise their curriculums and conduct diversity training for faculty. Additionally, parish leaders participate in overnight workshops on racial and

ethnic sensitivity as part of a strategic plan set in place by the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin. Projects are driven by three underlying principles. The first principle states that the presence of a strong spiritual leader is integral to making people see that they must change their attitudes and behavior to reconcile their differences. The second says that there must be “leadership by example” in white communities and communities of color. The third principle declares that there must be measurable outcomes that show gains people can see and embrace.

Outcomes

One of the outcomes of the Task Force is the Parish Sharing Program, which links inner-city and suburban parishes and addresses issues of race and race relations. Growing numbers of parishes are becoming interested in building relationships that bridge racial and ethnic divides. In May 1997, two forums called “The Archdiocese of Chicago Faces Racism” were conducted; 1,200 pastors, school principals, and other parish leaders attended. The forums defined racism, examined racism through a theological lens, and considered the role of leadership in combating racism.

A strong spiritual leader can move people to change the way we reconcile our differences. We need to lead by example. We need to reconcile our Nation to create a just America.