

PEACE AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

JOURNAL

SUMMER/FALL 2019

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 1



Waking Up
to Our
Shared.
Humanity

ALL PEOPLE. ALL VOICES. ALL MATTER.

The Work Continues



Since its inception as an initiative, PJI has served as a safe space for All People to engage in reflective practice and feel support to share their authentic selves and what inspires them to build a culture of peace from within. Only through the inner work of understanding “who am I” will individuals develop the capacity to “wake up to our shared humanity” to help strengthen their relationships and respond to conflict and trauma with resilience.

But for far too many, ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) inhibit one’s full potential to attain wellness and wholeness.

ACEs is used to describe neglect, abuse, and other potentially traumatic experiences that occur to people under

the age of 18 and expose these individuals to increased risk of poor physical and mental health as adults.

This issue of the Journal features the influence of ACEs, and collective traumas on learning and thriving, and reflects PJI’s commitment to further study the integration of the science behind ACEs, trauma-informed practices and healing.

Understanding the science of the brain changes the dynamic from shame to compassion as the question “What is wrong with me?” is replaced with “What happened to me?”

Insight into how systems of oppression including poverty, racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism and religious intolerance dramatically impact individual and public health will help PJI transform the culture of silence about the cumulative effect of these traumas to conversations about how much they matter and influence every aspect of well-being.

“Healing doesn’t mean the damage never existed, it means the damage no longer controls our lives.”

Though it is a lifelong process and there is no single path that leads to healing, PJI’s Principles and practices can help individuals overcome personal and societal trauma, deal with conflict and learn to become resilient.

Patricia Ambinder
Peace and Justice Institute Advisory Council Chair

PJI Advisory Council colleague and my dear friend, John C. Bersia, passed away in April. John was dedicated to informing the Central Florida community about domestic and world affairs and the global commons. Through his Pulitzer Prize winning journalism; teaching; and PBS show, *Global Perspectives*, he leaves a legacy of seeking justice, mentoring students and working for the good of humanity. John was brilliant, kind, open-minded, fair-minded, and empathetic. I will miss his presence and guidance.

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Leadership Matters

When Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, president emerita of Spelman College, came to Valencia in 2018 to keynote the Inclusive Excellence Speaker Series she repeatedly reminded audiences, “Leadership matters.” We are living at a time when leadership matters more than ever. At the Peace and Justice Institute, we believe leadership takes the form of any individual willing to stand for something, speak up, and act according to their life giving values.

Developing leaders capable of supporting a culture of compassion, respect, peace and justice is a central focus of PJI. Programs at the college and throughout Central Florida led by skilled facilitators develop leaders of cultural change. In this issue of the JOURNAL you will read about such a program at the School District of Osceola County with their Custodial Leadership Academy, a six-part workshop series aimed at nurturing leaders capable of influencing positive change. On



campus, professors Mollie McLaughlin and Lianna McGowan grow student leaders through the practices of the Principles for How We Treat Each Other.

Yes, leadership matters. As I ponder the retirement of Dr. Stacey Johnson, East and Winter Park Campus President, and her significant impact on the trajectory of the campuses she led, as well as the Peace and Justice Institute, the impact of effective leadership is undeniable.

Not only did Dr. Johnson see the building of a new School of Arts and Entertainment on East Campus, she strengthened the research and grants on her campuses to integrate STEM and the arts to create a STEAM campus. Dr. Johnson brought a broad definition of who makes up “us” and used her circle of influence to expand the “us” by diversifying her leadership team.

Dr. Johnson supported dialogues around race, gender, LGBTQ+ and socio-economics and led the way among her peers by joining the advisory council of PJI and being the first member of the senior team to participate in SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity).

Additionally, she put her energy and attention behind PJI to move us from an initiative to an institute, opening doors of opportunity for our work. With her unwavering support, PJI

built the infrastructure of an institute that serves the campus and community, with the foundations of a sustainable program certain to flourish over the years ahead. Her unwavering belief in the value of the work, her commitment to the vision, “All People. All Voices. All Matter.” and modeling of the Principles for How We Treat Each Other, made her a champion of PJI.

She guided and counseled me personally, and taught me the value of preparation. She modeled the value of conflict as an opportunity for growth and transformation, always willing to find a teachable moment to mentor others and me.

Leadership matters. Stacey Johnson brought bold leadership to Valencia College. She leaves a legacy of programs and people who have benefited from her commitment to excellence and equity in education. I extend my appreciation and gratitude for having had the opportunity to work with and learn from such a passionate, bold and effective leader.

Thank you Dr. Johnson. We will miss you!

Fondly,

Peace and Justice Institute, Director

3300

3300+ City of Orlando Employees trained by PJI in Inclusive Excellence series

25k+

25k+ PJI Principles For How We Treat Each Other introduced to 25,000+ residents in Central Florida creating a common language and common practices among us

2018

2018 PJI was presented as a credible pathway to the Culture of peace at the United Nations, 2018

101

101 PJI listed as one of the “101 Things To Love About Central Florida” by the Orlando Sentinel

5000+

5000+ attendees at workshops offered to Valencia students during PJI's week long Conversations on Justice and Global Peace Week

SPRING 2019 IN REVIEW



An Evening with Iron Eagle

January 26

Launching Conversation on Justice, this event brought Apache Medicine Man, Iron Eagle. Sitting around the fire participants joined in drumming, chanting and storytelling as they learned about the medicine wheel and honored our inherent interconnectedness.

Conversation on Justice

January 28 - 31

This collegewide conversation explored today's hot-button issues including #metoo, gun violence, immigration, economic inequality, sexual orientation, the environment and racial inequity



Black History Celebration Breakfast

January 31

Students, faculty, staff, and community members came together to celebrate the voices of courage, strength and passion from some of our African Heritage leaders within the community.



Valencia Night at Congregation of Ohev Shalom

February 15

Participants toured the synagogue, experienced a free dinner and Shabbat service at Congregation Ohev Shalom.

International Women's Day Celebration Breakfast (photo above)

March 5

In celebration of International Women's Day participants joined local women leaders who have made a positive impact on the culture of Central Florida.

Spring Fling at the Coalition for the Homeless (photo right)

March 23

Valencia clubs and groups came together to bring a day of fun and fall festivities to the children and families in residency at the Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida.



Creating a Resilient Community: From Trauma to Healing Conference

April 3

Over 500 community members joined to explore community wellness through the integration of the science behind adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), trauma-informed practices, and healing at this PJI event.



Kaepernick and the National Anthem Workshop

May 28

This interactive workshop invited participants to discuss Privilege, Pride and Patriotism through the lens of the differing views about Colin Kaepernick and his decision to “take a knee.”



PJI Academy for Teachers

Various weeks

In this weeklong program, participants are introduced to a set of pedagogical tools and theoretical frameworks that help create a peaceable and inclusive classrooms. Participants explore their own identity, hidden bias, and life experiences to discover the impact these have on the selection and delivery of curriculum and teacher/student relationships. Through selected readings, written reflections, experiential activities, and dialogue, participants identify ways to expand inclusion and create safe spaces for learning.



Conversations on Justice

In January over 3300 people participated in the annual Conversations on Justice. Covering many of today's hot-button issues—ranging from gender violence, immigration and economic inequality to food insecurity, race and sexual orientation—each event, through the power of transformative stories, facilitated discussions, award-winning films, art projects, and more, will delve into critical conversations whose ultimate goal is to promote a culture of peace and understanding and mend the fabric of our humanity.



Social Responsibility Begins With You



The Peace and Justice Institute (PJI) has been a reliable and growing partner to sustainability education over the past several years. Through its annual Peace Week in the fall and Justice Week in the spring, I've been given the opportunity to share knowledge and spark conversations about the connection between social, environmental, and economic issues that make up sustainability. Through workshop topics ranging from Conscious Consumerism, Environmental Racism, Ethics of Eating (Sustainable Food Choices), Climate Justice, Speciesism, and most recently The True Cost of Fast Fashion, we are able to engage hundreds of students.

It is important for institutions such as PJI to exist in our communities and schools because it exposes people of all ages to important topics they are typically not learning about in their classrooms, in the media, or from their peers in most social settings. This is unfortunate because sustainability topics are directly relevant to almost every part of our daily lifestyle choices and they do not have to have the negative impact they currently do on each other and our planet.

When providing workshops on the fast fashion topic, most students have never thought about the social costs of "fair" versus "ethical" labor practices, or how environmental costs such as textile waste and toxic dyes are directly linked to quality of life issues such as clean drinking water or air pollution. Education that evokes critical thinking about the world we live in creates an opportunity to not just decrease the amount of "bad" we do, but to increase the amount of good we do through small shifts in our everyday choices and mindset.

It also fills our communities and schools with change makers who will create solutions for the most pressing sustainability challenges we face.

I hope we all play our part to build a resilient world where we can move away from scarcity to abundance so individuals of all species thrive.

Resham Shirsat
PJI Advisory Council Member

Five Things We Can Do

1. Reduce/eliminate the use of single use plastics
2. Eat a more plant based diet
3. Use (buy or make) non-toxic household cleaners ("green cleaners")
4. Shop local (farmers markets, local family owned restaurants, etc.)
5. Plant trees

CREATING A RESILIENT COMMUNITY:

FROM TRAUMA TO HEALING

On April 3rd, 2019, our community conference provided participants with the opportunity to explore community wellness through the integration of the science behind adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), trauma-informed practices, and healing. The day included a keynote address from Dr. Vincent Felitti, the chief researcher of the ACEs study. The conference further provided a space for multiple stakeholder groups to discuss action plans for moving toward a resilient community. The stakeholder groups included health and medical; education; business; criminal justice, judicial, and first responders; government and public sector; and civic, faith, and non-profit.

“They [ACEs] are powerful predictors of adult social malfunction, emotional distress, health risks, disease and premature death. And that combination of high prevalence and great destructiveness makes adverse childhood experiences the leading determinant of the health and psychosocial well being and economy of the nation.”

*Vincent Felitti, MD
Founder and Executive Director,
California Institutes of
Preventative Medicine*

“We know and I think you know that we can’t arrest our way out of this situation.. that’s why law enforcement has grasped this idea of crisis intervention training, especially dealing with folks with mental health issues.”

*Sheriff John Mina
Orange County*

“We all know that Orlando and the Central Florida community are no strangers to trauma...from the Pulse tragedy.. to the impacts of domestic violence which we all know so well. But collectively we’re resilient when we are united, and we’re at our best when we are collaborative...Being a healing and trauma-informed community is without question collaborative work..so that’s what we’re here to do this morning is to collaborate.”

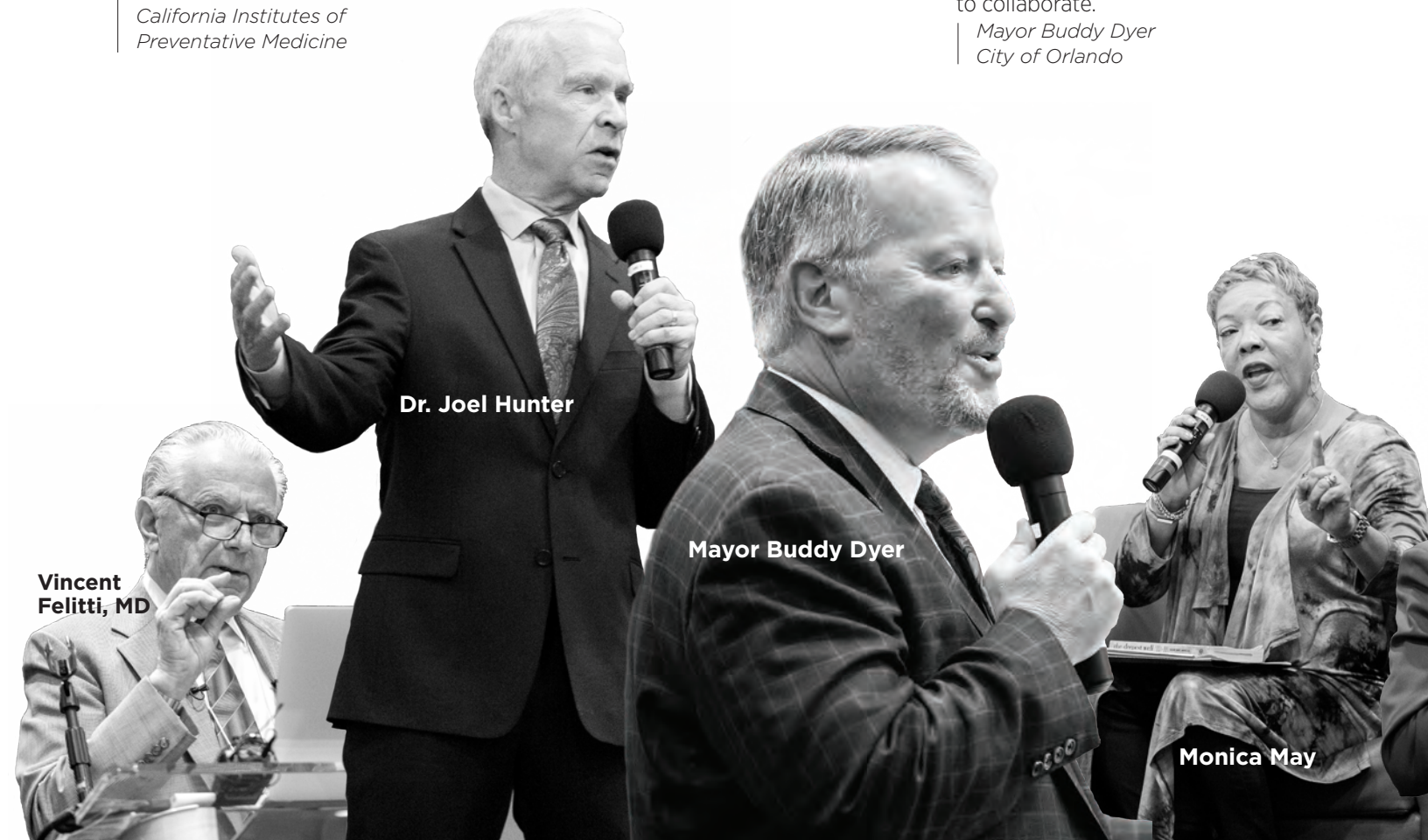
*Mayor Buddy Dyer
City of Orlando*

Dr. Joel Hunter

Mayor Buddy Dyer

Monica May

Vincent Felitti, MD



“They always say that knowledge is power, I say it’s what you do with it that makes it so powerful.”

| *Monica May*
| *Speaker, CEO, and Philanthropist*

“All of us need to get to that place of awareness and look at people that way... instead of just saying ‘what’s wrong with you’... And I’m particularly asking this of our educational sector, juvenile justice sector, our criminal justice and public safety sector, that we think about ACES before we judge, and before we act, and don’t add to the trauma.”

| *Candice Jones, MD*
| *Orlando Board Certified Physician*

“If you want change, you need to build in a reflection component in whatever you do... we can’t expect to do something externally, outside our organization, unless we’re doing it internally.”

| *Lucy Roberts*
| *Executive Director, Family Hui*

“We know that homelessness is unevenly distributed- and that interrupts learning. We know that hunger is not evenly distributed and it undermines learning. And we know that lack of transportation... and lack of childcare... and [we can] start naming all of these issues that follow the same fault lines. And now I have a new one.. ACE’s are not evenly distributed either.”

| *Dr. Sandy Shugart*
| *President, Valencia College*

“To answer the biggest challenges of our community, we need a large part of the community activated. We can’t put the entire responsibility for solutions on specialists. We need a broad-base of peer encouragers, friends, and knowledgeable helpers. Those from our faith communities seem to be highly motivated and give great hope.”

| *Dr. Joel C. Hunter*
| *Founder and Chairman, Community Resource Network*



Lucy Roberts

Sheriff John Mina

Dr. Candice Jones

Dr. Sandy Shugart



Waking Up to Our Shared Humanity

By Rudy Darden, Professor of English and PJI Facilitator

Walking into the upstairs ballroom of the Garden Theatre in downtown Winter Garden to facilitate the Rise: Conversations on Race and Unity workshop I shook my head. I knew the theatre was first opened in 1935, a time when Jim Crow laws prevented people like me, a Black man, from entering the “Whites Only” establishment. I wasn’t just entering the building. I was there to host a conversation on race, where I, along with Rachel Allen and Aida Diaz from the Peace and Justice Institute, was invited to bring together a majority White Christian group to participate in an authentic conversation titled, “Waking up to our Shared Humanity.”

As I exited the elevator to enter the room, a rush of excitement and anxiety filled my body, and I embraced it, taking in a deep breath, reassuring myself: “Rudy it’s just like the hundreds of workshops you’ve led



in the past; you’ve got this!” My anxiety in that moment stemmed from what is now known as the “Black Exodus of 2016,” where thousands of Black parishioners left predominantly white religious spaces after the national election. There I stood with my hand on the doorknob, trying to convince myself to enter back into what I presumed was a white religious space again. In that moment, I knew it was not like every other workshop I led. It was more significant to me because it was the beginning of my own attempt to move toward my own discomfort.

Upon entering the room one hour before it began, I quickly found my colleagues, took notice of the space and the materials, and began to look at every slide we were using for the night. The three of us sat in the back of the room, highlighting specific responsibilities, ensuring we focused on the timing and the wording of each slide. By the end of the run-through, we stepped outside of the main room through a side door and held hands, speaking affirming and encouraging words to each other. After a few minutes, we finished our thoughts, took a deep breath, and re-entered the room.

By that point, dozens of people streamed in and the volume of small chatter rose as pleasantries were exchanged by the incoming crowd. I saw exactly what I expected and more, as I scanned the room. There were White people, but there were also black people. There were Latinx individuals, as well as bi-racial or multi-racial participants. I took notice of two women who donned a hijab, as well. There were young people, some as young as 13 who asked to participate in the

conversation and some who were clearly well into their senior years. As my eyes widened in amazement, I noticed a Black male who looked similar in age to me coming directly toward me with a big smile on his face. Next to him, I noticed a White woman of similar age approaching with a similar smile making it obvious they were excited. They introduced themselves as the pastors of Oasis Church, the hosts of the event, in partnership with PJI and City of Orlando Mayor’s Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission.

As they continued to discuss their excitement around the event and the turnout for the evening, my mind stayed in their introductory labels as pastors of Oasis Church. Pastor William was a Black man and Pastor Shiloh was a White woman. “They both are the pastors of Oasis Church?” I thought to myself. “How could a young black man and white woman, who are married, be the pastors of a predominantly white church in Winter Garden?” My mind could not process their words, yet I nodded in excitement, doing my best to stay in the moment to focus on what they were saying.

I watched Pastor Shiloh lead the introduction with words of encouragement around their expectations for the night and their desire to see this series of conversations as a space to confront the challenging topic of race so that everyone in the room could begin to come together in unity, acknowledging and honoring the differences each person brought into the world.

Before I knew it, we were off. Slide after slide appeared on the screen as my peers and I went on and off-script weaving in

personal and anecdotal experiences related to the prompts. Participants sat in groups of five so they could share and listen to each other's personal stories. The groups were diverse so that the stories shared would reflect different life experiences. At various times, hands flew up in the air as participants asked to stand up and share their stories in the large room of how race impacted their lives. People leaned in with their eyebrows pointing towards their nose while others sat with their arms folded and their backs against the chairs. Some shifted in their seats as statistics appeared on the screen while others gave affirming head-nods. Mouths dropped, tears flowed, and smiles adorned the space over the next two and a half hours.

By the end of the conversation, I was tired, yet I was energized. I was hopeful, yet bitter. I was thrilled and eager to share with others about our experience, yet I knew the mountainous challenge ahead. I wasn't expecting closure, but I began to find some. I wasn't expecting healing, but I experienced the beginning of it.

Walking out of the Garden Theatre that night, I knew the tremendous responsibility my peers and I accepted. I didn't expect to convince or convert anyone into abandoning their racist ideas or behavior in one night, although that would have been great. But the fact that my attention was on what the participants would experience, I was completely caught off guard at the ways in which I benefited from the opportunity to facilitate this workshop.

I received an affirming gift that night. It wasn't tangible.

It wasn't something I ever put language to before that night. But it is something

I now cherish. I received and owned this overwhelming sense of gratitude. Gratitude for being exposed to the Peace and Justice Institute and the many opportunities we have to enlighten each other and our

community. Gratitude for my own diverse family working to piece together our stories around the ways in which we are impacted by race.

And while there are many other reasons why receiving that gift of gratitude was significant for me, in that moment, driving away that night, I knew that just as the Garden Theatre was officially closed in 1963, ending its segregationist policy, I was part of a rebuilding of the Central Florida community not bound by walls or separatist

Mouths dropped, tears flowed, and smiles adorned the space over the next two and a half hours.

practices. I, for this series, was part of a shared community, acknowledging its history, working through racial inequalities in the present, and laying a new foundation for a more unified future.



FUND OUR WORK

With your generous help we continue to bring practices of respect and community building to Central Florida through community dialogue, workshops, speakers and peace education. Please give a tax-deductible gift today to support our work.

GIVE

Give online at
valenciacollege.edu/pji

If you prefer to give by check, please mail to:
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1768 Park Center Dr. STE 400
Orlando, FL 32835





A Mother's Past, A Daughter's Future

INTERVIEW WITH ORLANDO'S RADIO STAR, CEO,
AND PHILANTHROPIST, MONICA MAY

Orlando's hardest working woman in radio talks about her non-profit Let's Spill The Tea (LSTT), a model for how families can break through communication barriers during the teen and young adult years.

Can you explain the meaning of the name of the program?

"Let's Spill the Tea" was derived in two ways... our grandmothers sat on the porch sippin' tea and gossiping about everyone and everything. Kids today have the "Tea" (gossip) on celebrities, friends, you name it. Mothers and daughters are sharing the same space, but not spilling the tea. Questions go unanswered and topics remain taboo.so it just felt like an appropriate expression to describe this space where families could breakthrough those communication barriers.

Why did you create this program?

I grew up in a household where my mom didn't talk much at all. At that time (the 60's) I guess the thought was, you had a roof over your head and food on the table - that's love. However, the words "I Love You," were never said and there were never any hugs.

The one thing any human being needs is interaction and I vowed to never withhold affection or attention from my child. Years later as I was raising my daughter, Monique, as a single mom, I kept my word. But I took it a step further and shared my life story with her in front

"Break the cycle, open your mouth, spill the tea. Your past can save your daughter's future."

of a packed church one night. She'd heard and seen some "things" over the years, but in that church

that night she heard it all. I talked about my years of alcohol and drug use, various relationships, self-doubt, and more. Her response was sobering, she said, "Mom I loved you before but I love you even more now. You survived all that and you're not bitter, or angry!" So I went from telling it in small groups, to now in front of thousands as I travel speaking about spilling the "Tea".

What need have you identified?

TRANSPARENCY. To be able to tell the truth to your children and spare them the heartache of travelling your same road is needed. What if alcoholism or drug dependency are hereditary and you witness behavior indicating your child is repeating the cycle? We must

talk to them about it, from our own perspective, and let them ask questions that require real answers. Afterall, mothers have been there and may have experienced things that their daughters are curious about today.

What do you see as the benefit for moms and daughters participating in this program?

LSTT gives mothers and daughters a safe space to talk, and permission to ask questions and be transparent. The Tea environment lets them know that they are not alone. Oftentimes, moms will say, "I don't want them to think badly of me." But your kids already know. They are smart. They already know who you are. Take the time to be what your mom was not to you. You know there are so many things you wish your mom had said to you. Break the cycle, open your mouth, spill the tea. Your past can save your daughter's future.

How do you see this program as healing for families?

LSTT takes the tension out of communicating. The words, "We need to talk," can raise the hairs on your arm. The Tea gives you a chance to learn some of the conversation starters and techniques that allow the "set-up" to be easier.

Once you establish that your conversations are judgment-free and a mother begins to share her "Tea" with her daughter, she too is releasing herself from bondage. It also teaches the difference between privacy, which we all need, and secrecy - which there is no need for. During a Tea there is always a licensed mental health provider present to initiate in-depth counseling if necessary.

This year we are hosting our 2nd Annual "Ties and Tea", a 90-minute Tea for dad and his daughter.

What final message do you want to share?

A mother's past can save her daughters future!







STUDENTS GET INVOLVED

Be a part of PJI by getting involved in one of the numerous programs or credit courses:

Peace and Justice Institute (PJI)
Distinction

The Peace and Justice Ambassadors

Peace Through Service

Leadership Fellows

Student Curriculum

Learn more by visiting
www.valenciacollege.edu/pji
or connect using the QR code



PEACE AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE

All People. All Voices. All Matter.



Healing and Transformation

IN THE CLASSROOM

By Dani Moritz-Long

Most students come to college with some kind of trauma. It isn't a unique phenomenon to Valencia College, but a pervasive truth that affects students across the country, even around the globe. For some students, that trauma stems from years of repressed anxiety and depression. For others, it's a result of socioeconomic status or disparities faced based on race, gender, religion or sexuality.

In recent years, Lianna McGowan, faculty, New Student Experience (NSE), explains that far too many students face trauma from the gun violence perpetrated at Pulse and, just over a year ago, at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

These traumas, which weaken students' feelings of safety and security, undermine their ability to learn. Sometimes, they manifest as a reluctance to engage in or even attend classes. Sometimes, shared traumas — like racial disparities — lead to the achievement gaps that Valencia has devoted itself to eliminating. In the case of trauma at the hands of violence, Lianna says she often notices these students seat themselves near a window and frequently avoid being too close to a door, and they — understandably — struggle to open up to their classmates.

An educator at Valencia for five years, Lianna knows it's paramount that teachers acknowledge these traumas and their impact on students' ability to learn. Likewise, she says, it's important to understand the potentially transformative power classrooms hold.

For example, Lianna says, she helps students process trauma by creating an inclusive community and safe space that encourages students to share their stories, which ultimately empowers them to gain confidence, self-awareness and strength.

In doing so, Lianna relies on the Peace and Justice Institute (PJI) Principles for How We Treat Each Other, which are embedded in her syllabus and used to preface class discussions and activities — effectively promoting key PJI ideals that encourage students to speak their truth, create a hospitable and accountable community, suspend judgment and so much more.

Embedding these principles in activities like icebreakers, journaling sessions, serial testimonies and other reflective assignments gives Lianna's students an opportunity to actively create a hospitable learning community, forge relationships, and transform the Principles from theory into actual, real-world practice. This better equips students to manage internal, interpersonal and social conflict. The practice can similarly support students in processing traumatic events and experiences from their past.

"When a student has been affected by something traumatic, and they can share the experience with a

group of people from a personal perspective, it's going to help the student become more successful, because they can bring their whole self into the classroom," Lianna explained. "For me, it's the personal story that is healing and transformative."

Lianna has experienced the power of personal stories in her classroom and witnessed countless transformations because of the stories shared.

"Students have shared with me that this has changed the trajectory of their lives — that they came to Valencia with a story that was no longer serving them, and this class showed them they can have a new story. They don't have to be the same person as when they came in."

For example, she's had students who decided to go to rehab after taking the class; she's had students change their major after they had the opportunity to reevaluate their own values and passions. She's even had students embrace their personal calling to engage in social justice issues, and she's supported Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students who have navigated immense personal and family challenges in recent years.

"Another example [of the success of integrating PJI into the classroom] is when you see students bring the practices

outside of the classroom when they're having difficulties with their friends or partners," Lianna said. "They'll share, 'it got really hard and I had to turn to wonder.' They're actually using these Principles outside of class. That's a huge moment, because you know students are doing this in their life and finding it transformational."

This kind of curriculum based on self-work is a natural fit for NSE courses, which are designed to facilitate the growth our students need as they enter college. And, Lianna believes Valencia faculty should embed PJI into as many courses as possible.

"Once you get involved with PJI, you realize how meaningful it is," she said. "Sometimes there's a misconception that it's


too therapeutic or soft, that it's not academically rigorous. It's easy to make those assumptions, but we can use this to become better teachers. Whether we're teaching economics or nursing, our students are human beings [and they can benefit from using these practices]. Any class is going to have a community of learners, so the ways these Principles can be used to create that community is endless."

"Students have shared with me that this has changed the trajectory of their lives — that they came to Valencia with a story that was no longer serving them, and this class showed them they can have a new story. They don't have to be the same person as when they came in."

GROWING LEADERS



Making a commitment to growing leaders within an organization is a sure pathway to success. The PJI Leadership Academy offers an organization a powerful program of leadership development with documented evidence of success.



At the School District of Osceola County (SDOC), PJI facilitated the Custodial Leadership Academy for 60 custodial supervisors who participated in the following series of workshops:

- Principles for How We Treat Each Other
- Conversations in Inclusiveness
- Organizing and Planning for Leadership Success
- Reflective Practice and Emotional Intelligence
- Working with Conflict
- Into Action: Activating the Principles

According to Michael Clark, Coordinator of Custodial & Ancillary Services at SDOC, "The Leadership Academy for my supervisory group gave them a better understanding and comprehensive knowledge of the supervisory field. A great majority of them are now displaying the confidence needed to face the toughest leadership challenges. They are openly projecting the skills they acquired during the classes to open a much better line of communication with their groups."

The cohort experience took place over a 6-month period, bringing the supervisors together on a monthly basis for a three-hour workshop meant to develop their leadership skills in time management, emotional intelligence, conflict navigation and communication. The workshops raised awareness about the impact bias plays on how we treat each other, with a role play experience to synthesize the skills learned throughout the Academy.

Feedback from the custodial supervisors was strong with 100% of participants feeling the Academy was beneficial to them.



The School District of Osceola County has demonstrated a tremendous commitment to the people within their organization by partnering with PJI to bring the Custodial Leadership Academy, Operational Leadership Academy, Staff Development days, and Administrators Academy keynote address, each focused on integrating the Principles for How We Treat Each Other and building a culture of respect and belonging. To learn more about how you can bring the PJI Leadership Academy to your place of work, contact Will Jefferson at Wjefferson6@valenciacollege.edu or call 407-582-6525

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

I believe the workshops are "essential" to anyone who is in a leadership role, from a custodial manager to a Superintendent.

A good reminder that a leader or supervisor's job is to not only practice treating others with respect but also rebuild trust. Also reminds us we deal with people and not machines or cell phones. Restores human contact.

Let's please do another for next school year.

This made me interact and communicate well with my employees and team.

This was so worthwhile. Usually these workshops are usually nothing we will ever take back to the workplace. The facilitators were energetic and engaging. I think these principles will be valuable in the future both personally and professionally. Great workshop.



INVEST IN YOUR PEOPLE.

**YOUR PEOPLE
WILL INVEST
IN YOU.**

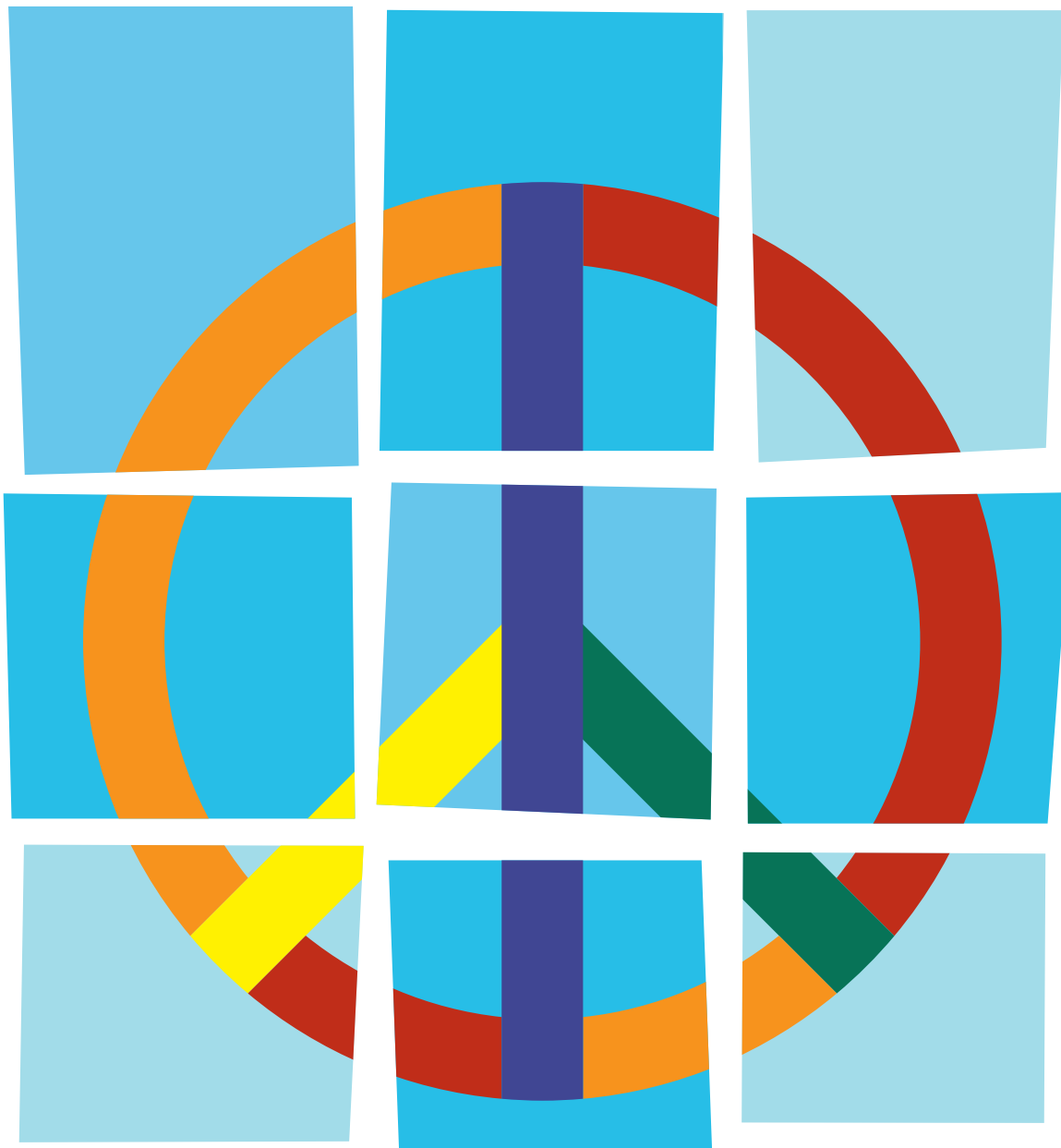
**PEACE AND
JUSTICE INSTITUTE**

All People. All Voices. All Matter.

VALENCIA COLLEGE

The Peace and Justice Institute offers a selection of transformative, interactive workshops customized to meet the needs of your organization. Our trained facilitators promote critical conversations that foster *inclusive and connected workplaces.*

To learn more visit
<http://bit.ly/PJIBizSolutions>
or call 407-582-6525



GLOBAL PEACE WEEK

SEPTEMBER 23RD-26TH

Join PJI for a week of free workshops and films aimed at growing positive peace practices. Topics include emotional intelligence, yoga, meditation, conflict transformation, mindfulness, interfaith understanding, trauma healing, forgiveness, the healing power of nature, and peaceful communication.

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MOLLIE MCLAUGHLIN

Uses Class Assignment to Bring PJI
Principles Into the Community

By Dani Moritz-Long

Create a hospitable and accountable community. Listen deeply. Create an advice-free zone.

As Mollie McLaughlin, then a first-time speech professor, and her students read the Peace and Justice Institute (PJI) Principles for How We Treat Each Other, the interest in her students was palpable — for all save one. One student — arms crossed and visibly irritated — quickly met the principles with dissent, offering no interest in engaging with their purpose or building community among his peers.

Recalling the student's adverse response, in which he employed the principles to refute them, Mollie remembers, "At some point, he said, 'do you want me to give an unpopular answer? Do you want me to speak my truth? These are bullshit.'" It's a response that might take even a tenured professor aback, and it certainly raised alarms for Mollie, then a novice educator.

"You seem like a nice lady," he continued, "and I'm sure you're all nice people," he said, addressing his concerned peers, who instantly equated the student's discontentment with a lack of compassion and respect, "but I just spent three tours between Iraq and Afghanistan. I'm tired, and I don't want to care about you. I'm here for credit; that's what I'm doing."

Then, things changed. The students gave him space, suspended their initial judgement and created a community where all voices — including discontented ones — held value. Before that student knew it, the PJI principles changed his life.

While Mollie says he remained authentically true to himself through the remainder of the class, which often manifested as bitter remarks, the students gave him space to just be him — effectively giving him time to heal. At the end of the class, when the students gave their final speech, no one expected the student's remarks.

"Because you didn't push me and you let me be where I was, I feel like I've come back to the land of the living," the student said before the class, "and I care about all of you."

"There was not a dry eye in the class," Mollie recalls. "At that point, I was 100% in. If you stay working with the principles imperfectly but with intention, you can find your way through the most awkward, difficult, identity-threatening, emotional moments and come out on the other side without annihilating each other and without doing damage to yourself and the other."

Over the years, Mollie continued to employ the principles in her speech class and now, as a professor who teaches Interpersonal Communication, she employs the principles in that class — not only to create a foundation of peace, community and understanding, but in a project that brings the principles outside of her class.

Inspired by a TED Talk called Take the Other to Lunch, Mollie's culminating assignment invites students to leverage the principles by engaging in a conversation with a stranger who they would normally avoid engaging or someone they have an ongoing conflict with.

Mollie provides copies of the principles and instructions regarding the nature of the assignment (conversation), which is designed to build a common understanding, including a common cultural language, and create a safe space for the participants to explore the other via open and honest questions. After the exchange, the students draft a paper about the experience, including how the principles impacted the conversation.

The results have been phenomenal — ranging from students initiating the healing process with family members after long and painful wounds, to students identifying their own biases and addressing these biases with members of the community.

In one paper, for example, a student detailed how the principles helped her and her ex-husband, who had already been introduced to the principles through the City of Orlando, navigate co-parenting, finding peace after years of a highly strained relationship. Another student reflected on a conversation he had initiated with a homeless man, which enabled him to see past his just-world theory and find empathy for those less fortunate. Another shared her conversation with an ex-convict who moved into her neighborhood. In her project, she explored her own discomfort and discoveries about how her biases initially prevented her from seeing that person for who he was.

But, Mollie says, while many students do have life-changing experiences, these conversations are seldom absolute in

their ability to heal us. She says one student described this phenomenon especially well.

"In doing the paper," the student wrote, "I learned that

just simply putting an effort to communicate can make us better. My mother and I spoke about a part of our lives that was difficult, and I don't think either of us walked away completely satisfied."

And in part, Mollie explains, that's the point.

"That's the truth," Mollie said. "It's not completely satisfying. There's never a period at the end of these conversations where they're wrapped up in a perfect bow. But, when you have these principles in place, you have a resilience to be present and stay present, and that really serves the relationship and the community overall."

Mollie hopes that by empowering our students to use the principles within and outside of Valencia and creating growth experiences through discomfort that she can help bring the work of PJI outward. With students as our ambassadors, we become closer and closer to creating a community where everyone is welcome, safe and included. As Mollie's project exemplifies, we won't always agree with the other, but we can work with, understand and embrace each other. That is the work of PJI.

"Because you didn't push me and you let me be where I was, I feel like I've come back to the land of the living," the student said before the class, "and I care about all of you."

PEACE AND JUSTICE INSTITUTE 2019-2020 Calendar of Events

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 6TH

Global Peace Film Festival

Community screening in partnership with the League of Women Voters.

Winter Park Campus | 850 W Morse Blvd, Winter Park, FL 32789 | 6:00 Doors Open 6:30 pm Film



TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH

Hannibal Square Heritage Walking Tour

Discover the rich history of Hannibal Square with Historian Fairlyn Livingston. Bring your walking shoes!

Hannibal Square Heritage Center | 642 W New England Ave, Winter Park, FL 32789 | 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

SEPTEMBER 22TH - 26TH

Global Peace Week

Join PJI for a week of free workshops and films aimed at growing positive peace practices. Topics include emotional intelligence, yoga, meditation, conflict transformation, mindfulness, interfaith understanding, trauma healing, forgiveness, the healthy power of nature, and peaceful communication.

College-wide | Check online for events schedule



FRIDAY OCTOBER 4TH

Valencia Night at the Islamic Society of Central Florida

Would you like to learn more about Islam and share a deeper understanding with our Muslim neighbors? Please join Valencia students, faculty, and staff for a tour of the mosque, a free Middle Eastern meal, and a presentation about the fundamentals of Islam.

Register at: <https://Valencianight2019.eventbrite.com> Islamic Society of Central Florida | 1021 N Goldenrod Road, Orlando, FL 32807 | 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

SATURDAY OCTOBER 26TH

Fall Festival Service Project

Join Valencia clubs and organizations as we come together to bring a day of fun and fall festivities to the children and families in residency at the Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida.

Coalition for the Homeless | 18 N Terry Ave, Orlando, FL 32801 | 8:30 am - 1:30 pm



SUNDAY NOVEMBER 3RD

Valencia Afternoon at Mount Moriah Baptist Church

Founded in 1886, the historically black church, known to many as "The Mount", is a landmark within the community of Hannibal Square. Join us for a church service and a conversation on history and beliefs.

Register at: www.bit.ly/MtMoriah2019 Mt. Moriah Baptist Church | 421 S Pennsylvania Ave, Winter Park, FL 32789 | 10:30 am - 1:30 pm

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 13TH

Peace Breakfast: An Interfaith Gathering

Join us for an interfaith gathering and discussion with religious leaders and humanists from across Central Florida. A free breakfast is served. All are welcome!

East Campus | 701 N Econlockhatchee Trail, Orlando, FL 32825 | Room 8-101 Doors Open for Breakfast 8:00 am | Program 8:30 am - 9:45 am



SATURDAY NOVEMBER 16TH

Healing Retreat with Iron Eagle for Valencia Students, Faculty and Staff

Join PJI for a retreat with Chiricahua Apache Medicine Man Iron Eagle in Ocala.

10:00am - 4:00pm

JANUARY 27TH - 30TH

Conversation on Justice

Covering today's hot-button issues ranging from gender equity, gun violence, immigration, economic inequality, sexual orientation, the environment and racial inequity - each event, through the power of transformative stories, facilitated dialogue, award-winning films, art and more, will delve into critical conversations whose ultimate goal is to promote a culture of peace and mend the fabric of our humanity.

College-wide | Check online for events schedule

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14TH

Valencia Day at the Hindu Society of Central Florida

Would you like to learn more about Hinduism and explore ways in which our community can learn and better connect with each other? Join us for a tour of the temple, a free vegetarian dinner, and presentations on a variety of Hindu religious traditions.

Register at: www.bit.ly/Hindu2020
1994 Lake Drive Casselberry, FL 32707 | 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm



FRIDAY - SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21ST - 22ND

Faculty and Staff Peace and Justice Spring Retreat

Nationally acclaimed speaker and facilitator, Elaine Sullivan, from the Center for Renewal and WHoleness Higher Education returns for a multi-day retreat. Explore ways for knowing beyond the rational, including mindfulness and emotional intelligence. Engage in conversations of commitment around themes of social justice and practice the Principles for How We Treat Each Other

Venue on the Lake | 641 Maitland Ave S, Maitland, FL 32751
8:30 am - 4:30 pm

THURSDAY MARCH 5TH

International Women's Day Celebration Breakfast

Join us for a celebration of women: their courage and determination makes a difference in our local community. All are welcome.

West Campus | 1800 S Kirkman Road, Orlando FL, 32811 | Room HSB 105

Open for Breakfast 8:00 am | Program 8:30 am - 9:45 am



FRIDAY MARCH 20TH

Valencia Day at Guang Ming Temple

Please join Valencia students, faculty and staff for a tour of the temple, presentations on Buddhism and calligraphy, a vegetarian lunch, and more.

Register at: www.bit.ly/GuangMing
6555 Hoffner Ave, Orlando, FL 32822 | 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

SATURDAY MARCH 28TH

Spring Fling Service Project

Join Valencia clubs and organizations as we come together to bring a day of fun and spring festivities to the children and families in residency at the Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida.

Coalition for the Homeless | 18 N Terry Ave, Orlando, FL 32801 | 8:30 am - 1:30 pm



DATES TBA

Inclusive Excellence Speaker Series

The Inclusive Excellence (IE) Series is a collaborative effort to educate our community on a topic aimed at improving inclusive excellence - the notion that a community or institution's success is dependent on how well it values, engages and includes the rich diversity of its members.

College-wide | Check online for events schedule

All events are subject to change. Additional events will be added throughout the year. For the most up-to-date PJI calendar check Facebook at www.facebook.com/valenciaceandjustice or the PJI website at www.valenciacollege.edu/pji

PRINCÍPIOS DE COMO TRATAMOS UNS AOS OUTROS

HOW WE TREAT EACH OTHER

Our Practice of Respect and Community Building

1. **Create a hospitable and accountable community.** We all arrive in isolation and need the generosity of friendly welcomes. Bring all of yourself to the work in this community. Welcome others to this place and this work, and presume that you are welcomed as well. Hospitality is the essence of restoring community.
2. **Listen deeply.** Listen intently to what is said; listen to the feelings beneath the words. Strive to achieve a balance between listening and reflecting, speaking and acting.
3. **Create an advice free zone.** Replace advice with curiosity as we work together for peace and justice. Each of us is here to discover our own truths. We are not here to set someone else straight, to “fix” what we perceive as broken in another member of the group.
4. **Practice asking honest and open questions.** A great question is ambiguous, personal and provokes anxiety.
5. **Give space for unpopular answers.** Answer questions honestly even if the answer seems unpopular. Be present to listen not debate, correct or interpret.
6. **Respect silence.** Silence is a rare gift in our busy world. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words. This applies to the speaker, as well - be comfortable leaving your words to resound in the silence, without refining or elaborating on what you have said.
7. **Suspend judgment.** Set aside your judgments. By creating a space between judgments and reactions, we can listen to the other, and to ourselves, more fully.
8. **Identify assumptions.** Our assumptions are usually invisible to us, yet they undergird our worldview. By identifying our assumptions, we can then set them aside and open our viewpoints to greater possibilities.
9. **Speak your truth.** You are invited to say what is in your heart, trusting that your voice will be heard and your contribution respected. Own your truth by remembering to speak only for yourself. Using the first person “I” rather than “you” or “everyone” clearly communicates the personal nature of your expression.
10. **When things get difficult, turn to wonder.** If you find yourself disagreeing with another, becoming judgmental, or shutting down in defense, try turning to wonder: “I wonder what brought her to this place?” “I wonder what my reaction teaches me?” “I wonder what he’s feeling right now?”
11. **Practice slowing down.** Simply the speed of modern life can cause violent damage to the soul. By intentionally practicing slowing down we strengthen our ability to extend community building to others—and to ourselves.
12. **All voices have value.** Hold these moments when a person speaks as precious because these are the moments when a person is willing to stand for something, trust the group and offer something he or she sees as valuable.
13. **Maintain confidentiality.** Create a safe space by respecting the confidential nature and content of discussions held in the group. Allow what is said in the group to remain there.

Prepared by the Peace and Justice Institute with considerable help from the works of Peter Block, Parker Palmer, the Dialogue Group and the Center for Renewal and Wholeness in Higher Education

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Find the Principles for How We Treat Each Other in multiple world languages at www.valenciacollege.edu/pji

Interfaith Series 2019-2020

Join us as we expand our own intercultural experiences by exploring various houses of worship and learning about their practices and beliefs. With this, we build bridges of understanding among us and strengthen our community bonds.

*The events are free and open to the public.
Registration is required. Join us!*

Valencia Night at the Islamic Society of Central Florida

Join us for a tour of the mosque, a free Middle Eastern meal, and a presentation about the fundamentals of Islam.

Friday October 4th 2019

1021 N Goldenrod Road
Orlando, FL 32807

5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Register at:
<https://Valencianight2019.eventbrite.com>

Valencia Afternoon at Mount Moriah Baptist Church

Join us for a church service and conversation on the history and beliefs of this historically black church, known to many as "The Mount", a landmark in Hannibal Square.

Sunday November 3rd 2019

421 S Pennsylvania Ave
Winter Park, FL 32789

10:30 am - 1:30 pm

Register at:
www.bit.ly/MtMoriah2019

Valencia Night at Hindu Society of Central Florida

Join us for a tour of the temple, a free vegetarian dinner, and presentations on a variety of Hindu traditions including yoga and meditation.

Friday February 14th 2020

1994 Lake Drive
Casselberry, FL 32707

5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Register at:
www.bit.ly/Hindu2020

Valencia Day at Guang Ming Temple

Join us for a tour of the temple, a presentation on calligraphy and Buddhist philosophy. Enjoy a free vegetarian lunch and more.

Friday March 20th 2020

6555 Hoffner Ave
Orlando, FL 32822

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Register at:
www.bit.ly/GuangMing

PEACE NEWS

CELEBRATING PEACE NEWS LOCALLY,
NATIONALLY, AND INTERNATIONALLY.

Atlanta to transform 7 acres of vacant property into country's largest food forest for public

The council said in the ordinance that The Urban Food Forest would include edible trees, shrubs, vines, walking trails, community garden beds and a number of other features that would be open to the public for free.

Source: *The Hill*



Taiwan Legalizes Gay Marriage

Taiwan's parliament has become the first in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage following a vote on Friday.

Source: *BBC*

Morehouse College Graduates' Student Loans to Be Paid Off by Billionaire

During his commencement speech at Morehouse College, the billionaire investor Robert F. Smith pledged that he and his family would pay off the student debt for the entire graduating class.

Source: *The New York Times*



How a 97-Year-Old Artist Used Doodles to Save His Beloved Hometown From Being Torn Down

When the Taiwanese government was threatening to demolish his beloved hometown, a retired war veteran managed to save the place with a paintbrush. 97-year-old Huang Yung-fu is responsible for transforming the Nantun district of Taichung City into “The Rainbow Village” that now attracts throngs of visitors.

Source: Good News Network



Orlando-area Commission: ‘Housing First’ initiative to combat homelessness a success

The Central Florida Commission on Homelessness says since implementing its ‘Housing First’ model in 2014, some 339 chronically homeless have been housed. That’s more than triple the initial 100 they planned to help. Their emergency room visits dropped 60 percent, trips to jail decreased 85 percent, and 96 percent still have roofs over their heads.

Source: Spectrum News13



Solutions Journalism Network

Solutions Journalism Network (www.solutionsjournalism.org) trains and connects journalists to cover what’s missing in today’s news: how people are responding to problems. Working to bring solutions journalism to every newsroom worldwide.

Source: Solutions Journalism



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