

Valencia College Peace and Justice Initiative

Season's Greetings

The Peace and Justice Initiative is completing another season of programming and development. It has been a fruitful time for our work in many ways. Our growing Conflict Transformation program was boosted by the three day residency with Dr. George Lopez from Notre Dame University. In addition, a team of five University of Central Florida graduate students have worked to synthesize our Conflict Transformation curriculum into a comprehensive training that will be made available to faculty and staff in the spring through Faculty Development and EDGE workshops. Ultimately, the Conflict Transformation curriculum will be brought to students through *Skillshops*, imbedded modules in SLS and IPC as well as the PAX 1500 course, which is in development to be piloted the fall of 2012.

We are excited to report that beginning fall 2012, Peace Studies will be taught on four campuses including East, West, Osceola and Winter Park. Thanks to our faculty, Penny Villegas, Paul Chapman, Cass O'Little and Eli Solis for making this a reality.

The co-curricular work of the Initiative continues with International Peace Day celebrations, a film festival in partnership with the Global Peace Film Festival, service work at the Coalition for the Homeless and the Multifaith Prayer breakfast. Each of these activities helps to realize the mission of the PJI, to make a difference by intentionally engaging in practices and principles that explore, advocate and honor the dignity of self, others and the earth.

As we look ahead to the spring and a new semester of exciting programming, we invite you to join us.



Notre Dame University Scholar Comes to Valencia



Dr. George Lopez, Scholar in Residence from Notre Dame University, discusses finding peace in a world of terrorism.

In late October, Valencia faculty, staff and students had the privilege of learning from Dr. George Lopez, a visiting scholar from the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at Notre Dame University. For three days, and through a series of workshops and lectures, Dr. Lopez shared his knowledge and experience as an international relations expert and peace scholar.

“We invited Dr. Lopez to the college to guide us in the development of our Peace Studies curriculum, as well as bring his expertise to students and faculty in our ongoing Conflict Transformation work,” said Rachel Allen, coordinator of the Peace and Justice Initiative. Rachel and her colleagues, Celine Kavalec-Miller, English professor, and David Sutton, dean, humanities and foreign languages, first met Dr. Lopez two and a half years ago at Notre Dame University, where they began to explore how we could incorporate peace studies into Valencia’s curriculum.

On October 18, Dr. Lopez held a workshop for students where he discussed critical skills needed in the art of negotiation. The following day, he held a similar workshop for faculty on teaching conflict resolution. In addition to 19 Valencia full and part-time faculty, were guests from the University of Central Florida and the Islamic Society of Central Florida.

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Students engage in an afternoon workshop on the 'Art of Negotiation' with Dr. Lopez



Faculty in engage in 'The Art of Negotiation' with Dr. George Lopez from The Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies

Terry Miller, a professor of criminal justice, attended the faculty workshop and was eager to learn more about how he could incorporate “new ideas and problem solving techniques to a vast number of situations and issues involving peace and justice, conflict resolution and conflict transformation.” After “having seen more than anyone should of war and injustice in my life, this workshop was a must do,” Terry said. He went on to say that the workshop “encouraged positive thought and growth possibilities from what I was already doing to what I could do, from my classes and program, to joining forces with all the other great people in the group, to bring these ideas and solutions to the students, staff and faculty at Valencia.”

Dr. Lopez wrapped up his visit on October 20, with a public lecture titled, [“Is Peace Possible in a World of Terrorism?”](#) where he discussed his work on “the search for peace in a world of terrible violence.” In this presentation, Dr. Lopez discussed the world we live in, the challenges we face, and how the nation has traditionally responded to those challenges.

Looking back on the world’s history, Dr. Lopez said that the response to many of our challenges has been the use of military force. While military responses might be effective in some cases, Dr. Lopez points out that, “there are other routes of response where we might be able to, by policy changes and some other successes, make the world overall less violent.” You can [watch Dr. Lopez’s full lecture](#) below thanks to our digital media department, who made this event available to the college community.

George A. Lopez (Ph.D., Syracuse University, 1975) holds the Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., Chair in Peace Studies at the *Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies* at Notre Dame University. Lopez’s research focuses primarily on the problems of state violence and coercion, especially economic sanctions, gross violations of human rights, and ethics and the use of force.



Dr. Lopez’s visit was made possible by the partnership of the Valencia Foundation, Faculty Development, the Teaching and Learning Academy, Student Development, and the Patricia Havill Whalen Endowed Chair in the Social Sciences. “The Endowed Chair program offers Valencia faculty a tremendous opportunity to bring new ideas to the college. I am grateful to the Foundation for providing the resources to pursue this work,” said Rachel.

This article first appeared in the [Valencia Grove](#).

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Faculty Workshop with George Lopez, *The Art of Negotiation Reflections*

Below are some of the comments from the faculty who attended the workshop:

I found that this work will be effective in all disciplines and all groups of the college. We can use this with our work with students, faculty and our community.

Upon reflection, I see that not only is peace studies an essential tool in critical thinking but also holds weight as a "science" due to the fact that resolution/results can be concluded a priori.

I am glad that I attended. The opportunity to learn from an established scholar is invaluable.

This was great, focused, usable material that can directly translate to a class module for all types of classes.

Both the simulation and "working lunch" which followed were very engaging, but these were merely peaks in an overall stimulating workshop. Thank you!



Valencia and UCF faculty engage in a negotiation simulation with Dr. Lopez



A special thanks to our fall interns, Krystal Pherai and Melvin Thompson for their commitment and contributions.

Valencia Faculty and Students Meet National and International Leaders in Conflict Resolution Education



*Elis Solis, Zoraya Torres, Rachel Allen,
Maria Batista and Yasmeen Qadri*

Students from the Valencia Future Educators Club, Zoraya Torres and Maria Batista joined faculty at the 4th International Summit on Conflict Resolution Education at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland this past June. The group met with leading practitioners in peacebuilding and conflict resolution education and brought home ideas for programming at our own college, including [Sustained Dialogue Campus Network](#).

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Images from International Peace Day Festivities September 21



Faculty, staff and students get involved as we raise awareness about the [United Nations](#) sanctioned day for global peace.

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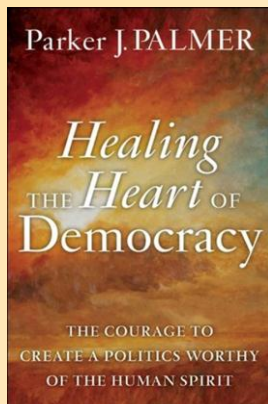
SAVE THE DATE

March 16-17

Spring Faculty and Staff Peace and Justice Workshop

Elaine Sullivan, from the [Center for Renewal and Wholeness in Higher Education](#) returns for a two-day workshop Friday and Saturday March 16-17, 2011.

The workshop will be based on Parker Palmer's newest book titled, *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit*.



All faculty and staff are welcome to attend.

The workshop will be hosted at an off-campus site. The fee for the two-day experience is \$100.00, which includes facilitation, a copy of the book and lunch Friday and Saturday. SPD tuition reimbursement funds may be used for FT faculty and staff. PD credit available. Scholarships are available upon request.

Watch for registration information through The Grove. For questions, please contact the Peace and Justice Office at x2291 or e-mail peaceandjustice@valenciacollege.edu

Peace and Justice Retreat August 2011

In August, nineteen faculty and staff met for a one day retreat at Canterbury Center. These are some of the reflections from the day.....

I will incorporate what I learned about community building into my lectures in Social Psychology.

I will focus on creating community in my classroom this semester. The community vision piece will help with this. Great day! It is so refreshing to be able to share deeply with peers.

I like learning about the four stages of community. I'm sure I will use that information almost daily (personal and on the job). I enjoyed learning more about myself. I confirmed my 'need' for connections with like-minded associates/friends. Although it is not a 'learning', I was refreshed and renewed as a result of participating in the retreat. This will help me start my semester with renewed passion and commitment.

I liked the format of the Retreat. There was time for personal reflection, then small group sharing and exploring and then large group time. The day seemed to flow and build a great sense of trust.

I am so appreciative of the opportunity to take part in this retreat. Thank you to all who made the retreat a reality. Valencia College is to be commended for offering such inspiring and valuable programs for staff and faculty.



Participants from the August retreat

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Here's What PAX1000 Does

The best way to show the range of topics and attitudes in Peace Studies is by looking at the actions of my past students: PAX1000 includes spiritual practices, intellectual rigor and service to others.

The spiritual aspect was clear when I went to a Buddhist temple and the young woman sitting in front of me turned around, called my name and hugged me. She was there with her boyfriend and mother. They have been going several times a week for four years--ever since she left the PAX1000. She had read Deepak Chopra and Thich Nhat Hanh. She said, with such a smile, that was what introduced her to Buddhism.

Then we have the academic strain. Andrea Gardner and Angelica Hoyos were my right hand women for 3 semesters. They made posters on speakers and events, posted them, carried tables, wrote petitions, gathered signatures, invited speakers; they had found their path. The photo below was taken at Columbia University where they were accepted and they continue what they started in PAX1000 class and in Amnesty International. Andrea wants to continue in International Law; Angelica with Human Rights, focusing on Minorities and Women. She fights to abolish the death penalty.



Here's what Andrea (on the left) is doing now: *After spending the last several years focusing almost exclusively on political activism for human rights with organizations such as Amnesty International (which I was inspired to join while taking PAX 1000), the Human*

Rights Campaign, and Jobs with Justice, I decided this summer to get involved with my community on a more personal, service-oriented level. I volunteered to teach ESL and GED classes for an organization called Community Impact that serves to educate and improve the literacy of marginalized individuals in the New York City area. It has become one of the most rewarding things I've ever done. My students were an incredibly diverse group that were eager to learn and ready to make a change in their lives to improve the lives of their families, but by the end of the summer, I can honestly say that they changed mine for the better.

Since then, I've been hired by the organization to train volunteer teachers and teach conflict resolution to help teachers better communicate with their students and manage their classrooms. As I continue to teach my GED students and teachers, I draw constantly from the principles of non-violence I learned from my Peace Studies class and the Conflict Transformation training I received from Dr. Alma Abdul Hadi-Jadallah when she visited Valencia in 2010.

Here's more service: Ana Maria de la Rosa carried her love for justice into the Peace Corps. She's in Peru and her task is to teach safe sex--among other things. There's a high incidence of HIV so hers is a crucial job. She's also involved with teaching healthy diets: "I've been doing these series of educational classes with moms about nutrition and ways to not make your kids fat and useless. They have been going really well :) Moms are receptive and a good crowd to work with. At the end of the day they just want their kids to be healthy and happy. I help give them a couple of tools on how to make that happen." Ana is in her second year of service. I wish you could see her contagious smile, she makes it all fun.

There are many ways to serve: Allison Estes went on to work with the National Coalition for the Homeless and AmeriCorps as she finished her degree at UCF. Krystal Pherai works as an intern with the Peace and Justice Initiative on East Campus.

This past summer brought a new experience! When the police were arresting Food Not Bombs members for sharing food with the homeless in Lake Eola, I went to witness. There were numerous homemade posters: "Jesus didn't need a permit" and "If the people are

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hungry, we will feed them." I was so happy to see many of my past students. I confess I was nervous when several of them were hauled off in handcuffs. One, Brock, who had said in class that he wanted to go into politics, was quoting Martin Luther King as they pushed him into the van. Six of them went to prison over the course of three weeks. They went willingly, practicing civil disobedience and direct action as King and Gandhi modeled.

Like all teachers I have questioned whether what happens in the classroom makes an impact. I never thought to see such proof. It's not me--it's the power of models like New England philosopher Henry David Thoreau, our American Peace Hero Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Great Soul, Mahatma Gandhi.

Penny Villegas
Professor Emeritus
Peace Studies

The United States Institute of Peace includes Valencia College and the Peace and Justice Initiative among twenty-one two year colleges in a forthcoming book



Included on the list of two year colleges are peace and conflict programs where
(1) there is an academic credit based effort, or
(2) there is tangible ongoing noncredit effort, and
(3) the program has a web presence.

Valencia College's PJI met each of these criteria. The book is scheduled for release in the fall of 2012.

Veterans-Only Speech Class

Valencia College's first ever Veterans-Only speech class is underway and doing fine. There are 13 veterans representing every military branch. Their years of service range from 2 to 20, the mix is four women-nine men and their backgrounds vary from submarines to infantry. All agree the overriding fabric that surrounds the class is the safe and comfortable environment created by people with similar backgrounds.

Although the major emphasis is on becoming a better speaker, we often talk about different associated with the military. Obviously VA benefits come up a lot, therefore one class will be devoted to having someone come in and talk specifically about benefits. Ashley Powell (USMC) has everyone bringing in several items that will be packaged up and sent to our soldiers deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. The class elected to go and listen to a speaker from the Wounded Warrior Project and we had fellow veteran, Mark Bollenback (US Army) come from East Campus and talk to us about Valencia's library resources.

When asked if the class was going to be run every other semester, my response was, "The goal is to have two sections every semester." In spring 2012 the class will be taught Tuesday and Thursday from 2:30pm - 3:45 pm on West Campus, Building 5, Room 115. Call Sharon Sorrough at (407) 582-1313 to register.

John Creighton
Professor of Speech



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Service for Peace: *The Fall Fest* at the Coalition for the Homeless

Over 50 volunteers from Valencia, including members of the West Campus H.E.R.O.S., Phi Theta Kappa, the East Campus Psychology Club, members of the Muslim Student Association, the Honors College and the Peace and Justice Initiative came together October 29 for a *Fall Fest* at the Coalition for the Homeless for families and their children. Fun was had by all as we danced, played games, painted faces, made crafts, took family portraits, won prizes and shared the morning together.



Valencia students and faculty brighten the day of families at the Coalition for the Homeless.



Join us for the *SPRING FLING*
at the Coalition for the Homeless

April 14, 2012 10:00-2:00 PM

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Reflections about Trauma

I am teaching a veterans-only speech class. I am a veteran myself, but of a different era (Vietnam). Although the times and landscape have changed dramatically, our soldiers still have one thing in common – when they're in country and looking at a civilian, the question still remains, are they friend or foe?

I wanted to upgrade my mental antenna before the class began this fall. I started reaching out to people who were currently dealing with veterans. I am not a counselor nor do I want to put myself in that position but at least I wanted to know what some of tell-tale signs of trauma and PTSD might look like.

As part of my preparation for the class this fall, I attended a two day workshop on trauma facilitated by two professors from Eastern Mennonite University. They are a part of a fantastic initiative called S.T.A.R. ([Strategies for Trauma Awareness & Resilience](#)) that was created to assist thousands of people affected by 9/11 and Hurricanes Katrina & Rita. EMU's overall curriculum was developed by an "internationally-renowned" faculty and training staff from the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding.

I rather cavalierly walked in and sat down only thinking about veterans. Two days later, I was barely able to get out of my seat and walk out the door overwhelmed by how deep trauma runs in the veins of so many everyday people. The emphasis was more about awareness but we did get some excellent take home skills. I'm now registered for their week-long Level 1 training in March 2012 and have every intention of attending their second level in 2013.

I would encourage you to explore the S.T.A.R. website (<http://www.emu.edu/cjp/pti/star/>) and check out the S.T.A.R. training and their resources. Thank you Dr. Alma Jadallah for mentioning EMU in one of our workshops - Valencia's P&J Initiative, you rock!

John Creighton
Professor of Speech
West Campus

UCF Graduate Students Partner in Conflict Transformation Training Development



A service-learning project for UCF graduate students turned into a preliminary, Conflict Transformation training course for Valencia College's Peace and Justice Initiative. Five UCF graduate students (Christina Cook, Instructional Design, MA; Loretta Forlaw, PhD, RN, FACHE; Maram Khayyat, Instructional Technology, MA; Marilyn Jackson-Lee, EdS; Lauri Lott, Applied Learning and Instruction, MA) spent one semester synthesizing the Conflict Transformation work of the PJI, designing, and producing a training course for Valencia faculty and staff. As a diverse group of graduate students, "Team Transformers" not only produced a marketable program but also set in motion a lasting network of professionals and new friends.

Under the guidance of UCF Professor Atsusi "2c" Hirumi, PhD, and Professor Rachel Allen, Valencia College PJI Coordinator, Team Transformers received a direct learning experience in systems design. "This experience has given me more than I bargained for. I not only gained experience in systems design, but I learned about the framework of Conflict Transformation and how it permeates all areas of my life: personal, educational, and professional," notes UCF graduate student Lauri Lott.

Two UCF graduate students will continue partnering with the PJI in the Spring of 2012; Christina Cook will help design the course for online applicability and Lauri Lott will continue with the PJI as an intern.

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Partnering with the Community

On the evening of October 19, Dr. George Lopez from Notre Dame University spoke to a gathering of friends on the compelling topic, “Is the United Nations Worth It?”



Mitch Bloomer from the Holocaust Memorial Center of Central Florida



Gabriela Lothrop and Jessica Gagnon from the UCF Global Perspectives Office with Imam Muhammad Musri from ISCF



Laura Firtel, AmeriCorps Director



Dr. Yasmeeen Qadri and Dr. Valerie King, Director of the Office of Diversity Initiatives at UCF



Lucy Roberts of Roberts Consulting and Sue Foreman from the Valencia Foundation Board of Trustees



Imam Musri of the Islamic Society of Central Florida and John Bersia from the Global Perspectives Office at UCF

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Café Conversations: How We Treat Each Other

Thirty-three people, including students, faculty, and staff attended the Peace and Justice Initiative's Café Conversation: *How We Treat Each Other* event on Thursday, October 6, 2011. The purpose of the event was to "explore how we might imbed the [How We Treat Each Other](#) principles and practices into the campus culture," said Rachel Allen, coordinator of the Peace and Justice Initiative.

At the event, the attendees were divided into groups of four and assigned one or two of the twelve *How We Treat Each Other* principles. Each table had twenty minutes to discuss two questions: "How might this principle have a positive impact on our campus culture?" and "What might be a barrier to adopting this principle?"



Students and faculty dialogue about the 'Principles for How We Treat Each Other'

During these twenty minutes, "incredible interaction between unique individuals took place," Rachel said. While not everyone was familiar with their fellow participants, it didn't take long for them to share ideas and thoughtful responses. After twenty minutes, the "lightning round" was open and each table facilitator shared insights from their group discussion.

The event ended with a conversation about how to bring these principles to life on campus. Ideas such as adopting a "principle" for the week, including the principles in the student handbook and faculty planner, taking ten minutes out of a math class to converse over a principle, practicing the principles in our homes, and conducting more Café Conversations were just a few of the suggestions. The event atmosphere was positive, and participants were left energized and ready to put the principles into action.

The [How We Treat Each Other](#) principles are more than a catch phrase – they could become a foreseeable reality in our day-to-day interactions with one another. Dr. Ruth Prather, our East Campus President hopes that these principles will be adopted and practiced as her campus plan is developed. "The principles identify behaviors that support a learning-centered campus," Dr. Prather said. "These behaviors help each of us understand ourselves, our students and each other better."

Furthermore, Dr. Joyce Romano, Vice President for Student Affairs, pointed out that the principles will be helpful to her team. "How we build partnerships with students and with each other to serve students is fundamental to our work to promote student success," Dr. Romano said. She went on to explain that students are often under stress when they visit student affairs staff and that her team experiences an equal amount of stress when helping students "start right" at Valencia. "For all of these times, the *How We Treat Each Other* [principles] are helpful," Dr. Romano explained. "We need to approach each student with grace in order to help them through their difficulties and to get on track."

The Peace and Justice Initiative is a faculty and staff guided initiative that seeks to transform the culture at Valencia by creating an environment where peace and justice for all are valued, and conflict is viewed as an opportunity for growth and transformation. Look for more Café Conversations in the coming months.

This article was first appeared in the [Valencia Grove](#).

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Upcoming Events

January:

17-19 Reading Circles based on Karen Armstrong's *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*

23-27 *Conversations on Compassion* with Service, Workshops, Forums, Film, Keynote

February:

TBA Café Conversations: *How We Treat Each Other*

March:

16-17 *Healing the Heart of Democracy: Spring Workshop for Faculty and Staff*, with facilitator Elaine Sullivan from the *Center for Renewal and Wholeness in Higher Education*

TBA Conflict Transformation Workshop Part I: Faculty and Staff Development

29 Multifaith Prayer Breakfast, East Campus

April:

14 *Spring Fling Service Project* at the Coalition for the Homeless

19 Earth Day Celebrations and Film Screening in partnership with the Global Peace Film Festival



The West Campus HEROS, with a membership of 200 students, bring Peace and Justice awareness to their campus through programming and service.



Panelists from the Multifaith Prayer Breakfast represent Islam, Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism and Judaism



Peace and Justice Initiative Mission:

All People, All Voices, All Matter: Making a difference by intentionally engaging in practices and principles that explore, advocate, and honor the dignity of self, others, and the earth.

The PJI is proud to partner with Student Development, the Honors College, the Professional Staff Leadership Team, the Wellness Program, Faculty Development, the Valencia Foundation and the Veteran's Initiative in support of programming at the college.

Many thanks to our contributing photographers:
Don Burlinson and Caitlin Dos Santos

We extend our gratitude to the Valencia Foundation whose private donors partially fund the PJI.

Please visit the Peace and Justice Initiative at
www.valenciacollege.edu/PJI