

EVENTS

The Peace and Justice Initiative Establishes an Advisory Council

It is with great pride and honor that the Peace and Justice Initiative announces our new Advisory Council. The advisory council represents distinguished members of the community engaged in interfaith, social justice, law enforcement, non-profit, and legal work. In addition, faculty, staff and administrators from the college are represented on the council. The first meeting was held at Leu Gardens October 9, 2012.



Subhas Rampersaud Tiwari and Paul Chapman



Imam Muhammad Musri, Lucy Roberts, Patricia Ambinder, and Jessica King



Dr. Joyce Romano and David Sutton



Dr. James McDonald, Dr. Falecia Williams, Chief Paul Rooney, and Undersheriff Rey Rivero

VALENCIA COLLEGE

**Peace and Justice Initiative
Advisory Council**

1. Rachel Allen
2. Patricia Ambinder
3. Linnette Bonilla
4. Paul Chapman
5. Sheriff Jerry Demings
6. Ann Farrell
7. Sue Foreman
8. Aminah Hamidullah
9. Liz Jusino
10. Jessica King
11. Lauri Lott
12. Donna Marino
13. Greg Meier, Esq.
14. Imam Muhammad Musri
15. Krystal Pherai
16. Undersheriff Rey Rivero
17. Lucy Roberts
18. Dr. Joyce Romano
19. Chief Paul Rooney
20. David Sutton
21. Subhas Rampersaud Tiwari
22. Penny Villegas
23. Dr. Falecia Williams

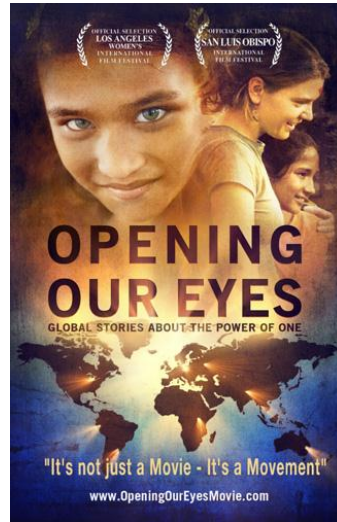
**International Peace Day Celebrations
September 21st**



For International Peace Day, annually celebrated on September 21st, the Peace and Justice Initiative celebrated by creating “Pinwheels for Peace” on the East Campus. Students made friendships while at the tables decorating their pinwheels.



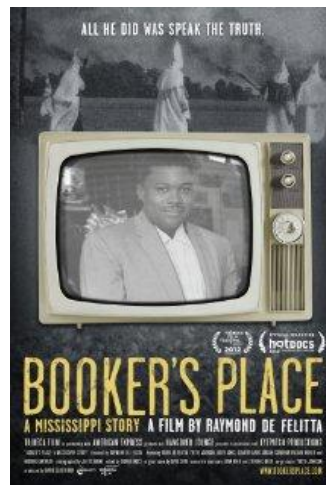
Later that day, The Peace and Justice Initiative, in collaboration with the [Global Peace Film Festival](#) screened the film *Khaati Suun*, about young women in rural Nepal who struggle to get an education and overcome many obstacles along the way.



On Thursday evening celebrations included an East and West Campus screening of *Opening Our Eyes*, by mother-daughter filmmakers who circled the globe on a 99-day journey filming eleven individuals who have dedicated their lives in order to make a positive difference in the world. This film inspired students to recognize “the power of one.”



Following the screening of *Opening Our Eyes*, members of the audience gathered in a field outside to create a human peace sign by candlelight.



The final event for Peace Day was the screening of *Booker's Place: A Mississippi Story* on the Winter Park Campus. This deeply personal film explores the legacy of intolerance as well as the life of an ordinary man who changed the world around him when he decided to speak the truth. The film stirred up many of the students' thoughts about racism and inequality in today's society.

Contributed by Linnette Bonilla, PJI Student Intern

Peace and Education on Valencia Night at the Islamic Society of Central Florida

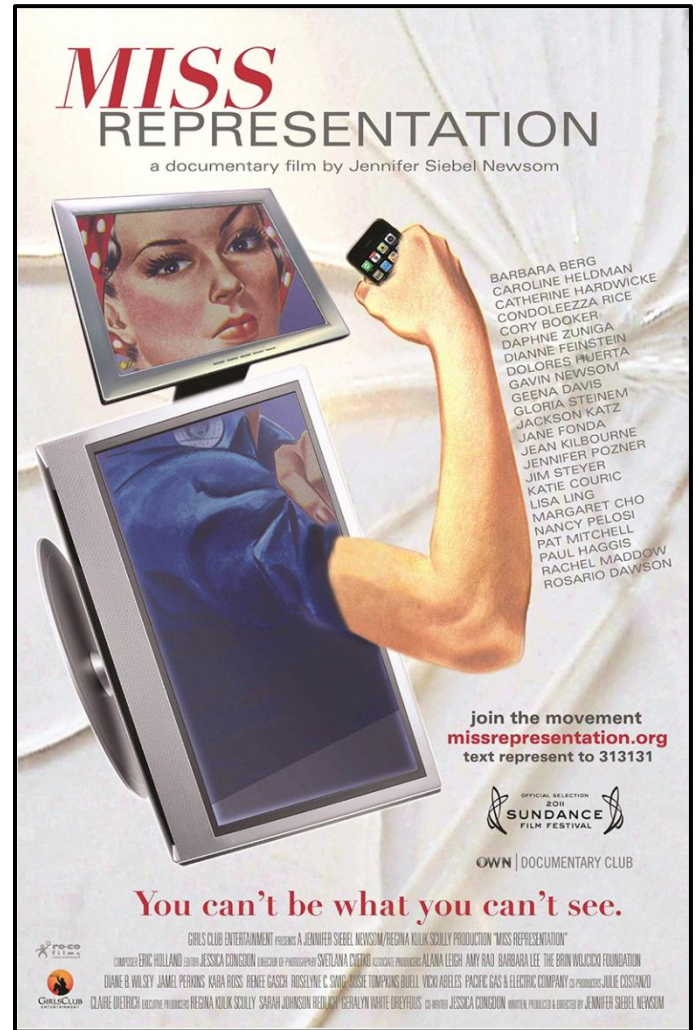


The PJI Teams Up with Psychology Club to Talk About Gender Equality

On October 2nd the Initiative joined up with the [Psychology Club](#) to screen the film [Miss Representation](#). *Miss Representation* is the award-winning documentary film that exposes how mainstream media contributes to the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and influence in America. The film challenges the media's limited and often disparaging portrayals of women and girls, which make it difficult for women to achieve leadership positions and for the average woman or girl to feel powerful herself. After the film screening, the audience engaged in a lively and thoughtful discussion about the issues raised in the film.

With the aim of bringing people of different religious and cultural backgrounds together to debunk myths about Islam, the [Peace and Justice Initiative](#), the office of [diversity and inclusion](#), and the Islamic Society of Central Florida ([ISCF](#)) collaborated to host Valencia Night at the ISCF! Over 300 Valencia students, faculty, and staff gathered at ISCF on Friday, October 12, for an evening of peace and education. Attendees had the opportunity to take a tour of the mosque, view a presentation about the core tenants of Islam versus what you may see in the media, and enjoy a delicious international feast. Questions and dialogue were a welcomed part of the event, and some participants left saying that they had a new found understanding of Islam. "The intent of the program was not to change people's belief systems," explained Rachel Luce-Hitt, coordinator of diversity and inclusion. "The point of the event was to expose people to differences in perspectives and harness the mutual respect that is essential in our journey towards peace, diversity, and inclusion."

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



PEACE STUDIES CURRICULUM
PAX 1000: Introduction to Peace Studies



The Peace Studies Professors: Cass O'Little from West Campus, Paul Chapman from Osceola Campus, and Eli Solis from East Campus

Introduction to Peace Studies: PAX 1000 was offered on three campuses this fall. Introduction to Peace Studies is a study of peace in its philosophical, religious, literary, historical and other cultural contexts. The course includes investigation into the causes of violence on the global and personal levels, and an emphasis on the interdisciplinary study of peace and the peace movement in historical and contemporary views. Application of conflict resolution, nonviolence, and other practices necessary to become more powerful and peaceful members of our world are also taught in the course.

The Peace Studies courses are partnering with the [Academy at the United States Institute of Peace](#) to incorporate online certificates in conflict analysis, interfaith conflict resolution and negotiation and conflict management.



**The Courage to Remember:
 Holocaust Exhibit and Lecture Series**

Valencia College hosted [The Courage to Remember](#), a 42-panel photographic exhibit presented by the Foundation for California, produced by the Simon Wiesenthal Center. On October 11th, civic, educational, business, government, law enforcement, religious and community leaders attended and spoke at the opening ceremony for the exhibit. A lecture series titled *The Courage to Transcend* took place from October 15th until October 18th. The lecture series featured Valencia Professors Richard Gair, Dr. Michael Savage and Dr. James McDonald. Dr. George Lopez from Notre Dame University gave the final lecture titled *Preventing Mass Atrocities in the 21st Century*.

Members of the PJI's new advisory council attended the lecture and reception with Dr. Lopez.



Dr. James McDonald with PJI Advisory Council members Greg Meier, Esq. and Dr. Joyce Romano



Dr. George Lopez and Advisory Council member Imam Muhammad Musri

**Imbedding Peace Studies:
A Day with Dr. George Lopez**



Dr. George Lopez from Notre Dame University

On October 19, 2012 thirty-two colleagues representing faculty from over twenty disciplines and community members came together for a day long workshop titled *Integrating Peace Studies*, led by Dr. George A. Lopez from Notre Dame University's [Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies](#).

The October workshop generated meaningful discussion and ideas. Feedback from colleagues indicates they enjoyed learning current trends across the world in peace studies as well as being made aware of the vast opportunities for jobs related to peace studies in almost every discipline taught at Valencia College. As one participant stated,



The highlight of my day was the alternative ways for re-thinking peace studies. In fact, the interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary worldviews presented in the workshop illustrated that a single discipline does not present a response to peace studies. For peace to be achieved, we have to think about it from different lenses so that we can engage various viewpoints and different communities.

Dr. Lopez is not new to the college, as this is his second visit to Valencia and he has trained three teams of faculty at Notre Dame University's week long summer Institute, *Teaching Peace in the 21st Century*.

To that end, faculty across the curriculum are beginning to develop discipline-specific peace studies courses, i.e. "Peace, Conflict and the Police," a new course created by Dr. James McDonald in Criminal Justice, and "The Psychology of Peace," a new course created by Dr. Judi Addeleston. In addition, faculty will imbed peace studies topics such as nonviolence and conflict transformation into existing courses such as Composition, Interpersonal Communication and Student Success.

To learn more about imbedding peace studies across the curriculum, keep your eye out for Faculty Development courses in 2013 on "Working with Conflict," "Creating Safe Space for Dialogue," and "Neuroscience and Contemplative Practice."



New Course: CCJ 2930
Peace, Conflict and the Police

Between June 10th and June 15, 2012, I had the opportunity to attend the Kroc Institute's Teaching Peace in the 21st Century Summer Institute for Faculty at the University of Notre Dame. When the PJI first solicited volunteers to attend the summer institute, I nervously submitted my name as I pondered whether I was venturing too far beyond my scholastic comfort zone. Intuitively, I understood the role of the police as peacekeepers, but I was afraid the caricature of the police as "crime fighters" would somehow taint my contribution at the institute. Moreover, I struggled with my own misconceptions about peace and what it meant.



Dr. James McDonald, Dr. Lee Thomas, Terry Miller and Dr. Judi Addelston

Needless to say, I learned a lot about peace and the role the police play in contributing to both positive and negative peace. I also confronted my own ignorance and learned a lot about peace (in general) and those who advocate for non-violence, human dignity, and social justice. To simply quip that the Kroc Institute changed my thinking would be an understatement. When the workshop ended, I returned with a whole new perspective on peace and the police.



Criminal Justice Faculty Dr. James McDonald, Casper Johnson and Terry Miller

Most importantly, I returned motivated to synthesize what I learned about peace with my knowledge of the police role in society, police subculture, and organizational and environmental forces that affect police behavior.

The tangible end result of my experience at the Kroc Institute was the development of a new course entitled, "Peace, Conflict, and the Police," that explores the role of the police in peace movements; that examines non-violent alternatives to dealing with conflict; and, that encourages students to devise an alternative paradigm for the police that emphasizes non-violence, conflict transformation, and human rights.

Contributed by Dr. James McDonald, Criminal Justice. Valencia plans to send a new team to the Summer Institute at Kroc in June 2013. Look for an announcement about this in the spring.

Follow the link to watch a video about the [Lessons from Notre Dame University: Teaching Peace in the 21st Century.](#)

**Peace, Conflict, and
the Police**

CCJ 2930
Spring 2013, East Campus
Instructor: Professor James McDonald
Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 2:30-3:45pm

In this course, students will learn the meaning of peace and investigate the philosophical and religious theories that underlie peace studies. In addition, students will investigate causes of war and violence from the individual level to international level and evaluate the paradox of the police as instruments of both peace and conflict. Students will investigate the police role in nonviolent movements and learn about occupational and organizational factors that influence police behavior. Finally, students will learn about the history of non-violent movements and the means used to end conflict or injustice peaceably. Finally, students will be expected to devise an alternative framework for the police that emphasize peacekeeping strategies rather than coercive means.

**Bringing the Principles into the Classroom:
A Faculty Perspective**

One of my recent favorite additions to the classroom has been inspired by my involvement with Valencia's Peace & Justice Initiative. PJI has developed [13 "Principles for How We Treat Each Other,"](#) and these principles provide a rich framework for dialogue with students about how we build community through our communication behaviors. They also align beautifully with what I see as one of our most challenging core competencies at Valencia, which is Value, which asks that we identify, express, and commit to our values. With the help of these simple guidelines, the students and I are able to build a stronger learning environment that's rich with the values of respect, civility, and empathy, as well as providing clear practices for communication competency in the classroom.

When I introduce the principles in class, every student gets a copy and they take turns volunteering to read them aloud. I ask them to pick out a few that seem especially important to them and to silently consider why they have chosen the principles. If they have an experience related to any of the principles, they are encouraged to recall these. After a short time to reflect, I ask students to share their most valued principle and, if they'd like, to describe a time when they experienced the principle in action or needed but didn't receive it. We are able then to discuss how often undervalued, and yet so impactful, these practices are on the quality of our interpersonal communication. We finish this exercise by discussing the shared values that have been discovered, the value of having principles by which to guide us in our classroom. We close our discussion by coming to an agreement on the principles the class will adopt. This becomes our class contract with regard to our environment and expectations of one another, and contributes to a greater sense of vitality, connection, and courage in the classroom!

*Contributed by Mollie McLaughlin,
Speech Professor
Reprinted from the spring 2012
Newsletter*

For classroom sets of the [Principles for How We Treat Each Other](#), please contact the PJI office or find them online. Please let us know other creative ways that you are embedding the Principles into your practice at Valencia.

**The Principles for How We Treat Each Other
*Our Practice of Respect and Nonviolence***

- 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 non-violence 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 Initiative with considerable help from the works of Peter Block, Parker Palmer, the Dialogue Group and the Center for Renewal and Wholeness in Higher Education

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

The Little Book of Conflict Transformation

Perhaps this has happened to you. At a conference, someone discovers that you work at Valencia and more times than not, the reaction is an overwhelming "it must be great to work at Valencia." And the fact of the matter is this: Valencia is a great place to work. So why is it that on some mornings when I look at my calendar, I dread coming to work?

Those are the days on which I see an appointment with a student, a faculty member, or a staff member, and I know that the reason for the meeting is a concern or complaint. Conflict, as a rule, is something we avoid; scheduled conflict just seems wrong. An honest assessment of our daily schedules, however, makes one thing clear – conflict is a part of our daily lives and there is no avoiding it.

Recently, a group of colleagues gathered to discuss principles for the dispute resolution policies at the college and to anchor this work, we read "The Little Book of Conflict Transformation" by John Paul Lederach. While my immediate reaction to the title was not entirely positive, the book itself proved to be very thought provoking and has allowed me to reconsider the importance and value of those scheduled conflicts.

Here are a few of the ideas from the book that struck me:

Conflicts are normal. Maybe it is because the root of the word is from the Latin *fligere* (to strike) or because it is associated with wars and aggression, but we often see conflicts as problems to avoid or as failures to maintain a peaceful structure. If there is a conflict, clearly someone is wrong and needs to be corrected. This is especially wrong in an academic environment where assumptions are constantly challenged to advance learning and understanding. Conflicts are not only normal, but serve as the force behind change within the organization.

The presenting issue in a conflict is just one piece of a larger view. Since conflicts are part of developing relationships, often the triggering event is only indirectly related to the deeper issue, which is really in need of change. The author uses the example of doing the dishes in a family setting. When there is an argument about who will do the dishes, what is really being discussed is the understanding of each person's role and place within the family. The student who comes in to argue a grade,

the faculty member challenging a work load form, or the dean putting off doing an annual evaluation are all in the perfect place to better define their roles and the roles of those involved in the work of the college. No one needs fixing; rather, they need transformation, which is more long term and visionary, as opposed to a quick fix, which is temporary.

What is essential in conflict transformation is trust. A model of conflict resolution calls for clearly established procedures, the goal of which is to minimize the disruptions in the organization and to find immediate relief for the presenting issues. Conflict transformation wants to take the conflict and engage a process whereby something positive and lasting can emerge. The focus is not on the procedures and the content, but on the relationships that exist in the organization.

Conflict is an opportunity. We have too often joked that we do not have problems, but opportunities. Who knew that this was true! With a different perspective on conflicts, they are truly the occasions for growth, strengthening of relationships, and a way to prevent us from becoming complacent.

We do not solve conflicts by clarifying procedures. This was not in the book, as such, but certainly became clear to me in our discussion of it. Valencia is a great place to work because the people we work with share the same values and passion for learning. The conflicts arise when we disagree on the implementation of these ideals, and transformation allows us to move toward a better and better experience for everyone.

I still feel reluctant to face the person who walks through my door with a problem, but this shift in my understanding helps me to engage the time in a new and hopefully productive way.

Lederach puts it this way: "Conflict transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real life problems in human relationships" (page 22).

*Contributed by Dan Dutkofski,
Dean of Fine Arts, West Campus*

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

**Who Me? Couldn't Be!
One Nursing Professor Takes on
Conflict Engagement**



Guest Consultant Dr. Phyllis Kritek with Pamela Lapinski, Recipient of the Harry J. and E. Mary Hobbs Teaching Chair in Nursing

As a child do you remember playing the game “Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar?” The response to that incessant chant was, “Who me, couldn’t be.” That is exactly how I felt when asked by Rachel Allen, Coordinator of the Peace and Justice Initiative, if I would be interested in applying for an Endowed Chair. My answer was, “Who me? Couldn’t be!” Well, eight months later it was me, and I am writing about this Endowed Chair as I ponder what the topic of my Endowed Chair project might be for next year.

This story began in March when I was participating in a Peace and Justice faculty and staff retreat and we were discussing, very passionately I might add, the subject of conflict. I was sharing with the group the different types of conflicts that nurses, nursing students, and faculty deal with on a daily basis including conflicts dealing with priorities, patients, families, physicians, administrations, fellow faculty, and the list goes on. Rachel came to me afterwards and asked if I would be interested in working on an Endowed Chair about conflict engagement saying she knew of an expert in Conflict Engagement for nursing. I thought for a few minutes and said, “Why not.” I recently survived the tenure process and was ready to learn and take on a new challenge.

As luck would have it, the Endowed Chair proposal was due in a week! I discussed my ideas with the Dean of Nursing, Dr. Paula Pritchard, and she was in full support. The proposal was submitted and accepted and the work began.

Rachel lived up to all her promises and then some, serving as my mentor and cheerleader. Rachel did have connections with a speaker, Dr. Phyllis Beck Kritek. Dr. Kritek has spent the past 30 years of her career learning, teaching and coaching on the subject of conflict engagement. I called and discussed with Dr. Kritek my ideas and plans for workshops on conflict engagement for three different audiences. She never hesitated and said she would love to come to Florida and be our consultant and teacher. That was the easy step.

The project evolved and grew into workshops for the Nursing and Health Science faculty, our local hospital partners from Orlando Health and Florida Hospital System, a round-table discussion group including a dean, faculty, support staff and leaders from the Valencia Nursing Student Association, and a student workshop for 80 students from the Leadership and Management course of the Nursing Program.

Feedback from workshop attendees indicates that each experienced important “ah-ha” moments about themselves and how they engage in conflict. They also enjoyed the role-play scenarios.

My motivation for facilitating this conflict engagement project had to do with serving others. My colleagues in the Nursing Department have supported, mentored, and cheered me on through the tenure process. I wanted to pay them back. In addition, our hospital partners are amazing; we could not have a nursing program without them. The workshop invitation was directed to the staff nurses who precept our students. I wanted to pay them back, as well.



PEOPLE

Working together as a college community was the stretch for me with the Endowed Chair. Not only do I often stay and find comfort in my Nursing V team, I rarely have branched out from the Nursing Department. For this Endowed Chair project I reached out and the college community responded. I learned so much from them.

The highlight for all of us was having the Valencia Nursing Student Association officers attend, contribute, and give us all hope for the future.



Officers from the Valencia Student Nursing Association

Last, but certainly not least, were the students. WOW! The energy in the room during the student workshop was infective. I wanted to help prepare them and put some tools in their tool boxes to deal with conflict in the clinical setting. Several students came up to me at the end of the workshop to express how much they learned about themselves from to the content of this workshop.

Personally, I increased my knowledge about myself, my relationships, and learned that I can steal a cookie from the cookie jar and complete an Endowed Chair!

For faculty, I challenge each of you to steal a cookie from the cookie jar and take on the privilege of an Endowed Chair.

Who me? Yes, you!!!

*Contributed by Pamela Lapinski,
Nursing Professor*

Peace Studies Professor Travels to Costa Rica

Eli Solis, Peace Studies professor traveled during the summer of 2012 to study at the [United Nations mandated University of Peace](#) in Costa Rica. Professor Solis shares her experience in the story below.

Standing in front of the microphone in the very small and crowded local radio station “La Voz de Talamanca” I felt my throat entwined suppressing the words as if they were imprisoned for some five hundred years and were ready now to be released. All I had to do was state my name, where I was from and what the purpose of my presence in this small indigenous village was. We had been in the community already for five days, and the local people were curious about these twenty-three strangers traveling together to the river, through the dusty gravel streets, their local market and schools observing, wondering and learning from these people to whom I felt so deeply connected. My voice trembled as I spoke my name into the microphone. I couldn’t hold the tears as I stated I was from Puerto Rico, a beautiful small island in the Caribbean where more than five hundred years ago there lived a population of indigenous peoples who no longer exist, except for the deep soul memories and traces left by them in the land. In a very strange sense I felt like I was home. I was in Costa Rica completing a course at the University of Peace on Human Rights with a focus on indigenous. Our trip to Talamanca was a part of the field component of the course.



We arrived in Talamanca from Ciudad Colón by bus, then crossed the Telire River and rode on the back of a truck to get to our modest accommodations prepared by a group of local women leaders. These women had worked together to find sustainable ways to improve their livelihood. Part of their efforts, funded by foreign government donors, was to build our accommodations and facilities which included a seminar room with computers and internet access.



The Amubri people own their land, in fact, the majority of the land in Costa Rica is owned by indigenous people, and this group in particular is working to find ways to improve and become part of a more modernized world without compromising their environment. I was impressed to see how clear the river ran. Not one candy wrapper, bottle, can, tire or old appliance was seen anywhere, despite the fact that they do not have garbage pick up services. The Amubri hold strong to their ancestor's belief of the sacred mother. "Iriria (Mother Earth) gives us everything we need, we must cherish and respect deeply our connection with her or we will suffer the consequences," one of the local women explained. Part of their effort is to learn how to use waste material such as plastics bags and cans to create art and crafts.

As a way to merge the old and the new, the Amubri people still use their traditional medicine man, the Awa, however they have partnered with the closest hospital for cases out of his reach. We had the opportunity to meet with him and as his interpreter explained, he treats most of the villagers from common colds to broken bones. He can treat snake bites, but fortunately they have a small plane that can fly out a victim of a venomous bite quickly to the closest hospital.

I hope that as the Amubri continue to adopt modern technologies they can do so in a manner that reflects their values of a sustainable community.



Crossing the Telire River



Our modest accommodations. This is the second floor which accommodated 17 of us; on the first floor were tents for the rest of the group.



During a course session in the seminar room. Eli Solis pictured second to the right.

*Contributed by Eli Solis,
Spanish Professor and Peace Studies Professor*

My Journey to Finding Peace

I have never believed in superstitions or myths, but I do believe in fate. I believe that everything happens for a reason. The journey I have been on this year has changed the course of my life and career. It all started in Professor Rachel Allen's 20th Century Humanities class. Since the first day of that class I have been motivated to learn more about the past and the present issues that happen in our world. She was so engaging and passionate about what she was teaching that I was immediately drawn in. Professor Allen created a curiosity, not only about the curriculum, but also about life. She made me think about so many aspects of humanity and peace that I felt that I wanted to do more. Her class was the spark that started my journey towards peace and justice. In one of her classes she invited Penny Villegas to speak about peace. After Penny's speech I felt so motivated that it sparked my desire to become a vegetarian. I thought, "peace on a plate, duh!" I already had devotion towards animal rights, but Penny really made it seem possible to do. Not only did my passion for animal rights get stronger, but I started to have a passion for justice and equality, especially towards women. Towards the end of the semester, Professor Allen invited me to be a part of the Peace and Justice Initiative as a student intern. I didn't even need to think about it because I knew that's what I wanted to do. The only thing holding me back was my full-time job, but somehow I made it work out. It has been a challenge to balance work, school and an internship, but it was all worth it.



Krystal Pherai, PJI Staff Assistant and former Intern and Linnette Bonilla, PJI Service Learning Intern.

My first time in the office I met Krystal Pherai. She was very kind and welcoming and I felt at home in the office. One of our first events was International Peace Day. The

events that week were so inspiring but one film stood out. *Opening Our Eyes* was such an amazing film about people who are helping others around the world. It really motivated me to want to make a difference.

The event that followed was the screening of *Miss Representation*. Professor Allen introduced this film to me in the Humanities class. I knew I wanted to share it with as many people as possible and Professor Allen supported my efforts in getting the film screened on campus. With the help of Krystal Pherai and Linda Freeman, Professor of Psychology, we successfully screened the film and held a discussion with the students. This event meant so much to me because I was able to spread the word about how women are still fighting for equality.



Noor Hashim, Linnette Bonilla, Krystal Pherai

The next event that really affected my career was the Fall Festival at the Coalition for the Homeless. I have volunteered before, but only for a few animal shelters. My thoughts, before all of this, were that humans are evil, don't deserve my help and animals are better. This experience taught me that I shouldn't be distinguishing between animals and humans. We are all earthlings and should be helping each other. I learned that humanity could be good, especially if everyone supports and helps each other. The event really motivated me to get into a career where I get to help others in need. Before taking this internship, my career choice was to become a college counselor. This is a goal I still wish to attain, but my end goal has reached farther limits. I hope one day to own a non-profit organization that helps women that are victims of domestic violence. I hope to guide them and empower them. There are so many other events and things that have contributed to my journey this semester and I wish I could share them all, but my journey has not ended and I will not give up on my dreams to make this a better, peaceful world.

Contributed by Linnette Bonilla, Peace and Justice Service Learning Intern, Fall 2012

**Honoring the Mother of Peace Studies:
A Tree Dedication Ceremony**



Penny Villegas, center, with students, faculty and staff

On November 15th, the Peace and Justice Initiative held a tree dedication ceremony in honor of Penny Villegas, founder of Peace Studies at Valencia College. Students, faculty, staff and members of the community, including Penny's husband Frank, came together to honor Professor Villegas through poetry, letters, words and song for her thirty years of dedication to Valencia, and specifically her role as the "Mother of Peace Studies" at the college. With the tremendous support of grounds maintenance supervisor, Clarence Canada, a Magnolia tree now stands as an evergreen reminder of Peace and Justice Studies and the legacy of Professor Emeritus, Penny Villegas.



Working together to plant the Magnolia tree.

PEACE AND THE ARTS

A Unique Design for the New PJI T-Shirts



The Initiative's new "Peace Tree" shirts are only \$5.00! The unique t-shirt, designed by local artist Raul Bonano, features the word "peace" in the language of all of our international students currently studying at Valencia.

In order to purchase your new t-shirt, contact the Peace and Justice Office.



Local artist Raul Bonano designed this unique shirt honoring the many voices of our international students.

Art as Service

As a class service project, Professor Eli Solis' *Introduction to Peace Studies* class created tie-die shirts for donation to the Coalition for the Homeless.



Peace Poetry

During the 20th Century, Dada poets would select an interesting section of text, cut the words out individually, and then randomly select those words to form a poem. The Dada movement inspired me to write the below poem, titled "Ahimsa." Ahimsa is the Sanskrit word for nonviolence. Enjoy!

Ahimsa

Forgive our mistakes, practice being mindful, people
 Rest, take a walk, environment, becomes natural
 Non-violence, beyond physical harm, compassion, love
 Martin Luther King, practice of restraint, relax
 Love to ourselves, Gandhi, not harm ourselves, ethical practice
 Yoga, disciplining ourselves, animals, self-kindness
 Practice, change our inner attitude, get outside
 Embrace yourself with, ahimsa as kindness
 Ahimsa embraces all creation.

~Krystal Pherai

I selected this poem because I believe in peace on earth. We should treat our world with love and respect every day. When we find peace, our world will be in peace. ~Linnette Bonilla

WALKING MEDITATION

Take my hand.
 We will walk.
 We will only walk.
 We will enjoy our walk
 without thinking of arriving anywhere.
 Walk peacefully.
 Walk happily.
 Our walk is a peace walk.
 Our walk is a happiness walk.

Then we learn
 that there is no peace walk;
 that peace is the walk;
 that there is no happiness walk;
 that happiness is the walk.
 We walk for ourselves.
 We walk for everyone
 always hand in hand.

Walk and touch peace every moment.
 Walk and touch happiness every moment.
 Each step brings a fresh breeze.
 Each step makes a flower bloom under our feet.
 Kiss the Earth with your feet.
 Print on Earth your love and happiness.
 Earth will be safe
 when we feel in us enough safety.

*Thich Nhat Hanh, Call Me by My True Names:
 The Collected Poems of Thich Nhat Hanh,*

Your Thought and Mine

By Khalil Gibran (1883-1931)

Your thought is a tree rooted deep in the soil of tradition and whose branches grow in the power of continuity.

My thought is a cloud moving in the space. It turns into drops which, as they fall, form a brook that sings its way into the sea. Then it rises as vapour into the sky.

Your thought is a fortress that neither gale nor the lightning can shake.

My thought is a tender leaf that sways in every direction and finds pleasure in its swaying.

Your thought is an ancient dogma that cannot change you nor can you change it.

My thought is new, and it tests me and I test it morn and eve.

You have your thought and I have mine.

Your thought allows you to believe in the unequal contest of the strong against the weak, and in the tricking of the simple by the subtle ones.

My thought creates in me the desire to till the earth with my hoe, and harvest the crops with my sickle, and build my home with stones and mortar, and weave my raiment with woollen and linen threads.

Your thought urges you to marry wealth and notability.

Mine commends self-reliance.

Your thought advocates fame and show.

Mine counsels me and implores me to cast aside notoriety and treat it like a grain of sand cast upon the shore of eternity.

Your thought instils in your heart arrogance and superiority.

Mine plants within me love for peace and the desire for independence.

Your thought begets dreams of palaces with furniture of sandalwood studded with jewels, and beds made of twisted silk threads.

My thought speaks softly in my ears, "Be clean in body and spirit even if you have nowhere to lay your head."

Your thought makes you aspire to titles and offices.

Mine exhorts me to humble service.

You have your thought and I have mine.

Your thought is social science, a religious and political dictionary. Mine is simple axiom.

Your thought speaks of the beautiful woman, the ugly, the virtuous, the prostitute, the intelligent, and the stupid.

Mine sees in every woman a mother, a sister, or a daughter of every man.

The subjects of your thought are thieves, criminals, and assassins.

Mine declares that thieves are the creatures of monopoly, criminals are the offspring of tyrants, and assassins are akin to the slain.

Your thought describes laws, courts, judges, punishments.

Mine explains that when man makes a law, he either violates it or obeys it. If there is a basic law, we are all one before it. He who disdains the mean is himself mean. He who vaunts his scorn of the sinful vaunts his disdain of all humanity.

Your thought concerns the skilled, the artist, the intellectual, the philosopher, the priest.

Mine speaks of the loving and the affectionate, the sincere, the honest, the forthright, the kindly, and the martyr.

Your thought advocates Judaism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam.

In my thought there is only one universal religion, whose varied paths are but the fingers of the loving hand of the Supreme Being.

In your thought there are the rich, the poor, and the beggared.

My thought holds that there are no riches but life; that we are all beggars, and no benefactor exists save life herself.

You have your thought and I have mine.

According to your thought, the greatness of nations lies in their politics, their parties, their conferences, their alliances and treaties.

But mine proclaims that the importance of nations lies in work – work in the field, work in the vineyards, work with the loom, work in the tannery, work in the quarry, work in the timberyard, work in the office and in the press.

Your thought holds that the glory of the nations is in their heroes. It sings the praises of Rameses, Alexander, Caesar, Hannibal, and Napoleon.

But mine claims that the real heroes are Confucius, Lao-Tse, Socrates, Plato, Abi Taleb, El Gazali, Jalal Ed-din-el Roumy, Copernicus, and Pasteur.

Your thought sees power in armies, cannons, battleships, submarines, aeroplanes, and poison gas.

But mine asserts that power lies in reason, resolution, and truth. No matter how long the tyrant endures, he will be the loser at the end.

Your thought differentiates between pragmatist and idealist, between the part and the whole, between the mystic and materialist.

Mine realizes that life is one and its weights, measures and tables do not coincide with your weights, measures and tables. He whom you suppose an idealist may be a practical man.

You have your thought and I have mine.

Your thought is interested in ruins and museums, mummies and petrified objects.

But mine hovers in the ever-renewed haze and clouds.

Your thought is enthroned on skulls. Since you take pride in it, you glorify it too.

My thought wanders in the obscure and distant valleys.

Your thought trumpets while you dance.

Mine prefers the anguish of death to your music and dancing.

Your thought is the thought of gossip and false pleasure.

Mine is the thought of him who is lost in his own country, of the alien in his own nation, of the solitary among his kinfolk and friends.

You have your thought and I have mine.



*Kamilah, Khalil's mother, painting by Khalil Gibran
Contributed by Aby Boumarate, Professor of Composition*

SERVICE

The Bi-Annual Fall Fest

I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.
-Rabindranath Tagore



Bi-annually, the PJI partners with classes and clubs across the college to host a party for the families in residence at the [Coalition for the Homeless](#). The goals of service are to positively impact another human being's life, to be exposed to societal inadequacies, to become empowered to improve those inadequacies, to encounter cross-cultural experiences, to take on skills of responsibility and caring for others, and to gain self-confidence in the process of giving.



Enjoying the "Mummy Race"



Volunteers, Doug and Mike



The Psychology club sponsored face painting



Professor Nichole Jackson with her sons, Aston and Adam



West Campus' H.E.R.O.S. Club



Our group of volunteers—thank you for your support!

Images from the Day of Visibility

Valencia students along with local colleges partnered with the Coalition for the Homeless to spread the word of Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Month.



“The thought of joining Samaritans in the struggle against hunger is refreshing. I’m guilty of disregarding the disenfranchised due to economic concerns. Thanks to the effort of the Peace and Justice Initiative, I was able to remind, not just myself but others, that there is an issue that needs to be addressed.” –Mike Voltaire



Krystal Pherai, Mike Voltaire, and Linnette Bonilla

“It was important for me to be a part of this movement because helping others is a part of my life. Raising awareness to help others in need should be a part of everyone’s lives. Everything we do to help others, even if its’ something small, will make a difference.” –Linnette Bonilla



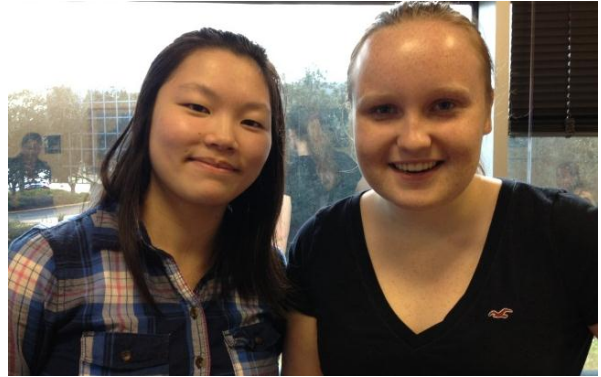
“Getting out on the streets, holding our signs in the cold weather—just as our neighbors without homes do—is exactly what I love doing to work towards social justice. The encouragement of friendly drivers, honking their horns, waving their hands, and sporting their peace sign fingers gave me the extra motivation to keep going—to keep working for a greater cause.” –Krystal Pherai



Fight Hunger & Donate \$10
Text Serve to 80100

Peace and Justice Ambassadors

During the fall 2012 semester the Peace and Justice Initiative brought together a small group of students, with faculty and staff support to create the "Peace and Justice Ambassadors," dedicated to developing a corps of volunteers for the PJI. This coming spring we are welcoming more students to join in on the fun as we retreat together on Saturday, February 9, 2013. If you have any students who you think would like to be involved, please contact the Initiative.



Mingli You and Taylor Sheffield

"The end of all education should surely be service to others," is a saying by Cesar E. Chavez. I feel that serving others and at the same time being a Peace Ambassador is a privilege that comes with fun responsibilities and experiences. I believe many peace ambassadors strive to be open-minded, confident, and have a good sense of humor! It's really challenging your views and even sharing your recipes and holiday traditions. To me the Peace and Justice Initiative was more than a boost on my resume showing that I've been a volunteer. It was about really learning from the great minds of others and bringing everyone together into a project to make things possible. During each Peace Ambassador meeting I hear voices of all values and identify all assumptions. It's a free environment to come up with any advice and sharing the truth about your view. I absolutely love it!" –Mingli You



Professor Linda Freeman



Professor Eli Solis and Krystal Pherai

"I was introduced to the Peace and Justice Initiative through a week of events they had on compassion and was utterly glad when they informed me of the Peace Ambassadors idea. I have wanted to take more action in the community and here was my chance. We formed a group, partly students and partly staff, but we became like a family as the days went on. Even with all the diversity, we felt free to give our truthful opinions on any topic, knowing no one would be offended. We laughed and joked while at the same time working towards ideas and events that would make a difference and allow us to give back to our society. We were able to learn immensely from each other as we recognized that one of the ways of reaching inner peace is being accepting of others and all their faults and differences, knowing that you too are not perfect." –Noor Hashim



Krystal Pherai, Linnette Bonilla, Rachel Luce-Hitt, Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion, and Noor Hashim

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Valencia Professor Recognized for Building Bridges in Community



At the Islamic Society of Central Florida (ISCF) annual “United We Stand for Peace” event, [Rachel Allen](#), professor of humanities and coordinator of the [Peace and Justice Initiative](#) (PJI), was recognized for her personal and professional contributions to building bridges of understanding and dialogue in the community. “We would like to extend our deep appreciation for all the work you have done in the community to build respect, understanding and dialogue between people of all faiths and backgrounds,” wrote Bassem Chaaban, director of operations for ISCF, in a letter to Rachel. This award, given to an individual in the community each year, symbolizes Rachel’s dedication to the initiative of peace, unity and respect for others. “Professor Allen has a deep passion for Valencia’s Peace and Justice Initiative,” said Dr. Stacey Johnson, president of the East and Winter Park Campuses. “She works tirelessly to expose and include all individuals throughout Valencia and the community at large. Rachel is deserving of this award and well represents Valencia in the Peace and Justice Initiative, [which] is important and enriching to the institution at large.”

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

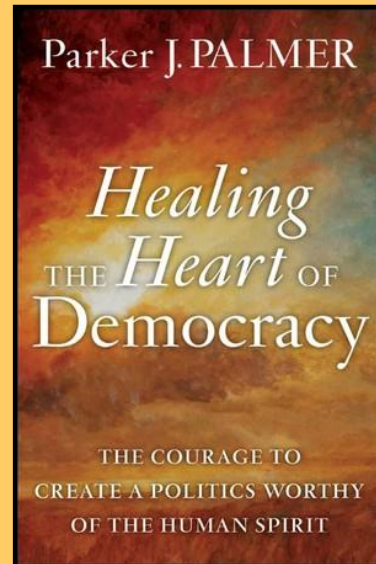
SAVE THE DATE

February 15-16

**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 February 15-16, 2013.

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 is 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



The Peace and Justice Initiative was recognized by the Equity Commission for a "Best Practice" Annual Award.

The Initiative was awarded a \$500 Cash Prize.

The Association of Florida Colleges is the professional Association for [Florida's 28 public community colleges](#), their Boards, employees, retirees, and associates. The mission of the Association is to actively promote, democratically represent, support, and serve the individual [members](#) and institutions in their endeavors to provide their students and the citizens of Florida with the best possible comprehensive community college educational system.

Want to follow the Peace and Justice Initiative more closely?

"Like" us on Facebook to get updates on news and announcements, events, pictures, and interesting information about our 13 Principles for How We Treat Each Other!



www.facebook.com/valenciaceandjustice

Conversation on Peace January 28-31, 2013

Valencia's Peace and Justice Initiative, in partnership with Student Development, is proud to announce a [Conversation on Peace](#), January 28-31, 2013. In the tradition of last year's *Conversation on Compassion*, the week's events will include workshops, national and international guest speakers on multiple campuses,



screenings of the film *Project Happiness*, in partnership with the Global Peace Film Festival, reading circles, festivities, and more.

The primary text for the week's conversation is *The Peace Book: 108 Simple Ways to Create a More Peaceful World*. The book by Louise Diamond, PhD. in Peace Studies, is broken into twelve chapters, with topics including inner peace,

conflict resolution, peace at work, co-existence, honoring our diversity, social change, justice, nonviolence, the environment, and spirit. The book offers a basic introduction to these topics and serves as a launching pad for the study of peace and the creation of a culture of peace.

Students will be encouraged to pick up free copies of the book in January across the campuses, and reading circles will be offered on multiple campuses during the weeks leading up to the [Conversation on Peace](#).

As the schedule is finalized, we will encourage faculty to sign up to bring classes to the workshops, speaker events, film screenings and festivities being offered on multiple campuses. [Find schedule details on the PJI website.](#)

If you are interested in exploring a copy of *The Peace Book* contact the Peace and Justice Office at 407-582-2291 or peaceandjustice@valenciacollege.edu

Thank you to everyone who contributes to the success of the Peace and Justice Initiative. We are happy to see the work grow at the college and within the community.

The Initiative would like to send a special thanks to the Valencia Foundation and the private donors who support our work.



If you are interested in making a donation to the Peace and Justice Initiative, please contact the Valencia Foundation at <http://www.valencia.org/>.



“Peace comes from being able to contribute the best that we have, and all that we are, toward creating a world that supports everyone. But it is also securing the space for others to contribute the best that they have and all that they are.”

- Hafsat Abiola, Human rights activist and founder of the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy in Nigeria.