



nccj

The National Conference
for Community and Justice

DIRECTORY
OF
FAITH BASED PROMISING PRACTICES
FOR
RACIAL UNITY AND JUSTICE

2000

(NCCJ ENCOURAGES YOU TO DUPLICATE AND DISSEMINATE THIS DIRECTORY)

The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) is grateful to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for providing the funding to make this directory possible. NCCJ also recognizes Allen and Joan Bildner for their major gift to NCCJ's Public Policy Institute which provides support for the staffing of this Initiative. We wish to thank the program administrators of the promising practices listed for their time, enthusiasm, and commitment.

NCCJ's Directory of Faith Based Promising Practices for Racial Unity and Justice was edited by Danielle Glosser, NCCJ's Senior Public Policy Strategist, and compiled by NCCJ's Public Policy Intern, Erik L. Solivan.

December 2000

The National Conference for Community and Justice, founded as The National Conference of Christians and Jews in 1927, is dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry, and racism and promoting understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution, and education. Historically, NCCJ convened religious, political and business leaders to address interfaith and cross-cultural issues. NCCJ's past has uniquely positioned our current leadership to continue to work with America's faith community. In 1998, this was affirmed when President Clinton called upon NCCJ to continue the momentum generated within the faith community by his Initiative on Race.

Consequently, NCCJ established its Faith Leaders Initiative to create new and bold methods of addressing racism in the 21st century. A Planning Committee was identified after a summit with 38 diverse faith leaders at The White House Conference Center. In March 2000, more than 150 faith leaders met at The White House and presented a list of 13 commitments to President Clinton. One of the deliverables was to create this directory of faith based promising practices to highlight the range of ways that people of good will are working toward racial reconciliation and social justice. We hope *NCCJ's Directory of Faith Based Promising Practices for Racial Unity and Justice* provides a starting place for additional efforts by faith and community leaders who want to boldly address racial reconciliation and justice through their faith communities.

This directory features 27 promising practices from diverse faith traditions across the country that are creating a more inclusive and just society for all of us. We recognize that this directory is not exhaustive and will need to be updated. We encourage you to contact Danielle Glosser at (202) 887-0885 if you know of additional programs that may be included in future publications and eventually on our website (www.nccj.org).

The number of community and faith leaders working on a daily basis to provide equal access and opportunities for everyone in our nation is a true blessing. NCCJ dedicates this directory to them, and hopes it will inspire others to create racial justice initiatives through diverse and inclusive collaborations in their communities.

Sanford Cloud, Jr.
President and CEO

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction

II. Faith Based Promising Practices

A. Baha'i

1. Common Visions: Photographic Explorations of Unity in Diversity
2. The Asheboro Support Group for the Healing of Racism
3. The Salt Lake City Institute for the Healing of Racism

B. Christianity

1. Archdiocese of Chicago: Uniting for Racial Justice
2. Church Women United: Cultural Diversity Module (WomenLinC)
3. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Anti-Racism Training Program
4. First Presbyterian Church: Citizens Upholding Racial Equality
5. Mennonite Central Committee: Damascus Road to anti-racism process
6. Mission Mississippi
7. Missouri Area United Methodist Church Urban & Intercultural Ministries
8. The Dismantling Racism Task Force

C. Judaism

1. American Jewish Committee's Belfer Center for American Pluralism: Hands Across the Campus
2. Anti-Defamation League: A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Institute
3. Jewish Community Relations Council: African-American/Jewish Dialogue Initiative Process
4. Jewish Community Relations Council: African-American/Jewish Task Force

5. Jewish Women International: Prejudice Awareness Summit

D. Islam

1. United Muslims of America's Interfaith Committee: Children of Abraham Program

E. Unitarian Universalism

1. Unitarian Universalists Association: Journey Towards Wholeness

F. Interfaith

1. Can't We All Just Get Along?

2. Coalition for Mutual Respect

3. Dillard University's National Center for Black-Jewish Relations

4. Interfaith Action for Racial Justice

5. Interfaith Bridge Builders Coalition

6. FAITHS Initiative

7. Joint Venture: Cote Brillante Presbyterian Church/Central Reform Congregation Dialogue

8. The National Conference for Community and Justice: Different People...Common Ground

9. Students Together Opposing Racism (S.T.O.P.)

III. Appendix A

INTRODUCTION

In 1998, NCCJ was asked by President Clinton to continue his Initiative on Race within the faith community of America. NCCJ convened senior faith leaders to design and implement a set of bold initiatives that would engage America's faith community and their leadership in eliminating bias, bigotry, and racism.

In March 2000, over 150 senior faith leaders from across the country attended an historic meeting with President Clinton at The White House to translate their ideas for racial unity into concrete commitments, renewing many faith leaders enthusiasm and dedication to taking their rightful leadership positions in creating a more inclusive and just nation. The faith leaders created a list of 13 commitments toward racial unity. One of the deliverables is *NCCJ's Directory of Faith Based Promising¹ Practices for Racial Unity and Justice* (see Appendix A for additional deliverables).

This directory highlights initiatives striving to engage people through their faith tradition and community in study, dialogue and action on race-related issues. It features the history, achievements, challenges and goals of promising practices across the country. Most importantly, it recognizes the collective commitment of faith and community leaders in moving America toward a more inclusive and just society.

NCCJ urges faith and community leaders to use this directory to inspire their own ideas for advancing racial justice in their community through their faith and interfaith communities. The need for this action is witnessed daily across the nation, and faith and community leaders have the opportunity to more boldly lead their communities in advancing racial unity and justice.

Information for this directory was compiled through several means: the internet, the 150 faith leaders who were invited to attend The White House meeting with President Clinton on the intersection of race and faith issues in March 2000, NCCJ's 65 regional offices, college faith programs, seminary students participating in NCCJ's Seminarians Interacting initiative, and The National Congress of American Indians who contacted approximately 280 American Indian tribal faith leaders on NCCJ's behalf.

Each program had to meet the following criteria to be considered:

- # The program must have a religious or faith based affiliation.
- # The program must be currently active.
- # The program must ultimately seek to increase the understanding of different groups for racial unity and justice.

¹ NCCJ uses the term *promising* rather than *best*, to allow us to continue to learn and benefit from the variety of approaches used across the country, and to build toward a consensus as to how to define best practices.

The description of each initiative was provided by the program administrators who answered the following questions:

- # When and why was the program created?
- # What community does the program serve?
- # What do program participants learn about racial unity?
- # What goals has the program achieved?
- # What are the programs challenges?
- # What are the future goals of the program?
- # How does the program effect your community?

NCCJ has not evaluated and does not endorse these initiatives. They are presented as resources to stimulate your own thinking and to draw from the experiences of the community and faith leaders who developed the programs.

NCCJ reached out to include promising practices from the following faith communities: Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Native American Traditions, Shintoism, Sikhism, Taoism, Unitarian-Universalism, and Zoroastrianism. Promising practices from each of these groups which met the established criteria noted above are unfortunately not featured. NCCJ requests that you contact Danielle Glosser at (202) 887-0885 or via e-mail at dglosser@nccj.org if you know of additional programs that meet the criteria. An updated directory will be released next year and through NCCJ's website: www.nccj.org.

**BAHA'I
PROMISING PRACTICES**

Name of Program: CommonVisions: Photographic Explorations of Unity in Diversity

Contact Person: Mr. Chuck Egerton

Contact Information: (336) 629-8218; egerton@asheboro.com

Location: Asheboro, NC

Description:

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Realizing that many people experience frustration when involved in racial unity efforts that begin and end in words and show no clear or tangible results, Mr. Chuck Egerton, who is a full time photography instructor at Randolph Community College and Secretary of the Southern Regional Race Unity Committee serving Baha'is in 16 states, created CommonVisions to utilize photography to stimulate dialogue and foster intergenerational, interfaith, interracial and intercultural friendships.

CommonVisions utilizes the powerful impact of the visual art of photography to understand bias and racism, and to build trust and understanding between diverse individuals. Participants are given 'single use' cameras to photograph specific themes. The resulting images are used as tools to discuss unity in diversity by addressing the deeply rooted legacy of racism in America. By focusing on the reality of the oneness and interdependence of all humankind and the principle of unity in diversity, solutions are created as well. Ultimately, the participants create a gallery show and a program for community dialogue.

CommonVisions gives people an opportunity to share their stories, express their frustrations and learn the truth about each other in a safe environment. Involving middle school, high school and college students in the program is a priority. Currently, African-Americans, European Americans, Latin Americans and Asian Americans ranging in ages from 12 to 70, as well as a diversity of faith traditions, are participating in the program. There is no cost to the participant, due to generous assistance from the Randolph Arts Guild of Randolph County, North Carolina and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation's Race Will Not Divide Us Initiative.

Specific long-term goals of the project are to:

- # Create a traveling exhibit for malls, schools, libraries, and organizations
- # Develop a web site where the pictures can be featured with their respective stories
- # Inspire the creation of grassroots efforts to discuss race and ethnicity in schools and businesses

The future goal of CommonVisions is to serve a growing number of diverse participants, and to be the cause of a ripple of racial understanding and unity that spreads throughout their community.

Name of Program: The Asheboro Support Group for the Healing of Racism

Contact Person: Mr. Chuck Egerton

Contact Information: (336) 629-8218; egerton@asheboro.com

Location: Asheboro, NC

Description:

The Asheboro Support Group for the Healing of Racism is an ongoing initiative sponsored by the Baha'i Faith of Asheboro, North Carolina. It was founded in 1991 in response to the need for more dialogue and understanding between racial groups in Asheboro/Randolph County. The group was established to live up to the challenge of some of the Baha'i teachings: to be free from prejudice; to build communities that are vibrant models of unity in diversity; to nurture, encourage, and safeguard every minority belonging to any faith, race, class, or nation; to be examples of mercy and justice; and to make the principle of the oneness of humanity a living reality. The vision of the Support Group is drawn from the founder of the Baha'i Faith, Baha'u'llah, who stated "The purpose of justice is the appearance of unity."

The Support Group project has been primarily an outreach effort, offered in the spirit of service to the greater community of Asheboro. Local church groups, students, teachers, civil rights organizations, law enforcement agencies, the chamber of commerce, colleges and civic organizations have been served by the Support Group through speakers, dialogues, unity in diversity programs, training workshops and classes. Topics include how to be an ally for the healing of racism; the oneness of humanity; white privilege; internalized racism; the many forms of racism; white role models for racial unity; the historic legacy of racism in the United States; stereotypes; creating racial unity; and listening skills.

The specific goals of the Support Group are as follows:

- # To teach and model the concept of the oneness of humanity, a scientific, moral and spiritual truth
- # To create opportunities for diverse people to come together for dialogue and fellowship
- # To create safe environments for all people, in which to explore the oneness of humanity and the social, emotional and spiritual repercussions of the racism that separates people
- # To recognize racism in its various manifestations ranging from the most blatant bigotry to the most subtle, unaware and passive forms of bias

- # To examine attitudes, assumptions, feelings, and beliefs about people of color and their cultures, and to identify how society has conditioned both whites and people of color with misinformation and lack of information
- # To assist whites to discover how racism has effected their lives; to become more sensitized to the experiences of people of color; to unlearn racist patterns; to empower themselves to interrupt racist remarks and attitudes; and to embrace the oneness of humankind
- # To provide an accepting and supportive atmosphere for people of color to heal the hurts they have suffered as a result of the oppression of racism
- # To make available educational opportunities for people of all ages to obtain accurate information about the history and rich heritage of people of color and whites
- # To build coalitions with other groups and individuals who share a deep commitment to racial justice and unity

These goals will continue to be addressed by the Asheboro Support Group for the Healing of Racism in their pursuit of creating a more formal and permanent presence in their community. In addition, they hope to maintain their momentum by developing more resources and greater community involvement --- especially with the growing Latino population in their area.

Name of Program: The Salt Lake Institute for the Healing of Racism

Contact Person: Ms. Jan Saeed

Contact Information: (801) 582-3135; jansa9@aol.com

Location: Salt Lake City, UT

Description:

The Salt Lake City Institute for the Healing of Racism was founded in 1989 by three individuals in the Baha'i faith community. They were inspired to educate their own faith community and others about the oneness of humanity and how to truly create it within their region. Ever since, the Institute's mission has been to create environments of learning in which people of all ethnic backgrounds and religions can address each other in a spirit of open and honest discussion, free of blame and victimization. The use of the principle of "trusting consultation", believing that truth lies not in the individual perspective but in the unity of diverse souls, is basic to their programs.

To accomplish their mission, the Institute created service learning opportunities to foster an understanding of how racism effects all people in varying degrees. Creating race unity is facilitated by holding study circles, seminars, assemblies, and dialogues on the issue of racism. Through such efforts as their Color Me Human Teaching Project, various community organizations, businesses, and government agencies come together to promote the oneness of humanity through a series of initiatives including youth activities, seminars, festivals, and conferences.

Through such programs, racism is identified as the most powerful and persistent obstacle to the attainment of a just and peaceful society; that individuals need to recognize the essential oneness of the human race; that all human beings share common ancestors; and that everyone is responsible to realize the oneness of humanity in their personal and social lives.

The Institute has created positive learning environments throughout the city. With newspaper and television coverage, the message of the oneness of humanity has spread beyond their participants throughout the region. The Institute has received numerous awards including one from the Utah Humanities Council, and the Office of Black Affairs for the state of Utah. More importantly, participants have become social justice activists as a direct result of their positive experiences with the Institute.

Future goals of the program include creating a center where classes could take place on a regular basis, and having a full time staff to facilitate such programs.

CHRISTIAN
PROMISING PRACTICES

Name of Program: Archdiocese of Chicago: Uniting for Racial Justice

Contact Person: Sister Anita Baird, D.H.M.

Contact Information: (312) 751-8236; abaird@archdiocese-chgo.org

Location: Chicago, IL

Description:

The Archdiocese of Chicago's Task Force on Racism was established in 1997 in response to racial incidents that occurred at two local Catholic high schools. A direct outgrowth from the Task Force was the establishment of the Office for Racial Justice in July 2000 to implement the recommendations outlined in the Task Force's *Uniting for Racial Justice* platform document. The *Uniting for Racial Justice* platform document addresses the sin of racism by providing parishes and schools with the means to initiate and enhance their efforts to fight racism. Initiatives are driven by three principles: a call to change attitudes and behaviors that will lead to a conversion of heart and reconciliation among people; a commitment to take concrete, visible steps to dismantle personal and systemic racism; and to witness through our lives and actions the unconditional love of God for all human beings regardless of their race, color, religion, gender, national origin, economic or physical condition or sexual orientation.

Workshops on racism and ethnic sensitivity were created to help parishes to uproot racism and to foster a spirit of collaboration and respect for the diversity that makes up the Church in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Participants from the 200 parishes that have completed the program are sensitized to the fact that neither individuals, society nor any human institution should be allowed to reduce a person, or a group of persons, to the status of an object. Many parish-sponsored initiatives in housing and criminal justice have resulted from parishes going through the program and making a commitment to work for racial and social justice.

Although challenges exist, especially that of individual complacency or denial that racism exists and the personal fear of being labeled a racist, the Archdiocese of Chicago is committed to having all 378 parishes complete the workshop while at the same time expanding it to college and university campuses and community organizations. Such focused efforts help build upon the several thousand people that have experienced the Archdiocese's commitment to eradicating racism in Chicago through building bridges of understanding and cooperation.

Name of Program: Church Women United: Cultural Diversity Module (WomenLinC)

Contact Person: Ms. Inday Day

Contact Information: 1-800-298-5551; iday@churchwomen.org

Location: New York, NY

Description:

Church Women United's Cultural Diversity Module is one of 11 modules in the Women Leading in Community (WomenLinC) program created between 1996-1998 to emphasize cross-cultural understanding. The module facilitates commitment to the study of cultures other than one's own, and stresses the value of understanding cultural differences in bringing about social transformation.

The participants in the WomenLinC program learn to become workshop facilitators in order to guide diverse groups through a process to understand cultural differences. Drawing on the ethnic richness of Church Women United (CWU), the program has over 150 active facilitators across the country assisting groups in four languages: English, Spanish, Korean, and Malayalam.

The program has been successful in uniting ethnically diverse organizations. For example, one non-profit organization was experiencing tension between their employees and they consulted with CWU to provide their Cultural Diversity Module in order to improve the relationships between their workers. The program was very successful and many participants learned how to deal with differences in a more positive way.

To date, the most difficult challenge has been to build inclusive coalitions within local communities to broaden the impact of the transformative process.

In the future, the organizers plan to create a new WomenLinC module focusing specifically on racism: how to identify and deal with it, how it manifests itself in communities, and collaborative steps to take to eliminate it. Plans are to link this new module with the Cultural Diversity Module in order to strengthen the understanding of both issues.

Name of Program: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Anti-Racism Training Program

Contact Person: Ms. D. Christine May

Contact Information: 1-800-638-3522; cmay@elca.org

Location: Chicago, IL

Description:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Anti-Racism Training program was developed in 1997 and implemented in 1998. The program began as a response to the specific request from a number of synods, congregations, and churchwide staff for assistance in understanding and addressing racism. A five-day intensive facilitator training was established to equip people with the necessary tools to facilitate one-and-a-half-day anti-racism workshops. The training includes analysis of individual and institutional racism, biblical and theological foundations for addressing racism, group facilitation skills, and leadership development skills. The training and workshop include experiential and interactive exercises. To date, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has trained approximately 109 facilitators across the country in 31 of its 65 synods.

The ELCA Anti-Racism Training Program provides training to all of its church staff including deployed staff, the ELCA Bishop and 65 synod bishops, Women of the ELCA, and ecumenical partners in the United Church in Christ, Reformed Church in America, and the Presbyterian Church of America-USA. The participants learn how to expand their awareness of their own cultural background; increase their understanding of the reality of others by learning how to listen to and respect the culture and opinions of those who are different; and gain knowledge and insight into the roots of racist behavior on a personal and institutional level.

The one-and-a-half-day anti-racism training is mandatory for all employees, volunteers and elected leaders. The training must be completed within one year of employment, election, or appointment to serve. The ELCA has held awareness training for its 450 employees, 65 synod bishops, Church Council members and all other appointed or elected leaders, as well as all employees of its publishing house - Augsburg Fortress Publishing.

Since the ELCA began implementing its basic training program in 1997 they have added two additional training areas during 1999:

- # Anti-Racism Advanced Training: A four-day intensive training offered to those who have completed the day and a half Anti-Racism Training Program. This training provides an in-depth analysis to address individual and institutional racism, and the opportunity to create an action agenda.

- # Anti-Racism Facilitator's Retreat: An annual retreat held to further equip trainers with new techniques, resources, networking opportunities, and affirm facilitators progress in their respective communities.

In the future, the ELCA will be implementing an additional training workshop to address race issues:

- # Internalized Racial Oppression Workshop: This program will introduce an in-depth examination of the internalized racial oppression of African Americans, American Indian/Alaska Natives, Asian and Pacific Islanders, Arab and Middle Easterners, and Hispanics. The training will move people of color to better understand the impact that racial oppression has had on their lives and how it has been internalized. The goal of this workshop is for healing to take place in order to form more confident leaders by recognizing, confronting, and dealing with the messages which they have internalized.

Name of Program: First Presbyterian Church: Citizens Upholding Racial Equality

Contact Person: Mr. Stanley Johnson

Contact Information: (419) 334-7171

Location: Fremont, OH

Description:

The Citizens Upholding Racial Equality Program (CURE) began in 1995 when Rev. Dr. Douglas Nagel of the First Presbyterian Church of Fremont, Ohio encouraged a study circle. The program is designed to study and discuss race relations and other issues related to understanding differences in their community. CURE works in conjunction with many churches in the surrounding area, Voices Unidas (a local Hispanic organization), the local chapter of the NAACP, the City Council, and members of the secular community.

Each year, the program conducts three study circles with adults and youths. Participants in the program learn that it takes patience and understanding for people to communicate effectively. In addition, they learn about the importance of cooperating across racial lines to build a stronger community. As a result of these dialogue groups, many participants have become proactive in the community. They have joined community watch groups, school boards, City Council, and various city boards. Most importantly, these discussions have become a medium for local African- Americans, Hispanics, and whites to talk openly and honestly about their different life experiences.

In the future, the program organizers hope to continue projects with the local chapter of the NAACP and Voices Unidas; recruit more churches in the community to join the fight against racial discrimination and exclusion; involve more city officials in their efforts; and convince local companies to participate in their study circles to better understand the concerns of their minority employees.

Name of Program: Mennonite Central Committee: Damascus Road anti-racism process

Contact Person: Mr. Tobin Miller Shearer

Contact Information: (717) 859-3889; DamascusRoad@mccus.org

Location: Akron, PA

Description:

The Damascus Road anti-racism process was created in 1995 and remains housed under the Peace and Justice Ministries of the Mennonite Central Committee U.S., a program of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Churches. The program was created after a national gathering of Anabaptists with the intention of providing its members with tools to dismantle racism in the Mennonite community including its conferences, colleges, high schools, congregations, and mission agencies.

The Damascus Road anti-racism process seeks to lay the foundation for the long-term work of dismantling racism by training leadership teams within each of their bodies. The program provides each leadership team with biblical knowledge grounded in the Anabaptist tradition; an analytical framework for dismantling racism; skills for dismantling institutional racism; and a structure for long-term follow-up, training and accountability.

Each participant in the program learns about their issues regarding racism; historical and cultural forms of racism; and how to create and implement a plan for dismantling racism in their institution. The program has created an active network of over 600 individuals nationwide. Their greatest challenge is long-term sustainability.

In the future, the Damascus Road anti-racism process will continue to strive toward the creation of an anti-racist environment in each congregation and to the development of more effective training models and levels of applicability. Today, the program is the model for dismantling racism within the Mennonite community.

Name of Program: Mission Mississippi
Contact Person: Dr. Dolphus Weary
Contact Information: (601) 353-6477; mission@telapex.com
Location: Jackson, MS

Description:

In 1993, Mission Mississippi was created to help overcome the racial denominational divisions within the Christian community of the Jackson metropolitan area and the state of Mississippi. The program is designed to have Christians of different ethnic backgrounds interact through programs such as:

- # Youth Leaders meeting: A regular gathering designed for youth leaders to gain insight from one another about race related social issues in their community.
- # The Annual Youth Retreat: Youth of all ethnicities join together for dialogue about unity and common religious ground.
- # The Two and Two Restaurant Days: Two couples of different racial make-up dine out together to engage in dialogue and move toward understanding.

Through these initiatives, the participants learn about racial reconciliation from a biblical standpoint focusing on the importance of reconciliation within the Christian community.

In the future, the program hopes to reach out to more adults and students of all ethnic backgrounds in hopes of reconciling Mississippi's Christian community across racial and denominational lines.

Name of Program: Missouri Area United Methodist Church Urban & Intercultural Ministries

Contact Person: Rev. Monica Jefferson

Contact Information: (636) 225-1648; jefferson@ecunet.org

Location: Ballwin, MO

Description:

The Missouri Area United Methodist Church Urban & Intercultural Ministries was started in 1999 to teach and provide resources to local United Methodist churches, individuals, communities, and institutions on how to develop programs that address racism, inclusiveness, diversity, and unity. The focus of the program is to help local churches and communities connect with other organizations within the United Methodist Church in order to eliminate duplication of efforts, monitor existing programs, call congregants to faithfulness and action, and empower local churches.

The specific goals of the program are outlined in the United Methodist Church's Constitutional Amendment on Racism which was adopted on May 12, 2000 at their General Conference:

- # The United Methodist Church shall confront and seek to eliminate racism, whether in organizations or in individuals, in every facet of its life and in the society at large.
- # The United Methodist Church shall work collaboratively with others to address concerns that threaten the cause of racial justice at all times and in all places.

This program reaches approximately 900 charges and over 250,000 United Methodists in the state of Missouri by serving local United Methodist churches and their respective communities. There are district, conference, and national programs within the United Methodist Church that this program connects to as well.

To date, the program has formed collaborations through the United Methodist Church, other faith communities, and organizations to address their goals. This program is a visible sign to the community that the United Methodist Church of Missouri is committed to addressing the painful causes of division and marginalization in its local churches, the community, the nation, and the world.

Continuing their traditions of valuing and seeking ways of healing and developing the wholeness of all persons through education and action is the essence of their future plans. This will be accomplished by creating workshops, retreats, and pulpit exchanges; forming a training bureau of speakers; developing partnerships with additional individuals and organizations that are participating in ministries and programs that fight racism; and creating a resource database.

Name of Program: The Dismantling Racism Task Force

Contact Person: Rev. Bentley de Bardelaben

Contact Information: (314) 865-2956; stlukes@juno.com

Location: St. Louis, MO

Description:

The Dismantling Racism Task Force (DRTF) is an authorized task force of the St. Louis Association which is composed of 65 churches in the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC). The Task Force was formed in 1992 as a local response to the UCC's "Pastoral Letter on Contemporary Racism and the Role of the Church." It is also rooted in the UCC's 1993 General Synod's call for the United Church of Christ in all its settings to be a true multiracial and multicultural church.

The mission of the DRTF is to:

- # Envision and attempt to live out ways for being an inclusive community of faith
- # Name racism within church and society, and work in a spirit of faith, truth, courage, and reconciliation
- # Equip people to dismantle racist practices, policies, and structures
- # Educate and call churches and church institutions for faithfulness to the gospel's mandate "that all may be one"

In the context of this mission, the DRTF has provided numerous services to the St. Louis Association including counsel and intervention for churches and church institutions seeking support regarding issues of inclusion; being an ally for people of color who are experiencing racism within the UCC; workshops and programs for congregations of the Association; program support for specific Association needs regarding racial and ethnic inclusion; retreats and training for cross-cultural dialogue; and connections between the Association and other St. Louis interfaith and community activities working toward dismantling racism.

Along with evidences of accomplishment and growth, the DRTF has also experienced times of conflict and disappointment --- struggles with its own racism. In its eight year history, the DRTF has encountered internal issues of racism which were directly confronted, but have been difficult and painful for all. These times have presented opportunities to see the Task Force as a crucible for wider church issues, and there has been consensus that the Task Force cannot ask the wider church to struggle with issues of inclusion that they have been unwilling to face. Ultimately, these experiences have served to strengthen their mission, resolve, and understanding.

Having an institutional home for dealing with racism within the St. Louis Association has brought concerns, fears, and feelings of powerlessness into the open so that racism can be honestly confronted and challenged by the churches. The word "racism" itself has come to be more generally understood by people in various roles of leadership and church engagement as not simply a personal accusation, but an institutional matter which can and must be addressed if they are to be faithful to God's will. Most importantly, people now know there is a place where they can come for help and programmatic support to address issues of racism and inclusion.

**JEWISH
PROMISING PRACTICES**

Name of Program: American Jewish Committee's Belfer Center for American Pluralism:
Hands Across the Campus

Contact Person: Mr. Guy Billauer

Contact Information: (202) 785-4200; billauerg@ajc.org

Location: Washington, D.C.

Description:

Hands Across the Campus was developed in the 1980s by the American Jewish Committee's Los Angeles chapter. The program is designed to promote tolerance and combat prejudice in secondary schools throughout the country by creating an environment that nurtures intergroup relations on and beyond school campuses. Program participants learn about the importance of personal responsibility, respect for the differences of others, civic participation, and appreciation of America's cultural diversity. Hands Across the Campus has effectively prevented conflicts that divide people along ethnic lines and changed the quality of the racial and ethnic environment in each community it serves. The program's greatest challenge is to keep students aware of issues regarding racial tolerance. It is currently being implemented in:

Buffalo, NY: Over 200 hundred students have worked with this program at the Hutchinson Technical High School and the Burgard Vocational High School.

Chicago, IL: More than 3,000 students have participated in each of the 11 schools where the program is in operation.

Cincinnati, OH: Hands Across the Campus is an extra-curricular program in eight Catholic schools and eight public schools.

Milwaukee, WI: Thousands of students have been reached in Milwaukee and the surrounding suburbs by this program. Hamilton High School offers Hands Across the Campus as an elective that satisfies a graduation requirement.

Montgomery County, MD: Over two dozen teachers have expressed interest in using the program in the 2000 school year.

Palm Beach County, FL: Hands Across the Campus operates in a dozen schools in South Central Florida. Over 300 teachers have implemented the program which has reached approximately 1,000 students.

Pittsburgh, PA: The Mayor of Pittsburgh made Hands Across the Campus the centerpiece of his Youth Initiative and a significant part of their Teen Leadership Council's Student Leadership Training Program.

West Coast, FL: Over 13 schools in five different counties are actively working on improving the quality of cross-cultural relations within their community through this program.

In the future, AJC seeks to double their outreach efforts to instill the knowledge of conflict resolution and leadership skills in lives of individual students and institutions across the country.

Name of Program: Anti-Defamation League: A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Institute

Contact Person: Ms. Caryl Stern-LaRosa

Contact Information: (212) 885-7801; sterc@adl.org

Location: New York, NY

Description:

In 1985, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and WCVB-TV in Boston, Massachusetts initiated the A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE campaign to respond to the intergroup tensions and violence surmounting in their community at that time. This effort grew into A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Institute where anti-bias and diversity education programs and curriculum resources are provided to children throughout their primary, secondary, middle and high school years as well as through their college experiences. Programs are also available to corporations, and community and law enforcement agencies.

The goals of the Institute are threefold: to assist a broad-range of people to recognize bias and the harm it inflicts on individuals and society; to explore the value of diversity and improve intergroup relations; and to combat racism, anti-Semitism and all forms of prejudice and bigotry. These goals are achieved through a series of programmatic objectives including the design and dissemination of practical, experiential, hands-on anti-bias training to individuals, communities and organizations; equipping individuals with the necessary skills and resources to challenge prejudice and discrimination; and by providing avenues for positive intergroup communication and collaboration in order to help people live and work successfully and civilly in a diverse environment.

Program participants learn about and come to recognize the importance and value of diversity in society. They explore the nature of bias as a means to encourage the recognition that each person is responsible for helping to combat and confront bias and prejudice in their own and others' lives, schools, workplaces and larger communities.

Each program is administered by the ADL's professional education staff who are located in their network of 30 regional offices. All workshops are led by highly qualified, specially trained professionals from diverse backgrounds and geographic areas.

The Institute is composed of the following programs:

- # A CLASSROOM OF DIFFERENCE: Anti-bias and diversity education programs and curriculum resources are provided to Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade communities. These services include teacher and administrator training, peer training, programs for youth service providers and family members, as well as other specialized programs including essay contests and youth leadership events. The program has directly reached

350,000 elementary and secondary school teachers who are responsible for nearly 12 million students.

- # A CAMPUS OF DIFFERENCE: The ADL's Campus/Higher Education Affairs and Programs Department provides college administrators, faculty and students with seminars, conferences, leadership training, anti-bias education, and resources to confront and combat anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial on campuses by exploring the value of diversity and learning how to effectively respond to hate and bias on college campuses. More than 135 colleges and universities have participated in diversity training, and 400 hundred more are utilizing ADL's anti-bias education materials.

- # A COMMUNITY OF DIFFERENCE: Social service workers, volunteers and staffs in community organizations – as well as civic leaders – learn how to work together more effectively through specific skills and strategies.

- # A WORKPLACE OF DIFFERENCE: Adults in corporations, small businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations learn the necessary skills to improve communication, reduce conflict and enhance productivity in a diverse workplace. Over 100,000 adults in the public and private sectors have participated in these programs to improve communication, reduce conflict and enhance productivity in a diverse workplace.

The Institute's future goals are to continue to refine existing programs and to develop new initiatives and resources to fully meet the needs of their regions. Additionally, the Institute is currently embarking upon an ambitious early childhood effort to reach teachers, parents and caregivers of children.

Name of Program: Jewish Community Relations Council: African-American/Jewish Dialogue Initiative Process

Contact Person: Ms. Marilyn Ratkin

Contact Information: (314) 432-0020, ext. 3873; ratkinm@aol.com

Location: St. Louis, MO

Description:

In 1999, several members of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) invited several members of the African-American community to discuss mutual concerns regarding racism in the greater St. Louis community. After nine months of meetings, the group developed the African-American/Jewish Dialogue Initiative Process to re-kindle former ties between the communities which had been weakened over the last two decades. This process formally began in March 2000 and is continuing through follow-up social and educational meetings to examine ways in which the two communities can work more closely together.

This program serves interested Jews and African-Americans in the St. Louis area to explore group identities, commonalties and the possibilities of allied relationships. New friendships and renewed understandings have developed between the two groups, and participants have learned that although there is racial unity in many instances, there are also subgroups that have many differing opinions.

The group is still in its infancy which makes it too early to assess its effect on the community. It faces the challenge of the participants' busy schedules --- there have been varying people from one meeting to the next so developing continuity is difficult.

The future goals of this program are to continue to schedule educational and social events that will propel the participants to reduce the racial polarization in their community in meaningful ways.

Name of Program: Jewish Community Relations Council: African-American/Jewish Task Force

Contact Person: Ms. Emily Fink Bauman

Contact Information: (314) 432-0020, ext. 3870; emilyfb@aol.com

Location: St. Louis, MO

Description:

In 1989, the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) created the African-American/Jewish Task Force to foster better relationships between the African-American and Jewish communities of greater St. Louis. The Task Force provides leaders of key civic and religious institutions with opportunities to learn more about race issues within their community through dialogue. They also serve as a clearinghouse for information, and provide awareness building opportunities on issues impacting both communities. These programs are run by the Jewish Community Relations Council and the Urban League.

Program participants learn a great deal about themselves, and that while neither community is homogenous, race and religion do shape the way the world is viewed. The information they acquire from the Task Force is shared with their constituents which in turn helps the overall relationships between African-Americans and Jews.

During the early years, discussions on sensitive issues led people to resign from the group. With time and effort, the group now functions as a team. Trust has been established and has allowed the group to talk honestly and openly about issues effecting the entire community. In fact, now, they often support each others' issues by speaking out collectively.

The Task Force hopes to continue to be a strong and meaningful presence in the community.

Name of Program: Jewish Women International: Prejudice Awareness Summit

Contact Person: Ms. Linda Siegel

Contact Information: (202) 857-1300 ext. 117; lsiegel@jwi.org

Location: Washington, D.C.

Description:

Jewish Women International's Prejudice Awareness Summit (PAS) is a one-day workshop for eighth graders designed to lessen prejudicial thought and action. Eighth grade leaders from diverse ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds are invited to hear speakers, participate in experiential activities and group discussions. Since 1991, PAS has remained a positive and dynamic learning experience that has proven to be instrumental in preventing violence based on hate in the formative middle school years.

The first Summit was held at Rice University in Houston, Texas for 150 youth from the Houston Independent School District (HISD). Jewish Women International (JWI) has been invited to present PAS ever since, and has expanded the program to include every middle school in HISD including youth from several local private schools. In 1996, JWI made PAS a national priority and summits are now held in Atlanta, GA; Austin and Houston, TX; Los Angeles, CA; and Westchester County, NY. They will also be held in Chicago, IL; St. Louis, MO; Washington, D.C.; and Richmond, VA in 2001.

PAS is specifically designed to:

- # Increase awareness and tolerance for difference
- # Prevent prejudicial thought
- # Eliminate violence based on stereotypes
- # Provide an opportunity for interaction between youth of different races and cultures
- # Create peer-led seminars in schools

Participants learn about the effects of stereotyping, conflict resolution techniques, and action planning for bringing prejudice reduction initiatives into their respective schools. Most importantly, youth learn that racial unity begins with their personal willingness to explore differences across lines of race, ethnicity, culture, gender and religion.

PAS participants have become leaders in the battle against racism. This is evident by the number of students involved in serving as mentors for their peers which has increased their awareness about the importance of their role in eliminating prejudice and promoting racial unity.

JWI plans to continue to promote PAS as a national model for educating youth in conflict resolution. They hope to recruit additional communities to host such summits.

**MUSLIM
PROMISING PRACTICES**

Name of Program: United Muslims of America's Interfaith Committee:
Children of Abraham Program

Contact Person: Mr. Iftekhar Hai

Contact Information: (650) 872-2578; umah82@hotmail.com

Location: South San Francisco, CA

Description:

The Children of Abraham Program was created in 1993 to promote better racial and religious understanding among the faith communities in the San Francisco Bay Area. The purpose of this program is to build a more inclusive America, based on diversity where race, ethnicity and religious differences are valued. Through seminars, interfaith activities as well as interracial and interreligious programs, individuals participate in dialogues that offer an opportunity for respectful and informed sharing of each others social and racial histories. It is through such programs that the United Muslims of America's Interfaith Committee aims to change hearts --- not just minds - where there will be no negative stereotyping of any group.

Program participants learn that each religious and spiritual denomination must be respected; that one has the right to follow whatever tradition they are born into; that religious beliefs are personal and should not be used to proselytize; and that one must never discriminate on the basis of religion, caste, creed, race, ethnicity or gender.

In addition, the United Muslims of America's Interfaith Committee has formed a Rapid Response Team to deal with problems of racial bias whenever there is racial injustice so that they can collaboratively speak up and stand up for each other.

Since its inception, Children of Abraham has educated the Muslim community about the importance of working with other faith based communities. This is evident by the number of other Islamic organizations engaging in interfaith work with people of diverse religious denominations. Such efforts are implemented regionally, statewide, nationally and internationally.

Their future goals are to increase the number of education programs that they hold including more seminars, interfaith activities, and interracial and interreligious programs.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM
PROMISING PRACTICES

Name of Program: Unitarian Universalists Association: Journey Towards Wholeness

Contact Person: Rev. Dr. Mel Hoover

Contact Information: (617) 742-2100; mhooover@uua.org

Location: Boston, MA

Description:

The Unitarian Universalists Association (UUA) was among the first national religious bodies to make an institution wide commitment to anti-racism work. At the UUA's General Assembly in 1997, the delegates voted to become an anti-oppressive and anti-racist multicultural religious community. They vowed to work with leaders of communities of color within the UUA and the community at large. The Journey Towards Wholeness program represents that commitment. The program is intended to bring about change within the UUA's organizational structures, congregations and communities that are located throughout the United States.

Participants in the program learn how white power and privilege undermine racial unity, and how white people have used power to control and oppress communities of color. They learn about the individual, institutional and cultural manifestations of racism; tools to develop anti-racist identity and practice; and the skills to be organizers for dismantling racism within their communities. Over 850 leaders nationwide have participated in the two-and-a-half-day analysis of racism, and 1,500 more are scheduled to participate in the next several years.

Other Anti-Racism programs administered by the UUA include:

- # *Beyond Categorical Thinking* which focuses on ending discrimination in hiring practices for religious professionals.

- # *A Step Ahead* which addresses the leadership role in developing an anti-racist identity and practice.

Through these programs, thousands of Unitarian Universalists across the nation have become involved in significant anti-racism work in their congregations and communities. Currently, 300 congregations are being invited to create internal anti-racist change teams, and will be assisted in creating a long-term strategic plan for change.

The UUA's greatest challenge in implementing these programs is meeting the demands for trained facilitators. In addition, the UUA is trying to move beyond the black-white paradigm to include the issues of Asian Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and other communities of color.

In the future, the UUA plans to expand its anti-racist work to other UUA organizational structures including the Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, Continental Young Adult Network, Interweave, Liberal Religious Educators Association, and the Unitarian Universalist's Ministers Association.

**INTERFAITH
PROMISING PRACTICES**

Name of Program: Can't We All Just Get Along?
Contact Person: Mr. Ronald Hagaman and Mayor David Berger
Contact Information: (419) 221-5202; mayor@cityhall.lima.oh.us
Location: Lima, OH

Description:

In 1992, the Rodney King incident caused unrest across the United States and in Lima, Ohio. Lima's Mayor Berger called together local clergy to work with him on restoring peace. A task force of ministers, the City of Lima, and The Ohio State University at Lima started using materials from the Study Circles Resource Center to foster interracial dialogue and activities to promote interracial friendships and community improvement projects.

These materials guided small groups through discussions on race relations. Their program is designed to provide a venue for people of diverse backgrounds to get to know one another and to examine how racism permeates and shapes individuals' daily lives. This occurs through a four-week dialogue process.

Fifty-nine churches and one synagogue have participated to date. Each has been paired in order to form racially mixed dialogues. The program has spread to neighborhood groups, schools, and businesses with the assistance of the Allen Lima Leadership Organization. People from the entire community have joined together to discuss matters of race addressing a variety of issues ranging from violence to youth issues.

The following initiatives have resulted from this program:

- # A crime prevention program
- # A mediation center
- # A unity choir
- # A food distribution center
- # An annual celebration of community diversity

Over 4,000 Lima residents have gathered to discuss issues of race in their community to date. Through this process, the community has learned about the challenges and issues that people of other races face, and how individuals feel about these issues. Most importantly, members of the community have had the opportunity to get to know and understand their neighbors.

The program's greatest challenge is to keep the momentum going. In doing so, they hope to bring more people into their small group interactions in order to become an even closer community.

Name of Program: Coalition for Mutual Respect

Contact Person: Rabbi Amiel Wohl

Contact Information: (914) 235-1800; tinr@tinr.org

Location: New Rochelle, NY

Description:

In 1979, The Coalition for Mutual Respect was created because of the Andrew Young affair. Mr. Young was the former lieutenant for Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and was appointed by President Carter as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations at a time when the United States did not have diplomatic relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). When Andrew Young chose to open diplomatic relations with the PLO, he was relieved of his position by President Carter. The African-American community viewed President Carter's decision as a submission to the Jewish community and therefore a discriminatory action.

In response to this situation, Rabbi Amiel Wohl brought together 20 men from the Brotherhood of Temple Israel to meet with Rev. Vernon Shannon at the St. Catherine A.M.E. Zion Church. Both congregations agreed that they must create a plan to work together to change such attitudes within their community. Ever since, the members of the Coalition have sought to create a community where blacks and Jews can work and live in mutual respect for one another. Through dialogue about local, national and international issues relevant to racial unity, they have been taught about the blessing of diversity and what it brings to a community. The Coalition has set the tone for mutual respect in New Rochelle and has moved their community to one that fosters tolerance and understanding. Rev. Michael J. Rouse has joined Rabbi Amiel Wohl as the current co-chairman.

They have received very positive feedback from their communities in that many of their members attend the Coalition's annual events: the Dr. King Sabbath Dinner and Service at the Jewish Temple; and Brotherhood Sunday at the St. Catherine A.M.E. Zion Church.

Recently, the Coalition expanded to Westchester County and now serves as a national model through its' denominations for black and Jewish cooperation and interaction. Their greatest challenge is the expansion of their membership beyond their township and state.

In the future, the Coalition plans to continue their outreach to youth and to other citizens in the New Rochelle and Westchester County communities.

Name of Program: Dillard University's National Center for Black-Jewish Relations

Contact Person: Dr. Marshall F. Stevenson, Jr.

Contact Information: (504) 816-4701; mstevenson@dillard.edu

Location: New Orleans, LA

Description:

Dillard University's National Center for Black-Jewish Relations was created in 1989 to heal the strained and confrontational relations between America's African-American and Jewish communities. Its specific mission is to promote ways to improve relations between African-Americans and Jews by initiating academic and cultural programs that teach similarities and differences in the historical experiences of both groups. At its inception, the Center was welcomed by the leaders of America's major black and Jewish civil rights organizations including the NAACP, National Urban League, American Jewish Committee, and the former National Council of Christians and Jews.

Their most noted program, and longest running of its kind in the country, is their annual conference. Students and the larger community are provided with an opportunity to learn from scholars and other black and Jewish organizational leaders who are committed to improving black-Jewish relations and race relations in general. The conference is a fixture to New Orleans each spring and draws a great deal of local media attention with programs that blend academic, artistic, theatrical and musical approaches toward understanding an unique and important historical relationship between two groups that have contributed a great deal to the world and this nation's history.

To date, one of their most significant achievements has been recapturing student interest in the importance of such initiatives during their collegiate experiences. Another significant achievement is the sponsorship of a Dillard student majoring in religion for a year's study at Ben Gurion University in Israel. Discussions are underway to create a permanent exchange program for students from both institutions.

The Center's activities are gaining more national presence, and the national news media has frequently sought their opinion and analysis of such critical issues as the impact of the selection of Joseph Lieberman as the 2000 Democratic vice-presidential candidate within the African-American community.

The program's future goals are to develop a strategic plan that helps meet its challenges successfully, along with permanent student involvement and community participation.

Name of Program: Interfaith Action for Racial Justice

Contact Person: Mr. John Springer

Contact Information: (410) 889-8333; iarj@bcpl.net

Location: Baltimore, MD

Description:

Interfaith Action for Racial Justice (IARJ) was founded in 1979 as the Baltimore Clergy and Laity Concerned. Its current mission is to promote understanding and tolerance among people of diverse racial backgrounds and religious traditions and to strive to end racism and ethnic prejudice. IARJ accomplishes their mission through dialogue, by creating community, and in engaging people to take action toward justice.

In 1998, President Clinton's Initiative on Race selected IARJ's *"The Baltimore Metropolitan Area: A Call to Community - An Honest Conversation about Race, Reconciliation and Responsibility"* as a promising practice for racial reconciliation. The organization's goal is to pioneer a comprehensive vision, process and program of racial healing in the Baltimore metropolitan area inclusive of personal transformation, community wide acknowledgment of history and support for economic equity by 2005.

Through IARJ's *Racial Dialogue Project*, a commitment from other organizations to support efforts toward greater economic equity within the Baltimore metropolitan area is being fostered. The principle vehicle for the *Project* is the "Dialogue-Action Circle" which consists of interracial groups of up to 15 participants, who, with the assistance of an interracial team of facilitators, meet for 2.5 hours a week over six weeks to systematically explore issues of race, reconciliation, and responsibility.

This effort was created as a means of bringing individuals from all walks of life and all sectors of the region together to engage in a sustained, intimate discussion of the role that race and racism have played and continues to play in their lives, community, and country. This program has broken down some of the social barriers that keep racism in place by creating understanding, tolerance and connections between people of diverse backgrounds. It has also moved people beyond talk into cooperative action across geographic, racial, and class lines to address the larger political, social and economic divisions and inequities that perpetuate racism.

Program participants learn that individual and institutional racism and racially-based divisiveness continue to be major problems hampering the well-being of their regional community and that reconciliation requires acknowledging a history of racism in their region which has created the inequities, divisions, and distrust that have hurt everyone. Further, participants learn that a common vision of the region's future includes a component of racial healing which is not only possible to articulate, but essential to effectively implement solutions to the region's most intractable economic and social problems.

To date, more than 550 individuals have completed Circles, over 100 individuals have been trained as facilitators, and over 160 elected officials, religious, business, educational, and non-profit organizations have signed on as project sponsors.

Participation in Circles has profoundly effected the way many program graduates perceive members of other races, and the way they understand the role of racism in their lives. Action has resulted including the alteration of institutional policies at local community colleges; advocacy efforts directed at local media organizations; support for local religious leaders addressing racial concerns within their congregations; and the mobilization of elected officials to state their commitment to form interracial partnerships.

IARJ's greatest challenges with Circles is maintaining registrants' commitment to the process, coordinating facilitator availability with participant availability, and moving participants from a commitment to discussion into a commitment to action.

IARJ's future goals include:

- # Developing a variety of additional Racial Dialogue projects in order to involve populations not well-served by the six-week Circles program, and to provide continuing opportunities for discussion by Circle graduates.
- # Making IARJ's resources available to other organizations and businesses who want to adapt Circles programming.
- # Improving the efficiency and professionalism with which Circles is administered.
- # Increasing the percentage of project participants who go on to become actively involved in dismantling racism and working for reconciliation.

Name of Program: Interfaith Bridge Builders Coalition

Contact Person: Rev. Patti Lawrence

Contact Information: (315) 735-8586; revslaw@aol.com

Location: Utica, NY

Description:

In 1994, the community of Utica, New York was experiencing an excessive number of minority students being moved from the public school setting into alternative education programs. As a result, the Interfaith Bridge Builders Coalition was created by a group of clergy who perceived a need for dialogue regarding race relations in Utica. The mission of this program is to advocate for racial peace and justice and to ensure fair and equal treatment for everyone in the city through greater understanding and reconciliation across races, ethnic groups, and diverse faith traditions. In addition, they aim to hold the leadership of their community accountable for its actions with regard to equal rights.

One of their programs involves forming study circles to reach as many people as possible in dialogue settings. Such opportunities create safe forums to discuss race relations and racism as well as create an opportunity to devise action steps for needed changes. Groups have formed around Bridge Building themes at local high schools as well as in houses of worship. To date, approximately 1,000 people have been involved in this process.

Study circle participants learn that understanding is possible through dialogue with people from other races; that one-to-one friendships form across racial lines; and that all of us have common goals, needs and dreams for the future. Through these conversations, community awareness has been heightened and consciousness has been raised.

Their biggest challenges include inspiring communities of color to participate in their process, and resources. Therefore, their current goal is to increase the study circle process to reach more people, especially those of color within their community.

Name of Program: FAITHS Initiative
Contact Person: Mr. Dwayne Marsh
Contact Information: (415) 733-8500; dsm@sff.org
Location: San Francisco, CA

Description:

Although the San Francisco Bay Area is home to many racial and ethnic populations, significant patterns of racial segregation still limit opportunities for low income residents and people of color. Recognizing the potential of religious institutions to bring together people to address economic and racial inequities, religious leaders established the FAITHS Initiative to build working relationships among diverse communities. FAITHS connects community leaders and social justice activists with tangible resources such as funding possibilities, education on critical issues affecting communities, and opportunities to network. FAITHS also involves religious community members in initiating local projects to improve race relations. FAITHS is a compelling example of how faith-based community institutions can partner with foundations and other organizations to effectively translate moral leadership into community activism for economic and racial justice.

Since 1993, leaders of the San Francisco Bay Area congregations and interfaith organizations have been convening to enhance the human service delivery and advocacy capacity of the area's faith organizations. "When we began exploring new ways to get closer to the community," said Joe Brooks, then of The San Francisco Foundation, "it was obvious that congregations were often the only credible, ongoing institutions in poor neighborhoods." The network currently includes 345 congregations, religious organizations and non-profit allies and touches thousands of individuals. FAITHS now builds deeper relations within and beyond the faith community, identifies opportunities to support strategic community development efforts, and educates philanthropists on the opportunities to strengthen community through faith-based institutions.

FAITHS manages a variety of programs conceived of by and for the Bay Area faith community. *Community Economic Development Training* boosts the ability of congregation leadership to implement local economic development. *Economic Justice Forums and Follow-Up* help congregation leadership prepare for changes in legislation impacting low-income communities. *Race Relations Community Briefings* are held bi-monthly to inform religious leadership about pressing race relations issues like immigration, criminal justice, and affirmative action. *Community Partners* connects congregations, faith-based organizations and other community leaders to improve race relations and quality of life in local neighborhoods. *Community Renovations* identifies technical, in-kind and financial resources that help restore community-serving congregation facilities. Most significantly, since 1997, FAITHS has managed a Youth Leadership Training that provides young people with personal and professional development through summer internships and training.

Each summer, a cohort of 12-14 young people are trained to assert community leadership through a combination of non-profit work experience, community development analysis and personal and professional development activities. They assume an advisory role to the ongoing work of the Initiative, which distributes more than \$500,000 annually in financial, human and technical assistance resources to diverse Bay Area faith communities.

This work takes part in three components. A Youth Leadership Awards program is held for young people from numerous communities, and provides a collective and individual analysis of youth perspectives on race and community relations. Award winners join other promising young people in a Summer Training that involves 100 hours of workshop and seminar preparation as well as 175 hours of non-profit exposure in relevant subject areas. The third component entails ongoing participation in leadership and decision structures within the broader Initiative.

Following the summer training, the youth remain engaged with the Initiative through involvement in specific projects that it sponsors. They provide guidance on the implementation of a multiple year effort to improve outcomes for youth at high risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system, develop the programming and outreach for the continuation of the Youth Leadership Training, and manage a small grants program that provides support to efforts identified by the cohort that engage in innovative youth civic engagement.

Another way in which FAITHS impacts intergroup relations is by assisting in defining the role that a community foundation can play in catalyzing faith community engagement in intergroup and race relations. The FAITHS Initiative therefore provides small grants through the Community Partners process as part of its capacity building for congregations and faith-based organizations. FAITHS identifies promising race relations efforts in the San Francisco Bay Area and provides grants of \$1,000 to \$7,500 to a cohort of grantees selected by a community advisory committee. The small grant work has become an important component of the Initiative's workplan.

FAITHS is an example of how faith-based community institutions, in partnership with philanthropy, can effectively translate moral leadership into community activism for economic and racial justice.

Name of Program: Joint Venture: Cote Brilliante Presbyterian Church/Central Reform Congregation Dialogue

Contact Person: Mr. Jesse C. Swanigan and Mr. Philip Deitch

Contact Information: (314) 862-7158/(314)576-2111 ext. 309
JesseSwanigan@msn.com/PlloydD@aol.com

Location: St. Louis, MO

Description:

The Joint Venture was formed in 1991 by The Cote Brilliante Presbyterian Church, an African American Christian Church, and the Central Reform Congregation, a Jewish synagogue, to improve interracial and interreligious relations in the St. Louis community. The Joint Venture reports to the governing bodies of the two congregations which is responsible for appointing the 16 participants - eight from each congregation. Members of both congregations are committed to fighting the problems in St. Louis through dialogue and action.

The purpose of this collaboration is to:

- # Create a more inclusive community by increasing sensitivity to the issue of racism and its effects
- # Improve communication and cooperation among different people by addressing personal and interpersonal dynamics that create misunderstanding and fear
- # Build relationships with different people

Every month, this group engages in a dialogue process which allows program participants to better understand the culture, history and thinking of people from other races and religions. They also have worked toward racial unity through interfaith services, marching in parades together, and working on collaborative projects. They have worked collectively for Habitat for Humanity, the Cote Brilliante Elementary School by assisting them in designing, funding and creating a garden and park, and the Joint Mentoring Project to provide an elementary school with long-term assistance in enabling all of its students to graduate from high school. Such involvement has lead to greater understanding and respect of people within their community of different races and religions.

In the future, the Joint Venture wants to get more of their fellow congregants involved in their dialogue process and initiatives, and has applied to become a federally recognized non-profit organization.

Name of Program: The National Conference for Community and Justice: Different People...Common Ground

Contact Person: Ms. Gail Parrish and Ms. Linda West

Contact Information: (313) 567-6225; lwest@nccj.org

Location: Detroit, MI

Description:

Different People...Common Ground (DPCG) is a human relations dialogue program of The National Conference for Community and Justice's Michigan Region. DPCG was started in 1999 to provide Detroit metropolitan-area residents with an accessible program to explore issues of diversity with people different from themselves. A diverse group of participants attend three dialogue sessions which are lead by a trained volunteer facilitator. This process provides a safe space for the exploration of sensitive issues regarding race, religion, sexual orientation and other subjects which are typically "off- limits" in everyday conversation.

NCCJ defines dialogue as a purposeful conversation on a common subject between two or more people of differing views, undertaken so that each can learn from the other and each can grow and change. Designed to minimize the conflicts and communication breakdowns traceable to differences in style and mode of communication, the dialogue process fosters new, respectful relationships that are informed by a deepened understanding of the role of prejudice and stereotyping in discriminatory behavior. From these new relationships a commitment to fight against such behavior in one's self, one's life, and one's community is formed. This commitment to action is critical, since it is only human action that can break down the walls that divide us.

Through dialogue, DPCG provides individuals with a forum to create understanding, reduce stereotyping, and provide opportunities for collaboration between the diverse racial, ethnic, religious and other groups in the Detroit metropolitan area. Rather than learning about racism and discrimination through a discussion leader or written materials, the exercises in DPCG are designed for participants to learn about these issues from each other. Personal and family histories are shared including how issues of race, religion, discrimination and prejudice influenced individuals' lives. Such openness has the effect of neutralizing the usual debates that arise in other settings around these issues. The result is a sense of unity and trust between participants. At the end of DPCG, participants identify areas of needed change within their community related to diversity or justice concerns. They then develop an action plan for achieving the identified changes.

Since its founding, DPCG has held approximately 160 dialogue sessions throughout Detroit and its suburbs for faith-based congregations, community organizations, educational institutions and businesses. More than 1,400 people have participated in the program, and approximately 50 individuals have been trained as volunteer facilitators. Testimony and statements from DPCG participants have verified that the program is successful at broadening their understanding of

people different from themselves. As a result, stereotyping is reduced. In addition, a number of collaborative community initiatives have been created:

- # In 1999, students from Wayne State University Medical School participated in a DPCG dialogue group and decided that their peers needed to experience the dialogue process and thus made an action plan to institutionalize dialogue at their school. As a result of their efforts, a condensed version of DPCG was incorporated into the orientation program for 273 incoming first year medical students. The original participants, medical school staff, including the Dean of Students, and community volunteers were trained as facilitators and led the dialogue sessions for the orientation program. As a result, more students committed to becoming trained facilitators for future orientation programs.
- # The Southfield Interfaith Clergy's dialogue session helped to build cohesiveness, create understanding and strengthen bonds between a diverse group of congregational leaders. They were having difficulty in achieving group unity until they created an action agenda which included sponsoring a class on world religions, creating a series of news articles featuring various faiths in the community, and sponsoring round-robin family pot lucks at each other's places of worship.
- # The Dearborn DPCG group brought together 32 participants from several Muslim and Christian congregations. The session was the first time many of them had ever sat together and spoken with a person of the other faith. As a result of the session, a Muslim/Christian women's group formed to address common community concerns and to increase opportunities for dialogue.

The program's future goals are to provide participants with support in fulfilling their commitments made during the sessions, and to create opportunities for participants to reconnect with one another periodically. NCCJ also hopes to double the number of sessions held so that a minimum of 3,000 people have participated in the program. Additional facilitators will be trained as well.

Name of Program: Students Together Opposing Racism (S.T.O.P.)

Contact Person: Ms. Susan Murphy

Contact Information: (978) 443-9166; prskmurphy@earthlink.net

Location: Sudbury, MA

Description:

In 1991, the Students Together Opposing Prejudice (S.T.O.P.) program was created and implemented in response to anti-Semitic incidents which took place in some western suburbs of Boston. The culminating incident was anti-Semitic graffiti on a local elementary school. In response to this incident, Rev. Avis Hoyt-O' Connor, Associate Pastor of Sudbury United Methodist Church, Sheila Goldberg, Director of Education of the Religious School at Congregation Beth El, and Susan Murphy, Religious Education Director at Our Lady of Fatima Parish (a Roman Catholic Church) met to discuss how they could collectively address the issue.

The result was the development of S.T.O.P.'s six-week curriculum which is designed to bring together students who are concerned about issues of tolerance and discrimination; to open their eyes to the many forms of bigotry; and to provide them with strategies to confront racism. Since its inception, S.T.O.P. has reached over 300 young people, some of whom have returned to participate in their leadership program.

S.T.O.P. participants learn that racial unity is fostered by recognizing the value of each individual, by celebrating each person's uniqueness, and by appreciating the richness of ethnic diversity including what it brings to a community. These ideas are sometimes challenging to convey because of the lack of racial diversity within the Sudbury community.

In the future, the organizers hope to publish their curriculum so other communities can implement a similar program initiating dialogue between youth and adults regarding the issues of racism and racial unity.

APPENDIX A

NCCJ'S DELIVERABLES FOR FAITH LEADERS INITIATIVE (2000 - 2003)

1. Faith Leaders will identify and name racism as a sin, an evil that must be addressed, and a problem of the heart:

Action item: Create a joint statement that names racism as a sin to be dispersed by the participating national organizations, their congregations, and members.

Action item: Create a booklet of theological underpinnings and scriptural concepts as well as excerpts that honor indigenous oral traditions that are held in common naming racism as a sin. This information could be used by individual congregations to generate a set of their own commitments.

2. Faith leaders will name overcoming racism and classism as a top priority for our nation:

Action item: Create a directory of information on faith-based promising practices and programmatic strategies from a range of faith communities related to racial reconciliation and social justice for others to replicate (to be available in hard copy and on NCCJ's website).

Action item: Announce plans for a forum for hundreds of faith leaders from across the country to be held in the Spring/Summer of 2001 that would update them on the commitments made by the diverse faith groups; allow for each leader to safely explore the needs of their community; examine how to translate national efforts into community practices; and seek commitments from more faith leaders in this historic collaboration.

3. Faith leaders need to declare that they are morally bound to engage in anti-racist activities:

Action item: Each participant's religious institution will determine from their scriptures how the concepts of repentance and forgiveness will be translated to their congregants; within their congregations as a whole; and across faith lines.

Action item: Trainings to be held for select faith leaders to explore their own issues surrounding prejudices, stereotypes, and racism as well as foster a greater sense of trust, develop more flexible outlooks, and create a problem-solving process. Create a programing model for their organizations to replicate at a local or congregational level.

Action item: Select theological students to participate in an initiative to plan and execute race-related programs as well as explore their issues around race (i.e., NCCJ's Seminarians Interacting Program).

4. Faith leaders will address race issues in their own religious institutions:

Action item: Self-assessment sheet provided to each participant's organization and denomination to assess their diversity skill sets.

Action item: Participants with congregations or chapters will create grassroots curriculum and train facilitators to conduct local dialogues on race related issues.

Action item: Participants with congregations or chapters will hold dialogues to discuss the extent of sexism in their religious institution, and determine an action plan to address opportunities for change.

Action item: Participants with congregations or chapters will hold interreligious forums on anti-racism work that will be open to their community.

Action item: Each participating faith group will identify public policy initiatives that communities of faith can address at the local and national levels to advance racial justice.

Action item: Each participating faith group will identify and disseminate amongst their congregations 10 actions each person can take to bring us towards racial reconciliation.