

Making Things Right



Mission: To foster peacemaking and the resolution of conflict through the teaching and implementation of Restorative Justice values and principles.

December 2011

Lancaster Area Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (LAVORP) - Is Now - *Center for Community Peacemaking (CCP)*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:

When I arrived at LAVORP in 2000, we were working exclusively with victims and offenders referred by Lancaster County's Office of Juvenile Probation. Since then, we have expanded the services we provide and our referral network significantly. First, Youth Aid Panels all over the County started making referrals for victim-offender conferences. In time, the Lancaster Mediation Center transferred its "You Can Be A Winner" program to LAVORP. (We later renamed it *Making Peace*.) Then, we began organizing Peacemaking Circles to address wider community controversies and disputes, and then Circles of Support and Accountability arrived on the scene. In addition, referrals are starting to come from Defense Attorneys, the District Attorney's office and members of the community are even now making self-referrals.

It is exciting to have seen these changes take place. Over time, however, it has become apparent to our Board, staff and volunteers that the name LAVORP no longer reflects the broader mission of the organization. Having considered several names, the Board decided to adopt a new name – the Center for Community Peacemaking, a suggestion by Ken Nissley and Carol Herr Steffy, our part-time Case Managers/Coordinators. I wanted to take this time to thank Ken and Carol for the suggestion, and also thank all of you for your support of the organization and its growing mission. A more detailed discussion of the name change follows below.
Peace, Jon Singer

SO, WHY THE NAME CHANGE?

On May 20, 1994, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania issued Articles of Incorporation for the "Lancaster Area Victim Offender Reconciliation Program" for the express purpose of bringing "victims and offenders together with trained mediators for the purpose of restitution and healing." Since then, we have expanded into four programs.

Victim-Offender Conferencing – In September of 1994, Barb Toews, who was with the Fresno, CA, Restorative Justice Program, was appointed the Director of LAVORP. Barb worked diligently to spread the message of Restorative Justice in Lancaster County and persuaded President Judge Eckman to authorize Juvenile Probation in 1995 to make referrals to LAVORP for victim-offender conferencing. In 2000, Youth Aid Panels (a diversion program for 1st time juvenile offenders) started making referrals to LAVORP.

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SO, WHY THE CHANGE? (Cont'd)

Victim-Offender Conferencing, at this time, still represents the majority of the time invested by our ninety-five volunteers. In addition to youth, CCP is now working with the District Attorney's Office to receive referrals of defendants who have victims in non-serious crimes. CCP is also beginning to receive referrals directly from the community and some defense attorneys.

Making Peace (Strategies for Conflict Resolution) – The Lancaster Mediation Center (LMC) initiated a program, “You Can Be A Winner,” for youth referred by Youth Aid Panels and Magisterial District Judges. The program was designed for youth who had gotten into trouble because they lacked appropriate anger management skills. The program consists of a four hour session for the youth, two hours for their parents, separately, and a half-hour joint meeting. LMC transferred this Program to CCP as part of their fine-tuning of their mission. Eventually, the program name was changed to “Making Peace.” While referrals generally come from Youth Aid Panels and Magisterial District Justices, inquiries are encouraged from any family that feels their relationships could be improved through learning conflict resolution skills, as well as community organizations.

Circles of Support and Accountability - This program is designed to hold high risk sexual offenders accountable for their actions and to provide them with support following their incarceration. A Circle consists of a Core Member (the offender), five to seven professionally trained volunteers who provide the support and accountability, and professional service providers. Volunteers maintain daily contact by phone and weekly in-person meetings. The first Circle Member in Canada, where this program was started by the Mennonite Central Committee, was successful in never reoffending for the 15 years prior to his death, despite being told by his psychologist that he had a 100% chance of reoffending. Evidenced based research shows that when offenders participate in the Circles, recidivism is reduced by 70%. Core values: “No more victims – No Human is Disposable.”

In 2008, two community activists, Jim Kalish and Keith Regehr, began discussions with LAVORP to see if we were interested in establishing a Circles of Support and Accountability Program in Lancaster County. After months of deliberation and a poll of LAVORP's stakeholders, the Board approved the creation of a Circles of Support and Accountability Program in December 2009 and Lance Couturier, PhD (recently retired as Chief of Psychological Services with the PA Dept. of Correction, where he directed the sex offender treatment program) was asked to join the Board to oversee it. In March 2010, positive reinforcement for the Circles Program came when Jim secured a \$5,000 Grant from the Friends Meeting and Keith Regehr to become Program Manager on a part-time basis. In January 2011, CCP committed \$3,700 to the Program and, in October 2011, The John Frederick Steinman and The James Hale Steinman awarded grants of \$7,500 each for the program. The first Core Member was admitted into a Circle on October 4, 2011. Working closely with Lancaster County and State Probation and Parole Offices, additional Circles will be formed as Circle Volunteers become available.

Peacemaking Circles – “Circles bring us together to share who we are beyond our appearances. They're places of listening – of hearing what it's like to be someone else. They're also places for being heard – for expressing what's on our minds and hearts and having others receive it deeply. Telling our stories in the safe space of Circles opens windows on each other's lives, giving us moments when we can witness the path another has walked as well as feel that others appreciate their own path.” Peacemaking Circle: From Crime to Community, Kay Pranis, *et al.*

Peacemaking circles bring people together to connect in a common purpose, without judgment. When a person brings a problem or issue to be discussed, it is owned by the group. Equality is achieved by using a talking piece, which can be any object of significance to the group. The talking peace is passed around the circle with the person holding the talking piece having the sole right to speak. All others listen with respect and careful consideration of the words spoken and the feelings expressed, knowing that their time to speak will also be respected. Within the past year, CCP has conducted Peacemaking Circles for Teen Challenge, Pheasant Ridge community and a Lancaster neighborhood.

The Center for Community Peacemaking invites anyone who wishes to become a volunteer for any of the above four programs to make an inquiry via 397-2404 or info@ccp.org.

Contributors

CCP 1-2-5 Society

(Faith Partners)

Faith partners are those businesses, individuals, and congregations who have accepted our invitation to help provide a secure funding base (while we carry out our mission) by investing a minimum of \$200 per year, for five years. If you wish to become a faith partner, please send your check and indicate that it is for the "CCP 1-2-5 Society."

New: John & Margaret Layman

Contributors

CCP is grateful for the support of the following individuals, congregations, businesses, foundations and organizations who have made contributions during the period August 13, to November 15, 2011. Any omissions are unintentional. Please let us know of any needed corrections and you will be included in our next newsletter.

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Diane Adamczyk
Mary Ellen Bachman
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Building Community ... Peace by Peace

SAVE THE DATE! - MARK YOU CALENDAR NOW!

April 19, 2012

The Center for Community Peacemaking's Annual Dinner

Victim-Offender Vignette

Keynote Speaker

Silent Auction

FACEBOOK

Yes, CCP is on Facebook!

"Like" CCP on Facebook to keep up with events and to become informed about Restorative Justice in your community. Invite your friends to "like" CCP: expand the circle of learning and support for "BUILDING COMMUNITY ...PEACE BY PEACE in Lancaster County.