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Promoting Justice, Peace, and Understanding through Partnerships and Dialogue

Center for Peace, Democracy, and Development, University of Massachusetts Boston

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Promoting Justice, Peace, and Understanding through Partnerships and Dialogue

Center for Peace, Democracy, and Development,
John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies

Strategies and Key Themes

The **Center for Peace, Democracy and Development (CPDD)** promotes conflict resolution, democracy, economic development, education building, media development, and legal and judicial reform through partnerships and training programs across the globe.

We offer **academic and practical expertise** across the spectrum of conflict management and democratic governance. Moreover, we mentor the **next generation of peace and democracy builders from the UMass Boston student body** who actively participate in many of our initiatives.

Key Themes in Our Work:

- Interfaith and inter-ethnic peacebuilding
- Environmental conflict prevention
- Strengthening democratic governance and rule of law
- Development communications and independent media
- Supporting higher education in developing countries



Restorative Justice Mediation Project

The Restorative Justice Mediation Project (RJUMP) is a university-based program that aims to provide restorative justice services, education and training to the Suffolk County law enforcement community, department of corrections, youth organizations, Boston Public Schools, and UMass Boston graduate students.

Based on research and successful international models:

- A school system in Minnesota reports a 50% reduction in suspension and expulsions.
- In one year, an Oakland School's pilot reduced suspension rates from 12% to 8%.
- Using restorative justice approach since 1989, New Zealand's juvenile justice system has seen a significant reduction in youth incarceration leading to the closing of detention centers.

Goals:

- To divert young people from acquiring criminal records and re-offending while assuring victims have a voice in the process.
- To help young people take responsibility for the harm they have caused, become conscious of the underlying causes for their negative behavior and embark on a process of healing.
- To build bridges and increase community participation and voice in the criminal justice process.
- To evaluate and research restorative justice practices & programs.

Approaches:

- Utilize restorative Circles involving offender, victims or community at-large, family of offender and victim, and a trained facilitator.
- Provide Victim Offender Mediation with structured dialogues.
- Facilitate Family Conferences among those who have a role to play in devising a plan to keep the youth safe.
- Draft MOU and Confidentiality Agreement to be signed by all parties, including the District Attorney's office.

Process:

Stage 1, Referral: Screening and meeting with offenders and victims to determine whether RJ process is appropriate.

Stage 2, Preparation Session: Involves building relationships and trust with youth, families and victims.

Stage 3, Restorative Conference: A reparation agreement outlines how the offender will try to repair any harm caused by offense.

Stage 4, Service Referral: Connects youth to services such as anger management, therapy, GED prep, or job training.

Stage 5, Advocacy/Mentorship: Provides the youth and/or juvenile victim with a RJUMP mentor.

Stage 6, Follow up: Continue circles, conferences, and mediations.

Stage 7, Leadership & Education: Opportunity for youth to participate in community dialogues and education.

Additional Projects

International

Nigeria – Muslim-Christian dialogue program across Northern Nigeria supporting the Interfaith Mediation Center

Liberia – Teacher Training Programs at the University of Liberia to improve the faculty quality

Israel/Palestine – Development of a Peace College with Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, an integrated Israeli-Palestinian community

South Africa – Health, migration and governance in southern Africa at the African Center for Migration and Society

Massachusetts

Busing/Desegregation – Assistance in the development of a Boston-wide conversation to heal the scars from the Busing Era and to improve cross-cultural relations

Veterans' Courts Project – Supporting the expansion and improvement of veterans' court sessions in Massachusetts

BRIDGES – Improving the quality of communication between the Greater Boston Muslim, Arab, and Sikh communities with regional law enforcement and customs officials

Get Involved!

To learn about our work in conflict management and democratic governance, contact us:

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