

# RESTORATIVE WORKS

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW



## WE CHOOSE TO ENGAGE

IIRP ALUMNA KEISHA ALLEN, '19  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN, USA



International Institute  
for Restorative Practices

### IMPACT SCHOLARSHIPS

Supporting the Next Generation of International Changemakers

### HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty

Photo credit: Zenobia Awada

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## A SCIENCE OF HUMAN DIGNITY

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



The desire to be treated with “dignity” is a universal component of human experience. This is the foundation of my recent paper, *A Science of Human Dignity*. Across time and cultures, human beings have expressed this desire in a multitude of ways.

There are three dimensions of human dignity that are clearly evident within restorative practices scholarship — expressed as three areas of universal human need. These are the need to belong and to have voice and agency.

Regardless of the many things that divide us, we all seek strong, meaningful and lasting bonds with others (the need to belong). Each of us also needs to know that our unique voice will have an opportunity to be heard, and that our personal story matters to those around us (the need to have voice). Lastly, we need regular opportunities to use that belonging and voice to impact the world around us (the need to have agency).

As a new field of inquiry within the social sciences, restorative practices is exploring this fundamental aspect of human experience and applying those insights to some of the world’s most pressing needs and challenges. That is our collective mission.

You’ll find many stories related to our mission in this issue of *Restorative Works*. In particular, we are thrilled to share some of the groundbreaking work by IIRP students and alumni around the world. The IIRP Graduate School pursues this work through education, consulting and research. We are international, freestanding and wholly dedicated to restorative practices — the science of relationships and community.

An institution does not need to be large to make a sizeable impact on the world. In this sense, the IIRP Graduate School is at the leading edge of the future of higher education. The complexity of social life and the realities of work in the 21st Century demand modestly scaled, focused and strategic higher education institutions capable of going deep into specific challenges faced by civil society.

Our graduate programs, professional development, conferences and symposia, strategic consulting projects and growing range of research activity provide a global platform for inquiry, influence and impact.

You can help to magnify that impact today. Please consider donating to the IIRP’s new Impact Scholarships Campaign. You’ll be providing crucial support for real communities and the next generation of changemakers around the world. See page 16 to learn how to give.

**John W. Bailie, Ph.D.**  
President



## ALUMNI AND STUDENTS MAKING AN IMPACT



**ROSIE ARCONA, '19**  
Fostering Educational Equity

As a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)-Equity Coach in Sacramento, California, Rosie is helping address issues from racial strife to student expulsions to striking teachers.

When a student's science fair display "proved" that African American, Latino and Southeast Asian students had lower IQs than white and Northeast Asian students, the community was outraged. So Rosie and her team invited the community to a series of healing circles. Everyone discussed: "How has racism affected you?" "When have you seen discrimination in your community or school?" and "What can we do as a community to address these concerns?" People really valued the opportunity to connect and express themselves.

Rosie stepped in when two freshmen boys were about to be expelled for getting into a serious fight on their way home from school. Instead of the usual expulsion hearing, she arranged a restorative conference with the boys, their parents and administrators. At first, the boys were guarded and denied blame. But after they told their stories, accepted responsibility and apologized, they wanted to be friends and pledged to join the school's Leadership Academy. Expulsion was off the table, and the adults committed to create a climate of support to prevent students from fighting.

Restorative processes are just as important for teachers and administrators, says Rosie. In the wake of last year's teachers strike, giving everyone an opportunity to be heard is essential. Moreover, she stresses, "Our kids aren't going to be OK if we don't invest time in adults."



**SHARON MAST, '10**  
Strengthening Relationships  
in Business

Sharon is helping business leaders enhance communication and relationships within their companies. Through her firm, Spark Solutions & Support, she has developed strategies

that are improving climate and culture in businesses, from engineering firms to car dealerships, all over the world. "It's all about learning to ask the right questions," Sharon explains. Utilizing restorative concepts like Fair Process and working *with* their employees, not *to* or *for* them, Sharon's corporate clients are increasing employee satisfaction and productivity.

At a medical equipment manufacturer, employees were purposely not communicating with the next shift because they disliked them and wanted to give them a hard time. Sharon facilitated a restorative circle about the negative impact this lack of communication was having on morale and on customers. The employees took responsibility for their actions, and their mindsets and relationships began to change for the better. A year later, the client was named "one of the best places to work in Pennsylvania."



**KECIA MCMILLIAN,  
STUDENT**  
Promoting Cultural Diversity

Kecia has spent many years working with young people, including those who are homeless, underrepresented, and who have mental health or intellectual and developmental

disabilities. Currently an in-home tutor for youth struggling with learning, she believes in meeting students where they are to help them reach their goals. She's also active in her church. She employed her learning at the IIRP to heal a serious rift that arose among the congregants. She is now introducing restorative practices to her fellow congregants as a way of "living our Unitarian Universalist principles." She is also using the practices to explore the issue of white supremacy and promote racial diversity in her church membership. As a young African American girl at a newly desegregated school, Kecia experienced significant traumatic events, including racially motivated bullying and assault. She writes: "Restorative practices attracted me because of its history with Indigenous Peoples around the world and its willingness to separate actions from people's worth to allow for and encourage true restoration."

*Kecia earned the 2019 Shawn Suzch Scholarship, awarded in memory of a man who overcame adversity with courage and determination.*

## COMMENCEMENT 2019: WE CHOOSE TO ENGAGE

“How we relate to everyone within our community matters more than many of us might suspect,” shared John Bailie, Ph.D., IIRP President, in his opening remarks. “The graduates you see before you are planting the seeds that will grow into new communities ready and evolved to face the 21st Century. The work our alumni are doing has a social impact far in excess of their numbers.”

The 20 members of the IIRP Class of 2019 participated in the Master’s Degree program from seven U.S. states – from Maine to California – and four other countries: Yukon, Canada; Shimla, India; San Jose, Costa Rica and Vieux-Fort, Saint Lucia. The IIRP has now conferred 208 master’s degrees to graduates from 12 countries. The new graduates are using what they have learned at the IIRP in their work as educators, attorneys, researchers, practitioners, civil society advocates and more.



On behalf of her fellow graduates, Keisha Allen, Executive Director of the Training Institute for the IIRP partner, Black Family Development, Inc., in Detroit, delivered an inspiring Commencement address. In a reflection on the power of “engagement,” Keisha shared how that power has impacted her life and work.

Her great-aunt engaged her by taking her in when her mother was on drugs and her father incarcerated. Her ninth-grade English teacher engaged her when she was “smoking weed, skipping school and contemplating whether or not life was worth living.”

Keisha stressed how urgent it is to engage our young people, who “deserve a school-to-career pathway and not a school-to-prison pipeline.” Engagement requires three



things, she explained: authenticity, creating an environment of resilience and a willingness to teach what we know. She quoted an African Proverb: “When the children are not embraced by the village, they will burn it down to feel its warmth.”

To engage Detroit’s youth, Black Family Development, Inc. trained 125 restorative practices youth ambassadors at five high schools. “I used to get angry when someone offended me,” one youth told Keisha, “But now I pause and ask myself, ‘What has interrupted their interest and joy?’ I no longer choose to write a negative script.” After the youth ambassadors brainstormed how to address challenges restoratively, their schools implemented some of their ideas, including a community beautification project to help elderly neighbors maintain their yards.

“I pray that the adults, community members, law enforcement and any system impacting youth will become brave enough and vulnerable enough to see the value of youth and be willing to invite them to the table as partners, and not clients,” Keisha declared. Ultimately, she added, transformation in a young person’s life doesn’t happen because they encounter a restorative practitioner. It happens because we choose to engage.

Discover 21st Century learning at the graduate level. **Visit [iirp.edu](http://iirp.edu).**



## ALUMNI IMPACT



### SCOTT KRUMSEE, '17 HEALING THE IMPACT OF GUN VIOLENCE

A restorative practitioner at a West Oakland (California) Middle School, Scott says the most important thing is giving students more power and voice. In this multi-cultural setting where all students are eligible for free or reduced lunch, Scott uses practices like community-building circles and cooperative games to make this happen.

He begins with a check-in and a “mindful moment,” so kids can focus in. Games help students speak their truth, from safe subjects like favorite colors to serious matters like family relationships. The key is finding the right topic — not so light that kids will “check out,” and not so heavy it opens wounds that

can't be addressed before they leave for the next class. It's also about modeling behavior. “They soak up everything I say and do,” Scott explains. “So I show up every day in a consistent, loving, patient and thoughtful way and demonstrate how I want them to interact with each other.”

In a weekly boys group class, a student shared his experience witnessing a shooting. Scott models for the kids: if something strikes a chord with your own life, step up and share. This story struck a chord with everyone in class. Scott could tell they'd been carrying their stories with them, afraid to share them. The boys decided to record their experiences witnessing gun violence, interviewing each other using restorative questions. “It was amazing to see them react to each other's stories and help each other out,” he says.

“We Had to Say No,” the project's title, is from one of the interviews. The project website explains: “While brandishing a gun, the perpetrator asks our student and his younger brother, ‘Did y'all see anything?’ This moment epitomizes the terror and silence that surrounds it, for as our student recalls, he ‘had to say no.’ This project emphatically taught our students that it is okay to say ‘yes.’” Hear the boys' stories at: [www.ousd.org/Page/17852](http://www.ousd.org/Page/17852)

### JEN WILLIAMS, '16 EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO BE RESTORATIVE

As a middle school counselor in Elverson, Pennsylvania, Jen has empowered students to sort out conflict among younger students. Her “Peacekeepers” program incorporates social and emotional learning, community building, giving students a voice and training them in restorative practices. Students become part of a community through team building. They establish group norms and evaluate them regularly, and have frequent opportunities for their voices to be heard. Jen also trains these students to facilitate restorative conferences. The students enjoy helping younger kids resolve conflicts. “They become more confident and are often looked to by classmates for help,” Jen notes.



When the Miami-Dade, Florida, School District approached the IIRP to train students in restorative practices, IIRP Lecturer Mary Jo Hebling, '12, asked Jen for help. Together they adapted her program into a pilot restorative practices training for students, focused on developing leadership, interpersonal and restorative skills. In Miami, 12 IIRP Instructors, including seven IIRP alumni, trained 500 students. Jen says she watched 23 middle schoolers evolve from a punitive to a restorative *with* mindset in one day. The kids said the training helped them build connections with others and inspired them to make a difference in their school culture. “This day affirmed for me once again the power of restorative processes to foster strong relationships and melt away cultural differences,” shares Jen. “I am optimistic that the next generation will be one that seeks first to restore.”

## CIRCLING UP WITH OUR STREET NEIGHBORS

Some of the most marginalized people in Allentown, Pennsylvania, USA, are finding a voice and a sense of dignity, belonging and empowerment at Ripple Community, Inc. They may be experiencing homelessness, mental illness, trauma or drug and alcohol abuse issues. Ripple offers them a safe, comfortable place to spend the day with others. Everyone is welcome. Instead of “homeless people,” Ripple’s staff call their guests, “street neighbors.”

What strengthens the sense of humanity and community at Ripple is engaging people through restorative practices like circles. Ripple Community grew out of Ripple Church, a “church of the streets,” founded by Tom Albright, ‘15. Trained in restorative practices by the IIRP, Ripple staff and neighbors sit in a circle every day and share feelings and stories, build relationships and address issues and conflicts.

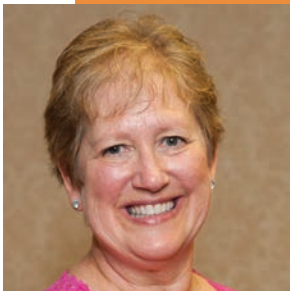
“These are people who are not used to being listened to, to not having a seat at the table,” comments Sherri Brokopp Binder, Ph.D., Executive Director of Ripple. “To have this chance to speak is like a breath of fresh air.”

The impact of restorative practices has been profound. “George” came to Ripple dealing with drug addiction and homelessness. At first, he couldn’t bring himself to participate in circles, but he gradually joined in and shared his experiences of homelessness and addiction. Now George no longer lives on the street and is in recovery. A leader at Ripple, he helps others struggling with addiction. He is especially proud of facilitating a circle with youth volunteers who had never interacted with a homeless person before. The experience was humanizing for everyone.



Ripple has an affordable housing program for people ready to move into apartments, called RCI Village. But transitioning from homelessness can be difficult. “Sandy” had just moved into an apartment at RCI Village and was lonely and scared. She hadn’t slept in a bed in years. She was used to being on the street, surrounded by other people. Staff helped Sandy explore her anxieties through nonjudgmental restorative questions. Starting out sleeping on the floor, she moved to the couch and finally to her bed. Staff also supported Sandy with regular visits to check in on her.

What’s happening at Ripple shows that restorative practices can be valuable in the community — that it can help people who have lost their support systems and live on the fringes of urban society to cultivate connections across social boundaries.



### JOYCE DAWLEY, ‘13 SUPPORTING FIRST RESPONDERS

Joyce is applying the skills and knowledge she learned at the IIRP Graduate School to help paramedics, firefighters, police officers and other emergency responders cope with stress after being called to tragic incidents, such as car crashes, suicides and infant deaths.

After working as a paramedic and as a middle school music teacher, Joyce was appointed to the volunteer position of Team Coordinator and Clinical Director of the Eastern Pennsylvania Regional Critical Incident Stress Management Team, an agency of the Eastern PA Emergency

Medical Services Council. She helps emergency responders continue their important work and truly believes in the Team’s mission to “serve those who serve others.” Leading and mentoring her Team, she finds the awareness and understanding she gained in her IIRP leadership and counseling courses to be extremely useful.

Without opportunities to talk about the serious trauma and misfortune they regularly face, responders often experience extreme stress. Overwhelmed by feelings of depression and hopelessness, they might quit their job or even take their own life. Joyce and her Team employ restorative practices like talking circles and affective questions to prevent such outcomes. The open-ended character of affective questions enables responders who are dealing with tragedy to reflect on and address their own feelings and behavior. The practices help them be more effective and fulfilled in their work and more relaxed and happier in their lives.

## ENHANCING SCHOOL CLIMATE

Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), a large urban school district in Louisville, Kentucky, is implementing restorative practices to teach lessons, build community and resolve conflict.

In a high school civics class, a teacher shows video clips and asks questions about the first amendment. Everyone has something to say, as they realize how the Bill of Rights impacts their lives. In one school, teachers and students come together to get to know each other. The discussion becomes intense as students describe the poverty, crime and neighborhood shootings that are a part of their everyday life.

“You need to understand we are walking into this school with PTSD,” a student declares. “We’re going to brush you off at first. You gotta keep trying.” His teacher admits, “I have two college degrees — in history. They didn’t teach me about trauma.”

“It was eye-opening for students and teachers to learn about each other and hear what they need,” comments Sandra Hensel, Behavior Support Systems Coordinator at JCPS. We are “striving to create healthy and positive school climate and culture, so all students and staff feel a true sense of belonging.”

Staff in 29 of 170 district schools have been trained and are embracing restorative philosophy and practices. Having worked with the IIRP for four years, the district now has a stable of IIRP Licensed Trainers and restorative



practices coaches: resource teachers who also coach Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Naomi Brahim, Ed.D., Director of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, oversees district restorative practices efforts. In schools where restorative practices take root, she observes, “Kids who make poor choices are still welcomed back. Kids are engaged and excited about learning and being connected to a school community.”

At the IIRP 2019 World Conference, JCPS presented data showing how restorative practices is reducing suspensions and office referrals. “We’re changing the relationship between adults and kids,” concludes Hensel. “Restorative practices is a way to teach adults how to build relationships with students, and to do it in a positive way that fosters the social skills they need to move forward in life.”



## POSITIVE RESTORATIVE PRACTICES RESEARCH

In the first rigorous, large-scale evaluation of restorative practices in a large urban school district, researchers from the RAND Corporation found restorative practices improved school climate, reduced student suspensions and decreased discipline disparities in Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS). The randomized controlled trial compared 22 PPS K-12 schools that adopted restorative practices with 22 similar schools that did not, between June 2015 and June 2017. The IIRP provided implementation support, funded by the National Institute of Justice. PPS is now implementing restorative practices in all district schools. The study found that climate and relationships in the restorative practices schools improved, compared with control schools. The number of days lost to suspension declined in the restorative practices schools, as did racial and income disparities in suspension rates, compared to control schools. Suspension-reduction rates were greater for African American, low-income, female and elementary grade students than for students not in those groups. “The study shows the promise of restorative practices as an important prevention strategy,” comments Gina Baral Abrams, Dr.P.H., IIRP Director of Research and Program Evaluation and Assistant Professor.



In academic year 2018-2019, IIRP Instructors provided restorative practices professional development to schools and organizations in 34 U.S. states, Washington, D.C., 3 Canadian provinces, the U.K., Singapore and Curaçao.



## COACHING THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

At the School District of University City, Missouri, restorative practices is an integral part of school climate and culture. Even the basketball team is on board. Kelvin Lee, Head High School Basketball Coach and Restorative Practices Specialist, is using talking circles to build relationships and bring the team together, explains Nancy Cambria, District Director of Communications.

After plays kept falling apart due to a lack of student leadership, Kelvin led an hour-long circle in the gym. Talk soon turned from basketball to Black History Month, prompting students and coaches to open up about hardship and resilience. An assistant coach shared the pain of losing two parents to incarceration. During this emotional circle, two team captains emerged to take on leadership roles. "What's great about the circle is you also begin to see who the leaders are," notes Kelvin.

As a result of their improved communication, the team won the Conference Championship for the first time since 1995. "My players are starting to walk down the high school's hallways like ambassadors for the school," says Kelvin.

Both the team and the school as a whole have come a long way. After a police officer fatally shot 18-year-old Michael Brown in nearby Ferguson, University City students and staff were upset and anxious. Racial tensions were impacting the entire school district.

Now, says Gary Spiller, the district's Executive Director of Student Services and Innovation, students feel safe and free to express themselves, supported by their teachers. What brought about this change? In response to recommendations in the Ferguson Commission's report and a study by Washington University, the district implemented restorative practices, culturally

responsive classroom techniques, trauma-informed teaching and social-emotional learning.

IIRP Instructors provided restorative practices professional development to district staff to help them strengthen relationships with students and build community and trust. The district passed a resolution, "Humanize School Climate Through Restorative Practices and Social Emotional Learning," the first of its kind in Missouri. Students can speak openly and honestly about tensions before they escalate and worsen.

University City High School also has a restorative practices class for students. "It's a way to work with our students towards a more restorative culture," explains Gary. In action research projects, students are identifying concerns in their school community and applying the practices. "Alumni are now prouder of their alma mater, and more educators want to work here," Gary adds. "I believe our district is a better place because of restorative practices."



### KEVIN JONES, '17 BUILDING SUPPORTIVE PARENT COMMUNITIES

Kevin is engaging parents in schools implementing restorative practices. He brings 35 years of experience as a mental health practitioner and alternative school administrator to his work as an IIRP Licensed Trainer in schools and communities. When his home state of Illinois began requiring alternative discipline practices, parents wanted to learn more. So Kevin began holding restorative parenting workshops. The first night, 75 parents showed up — in a snowstorm. The workshops became a platform to share parenting challenges. Parents built mutually supportive communities where they can be vulnerable and address difficult questions like, "What do I do when my wife and stepson fight?" "If we only affect young people in school, it's not enough," Kevin maintains. "A lot of parents are broken, and this work helps them." He explains, "I grew up in a housing project and experienced many things that keep people from being successful. This helps me empathize." Kevin is now also an IIRP Graduate School Lecturer. "I have an ability to bring restorative practices to life so people can see it in action."

**ALBERTA, CANADA** Hosted by Gayle Desmeules, IIRP Canada Regional Representative, John Bailie, Ph.D., IIRP President, visited three colleges that serve Indigenous students. He presented his paper, *A Science of Human Dignity*. He also learned about the devastating impact of colonization on Indigenous people by taking part in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise. This participatory history lesson was developed in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, knowledge keepers and educators to foster truth, understanding, respect and reconciliation among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

**AUSTIN, TEXAS, USA** Walter Long, an attorney practicing appellate law, has been working to help Texans move beyond polarized discussions related to state violence. In 2007, he founded the Texas After Violence Project (TAVP) to foster dialogue between Texans on all sides of the death penalty. TAVP has grown into a restorative storytelling project that features a growing library of interviews conducted by those whose loved ones have been executed, killed by police, died in prison or suffered other traumatic violent events, with others who have similarly experienced violence and trauma. Walter was a keynote speaker at Community Leadership: the IIRP 2019 World Conference. He spoke about ways our society can transform systems that promote violence, trauma and toxic stress into regenerative systems where health and well-being are enhanced and individuals can thrive.

**SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, USA** The Restorative Justice Ministry of the Archdiocese of San Francisco is committed to supporting victims, crime survivors and offenders through a wide range of services and events. These include healing circles for crime survivors and family members of homicide victims; retreats for coping with the violent death of a loved one; conferences for the previously incarcerated; support and training to develop restorative leadership skills and concepts for crime survivors, clergy and others. The IIRP has provided many professional development events. "Beyond caring for the needs of those we serve, we nurture relationships and friendships with prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families, as well family survivors of homicides in San Francisco and the greater Bay Area," says Julio Escobar, Program Director. "We engage in a 'ministry of presence,' spending time with and listening to the people, empowering them to believe in themselves, identify goals and value their own opinions and decisions."

**BERMUDA** The nonprofit Citizens Uprooting Racism in Bermuda (CURB) is working to identify and eliminate racism across the island. Bermuda has a history of slavery, segregation and white privilege. CURB encourages open dialogues about this past and how it still affects society today, through Truth and Reconciliation Community Conversations, which incorporate restorative practices. Participants sit in circles and use affective language to have respectful, authentic discussions about systemic racial issues and how racism has affected them and their community. CURB is also actively training others in restorative practices and hopes to introduce it throughout Bermuda.

**EMBU, KENYA** James Mureithi is Founder and Executive Director of Youth Promise Kenya, a nonprofit that provides educational opportunities and community health support for underprivileged children and young people. James participated in a restorative practices training at the IIRP in Bethlehem. He gained new skills and knowledge that he has employed with young people and colleagues to help them express concerns, problem-solve and build relationships and community. "This training has helped me rethink ways to handle issues that break community in work, school, church and general society," he affirms.

**VLEZENBEEK, BELGIUM** After losing her life partner, Johan Van Steen, during terrorist attacks in Brussels, Kristin Verellen transformed her private pain into public healing, cofounding "We Have the Choice." The nonprofit organizes and facilitates circles to heal trauma and rebuild resilience after tragic events. Sitting in a circle with family and friends and talking about her feelings helped Kristin and inspired her to help others in similar situations. "It started as a way of surviving, but then it became the most precious, human thing you can do at such moments," she shares. "We sat down in a circle just to come back to ourselves, to try to find the words for what we were feeling and try to make sense of it. By the end, there was lightness, even laughter." Kristin was a keynote speaker at the IIRP Europe Conference in Kortrijk, Belgium.

**ROMANIA** Hosted by Vidia Negrea, Trustee and IIRP Europe Regional Representative, John Bailie, Ph.D., IIRP President, met with faculty and students at three universities in Romania. He participated in a conference of several hundred school educators, administrators, psychologists and counselors, focused on restorative practices. He also presented his paper, A Science of Human Dignity.

**TIWI ISLAND, AUSTRALIA** After years of colonization and racial discrimination, many Indigenous people are struggling, especially in remote communities like Tiwi Island. Terry O'Connell, a restorative justice pioneer in Australia, worked with Tiwi College staff to implement restorative practices into the boarding school's culture. "It was pretty chaotic, but now Tiwi College is known as 'peaceful Pikka.' Staff are meeting their many challenges in a positive way," affirms Terry. He helped create the national organization Remote Indigenous Parents Australia (RIPA), which is increasing Indigenous parent involvement at boarding schools. RIPA collaborates closely with Kerrie Sellen, IIRP Licensed Trainer and Director of the nonprofit Restorative Journeys, to provide restorative practices professional development and strengthen relationships in Indigenous communities across Australia.

# INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES



## GRADUATING WITH A BRIGHTER FUTURE

High school graduation is always emotional, but the graduation ceremony at Buxmont Academy Bethlehem was uniquely powerful. I didn't know any of the students personally. I had only briefly interacted with the three graduates after touring the school a few weeks before. But by the end of the ceremony, my eyes welled up. I expected a speech from the school Coordinator Karen Engle, but I didn't expect the students to share such compelling stories of transformation and community.

There was a palpable sense of comradery throughout the day. "The ceremony is to celebrate the graduates, of course, but we are also celebrating all the other students as they return to their public schools or continue here," Karen explained. Every student shared their proudest change. This made a strong impression on me: opening up to people, controlling anger, making better decisions and successfully staying at one school for a whole year.

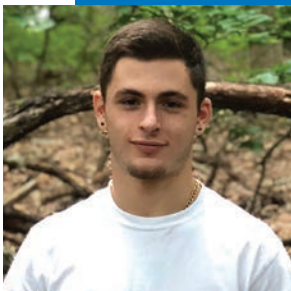
The three graduates are testaments to the importance of community and commitment to personal growth at Buxmont Academy. Nikole said she was most proud of improving her grades. She had already graduated from public school but came back to Buxmont for the last week of classes and to attend graduation. How many other young adults would willingly go back to school after graduating? Giovanni said he was most proud of "stepping up and becoming a leader." A leader is exactly how I would describe him. When he gave me the school tour, he told me that Buxmont helped him realize his former struggle to respect authority was a sign of



leadership potential. Leilani said she was most proud of "being able to accept myself as a person," and that Buxmont Academy had helped her learn to love herself and others. She shared with me that she had low self-esteem when she first came to Buxmont, but I wouldn't have known that from the way she acts now.

Everyone changes during high school, but it was truly inspiring to see how these students had transformed themselves at Buxmont Academy and how the staff sincerely care about and support them.

— By Rachel Lee, IIRP Intern



## BUILDING RESILIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE

After committing a serious crime and struggling with substance abuse, Fred Knecht turned his life around at Community Service Foundation (CSF)'s Restorative Reporting Centers (RRC). This IIRP model program helps youth take responsibility for their actions and make lasting, positive change in their lives.

Fred appreciated that RRC staff did things *with* him, not *to* or *for* him. "They gave us the opportunity and space to police ourselves," he explains. The program taught him responsibility and accountability and improved his decision-making and coping skills. "It's helping me to this day," he affirms.

The 20-week RRC experience involves nine to 13 weeks of the highly structured program and seven to 11 weeks of intensive aftercare, depending on students' needs. Aftercare helped Fred reintegrate into society, he says. Now he's apprenticing full-time at a heating and air conditioning firm, has an apartment and a car, and hopes to start his own business. He also wants to give back by helping kids going through difficult times, like he once did. "We hope Fred will share his experience with our current students," says Jerry Bradley, CSF Assistant Director of Community-Based Programs. "His story is one of resilience and perseverance."

## FROM ANTI-SEMITISM TO EMPATHY

Freshman boys at a Michigan high school shocked the community by performing an anti-Semitic rap song at lunch. But bringing people together to repair the hurt they caused turned an ugly episode into a chance to build empathy and respect.

Harm spread throughout the school as a video of the incident circulated. “The hardest part,” lamented a member of the town’s Jewish community, “was that it wasn’t one student, but a whole group.”

Many Bloomfield Hills High School staff had received restorative practices professional development from IIRP Licensed Trainers Bill Boyle, ‘16, and Margaret Schultz, District Administrator for Social-Emotional Learning & Educational Equity. Margaret used restorative questions to help the boys explore the boundaries of trust and safety they had violated. They spoke emotionally about the shame they had brought upon themselves and the pain they had caused.

She also facilitated a restorative conference. The boys met with staff, family and community members to discuss what happened, express their feelings and have a say in the outcome. Rabbi Joshua Bennett, a school parent and community resource, was a participant.

“There was little eye contact at first,” notes Rabbi Bennett. But the conference helped participants articulate their pain and remorse, move on and repair the harm. Rather than simply being suspended, the boys heard

firsthand from people they hurt, faced painful feelings, accepted responsibility and made amends.

As a follow up, Rabbi Bennett led a tour of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, where everyone viewed shocking depictions of anti-Semitism. Students voiced grief at the millions of lives lost because few had the courage to speak up. A parent observed: “It’s hard to know, until another incident comes along where they have the option to stand up, if they will do it. But if one does, it was worth it.”

“This incident of anti-Semitic hate speech was devastating. But we’re a stronger community because of the restorative process used to address it,” comments Charlie Hollerith, Bloomfield Hills High Principal. “It allowed students to be welcomed back into the community, with stronger relationships and a larger understanding of their role within the community.”



## HARLEM CHILDREN’S ZONE — BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

Harlem Children’s Zone (HCZ) Promise Academy Charter Schools, in New York City, are implementing restorative practices to build meaningful relationships between students and staff and enhance students’ educational experience.

Administrators were attracted to the practices while exploring options to support social and emotional learning. “It is important for our students to be able to accurately identify and articulate their emotions, as well as understand how their actions impact others,” notes Deirdre Schwiring, Director of Social and Emotional Learning. They were also influenced by research showing restorative practices’ capacity to decrease suspension and student time out of the classroom, a continual goal.



Staff have been trained in Basic Restorative Practices and Using Circles Effectively. Elementary students gather in circles at the start of every school day. Middle and high school students gather during social-emotional learning classes two to three times per week. All levels employ restorative circles to address harm in the classroom and support conversations with administrators and deans. Elementary teachers report that their morning circles set a positive, supportive start to the school day. Middle and high school teams use circles to discuss school-year transitions and to repair harm within the community.

HCZ’s mission and vision aim to break the cycle of poverty by focusing intensively on children’s social and educational development. In addition to education, the organization provides wraparound programs, such as Health and Wellness, Arts and Culture, Preventative Programs and HCZ Community Centers, which support families and neighborhood environments.

“We hope to continue building an educational environment based on fair process and mutual respect,” says Deirdre. “Our goal is that students will feel an increased sense of ownership over their education.”

## CONNECTING COMMUNITY HEALTH AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

The IIRP Summer Symposium, *Advancing Community Well-Being Through Restorative Practices*, was a dynamic two-and-a-half-day experience. Through interactive activities, lecture and open-ended questions, IIRP faculty and other speakers challenged participants to think about community health and restorative practices in new ways.

Community health is a multi-disciplinary field that applies public health science to improve health and quality of life for everyone in a community. Restorative practices is an emerging social science that studies how to strengthen relationships between individuals, as well as social connections within communities. While restorative practices can respond to harm and help repair relationships, most of the time, the practices should be employed proactively, to build community and prevent harm. The Symposium focused on this proactive approach.

Community health practitioners can utilize restorative practices to create a social environment that fosters health and well-being in a systemic and sustainable way. “Restorative practices can be an innovative prevention strategy for improving the social determinants of health — the social factors known to influence well-being, including connectedness and belonging, sense of community and collective efficacy,” explains Gina Baral Abrams, Dr.P.H., IIRP Director of Research and Program Evaluation and Assistant Professor, who led the Symposium.

At the Symposium, Henry McClendon, Jr., IIRP Michigan Regional Representative and Vice Chair of the IIRP Board of Trustees, shared an example of how linking community health and restorative practices has worked in the real world. After his home city of Detroit lost more than a million residents and declared bankruptcy, residents’ sense of well-being hit rock bottom. At Henry’s urging, Detroit began implementing restorative practices on the intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, community and policy levels (the five levels of influence in the community health Social Ecological Model).

For several years, Henry oversaw restorative practices education in neighborhoods, schools, social services and criminal justice, supported by partnerships with the community organizations, The Skillman Foundation and Black Family Development, Inc. Then, he and a multi-sector leadership council shared what they had learned with their circles of influence and strategically engaged leaders from across sectors, including police, courts, education, corrections and healthcare. “Getting the right people in the room is not enough,” notes Gina. “Successful multi-sector community health efforts need an explicit model for how people will relate as they work together toward a common agenda.”

The Symposium presented information in an arc that built day by day. Participants received the same information, then broke into groups of their choice: focusing on higher education, K-12 education or family and community. Sitting in circles, participants learned from each other as they discussed how to apply the information they had learned in their own settings.

Fifteen Symposium attendees further enhanced their learning by participating in the IIRP Graduate School online course RP 570. Each student developed a plan for their own community by writing a case study about a real problem. They then worked together to explore possible solutions through feedback from other students and insights gained from the entire blended learning experience.

“Digging into coursework that exposed me to the power of preventative care, asset-based community health forums, community engagement and how restorative practices could enhance such practices was enlightening,” comments St. Claire Adriaan, a middle school principal in New York City and IIRP Master of Science in Restorative Practices student who participated in the Symposium and the online course. “Writing and analyzing my own case study based on this knowledge confirmed that one person can make a difference and that restorative practices is a powerful tool to ensure a community’s health and well-being.”





## BUILDING TRUST BETWEEN POLICE AND COMMUNITY

Police Community Summits are building much-needed trust between officers and residents in Detroit, Michigan, USA.

Commander Eric Ewing of the city's Fifth Precinct was determined to find a way to bridge the gap between police officers and citizens. He believed the issue was "a relationship problem, not a crime problem." When he met Henry McClendon, Jr., IIRP Michigan Representative and Vice Chair of the IIRP Board of Trustees, and learned about restorative practices, Eric thought its emphasis on building relationships and giving everyone a voice might provide what was needed.

Eric, Henry and Bishop Daryl Harris together convened the first Police Community Summit. Twenty each of police officers and residents — a mix of races and genders, veteran officers and recent police academy graduates— were chosen to participate. Half the residents had previously filed a police complaint but were unsatisfied with the outcome. Still, recruiting residents was difficult: Some worried it was a trick to bring in people with outstanding warrants or a public relations gimmick.

Restorative questions helped everyone empathize and communicate with each other. Officers attended out of uniform, and the event was well underway before residents learned they had been interacting with police officers. Henry recalls one resident describing the shock of realizing they had been talking with a police officer, saying he was "almost human!" Debra Jones-Christopher, whose brother was killed by a police officer in 1988, said the honest communication allowed her to finally release the anger and horror of her past experience.

There have been 10 Police Community Summits in Detroit. Henry and Eric believe they can be utilized in any community dealing with police-community relationships. "We have complex cultural issues that need to be addressed in a healthy way, or we run the risk of destroying our democracy," Henry observes. "This is one way restorative practices can be used to address this concern in any community, especially communities of color where police-citizen relationships have been a historic challenge."

## LISTENING CIRCLES — SAFE AND SACRED SPACES

Listening Circles are proving an effective way to deal with highly sensitive issues such as sexual abuse.

Liz and Vic O'Callaghan were restorative educators in Parramatta, New South Wales, Australia, when the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was launched in 2012 to hear from victims of child sexual abuse in Catholic parishes.

Responses for victims included counseling, financial compensation and non-disclosure agreements. But Liz and Vic asked: "What about the people in the pews?" Ten months later, they held the first Listening Circle for 40-50 parishioners and clergy in one parish. In groups of six, led by a facilitator and with a counselor on hand, restorative questions guided participants to share the effect the abuse had on them. Everyone found the experience helpful. One woman commented that it was the first time she'd found a voice in her parish.

Listening Circles served as a model at St. Anne Catholic Church in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, USA, in 2018, after a Grand Jury Report was released following a two-year investigation documenting child sexual abuse in the state's Catholic dioceses. Father Anthony Mongiello of St. Anne contacted the IIRP to help his parish address the trauma the report had caused. Participants at the resulting Listening Circle appreciated the emotional openness, compassion and the opportunity to be heard.

Liz and Vic hope that the model might someday be used to bring communities together to address other difficult issues, as well.



Vic and Liz O'Callaghan

## EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES IN HONDURAS

Organizations across Latin America are strengthening relationships and transforming communities through restorative practices. In Honduras, they include Organization for Youth Empowerment (OYE) and Un Mundo, both trained by IIRP Latin America and Miguel Tello, IIRP Adjunct Professor.

OYE staff employ circles with students to discuss difficult subjects like sadness and loss. "We were surprised how openly our youth shared painful situations in their home and personal lives," comments Amanda Hall, OYE Development & Partnerships Coordinator. A circle about the migrant caravans leaving Honduras gave students a safe space to talk about how this is affecting them. They expressed a sense of responsibility and a commitment to use the opportunities they have received at OYE to provide the same for others.



Denis Espinal, Executive Director of Un Mundo, shared a story of conflict around a water project between the local water board and landowners. The board found a water source to provide a remote rural community with much-needed clean water. But landowners refused to sign a permit for a water transport system from their land to the community. Un Mundo facilitated a circle, giving everyone a chance to speak. This allowed them to recognize common goals, and that clean water is important for everyone. The landowners signed the permit.

Un Mundo is also addressing sensitive interpersonal issues through restorative practices. Denis employed circles to facilitate difficult conversations with a family dealing with sexual abuse. The family was able to move forward and begin healing.

## RESTORATIVE PRACTICES ACROSS SINGAPORE



IIRP partner Lutheran Community Care Services (LCCS) is spreading restorative practices across Singapore. "Our goal is universal

application of restorative practices," declares Justin Mui, Director. It begins within the organization. All staff are trained in the practices. Everyone works together. The

entire staff had input into their seven Guiding Principles, which are upheld internally and with clients.

LCCS has introduced the practices to a wide range of domains, including schools, families, the Housing & Development Board (HDB), State Courts, the prison system and religious organizations. HDB provides public housing to 80 percent of Singapore's population, which includes Chinese, Indian, Malay and Filipino residents. Restorative practices helps bridge cultural tensions and resolve neighborhood disputes that would otherwise go to court. LCCS facilitated a circle for an enduring neighborhood noise complaint. Instead of casting blame, the community came together and shared how they were affected. Everyone took responsibility. The police were delighted.

Simple templates make restorative concepts like Restorative Questions and the Compass of Shame accessible to everyone LCCS serves. The Compass illustrates four reactions to shame: Withdrawal, Attack Self, Avoidance and Attack Other. When Justin showed the Compass to a teen in a children's home, the boy quickly pointed to Attack Other and Withdrawal, building his self-awareness.

LCCS is raising awareness of restorative practices through the #Badge4Change campaign. When people behave restoratively, they receive a badge: Engage, Empower, Restore or Collaborate, which is shared on Instagram. When an airline employee expressed empathy for a stressed customer with overweight luggage, he received the Restore and Collaborate badges. Leading by example, LCCS is fulfilling their goal of spreading restorative practices across Singapore and beyond.



### HAZEL THOMPSON-AHYE, '17 A TIRELESS AMBASSADOR

An Independent Senator in the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago and a Vice President of the International Society of Family Law, Hazel dedicates her life to advocating for restorative justice and children's rights. "In the Senate, at every turn where there is an opportunity to talk about restorative justice, I do," she states. She intends to train the Senate in restorative practices and hopes it will become embedded in her country's justice system. An attorney, Hazel presents on family law and restorative justice worldwide and recently founded a nonprofit, The Child Rights and Restorative Justice Organization. In 2018, she received the Hummingbird Medal Gold for loyal and devoted service to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in the sphere of Public Service and Youth Development.





## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

IIRP 2019 WORLD CONFERENCE | OCTOBER, BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA, USA

Participants shared their efforts to lead positive change, from listening circles for people affected by child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, to building trust through Police Community Summits. More than 360 people came together from 12 countries, 26 U.S. states and 4 Canadian provinces to consider a range of subjects, including community-based leadership, equity and inclusion, restorative justice, education reform and community health. To conclude the conference, Hazel Thompson Ahye, '17, of Trinidad and Tobago, read aloud from her inspirational poem, "We should lead the charge for society's transformation / To bring about change, peace and healing in every nation."

## COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE

IIRP EUROPE CONFERENCE | MAY, KORTRIJK, BELGIUM

Over 270 colleagues from 24 countries explored crucial topics for the 21st Century, including the intersection of restorative practices and community resilience and using restorative circles to process traumatic events. A circle of empty chairs in the town square engaged local residents in themes developed at the conference. During the closing session, attendees wrote phrases on golden flags summarizing the spirit of the conference and suspended them on ropes across the Leie River — a visual reminder of the inspiring event.



## SAVE THE DATES!



### A RESTORATIVE VISION FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND EDUCATION

IIRP Latin America Conference  
March 5–6, 2020, Mexico City, Mexico

The conference, in Spanish, will provide a community-building space to discuss restorative practices initiatives across Latin America, focused on criminal justice and education. Claire de Mézerville López, IIRP Latin America Representative, is excited to examine applying best practices from criminal justice programs, which have a strong history in the region, to education. John Braithwaite, Ph.D., renowned Australian criminologist and IIRP Honorary Trustee, gives the keynote address, in English with Spanish translation, on restorative practices opportunities for Latin America.



### THE SCIENCE OF RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNITY

IIRP 2020 World Conference  
October 14–16, 2020, Bellevue, Washington, USA

Hosted by Committee for Children, In Partnership  
with ChildStrive

## FERNANDA FONSECA ROSENBLATT, PH.D.

IIRP ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
REVIEWS UN RJ HANDBOOK

Fernanda, based in Brazil, joined 30 international experts in Bangkok to review the new edition of the United Nations Handbook on Restorative Justice Programmes, an international resource for creating successful restorative justice programs. She led discussion of Chapter 8: Programme Oversight, Monitoring and Evaluation; advocated for involving universities in data collection and dissemination and suggested expanding the list of qualitative data. She is excited about a new chapter: Restorative Justice Responses to Serious Crime. Borbála Fellegi, Ph.D., IIRP Assistant Professor, helped review the original handbook.



# IMPACT SCHOLARSHIPS: SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF INTERNATIONAL CHANGEMAKERS

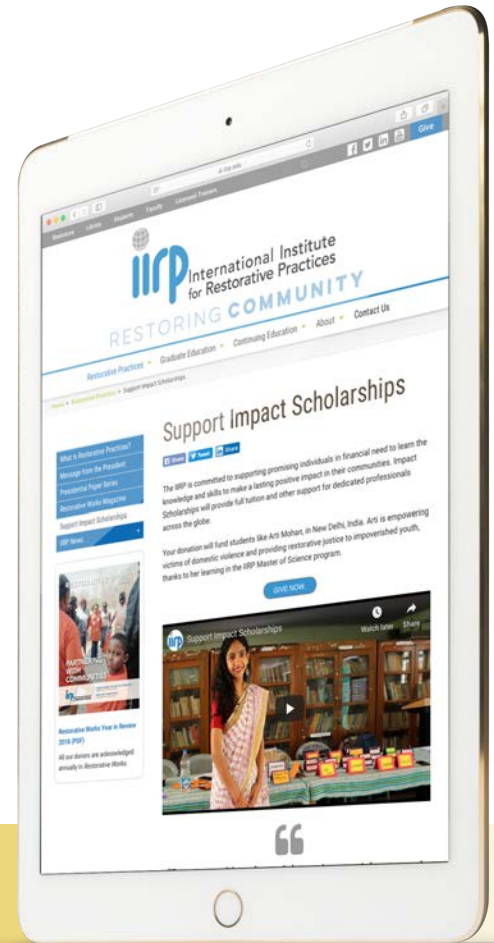
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Please give to Impact Scholarships at [iirp.edu/give](http://iirp.edu/give).



## ARTI MOHAN, '19 PROVIDING JUSTICE AND HEALING IN NEW DELHI, INDIA

Arti is designing and facilitating restorative processes for children and families in her community in New Delhi, where violence, impoverishment and marginalization are unimaginably high.

She became an attorney, hoping to “create justice processes that meet the needs of people, and justice responses that empower.” She soon discovered, however, that the legal system did little to heal victims or prevent people from causing more harm. She knew there had to be a better way. Searching on the internet, she found the IIRP.

Earning her IIRP Master of Science in Restorative Practices gave Arti knowledge and skills to truly improve people’s lives, from child victims of sexual abuse, to women suffering from domestic violence, to children in custody and their families. She’s fulfilling her goal of creating justice that restores and empowers.

When you give to Impact Scholarships, you make it possible for committed individuals like Arti to have an enduring, positive impact on their own corner of the world.

## THANK YOU

The IIRP and its consortium of organizations appreciate all gifts, great and small. We want to acknowledge the following donors to the IIRP, Community Service Foundation and Buxmont Academy, who gave from September 2018 through October 2019 in support of our work to restore community, including Impact Scholarships.

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### FLOR GARCÍA MENCOS, ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

Flor is Executive Director of Asociación para el Liderazgo en Guatemala and a clinical psychologist. She assists the professional and personal growth of nonprofit organization leaders in Central America. She cofounded a collective of restorative practitioners where they share best practices and mutual support to increase their positive impact. She collaborated with the government of Guatemala on a restorative care plan to respond to natural disasters, which was implemented after the eruption of the Fuego Volcano.



### MARK VANDER VENNEN, ONTARIO, CANADA

Mark is Executive Director of Shalem Mental Health Network, as well as a marriage and family therapist and registered social worker. Shalem offers mental health supports in community settings, along with restorative programs, including FaithCARE (Faith Communities Affirming Restorative Experiences), the Centre for Workplace Engagement, EduCARE and Restorative Families. He co-authored "Hope in Troubled Times: A New Vision for Confronting Global Crises," with a foreword by Desmond Tutu.



“For communities where violence, impoverishment and marginalization are unimaginably high, I see my work as contributing to making the world a better place.”

— Arti Mohan, '19

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