Spotlight on Restorative Justice & Restorative Practices

We kicked off the new year with staff presentations on NCRC’s fast-growing Restorative Justice programs. Reaching out to at-risk youth in schools and in the community, our caring facilitators give young people the opportunities they need to succeed and thrive.

NCRC Restorative Practices in Schools

Just a few years after NCRC began working with the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) on the “Avoiding the Pipeline to Prison” initiative, we are a full partner in SDUSD’s new Restorative Practices Department offering pro-active services to 130,000 students and their families. We are proud to have expanded our restorative network from its three pilot schools to more than 200 schools.

By moving from a punitive to a restorative approach, our efforts reduce suspensions and expulsions, and they prevent conflict in schools by making students feel respected and valued. But these programs are not a “slap on the wrist.” Students develop and implement action plans for repairing damage they have caused, and they are trained in community building circles to become achievers and leaders. Recent NCRC-SDUSD program additions include Youth Clubs, Student Center Coaches, and Executive Leadership Training.

NCRC Restorative Practices in the Community

When young people in stressful environments struggle to stay out of trouble, our facilitators send them a powerful message: “We are here for you, and we will always be here for you.” Sustained support and collaboration with peer agencies have been instrumental in diverting youth, building up families, and strengthening neighborhoods.

Our community-based restorative team members are pro-active and innovative. They focus on engaging each student’s passions, and they take youth on transformative adventures, from mentor-guided outdoor activities to strength. Alliances with law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges, and social service organizations have yielded a network of partners devoted to keeping young people out of the pipeline to prison. A cadre of trained adult mentors provide personal counseling and serve as role models. The result has been declines in youth recidivism, savings in prosecution and incarceration costs, stronger families, and most important, a new generation of trained community builders who are ready to lead.
Congratulations Marc and Betty!

By Allie Brashar, NCRC Intern with the West Coast Resolution

Congratulations to our new Director of Operations, Marc Meyer, and our new Office Manager, Betty Omer. Their recent promotions were announced at the January 22 staff meeting, and the news was warmly applauded by all their NCRC colleagues.

Betty joined NCRC in 2017 as our Assistant Office Manager and executed the day-to-day tasks that keep our office running smoothly under Marc’s supervision. With this promotion, she will be able to execute these tasks and make decisions more independently. She also will be tasked with visiting our satellite offices to keep them supplied, check on their needs, and ensure that they are functioning properly.

Marc, who joined NCRC in 2009, previously served as the Associate Director of our Training Institute. In that role, he supervised Betty as our Office Manager, managed and implemented all of NCRC’s training initiatives and projects, and provided a supportive role to such NCRC Restorative Practices programs as Live Well San Diego and the University of San Diego Circle Project. With this promotion, Marc will be able to focus more time on the Training Institute and the restorative practices and projects in our community.

“Marc and Betty have done a fantastic job of supporting NCRC’s mission and success,” said NCRC President Steve Dinkin. “In their new positions, they will raise the level of professionalism in every area of our organization.”

Both Betty and Marc want like to thank everyone in the office for providing the opportunities, guidance, and support that has allowed them to succeed and grow in their roles.

Got Friends With Conflicts? Try “Mediate This!”

You know how sometimes you tell people you work at the National Conflict Resolution Center, and they say, “Whoa! I’m in the middle of a conflict, maybe you can resolve it,” and you don’t how to respond? Well, help is on the way!

“Mediate This!” is a new NCRC column of expert tips for resolving everyday conflicts that appears Sundays in the Local section of the San Diego Union-Tribune. Each week’s column looks at a real-life dispute and describes how standard mediation strategies and tools could be applied to ease tensions, craft a solution that works for all parties, and foster civility and trust. We are trawling for submissions, which can be emailed to: mediatethis@ncrconline.com. Anonymity is guaranteed, and to underscore that, we will soon offer an online submissions form on the NCRC website.