

NCBI Newsletter

National Coalition Building Institute

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Finding Our Voices

This is an amazing time to be alive and yet, a very challenging time as well. Throughout the world, increased tribalism, nationalism, xenophobia, partisan politics, racism, sexism, anti-Semitism and gay oppression are confronting many of us. What the world needs now more than ever are principled leaders: leaders who have the courage to say and

more critically at Allyship through a racial lens with Joyce Shabazz; Self Care: Examining what we need as individuals or individual leaders to best move forward in the multiple roles in our lives with Dr. Renay Scales; and taking individual leadership initiative to handle conflicts on campus with Cherie Brown.

"NCBI is there, on the ground, preparing leaders all over the world to respond to these tough challenges with compassion and skill."

do the right thing, leaders who have the humility to face their own limitations, correct mistakes, and seek growth and renewal, and Allies who will step up and find their voices to speak out.

NCBI is providing many leaders with the skills and tools to find their own voices and to partner with others to reduce this increased polarization and overtly oppressive words and actions. At the recent NCBI campus conference, leaders from 11 NCBI campus affiliate teams came together at the University of Iowa to attend sessions on: Looking

In many communities and campuses, the NCBI Controversial Issues Process (where participants are trained to listen to the heartfelt concerns underneath divisive issues and then reframe the issue in a way that builds bridges) is being used to work through highly controversial issues. In Mantua, PA, for example, at a train the trainer program for law enforcement and community citizens, the controversial issue the group chose to discuss was: Should the names of law enforcement officers who have shot a

Leadership for Diversity Institute

April 25 – 28, 2018
Cherie Brown & Joyce Shabazz

August 1 – 4, 2018
Cherie Brown & Joyce Shabazz

Oct 31 - Nov 3, 2018
Cherie Brown & Larry Bell

[Learn more here](#)

[Register here](#)



Exciting News!

We at NCBI HQ, are thrilled to announce we have a new Website!

www.ncbi.org

We've received such great feedback and ask you to share it on your social media and throughout your entire network!

community citizen be revealed to the community. The group was evenly divided on the answer and the NCBI process gave both police and community activists the chance to listen and learn about each other's underlying concerns.

The work of NCBI is needed now more than ever. Times are tough.

But NCBI is there, on the ground, preparing leaders all over the world to respond to these tough challenges with compassion and skill. I look forward to continuing to partner with the many communities, campuses, and leaders who are finding that NCBI skills and practices are turning difficult challenges into

important opportunities for change.

By Cherie Brown,
NCBI CEO

Puerto-Rico Se Levanta

Interview with Senior Leader Guillermo Lopez (GL) about his relief efforts in Puerto-Rico after the passage of Hurricane Maria.



Devastation of a home in Puerto-Rico as witnessed by G. Lopez.

JP: What is your relationship with Puerto-Rico?

GL: I was not born in Puerto-Rico, but it is certainly borne in me. I have spent many vacations in my childhood and in my youth on the island. I am still very connected to the culture, the people, and most of my extended family still lives there. My cousins often tell me that I am more Puerto-Rican than them (laughs) but I think what they see is me fighting against assimilation by

staying as connected to the Puerto-Rican culture as possible.

JP: What was your reaction when you found out about the extent of the damages caused by Hurricane Maria?

GL: I first heard of the damages caused by Hurricane Maria through news media outlets. The images of the island completely shocked me; I could not recognize the lush and green island I know. I had never seen so much brown in Puerto-Rico. For six days, I could not get a hold of

how my uncles and aunts who are much older, would fare in the aftermath of the hurricane.

JP: What motivated you to get involved with this team and go to Puerto-Rico?

GL: After I saw the news, my first thought was, "I must go and see, I must go and help". After I spoke to my family, I was even more determined to go. They were so rattled; they said: "Puerto-Rico is unrecognizable, it is no longer the same Puerto-Rico." That really scared me. Two weeks later, a

"In my role as a Senior NCBI Leader..., I have learned the leadership skills to build bridges and connect with people on a deeper level."

my family. As shocked as I was by what I was seeing on television, I had a feeling that my family was okay. I felt certain of that. When I was finally able to speak to them, they were able to confirm that they were all well; in fact, they had already been cleaning up and helping their neighbors. Still, I was a little worried about

group of 13 people from my church announced they were putting together a relief team to replace roofs on damaged houses in Puerto-Rico; I volunteered to join them. Because of my physical limitations, I knew I couldn't be of much help with lifting things or climbing ladders; however, I knew I could serve as an

interpreter since I speak the language. I also know the land and the culture, I knew this could be helpful in connecting with the people. In my role as a Senior NCBI Leader and in my position as Family Liaison for Communities in Schools at the Easton School District, I have learned the leadership skills to build bridges and connect with people on a deeper level. I knew this would come in handy once we landed.



G. Lopez and his crew repairing a roof in Puerto-Rico.

JP: What were you able to see and do once on the island?

GL: Before I left the mainland, I was able to rally friends and family members in Puerto-Rico who could help with providing storage space, transportation means, medicine etc... Despite being affected by the hurricane themselves, everyone I contacted agreed to help in any way they could. They were very adamant that they did not need my help, they wanted me to help people who were worse off than them.

One of them gave us a school bus so the relief team and I could take all of our equipment and provisions around the island. We brought construction tools and supplies from the mainland along with medication, flashlights,

batteries etc... We landed October 9th; after 6 days, we had replaced roofs for 35 homes in central Puerto-Rico. Our strategy was to stay away from the coastal towns who were already receiving aid. We wanted to focus our help on the people living in the highlands, in hard-to-reach areas. At the end of the trip we donated all our construction equipment.

JP: What struck you the most while on the island?

The first thing I noticed were small plant buds springing out of the mud. It may sound trivial but with all the vegetations that was swept away by the hurricane, every little bud, every little bloom symbolizes hope. When I saw that I thought to myself, “we will be okay, Puerto-Rico se

“After 6 days, we had replaced roofs for 35 homes in central Puerto-Rico.”

Levanta” meaning Puerto-Rico will Rise. It really struck me how fast I saw nature reclaim the island.

The second thing that struck me was how little help from the U.S government had arrived inland of Puerto-Rico. During our stay, we travelled extensively inland and in mountainous areas; we did not encounter one FEMA worker, not one U.S. official offering any kind of help except for local authorities; we did not meet one agent from the American Red Cross. In fact, when we would show up to help folks with their roofs, they asked us if we were from FEMA. This was very

disappointing and heartbreaking for us.

The third is how strong the Puerto-Ricans we met are. They are truly proud people. Everyone we met was keeping a brave face. One woman, in particular, asked me why I was so serious at my task, she asked if I was happy to bring relief. I responded that was very happy to be able to help but “my joy is tempered by all the pain you are going through”, I added. As soon as I said that, she crumbled down and sobbed; I hugged her as she continued to cry on my shoulder. This happened often during our trip. When we spoke to people and inquired about their well-being, once we offered that human connection, they really opened-up and showed their distress. This

is the reason why I volunteered for this trip; I knew that beyond fixed roofs, people really wanted and really needed to be acknowledged; they wanted to know that they were not forgotten or ignored.



G. Lopez, his church's relief group, and a Puerto Rican family.

JP: As a Puerto-Rican, what do you want our readers to know about Puerto-Rico, Hurricane Maria and the US Citizens who call Puerto-Rico home?

I want people on the continental U.S to know that the news

coverage they have seen does not represent the people of Puerto-Rico. The news coverage has focused on the people's desperation for the purpose of showing how bad the situation is but they do not show how strong and self-reliant Puerto-Ricans

truly are. They are faced with hard decisions every day, they have it tough right now, but they are confident that Puerto-Rico will rise; Puerto-Rico se levanta.

By Jennifer Plantin
NCBI, HQ

Change with Kindness

This is a story of accomplishments of one Chinese American woman and the way a European heritage woman and NCBI leader seized an opportunity to be an effective ally for her.

cautiously whispered among the elders; but she had never been told about it. Why the secret?

Was it a lasting effect of the discrimination illustrated by the

Grove. So, she developed the approach she calls "change with kindness."

Every July, Pacific Grove has a celebration called "The Feast of Lanterns." People come from all over to join in the festivities and see the pageant, which includes a skit written by residents in the early 1900s. The skit is a tale of Chinese people; but it was written by Whites and is often exclusively played by Whites.

"She couldn't believe that the organizers thought it was okay to teach their children hatred toward any group"

Gerry Low-Sabado discovered that several miles away from her hometown of Fremont, in Pacific Grove, CA, a predominantly white community, an archeological team was digging up the remains of a Chinese fishing village. This old village had been erected during the 1800s on the shore of Monterey Bay and was destroyed in a suspicious fire in 1906.

Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882?

Indeed, she found out that local laws had been written against the fishing practices of the Chinese who lived there between the 1800s and 1900s, and those laws threatened to ruin the livelihood of the village. She learned that her grandfather tried to repair his home in the village after the fire; but each day he would return to find his work torn down. Gerry

"Since there is a real history of the Chinese in Pacific Grove, substituting a fictional tale of Chinese people over real history and having it acted by White people confounded me" said Gerry.

During the skit, it is common for the audience to start booing a Mandarin character. When Gerry first witnessed this, she wondered: "Is the audience booing the Chinese people, the very culture itself?" Gerry felt wounded and angry, unsafe, and unwanted. She couldn't believe that the organizers thought it was okay to teach their children hatred toward any group. However, as benign and entertaining as the play was

"Standing up when things aren't right is like using a muscle—it gets easier with use."

Soon after, Gerry learned that her own great-grandmother, Quock Mui, was a resident of that village. She also learned that knowledge of this history was

was determined to learn more about this archeological site despite possible backlash for her family and other Chinese residents who still live in Pacific

probably meant to be, Gerry saw her people being targeted—she had to do something about it.

Gerry planned to meet with the mayor of the city, its Heritage Society, the board of the Feast of Lanterns, and members of the city council. She wasn't sure what kind of reception to expect . . .

"Gerry has helped me to break out of that isolation."

she felt intimidated. Yet she was determined to gain the respect for her people that they deserve, that everyone deserves.

After seeing an article in the newspaper about Gerry, Sue Parris contacted her. Sue is one of the founding members of the local chapter of NCBI. The two met several times, establishing a relationship. Gerry says it's the first time that a stranger wanting to help took the time to get to know her story.

Sue and a few other NCBI members got together with Gerry to strategize—now Gerry had a team. Sue suggested that Gerry not go alone to meetings about the Feast of Lanterns. "I didn't realize I needed someone. I thought they'd listen to me and realize that some people would find the treatment of the Chinese characters in the skit offensive," Gerry said. She was fierce enough to have tackled the situation alone but grateful for her new

allies. She still was shaky, and some of her feelings of intimidation were reduced by the support. She felt those who attended the meetings about the skit were more responsive when she brought allies than when she had gone to face them alone.

An ally is useful because they

don't have some of the more emotional responses and can lend a more objective view. They can create access to people with power because they are not a member of the target group; an ally has access to different circles.

In de-isolating the members of a minority group and standing with them, an ally has the opportunity to confront their own assumptions, make a friend, and learn about different ideas and customs. They can lead in the skill of listening and model an attitude of inquiry and curiosity, and then, possibly, challenge the dominant narrative. Scary? Perhaps. Sue has learned that "standing up when things aren't right is like using a muscle—it gets easier with use."

Sue also gained a whole lot more information about Pacific Grove history and the role and contributions of Chinese people. Sue reflects that "The conditioning that white people receive can cause us to be

isolated, wary and defensive; working with Gerry has helped me to break out of that isolation."

Now, at the ten-year point in this active journey for recognition for her people, Gerry, with help from allies and various groups and agencies of the City of Pacific Grove, has established an annual Walk of Remembrance, honoring the Chinese who lived in the fishing village. And, along with the many people of all walks of life who attend, they enjoy the Lion Dancers performing in a lively recognition of the Chinese among us.

Gerry's mission has been a success. Recently, Gerry even was able to initiate changes to the text of the Feast of Lanterns skit. "Change with kindness."

By Evelyn Kahan,
NCBI Monterey County



Sue & Gerry at the ACLU award ceremony

To learn more about this story and NCBI's Monterey County Chapter visit their [website](#)

NCBI Campus Affiliate Welcomes a Cohort from Saudi Arabia

The University of Iowa, an NCBI Campus Affiliate, was pleased to host a cohort from Saudi Arabia for a half-day Conflict & Controversial Issues workshop on Thursday, September 14, 2017.

The group was visiting the United States through the Council for International Visitors in Iowa Cities (CIVIC) for a state department-sponsored project on Interfaith Dialogue. The project goals included exploring interfaith dialogue and conflict resolution

models. The group had been in Washington, D.C. and Salt Lake City before arriving in Iowa City.

During the workshop, our affiliate members had the opportunity to work with translators (both simultaneous and consecutive translation), ensure faith-related accommodations, and address distinct challenges across different perspectives and experiences. Some of our major highlights included connecting

with individuals from around the world, getting to see how the lessons of NCBI can truly transcend cultural and language barriers and bonding as a NCBI leadership team.

We hope to hear from the delegation about some of their highlights of the experience; regardless we're glad we and NCBI got to be a part of their trip.

Bria Marcelo,
University of Iowa

The Citadel's NCBI Team receives grants for Diversity & Inclusion work

Julie A. Lipovsky, The Citadel

The Citadel is a military college in South Carolina. As part of NCBI's Carolina Coalition this is their fifth year of offering the Welcoming Diversity workshop.

Transformation grant from the American Association of College and Universities. These projects are designed to advance The Citadel's work enhancing diversity and inclusion on

hosting the Carolina Coalition's annual Train-the-Trainer. Participants from NC State, Wofford College, Presbyterian College, and University of Alaska joined us for an excellent training facilitated by Idella Glenn, Beverly Williams, and Theresa Pizzuto. Participants were able to attend The Citadel's military parade and get a feel for its unique culture. We look forward to hosting this event next year.

"We are excited to be collaborating with other groups across campus"

This year, the Citadel's NCBI's team was very productive. We finally rolled out the Controversial Issues process to rave reviews from participants.

The Citadel received two grants this year, one from the Campus Compact and the other a Truth, Racial Healing, and

campus. NCBI programming will be an important feature in these two projects. Both involve fostering civil discourse using the Controversial Issues process. The Citadel's team is excited to be collaborating with other groups across campus and in the Charleston community in these comprehensive grant projects. The highlight of our year was



The NCBI team at the Citadel

Peace Ed & NCBI – Spotlight on a Long-standing Partnership

By Janene Shakir, Peace Ed

The Peace Education Program (PeaceEd) has been affiliated with NCBI for over 30 years. Using the NCBI principles and methodologies are vital to PeaceEd's work. Since 1997 this NCBI Affiliate has conducted an annual 3-day Community Institute. The first day and ½ of the Community Institute is the NCBI prejudice reduction model. The purpose of this

Institute is to share with the Youth Service Providers in Louisville Kentucky, the training methodologies that we know have the biggest impact when training youth to manage/solve their conflicts non-violently. This model has been very helpful in creating communication bridges between diverse groups. This allows them to be open to

sharing their life stories, and learning new ways to get along with others. Pictured below are the participants of PeaceEd's February 2017 Community Institute.



NCBI is an international non-profit that provides training in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

To learn more about our training principles & models, visit our website at www.ncbi.org and call us at (240) 638-2813

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