

# Principles into Practice

Strengthening Leadership  
for a Diverse Society

**National Coalition Building Institute**

“Congratulations to you and to NCBI for winning the silver award in the British Diversity Awards. Fighting prejudice is a critical part of building healthy and inclusive communities and I am pleased that NCBI’s valuable and innovative work to tackle racism and other forms of discrimination has been recognized.”

**– The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, M.P.,  
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom**

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DAVID KIDD

1.

# Introduction

The National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) was launched in 1984 when I was developing workshop models to ease tensions between African Americans and Jews on college campuses in the United States. Dozens of individuals familiar with the workshops began coming to me, asking me to teach them how to replicate what I was learning. From just a few city-based chapters and college campus teams in those early years, we have built NCBI into an international leadership network that has grown in influence and reach to combat all forms of racism and discrimination worldwide.

Our work in communities from Louisville to London and from Birmingham to Bosnia indicates that institutions and communities can overcome conflicts that drive them apart if leaders have the necessary tools and training.

In these pages, you will read about dedicated community activists who are putting NCBI principles into practice. We hope that leaders in local communities and agencies who are as yet unfamiliar with our work might recognize themselves in these stories, gain new ideas about what is possible, and become NCBI supporters and partners.

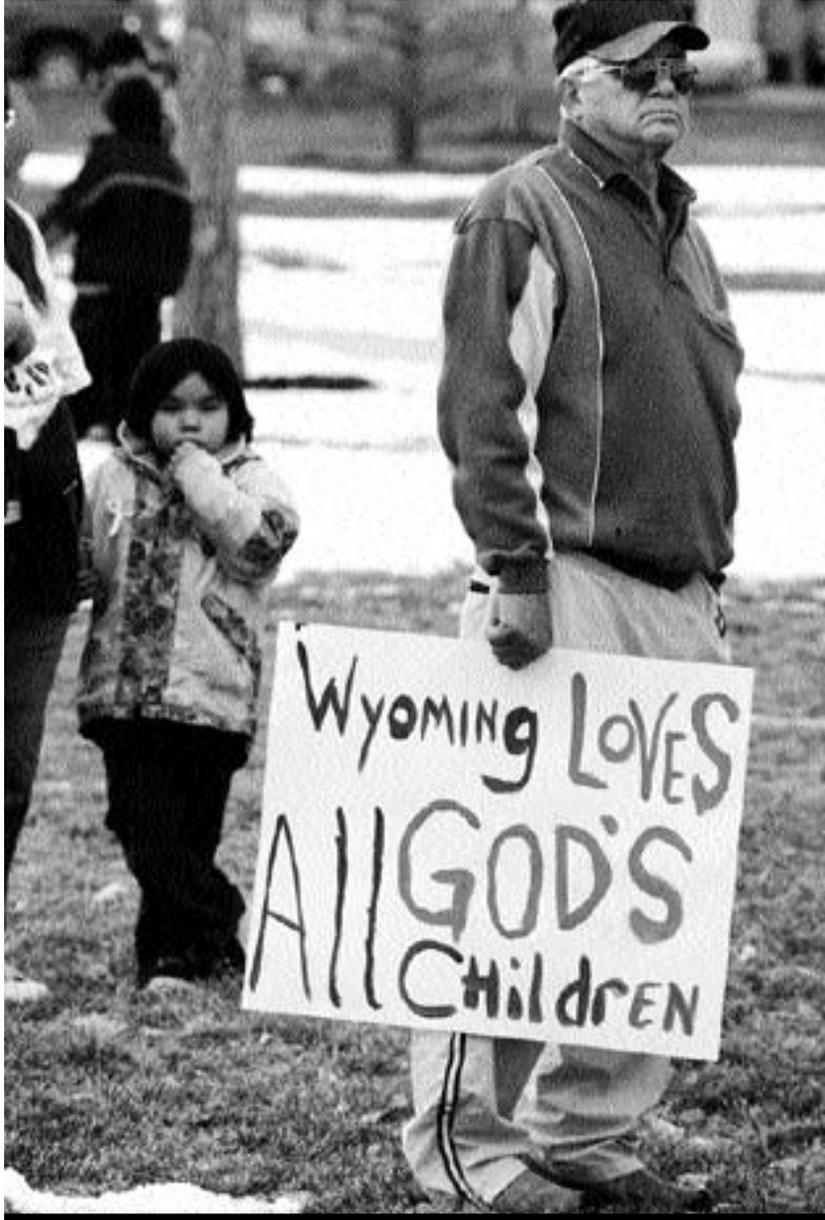
Through the years, I have been blessed to work with hundreds of chapter leaders and volunteers who have been the driving force behind our growth and success. This report celebrates their passion, creativity, commitment, and results.

**—Cherie Brown**

*Washington, D.C.*

*September 2003*

**We have built NCBI  
into an international  
leadership network  
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## 2.

# Principled Stands, Purposeful Action

Can people from diverse backgrounds, with differing views and a history of conflict, create inclusive communities free of discrimination and mistrust? Can those whose interactions have been characterized by fear and hatred reach toward each other to address common problems where they live and work?

Since 1984, the National Coalition Building Institute has dedicated itself to eliminating prejudice and intergroup conflict throughout the world. NCBI provides prevention-oriented programs and the skills and tools needed to implement diversity initiatives. NCBI training programs enable leaders to take principled and courageous stands, enter the heat of emotional group conflict to build bridges, and act as stalwart allies for all groups. NCBI tools and workshops demonstrate that:

**Differences among individuals need not lead to division and discrimination.** NCBI provides workshops in prejudice reduction that encourage individuals to tell their stories of discrimination in order to build understanding among people.

**Differences among groups can be a community asset.**

In NCBI's programs, all voices and all issues count. Constituency caucuses and ally-building sessions provide safe, unfiltered environments in which to share common concerns and build greater unity.

**Differences on issues need not divide communities.**

Rigid confrontational positions can be reframed to take the profound concerns of both sides into account. NCBI's "Controversial Issues Process" and alliance-building techniques provide leaders with the skills needed to change people's hearts and to build bridges across controversy.

**NCBI training programs enable leaders to take principled stands and act as allies for all groups.**

## FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL SOLUTIONS

“NCBI gives people concrete tools for altering environments that might be characterized by intolerance or fragmentation, isolation, and marginalizing behaviors. This is not just a volunteer group of independent do-gooders trying to change the world, but an entire community context within which people can alter their shared space.”

**—Larry D. Roper, vice provost for student affairs, Oregon State University**

“NCBI’s program was ranked high in overall quality. It was commended for its freedom from bias and stereotypes and for its strong foundation in and use of both a peer education and an empowerment model... . While many workshops that address diversity on campuses exist, NCBI is the only known organization that has built a model, replicated it on 65 campuses, and tested it extensively.”

**—U.S. Department of Education National Evaluation Panel**  
recognizing NCBI as a “Best Practice”(1999)

NCBI’s vision for solving the problems of diverse communities is to empower teams to find local solutions. Leaders—trained in effective techniques to address controversial issues, combat discrimination, and build bridges among groups—train others within the community. They nurture an ever-expanding network of local citizens who meet regularly and serve as resources, able to identify and respond to complex intergroup conflicts. These community teams—comprising individuals from every segment of society—provide a means for leaders to learn about all the groups within their communities and to fuel momentum for change.

The Institute’s methodology has been recognized as a model of excellence by dozens of widely respected organizations and government agencies, including the Points of Light Foundation, the U.S. President’s Initiative on Race, Amnesty International, the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, and the government of Great Britain. NCBI also has won the Nelson Mandela Award for outstanding international work on fighting racism and the Gabriel Award for excellence in youth video programming.

Since its founding, NCBI has established a growing international network of community-based chapters in more than 50 cities in the United States, Canada, Switzerland, England, Germany, Austria, and Bosnia; on more than 60 college campuses; and in a broad range of organizations, including public and private schools, corporations, trade unions, government offices, law enforcement agencies, foundations, religious institutions, and community groups.



## CORE PRINCIPLES

NCBI’s approach begins with the conviction that “all human beings are fundamentally good,” says NCBI founder Cherie Brown. “In our work, we do not shame or blame people for attitudes and values they may have.”

NCBI gives group leaders the skills to use individual stories to build understanding and to explore sources of pain and mistreatment in a safe environment.

“When individuals have not been listened to or had a chance to heal from their own mistreatment,” Brown says, “they become defensive, turn inward, and resist taking the steps necessary to change themselves and the world around them. NCBI enables people to open their hearts and interact differently, be hopeful, and take action to transform themselves, the group, and, ultimately, the world.”

Other key NCBI principles include:

**Every issue counts.** NCBI addresses a wide range of diversity issues in the course of its programs, including race, ethnicity, gender, social class, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, and job and life circumstance.

**Stories change attitudes.** Listening to personal accounts of mistreatment can impart a new perspective on the devastating impact of bigotry, and move people with racist attitudes to become allies of those they had discriminated against.

**Skill training generates empowerment.** NCBI equips people with practical techniques for taking on prejudicial behavior—for example, training sessions impart ways to shift the attitude of someone who has made a hurtful joke or remark.

**Ending mistreatment means ending “leadership oppression.”** To help leaders counter mistreatment from within an organization, NCBI fosters appreciation for their efforts and trains them to handle conflicts and respond effectively to attacks. The Institute models how leaders can be treated more humanely and build greater support for their leadership efforts.

**NCBI equips people with practical techniques for taking on prejudicial behavior.**



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

## 3.

# Strengthening Diversity in Higher Education

While the nation's institutions of higher learning are more diverse than ever before, they also may be more divided. Campuses struggle to make diversity an asset, one that helps students of color feel welcome (and more inclined to stay in college) and that contributes to a real sense of community for all student groups.

NCBI provides tools that bring groups together, aids institutions in becoming more vigilant about intergroup conflict, and establishes workshops that improve campus culture.

At many colleges and universities, entering students take NCBI training as part of their orientation. NCBI principles are enriching course curricula and winning approval from faculty and staff members dedicated to improving communication at all levels. When faculty members discuss diversity, leadership, coalition building, or conflict management, they often invite NCBI trainers into their classrooms to make presentations. The NCBI team becomes a campus resource that helps to shape diversity initiatives, to mediate highly charged disputes involving accusations of racial or sexual harassment, and to foster the development of advocacy organizations.

NCBI's work is helping constituencies on campus discover that it is okay to have different values and ideas and not feel threatened when groups want to work on their own. NCBI trainings bring together diverse groups, and provide a unifying set of tools to address issues of equity and inclusion and to create institutional change within the campus culture.

Because of NCBI's reputation nationwide in building effective leadership teams on scores of college campuses, and Columbia University's mission to be a national leader in diversity programming, the university and NCBI established a formal partnership in 1999. The national office of NCBI campus programming is housed on the Columbia campus and the work of the NCBI director for campus programming is subsidized by the university.

“The National Coalition Building Institute is the first and only organization that has developed a systematic process for training ethnic leaders in the art of coalition building and conflict resolution. Their prejudice reduction program on college campuses is the best in the country.”

**—Irving Levine,  
former director of  
national affairs,  
American Jewish  
Committee**

## What NCBI Means to a College Campus

“The NCBI framework gives institutions a standardized way to open up the conversation about diversity; training and external assistance to use the model; and a committed group of students, faculty, and staff who master the method and become effective trainers and leaders of others.”

**—Karen Rosenblum, vice president for university life and associate professor of sociology, George Mason University**



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The co-author of the widely used college reader, *The Meaning of Difference*, Professor Rosenblum says that her 27,000-student public campus earns high marks on the National Survey of Student Engagement for promoting diversity in the college experience, primarily because the institution has fully embraced NCBI training and principles rather than simply bringing in someone only when there is a crisis. According to Rosenblum, the NCBI approach:

**Gives campuses the tools and resources to expand important conversations about culture, race, student attitudes, and difference.** “It has taught our campus that we can tolerate a high level of discourse about important issues that faculty don’t have time to fully address in a one-and-a-half-hour class,” Rosenblum says. NCBI helps colleges and universities open up these conversations, providing the tools, method, place, and structure to help all segments of the campus learn about each other and build trust and understanding.

**Enables colleges to respond effectively to crisis situations.** “NCBI’s approach means that campuses do not respond like deer in the headlights when incidents emerge,” she says. “Trained students, faculty, and staff know what an incident is and don’t freeze, because they have skills and resources to call on.” For example, after September 11, 2001, George Mason University officials and students who were trained in NCBI techniques recognized that they could manage large-scale meetings of students without having to censor anyone. “Our leaders knew how to ask questions that got students into a mutually understanding and appreciative framework.”

**Complements the developmental needs of students.** “NCBI helps students move from a dichotomized or polarized view to fully address the complexity of, and ambivalence about, identity that they face every day,” Rosenblum notes. “The process is right in stream with what college students are experiencing.”

**Helps campus-life supervisors gain professional renewal.** NCBI validates staff for their work and offers a way to move up the ladder in their field by gaining experience in running workshops in a broad range of settings.

### **Creating Community at Columbia**

At Columbia University's Morningside Heights campus on the Upper West Side of New York City, nearly 40 percent of the undergraduates are students of color. There are 300 student organizations, one-third of which are cultural, ethnic, or religious in character. But the diversity that adds so much to the campus has also created a kind of balkanization among the groups. "Groups are less apt to work toward mutually supportable goals. Their interests are not always aligned," says Robert T. Taylor, associate director of the Office of Student Development and Activities at Columbia University, and director of Columbia University's NCBI campus programs.

NCBI principles have bolstered key campus programs, including retreats and leadership development for undergraduates. They also have been used to develop specific programs for various constituency groups on campus and to help build alliances among these groups.

NCBI's efforts at Columbia have helped to provide needed opportunities on campus for students to talk about public issues and private concerns, particularly at a time of war and terrorism. During recent war protests, administrators and students trained in NCBI techniques walked around campus and engaged students in conversations about the war in Iraq. NCBI also set up listening tables after September 11, 2001, for students anxious to discuss their concerns and fears.

### **Providing Skills for Learning**

The University of Hawaii at Manoa is one of the most diverse higher education institutions in the United States. Some 80 percent of its 19,000 students are students of color, and the entire university system enrolls more than 2,000 international students from 80 countries. A predominately white male faculty teaches a predominately Asian/Pacific Islander population. The difference in cultures between faculty and students leads to frequent misunderstandings and oppressive treatment.

Therefore, each year the university provides NCBI training for the staff and leaders who conduct orientation for 3,000 first-year students. NCBI campus affiliate members regularly receive invitations to present in courses at all levels, including advanced graduate programs. When the topic is diversity, leadership, coalition building, or conflict management, faculty invite NCBI trainers into their classrooms to make presentations. In addition, every student athlete has participated in an NCBI diversity training program, some in evening classes that fulfill the NCAA's requirement for life-skills training.

When the campus released a well-known coach from his contract, creating a furor among students in the athletic program, NCBI-trained staff used their skills to bring students and administrators together, creating an acceptable outcome for everyone. While the university did not rescind its decision regarding the coach, it listened to and respected the concerns of the students and created a search process that was inclusive of the team's representatives.

**NCBI provides the tools, methods, and structure to help all segments of a campus learn about each other and build trust and understanding.**

**NCBI creates opportunities for students and others to speak out, really know one another, and work across group lines.**

## **The NCBI Process at Work**

A controversial speaker at a public forum sponsored by a major university's African American Center allegedly told a packed auditorium, "The only good Zionist is a dead Zionist." An irate Jewish student stood up to refute the alleged comment, calling out, "I'm proud to be a Zionist!" The Jewish student was assaulted, and the ensuing mêlée made the 6 o'clock and 11 o'clock news on local television stations.

Nervous university officials invited NCBI to the campus. Keeping national television camera crews out of the room as they met with 100 black and Jewish student leaders, NCBI created opportunities for students, including the one who had been assaulted, to speak out about the incident. Fighting back his tears, he said that his father, who fled from Germany in the 1930s, had frequently tried to tell him about his fears as a Jew. The student said he had never understood his father's fears until he went to hear the controversial speaker on campus. NCBI facilitators then turned to the other participants to identify what touched them about the Jewish student's story. The director of the African American Center put up his hand and with tears in his eyes looked at the Jewish student and said, "I felt when I was listening to you that I could remove your face and put a black face there saying the same thing." Several other blacks and Jews then told their personal experiences with racism and anti-Semitism.

NCBI next took students through its "Controversial Issues Process." The students chose to examine whether speakers who are divisive and have a potential hate message in their speeches should be welcomed onto campus. The participants were evenly divided. As the two volunteers articulated each side of the controversy, the underlying group issues became clearer. For many African Americans, the Jewish students' telling them who they should or should not listen to on campus was a form of racism, and the patronizing message was that black students are not intelligent enough to choose for themselves and to listen critically to controversial ideas. For many Jews, the black students' insistence on trust was a form of anti-Semitism, and the unsettling message was that Jews were to trust that others would recognize anti-Semitism despite a painful history of betrayal by group after group.

In reframing the controversy, the students came to ask: "How do we welcome blacks' self-determination in selecting their own leaders while at the same time making sure that Jewish students and faculty do not get isolated or abandoned?" The new question led to a solution. The students decided that each group would invite a controversial speaker to campus, one whom the other side might fear. However, they also agreed to attend the speeches together as a coalition, teaching each other what was helpful and harmful in each speaker's message.

**—NCBI founder Cherie Brown**

### **‘All for 1 and 1 for All’**

At the University of North Texas at Denton, the NCBI affiliate is a respected organization offering some of the most effective training programs on campus. It provides required training sessions for all new employees, first-year peer counselors, and members of the “Ally Program” and holds popular “Building Community” workshops for the campus and broader community. NCBI training is a segment of numerous courses and essential to the university’s efforts to support all groups, including ethnic and religious minorities; gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) students and allies; and persons with disabilities.

Students, faculty, and staff trained in NCBI techniques and dressed in red t-shirts with NCBI’s slogan (“All for 1 and 1 for All”) are seen on campus as a highly visible and valuable resource to handle tough intergroup conflicts. At the administration’s request, the NCBI team served as peacekeepers when a fraternity was expelled from campus for a racist incident, when an anti-abortion group came to campus, and during an anti-war protest. When a faculty member made a racist remark that sparked outrage among students of color, NCBI provided a safe forum for the faculty member to apologize and embrace student leaders, and for everyone to listen attentively to each other.

### **An Impetus to Understanding**

Ohio State University (OSU) enrolls many students who come from inner cities or rural areas where they do not have a lot of exposure to diversity during high school.

“From a young age, students are taught inaccurate things about what different people and cultures are like,” notes Patrick J. Hall, director of student judicial affairs at Ohio State and director of the university’s NCBI affiliate. “The messages students get from family, peers, and the media are not all positive or accurate representations.”

The campus affiliate provides ongoing workshops for students, faculty, and staff. For example, NCBI trained all administrators and staff in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and First-Year Experience to strengthen their teamwork on the complex issues they face in student enrollment. NCBI also trained the entire staff—including doctors, nurses, technicians, and budget people—at the OSU Student Health Center. “We’ve got 90 people working in one big building, and now they really know each other and are more able to work across group lines,” Hall says.

Similarly, the affiliate will train more than 3,000 employees at the OSU Medical Center over the next several years.

To expose fraternities and sororities, which are typically more homogenous than the campus as a whole, to differences and to help them cooperate with others, the Institute recently hosted the university’s first retreat for students in Greek organizations.

### **NCBI to Expand Leadership Clinics for College Deans and Administrators**

In partnership with the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), NCBI will sponsor three-day Leadership Clinics for upper-level university administrators. The first such clinic was hosted at Columbia University in January 2001 and attended by dozens of college leaders from community and technical colleges, small private colleges, and large public and private universities.

Such clinics provide administrators with a comfortable environment in which to develop conflict resolution skills and strategies for promoting diversity as an institutional resource. NCBI plans to sponsor a biannual clinic in collaboration with NASPA and other national associations to train at least 450 college administrators, faculty, and staff members over three years.



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## 4.

# Lessons in Leadership from the United States

NCBI demonstrates how an activist organization, using mostly local volunteers, can take on major issues of our time and make a difference for a wide range of groups nationwide. The Institute has developed model programs to combat racism in the health professions and law enforcement and fosters approaches to bring people closer together within communities to end discrimination in workplaces, public agencies, and social organizations.

## **Healing the Medical Community**

A recent report issued by the Institute of Medicine documented a broad array of cases in which racial and ethnic minorities continually receive second-rate health care regardless of their economic status. In areas such as cancer treatment, cardiac medication, bypass surgery, HIV treatment, kidney dialysis, and transplants, minorities are offered less effective alternatives. The report attributed these inequities to racism on the part of health care providers, inadequate insurance coverage, underrepresentation of minority doctors, and the fact that doctors have fewer long-lasting relationships with black patients than with white patients.

As part of a national pilot program to close racial gaps in health care, NCBI convened a fall 2002 summit in Baltimore that brought together community leaders and representatives from hospitals, university medical centers, insurance companies, clinics, and public agencies to share personal and professional stories of racism in health care and identify potential strategies for change. At the meeting, U.S. Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD), the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, told about his grandfather's death from poor medical care and about the legacy of fear burdening many African Americans when navigating the health care system.

**Using mostly local volunteers, an activist organization can take on major issues of our time and make a difference for communities nationwide.**

Participants worked closely to develop a strategy to improve the quality of care for minority citizens. They called for increasing health care accessibility by renovating old facilities and creating new centers and clinics; implementing a social marketing campaign to change the public's attitudes and behaviors; developing new requirements for ongoing prejudice reduction and cultural sensitivity training for health care providers and students in the health care field; conducting physician and consumer forums in local hospitals; and using the spiritual strength of minority cultures to enable them to participate more effectively in their own health care.

NCBI has launched a national effort to influence the training of practitioners at medical centers and medical schools. At the Ohio State University Medical Center, Baylor College of Dentistry at the Texas A&M University System Health Science Center, West Virginia University School of Medicine, University of North Carolina Medical Center, and SUNY Upstate Medical University, workshops have improved the ability of doctors, nurses, medical students, and other personnel to serve the needs of patients from diverse backgrounds. The Institute also has established a long-term partnership with the American Medical Students Association (AMSA) to provide NCBI training for medical students from coast to coast.



DAVID KIDD

### **Confronting Racism in Law Enforcement**

Lackluster recruitment of minority candidates in law enforcement agencies, racial profiling, incidents of police misconduct toward minority citizens, and a woeful lack of police protection for minority groups have led to public outcry for reform. Police chiefs and city officials must continue to rethink their policing strategies, revamp hiring practices, provide diversity training for staff at all levels, and develop effective community relations programs. Many police departments have turned to NCBI for its expertise.

In Los Angeles, NCBI trained the police academy and the command staff of the police department during the O. J. Simpson trial. In Louisville, NCBI developed the Coalition Against Police Abuse, which created a six-month dialogue with police to develop a community policing plan that included a new public complaint process used by all city agencies. In Huntington, Ind., NCBI assisted the local police department in developing a five-year plan for police recruitment, including a commitment to stop hiring police candidates from out of state.

In Seattle, African Americans constitute eight percent of the overall population and 40 percent of the criminal population. Relations between police and the community led to claims of institutional racism as a result of racial profiling, shootings of black males by white officers, and limited police protection for black neighborhoods. The Seattle NCBI chapter aided police beginning in 1999 through a project funded by the U.S. Department of Justice: REAL (Reconciliation, Education, Action, and Leadership). The project trained community members and police officers in NCBI skills to improve community-police relations.



HARVEY FINKLE

**NCBI encourages an environment where the public, the business community, and officers of all backgrounds can air grievances in a healing manner.**

As part of the effort, NCBI guided highly vocal members of the minority community in expressing their frustrations toward law enforcement officials before orchestrating carefully planned strategy sessions with the police. This approach enabled leaders to address their own internalized emotions about race, discrimination, and oppression first, resulting in effective meetings in which local citizens, activists, and police officers listened carefully to each other and worked toward common goals.

In Seattle, the Institute also helped address the isolation that many minority officers feel within their departments and the cultural norms that hinder better relations. NCBI encourages an environment where the public, the business community, and officers from all backgrounds can air—and work through—grievances in a healing manner.

### **Empowering Citizens and Activists**

Nobody today has the luxury to stand silent in the face of injustice. Ending racism and discrimination requires people willing to take stands and implement strategies for change.

In **Lewiston, Maine**, NCBI leaders have formed a coalition with local activists, social service agencies, and religious groups to help ease racial tensions caused by a rapid influx of new Somali immigrants in a largely white, close-knit community.

**NCBI was an instrumental part of the ‘Many and One’ coalition in support of the Somali community in Lewiston, Maine.**

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Lewiston, an old mill town, grew tenfold when a railroad spur to Montreal brought trainloads of French Canadian workers to town. Now, more than 1,000 Somali immigrants are getting a mixed welcome from the descendants of those French Canadians. The mistrust and misunderstanding emanating from many long-term residents is overt. Incidents ranging from offensive remarks made daily in local grocery stores to white supremacists’ recruiting in the area have made many Somalis fear for their safety.

NCBI was an instrumental part of the activist “Many and One” coalition which staged a rally and march in support of the Somali community and against racial hatred. This rally drew 4,500 people throughout the state and attracted national media attention.

In 2000, the Maine NCBI chapter created and successfully ran “White People Confronting Racism: Vision to Action,” which involved a group of 30 white people diverse in age, geography, ethnicity, and class backgrounds. Committing to being part of a six-month process, each member of the course was required to initiate a community-service project resulting in real change. The group produced “White Lies,” an interactive theatre experience presenting personal stories of racism and white privilege, for the Lewiston community.

Other projects included lobbying successfully for a policy change designed to attract, hire, and retain more people of color as firefighters and creating an African heritage section for young people in the Portland Public Schools’ Multilingual Education Office library. In addition, activists established a paid city-government internship program for Portland high school students of color and of immigrant parentage, to encourage them to pursue leadership careers within the community.



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The NCBI affiliate is now bringing people from the African American, Somali, and French Canadian communities, and from various socioeconomic classes, together with city officials and members of the business community.

**Washington, D.C.**, like many communities nationwide, is attracting new immigrants as well as suburbanites who want to return to the city. Because of new demographic and economic challenges, city neighborhoods have been changing steadily. People from different backgrounds—young and old, rich and poor, white and minority, English-speaking and English-learning, gay and straight—exist in greater proximity, if not greater harmony.

One of the major challenges in the community is the increasing polarization between the affluent, predominately white community and the city's mostly poor minority neighborhoods. There also has been little focus by political leaders and community agencies on helping build bridges among the multiple cultures of one of the nation's most international populations.

The local NCBI chapter facilitated a citywide Day of Dialogue and Reconciliation that brought together more than 1,000 citizens, not through their roles as police officers, students, attorneys, or shopkeepers, but as people. During the day, the Institute convened 16 neighborhood dialogues, two in each ward of the city. Leaders developed communitywide plans to overcome polarization and strengthen race relations in their neighborhoods. The event also included a televised town meeting, broadcast on a local cable news channel, focused on the debilitating effects of race.

NCBI has since fostered meetings of Korean and black merchants to examine long-standing conflicts and misunderstandings. As a result of the Day of Dialogue and Reconciliation, local community leaders from different racial backgrounds founded Multicultural Community Services, a nonprofit group that provides much-needed youth programs and language services, helping non-English-speaking families and young people from all backgrounds to deal with schools, health providers, and the justice system.

**Monterey County**, on the central California coast, also struggles with polarization within its community. The county boasts thriving tourism in one area and a neighboring agricultural area referred to as “The Salad Bowl to the World.” Political divisions among local business people who support land development, environmentalists who want to limit growth, and workers who need more affordable housing, have made decisions about the use of public lands a nightmare for local leaders. In a recent community meeting, NCBI facilitators used the Institute's “Controversial Issues Process” to build greater understanding among the factions. “NCBI is helping to create new approaches in community decision making to ensure that important and controversial public issues are discussed civilly and openly and that all voices are heard,” says Sue Parris, director of the Monterey NCBI chapter.

## An Activist Approach Using NCBI Methods

After the burning of an African American church in Knoxville, Tenn., the former NCBI chapter director Asherah Cinnamon promptly contacted the church and wrote a statement of support for the black congregation. She quickly won community-wide endorsements of the statement from prominent religious and community groups. In alliance with local organizations, NCBI's voice became the voice of the community. The statement in part read as follows:

*We cannot agree that our community is to be defined by the most hateful or most disturbed elements within it, but wish to be defined as people who want to live together in peace, friendship, and justice... . We commit ourselves even more strongly to the eradication of prejudice and injustice in our community and to facing in ourselves the effects of racism in our culture.*

The NCBI team joined an anti-racism coalition with local religious leaders, the NAACP, and the FBI, and led healing sessions throughout the city. As word spread of the work in Knoxville, NCBI teams in Austin, Monterey, Dallas, and the District of Columbia—to name but a few—developed their own community-based responses to church burnings.

**NCBI creates new approaches to community decision making that ensure open and civil discussion of important and controversial public issues.**

In **Chicago**, the NCBI chapter is helping to reduce gang violence in neighborhoods. The Institute has organized vigils to engage residents in an extended dialogue to share their grief and common concerns and to create strategies to promote safety and conflict resolution. The chapter currently sponsors Diversity Dinners that bring 500 families into homes outside their neighborhoods. “All of that is making a profound difference in the urban life experience of Chicago. The model takes people who are focused on turf issues and leads them toward a common goal,” says Clarence Wood, chair of the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations.

**Keeping Faith with the Faithful**

The faith community is a powerful force for social change, even as it struggles to address the changes taking place in society today. NCBI has worked alongside religious leaders to reduce racial discrimination not only within local communities but also within their own religious denominations and congregations. And fostering reconciliation among faiths in conflict has been the focus of some of NCBI’s most path-breaking work worldwide, including facilitating reconciliation between Jews and Palestinians in Israel and between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.

In the United States, the Institute has diminished tensions between Arabs and Jews and led coalitions of Jewish leaders to support Islamic groups in addressing fears of “Islamophobia” after Sept. 11, 2001. NCBI chapters on college campuses regularly facilitate dialogues and “speak outs” involving Jewish, Palestinian, and Islamic students.

NCBI focuses on rifts within faiths as well. For example, the Jewish community in Pittsburgh asked NCBI to find common ground among Reconstructionist, Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox rabbis who have vastly different viewpoints on intermarriage, religious observance, and even who should be considered a Jew.

NCBI has assisted Unitarian, Methodist, Catholic, and Episcopal churches in promoting anti-racism programs. Also, leaders of various faiths have sought NCBI’s expertise in resolving complex questions about how to address homosexuality within congregations and to reconcile the needs of gay parishioners with the concerns of parishioners who believe homosexuality is a sin.

Equally significant, NCBI has played an important role in bridging cultural divides between white and black churches. NCBI has worked with churches to desegregate Sunday morning, bringing black and white congregations together in prayer, friendship, and service. The Washington, D.C., NCBI chapter, for example, worked with pastors and ministers to build fellowship between the all-black Berean Baptist Church and the virtually all-white Church of the Savior. Members of each church had the opportunity to meet, learn about one another, attend each other’s worship services, and work side-by-side on projects, such as feeding recently released prison inmates in a special transition program.



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“NCBI is an especially beneficial resource. For those of us seeking insightful guidance and effective strategies in interreligious, interethnic dialogue, this organization is invaluable. Community activists, civic leaders, political leaders, and those in the religious community will turn to this resource repeatedly. It is simply superb.”

—**Rabbi David Saperstein,**  
**director of the**  
**Religious Action Center**  
**of Reform Judaism,**  
**Washington, D.C.**

### **Resolving Conflicts in Government**

In the United States, private issues constitute an increasing part of public debate. Many issues—from abortion to abstinence education, from school vouchers to transracial adoptions—are politically charged, value-laden, and often polarizing.

NCBI counsels political leaders and government officials on generating consensus and promoting effective policy. The Institute’s methods benefit agency staff who are implementing controversial policies and politicians who are looking for creative, nondivisive ways to enable everyone to learn about all sides of an issue before crafting legislation.

In the U.S. Senate, for example, a bill to eliminate race as a factor in adoption stirred heated debate among lawmakers and child advocates on different sides of the issue of transracial adoption. Then-Senator Howard Metzenbaum invited NCBI to work with lobbyists and lawmakers to find middle ground. NCBI facilitated a daylong legislative summit, involving 50 organizations with various views on federal adoption policy, to forge a legislative agenda.

“NCBI successfully captured the attention of personnel by demonstrating that diversity is an important part of communication and team function that extends far beyond issues relating to sex, religion, and race. Your training approach provided information and knowledge without creating defensiveness or guilt.”

—**John Montenero,**  
former fire chief of  
Monterey, Calif.

Recently, the state of North Carolina and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) contracted with NCBI to facilitate a two-day Sex Education Summit. The session brought religious leaders and advocates for “abstinence only” education together with school officials, sex education advocates, and youth health experts who believe that young people need information about contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, homosexuality, and other issues. CDC officials and all participants entered the meeting with great trepidation about building any form of consensus about what to teach young people about sexual health. In fact, similar meetings led by other groups in different states led to increased conflict rather than any mutual understanding. At the NCBI-led meeting in Raleigh, however, supporters of “abstinence only,” “abstinence plus,” and “comprehensive” sex education recognized that they had far more in common than previously imagined. Rather than dwell on differences, participants found a surprising amount of common ground on which everyone could agree. The meeting was so successful, the CDC has funded agencies in two additional states to hire NCBI to replicate the program.

### **Promoting Public Sector Improvements**

In an increasingly diverse society, public agencies must prepare a workforce that both represents and is sensitive to all of the people it serves. Managers need to create a work environment that attracts and nurtures minority talent.



HARVEY FINKLE

NCBI has worked with agencies at all levels of government to train employees in communicating across cultural lines, addressing intergroup conflict, strengthening teamwork, and building good will among the many populations they serve.

In the Atlanta area, a local county probation office retained NCBI to implement a team-building process when four satellite offices merged. The 80 employees—including judges, parole officers, and court-referral-service workers—lacked effective ways of relating to each other. The new department was rife with internal conflicts caused by isolation, lack of trust, cliquish behavior, unproductive class distinctions, and credentialism. Many workers felt powerless and suffered from discouragement. NCBI Atlanta organized three training sessions for management and staff and is providing follow-up sessions and ongoing counsel that are producing significant changes in the workplace environment.

Atlanta's NCBI team is cooperating with town managers in a rural community outside the city to develop a strategic plan to address discrimination against women, who are relegated mostly to low-level duties and secretarial jobs, and against African Americans, who have been repeatedly subjected to racial slurs and regularly ignored by white managers. This is a multi-year project working with a small town, its administrators, and all town employees to create a more inclusive town government. Diversity in government is being expanded to include Koreans and other community groups.

The New York Governor's Office of Employee Relations, which coordinates training for every agency in the state, uses NCBI principles and methods as central components of its diversity initiative. Since 1995, when the office established the Institute's Public Sector Affiliate, a total of 22 public agencies in New York have adopted such programs. More than 10,000 state employees have received NCBI training over the past eight years.

In recent years, the Public Sector Affiliate organized a number of innovative programs: the first-ever state-sponsored dialogue on race for public employees, a one-day leadership workshop for members of the Affirmative Action Advisory Council to address internal conflicts, workshops on men and women becoming allies in the workplace, and a leadership development workshop for the Governor's Affirmative Action Advisory Council. Individual state agencies continue to strengthen their capacities to promote diversity. For example, the state Education Department has mandated that all its 3,000 employees receive NCBI training.

The 207,000-member Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA), the largest public sector affiliate of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) nationwide, adopted NCBI as its diversity initiative several years ago, placed key NCBI principles in its mission statement, and uses the Institute as a key resource in coalition building among diverse groups within the union.

“The mission of government is to address the needs of the people, and we cannot go forward as a nation until we learn to recognize and fully utilize the talent, creativity, and beauty of all our people. NCBI is the best way that this government agency has found to deal positively with diversity issues.”

**—Rosemary Alexander,  
executive director of  
Jobnet, Massachusetts  
Division of Employment  
and Training**

“NCBI’s work with PBS staff has provided us with powerful tools for genuine dialogue. Their positive approach has helped us build relationships across PBS and has given us a renewed sense of community in our workplace.”

—**Carolyn Dickert-Scherr,**  
**vice president of human**  
**resources, PBS**

The climate in many New York agencies is shifting toward more honesty in dealing with race issues. A representative from the state’s Education Department reported to the Public Sector Affiliate that as a result of NCBI training programs, staff members more openly discuss issues of race at staff meetings. Representatives from the Department of Correctional Services, the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance also reported successfully using NCBI’s techniques to defuse conflicts within their agencies before employees filed formal complaints. In addition, the state’s Department of Motor Vehicles reported that NCBI training has helped employees improve their service to an increasingly diverse clientele.

### **Diversifying the Workplace**

To run strong companies, executives must recruit and maintain a diverse workforce. They also need to establish an environment where talent can rise to its fullest potential and where distributed leadership, teamwork, and interstaff communication and support—hallmarks of efficiency and job satisfaction—are the norm. Corporations from Denny’s to Dupont, from Motorola to PBS, have turned to NCBI for its experience in developing diversity plans and training managers and staff in team building, prejudice reduction, and conflict resolution.

- NCBI assisted the Denny’s restaurant chain in devising new diversity strategies after the company was taken to court for violating public accommodation laws.
- CTB/McGraw-Hill brought in NCBI to launch a diversity initiative, which began with the formation of a team of 30 people from its three major locations in the United States. NCBI offered leadership training and helped assess and improve diversity practices and policies. The team coordinated this effort as part of the publisher’s overall commitment to diversity. It has conducted four companywide community-building celebrations and ongoing employee training, and plans to introduce a mentoring program and a conflict resolution process.



HARVEY FINKLE

## Creating Space for Underrepresented Groups to Meet

Many fear that when women and minority groups build separate constituency groups within a workplace, they weaken the overall unity of an organization. NCBI has found that the opposite is true.

In northern Virginia, black firefighters established a separate union within a larger—predominately white—firefighters union, which caused enormous tension. Some of the white union members supported the black firefighters. Others felt threatened, even betrayed. Within a year, the conflict deepened so that union leaders were concerned about the larger body's effectiveness in dealing with management. Both unions invited NCBI to help out. Each union chose a spokesperson. NCBI then coached them in listening to each other's concerns.

At a general meeting, the president of the umbrella union, a white man, said that all he had ever wanted to be was a firefighter. His father and grandfather had been firefighters, and he was proud of his work. He could not understand the need for a separate black firefighters organization, which he considered detrimental to solidarity.

The president of the black firefighters spoke next. He described how his father had also wanted to be a firefighter, but Jim Crow laws prevented him from fulfilling his dream. Instead, his father had to take a low-paying job with long hours. The son believed racism and job-related stress caused his father's recent premature death. After his father's funeral, he vowed that he would commit his life to making sure that blacks had opportunities and promotions denied to his father. He could not trust white firefighters to understand the unique struggles that black firefighters faced. Therefore, a separate union was essential.

Next, the representative of the umbrella union agreed to invite the president of the black union to attend the next general meeting and to repeat the personal story he had so courageously shared. The black leader accepted.

When all the union members heard his story, many were moved by his determination to ensure that his black colleagues would have a different work experience from his father's. The initial resistance to the black firefighters union waned. As the white firefighters' fears subsided, many black firefighters in turn made an increased commitment to participate more fully in the leadership of the larger union.

When key subgroups are welcome to hold separate meetings and pursue constituency work within an organization, their sense of ownership in the larger organization grows, often generating an eagerness to build unity throughout the whole organization.

—NCBI founder Cherie Brown



DAVID KIDD



DAVID KIDD

- At Bethlehem Steel, the local steelworkers union and management had never had a common language. As plans to revitalize the company shrunk the workforce, hundreds of conflicts emerged. Women claimed that they were being treated badly by male managers, tension among racial groups heightened, workers with the least seniority feared layoffs, and even those with the most seniority encountered disrespect. The steel manufacturer pulled Guillermo Lopez from his regular job as a millright in the coke oven section of the plant to be a workplace counselor. Lopez trained with NCBI and put the Institute's model in place, using every available technique to encourage workers at all levels to listen with respect, treat others with dignity, and share personal experiences and challenges. As a result, monthly grievances in one department, Steam Water and Air, dropped from 300 to 10.

### **Making Profitable Interventions for Nonprofits**

In today's economy, nonprofit leaders have weighty missions and responsibilities but too few staff and resources. So it is imperative for leaders of nonprofit groups to build partnerships and become more inclusive with leadership, board membership, and staff who reflect the communities they serve.

NCBI helps leaders and staff of nonprofit and grassroots community organizations develop a new skill set for leadership and management, take on challenging issues, build alliances, and expand their capacity to meet constituent needs.

The Institute has trained executives and staff from, among others, the Alliance of Concerned Men, American Jewish Committee, Americorps, Amnesty International, the Council of Foundations, Council on Jewish Federations, Girl Scouts of America, League of United Latin American Citizens, League of Women Voters, Lutheran Social Services, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, National Association of Social Workers, National Council of Churches, National Council of La Raza, United Way, the YMCA, and the YWCA.

### **Teaching Through Culture**

Museums, arts councils, libraries, and other cultural institutions provide opportunities for a community to make statements about tolerance and inclusiveness, and to educate young people and adults. NCBI has been a vital ally in such endeavors.

NCBI's Emory University and Atlanta chapters assisted in bringing a national exhibit, "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America," from a museum in New York City to the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site Visitors Center.

According to the curator, Joseph F. Jordan, the purpose of the exhibit was as much to educate whites about their role in ending racism as it was to inform more blacks about their heritage. "I want[ed] the public to see those faces, and I want[ed] them to understand that, in these insane incidents, death had two faces: the face of those who had been hanged, burned, mutilated, and shot, and the face of those who walked away from the lynch scene, confident that their communities, their friends, their pastors, and their political leaders would sanction their deeds and welcome them back into the fold. My intent [was] to deny those perpetrators the sanctuary of the faded page, or the fading memory."

The exhibit, accompanied by NCBI-led discussions and forums on campus, was a rare opportunity to unite campus and community and drew more people than it had in New York City.

In the fall of 2003, NCBI chapters in North America hosted community meetings in conjunction with the local premieres of the widely acclaimed documentary, "Two Towns of Jasper." The film portrays the life of a divided community, Jasper, Texas, in the aftermath of the 1998 murder of James Byrd, Jr., a black man chained to a pick-up truck and dragged to his death by three white men.

**Working Films and the Ford Foundation chose NCBI to host community meetings in conjunction with local premieres of the documentary, 'Two Towns of Jasper.'**

To show this film within local communities and host conversations that address the gut-wrenching issues underlying one of the most horrific incidents in the past decade, Working Films and the Ford Foundation chose NCBI to host the premieres and bring together civic leaders as well as young people. In each community, NCBI facilitated discussions and workshops on the personal activism needed to address racism and forge alliances.

**In elementary schools, students learn how to examine stereotypes, build intercultural cooperation, and resolve conflicts.**

### **Reducing Violence in Schools**

Gang violence, racial and intergroup conflict, bullying, homophobia, and sexual harassment are problems that demand careful and immediate attention in elementary and secondary schools. Young people, teachers, administrators, and staff need skills and tools to work with young people across cultures to address racism and bigotry. This not only promotes safety, but also creates means for students to develop leadership skills and for schools to become better places for living, learning, and growing.

NCBI's Washington, D.C., chapter pioneered violence prevention and prejudice reduction programs, now used in schools around the world, to drastically reduce incidents of bullying and gang violence. At the elementary school level, students learn listening skills, how to examine stereotypes, how to build intercultural cooperation, what it feels like to be an excluded group in society, and how to resolve conflicts and deal with everyday "putdowns" by their peers. Teams of students then put what they have learned into skits presented to other students.



## Cultural Changes at Oldfields School

Oldfields School, located 25 miles north of Baltimore, is a boarding school for 185 young women from the United States and around the globe. The school's alumnae include Wallis Warfield Simpson (the Duchess of Windsor) and the daughters of political and cultural leaders from King Hussein of Jordan to Larry King. While students come from 27 states and nine countries (including Japan, Korea, Ghana, and Mexico), only about 12 percent of students come from African American and Hispanic American backgrounds.

Oldfields started its NCBI chapter seven years ago to help ease racial tensions on campus.

"African American girls felt their differences from other students were not being understood or acknowledged. They became angry and upset, causing a lot of pain and soul searching among students, faculty, and administration," recalls Diane Hill, the Oldfields School counselor. At Hill's request, NCBI offered a prejudice reduction workshop for students and faculty and additional training for a diverse group of student leaders.

The workshops were such a success that Oldfields decided to launch its own NCBI chapter, offer prejudice reduction programs for all entering students, and fund student trips to NCBI leadership seminars that include adult and student activists from around the world.

"Oldfields is diverse in certain ways, but many of the girls haven't been around students of color. Sometimes there were instances where the white students would say and do things without thinking," says Shanell Stephens, an African American sophomore at Goucher College who spent four years at Oldfields.

"The NCBI team helps students, faculty, and staff understand how they might be hurting others," Stephens says. "NCBI taught me how to interrupt racist jokes, mediate disputes, and explain my point of view. I learned how to deal with people who asked ignorant questions about my hair, lifestyle, and culture. As I learned how to answer these

questions, I worked with NCBI peers to use the skills we learned to apply them to any situation that came up at school."

Shavonne Ward, an Oldfields junior from the Bronx, says that her participation in the NCBI program helped her grow "as a leader in other settings." A vice president of both the junior class and the Black Awareness Club, a tour guide, and a resident advisor of a campus dorm, her experience in NCBI has enabled her to build close relationships with many role models—including members of the school's maintenance and dining hall staff and a minority teacher—whose points of view are not the norm at the predominately white, all-girls school.

Rosa Lopez, a senior from Houston, says that the NCBI workshops, chapter meetings, and interventions are "opportunities to learn what to do when you are 'weirded out' by operating in a culture that may be different from what you know." As an outgrowth of being an NCBI trainer, Lopez co-founded the school's Hispanic Culture Club, which brings together every week dozens of students from various backgrounds to discuss myriad topics.

Jennifer Wolf, a recent graduate from Wilmington, Del., who will attend Sweet Briar College, says NCBI provided her with a broad array of skills that helped her through Oldfields. A student with two learning disabilities, she says NCBI equipped her to handle many of the challenges she and her friends faced at school. One of her most powerful memories of Oldfields, she says, was the NCBI workshop in which a lesbian student "came out" to her friends. "The workshop was carefully planned. The NCBI team created a truly supportive environment in which students and faculty who had gay friends, mothers, and siblings had a chance to share their feelings."

Rosa Lopez says, "In the beginning, the school really needed the program. But now much of what is taught through NCBI has become a way of life at the school. It has opened people's eyes."

**NCBI-trained teams of school ‘peacekeepers’ intervene when violence and bullying occur and encourage others to take stands against violent behavior.**

In secondary schools, Institute leaders work with a team that includes the principal, a teacher, and a diverse group of young people whom their peers choose as leaders. NCBI works with students and faculty to offer daylong, interactive workshops for teens, young adults, parents, teachers, and community activists. These initiatives have helped quell intergroup conflicts in schools and engendered teams of school “peacekeepers,” who help identify potential incidents, provide techniques for intervening when violence and bullying occur, and encourage students, teachers, and staff to take principled stands against any form of violent behavior.

When, for example, *The Washington Post* reported a fight between black and Latino students in a local high school as a “gang war,” the school’s NCBI team worked with students and school leaders to keep the incident from escalating. The team organized a crisis reduction workshop for a group of 60 students, including the Latino and black students involved in the original altercation. The workshop enabled the young people to air their feelings, many spawned by hurtful beliefs that each group had learned about the other. As a result of the workshops, NCBI built a new relationship between Latino and black leaders and helped turn potential violence into an opportunity for learning.

After two popular students at D.C.’s Wilson High School were murdered, school officials called on the NCBI chapter to counsel grieving students. With NCBI’s help, city agencies, as well as the religious community and the nonprofit sector, formed the Interagency Task Force for Grief, Loss, and Healing. This effort allowed grieving young people to mourn victims of violence rather than express their hurt by escalating the violence. Within a year, the task force provided grief counseling to students at all age levels in 61 public schools, culminating in a conference that brought together all of the high schools and middle schools—an endeavor facilitated, in part, by NCBI-trained student teams from regional schools.

The program has also sparked the development of a new student club called “Keep It Real,” in which young people organize “speak outs” along with musical performances and skits based on stories about violence bred of discrimination, grief, and loss.

In the New Orleans metropolitan area, the Institute has provided ongoing leadership training in local high schools. NCBI has trained more than 1,000 students in the Lafayette Parish public schools alone, including incoming freshmen in high schools. The program was first introduced when the Lafayette School Board’s Substance Abuse Department sought a new leadership training model for prevention of violence and drug use. Workshops in individual schools expanded to peer leadership training for students from every school in the district. Students from area high schools are now trained to implement the model in their own institutions, creating ongoing opportunities to make positive changes in their environments.

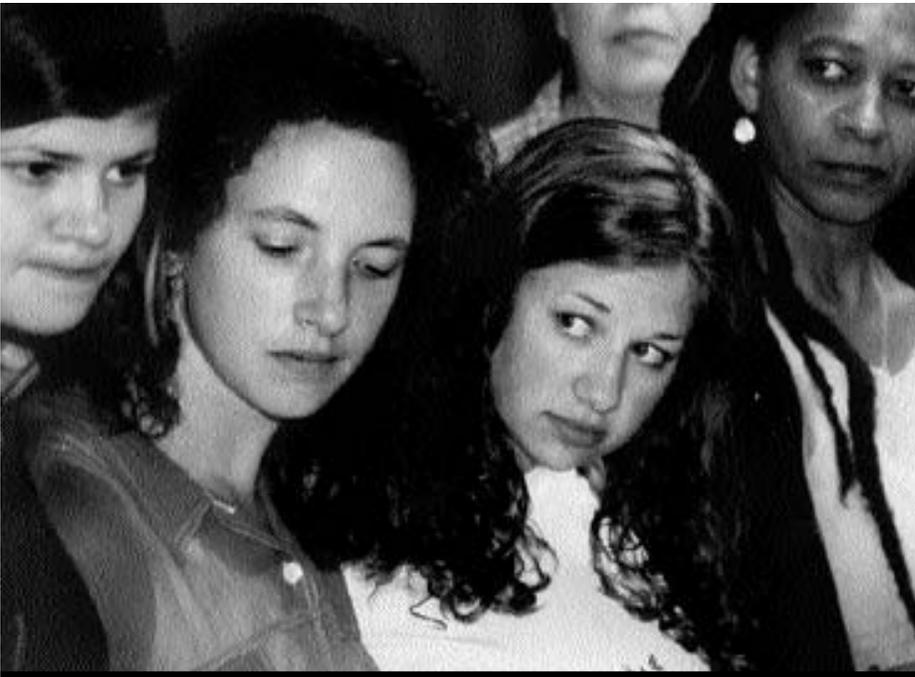
### **Strengthening Leadership of Young People**

In most societies and cultural groups throughout the world, young people aged 10 to 25 are not taken seriously. Adults set policy for youth and run youth-serving institutions and organizations often without soliciting, and even more frequently without including, the views and leadership of young people. This form of discrimination, which is called “adultism,” results in young people discounting themselves, giving up, and becoming destructive.

Young people fight adultism when they:

- Lead adults;
- Establish peer relationships with adults;
- Raise their voices in powerful ways;
- See what adultism is and what it does to them; and
- Build unity and cooperative relationships with each other.

NCBI is organizing the “Not 2 Young 2” campaign to highlight the importance of including young people at the forefront in the work of creating a just society. The public-awareness effort—designed with the leadership of an international steering committee of youth activists—will show how adultism harms youth and grownups alike and hurts society overall. NCBI chapters will also sponsor a series of activities on how to include youth voices at every level of society.



DAVID KIDD

**NCBI highlights the importance of soliciting the input of young people and including them in creating a just society.**

“This is an effort to end stereotypes and discriminatory actions common to adults in dealing with young people,” says Erick Adame, a sophomore at State University of New York College at Oneonta and a member of the Not 2 Young 2 steering committee. “We need to teach young people that they can achieve all of the goals that some have discouraged them from even trying to attain.”

The campaign will include local youth-led activities in NCBI affiliates worldwide, awards for organizations that support and encourage young people, and the development of a self-assessment in which individuals and institutions can evaluate their “Adulthood Quotient.”

Many NCBI initiatives involve young people. For example, NCBI Switzerland in 2003 launched an event, as part of its “Fairness” campaign, in which young immigrants spoke out on their experiences of discrimination in school and in applying for apprenticeships. Their statements appeared in four major newspapers. The Swiss program is hosting a larger event in summer 2003 and will seek to motivate schools to become “Fairness Schools.” These institutions will be assessed on how well immigrant youth are succeeding and whether the schools have offered useful interventions, such as providing mentors, to improve the success rates of immigrant youth.



DAVID KIDD

## Confronting Homophobia in Schools and Communities

At a public high school in Monterey County, Calif., two 15-year-old girls “came out” as a lesbian couple. Some students objected to the girls’ holding hands and kissing each other on the cheek. Administrators received complaints from parents and fundamentalist religious leaders. Students who supported the girls clashed verbally with students who found the girls’ behavior offensive. Threats of violence arose.

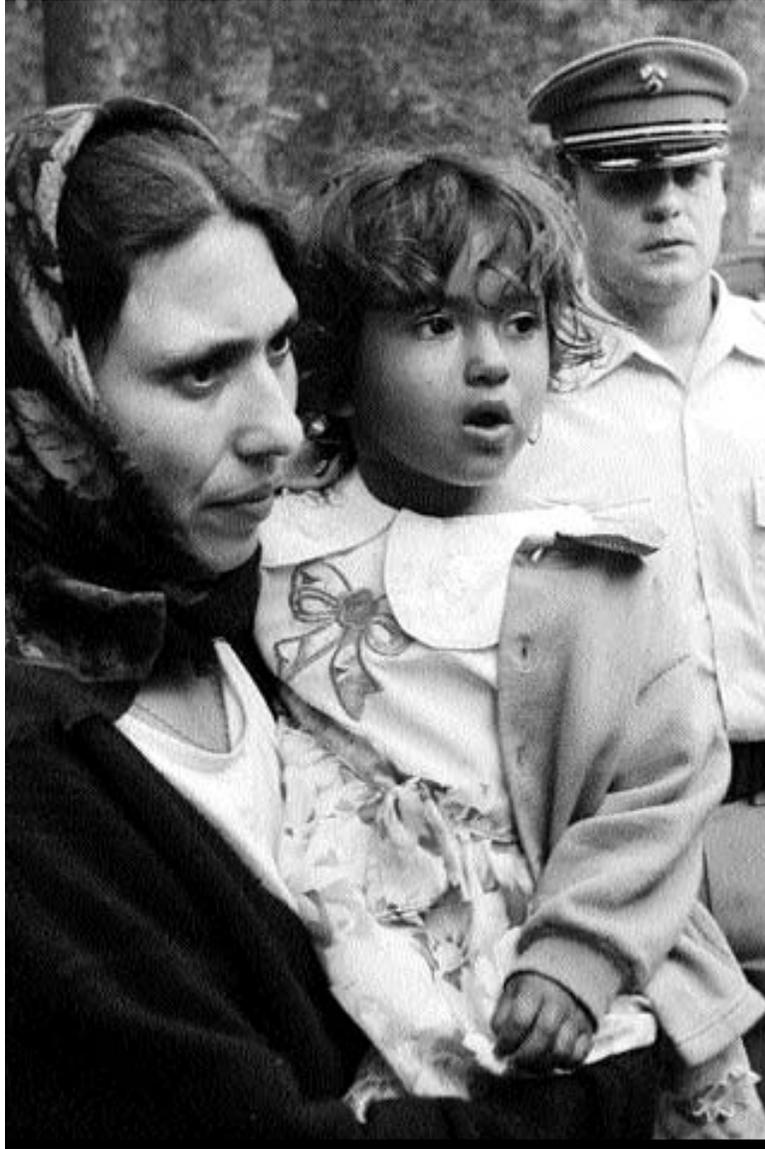
Students requested that administrators seek NCBI’s intervention. Forty students, parents, and clergy attended a Diversity and Controversial Issues workshop. By the end of the day, participants had identified areas of agreement and drafted recommendations for implementation of a school “public display of affection” policy to ensure equitable treatment of students, regardless of sexual orientation.

NCBI worked with youth groups and other organizations in Louisville, Ky., as part of the Hate-Free Schools Coalition to address the needs of GLBT students in the Jefferson County Public Schools, the state’s largest school district. The coalition had two goals: to educate school administrators about the experiences of GLBT young people and to change school policies to include protection against discrimination for GLBT students. Although the coalition was unable to win a change in the student rights, discipline, and behavior codes, their presentation to the county school board did result in public acknowledgement that harassment and mistreatment of GLBT students was unacceptable and that teachers needed training to deal effectively with GLBT issues. Consequently, NCBI leaders provided in-service training to public school teachers in the district.

In Tampa, Fla., NCBI leaders on the social justice committee in a local church organized a one-day workshop to welcome diversity and later encouraged the city council to amend the human rights ordinance to recognize GLBT partnerships.



DAVID KIDD



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## 5.

# Fighting Discrimination and Intolerance Worldwide

Globalization has accelerated the departure of people from their ancestral homelands to new countries in search of work, security, and better lives. Old geographic boundaries are disappearing, forcing nations to address new challenges of immigration, cultural assimilation, and backlash from xenophobic groups fearing displacement.

NCBI continually grows stronger with knowledge gained across cultures and continents. Lessons from work in South Africa inform the Institute's work in Bosnia. Both the Swiss Peacemaker Program and the British Friends Against Bullying initiative drew on violence prevention programs in the United States—and vice versa. In a time of terrorism, new initiatives from European NCBI chapters that address the spread of Islamophobia will benefit NCBI chapters in the United States.

These programs succeed where others fail because they are religiously and politically balanced and led by interracial, interreligious, and international teams.

## **NCBI Switzerland: Fighting Anti-Semitism and Racism**

Switzerland is a predominately white, Christian country that has experienced a dramatic increase in foreigners—first Italian, Turkish, and Portuguese workers, later refugees from war-torn Bosnia and Kosovo.

Many of these immigrants lack Swiss citizenship and have only recently brought their families to join them. There are schools where more than half of the students do not speak the local Swiss language at home. Communities, schools, and organizations throughout the nation are adjusting to this epoch-making demographic change, which has led some young Swiss nationalists to join right-wing extremist groups and made some adult Swiss increasingly xenophobic and concerned about cultural cohesion.

“NCBI trains people to handle crisis situations and work on divisive issues in constructive and healing ways. Our experience has been distilled into an effective training design that touches people deeply, doesn't blame anyone, and emancipates them to change the communities in which they live and work.”

**—Ron Halbright, director  
of NCBI Switzerland**

“Every school has a policy on bullying, but, without training and support, educators are not finding it easy to translate that policy into practice. The policy can end up being just a piece of paper on the wall. The NCBI initiative helps teachers and students understand what they can do. Much of the response must come from students, because teachers are not around when students use the lavatories, or go to and from school, when most bullying occurs.”

**—Val Carpenter,  
NCBI British Isles  
director**

Meanwhile, latent anti-Semitism has surfaced in response to escalating tensions in the Middle East and recent court decisions directing Swiss banks to return Nazi gold and unclaimed accounts as reparations to Holocaust survivors and their children. The small Jewish community has felt threatened by insulting public and private statements, graffiti, and occasional physical attacks. Incidents in schools inhibit teachers from teaching about the Holocaust. When a widely read national magazine publishes a cover headline, *We and the Jews*, Swiss Jews ask themselves if, or for how long, they are welcome in Switzerland.

To address these challenges, NCBI is building networks with local governments, churches, and schools. NCBI's work includes leading a national campaign against anti-Semitism, and educating the public about Islamophobia and the needs of specific immigrant groups. NCBI is also helping immigrants and their Swiss allies to share stories, learn how to mobilize people, and support progressive teachers, students, parents, administrators, and police.

The Institute has trained Jews and Gentiles to conduct workshops in churches and schools to help leaders and citizens combat anti-Semitism. Since Jews constitute less than one percent of the Swiss population, many Swiss have never met a Jewish person. The workshops provide a unique opportunity to challenge stereotypes and foster alliances. Similar programs have now been launched to reduce homophobia and—since September 11, 2001—Islamophobia.

NCBI Switzerland has designed and implemented an innovative “Peacemaker” Initiative in dozens of schools, to reduce violence. Over the past five years, NCBI has trained more than 1,000 Swiss boys and girls elected by their classmates to serve as playground and after-school mediators to confront bullying, racism, exclusion, and hateful epithets. As part of the program, NCBI leaders give teachers and administrators the skills and tools to prevent violence and intergroup conflict, in part through a “Peace Week” where the whole school focuses on learning conflict resolution and welcoming diversity strategies.

NCBI's new “Fairness” project showcases the marked difficulties immigrant children face in being successful in Swiss schools. The goal is to work with schools, parents, and employers on lowering the hurdles that hold these children back.

The Swiss chapters organized a solidarity campaign for Bosnian refugees threatened with expulsion by the Swiss government as the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina drew to a close. By publicizing the stories of young refugees through articles, booklets, concerts, television programs, and encounters in schools, NCBI mobilized public opposition to the forced expulsions.

The NCBI chapter in Geneva, in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, works with people to reduce barriers between German- and French-speaking Swiss people. The Geneva chapter has an increasing number of active members who are refugees from African and Latin American countries. Recent NCBI sessions have trained bus and tram drivers to address acts of aggression on public transport, and NCBI is planning a joint program with the army to train mediators on preventing racism in the Swiss military.

### **NCBI British Isles: Easing Antagonisms**

In April 2001, race riots broke out on the streets of several cities in northern England. Openly racist organizations and local white provocateurs torched buildings, tore up streets, firebombed cars, and attacked Muslim citizens of Indian ancestry whose families had come to work in cotton mills. The Muslim residents of one of those cities, Bradford, live in segregated, parallel communities that are common in the United States but relatively unusual in Britain.

NCBI helped leaders in Bradford reverse what the former executive director of the British Commission on Racial Equality, Sir Herman Ouseley, called disturbing patterns of “community isolation” of Muslims, Asians, whites, and other groups in the city. NCBI gathered 100 people from three different housing projects—one Asian, one white, and one mixed. They became more familiar with each other’s backgrounds and concerns, and they learned through workshops new techniques of cooperation. Similarly, youth workers in Leeds are using NCBI’s “Controversial Issues Process” to motivate young people to explore other—and more positive—ways to express dissent.

The Institute has a government contract to help Great Britain fulfill Prime Minister Tony Blair’s commitment to creating greater diversity among members of nonprofit groups and to deliver nonprofit services to more people of color. As a result, NCBI has provided diversity seminars in the nine government regions, reaching 20 percent of the country’s nonprofit organizations.

Moreover, NCBI is strengthening the government’s youth volunteer initiative, the Millennium Volunteers, to focus more community-service projects on social justice issues. As part of this effort, the Institute trained 300 young people to offer NCBI workshops to more than 3,000 of their peers nationwide.



DAVID KIDD

**Research has indicated that students who participate in NCBI programs want to be in school more than those who do not.**

Following several suicides of young people who had been bullied at school, NCBI brought its “Welcoming Diversity” workshop into schools to establish anti-bullying programs and launched successful peer training in the cities of Lancashire and Leicester. NCBI’s “Friends Against Bullying” teams lead sessions for victimized students, make presentations and run workshops for student councils and teachers, and contribute to activities outside the classroom. These projects are producing safer, more inclusive and welcoming schools, youth groups, and neighborhoods.

As a result, parents, students, and educators benefit from one another. The strengthened communication has cut the number of school dropouts. Research has indicated that students who participate in the NCBI initiative want to be in school more than those who do not participate in NCBI programs. Students involved in NCBI cite improved mental and physical well-being and heightened willingness to study.

Other NCBI projects in England include the “Kick Racism Out of Football” campaign with the Leicester City Football Club and the “Community Cohesion Resolving Differences Initiative,” which is training young people to be at the heart of building safe and inclusive neighborhoods and adults to listen to young people.

The Institute has established city-based leadership teams in Birmingham, Bristol, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, London, Preston, and Southampton, plus a number of organization-based leadership teams in schools, government agencies, and voluntary organizations. NCBI efforts have won British Diversity Awards every year from 1998 to the present.

## 6.

# NCBI Chapters and Affiliates

## NCBI U.S. Community Chapters:

Alabama	Massachusetts
Birmingham	Boston
Arkansas	Lynn
Rogers	Montana
California	Missoula
Monterey	New York
Santa Cruz	Albany
Colorado	Cohoes
Colorado Springs	New York City
Delaware	Rochester
Wilmington	Syracuse
District of Columbia	Utica
Florida	White Plains
St. Petersburg	North Carolina
Georgia	Chapel Hill
Atlanta	Pennsylvania
Hawaii	Allentown
Honolulu	Kutztown/Berks County
Oahu	Philadelphia
Illinois	Tennessee
Decatur	Knoxville
Park Forest/Chicago	Texas
Kentucky	Austin
Louisville	Corpus Christi
Louisiana	Denton
Lafayette	Virginia
Maine	Fairfax
Portland	Washington
Maryland	Seattle
Baltimore	Wyoming
Frostburg	Lander
Glencoe	
Oakland	

**NCBI International Chapters:**

Vienna, Austria  
 Bosnia-Herzegovina  
 Sudbury, Canada  
 Toronto, Canada  
 Lancaster, England  
 Leicester, England  
 Lincolnshire, England  
 London, England  
 Berlin/Brandenburg, Germany  
 Aargau, Switzerland  
 Basel, Switzerland  
 Berne, Switzerland  
 Geneva, Switzerland  
 Lucerne, Switzerland  
 St. Gallen, Switzerland  
 Zurich, Switzerland

**U.S. Organizational Affiliates:**

Center for the Disabled  
 CTB/McGraw-Hill  
 Dove, Inc.  
 Family Forward - Austin, Texas  
 Fulton County Division of Equal  
 Employment Opportunity  
 Greater Lynn Mental Health and  
 Retardation Association  
 Kentucky Cabinet for Families  
 & Children  
 New York State - Civil Service  
 Employees Association for  
 Education and Training  
 New York State Department of  
 Education  
 New York State Governor's Office  
 of Employee Relations  
 New York State Office of Mental  
 Health  
 Onondaga County/Syracuse  
 Commission on Human Rights  
 University of North Carolina  
 Hospitals  
 YWCA of Utica, New York

**NCBI Campus Affiliates:**

Agnes Scott College  
 American University of Bulgaria  
 Anderson College  
 California State University -  
     Fresno  
 California State University -  
     Monterey Bay  
 Central Michigan University  
 Clemson University  
 Columbia University  
 Del Mar College  
 Dickinson College  
 Drexel University  
 East Stroudsburg University of  
     Pennsylvania  
 Edinboro University of  
     Pennsylvania  
 Emory University  
 Franklin and Marshall College  
 Frostburg State University  
 Furman University  
 George Mason University  
 Georgia Institute of Technology  
 Hudson Valley Community  
     College  
 Ithaca College  
 Indiana University - Purdue  
     University Indianapolis  
 Kutztown University of  
     Pennsylvania  
 Loyola College in Maryland  
 Michigan Technological University  
 New School University  
 North Carolina State University  
 North Shore Community College  
 Oregon State University  
 Piedmont Technical College  
 Rochester Institute of Technology  
 Rutgers, The State University of  
     New Jersey Camden Campus  
 Seton Hall University  
 Seton Hill University  
 Slippery Rock University of  
     Pennsylvania  
 South Carolina State University  
 Southern Oregon University  
 State University of New York at  
     Albany  
 State University of New York  
     College at Buffalo  
 State University of New York  
     College at Oneonta  
 State University of New York  
     College of Agriculture and  
     Technology at Cobleskill  
 State University of New York  
     College of Technology at Delhi  
 State University of New York  
     Upstate Medical University  
 Texas A & M University  
 Texas A & M University - Corpus  
     Christi  
 The Ohio State University Main  
     Campus  
 The Texas A & M University  
     Health Science Center - Baylor  
     College of Dentistry  
 The University of Montana  
 University of Delaware  
 University of Hawaii at Manoa  
 University of Houston - Clear  
     Lake  
 University of Maine at Presque  
     Isle  
 University of New England  
 University of North Texas  
 University of Notre Dame  
 University of Puget Sound  
 University of South Carolina -  
     Aiken  
 University of Southern Maine  
 University of Texas at Austin  
 West Yorkshire Colleges  
     Consortium, England  
 Western Washington University

## **CONCLUSION**

This book was written for the many leaders all over the world who are working hard to create diverse communities and organizations. We welcome you to contact us, to learn more about our programs, and to become a participant, a sponsor, or a partner in our work of building diverse communities. Join leaders around the world who are learning that NCBI's programs can make a profound difference in their school, their neighborhood, or their community, religious organization, or government agency.

For additional information about NCBI programs, workshops, chapters, or affiliates please contact:

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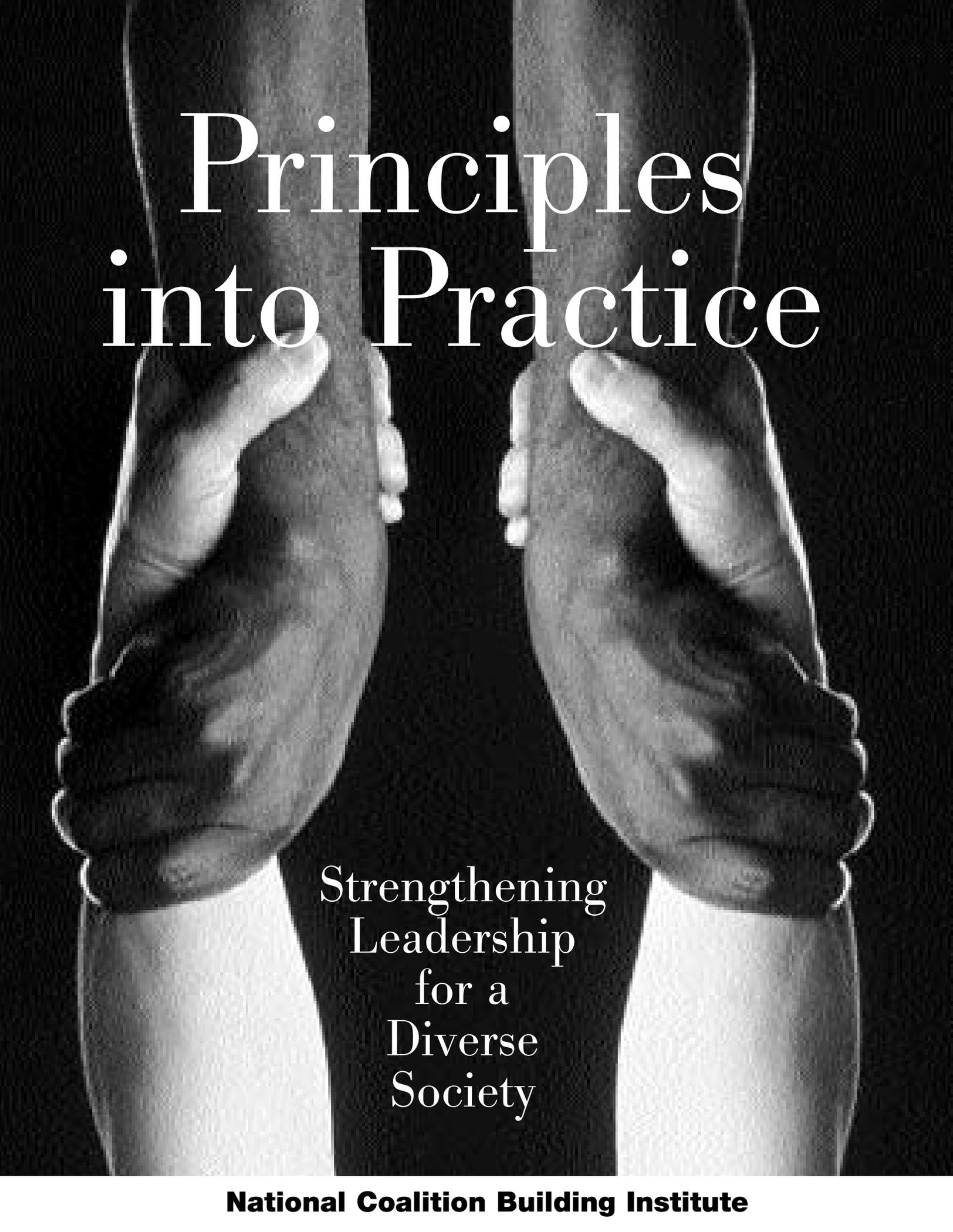
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A black and white photograph of two hands shaking. The hand on the left is light-skinned, and the hand on the right is dark-skinned. They are positioned in the center of the frame, with their fingers interlaced. The background is solid black, making the hands stand out. The lighting highlights the texture of the skin and the creases on the hands.

# Principles into Practice

Strengthening  
Leadership  
for a  
Diverse  
Society

**National Coalition Building Institute**