



## BUILDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS MONTHLY EMAIL UPDATE

*September 2009*

Dear Educators,

Welcome to the September 2009 edition of the Building Inclusive Schools Monthly Email Update! The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is pleased to provide this service to educators across the Commonwealth to support your efforts to fostering respectful and affirming school communities. As always, feel free to contact our office by phone at (804) 515-7950 or by emailing Ali Thompson, Director of Education & Training at [athompson@inclusiveva.org](mailto:athompson@inclusiveva.org) or David LeFebvre, Program & Event Coordinator, at [dlefebvre@inclusiveva.org](mailto:dlefebvre@inclusiveva.org) if we can provide more direct support of your work.

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### **--- INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES ---**

In July, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities welcomed two new employees to our team! ALICIA R. THOMPSON is our new Director of Education and Training, and DAVID E. LEFEBVRE is Program and Event Coordinator. Ali was most recently a Dean at the Steward School and has experience as a teacher and administrator for both St. Catherine's School and the Richmond Public Schools. She serves as President of the Virginia Diversity Network, an association of educators at independent schools in Virginia. As a high school student, David was a participant in programming offered by VCIC's sister office in Omaha, Nebraska, and he has since volunteered for several of that organization's programs. David also served as a college intern at Nonprofit Connect, the Ronald McDonald House, and the National 4-H Council. Starting in October, these updates will be sent from David's email address ([dlefebvre@inclusiveva.org](mailto:dlefebvre@inclusiveva.org)).

### **--- RESOURCES LIST ---**

This month's Resources List focuses on conflict resolution. Check out page 3 for information on "ready-made" diversity programs for schools, potential funding sources, curriculum ideas, and more. Please pass along resources you know for future emails!

### **--- PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: PREJUDICE AWARENESS SUMMIT ---**

The Prejudice Awareness Summit (PAS) is a one day forum for middle school students, currently held in the Richmond area. Last year, nearly 25 middle schools sent teams of 8 students and 1-2 advisors to spend the day exploring prejudice, identifying useful conflict resolution strategies, and developing action plans to take the PAS message back to their sending schools. Community volunteers and high school students facilitated group sessions throughout the day.

The 2009 PAS, financially supported by the Wachovia Foundation, will take place on Thursday, October 15 at VCU's Harris Hall from 8:30-2:00pm. Coalition partners for the 2009 PAS are Communities in Schools of Richmond, Hope in the Cities, the Junior League of Richmond, and Partnership for the Future. For more information about this program please contact David LeFebvre at [dlefebvre@inclusiveva.org](mailto:dlefebvre@inclusiveva.org).



### --- 2009-2010 CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS ---

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is pleased to share the Calendar of Holidays and Festivals for the 2009-2010 school year at <http://www.inclusiveva.org/documents/2009-2010InterfaithCalendar.pdf>. This resource is intended to increase our sensitivity to diverse cultures and traditions and includes observances from select religious, ethnic, and public communities. Since the calendar is not exhaustive, those using this resource at school may wish to add holidays or observances that are observed by students in your classrooms or community that are not included in this listing. Additionally, while we have done our best to verify all dates, it is always advisable to consult with local religious authorities.

### --- STUDENT ESSAY, MEDIA, AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION CONTESTS ---

Several national contests have been announced that relate to building inclusive schools! Please consider including your students in the following opportunities:

- (1) Global Virtual Classroom Contest (Deadline: September 25, 2009)  
[www.virtualclassroom.org](http://www.virtualclassroom.org)
- (2) The First Freedom Student Competition (Deadline: November 23, 2009)  
[www.firstfreedom.org](http://www.firstfreedom.org), click on the red First Freedom Student Competition button (center column)

### --- ABOUT THE VIRGINIA CENTER FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES ---

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (<http://www.inclusiveva.org>) conducts programs that promote understanding and respect on ALL issues of diversity, for ALL age groups, ALL across Virginia. Each year, Inclusive Communities leads educational programs, conferences, retreats, and workshops for thousands of youth, educators, community members, non-profit organizations, and corporate and business leaders.



## SCHOOL RESOURCES LIST

*Focus: Conflict Resolution • September 2009*

**CURRICULUM** (Ways to integrate human relations issues into education)

**Exploring the Nature of Conflict**

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/social-studies/lesson-plan/2919.html?detour>

**Nurturing Optimal Classroom Community for Culturally Responsive Conflict Resolution**

<http://www.tolerance.org/activity/nurturing-optimal-classroom-community-cu>

**PROGRAMS** (Initiatives and observances to advance character education)

**National Learn & Serve Challenge** – October 5 – 11, 2009

<http://www.learnandservechallenge.org>

**Ally Week** – October 19-23, 2009

<http://www.allyweek.org>

**Mix It Up Day** – November 10, 2009

<http://www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up>

**Inclusive Schools Week** – December 7-11, 2009

<http://www.inclusiveschools.org>

**No Name Calling Week** – January 25-29, 2010

<http://www.nonamecallingweek.org>

**Day of Silence** – April 16, 2010

<http://www.dayofsilence.org>

**ARTICLES & RESEARCH** (News for sharing colleagues or as classroom discussion topics)

**Elements of Style: The What, Why & How of Transformative Peer Mediation**

<http://www.mediate.com/articles/hershmanL2.cfm>

**It's My Life: Friends**

<http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/friends/bullies/article4.html>

**FUNDING** (Grant opportunities to recognize individual leadership or support class projects and clubs)

**Kids In Need Teacher Grants** –for classroom teachers who have innovative, meritorious ideas

Deadline: September 30, 2009

<http://www.kidsinneed.net/grants/guidelines.php>

**Lowe's Toolbox for Education** – for basic, one-time project needs from schools and community groups struggling to make ends meet.

Deadline for Fall 2009 Cycle: October 16, 2009

<http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/index.html>

**2009-2010 Target Field Trip Grants Program** –no-strings-attached funds to cover field trip-related expenses, such as transportation, ticket fees, resource materials and supplies.

Deadline: November 3, 2009

[Target.com/fieldtrips](http://Target.com/fieldtrips)