

Virginians Come Together in Response to Hate Group

Over 350 People Attend Anti-Hate Rally at Virginia Commonwealth University

When a hate group targeted Richmond and South Hampton Roads in March, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities quickly took action. The centerpiece of our response was an Anti-Hate Rally, co-sponsored with the student Hillel chapter at Virginia Commonwealth University. Over 350 people were in attendance, and they heard from several speakers including Inclusive Communities' President & CEO, Jonathan C. Zur (pictured at right). Additionally, our decals with the message "This is an Inclusive Place" were widely distributed at the event.

In addition to this public response, Inclusive Communities reached out to several of the targeted sites, including the Simon Family Jewish Community Center, the Weinstein Jewish Community Center, and the Virginia Holocaust Museum, to offer support. The organization also communicated with the school districts being picketed by the hate group, offering to facilitate workshops and dialogue for students and educators.

"We were so proud to join with like-minded individuals and organizations to clearly and firmly communicate that hate has no place in Virginia," states John G. Myers, Jr., chair of Inclusive Communities' State Board.



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VOICES of INCLUSION

SUMMER 2010

A NEWSLETTER OF THE VIRGINIA CENTER FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Inclusive Communities Celebrates 200% Increase in Programming Major Outreach Since 2005 Making a Difference

Since 2005, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities has increased the number of programs and events offered by 200%. Inclusive Communities now delivers over 90 workshops to an average of 7,500 people annually.

"Thanks to the support of donors and friends of Inclusive Communities, our organization has made tremendous strides in our outreach," notes Jonathan C. Zur, President & CEO. "We are proud to be able to share a message that is making a real difference, as evidenced both by evaluation results and continued increases in requests for our programs."

In addition to conducting significantly more programs each year, Inclusive Communities is also engaged in long-term consultation with schools and districts, ensuring more successful and sustainable outcomes for our work.



During the 2009-2010 school year, Inclusive Communities offered two Project Inclusion programs. This four-day, three-night retreat gives high school student participants the opportunity to explore issues of diversity and prejudice, gain insight into their own lives and values, and develop action plans to share their learning with their sending schools. In the words of one program graduate, "Project Inclusion helped me to understand that you should not judge someone until you know their story." Plans are already underway for up to four Project Inclusion sessions in the 2010-2011 school year.

Work on Academic Achievement Gap Expands

Partnerships Now in Place with Henrico County and Newport News Public Schools

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is building upon its work to reduce the academic achievement gap with new initiatives planned for the 2010-2011 school year.

To date, the organization has trained teams of educators in every elementary, middle, and high school in Henrico County Public Schools through that district's "Response to Intervention" initiative. Additionally, three elementary schools in the Newport News Public Schools are engaged in an intensive year-long partnership that involves retreats, professional development, ongoing assessment, and community programs.

The need for this work is great. The Daily Press reported that "Blacks account for 27 percent of stu-

dents in K-12 education in Virginia, but they account for only seven percent of all students enrolled in Calculus AB, an advanced placement math class. Of that seven percent, barely one in three passes the end-of-course test that delivers points for college."

Programming for both districts is aimed at increasing understanding of an educational framework of the "3 R's:" rigor, relevance, and relationships, with particular focus on ability status, race, and socio-economic status. During the summer of 2010, Henrico County's equity teams will participate in retreats facilitated by Inclusive Communities. And, in 2010-2011, continued work will be conducted for participating Newport News elementary schools, while a year-long partnership commences for middle schools in the district.

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Message from the President & CEO

Jonathan C. Zur

We are so fortunate in Virginia to benefit from the work of true humanitarians.

Each year, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities' Humanitarian Awards Dinners afford us the opportunity to recognize outstanding individuals and organizations for their contributions to the promotion of understanding and respect in our Commonwealth. Our honorees' stories are meaningful and memorable, and they provide wonderful lessons of how to live truly inclusive lives.

There's the example of the Holocaust survivor who, after being contacted by students in Germany who wanted to learn about his experience, committed himself to educating thousands of youth across Virginia about the importance of tolerance. And the business leader who led the development of the first fully accessible beach park and playground in the country after his son contracted ALS. There's the hospital administrator who coordinated efforts to develop a free clinic in one of the poorest areas of Virginia. The stories go on and on -- hundreds of hours spent tutoring, volunteering at houses of worship, taking on leadership roles with non-profit organizations, supporting the arts, and building relationships across lines of difference.

As the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities leads programs for schools, businesses, and community groups that foster an appreciation for diversity, we need look no further than the humanitarians we have recognized for inspiration and motivation. It is our hope that the message we deliver helps to develop the next generation of humanitarians. And, we remain grateful to our many supporters across Virginia who make this critical work possible.

Chapter News

- **Lynchburg Chapter** - Under the leadership of Robert A. Leveque of RR Donnelley, the following individuals were recognized on May 26, 2010, at the most successful Humanitarian Awards Dinner in chapter history: Dolores D. and Fred L. Fauber, Kenneth R. Garren, Hermina W. Hendricks, James H. Mundy, and James H. Taylor. The inaugural Allies Institute was conducted for Lynchburg College to kick off the spring semester. Also, the chapter's Diversity Dialogue Day for high schools and annual STEP with Links workshop for middle school students were both very successful.
- **Peninsula Chapter** - Joe S. Frank, Mayor of Newport News, chaired the chapter's 42nd annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner on February 25, 2010. That night, Golden H. Bethune-Hill, Elva Williams Hunt, Kenneth B. Murov, Nicholas E. Vlattas, Alan S. Witt, and W.M. Jordan Company were honored. Additionally, the Daily Press presented the "Citizen of the Year" award to the Gloucester 40 that night. Project Inclusion continues to be a signature chapter program, provided to high school students in both Hampton City Schools and Newport News Public Schools each year.
- **Richmond Chapter** - Planning is underway for the chapter's 48th annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner, scheduled for November 1, 2010. That event will be chaired by Charles C. Colpo of Owens & Minor. The chapter's 10th annual Prejudice Awareness Summit will take place in October 2010 for middle schools from Richmond City, as well as Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico County Public Schools. Additionally, programs are provided to several area independent schools, including Collegiate, St. Catherine's, St. Christopher's, and Steward Schools.
- **Tidewater Chapter** - Martin A. Einhorn, Corinne D. Jones, Jagdish A. Singh, Bruce L. Thompson, Edith G. White, and TowneBank were recognized at the chapter's 46th annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner on March 25, 2010. That successful event was chaired by Joel R. Rubin of Rubin Communications Group. The 2009-2010 NEXUS Interfaith Dialogue Series was conducted in partnership with the Center for the Study of Religious Freedom at Virginia Wesleyan College. The chapter also held its first Diversity Dialogue Day program, with participation from ten local high schools.

Inclusive Communities Broadens Outreach

Media Coverage Extends Across Virginia in Print, Television, and Web Outlets

Whether it is television profiles of the organization's programs, advertisements or articles about the Humanitarian Awards Dinners, or quotes about current events, Inclusive Communities is increasingly being recognized as a thought leader on issues of diversity and inclusion. In addition to stories and profiles on ABC-13, Comcast "Local Edition," Cox "Hot Ticket," the Daily Press, Inside Business, The News & Advance, the Richmond Times Dispatch, and Style Weekly, Inclusive Communities also provides regular updates about its work via Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/inclusiveva> and on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/inclusiveva>.



Diversity Dialogue Day Launched

New Program Reaches High School Students

Diversity Dialogue Day is a new program conducted by the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities. This forum brings together students from public and private high schools in a particular geographic area of Virginia at no cost to participants. Spring 2010 sessions were hosted by Lynchburg College for Lynchburg area schools and by Old Dominion University for schools in South Hampton Roads. Planning is underway for fall 2010 sessions in Richmond and on the Virginia Peninsula.

The 2010 Diversity Dialogue Day theme is "Stopping Stereotypes in Schools," with a curriculum taking participants through a process of awareness to action. At the program, students learn to recognize prejudice and intolerance and to build conflict resolution skills. Trained facilitators guide participants through small group learning activities that explore personal experiences with discrimination. They have the opportunity to work closely with peers from a wide range of ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds.

At the conclusion of Diversity Dialogue Day, participants develop strategies for increasing awareness and promoting diversity within their schools. Inclusive Communities follows up with each participating school to support the implementation of action plans created at the program.

Connections Institute Visiting Opportunities

The Harold M. Marsh, Sr. Connections Institute (formerly Metrotown) is the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities' signature Emerging Leaders Institute program. Since 1993, this peer leadership experience has prepared high school students to make decisions based on an appreciation of the vast diversity within Virginia. At the Connections Institute, student participants learn to break down barriers, deal with biased behavior, and develop action plans to reduce prejudice in their sponsoring schools.

The 2010 Institute will take place at Camp Bethel in Fincastle, Virginia. Community members are asked to RSVP by emailing contact@inclusiveva.org if you would like to attend during one of the following visiting opportunities:

- Tuesday, August 10 (8:00pm-10:00pm)
- Thursday, August 12 (10:00am-noon)
- Friday, August 13 (7:00pm-9:30pm)