

**MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY CENTER
FOR PEACEMAKING**



MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
Center for Peacemaking
Exploring the Power of Nonviolence

Founded in the 2008-09 academic year, the CENTER has engaged in a broad range of projects in its mission to “explore the power of nonviolence.” Here at Marquette, we work with faculty, students, administration and staff. Beyond the University, we are engaged with peacemaking efforts in the local, national and international communities. **Academically**, we both explore and add to the vast and growing literature on nonviolence. **Spiritually**, we seek to deepen the interior commitment that sustains the struggle for peace. As a community committed to the service of students, we look to **advance the cause of peacemaking** into the future.

ACADEMICS

This year we offered ten forums beginning with the celebration of Gandhi’s birthday in October 2008, including a series of talks by Argentinean torture survivor and anti-torture activist, **Patricia Isasa**.

The Frankel Family Foundation of Chicago granted the CENTER \$33,000 to work specifically on **Israeli-Palestinian nonviolent co-existence**. This grant allowed us to bring Gregory Khalil, a former negotiator, to campus to give his

perspective on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.



Tuesday Night Peace Group

The Szymczak Family of California donates \$25,000 annually to the CENTER to help students develop **skills for nonviolent activism**. In a special student forum, interns presented their discoveries and invited students to apply for their own Szymczak Summer Internships. One intern compared the peace processes in South Africa and Northern Ireland. In the course of the forum, she spoke of how the Szymczak Internship allowed her to spend time in both countries. Another intern spoke of her work with the Urban Ecology CENTER to develop sustainable food systems for SE Wisconsin.

To increase collaboration across the University, the CENTER created a forum for faculty from areas as diverse as Psychology, Theology, Philosophy and History, to share research from their various disciplines on nonviolent peacemaking.

Nonviolent dispute resolution is a cornerstone of the CENTER’S mission. Lee Thomas of Louisville, Kentucky granted us seed money for our dispute resolution project. In collaboration with the Law School and the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, we applied for and received a one-year grant of \$100,000 from the Milwaukee Brighter Futures Initiative to facilitate peer mediation in Milwaukee Public Schools.

The CENTER’S Steering Committee is pleased to select annually a local activist to be our **Milwaukee Community Peacemaker**. This year, we selected George Martin, national co-chair of United for Peace and Justice. His direct and ongoing interaction provided an invaluable mentoring experience for our students. In March, he spoke about his representation at the 2008 World Social Forum in Brazil – the world’s largest gathering of progressives.

The **Rynne Research Grants** facilitate the advancement of peacemaking scholarship. Drs. Sharon Chubbuck (Education) and Irfan Omar (Theology) won the 2008 – 2009 awards. In March, Dr. Omar presented his research on nonviolence in Islam. In April, Dr. Chubbuck presented her work on forgiveness interventions in schools. In the coming year, Drs. Jodi Melamed (English) and Franco Trivigno (Philosophy) will continue our research in peacemaking. Dr. Melamed’s project is concerned with global resource wars

and indigenous peacemaking while Dr. Trivigno will examine a virtue-ethics approach to violence and peacemaking.

SPIRITUALITY

We began the school year with a retreat directed by **Ken Butigan**, the national executive director of *Pace e Bene Nonviolent Services*. Together we explored the connection between the spiritual commitment to and practice of nonviolent peacemaking.



Ken Butigan and retreat participants

In late April, **Anna Brown** offered a Zen retreat renewing the personal/interior peace from which authentic activism proceeds. As a scholar, practitioner of Zen and nationally known activist, Dr. Brown was an ideal fit as facilitator for our year-ending retreat.

Between those two retreats, the CENTER hosted reflection sessions for university

and community activists returning from protests, internships or work abroad.

The **Peacemaker in Residence** program brings an internationally-known peacemaker to Marquette. This year, **Chris Ahrends** came to conduct reflection sessions on “peace within” the individual, “peace between” community members, and “peace among” various communities. Ahrends was the chaplain to Desmond Tutu during the fall of the apartheid government in South Africa.

ADVANCING THE CAUSE OF NONVIOLENCE

Since its inception, the CENTER has been working in “listening circles” as a partner with veterans in their reintegration. We now have six CENTERS in the Milwaukee area where vets can join with others in the healing journey to a future beyond the horrors of war.

In October 2009, the CENTER will co-host the annual meeting of the **Peace and Justice Studies Association**. All academics and activists are welcome. Already, Jonathan Schell and Helen Prejean have responded positively to our invitations. The CENTER’s first **academic journal** will be drawn from the papers of this conference. To begin the centennial celebration of coeducation at Marquette, the University will offer the CENTER’S guest, Sr. Prejean, an honorary degree.

In the future, we look forward to developing the ecologically centered dimension of peacemaking. We also want to invite more plastic and performing

artists into the CENTER to enrich the community and to counteract the destructiveness of violence. We’re joining the other Jesuit colleges and universities to develop a *ratio studiorum* for peace studies. And we hope to further formalize our academic commitments with a major in Justice and Peace Studies.

We look back on this year with thanksgiving and we look forward to the joy of working together with you for peace.

Yours in peace and justice,



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