

[www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org](http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org) [www.icfor.org](http://www.icfor.org) [www.forusa.org](http://www.forusa.org)

## NONVIOLENT CONFLICT INTERVENTION (NCI) WORKSHOPS

### NEW TO RIVERSIDE, CA. IN 2010

Students at University of California at Riverside (UCR), La Sierra University (LSU), and Riverside Community College (RCC) were given the opportunity to learn and practice Nonviolent Conflict Intervention skills from November 2009 through March of 2010. Three members of the Inland Communities Fellowship of Reconciliation (IC\_FOR)--Madelyn MacKay, Marilyn Sequoia and Rose Y. Monge were the facilitators. At UCR, students from Dr. June O'Connor's *Power of Nonviolence* class attended two Saturday all-day workshops. Students in Dr. Suzanne Mallery's *Childhood and Global Perspectives* class at LSU participated in a 9 week workshop series. RCC students from various classes (Speech and Interpersonal Communication), and two RCC faculty members attended an all-day workshop on March 13. LSU gave credit in their Service Learning project for participation in the NCI workshops, whereas students at UCR received credit either as a class assignment or via the new Undergraduate Research in the Community opportunity. One student even opted for Independent Study credit.



*UCR NCI Workshop Participants*



*RCC NCI Workshop Participants*

Madelyn MacKay of the Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP), Board of Canada, skillfully guided the project. She recruited two retired educators -Marilyn and Rose- to assist in training. The NP curriculum has five core components: Building Community, Communications Skills, the Work of the Nonviolent Peaceforce, Practicing Nonviolent Conflict Intervention and Next Steps. The latter component is essential for it encourages participants to apply NCI skills daily in their personal lives and community situations.

Basic communication skills are the core of the curriculum and include: Making Requests vs. Making Demands, Responsible "I" Messages, Deep Listening, Active Listening, and the Power of Body Language. The C-L-A-R-A Technique is unique to NCI: Calming and Centering Techniques, Listening, Affirming Common Ground, Responding, and Adding.

The training is interactive and includes a myriad of strategies. Third-party interventions used role playing - where a third, uninvolved party, might intervene with a two-party conflict. Interruption and Re-focusing by a third party can de-escalate conflict, for example when two roommates are arguing about their living conditions. Providing nonpartisan space, listening, organizing, finding solidarity, monitoring, witnessing, reporting, using/contacting authorities, and the like, can "create space" when groups of people need to develop their own nonviolent action. These techniques are facilitated by the Nonviolent Peace Teams and have been effective in quelling conflicts world-wide.

Nonviolent Conflict Intervention techniques are not designed for the interveners to SOLVE the problems at hand...but to use the above skills to step in, so that the participants might have an opportunity to temporarily remove themselves from the fray to calm, center, be heard, hear others, find common ground, formulate "I" messages, plan to make a request, reflect/respond, organize, find solidarity or resources, monitor, witness, report, use or contact authorities.

The introductory full-day or 9 week workshop series is designed to be followed by another full day training aimed to "Train the Facilitators." The goal of this workshop is to prepare participants to facilitate similar workshops in the community: in their own

milieu, their own social groups, and organizations. In Riverside, sixteen students took the second level of training. Many have assisted in facilitating NCI workshops and NP information sessions in the local area.

Much appreciation has been shown by and to the participating staff and students of the colleges, in particular: Dr. June O'Connor, Dr. Suzanne Mallery, Samantha Wilson, Jim Howard, Marilyn Martinez-Flores and Tara McCarthy. Additional kudos to June O'Connor, to RCC, to Rose Y. Monge and Norma Lakes, for their generous contributions of snacks and lunches to sustain the participants!

Madelyn MacKay and Marilyn Sequoia traveled to Tucson, AZ to facilitate yet another NCI all-day workshop for adult participants working in the local prisons, schools, and with No More Deaths and Samaritans, near the border of the USA and Mexico. We are grateful to Paul and Carol for hosting this NCI workshop via the Nonviolent Peaceforce.

We at IC-FOR are very grateful for the untold hours and energy that Madelyn MacKay, Marilyn Sequoia, and Rose Y. Monge donated to this worthy NCI effort to bring the concepts and practice of nonviolence to the Inland Empire.