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Conflict Resolution student panelists with Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams. From left: Babikir Babikir, Mikaela Ladwig-Williams, Jody Williams, Adam Christopher, Tammy Rubenstein.

CRI HOSTS NOBEL LAUREATE JODY WILLIAMS

On Friday morning, September 25, more than 300 people filled the Driscoll Ballroom on the University campus for an informal discussion with 1997 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Jody Williams. Ms. Williams was at the University of Denver to participate in the largest gathering of Nobel Laureates ever to occur outside of the Nobel Peace Prize Foundation in Norway, as PeaceJam celebrated its 10th Anniversary. PeaceJam is an Arvada, Colorado based organization that brings together Nobel Peace Prize winners to work with the youth of the world.

The ninety-minute session, hosted by the Conflict Resolution Institute, was moderated by Karen Feste, director of the Conflict Resolution Institute Graduate Program. The discussion was guided by questions posed by four student panelists, all M.A. candidates in Conflict Resolution - Babikir Babikir, Mikaela-Ladwig Williams, Tammy Rubenstein, and Adam Christopher.

Topics under discussion ranged from international peace-building to civil society, from causes of terrorism and revolution, to domestic violence. Ms. Williams' responses provided not only rich commentary but often, specific recommendations for individual actions. She believes strongly that grassroots movements and public campaigns are important to changing policies and bringing peace.

Williams received the Nobel Peace prize as a result of her efforts to ban the production and use of "anti-personnel" landmines. Through her work, 122 foreign governments signed a Mine Ban Treaty that covers victim assistance, mine clearing and destroying stockpiled landmines.

Babikir Babikir opened the discussion with the subject of anti-Arab sentiments that have swept the U.S. post-9/11 and then asked, "If you were Dr. Condoleezza Rice, would you be willing to head a team to negotiate with al Qaeda?" Noticeably surprised

WILLIAMS CONTINUED

by this question, Ms. Williams replied that yes, she would most definitely attempt to negotiate with the terrorist group, and went on to highlight the role that negotiation plays in the resolution of conflict and terrorism.

Mikaela Ladwig-Williams, a second-year master's student and president of the Conflict Resolution Graduate Student Association (CRGSA), asked Ms. Williams about the role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, suggesting that since its inception over sixty years ago, the UN's efforts have been plagued by politics, a lack of funding, and lack of global support, its future impact is uncertain. She wanted to know specifically what role the UN should have in our international peace-making efforts and what steps and/or changes are necessary to strengthen the organization. In response, Jody Williams, recognizing the importance and potential of the United Nations, noted that many of the UN's flaws stem from its origins as a post-World War II creation of the self-proclaimed victors. She added that as long as the members of the Security Council, especially the United States, have veto power and general control of UN decisions and forces, it will remain plagued by politics. She noted, in addition, the gross under-representation of women in the UN as symptomatic of its structural flaws.

Tammy Rubenstein, in her questions, pursued the issue of gender equality on a community level, asking Jody Williams about the mission of the recently established Nobel Woman's Initiative to improve global justice. What major problems did the group confront with various cultures and beliefs about gender and equality? The Nobel Laureate's response emphasized the importance of sensitizing

Nobel Laureate Jody Williams and CRI Graduate Program Director Karen Feste react to a question from the audience.

movements for change to local cultural conditions in order to pursue appropriate, realistic programs for improving equality for women. She believes strongly that progress is possible, but needs to be calibrated and understood within a cultural context. Projecting an optimistic outlook, she said that careful planning and appropriate action will help individual countries in the transition process.

Adam Christopher took the discussion in another direction, raising a philosophical point about transitioning societies: "The specter of revolution and terrorism alike have plagued civil societies for generations," he said, adding that the United States itself has a rich tradition of political and social upheaval, such that its national identity even idolizes the revolutionary in some ways. "With political revolt being not only a core value, but as Thomas Jefferson said, a duty of the American citizen, how does that fit in with your conception of peaceful civil society?" Ms. Williams reminded the audience that revolution need not necessitate violence. She noted that there are many examples of political revolution that have been carried out peacefully, one example being the movement led by Gandhi.

"Ms. Williams was hilarious and provocative, and I think she is an excellent person to inspire others to action," Christina Farnsworth, a first year Conflict Resolution M.A. student said. "I don't think anyone could have walked away without being challenged."

"My personal politics are different from Ms. Williams', but because she spoke the way she did, it forced me to open up a little and hear very real thoughts and extremely focused ideals," Joseph Gary, a first year Conflict Resolution M.A. student said.

During the final 30 minutes, Ms. Williams engaged audience members by addressing their questions, telling personal stories that led to her Nobel Peace Prize award, and urging audience members to take action to bring about change. When the session ended, the audience seemed energized and gave Ms. Williams a standing ovation. - *K. Feste, M. Pilz, and K. Zimmerly all contributed to this story*

Save the date
CRI's Gala is
April 28, 2007

JAMMING WITH PEACE JAM

By Cathy Peterman
& Mikaela Ladwig-Williams
(MA candidates in Conflict Resolution)

During the second week of September 2006, The University of Denver had the great honor of hosting the 10th Anniversary PeaceJam conference. This was in no way an ordinary conference however; in fact, it was quite extraordinary. The celebration brought together 3,000 youth from over 31 different countries with Nobel Peace Prize Winners. In an unprecedented event, 10 of these Nobel Peace Prize Laureates were brought together for the first time to share their stories, inspiration, hopes and dreams to an auditorium filled with the next generation of peace-builders.

The PeaceJam organization is an international education program built around some of the world's leading Nobel Peace Laureates: Archbishop Desmond Tutu, President Oscar Arias, Rigoberta Menchú Tum, The Dalai Lama, Aung San Suu Kyi, Mairead Corrigan Maguire, Betty Williams, Jody Williams, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, José Ramos-Horta, and Shirin Ebadi. These Laureates work personally with the PeaceJam program and participating youth as 'peace mentors', sharing and passing on their spirit, motivation, skills, dedication, and stories. The goal of PeaceJam is to inspire and guide a new generation of peacemakers, possibly future Nobel Peace Laureates who will work to build peace within themselves, their communities, and the world.

As aspiring peace-builders ourselves, we were fortunate enough to participate in this historic conference as mentors to the youth. During this three day celebration, the Laureates urged the youth of the world to yearn for peace and to act on that yearning. As Jody Williams said, "Think of what you want to change, what needs to change and *change* it". Or as Mairead Maguire offered, "Change starts with asking the right question." Our role as mentors was to facilitate discussion around these and the many more inspirational and difficult words spoken by the laureates and encourage the youth to think creatively and actively about how they can be influential in bringing peace to the world.

The 2006 PeaceJam participants started preparing for the conference well before gathering in Denver. Most started about a year ago with a curriculum that focuses on the personal experiences of the Peace Prize winners, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu's fight against apartheid in South Africa, President Oscar Arias' efforts to negotiate peaceful settlement of the war and conflict in Central America, and Shirin Ebadi's efforts for democracy, peace and women's rights in the Middle East, among others. The youth then used these leaders as inspiration to design and engage in service-learning activities that address their own communities' needs. During this conference, the participants were able to share these projects with the Laureate who inspired them. Watching the Nobel Peace Prize winners interact with this next generation of peace-builders and seeing the hope and excitement in everyone's eyes was truly an amazing experience.

The opportunity to work with idealistic youth who believe they can change the world was amazing. The youth were just as, if not more, inspirational than the influential leaders present at the event. Their energy, passion, and activism for bringing peace to their communities in a variety of creative avenues allowed us to renew our own enthusiasm for understanding the roots of conflicts and the different methods of managing conflicts. We were fortunate to take part in this historic event and can only hope that we touched the lives of the youth as much as they touched ours.

COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE LAUNCHES NEW NETWORK

CRI's 2006 conference took an intermediate, regional focus. Over Memorial Day weekend, a thoughtful group convened to address how universities in the West can be better utilized to promote collaborative governance and quality solutions to public disputes. The conference was entitled, "Public Conflict Resolution and Collaborative Governance in the West: University Centers as Partners and Conveners," and was co-sponsored by the Policy Consensus Initiative (PCI) based in Portland, Oregon. Attendees represented three primary groups: University-based centers that currently provide services for addressing public policy conflicts or who partner with those who do, people from western universities interested in this work, and regional private providers or government agency in-house conflict resolution specialists interested in collaborating with universities. The conference had wide regional representation, with ten other western universities attending: Arizona, Colorado State, Hawaii, New Mexico, Oregon State, Portland State, Regis, Utah, Washington State, and Wyoming. Several locally based but nationally known private firms also sent representatives, including Keystone, Meridian, CDR, and RESOLVE.

Conference participants Martin Carcasson (Center for Public Deliberation, Colorado State University), Juliana Birkhoff (RESOLVE Washington DC) and Bob Varady (Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona) discuss strategies.

Many western states share: (a) numerous disputes over environmental and other public issues, (b) lack of official institutional mechanisms for addressing these disputes productively, and (c) a network of providers that have evolved to serve this need, yet remain isolated and autonomous.

Chris Carlson (Policy Consensus Initiative) welcomes participants to the conference.

Universities are uniquely positioned to serve political and civic leaders who are seeking to address and solve today's difficult public problems, and to help make connections with the network of providers who serve this need. As neutral forums, university-based consensus building programs can take action without taking sides. As teaching institutions, they can increase the capacity of all parties to better work collaboratively to achieve their goals. They can provide education, training, tools, resources, and information about best practices for transforming conflict into cooperation. As clearinghouses, they can connect leaders and communities with providers of substantive and/or process expertise. As institutions with public credibility, they can provide both the place and the necessary expertise to assist governments, business groups, community members, and other decision makers to collaboratively improve the design and implementation of public policies.

According to PCI's report, *Finding Better Ways to Solve Public Problems: The Emerging Role of Universities as Neutral Forums for Collaborative Policymaking*, newly developing programs face a number of important design decisions. These include choosing the appropriate location and context for the program; finding active and engaged champions; determining strategies for serving both the academic and service missions of the university; and setting a strategic program direction and a method for measuring results. In addition, program developers should consider working with partners both within and outside the university to overcome resource constraints and other barriers. They should devise outreach and promotional strategies to increase awareness and use of collaborative governance practices, enhance funding opportunities, and grow the number of advocates working toward the program's success.

CRI and PCI organized this conference to explore how to further enhance capacity in western states for collaborative governance processes, to better tap into and utilize university resources for these processes, to link and establish relationships between service providers, to make relationships within states work more effectively, and to network across states, e.g., for sharing best practices and for collaborating on research. The conference began with a public panel, *"Solving Public Problems: Stories from the Field… (the Highway, the River, and the Public Square)"* featuring speakers Kirk Emerson (U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, Arizona), E. Franklin Dukes (Institute for Environmental Negotiation at the University of Virginia), and Peter Adler (The Keystone Center, Keystone, Colorado). One and a half days of sessions followed, including a variety of panels, roundtables, and open discussions. A range of topics were addressed, including: exploring university program models, building increased (internal) university capacity, building increased external capacity, bringing research to bear on public issues, and continuing to work together to address western states' needs.

Attendees were very enthusiastic about the value of the conference. Strategies were shared for addressing many ongoing challenges. Particular challenges specific to universities were also discussed, such as how to build a donor base, how to involve students in apprenticeship roles, how to walk the fine line of being involved in policy issues and yet often being a taxpayer-funded entity, and how to collaborate rather than compete with nearby entities also engaged such as private firms or government agencies.

In addition to the conference proceedings, which are currently being assembled, the conference participants decided to establish a listserv and an informal network. Washington State University professor Rob McDaniel has volunteered to host a follow up meeting of the network there in 18-24 months. - *T. P. d'Estrée*

VISITING SCHOLAR SHARES RESEARCH

By Jay Politzer, MA candidate in Conflict Resolution

On October 6, 2006, the Conflict Resolution Institute (CRI) welcomed Jayne Seminare Docherty, Ph.D. to the University of Denver for the first wine and cheese event of the new academic year. Docherty, an associate professor of conflict studies in the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University, was invited by CRI faculty to present her new study, *The Global War on Terrorism: Learning Lessons from Waco*, to a mixture of students, faculty, and local conflict resolution practitioners.

Jayne Seminare Docherty is an Associate professor of conflict studies in the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University. She consults with organizations and communities about designing dispute resolution systems that promote social change and peacebuilding and she has studied and written about confrontations between state authorities and unconventional belief groups. She is the author of *Learning Lessons from Waco: When the Parties Bring Their Gods to the Negotiation Table.* Ms. Docherty holds a Ph.D. in conflict analysis and resolution from George Mason University.

Docherty's analysis of the 1993 standoff between federal law enforcement agents and the Branch Davidians in Waco offers some compelling insights into the United States-led War on Terror. Through examination of the efforts of the federal negotiators in the 1993 debacle, Docherty suggests that a number of their strategies parallel the approach that the United States has employed in fighting the War on Terror. She maintains that in order for the United States to effectively manage its role in the conflict, it must heed the mistakes and failed strategies of the federal agents in Waco.

In both cases, Docherty asserts that disaster transpired because apocalyptic and militantly religious beliefs, such as those held by the Branch Davidians and Islamo-Fascist militants, came into contact with the United States' unshakable perception of secular legitimacy. In order to prevent such a collapse of negotiations, Docherty stresses that the United States must recognize the inherent differences between its belief system and that of its opponents in the War on Terror. She posits that a need has arisen for "a symmetrical anthropology that treats the foundational narratives of religious and secular actors as functionally worldmaking stories." All opposing narratives, beliefs, and customs are valid in negotiations, and it would behoove the United States to adopt such a strategy that gives credence to the fundamental disparity between its traditional values and those of its opponents. Then, and only then, can the United States be prepared, when needed, to conduct effective and meaningful negotiations with those it perceives as extreme.

CRI STUDENTS LEARN VALUABLE SKILLS FROM INTERNSHIPS

Why Require Internships?

Research studies have shown that practical experience improves chances for landing a job. Hence the national trend in higher education, particularly for post-graduate professional degree programs, to blend academic instruction with short-term career related work through a required internship, is hardly surprising. At the Conflict Resolution Institute, all M.A. candidates must participate in our internship program, which is designed to expose students to experiential training to broaden their understanding of conflict resolution practice that may be impossible to acquire through regular academic assignments—the normal reading, writing, research and discussion occurring in the university seminar environment. An internship may sensitize a student to the importance of conflict resolution work in the real world, the multiple modes of implementing it in the market place, and the varied settings where it applies. It may also help an apprentice understand how practitioners of conflict resolution operate within different theoretical frameworks and under hidden assumptions about human behavior.

Our students have been employed as interns in government, private industry, and non-profit organizations within the Denver metro area, throughout Colorado, across the United States, and abroad. Collectively, their tasks have required management related activity, planning-research work, mediation observation and participation, counseling, and classroom teaching. These different roles match perfectly the multiple set of job categories where our conflict resolution is needed and where our graduate seek employment to enter the professional work force.
– K. Feste

United States Dept. of Justice - Community Relations Service

By Donna A. Calabrese, MA Conflict Resolution 2005

While attending CRI at the University of Denver, I experienced a remarkable internship with the United States Department of Justice- Community Relations Service (USDOJ-CRS), Rocky Mountain Regional Office (Region VIII). This Regional CRS office operates out of Denver, Colorado, and covers the six states of Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana. The internship was a natural fit with my background, prior experiences, and my pursuance of a Masters degree in Conflict Resolution.

In this arm of USDOJ, CRS is known as the Department's "peacemaker" for community conflicts and tensions arising from differences of race, color, and national origin (www.usdoj.gov/crs). CRS was created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It is the only Federal agency dedicated to assist State and local units of government, private and public organizations, and community groups with preventing and resolving racial and ethnic tensions, incidents, and civil disorders, and in restoring racial stability and harmony. CRS facilitates the development of viable, mutual understandings and agreements as alternatives to coercion, violence, or litigation.

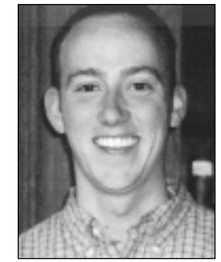
After receiving official notification of my acceptance into the CRS internship program, I was highly energized about the knowledge, training/mentoring, and exposures that I was about to receive — and I was not disappointed. After an extensive background check, my initial orientation at CRS served to familiarize myself with their protocols, the substance and significance of confidentiality in this work, the mediation techniques used, and the standard operating procedures within the organization. Following orientation, my experience included: serving as a co-mediator, providing community dialogue facilitation, assisting in the training of persons who would act as self-marshals for marches and parades, and being present at protest rallies. In addition, I also helped with administrative duties and provided constructive input into the planning for the annual work plan projects at CRS. In the end, I found it to be a well-rounded and highly-educational internship.

The USDOJ-Community Relations Service was, in my opinion, an ideal internship-organizational match for me that fit in accordance to my future goals and ambitions in conflict resolution and in the regional, national, and the international realms. The overall experience gave me deeper insights into the realities and the possibilities that lie out there in conflict resolution and to a deeper comprehension of the other aspects of my coursework at DU. The experience also opened doors for me and led me to the position of Special Assistant to the National Director at Headquarters in Washington, DC.

Ultimately, the CRS internship led me to have a personal and professionally stronger determination, to seek resolution and to live with a vision and a purpose in the overall scheme of things, and to have a deeper comprehension of Conflict Resolution.

Jefferson County Mediation Services and Mediation USA

By Andy Owsiak, MA Conflict Resolution 2005



I had the unique experience of performing internship responsibilities for two distinct organizations: Jefferson County Mediation Services (JCMS) and Mediation, USA. JCMS provides mediation services to the residents of Jefferson County, Colorado. It also serves as a resource for county offices that encounter cases amenable to mediation. These offices regularly refer cases to JCMS involving barking dogs, neighbor relations, code enforcement, and child custody/parenting arrangements.

Additionally, JCMS makes a team of mediators available to small claims court on each evening that the court is in session. In this triage-type setting, mediators typically experience cases involving contract disputes, employer/employee relations, and property damage.

Mediation, USA, on the other hand, is a private company focused on providing mediation services primarily to federal agencies. As a private entity, the company can develop expertise in certain case types by narrowing its focus and concentrating its efforts on these cases. The president of Mediation, USA, conducts the majority of mediation sessions herself, and also customizes training programs in communication, mediation, and conflict resolution for various audiences. The responsibilities of my internship experience were similar across both of these distinct organizations. In particular, I assisted both offices in tracking case data. The variables involved interpretations of success in mediation (e.g., was a memorandum of understanding completed and signed by the parties), the time invested by the organization (e.g., how many mediators worked on the case and their respective time commitments), or logistics (e.g., who was involved). In the case of JCMS, this work afforded opportunities to observe mediation sessions, which eventually transitioned into a position as a volunteer mediator. Mediation, USA, provided similar experiences. After a few months of tracking case data, I was invited to serve as a co-mediator for a federal employment discrimination case and eventually assisted in the creation and design of new mediation training materials.

Although these experiences taught me many things, there are three main lessons that hold particular value. First, there is no universal manner for tracking and analyzing cases. Different organizations capture different variables when reviewing cases, which are based on the value structure of that organization. A public entity might track signed agreements, since it must continually fight for a budget. Or two entities may track the same variable, but define it differently. Thus, difficulty arises when mediation is studied as a field, as statistics are not always comparable across organizations. This illustrates the ongoing discussion in conflict resolution literature regarding what constitutes "success" in mediation (among other topics). [See article in Dec 2005 CRI Newsletter]

Second, different situations require different approaches. This may appear to be a simplistic conclusion to reach, but it is hard to hear such an assertion in a classroom and know what it means. Mediation texts will often iterate that each case is unique, requiring the mediator to navigate the unknown and employ a variety of skills and techniques to make the process work to its fullest potential. Until one is placed in such situations, however, it is impossible to understand what choices will need to be made and when the opportune moment is in which to make them. Only participating in the mediation process can teach a mediator how to adapt the process to fit the contextual variables at hand.

Finally, conflict resolution texts and courses tend to repeatedly answer student questions with one phrase: "it depends." In the classroom, this can cause frustration. But in practice, there really is no *one* answer to any process question related to mediation. The context drives the process. When to intervene to reestablish behavioral guidelines, how to handle difficult people, when and how to caucus, and what questions to ask all depend on the parties involved and their disposition at any given moment. In short, it really does just "depend," and only getting beyond the classroom can demonstrate what this truly means.

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CRI PROFESSOR SPOTLIGHT: DR. JOHN JONES

CRI Research Professor
John "Jack" Jones

Dr. John "Jack" Jones spent 18 years at the University of Denver's Graduate School of Social Work first as Dean, then Professor. Upon his retirement in 2004, he joined the Conflict Resolution Institute as Research Professor. Dr. Jones can be reached at jojones@du.edu.

How did you become involved with the Conflict Resolution Institute at the University of Denver?

Somewhat accidentally, actually. Years ago, I was invited to participate in an oral exam for one of the master's students in the Conflict Resolution Program and was very impressed with the caliber of students in the program. That got me started. I asked for a spot in the program, and in time became Research Professor.

As a Research Professor, what particular ideas or events attracted your attention in the conflict resolution field?

As a Research Professor, what struck me about the field of conflict resolution was its apparent neglect of developments in human security. True, the role of conflict resolution in international affairs was widely discussed, but human security at the cutting edge of global development was receiving less attention in our discipline. I felt this was a missed opportunity.

Traditionally, the notion of human security was based on "state security" – a concept that dates back to the 17th century when peace meant defending national borders militarily. Even today, you'll find governments primarily thinking of security as defending borders, accumulating arms, etc. In point of fact, if you're looking at human security, you should be concerned with people and communities.

Human security has two aspects: first, *provision* – combating the fear of want, of poverty through the provision of livelihood and the social services essential for peace; and secondly, *protection* – combating the fear of violence and the denial of human rights (embodied in the UN Charter). Sometimes protection means a political approach – keeping combatants apart. Sometimes it means insisting governments protect their minorities from an oppressive majority and sometimes it means protecting citizens from their own governments. An example of failure in both provision and protection is Darfur in Sudan where you have genocide occurring.

Insecurity is very often the direct result of poverty. If you look at Africa, for example, there is currently a great deal of violence arising from poverty – through lack of natural resources, lack of access to education, and lack of access to trade, all of which can give rise to violence.

Can you tell us a little about your recent work editing a journal for the UN?

The field of conflict resolution has always given attention to international affairs, but not specifically to human security. I set about trying to link CRI with the United Nations, specifically with the United Nations Center for Regional Development (UNCRD), through my association with both organizations. Toward that goal, I recently had an opportunity to edit a UN journal, *Regional Development Dialogue* (RDD), a special issue devoted to human security and conflict resolution. The journal was a collaborative effort between the journal's publisher, UNCRD in Nagoya, Japan, and our Institute. It included among its papers articles by CRI faculty. CRI Graduate Program Director Karen Feste contributed a paper on the Israeli-Palestinian dispute with its conflict resolution strategies and peace prospects. Another paper by CRI Core Faculty member Denise Pearson deals with interethnic conflict in Trinidad and Tobago and its post-colonial challenges and opportunities.

What would you say are the greatest opportunities for conflict resolution students entering the profession today? Do you have any advice for our students?

Conflict Resolution expertise is increasingly recognized as a critical skill. Our students find jobs when they graduate. It takes a little time and a little patience to get the exact job you're looking for – but conflict resolution jobs do exist and they exist in the international arena as well, both with the UN and also with NGOs that work abroad.

Do you think our students are entering the profession at a good time, when conflict resolution concepts are more widely accepted and acknowledged?

I do think this is a good time to be entering the profession. Decision makers at the international level now realize that we need conflict resolution practitioners. That is certainly true in Africa and South America. UNCRD, among other agencies, now stresses this – a huge step forward.

My advice to students wanting to work in international conflict resolution is to scout out the field (including the broader area of social development), be patient, take advantage of opportunities that present themselves, and give themselves time to find that perfect job.

CRI BEGINS PROJECT WITH TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY

Map of the Republic of Georgia

CRI has received funding for a three year project with the Department of Social Psychology at Tbilisi State University (TSU), Republic of Georgia, to develop a Georgian university-based clinic as a training center and curricular model that will support a growing cadre of mediation and conflict resolution practitioners in the South Caucasus region. The project is funded through the United States Agency for International Development (U.S.AID) New IDEAS Partnership Program, and the Higher Education for Development (HED) office. Through intensive training, classroom seminars, and mediation observation and practice, students in this mediation clinic will learn to mediate various civil and community disputes. Besides training TSU's Conflict Resolution M.A. students, the clinic will provide free and confidential mediation services to the general public as well as staff, students and faculty at the University. Specialized mediation services will also be provided to Georgia's reforming business, legal, and educational sectors.

The Republic of Georgia is now well into the second decade of transition from communist rule to free-market democracy. As with many countries in the surrounding region, monumental social, political, and economic changes have produced both significant advances and significant challenges. Georgians have gone through civil war, the accumulation of great wealth in the hands of a few, and the expansion of crippling poverty. Despite significant changes, the transition to the new system remains incomplete. Communities and institutions are seeking ways to manage tensions during these times of transition, as reforms at all levels are instituted.
Georgia's mix of rapid reform, long-standing ethnic tensions, and economic challenges make it a setting for simmering hostilities. Changes in standard operating procedures, business norms, educational guidelines, and administrative and legal practices add to the uncertainty produced by uncertain economic conditions. Under such circumstances, conflicts are inevitable, yet the post-Soviet vacuum in social capacity for resolving conflicts has been slow to fill with resurrected Georgian customary practices.

Nowhere is the need for conflict management skills more critical than in communities of internally displaced persons. (IDPs) Georgia itself is ethnically diverse, and as Georgia broke away from the crumbling Soviet Union, different ethnic regions within Georgia themselves made claims for autonomy. Georgia now has several areas recognized as conflict regions including: Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Adjaria, and Javakheti Province. Conflict in these regions has resulted in massive internal displacement of people. Georgia now has over 280,000 internally displaced persons as a result of ethno-political conflicts that occurred during 1991-1993.

Mediation is a process used in many cultures where an impartial party assists other parties in resolving their own disputes, building constructive working relationships, and designing systems for managing future conflicts in organizations and communities. It complements traditional judicial processes that allow for process control by participants and results in accountability for and investment in solutions. For many types of disputes, it is more effective and appropriate than a court process. Historically in Georgia as well as in the whole South Caucasus region, people had strong traditional mechanisms of conflict management through mediation, but these traditional mechanisms no longer operate and the experience of Georgian mediation has been lost.

While international governmental and nongovernmental entities have attempted to bring outside mediation and conflict resolution expertise to the region, local expertise in conflict resolution with the insight of insiders to the conflicts has only recently begun to be established. TSU, with its newly established degree in conflict resolution, has taken an important first step in preparing a cadre of specialists. What this project plans to create is hands-on training, supervised by experienced mediators, as well as a logical institution for providing mediation services. The project will begin to address existing tensions by increasing the capacity of both citizens and specialists to manage conflicts more effectively with hopes that insider insight will help to address both the enduring and the future conflicts of the region, and provide for peace, security and development for its people.
– T. P. d'Estrée

PLAN ON ATTENDING CRI'S UPCOMING CONFERENCE

Peacebuilding and Trauma Recovery:
Integrated Strategies in Post-War Reconstruction

University of Denver, February 22-24, 2007

The conference will examine the important interface between peacebuilding and trauma recovery during post-war reconstruction. Conference participants will explore, through panel discussion, topic-specific workshops and informal discussion, the research and practical applications of trauma recovery processes within the larger peacebuilding process. Peacebuilding theorists and practitioners, psychologists, cultural anthropologists, indigenous healers, and others engaged in the work of transitional justice, post-conflict healing, and peacebuilding are invited to participate in this important conference.

Panel themes will include: The nature of collective vs. individual trauma, the importance of cultural variables, justice and healing, TRC's and their recommendations, the role of spirituality, integrating peacebuilding and trauma recovery, guidelines for informed field practice.

For further information, including the Call for Papers, please visit
www.du.edu/con-res/center/February2007Conference.htm.

Co-sponsored by the Conflict Resolution Institute and the Graduate School of Professional Psychology's International Disaster Psychology Program at the University of Denver, and the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University

GUEST COLUMN

INTERFAITH ACTIVITY IN SALT LAKE CITY

By Linda Nobis

Linda Nobis teaches Communication courses for Salt Lake Community College and Online for the University of Denver's University College.

I recently moved from Colorado to Salt Lake City, Utah. My curiosity as a non-Mormon resident in a city where this religion dominates life and culture led me to research both historical and current accounts of how the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS, or commonly, Mormons), interacts with other faiths.

Mormons and non-Mormons have been finding ways to coexist in Utah since the 1800s. In the 19th century, Utah served as a stopover for settlers and prospectors on their way to California. In 1847 the Mormons arrived as permanent settlers in the Wasatch Valley. Immediately, there arose tension between faiths. Brigham Young initially refused to allow non-Mormon services to be held in any public facility. However, as time passed and relationships were formed, this policy was relaxed. In 1899 the Catholic Church broke ground for a major cathedral to rival the Mormon temple, situated on the same street in Salt Lake City. Presbyterians soon laid the cornerstone for their flagship church in 1903, one block from the Catholic Church.

The Transcontinental Railroad construction (completed in 1869 at Promontory Point, Utah) also meant an influx of workers who brought other faiths into the community. As the groups interacted and moved towards the goal of Statehood, it became apparent that a way to coexist would have to be found. Federal troops who were sent to oversee the transition from Territory to Statehood in 1890 brought even more diverse representation of ethnicity, culture, and religion into the fledgling state.

Much more recently, the 2002 Winter Olympics positively impacted interfaith activities. The Olympic charter mandates that the host city provide venues for worship and spiritual guidance for the world's athletes. This requirement resulted in the development of the Interfaith Roundtable, begun in 1998, which was created to address how best to meet the needs of the athletes. This body represented the LDS church, Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Hindus, and Muslims. Relationships that ensued from this planning committee continued beyond the Olympics. The Roundtable meets regularly today, and includes a lunchtime forum for building relationships and understanding. The mayor's office also has created a group called "Bridging the Religious Divide". The first phase of this program attracted six hundred people.

The interfaith dialogue that began with the arrival of miners, settlers, and soldiers has become an infrastructure that can possibly address how to move forward as a modern community of all faiths.

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

CRGSA & SCORE—Uniting Together

By Mikaela Ladwig-Williams, CRGSA President

During the Fall quarter, *unity* proved to be the central theme guiding the Conflict Resolution Graduate Students Association (CRGSA) and the Society for Conflict Resolution (SCORE). The SCORE board and the CRGSA board decided to unify their efforts in the hope of being able to better reach the student population, as well as community members.

Our first joint initiative focused on the new student orientation in September. While both organizations presented information at the faculty-led new student orientation, SCORE and CRGSA wanted to do more to connect with the new conflict resolution class. We developed an additional student-led orientation session to open the lines of communication between incoming students and current students, to share our experiences, lessons learned, and recommendations in the hope of paving the road for a smooth transition and their future success in the program. The orientation was a great success and will become an official part of new student orientation activities.

Following the success of our first joint SCORE-CRGSA venture, officers of the two organizations were motivated to make this union official and long-lasting. Our next initiative became the merger of the SCORE and CRGSA Boards. Considering the small size of the Conflict Resolution student body and the speed at which students were finishing the program, it was evident that forming two student Boards each to serve only a year term was unrealistic. For this reason, as well as to increase student unity within the program, SCORE and CRGSA reformed the organizations' constitutions to make CRGSA the central Conflict Resolution student organization from within which SCORE (in name only) would continue to serve student and community members. This merger passed with a unanimous vote at our open student meeting in October and will officially be enacted with the election of the new 2007 CRGSA board.

During the Fall quarter, our central event focused on International Conflict Resolution Day—October 19th, 2006. This day of recognition and celebration of the conflict resolution field was established by the Association for Conflict Resolution. Our goal was to bring together the Conflict Resolution Institute students, the University of Denver community, and the general public to talk about conflict resolution and its vast and significant role both locally and internationally. Working with several prominent conflict resolution practitioners from the Denver area, creating the 2006 Colorado International Conflict Resolution Day Committee, CRGSA-SCORE coordinated a dynamic panel discussion. The topic for this discussion was *"The Reality of Conflict: When Does Push Come to Shove"*, addressing the complex and diverse nature of conflict and conflict resolution in personal, private, and international arenas. The panelists consisted of highly respected and experienced practitioners all connected to the Conflict Resolution Institute: Melodye Feldman—Executive Director of Seeking Common Ground, Patricia Whitehouse—KUSA/KTVD Human Resources Manager and University of Denver Conflict Resolution graduate, Grace Sage—US Department of Justice Conciliation Specialist, and Akbarali Thobhani—Metro State African and Middle Eastern Studies Professor. Our celebration served to be an intellectual and insightful discussion, a successful event we look forward to repeating next year.

Panelists for CRGSA's International Conflict Resolution Day event: (from left) Patricia Whitehouse, Melodye Feldman, Grace Sage, Maureen Coghlan, and Akbarali Thobhani.

In our final days as SCORE and CRGSA Board members, before we regretfully yet enthusiastically pass on the torch, we will be hosting the Fall end of the quarter social. Finally, in our last unifying effort, CRGSA and SCORE have had Conflict Resolution tee shirts made for all current students, a gift from us to the CRI student body. It is our hope that these shirts will represent our shared passion and future work in conflict resolution, as well as the importance of working together and maintaining a sense of humor.

Congratulations to the new 2007 CRGSA Executive Council members. President: Luke Yoder, Vice President: Joseph Gary, Treasurer: Jay Politzer, Secretary: Katy Harshbarger, Activities Coordinators: Shanna Tabatcher and Mila Pilz.