

CONFLICT RESOLUTION INSTITUTE  
NEWSLETTER

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REFLECTIONS ON HEALING AND RESPONSIBILITY  
*Symposium on Sand Creek*

**Panel 3 - Public Recognition and Acknowledgement - Panel chair Dr. Nancy Wadsworth, Ernest House, Lt. Governor's Office, Joe Big Medicine, Southern Cheyenne, Iliff President Tom Wolf, Methodist Bishop Elaine Stanovsky, DU Chancellor Rebecca Chopp**

On May 22, 2015, the Conflict Resolution Institute partnered with DU's Center on Rights Development (CORD) and John Evans Committee to host the *Symposium on Sand Creek Massacre: Acknowledgement and Repair*. The day-long symposium hosted notable influential community leaders such as Methodist Bishop Elaine Stanovsky, Governor's representative Ernest House, and University of Denver Chancellor Rebecca Chopp as well as descendants from the Northern and Southern Arapahoe and Northern and Southern Cheyenne tribes. They discussed the findings from the DU John Evans Study Committee Report on the Sand Creek Massacre, as well as public recognition and acknowledgement, land ownership and allocation of resources, and future possibilities for repair and healing with the Native American community.

The Sand Creek Massacre occurred on the morning of November 29, 1864 l.c. Near Eads, Colorado when U.S. Army Colonel John Chivington led a 700-man battalion into the area of Sand Creek and destroyed peaceful Arapahoe and Cheyenne villages, leaving over 100 Native Americans killed and mutilated, many of whom were women and children. The villages had been given protection from a peace parley signed in September of 1864. However, at the time, Colorado territory Governor John Evans did nothing to stop Chivington's plans for the attack on the villages. Evans was also the territorial superintendent of Indian Affairs and the founder of Northwestern University and University of Denver. The site is now a National Historic site ([www.nps.gov/sand](http://www.nps.gov/sand)).

The all-day Symposium included four panels. In the opening panel, authors of the DU John Evans Study reported on the motivations, processes, findings, and hopes for their landmark report as an insti-

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# SYMPOSIUM ON SAND CREEK MASSACRE

tutional acknowledgement of the interconnected, yet neglected history of the Sand Creek Massacre. The John Evans Study committee included DU faculty, university and state historians, DU native students and faculty, and representatives from Arapahoe and Cheyenne tribes. Report writing was a collaborative and interdisciplinary effort of a subset of faculty and researchers from this larger committee. Research was done in tandem with a similarly constituted committee at Northwestern University, another institution that John Evans founded, though discrepancies in conclusions about the universities' founder's involvement are found in the two subsequent reports. The DU committee found that John Evans had a unique and integral role in encouraging the violence at Sand Creek. Through actions towards healing and reconciliation, this recognition confronts the direct and indirect benefits the university has gained from the displacement of indigenous communities. The panel included Dr. David Halaas, Dr. Nancy Wadsworth, Dr. Richard Clemmer-Smith, Dr. Alan Gilbert, Dr. Billy J. Stratton and Dr. Steven Fisher, with Dr. Dean Saitta as chair of the panel. (The report is available at <https://portfolio.du.edu/evcomm>.)

The second panel, "Possibilities of Repair: Truth Commissions, Reparations and Cultural Restoration," focused on defining repair and the possibilities of what could it look like. David Akerson of DU's Sturm College of Law chaired the panel which consisted of Henry Little Bird from the Southern Arapahoe tribe, Professor George "Tink" Tinker from the Illif School of Theology, Dr. Billy J. Stratton, professor of English at DU, and Andrew Reid, also from Sturm College of Law. The panel opened up with the question of what does 'repair' mean in this con-

text. Henry Little Bird shared that the Sand Creek Massacre is still affecting people today and that healing and forgiveness are two separate elements. He described current Colorado Governor Hickenlooper's formal apology in December 2014 as a "gift," and he has been open towards forgiveness. However, he noted that healing is not forgiveness, and healing is what is needed. The rest of the panel reflected on Henry Little Bird's words and also proposed that we need to take substantive steps in providing tangible resources to the communities that were ruined as a result of actions like the Sand Creek Massacre. The panel pointed out that the white population of Colorado was able to thrive as a result of the resources and land taken from the Native American tribes. Reid reminded the audience that we should take responsibility for helping these communities since we economically and socially thrived on their oppression.

The third panel of the day, "Public Recognition and Acknowledgement," included leaders of community institutions such as DU Chancellor Chopp, Methodist Bishop Elaine Stanovsky, Ernest House of the Lt. Governor's Office and Illiff School of Theology President Tom Wolfe. The panel also included two descendants of victims of the Sand Creek Massacre, Gail Ridgely of the Northern Arapahoe tribe and Joe Big Medicine of the Southern Cheyenne tribe. Panel members discussed what it means for institutions to grapple with their histories, what measures have been or are being taken, and how this affects a process of healing. Whether it is a university, a church, or a state, some leaders act regressively when the reputation of their institution is threatened. However, the only way to protect an institution is to embody the values it stands for and face its issues

and history square on. The process of righting these wrongs must be sincere, authentic, and collaborative or it risks doing more harm than previous inaction. With still more histories to be told and work to be done, the institutions holding responsibility for Sand Creek have committed to a journey of remembering and action to improve the narrative and legacies for future generations.

The final panel of the day, "Learning and Healing: Continuing the Conversations," brought together three Cheyenne and Arapahoe descendants, Henry Little Bird, Gail Ridgely, and Joe Big Medicine, with three John Evans descendants, Anne Hayden, Tom Hayden, and Laurel Hayden, to discuss their experiences of meeting with one another and forming meaningful relationships that do not forget the massacre but respect and engage the past between their families. Anne Hayden opened the discussion by saying it is only appropriate to ask permission of the Arapahoe and Cheyenne descendants for her family to be on this land and to have this discussion. While a symbolic act, Anne's request helped set the tone of the panel discussion for the future conversation of responsibility by the American people for their past actions. Laurel Hayden noted that she feels a level of internal responsibility as a John Evans descendant. She asserted that instead of feelings of guilt, we should all feel a level of responsibility when looking at solving this conflict and healing from the trauma.

Panels were well-attended on a rainy day. Sarah Klinikowski, a first year Conflict Resolution graduate student, said she learned that "healing needs to be centered on, and decided by indigenous people" and that a "focus on healing is very important." Laurel Hayden, a second year International

## SAND CREEK (CONTINUED)

Human Right Development graduate student, echoed similar sentiments. She said, "Collaboration is necessary and a part of healing." As a John Evans descendant, Hayden also was a crucial member in organizing the symposium. When asked why she wanted to help organize this event she offered that once meeting the Cheyenne and Arapahoe descendants you "sit in the same room [with the native descendants] it really hits home." She was glad that this topic is finally being brought up and discussed.

Others felt the symposium was only a small step in the right direction and left the event hoping for more action. Joe Big Medicine, a descendant of the Southern Cheyenne victims of the massacre noted that this symposium was a "positive step." However, he also stated that he wants to see justice, reparations and more action on behalf of indigenous people by the U.S. Federal government.

Many possible steps toward healing

and repair exist. Since the release of the DU John Evans Study Report, more conversations about the Sand Creek Massacre are being held. The recent formal apology by Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper on December 3, 2014 represents an important acknowledgement by a sitting governor. On the third panel, House described the process leading to the apology, including the governor's consultation with all living former Colorado governors. This apology can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJ0sffKFSBE>.

Many feel such action should be done on the federal level. Awareness of the atrocity should continue to spread throughout the state and country as two more Sand Creek reports are completed by the Methodist Church and Northwestern University (<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/committees/john-evans-study/>), which was also founded by John Evans. As awareness grows, more dialogue with local tribes should be utilized as the participants in this symposium note that involving native

people in deciding themselves what is best would create a healthy relationship between the communities help to heal from this nightmare.

Overall the Symposium was a success as many people who attended the event came out either more informed on the massacre and the issues it created for today or really engaged in finding out next steps to take in this process. The symposium ultimately left people with the idea that as the American people, we should take responsibility for our ancestral past and also work towards healing relationships between indigenous people and communities within the dominant culture.

Panel videos can be viewed at the Conflict Resolution Institute website: (<http://www.du.edu/conflictresolution/center-conflict-engagement/conferences/cr-sand-creek-symposium.html>)



**Evans Committee Study Report  
Webpage:**  
<https://portfolio.du.edu/evcomm/>

### COLORADO GOVERNOR HICKENLOOPER'S APOLOGY ON DECEMBER 3, 2014

"Today we gather here to formally acknowledge what happened, the massacre at Sand Creek. We should not be afraid to criticize and condemn that which is inexcusable, so I am here to offer something that has been too long in coming, and on behalf of the State of Colorado, I want to apologize... To the runners, to the tribal leaders and to all the indigenous people - and the proud and painful legacy that you all represent -- on behalf of the good, peaceful, loving people of Colorado, I want to say I am sorry for the atrocities of our government and its agents that were visited upon your ancestors. Today, as these runners complete their 16th Annual Sand Creek Spiritual Healing Run, I want to assure you that we will not run from its history, and that we will always work for peace and healing, and we will make sure that this history continues to be told."



## Bringing Restorative Justice Practices to Student Services

Restorative justice proponents have long advocated for restoring relationships between parties in conflict. At the University of Denver, CRI graduate Maggie Lea (MA'14) works diligently to employ these strategies among students in the Office of Student Life - Student Conduct. Traditional processes of third-party adjudication and arbitration are still used as well, but such processes often limit student understanding of the impact of their actions and inhibits their desire to change their behavior. In these situations, students often feel that the process is out of their control, and does not recognize their specific needs or circumstances. Therefore, despite their best intentions, the current case resolution processes tend to encourage a reactive state-of-mind, as opposed to a reflective one, and consequently squash the learning opportunity or "teachable moment."



At DU, the Student Conduct office seeks to emphasize reflection among these students by offering them the opportunity to participate in Restorative Justice Conferences (RJC's). These RJC's differ from traditional, sanctions-focused approaches. RJC's provide a facilitated dialogue process for students, impacted parties, and community members (all referred to as "stakeholders") to collectively investigate underlying issues related to the incident. Noting that conduct violations do not happen in isolation, Maggie describes this process as "one that focuses less on the act of 'rule-breaking' and centers the conversation around how the student's behavior impacted the community."

Drawing from restorative justice models employed by Skidmore College, University of San Diego, University of Colorado, Stanford, and Colorado State University, DU's RJC program evolved the vision of earlier CRI graduates Adam Brown (MA '10), Brittany Eskridge (MA '11), and Jonathan Howard (MA '10) for campus-wide Conflict Resolution Services. Adam's idea of piloting RJC's within undergraduate housing shifted to implementation within the Student Conduct office, and Maggie's 2012 internship in this department helped move the program from an idea to a reality.

When a case comes before Student Conduct, it is usually a result of an Incident Report filed by DU Campus Safety, faculty, staff, students, or other campus community members. From that point, there are three methods for addressing the reported student misconduct. The first traditional option involves a Conduct Administrator adjudicating the case through a one-on-one meeting with the student,

whereby that administrator makes a determination about the student's responsibility and assigns typical learning "outcomes" based on Honor Code violations for which the student has been found responsible. The second traditional option employs a Conduct Review Board (CRB), which consists of a panel of individuals (a student, a faculty member, and a staff member). Within this hearing format, the student engages in a discussion about the incident with the CRB, but is absent while the board deliberates and makes a decision about the student's responsibility and appropriate outcomes.

The third method is the newest on the menu of options for case resolution – the RJC. During the initial meeting with a Conduct Administrator, if the student takes active accountability for his actions and expresses some sign of remorse or sincere apology, the student's case may be referred to an RJC. What distinguishes the RJC case resolution process from the other two options is that the RJC is a completely voluntary process, and it places the student in the driver's seat. Instead of relying upon a third-party to hear and decide upon the case, the student is empowered to actively be accountable for her actions, propose ways in which she can address the impact of her actions, and participate in the decision-making process about her outcomes.

Similar to other restorative justice processes, Maggie describes the RJC as a one that requires preparation for all parties involved, including those directly impacted by the student's actions. Preparation for each individual RJC focuses on brainstorming and acknowledging which individuals were impacted in the situation and who should be invited to attend. The conferences typically involve between six and eight "stakeholders," as well as two trained facilitators. These participants spend roughly half of the two-hour RJC conference focusing on exposition of the situation and identifying the direct – and indirect – impact caused by the student's behavior. The latter part of the RJC is dedicated to collaborative brainstorming of appropriate outcomes for the student. Maggie stresses that these outcomes emphasize the student's ability to address the impact, the rebuilding of community trust, and creation of positive learning opportunities for the student in a holistic manner that is typically lost in the traditional forms of addressing student misconduct.

The DU community values this updated approach to conduct violations. DU Campus Safety fully supports the program, and Sergeant James Johnston, Community Partnerships and Training Coordinator, often frequents RJC's as an impacted party representative or community member. Chase Bennington, President of Kappa Sigma Fraternity, described the program as "the single most engaging experience [he's] had as an undergraduate at DU." In addition to anecdotal evidence touting the importance of the RJC process, recidivism data also illustrates initial success of the program. In fact, of the 33 total RJC's that have been completed to date,

## SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

the numbers show a recidivism (i.e., repeat offenses) rate of only 6%, which is in stark contrast to the 33% recidivism rate of traditional cases. This suggests that students learn to change their behavior better through RJC's than through the traditional case resolution processes.

Its initial success supports the idea that more should be done to expand and promote the program across DU. Maggie foresees natural expansion of the restorative justice philosophy into DU's extensive Graduate Studies departments as well as University College. In addition to Campus Safety, CRI and Korbel Professor Alan Gilbert supports the initiative and suggested a joint certificate program specifically geared towards restorative justice between the Korbel School and Morgridge College of Education. Maggie sees a natural fit for internships for CRI students, as they would be able to achieve direct facilitation experience as well as

hands-on program evaluation skills right here on campus.

Despite the success of RJC's at DU, the program still faces financial hurdles. DU's Undergraduate Student Government (USG) was able to help with a one-time grant. Student Conduct's RJC program can help increase focus on campus inclusive excellence, repair relationships harmed in conduct violations, and provide support in preparing students to be better prepared to face the challenges of productive citizenship. As Buie Seawell in the Department of Business Ethics and Legal Studies has expressed, "Restorative Justice is the ingredient that is needed in the DU system."

-- Jonathan McAtee, MA '15

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

### **Kevin Malone (MA '13):** *Coordinating Foreclosure Mediation at Chicago's Resolution Systems Institute*

Conflict Resolution Institute Alumnus Kevin Malone (MA '13) joined Resolution Systems Institute (RSI), a court alternative dispute resolution institute based in Chicago, in November 2013. Malone worked to create and now administers the Mandatory Foreclosure Mediation program, which launched on January 1, 2014.

Currently Malone is working on foreclosure cases in the Illinois 16th Judicial district. Once a foreclosure case has been filed, it enters RSI's mediation database. From there, it goes through mediation to avoid going to court. Malone helped develop many of the forms and standards under which the program operates.

Malone originally learned about the conflict resolution field as a Peace Corps volunteer serving in Lesotho. Malone's project proposals often received conflicting levels of approval from local chiefs and parliament, and he learned that for mediation to work "you must have buy-in" from everyone. Malone also served on the Volunteer

Action Council where he worked to assist other volunteers with problems they encountered. His Peace Corps experience ultimately inspired him to enter the conflict resolution field.

In 2013 Malone was one of three new staff hired at RSI. Although RSI is geared towards the legal field, Malone brings value to the organization due to the interdisciplinary nature of his CRI education. Malone applies a combination of theory and practice to his current role which enables him to approach his work with creativity. He praised the practicality of DU's Conflict Resolution curriculum, saying that everything he learned has contributed to his success in the field.

Malone recommends that recent CRI graduates should take time reflect on everything the program has taught them, including classes that may not directly pertain to their focus or career goals. He stresses the importance of networking, which helped him find internships and eventually his current position at RSI.



To incoming Conflict Resolution students, Malone advises that people "won't line up to hire you. You need to work hard to sell yourself, show your skills are more valuable, and be open on go anywhere." He also advises students to be flexible, understand that every part of the program is relevant, and to take every opportunity that presents itself.

Kevin Malone can be contacted at: [kmalone@aboutrsi.org](mailto:kmalone@aboutrsi.org)

--JB Deselle, MA '15

# COLORADO COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

## Collaboration for Community Flood Response & Resilience Planning

Natural disasters pose collaboration and coordination challenges for communities that can escalate into conflicts. The Conflict Resolution Institute at the University of Denver co-facilitated its second workshop as part of the Colorado Collaborative Leadership Institute (CCLI). Founded in 2012 by a consortium of local universities, CCLI seeks to increase the local collaborative capacity to address environmental and public policy issues in Colorado. The April workshop took place in Boulder, focusing on inter- and intra-community collaboration for flood response and resilience planning. The event spanned two days, and was held at the National Center for Atmospheric Research and the University of Colorado's Institute of Behavioral Sciences. The workshop's size of forty participants, drawn from local communities, non-profits, businesses, and various government sectors, allowed for direct interaction and sharing of experiences regarding the 2013 Colorado floods.

The workshop began with a panel focused on the importance of community outreach and collaboration during the flood response and recovery process. Chaired by Professor Tanya Heikkila of the School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado Denver, panelists shared their experiences with these challenges and offered an engaging discussion regarding the various aspects of collaboration and the importance of both preparedness and community resiliency. This panel introduced a major theme of versatility to the conference, as representatives from Lyons, Evans, and Jamestown provided perspectives unique to the flood's impact on their community and the different processes needed depending on region demographics.

Interactive sessions offered participants opportunities to engage in activities

with one another and learn facilitation and leadership skills to apply to their own field.

Laura Kaplan, a Conflict Analysis and Resolution professional with a strong background in designing and implementing multi-party collaborative processes, conducted a workshop on meeting facilitation skills. This workshop provided insight into effective public meeting facilitation, including some of the main goals of a public meeting, pointers on delegating and prioritizing topics, and tools for organizing thoughts and questions. Participants talked about the "3 D's" of leading a meeting: Deals, Delegate, and Defer, and the importance of tailoring the meeting to both the attendees and the goals of the facilitator. Note-taking was another focus, and Kaplan led a discussion about various media for recording thoughts and encouraging attendees to participate, including computer applications, white boards and flipcharts. The workshop was particularly useful given the topic under exploration, and leaders from various communities and professional fields expressed their appreciation for the training module.

The conference's second panel was led by Professor Tamra Pearson d'Estrée of the Conflict Resolution Institute at the University of Denver. Panelists from the County of Boulder and the City of Longmont provided valuable insight for balancing community needs and values during flood recovery. This segment concentrated heavily on the importance of communication. As Gabi Boerkircher, of the Boulder County Public Information Office, attested, "one of the things most striking for



me was the amount of interaction the community really wanted. [They were] thirsty for any information we could give them." Identifying the needs and desires of the community as quickly as possible was key to assuring the process would run smoothly and the community would feel informed and considered during the flood recovery process. Communication was important for spreading awareness, as well; a trending problem within all represented communities at the conference was the drastic differences in impact even within the same region. Gary Sanfacon of the County of Boulder's Community Engagement department recalls complaints coming into the office regarding the noise of the helicopters; these residents had experienced light rain during the flooding and had no idea that the helicopters were rescuing other community members from trees and roofs just a few miles away.

The remainder of the panel keyed on the various unique aspects of each community which needed to be recognized, celebrated, and preserved. For example, many communities had economies which focused on tourism or farming. Participants from Longmont talked about the "jewel of Longmont," the Greenway, which is a bike path running through the town and into the mountains. Boulder community members discussed the plethora of festivals year-round in Boulder, a defining quality of the city; many of these towns had large cyclist and hiking populations that were

*Continued on Next Page*



## INTERNSHIP REPORT

### **Sarah Mauter (MA '15):** *Putting Conflict Resolution Skills to Practice in Criminal Justice*

With a desire to use her conflict resolution experience in a military context, Sarah Mauter (MA '15) was encouraged to look into an internship with a local police department. She visited the Lakewood Marshal Division, which is responsible for processing warrants, regulating and managing security check points for the Public Safety Building and transporting prisoners. Within moments of inquiring about an internship, Mauter had an impromptu interview with Chief Mark Dietel. According to Sarah, "the Chief was so impressed and excited when he heard my Masters was in Conflict Resolution, that he immediately offered me an internship in the Marshal Division!"

For the first few months, Mauter was in charge of filing paperwork, contacting individuals with outstanding warrants, and communicating with various departments. She was the first person with whom people interacted when they arrived at the Marshal Division. Mauter explained, "I have had to deal with a lot of angry and upset people, mostly individuals who have outstanding warrants and are frustrated by our legal system." Part of her job includes listening and understanding individual's problems.

"It was really difficult in the beginning. I was the first person anyone with an outstanding warrant met at the Marshal Division. Most of the

time, these people were furious and they would take their aggression out on me. I can't tell you how many times I have been yelled at or called a foul name." When faced with such a situation, Mauter explained that her conflict resolution courses, especially the Negotiation class, and workshops and trainings in her coursework have prepared her to deal with these interpersonal conflicts. She explains, "People want to be heard. When they arrive in the Marshal Division, they are confused, scared and frustrated. They want their questions answered, grievances addressed, and they want a chance to explain themselves." Mauter listens, acknowledges and provides as much support to these individuals as she can.

Recently, Mauter began participating in ride-alongs where prisoners are transported from prison to the Jefferson County Jail, so they can appear via video on their warrants through Lakewood. Additionally, she goes with police officers for street cases. She explained that "when someone calls dispatch and the police have to respond, I go with them. These cases often include domestic disputes, but really anything could have happened." Once on the scene, officers and Mauter only have a limited window of time to gather information. Mauter explains, "It's like I have to conduct a conflict analysis in minutes. I have to assess the situation and move quickly.

There is no time to waste. I have to identify the main parties, their needs, values, interests and positions in minutes."

When asked how her internship relates to conflict resolution, Mauter said, "My entire job is conflict resolution. On a day to day basis, I resolve interpersonal conflicts. I am responsible for making sure people who come to the Marshal Division feel heard and have their concerns and grievances addressed. Every theory I have learned and every workshop I have taken helps me de-escalate conflicts. I let people vent. If they have to yell at me, so be it." For Sarah Mauter, her experiences in the Marshall Division have reassured that the military is where she hopes to build her career in conflict resolution.

Sarah Mauter can be contacted at [sarah.mauter02@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.mauter02@gmail.com).

--Tayma Bislim, MA '14



## Colorado Collaborative Leadership Institute (Continued)

eager to see the roadways and trails restored.

In between activities, participants enjoyed refreshments and networking opportunities, connecting with counterparts in neighboring communities or sharing perspectives. Many participants chatted about the possibility of

potential inter-region collaboration on future recovery projects.

CCLI continues to build capacity, transfer knowledge, and create dialogue around emerging environmental and public policy concerns in Colorado and is already in the planning stages for its next workshop. Read

more information about the upcoming workshop on collaborative community planning amid controversies such as siting and fracking to take place in Glenwood Springs, Colorado in 2015.

--Marina Dosch, MA '15

## An Engaging Photo Exhibit Inspiring Creative Problem Solving

Conflict exists at every level of society. But Zinn Mediation Associates in Denver, Colorado, has been diligently working to raise awareness about the options available for mitigating conflict through its “Talking It Out: Getting To Agreement” exhibit. This exhibit seeks to decrease violence and increase creativity and productivity for problem solving in a wide variety of situations, including inter-personal relationships, communities, organizations, and businesses. Mary Zinn, President and founder of Zinn Mediation Associates, has commissioned a unique set of photos and stories that features Coloradans working together to solve problems such as these. The exhibit illustrates seven distinct stories of people and communities that have made a choice to solve their problems constructively.

The exhibit notes that conflict is rarely solved in hours, or even a few days, with one featured story on the Fair Discipline in Schools Act. This bill reformed a controversial law of discipline among students in the wake of the 1999 Columbine High School shooting, but required over 18 months

of facilitated dialogues among students, teachers, administrators, parents, and police to reach a conclusion on providing a safe learning environment with appropriate discipline.

From restorative justice in the aftermath of a fatal car accident, to bullying in schools, to neighborhood dispute resolution in Wheat Ridge, CO and cross-cultural communication involving the Somali community in Fort Morgan, CO, the story panels showcase the wide variety of conflict resolution techniques and processes that are used right here in Colorado every day.

The “Talking It Out: Getting To Agreement” exhibit was on display at the Driscoll Student Center in May 2014 and opened with a large reception involving some of the participants and practitioners featured in the exhibit to share their experiences to the overall DU community. The exhibit and reception was coordinated by CRI Alum, Jordan Courtner, MA ‘14, Most powerfully, one of the families featured in the exhibit came to share their story of healing through restorative justice and mediation after a car accident ended in

## TALKING IT OUT:



the tragic death of their teenage son, David Mueller. The young man driving the car was a friend of Mueller's and was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the accident. Through mediation and restorative justice, both families of the young men were able to find healing and even become friends through the pain of this deadly accident.

Returning to DU in the fall of 2014

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT **Lieschen Gargano (MA '15): Program Assistant, CDR Associates**

Alumna of the Conflict Resolution Institute, Lieschen Gargano (MA'13) joined Boulder-based Collaborative Decision Resources (CDR) Associates in late 2012. CDR helps leaders and managers in the private sector, government, various organizations and public interest groups engage in dialogue to find common ground and come to agreements on difficult issues.

Currently Gargano assists program managers and partners on projects that focus on Environmental and Transportation public policy projects. These projects are often stalled in conflict, or while in the stake-



holder engagement and task force facilitation portion of the development phase. She facilitates group discussions and information sessions, sets up agendas for meetings based on interviews with clients and goals of the

process, as well as creates and follows up on project schedules and action items with team members. Gargano also writes role-plays and runs logistics for training programs for public or private firms in mediation and facilitation across the country. She acts as a conflict coach, as well as writes website and social media content.

A longer version of this article is available: [www.du.edu/conflictresolution/news-events/newsletters/spring-2015/gargano.html](http://www.du.edu/conflictresolution/news-events/newsletters/spring-2015/gargano.html)

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--Jolena Martinez



# GETTING TO AGREEMENT

the exhibit was displayed in Ben Cherrington Hall at the University of Denver's Josef Korbel School of International Studies. A reception and a special panel discussion with Korbel's Dean, Ambassador Christopher Hill, and Mary Zinn opened the exhibit, which asked students to engage in a more in-depth examination of the series and its importance for their context. This panel discussion compared conflict resolution techniques at the local, regional, and international levels and found that they are much more similar than often thought to be: parties want to be legitimately heard by their adversaries on their grievances, and mediation and negotiation techniques in local county courts are not too different from those used among competing Heads of States.

The exhibit has traveled throughout the state of Colorado to provide inspiration and promote greater dialogue for resolving conflict. The exhibit has been prominently displayed at locations as varied as the Colorado State Capitol for its opening exhibit in 2012, the Denver Public Library, Ft. Morgan Museum, Alamosa Public Library,

Penrose Library in Colorado Springs, and academic institutions from Arapahoe Community College, Adams State College, Colorado Mountain College in Breckenridge, University of Colorado-Anschutz, and University of Denver. In addition to the public viewing of these displays, Zinn Mediation Associates has organized many receptions and events alongside the exhibit to invite practitioners and communities to come together to raise awareness of the power of conflict resolution and "knowing how to work through our disagreements."

Mary Zinn serves as the president of Zinn Mediation Associates and continues to contract her services with Community Mediation Concepts and the Conflict Center in Denver. Additionally, she has played an integral role in promoting, planning, and collaborating for

Colorado's Conflict Resolution Month which takes place every October. Zinn's deep commitment to creatively resolve conflicts has been the principle force behind the "Talking It Out: Getting To Agreement" exhibit and she continues to inspire people throughout Colorado through her passion for the field, she says, "Conflicts present opportunities for courage, creativity and collaboration. Each of us is positioned to improve conditions and relation-



## INTERNSHIP REPORT

**Liza Hester (MA '15): Building Peace in Myanmar Through Mental Health Advocacy & Awareness**

During the summer of 2014, Liza Hester (MA '15) interned with SalusWorld, named after the Roman goddess of state health. Run by Elaine Hansen, former director of the International Disaster Psychology (IDP) program at DU's Graduate School of Professional Psychology, and Gwen Vogel, who acts as Director of Clinical and International Services, SalusWorld focuses on capacity-building in the mental health field in conflict areas training local organizations in conducting mental health work and promoting psychosocial awareness.

Hester, a transfer student into the Conflict Resolution program from the IDP program, was interested in the



way the Boulder-based SalusWorld merged the fields of trauma and peacebuilding. For the majority of her internship, Hester traveled as a rep-

resentative of SalusWorld to Myanmar to work with a local organization, Heal the World, based in Myanmar's largest city, Yangon. Heal the World focuses on conducting sharing circles, which are therapeutic empowerment groups that provide psycho-social support to a community which has faced ethnic tensions, widespread HIV, and political repression.

Liza Hester can be reached at: liza.hester@du.edu

--Rachele DiFebbo, MA '16

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: ALAN GILBERT

### *John Evans Professor, Josef Korbel School of International Studies*

Professor Alan Gilbert, John Evans Professor at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver, takes full advantage of the opportunity to tackle harrowing social justice and economic issues across cultures with his students. He has vast knowledge on a variety of subjects and time periods throughout history, from medieval Islam to slavery in the United States, and continues to address current conflicts from Israel vs. Palestine to Colorado's Jefferson County School Board vs. Community.

Much of Dr. Gilbert's passion stems from his experiences in social justice as a young adult. Raised in New York and Connecticut, his father was an economic advisor to President Roosevelt, and Dr. Gilbert grew up in affluence with maids and nannies, most of whom were black. He developed close bonds with many of his family's servants, opening his eyes to the paradoxes between rich and poor, and black and white, during the heated national climate of the Civil Rights Movements of the late 1950s and 1960s. Dr. Gilbert recalled one evening watching the news on TV, when a National Guardsman broke rank to defend a black schoolgirl from physical harm as the crowds grew violent. He remembers that he and his father cheered, and it was one of the many experiences that has fueled his fight against oppression today.

Thus began a lifelong dedication to promoting tolerance and defending social justice. Dr. Gilbert stated, "I've never bought into the idea that one person should suffer for someone else's benefit." He earned a degree in Government from Harvard University, where he helped lead the campus anti-Vietnam War movement. Dr. Gilbert went on to earn a Master's of Science from the London School of Economics, and then returned to Harvard to complete his doctorate. He began working, first as an assistant Professor, at the University of Denver in 1975, and was awarded the title of John Evans Professor for the Josef Korbel School of International Studies in 2001.

Dr. Gilbert provides exploration into topics such as democratic theory, social theory, philosophies of science and social science, ethics and more in his classes taught through the Korbel School of International Studies. Students in his courses gain an in-depth and raw perspective of conflict, social activism and effective participation in change. His most recent book, *Black Patriots and Loyalists*, was awarded the American Book Award by the Before Columbus Foundation, and he was interviewed by 3:AM Magazine in 2012 for his work in political philosophy and his support of the Occupy Wall Street movements.

Gilbert says that the root of conflict resolution is that one



must believe that everyone has an opinion and a soul. In his classes, he stresses the importance of being able to absorb someone else's perspective and be comfortable living with both their opinion and your own in your mind. He believes that tolerance begins with conflict resolution skills that guide people toward a mutual understanding and a value for all human life. "The key," he explains, "is doing away with this notion of the 'Other,' this group that we're supposed to be fighting or winning against."

In order to create social change, Dr. Gilbert is a great believer in mass peaceful demonstrations, noting the success of Gandhi and the civil rights movement in the U.S. He talks animatedly and passionately about the incredible power of non-violence and the practice and creation of more non-violent methods of addressing conflicts. Dr. Gilbert also points out a concept integral to the study of Conflict Resolution but foreign to society at large: conflict itself is not negative thing, and that often there must be large, challenging conflicts first in order to resolve strife and create progress. What is important is the application of, and respect for, attitudes that promote resolution rather than attitudes that foster competition and division.

Professor Gilbert can be contacted at: [Alan.Gilbert@du.edu](mailto:Alan.Gilbert@du.edu)

--Marina Dosch, MA '15

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## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: ANDREA STANTON

*Assistant Professor,  
Department of Religious Studies*

Assistant Professor in the Department of Religious Studies and an Affiliate Faculty with the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Denver, Dr. Andrea Stanton focuses on the history of the modern Middle East and Islam as well as the intersection of media and politics. She holds her BA with a double major in religion and history from Williams College, and her MA and PhD in Middle Eastern history from Columbia University. Her first book, *This is Jerusalem Calling: State Radio in Mandate Palestine*, was published in 2013.

Dr. Stanton's interest in conflict resolution began when she saw issues inherent to the field appear organically in her work, especially given her focus on the modern Middle East. Such issues include dynamics between colonizer/colonized, occupier/occupied, religious majority/minority, ethnic majority/minority, wealthy/poor, and powerful/disfranchised. Exposed to the broader interpersonal conflicts found in the Middle Eastern context from her time living in Beirut and Damascus, Dr. Stanton observed how local people interacted, "Whether hot or cold, these would play out on the ground level, in terms of casual comments made about people of different backgrounds, geographic self-segregation etc."

These dynamics intersect with history to create views of intractable conflict, which purport that a certain group has been fighting another group for time immemorial, placing the struggle into an abyss of history, which will continue indefinitely. This viewpoint is often combined with the idea that ethnic or religious identities add to intractability. A prime example is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where many observers would simplify the historical and conflict narrative to Muslims and Christians, Muslims and Jews in a never-ending struggle.

Dr. Stanton believes this is an unhelpful way to cast history's role in conflict. Instead of being used as a rationale for intractability, history can act as a "profoundly effective way to counter these 'external conflict' statements. Unpacking the historical evidence around specific conflicts helps defuse the notion of permanent, religious conflict." Having moved beyond a religious definition of conflict, other factors that may be contributing to conflict dynamics, such as politics, economics or environment, can be examined. Furthermore, automatically framing conflicts as religious and hence external, "serves extremists, who want more conflict and less compromise." History can thus act as a reframing tool for bringing conflict analysis from a one-dimensional to a multidimensional lens.

Along with Dr. Gregory Robbins, Dr. Stanton serves as an

affiliate faculty member to the Conflict Resolution program from the Department of Religious Studies. She has acted as a resource for students and collaborated with the Conflict Resolution Institute (CRI) on a number of events, including a 2013 workshop on peace-building which was funded by a grant from the United States Institute of Peace.

Recently, she took part in a winter 2015 talk on Lebanon co-sponsored by CRI and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies with scholar George Irani, and was one of the Institute's faculty-in-residence for Fall 2014, an experience she describes as "wonderful and enriching."

In the future, Dr. Stanton would like to grow in her involvement with the Conflict Resolution Institute by working more directly with students-- serving on thesis committees, having Conflict Resolution students in her courses, directing independent studies, and including Conflict Resolution students in the Department of Religious Studies' events with visiting scholars. For students interested in conflict issues in Muslim-majority or Muslim-plurality locations, Dr. Stanton recommends her 3000-level courses Introduction to Islam, Contemporary Islam, or Islamic Fundamentalism.

Dr. Stanton's advice for Conflict Resolution students is to take advantage of all the resources the University of Denver has to offer: visiting scholars, guest lectures, career services, and the tremendous faculty. Being under DU's Josef Korbel School umbrella gives Conflict Resolution students a doubly rich opportunity to engage with leading scholars and practitioners. Keeping in mind her desire to be more directly involved with Conflict Resolution students, Dr. Stanton notes that "even faculty with whom students don't have the opportunity to study with in a formal course may be willing to offer feedback on a thesis draft, or suggest opportunities for summer study, professional connections, etc." For graduates, keep in mind these connections and opportunities do not end after graduation. Dr. Stanton reminds students, "don't forget to check back in every year or so!"

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--Rachel DiFebbo, MA '16





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