



## BUILDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS MONTHLY EMAIL UPDATE

*March 2009*

Dear Educators,

Welcome to the March 2009 edition of the Building Inclusive Schools Monthly Email Update! The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is pleased to provide this service to educators to support your efforts at fostering respectful and affirming school communities. Archives of the email updates from previous months are available at <http://www.inclusiveva.org/resources.php>. As always, feel free to contact our office by phone at (804) 515-7950 or by emailing Jonathan Zur, Chief Operating Officer, at [jzur@inclusiveva.org](mailto:jzur@inclusiveva.org) if we can provide more direct support of your work.

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### **--- RESOURCES LIST: GENDER ---**

This month's Resources List focuses on gender. Check out the attached document for information on "ready-made" diversity programs for schools, potential funding sources, curriculum ideas, and more. Please also pass along resources you know for use in future emails!

### **--- ACTION PLAN PROFILE: MENCHVILLE HIGH SCHOOL ---**

Each month, we seek to profile activities taking place in Virginia high schools that promote inclusion, challenge assumptions, and advance understanding. As you hold programs in your school throughout the year, please share information about them to be included in future monthly email updates! This month, we profile the Menchville High School students who attended Project Inclusion in November. While attending Project Inclusion, the students made plans to hold training sessions for faculty at the school focused on creating inclusive and respectful learning environments. The first phase of the program will involve a survey to students and educators that will help the planners to arrange the session. After holding the professional development workshops, the students will again survey educators to determine if the sessions improved their classroom climates. This programming is being supported by the McKinley Price Action Grants, a partnership between the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, the Newport News Public Schools, and the Riverside Health System Foundation. The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities congratulates the Project Inclusion graduates from Menchville High School for their great work!

### **--- PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: CONNECTIONS INSTITUTE ---**

The Harold M. Marsh, Sr. Connections Institute (formerly Metrotown) is the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities' signature Emerging Leaders Institute program. Since 1993, this peer leadership experience has prepared high school student delegates to make decisions based on an appreciation of the vast diversity within Virginia. Connections is a yearlong process of challenge, growth, and impact for sophomores, juniors, and seniors. The experience begins with a residential program during the summer that allows student delegates to break barriers, deal with biased behavior, and develop an action plan to reduce prejudice in their schools. Connections will take place in August 2009, and the cost for a team of up to five students is \$1,750. Registration information will be mailed to high school principals this month. For more information about registering your school, volunteering to serve on the Connections staff, or sponsoring a team of students to attend the program, simply reply to this email.



### --- CURRENT EVENTS: THE ECONOMY ---

In these economic times, Tolerance.org has prepared a helpful resource titled "Teaching in the Downturn." That article is available at <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/magazine/features.jsp?p=0&is=44&ar=1011>. Additionally, the New York Times offers the following lesson plan called "Desperate Times Call for... Liberal Arts? Exploring the Value of Humanities in Tough Times" at [http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20090227friday.html?searchpv=learning\\_lessons](http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20090227friday.html?searchpv=learning_lessons). Contact Inclusive Communities if you would like more information on or support for how to support students during the economic downturn.

### --- PEACE ESSAY CONTEST ---

The Richmond Peace Education Center (RPEC) is again sponsoring a Peace Essay Contest for students throughout Virginia, from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This year's contest asks students to consider the African proverb, "Peace is costly but it is worth the expense." Students will discuss what that quotation means to them, and how it might apply to their personal lives, to their community, and to the world. The deadline for entering the contest is April 20, 2009. Prizes ranging from \$20 - \$100 are available for winning essays in several age categories. For more information and to obtain an entry form, please visit <http://www.rpec.org/Essay%20Contest%202009.pdf>.

### --- ABOUT THE VIRGINIA CENTER FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES ---

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (<http://www.inclusiveva.org>) is the only organization that conducts programs that promote understanding and respect on ALL issues of diversity, for ALL age groups, ALL across Virginia. Each year, Inclusive Communities conducts educational programs, conferences, retreats, and workshops for thousands of youth, educators, community members, non-profit organizations, and corporate and business leaders. These events and experiences teach participants not simply to notice differences, but also to respect variety in race, religion, and culture. We deliver our message in schools, houses of worship, the community, and in the workplace. Originally founded as the Virginia Region of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities has concluded our association with NCCJ and has joined with many of our fellow offices across the country to form the National Federation for Just Communities (<http://www.federationforjustcommunities.org>), a new movement fighting prejudice in all its forms.



VIRGINIA CENTER FOR  
**INCLUSIVE**  
COMMUNITIES

## **SCHOOL RESOURCES LIST**

*Focus: Gender • March 2009*

### **CURRICULUM** *[Ways to integrate human relations issues into education]*

#### **Closing the Gender Gap**

[http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20070419thursday.html?searchpv=learning\\_lessons](http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20070419thursday.html?searchpv=learning_lessons)

#### **Creating Gender-Free Nouns**

[http://www.tolerance.org/teach/web/wfc/pdf/section\\_1/1\\_24\\_creating\\_nouns.pdf](http://www.tolerance.org/teach/web/wfc/pdf/section_1/1_24_creating_nouns.pdf)

#### **Gender Roles in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: What Fiction Tells Us**

<http://dig.lib.niu.edu/teachers/women-gender-lesson1.html>

#### **Learning Social Roles: Boy/Girl Piece**

<http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/boygirl.html>

### **PROGRAMS** *[Initiatives and observances to advance character education]*

#### **Women's History Month** – March 2009

<http://www.nwhp.org>

#### **Day of Silence** – April 17, 2009

<http://www.dayofsilence.org>

### **ARTICLES & RESEARCH** *[News for sharing with colleagues or as classroom discussion topics]*

#### **Checking Your Schools for Sexism**

[http://www.napequity.org/e107\\_images/custom/CheckingforSexism.pdf](http://www.napequity.org/e107_images/custom/CheckingforSexism.pdf)

#### **Girls Grapple with Sexism in Sports**

[http://www.ypress.org/news/girls\\_grapple\\_with\\_sexism\\_in\\_sports](http://www.ypress.org/news/girls_grapple_with_sexism_in_sports)

#### **Seventh Graders and Sexism**

[http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/17\\_03/seve173.shtml](http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/17_03/seve173.shtml)

#### **Title IX at 35: Beyond the Headlines**

<http://www.ncwge.org/PDF/TitleIXat35.pdf>

### **FUNDING** *[Grant opportunities to recognize individual leadership or support class projects and clubs]*

**Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes** – honors young people, ages 8-18, who have shown leadership and courage in public service

**\$2,000 Prize** (*Deadline: April 30, 2009*)

<http://www.barronprize.org>

**Teaching Tolerance Grants** - for programs that engage collaboration between educators, researchers, parents/guardians and student groups that aim to equalize students' experience in schools

**Up to \$10,000 Grants** (*Deadline: March 15, 2009*)

<http://www.tolerance.org/teach/grants/schoolgrants.jsp>