



BUILDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS MONTHLY EMAIL UPDATE

May 2010

Dear Educators,

Welcome to the May 2010 edition of the Building Inclusive Schools Monthly Email Update! The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is pleased to provide this service to educators across the Commonwealth to support your efforts to fostering respectful and affirming school communities. As always, feel free to contact our office by phone at (804) 515-7950 or by emailing Ali Thompson, Director of Education & Training at athompson@inclusiveva.org or David LeFebvre, Program & Event Coordinator, at dlefebvre@inclusiveva.org if we can provide more direct support of your work.

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--- RESOURCES LIST ---

This month's Resources List focuses on class/socio-economic status. Check out page 3 for information on "ready-made" diversity programs for schools, potential funding sources, curriculum ideas, and more. Please pass along resources you know for future emails!

--- 2010 CONNECTIONS INSTITUTE DEADLINE *EXTENDED* ---

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities' 2010 Harold M. Marsh, Sr. Connections Institute (formerly Metrotown) will take place from August 10-14 at Camp Bethel in Fincastle, Virginia. High schools are invited to sponsor teams of 5 students to attend Connections. While there, students explore prejudice, identity, and diversity in interactive workshops and small discussion groups, and develop action plans to share the Connections message with their schools. School registration information has been mailed to high schools across Virginia, and the program brochure/registration form is available at <http://www.inclusiveva.org/documents/Connections2010Brochure.pdf>. A limited number of spaces remain, so please complete and return page 4 of the brochure right away in order for your school to be included! For more information, email dlefebvre@inclusiveva.org.

--- ACTION PLAN PROFILE: HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOL ---

Each month, we seek to profile activities taking place in Virginia high schools that advance Inclusive Communities' work. 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 a Newport News Public high school that attended Project Inclusion in December, Heritage High School. Heritage is working on a campaign to bury the word "retard". The students plan to film a skit where they will bury the word and have that shown on the morning announcements, as well as placing up posters throughout the school showing other words that can be used instead of "retard".



--- PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: EQUITY INITIATIVE ---

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is working with Henrico County Public Schools and the Newport News Public Schools to support those districts in addressing the academic achievement gap. A recent report from the Washington Post notes that “On a 500-point scale, Virginia’s black students trailed white students by significant margins in 2007: 23 points in fourth-grade math; 28 points in eighth-grade math; and 20 points in fourth- and eighth-grade reading.” Using an educational framework that focuses on the 3 R’s of rigor, relevance, and relationships, the programs facilitated by Inclusive Communities are aimed at giving educators the skills to foster school environments in which students from all backgrounds can be academically successful. These efforts build on work done by VCIC’s affiliate office in California that has been described by the Institute for Democratic Renewal at Claremont Graduate University as “the most promising vehicle for eliminating racial and ethnic disparities and narrowing the educational achievement gap in the country.” For more information about this new range of work, please contact Ali Thompson at athompson@inclusiveva.org.

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

In 1935, a team of Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant religious leaders known as the “Tolerance Trio” were invited to bring their message of interfaith understanding to Virginia. Their presentation at Lynchburg College attracted nearly 1,000 people from all over the Commonwealth. Those in attendance were so moved by the program’s message that they went back to their local communities and started chapters of what was then known as the Virginia Region of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Today, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (www.inclusiveva.org) continues the vital work of the former NCCJ Virginia Region. And, using the Christian and Jewish principles that inspired its founding, the organization promotes understanding and respect on all issues of diversity, for all age groups, all across Virginia. Each year, Inclusive Communities leads educational programs, conferences, retreats, and workshops for thousands of youth, educators, community members, non-profit organizations, and corporate and business leaders.



SCHOOL RESOURCES LIST

Focus: Class/Socio-Economic Status • May 2010

CURRICULUM (*Ways to integrate human relations issues into education*)

Poverty and Natural Disasters: Exploring the Connections

<http://www.tolerance.org/activity/poverty-and-natural-disasters-exploring-connections>

Testing, Tracking, and Toeing the Line: A Role Play on the Origins of the Modern High School

<http://www.zinnedproject.org/posts/590>

Interpreting Wealth Disparities

<http://www.tolerance.org/activity/interpreting-wealth-disparities>

The Ten Chairs

<http://www.teachingeconomics.org/content/index.php?topic=tenchairs>

PROGRAMS (*Initiatives and observances to advance character education*)

Mix-It-Up Day – November 9, 2010

<http://www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up/lunch-day>

Inclusive Schools Week – December 6-10, 2010

www.inclusiveschools.org

ARTICLES & RESEARCH (*News for sharing colleagues or as classroom discussion topics*)

The Question of Class

<http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-31-spring-2007/question-class>

“The Laptops are Coming! The Laptops are Coming!”

http://www.rethinkingschools.org/restrict.asp?path=archive/22_04/lapt224.shtml

Savage Unrealities: Uncovering Classism in Ruby Payne’s Framework

http://www.edchange.com/publications/Savage_Unrealities.pdf

How School Taught Me I Was Poor

<http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-35-spring-2009/how-school-taught-me-i-was-poor>

FUNDING (*Grant opportunities to recognize individual leadership or support class projects and clubs*)

Do Something Seed Grants – These grants can be used to jump-start your program or to realize your ideas for the first time. These are grants for all types of community action projects around causes that you care about and are important in your community!

\$500 Grants

Deadline: Ongoing

www.dosomething.org/grants/seedgrants

Youth Engagement Zone Grants – The purpose of the new initiative is to encourage collaborative community problem solving that increases students' academic and civic engagement while improving the odds that they will stay in school and graduate from high school.

Three-year grants of \$300,000 to \$450,000

Deadline: May 28, 2010 (Letter of Intent)

www.nationalservice.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa_detail.asp?tbl_nofa_id=82