



## BUILDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS MONTHLY EMAIL UPDATE

*September 2008*

Dear Educators,

Welcome to the September 2008 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 at fostering respectful and affirming school communities. As always, feel free to contact our office by phone at (804) 515-7950 or by emailing Jonathan Zur, Chief Operating Officer, at [izur@inclusiveva.org](mailto:izur@inclusiveva.org) if we can provide more direct support of your work.

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### **--- RESOURCES LIST: CONFLICT RESOLUTION ---**

This month's Resources List focuses on conflict resolution. Check out page 3 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: "USE ANOTHER WORD" ---**

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 share information about a sample activity that can be used in schools called "Use Another Word." Detailed at [http://www.diversitykansas.org/forms/08\\_ourtown/Another%20Word.pdf](http://www.diversitykansas.org/forms/08_ourtown/Another%20Word.pdf), the program focuses on helping educators and students choose words that are not hurtful towards others. Diversity Kansas, the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities' partner organization in Kansas, has developed a series of resource materials for "Use Another Word" at <http://www.diversitykansas.org/useanotherword.htm>, including advertising posters, pledge cards, and evaluation forms. Please contact the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities for more information about the "Use Another Word" campaign, or for assistance in developing a similar program in your school.

### **--- PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: "BREAK THE CYCLE: BE THE CHANGE" ---**

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities offers an assembly program entitled "Break the Cycle: Be the Change" to schools across Virginia. Examining the concept and consequences of prejudice, "Break the Cycle: Be the Change" is a fast-paced, interactive, 75-minute presentation. Beginning with the roots of prejudice, the program demonstrates clearly its progression from thoughts, to words, to actions. Using humor, role playing, audience participation, and real-life examples and stories, "Break the Cycle: Be the Change" motivates students to consider the ways in which they may have contributed to prejudice and helps them to assume the responsibility to work for change as agents of unity. For more information about this program and how to bring it to your school, contact the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities today!



### **--- 2008-2009 CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS ---**

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities is pleased to share the Calendar of Holidays and Festivals for the 2008-2009 school year at <http://www.inclusiveva.org/documents/2008-2009InterfaithCalendar.pdf>. This resource is intended to increase our sensitivity to diverse cultures and traditions and includes observances from select religious, ethnic, and public communities. Since the calendar is not exhaustive, those using this resource at school may wish to add holidays or observances that are observed by students in your classrooms or community that are not included in this listing. Additionally, while we have done our best to verify all dates, it is always advisable to consult with local religious authorities.

### **--- COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS ---**

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities works to sponsor and co-sponsor many community programs across Virginia. Our Lynchburg chapter has been an active supporter of the “Many Voices – One Community” dialogues on race relations (<http://www.lynchburgva.gov/Index.aspx?page=4149>), and will be working with their Advisory Group to bring programming to local schools. On September 28, the Richmond Chapter will be a co-sponsor of the Interfaith Council of Greater Richmond’s community screening of “Divided We Fall,” a documentary on hate violence after 9/11. That program will take place at 2:00pm at the Byrd Theater, and additional details are available at <http://www.icgr.org/activity.htm#dwf>. Our Tidewater chapter remains a co-sponsor of the Nexus Interfaith Dialogue Series, hosted by the Center for the Study of Religious Freedom at Virginia Wesleyan College. The theme for this year’s Nexus series is “Questioning Faiths: Open Windows and Revolving Doors.” Visit <http://www.vwc.edu/academics/csrf/events.php> to learn more about that program’s dates and topics.

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

The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (<http://www.inclusiveva.org>) is a human relations organization that promotes inclusion, challenges assumptions, and advances understanding through dialogue, experiential learning, and education. 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.

## SCHOOL RESOURCES LIST

*Focus: Conflict Resolution • September 2008*

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

#### **Being an Ally**

[http://groundspark.org/pdfs/being\\_an\\_ally.pdf](http://groundspark.org/pdfs/being_an_ally.pdf)

#### **Conflict Resolution and Peace**

<http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/activity.jsp?ar=869&pa=5>

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

#### **National Learn & Serve Challenge** – October 6-12, 2008

<http://www.learnandservechallenge.org>

#### **Ally Week** – October 13-17, 2008

<http://www.dayofsilence.org/ally.html>

#### **Mix It Up Day** – November 13, 2008

<http://www.tolerance.org/teens>

#### **Inclusive Schools Week** – December 1-5, 2008

<http://www.inclusiveschools.org>

#### **No Name-Calling Week** – January 26-30, 2009

<http://www.nonamecallingweek.org>

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

<http://www.dayofsilence.org>

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

#### **Decreasing Violence through Conflict Resolution Education in Schools**

<http://www.mediate.com/articles/asherman.cfm>

#### **Proven Benefits of Conflict Resolution Education Research**

[http://www.fultoncountyoh.com/elected\\_officials/county\\_commissioners/pdf\\_files/conflict\\_resolution.pdf](http://www.fultoncountyoh.com/elected_officials/county_commissioners/pdf_files/conflict_resolution.pdf)

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

**Pay It Forward Mini-Grants** – fund one-time-only service-oriented projects to benefit a school or community. Projects must contain a “pay it forward” focus, based on the concept of one person doing a favor for others, who in turn do favors for others, with the results growing exponentially

Deadline: September 15, 2008

*Up to \$500 Grants*

<http://www.payitforwardfoundation.org/educators/grant.html>

**Teaching Tolerance Grant Program** – offers grants to K-12 classroom teachers for implementing tolerance and youth activism projects in their schools and communities

*Up to \$2,500 Grants*

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