The Board of Listening for a Change envisions offering the Essence of Acceptance program to a numerically and geographically broader audience. Do you know teachers in Central or Southern California who would like to participate? Educators in other states? Please contact us if you do!

We believe that the Essence of Acceptance curriculum fulfills an important need—Who else is teaching an understanding of human rights and responsibilities; how to conduct an oral history; how to reach out into the community to interview someone who’s lost rights (linked to studies) and how to support student participation in a meaningful Service-Learning activity?

With its well-written, extensive lesson selection and support video, Listening for a Change is in the process of offering new workshops for teachers. This curriculum works especially well with Social Studies, Language Arts, and Service Learning classrooms grades 8-12. History is brought alive through interviewing someone linked to classroom studies who has experienced a loss of human rights. There are multiple reflective and critical thinking activities to help young people become civically engaged with issues that are occurring in the world today. The Service-Learning component allows them to reach out into the community and take action.

In late July and early August Listening for a Change participated in a three-day workshop at Sonoma State University (SSU) with the Center for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide titled “Exploring our Common Humanity: Integrating Genocide, Holocaust and Human Rights into the Curriculum.” Teachers came from all over Northern California, a few from Central, and one...
Community Listening Project Update

If you haven’t attended one of our free Community Listening Project workshops at the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County, call our office today and sign up for one of the upcoming sessions. Participants learn in four intense, fun hours how to conduct authentic oral histories. Active listening isn’t something our dominant culture has emphasized and everyone benefits from the practice. You’ll return home transformed and motivated to take a recorder and interview a neighbor who has different life experiences (that means anyone). For more details visit our website at www.listeningforachange.org.

Community Action Partnership (CAP) recently invited us to conduct a short training with their Diversity Committee and we are honored to do so. Many companies, non-profits and government agencies have Diversity Training for their employees. Listening for a Change is in the process of creating a brochure and offering to conduct portions of this training for employees. Employees can interview one another and build better understanding and acceptance of diversity in the workplace. Additionally, employees who work with the public will become more sensitive and aware of the needs of their clients and customers. Do you know an organization that might be interested? If so, please contact our office. We can use your help as we move into relatively new territory.

Schedule for Community Listening Project Workshops

Workshops are conducted on Saturday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

December 2
February 3
April 7
June 2

The above workshops are held at the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County
153 Stony Circle, Suite 100
Santa Rosa

For additional information call 578-5420

Expanding the Reach of Essence of Acceptance (continued from page 1)

from Los Angeles! Dr. Myrna Goodman and Jennifer Norton took the Genocide and Holocaust component and Phyllis Rosenfeld and Caroline Chinn Gonsalves taught the Essence of Acceptance component.

Listening for a Change has made inroads into Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), which is now requiring all students graduating in 2007 to have had a minimum of one semester of a Service Learning activity. We were honored to introduce our workshop and curriculum to teachers in June and October and are in the process of planning additional workshops to meet the needs of their student population.

Listening for a Change has been able to offer these workshops thanks to your generous donations and grants from State Farm Companies Foundation, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, and Holocaust Memorial/Education Fund of the Jewish Community Endowment.

“ This session was extremely worthwhile to me. Learning how to set up a sequence of safe, difficult interview questions, revising questions to be less leading and more open-ended, and keeping in mind all technical details has made me more confident that I can orchestrate student-led interviews in the classroom….I know I have to train my students to LISTEN to the responses and to each other’s follow up questions.”

Phyllis Hayashibara
Venice High School
Los Angeles Unified School District

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In Memoriam
Vivian Frye in memory of Gisela Strauss
Alfred & Susanne Batzdorff in memory of Sylvia Stein

In Celebration
Joyce Sokolik in honor of Rachel Rippy
Anne McGivern has traveled several long roads with many turns since her childhood in Worthington, Ohio. As one of six children in an Irish Catholic household, she aspired at age 10 to become a nun and held that desire until age 21.

In a household where adults suffered from the disease alcohol can bring, it wasn’t always easy to find someone who nurtured you in a genuine, accepting way. Anne’s elderly Bostonian grandfather stood out as someone who was deeply religious and kind to her. She believed in his goodness and felt the same about his older friends who would come to visit at the New Hampshire summer home. They were kind and playful and this meant a lot to her.

At the Catholic boarding school Anne attended as a teen, she again found acceptance and welcoming from the elderly nuns who cooked in the kitchen. They were tiny, little things who I could have real encounters with. They would tell me what their lives were like that day and they asked who I was and didn’t judge. They were interested in me being genuine.

For Anne McGivern, who became a prominent gerontologist, her experience “having all the frills gone, being genuine with no tricks” is where her priority of making connection with fellow human beings and Listening for a Change come together.

Today Anne sells real estate with Creative Property Services and is active as a mentor with Positive Impacting Choices. She is an administrator with Calix in Petaluma. She is most appreciative of the broad talents and energy they bring to our organization. Jessica is an attorney who is the Family Law Facilitator for the Sonoma County Superior Court. Anne is a gerontologist turned realtor with Creative Property Services, and Tamarya is a former executive with Motorola, Inc., and recently a customer service administrator with Calix in Petaluma.

We want to say a very special thank you to Connie Coddin who has served our organization for four years and will continue as an active member of our Advisory Committee. Connie’s passion for human rights issues and business acumen will be missed.

Reverend James E. Coffee
Human Rights Awards Event

For the third consecutive year Listening for a Change is participating in the Rev. James E. Coffee Human Rights Award event—First as a winner in the non-profit category, and for the past two years as a co-sponsor with the Commission on Human Rights and the Volunteer Center.

Please mark your calendar for Friday, December 1st at 6:30 pm. The event is to be held at the Mary Agatha Furth Center, 8400 Old Redwood Highway in Windsor.

The Keynote Speaker is State Assembly member, Mark Leno. Leno is known for his ground-breaking legislative work in the areas of marriage equality, expansion of solar power, support for foster youth, and programs that protect victims of domestic violence.

After the awards presentation there will be music, desserts, and beverages. Ticket prices for adults are $10 in advance and $15 at the door. For youths up to age 18, tickets are $5. For ticket information, please contact the Commission on Human Rights 565-2693.

A Few Thoughts from Phyllis...

Have you heard about the most recent Global Freezing Alert? As if there’s not enough to worry about, it’s what’s happening in the area of human rights. If you scan any newspaper, you’ll read that across the world “otherness” is exaggerated, emphasizing our separate-ness. Whether it’s nationality, race, religion, gender, or something else—You’re different and therefore less than/better than your neighbor.

Listening for a Change aspires to help warm up the community. In fact, with frozen relationships there’s less likelihood of solving shared concerns such as global warming.

To our Board and supporters, it seems imperative that we have the capacity to hear one another—This takes patience, openness, and a willingness to share and trust. Our pro- grams invite each of us to slow down and take time to simply hear someone else, take their perspective into one’s consciousness, turn it over, and examine what it means. When this occurs, there is the potential to grapple with problems.

People often ask me, “What are you going to do with these interviews?” The interview in and of itself “does” something. Honoring and preserving the story “does” something, creating opportunities to share the story “does” something, and analyzing the stories for what’s on people’s minds “does” something. So “do” something with us—Learn how to con- duct an oral history and join us in community building efforts. We need you!

Anne is a spiritual person who believes that “…goodness does exist. Spiritual experience is an immersion into that goodness.” For her, connecting with others does just that.
Our Fiesta Fantàstica event was a great success!

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Ruth Robinson accepted the Connie Codding Humanist Award on behalf of her late husband, Rabbi Michael Robinson.

Board Member Jessica Flores and Peggy Spaulding enjoyed the chocolate fountain.

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Auctioneer Chris Costin at work!

Below, Werner & Tamara Berg and David Karpilow at Silent Auction Table 4.

Above, Tom Garrett and Kristen Berger at the food tables.

At right, Javier Salmon and the Cuyuy band kept things lively, as did Ana Zavala and her tango dancers, below.

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