

Spring 2022 Newsletter

Education for Conflict Resolution

Reconciliation Notes

ECR - Moving into a Bright, New Future



*A Letter from
ECR's Interim
Director*



Spring Greetings, Friends of ECR:

So much has happened since my last letter, sent to you folks in the deep of Winter. First, “Spring has sprung,” and my yard on Elm Street has 100’s of blooming tulips in all shades of red, yellow, pink, and purple. My redbud trees are in full purple flower, and, as I write this letter, the flowering dogwood tree in my neighbor’s yard is just now presenting its early whiteness to the neighborhood. Earlier, in April, there was an ocean of yellow daffodils in my front yard that danced and swayed back and forth in the spring rain-winds like the blue-green algae at the bottom of the sea.

In a way, this spring revival going on in my yard is an analogy for what is happening at ECR right now. So many hopeful tulips are blooming in our garden as well.

Here is the first bit of good news. ECR applied for the Good Deeds Grant in February and was awarded \$15,000 in March by The Community Foundation of Wabash County. This grant is designated for funding a study of the work of our organization by the consulting firm, Transform Consulting Group, Inc., with the goal of strategizing for a more sustainable future for ECR.

Here is more good news. When we realized in a panic this winter that our office computer system was so outdated that we were not going to be able to run even the most basic office programs like QuickBooks necessary to keep our organization functioning, we applied for funds from The Community Foundation of Wabash County and again were awarded \$2,300 from the Carol Horn Fund to purchase a more powerful, up-to-date computer workstation.

Now for the best news: The ECR Board of Directors is about to kick-off its 2022 Revitalization Project. In conjunction with the Transform Consulting Group, the ECR Board will be looking at our organization’s programs and services, examining their viability to meet the current and future needs of our community, and using the data from this research to find better ways to serve the Wabash community and to continue to grow and thrive as an organization.

If it weren’t so cliché and a bit out of season, I would be tempted to say that right now, “Everything seems to be coming up roses” for ECR.

Linda Troop

Reconciliation Notes



Kathy Fry-Miller Joins ECR's Board

ECR was very fortunate to recruit Kathy Fry-Miller to serve on our board of directors, in February of this year. We are letting her introduce herself to you in her own words:

I moved with my husband Paul to North Manchester 17 years ago. I am currently a freelance writer and author of children's books, most recently *Maria's Kit of Comfort*, my first picture book (with co-author David Doudt, illustrator Kate Cosgrove). The story is based on my work with Children's Disaster Services (CDS)/Brethren Disaster Ministries, caring for children in disaster and other trauma situations. While I continue to volunteer, I retired as director of the CDS national program in 2018. Previously I had worked as a trainer/mentor for Child Care Resource and Referral. I also enjoy spending time with family and friends, forest bathing, traveling, music. I am an active member of the Manchester Church of the Brethren.

I learned about the work of ECR many years ago when my children were growing up in Fort Wayne Community Schools. I was excited to hear about the work of ECR and trained peer mediators in schools. I had worked to develop conflict resolution training for early childhood teachers and closely followed the work of ECR. When Jan Rhoades, current board member, invited me to join the board, I was grateful for the opportunity. I have had non-profit board experience and am looking forward to being of service to ECR. I have worked in non-profit leadership/administrative jobs and have provided training for non-profit leaders. I feel like those skills will be helpful in this work.

I am excited to be involved with the board through this next phase of development and strategic planning. I would like to see ECR as an effective, compassionate, sustainable community resource for conflict resolution for many years to come.

Thank you for supporting us!

Carole Baker
Dean and Reba Beery
Charles and Dagny Boebel
Betty and Andy Butterbaugh
James and Debbie Chinworth
Kim Ebersole and David Doudt
Andrew Duffy
Joel and Beverly Eikenberry
Wendy Erbaugh
Jan and David Fairchild
Norris and Grace Friesen
Jim and Kay Gaier
L. Judith Glasgow
Lois and Dave Good
Jane Grandstaff
Rachel and Bob Gross
Harriet Hamer
Jane and Richard Harshbarger
Pam Higgins and Steve Naragon
David Hippensteel
Carol and Dennis Horn
John Horn

Bob and Stephanie Jones
Charles and Susie Klingler
Cheri Krueckeberg
John and Deb Lahman
Pam Long
Keith and Mary Ann McWithey
Ed and Martha Miller
Judy and Dick Myers-Walls
Bev and Ron Petry
Eric and Jennifer Reichenbach
John and Kay Reinoehl
Jan Rhoades
Denis and Mary Schwartz
Linda Troop
David Waas
Susan and William Weybright
Jeanne Smucker and Brad Yoder

Eel River Community Church of
the Brethren
Manchester Church of the
Brethren

Tina's Mediation Update

As ECR's mediation coordinator, I've been extra busy lately, scheduling mediations. We have continued with School Attendance Mediations in Wabash County - seven this spring. In addition, we've facilitated three Court-Ordered Mediations. We also have one self-referred mediation that's in the intake process. Our ECR Mediators have been very busy!

ECR Staff met over zoom with one of Wabash County's judges, and we entered into new service agreements with the Wabash County Circuit and Supreme Courts and with Juvenile Probation.

If you know anyone who would like to join ECR as a mediator, please contact us!

Tina Rieman

Reconciliation Notes

Focus Point - Training and Workshops

Training opportunities are an integral part of ECR's fabric. Statistically speaking, there are direct correlations between employee absenteeism and conflict as well as school success with attendance. Specifically, employees call in as 'sick' to avoid workplace conflicts, and some students believe that skipping school is an acceptable way to absolve themselves of responsibility for school-based challenges. Further, what continues to impact these venues is the use of social media to air our differences and opinions. With so much time spent avoiding or navigating conflict from the sidelines, ECR is in a prime position to provide education, support, and transformation around conflict.

For many years, we worked with a local school to introduce effective conflict resolution skills to fourth graders. The Peace Learning Program provided an introduction to communication skills and positive resolution to differences. The highest value of this program is teaching young people how to effectively, productively, communicate with others and grow from our differences. Feedback from both students and educators identified the dynamic influence of this one-day workshop. We had even expanded this program to include a follow-up session with each class to review and capture insight on what resonated most for the students with respect to the program, considering how they were applying the skills learned. Since COVID changed how field trips are implemented, this program has not been utilized. Further, and across the country, there has been much controversy with respect to social-emotional learning.

In lieu of our traditional 32-hour Mediating Interpersonal Conflict and our 8-hour Productive Conflict and Communication workshops, we created a hybrid 16-hour course, titling it, *An Introduction to Conflict Transformation*. Much of our recent training base are Manchester University students. Because MU students can graduate with an area of distinction in conflict resolution, we explore ways to complement courses offered by the University for students to accrue the hours required. This distinction affords MU students a skill set that sets them apart from other candidates when pursuing employment.

The highlight of this workshop was a blending of effective communication skills and putting those skills into facilitating challenging conversations without the extension of direct mediation. Our mission remains fostering opportunities for others to learn and practice the skills of effective communication. For our readers who have been in a management position, you readily recognize the amount of time spent navigating conflict or helping employees improve their work relationships. We look forward to cultivating partnerships and opportunities to navigate conflict.

T. Onderko



Reconciliation Notes



PO Box 275
North Manchester, IN 46962

Please note the change of location for the annual meeting on June 23 - now at Manchester University's Intercultural Center.



A Special Invite for You

Who?

Members and Friends of **ECR**
Education for **C**onflict **R**esolution

What?

ECR's Annual Membership Reception
and Public Board Meeting
(Masks are requested but not required.)

When?

Thursday, June 23, 2022, 6:00-7:30 pm

Where?

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF LOCATION:
Manchester University Intercultural Center, Corner
of East St. and College Ave., North Manchester, IN

Details:

Join our annual meet-and-greet (**light refreshments provided**). During the **ECR** Board meeting, special recognition will be given for dedicated board service. **Come, to hear success stories from our own mediators and to find out what's next at ECR.**

Contact ECR

Email: info@workitout.org
Website: www.WorkItOut.org
Phone: 260-982-4621

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facebook.com/WorkItOut.org
Follow us on Instagram!
[workitout_ecr](https://www.instagram.com/workitout_ecr)

Who's Who at ECR

Staff:

Linda Troop - Interim Director
Theresa Onderko - Director of
ECR-MU Collaboration
Tina Rieman - Office Manager
and Mediation Case Coordinator

ECR Board of Directors:

Linda Troop - Chair
Jan Rhoades - Vice chair
Pam Long - Treasurer
Kathy Fry-Miller - Secretary
Kendall Brown - MU Peace
Studies Coordinator
Angie Briner
John Horn
Cheri Krueckeberg
Keith McWithey