Vision

Throughout human history, great thinkers and leaders from all world civilizations have inspired people to evolve and develop toward their fullest positive potential. For humankind to thrive and flourish, requires creating the necessary conditions for peaceful coexistence, mutual cooperation, and working in harmony toward the common good. In contrast to the mistaken yet often widely held beliefs that human nature is biologically programmed toward aggression and violence, and therefore that wars and other forms of direct and indirect structural violence must be accepted and tolerated as natural, the Center for Nonviolence & Peace Studies envisions a future humankind built on an overarching goal of a global beloved community built on the principles of peace and nonviolence.

Mission

• To **institutionalize and internationalize nonviolence** as a transformative educational and social change process that reduces human suffering and promotes a global beloved community.

• To **foster mutual understanding among people**, in which nonviolent processes are used to reconcile conflicts and to build peaceful, sustainable, and inclusive communities, across geographic, cultural, and identity boundaries.

• To **collaborate with and strengthen partner relationships** with other organizations, agencies, and governmental departments engaged in peacebuilding and nonviolence work at the local, national, and global levels.

To accomplish this mission, the Center for Nonviolence & Peace Studies plays a leadership role in providing innovative training and education, research, and outreach programs for individuals, organizations, communities, and institutions seeking to engage in the fundamental study and applied evidence-based practice of nonviolence and peace as alternatives to conflict in order to reduce the incidence of all forms of violence.
About the Center

The URI Center for Nonviolence & Peace Studies is an interdisciplinary center initially conceived in 1998 by a group of three faculty and staff – Prof. Charles Collyer, Abu Bakr, and Prof. Art Stein, who shared a common interest in promoting and studying approaches to addressing conflict through mediation and peaceful means. As this concept was developed, they met and discussed the proposal with Dr. Bernard LaFayette, Jr., a renowned civil rights activist who had been conducting nonviolence trainings with the Providence Police Department and consulting with the RI Race Relations Commission. Subsequently, with the support of then URI president Robert Carothers, Dr. LaFayette was appointed as a distinguished scholar in residence at the university.

The vision was broadened, resulting in the establishment of the URI Center for Nonviolence & Peace Studies in 1999 under the direction of Dr. LaFayette. Within a short period of time a number of interdisciplinary faculty and staff members joined as advisory members of the Center and were referred to as Center Conveners and Co-Conveners – Dr. Lynne Derbyshire, Dr. Cynthia Hamilton, Dr. Sylvia Peters, Ms. Gail Faris, Ms. Linda Palazzo, and Dr. Paul Bueno de Mesquita.

Legacy of Nonviolence

On the morning of April 4, 1968, in his room at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis TN, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was preparing a press release concerning plans for continued direct action and a public march he was to lead in support of the sanitation workers strike there. Assisting him was one of his close staff members, Bernard LaFayette. Bernard was to leave soon to fly to Washington, DC to complete advance planning for the Poor People’s March. Before leaving, King shared with Bernard a final vision for his next campaign, to institutionalize and internationalize nonviolence education and training. A few hours later that day, King would be shot dead on the motel balcony outside his room. Motivated by his final conversation with King, and King’s final dream for nonviolence, Bernard embarked on a 30-year career in nonviolence that led him to become one of the world’s leading authorities on the subject.

Based on this original and final vision, the Center serves as a keeper of an important historical legacy of nonviolence inspired by Dr. King and as handed down by Dr. LaFayette to the Center’s faculty affiliates. The work of the Center has continued under the leadership of Dr. Paul Bueno de Mesquita since 2009 to the present.
Center Organization

The Center for Nonviolence & Peace Studies is located in the heart of the URI campus, west of the Quad, in the Multicultural Student Services Center, Room 202. Within a small office with a big mission, the study of peace takes place in the heart of the URI campus!

Current organizational structure and staffing, consists of: one faculty member serving as director (research and service time), one part-time administrative secretary (25 hrs/wk) who is responsible for the overall daily operating management of the center, one graduate assistant (20 hrs/wk) who is responsible for coordinating various programs and activities including the international nonviolence summer institute, three-four undergraduate assistants/peace ambassadors responsible for various programs and activities (10 hrs./wk each), one coordinator of education and training curriculum (25 hrs/wk volunteer).

People

Paul Bueno de Mesquita, PhD, Director & Professor of Psychology
Thupten Tendhar, Graduate Assistant & PhD Candidate
Linda Laurenzo, Administrative Assistant

URI Student Peace Ambassadors (Work-Study)
- Alexa Mitchell, Coordinator for Gandhi Essay Contest
- Erin Concannon, Nonviolence Workshops
- Alexandra Benevites, Office Assistant
- Yash Dhuri, Technology Specialist

URI Student Certified Nonviolence Leaders, Co-Trainers, and Teaching Assistants
- Cheyenne Greco
- Sarah LaTulipe
- Melany Ulloa
- Timi Wallace
- Sydney Roberts
- Destiney Palacios
- Meghan Collamati
- Maja Decker
Alignment with URI Values, Mission, and Academic Plan

Cornerstones

The ongoing work of the Center has always been guided by and closely aligned with the cornerstone values.

- Encourages nonviolence as a courageous way of life,
- Contributes to the development of social conditions that reduce prejudice and intolerance,
- Seeks to overcome differences through friendship, understanding and perspective taking, finding common ground
- Promotes the personal health and well-being of students through inner peace and healthy minds trainings,
- Works to help create a global community beyond our borders, and prepares leaders committed to service and outreach.

Mission

The Center mission and activities are consistent with the Mission of the university as the state’s premier public higher education institution.

- Serves students at all levels: undergraduate, graduate, and professional education
- Engages students in ongoing research and scholarship through independent study projects and honors research projects on topics related to nonviolence, violence prevention, inner peace-healthy minds
- Provides outreach assistance and direct support services to neediest communities and school systems in Rhode Island and beyond.
- All work at the Center aligns with civic engagement with social injustices and inequities, nonviolence leadership, and meeting the global challenges of today's world

Academic Plan

The Center is connected with most goal areas included in the academic plan, but especially Goals 1, 3 and 4

- Develops and applies innovative instruction through education and training that facilitate engaged learning with active experiential-reflective learning methods.
- The broad field of nonviolence and peace is interdisciplinary and cross-cutting.
- Training methods primarily skill and competence oriented that take students beyond knowledge only, using problem-based learning, role plays, simulations, teach-backs
• The Center’s international reach brings our global work and visiting partners into the classroom and takes students into international locations for field experience.
• The study and practice of nonviolence and peaceful alternatives to conflict focuses primarily on contemporary relevant problems of social injustice and discrimination.
• Students learn and experience personal and social transformation in all Center coursework and training.
• Students are trained and prepared to function successfully in a diverse democratic and civil society – Life skills of activism and direct action, organizing, leading, including.
Executive Summary

According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, violence continues as one of the greatest threats to public health in the US and globally. Mass shootings occurring on a seemingly regular schedule each week take the lives of innocent victims in locations such as shopping malls, work places, schools, churches, mosques, and synagogues. Accidental firearm mishaps claim the lives of small children on an almost daily basis. Incidence of violent self-harm and suicide is rising. The need for nonviolence education and training to address the problems of violence in our society is greater than ever. The URI Center has continued to bring education and training to bear on these issues both on the campus and beyond. Although limited in staff, faculty, and resources, the Center engages in hopeful action year after year in ways that bring positive transformational change at the personal, interpersonal, community and societal levels. This past year has been no different, the Center again has readily responded to the needs of community organizations, schools, professional groups for nonviolence and peaceful alternatives to violent conflict. The Center’s work continues to be recognized as a valuable resource on the URI Campus, and a leader within the state of RI, nationally, and in many countries around the world. The accomplishments included in this report document the wide variety of education, training, and program work accomplished over the past year, that underscores the tremendous impact of the Center as it fulfills its mission and works to realize a final dream of Dr. King.
Strategic Goals & Progress and Updates

I. Goal - Engage increasing number of URI students in the study and practice of nonviolence and peaceful social change.

Outcomes (Global Trainers Directory)
- Enrollment in Nonviolence training courses (n = 60)
- Enrollment in Peace Psychology courses (n=60)
- Enrollment in Buddhism Inner Peace (n = 30)
- Enrollment in Independent Study (n = 12)
- Enrollment in International Relations Global Peace (n = 16) graduate level
- Annual Enrollment Total = 174
- Students frequently report that the courses and trainings are “transformational” and “life changing” as they strive to incorporate their newfound ideas about nonviolence into their personal lives and campus interactions and organizations, and future career paths.

II. Goal - Continue to involve students in scholarly research projects relevant to nonviolence and peace studies

Outcomes
- Measurement of Compassion Pilot Study (n = 380 URI undergraduates)
- Inner Peace Research Poster Session (May 2018) (n = 8)
- Design and Development: 8 Steps to Great Compassion, Film Mediated Online Training Program
- “Compassion and Well-Being: The Effects of Brief Online Film-Mediated Compassion Education Program on Undergraduate Students” (Dissertation research by Thupten Tendhar)

III. Goal - Increase the number of Center-affiliated nonviolence trainers at URI, in Rhode Island, in the US, and globally.

Outcomes
- Held 18th Annual International Nonviolence Summer Institute (June 4 – 15, 2018)
- Total of 68 Participants from 10 countries and 15 US states
- Certificates awarded in Level I Training of Trainers in Nonviolence & Conflict Reconciliation (n = 40)
• Certificates awarded in Level II Advanced Leadership (n = 28)

**IV. Goal - Provide consultation and technical assistance in support of helping to expand global network of Center partnerships with nonviolence and peace education and training Centers.**

**Outcomes (estimated completion and opening)**

- Himalaya Peace Study Center, Banepa, Nepal (March 2019)
- Universite’ Episcopale, Port Au Prince, Haiti (September 2019)
- Peace Education Center Northeast Institute for Social Science & Research, Kohima, Nagaland, India (Spring 2020)
- Basic Education and Employable Skill (BEST), Pakistan
  - [http://bestpak.org](http://bestpak.org)
  - Mission: “To contribute to poverty alleviation through provision of basic education, employable skill training and micro / small enterprise development leading to income generation and employment opportunities in a sustainable way.”
  - Both founders, Amish Khan and Ihsan Khan, traveled to URI to earn Level II certification in Advanced Kingian Nonviolence Training for Leadership, Organizing, and Mobilizing to incorporate Dr. King’s principles and strategies into their organization.
  - Ongoing German NGO funded project to rehabilitate Taliban youth, 2nd trial ongoing.

- Kampala’s Children’s Center (KCC), Wakiso Town, Uganda
  - The Center for Nonviolence & Peace Studies has sponsored performances of *Destiny Africa* on two different occasions.
  - KCC is an orphanage that services displaced children from the rebel war and resulting poverty. They have rescued children from city slums, those suffering from malnutrition and vulnerable to child labor and violent abuse.
  - Their exceptional performing arts program promotes healthy lifestyles, attitudes and creativity among the children and helps support their Center through fundraising performances worldwide with *Destiny Africa*.
  - [http://www.kampalachildren.org](http://www.kampalachildren.org)

- Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) Kathmandu, Nepal
  - [http://ecdcnepal.org](http://ecdcnepal.org)
  - A registered non-profit organization with the Nepali Central Child Welfare Board. The ECDC coordinates with jail administrators to rescue children from jail cells throughout Nepal whose mothers are incarcerated and there is no other place for them to live. Children are
relocated to “The Butterfly Home,” under the care of Pushpa Basnet, where they can lead normal lives in a supportive environment, attend local schools, enjoy healthy meals, healthcare, warm clothing, and most of all, receive unconditional love.

- The Center for Nonviolence has trained ECDC social worker, Purnima Basnet, in Kingian Nonviolence & Conflict Reconciliation at the International Nonviolence Summer Institute. She utilizes the knowledge in her work with the mothers in the prisons.

- **The Learning Realm International School (LRI), Kathmandu, Nepal**
  - [https://lrischool.edu.np](https://lrischool.edu.np)
  - LRI represents a quest for learning excellence in Nepal applying the best education practices, including a focus on peace and nonviolence as a practice in everyday life and within the school and local community.
  - The LRI principal, Mr. Devkant Joshi, the school founder, Mrs. Yashodhara Pant, and a teacher, Yashoda Bhatta Joshi, have traveled to URI to earn Level I certification in Kingian Nonviolence & Conflict Reconciliation in order to implement programs of nonviolence at the LRI school.

- **Tribhuvan University (TU), Kathmandu, Nepal**
  - [http://tribhuvan-university.edu.np/about-us](http://tribhuvan-university.edu.np/about-us)
  - The Center has conducted five nonviolence workshops in Nepal with students from the Masters in Conflict and Peace Development Studies at TU along with our URI students during faculty led program trips
  - The director of the MA in Conflict Studies at TU, Prof. Hem Subedi, traveled to URI twice to become certified in Level I and Level II advanced training in Kingian Nonviolence & Conflict Reconciliation. He incorporated the nonviolence information into his TU CPDS program courses.

- **The Initiatives for Sustainable Peace & Entrepreneurship Development (ISPED), Nigeria**
  - [http://isped.org.ng](http://isped.org.ng)
  - A non – governmental organization committed to enthroning peaceful coexistence in Nigeria via Entrepreneurship, Leadership and Skills development of youth, women and people with disabilities.
  - An ISPED leader and United Nations Student Ambassador, Abdulahi Bindawa, has traveled to URI to earn Level I certification in Kingian Nonviolence & Conflict Reconciliation to bring the ideas of nonviolence into his organization community.
V. Goal - Provide Community Trainings, Outreach and Special Programs (On/Off Campus)

Nonviolence Trainings
- Conducted Nonviolence Workshop for Santa Fe School Community, TX (July 12, 2018)
- Partnered with Nonviolence Schools Rhode Island, Educator Training (July, 2018)
- Compass School Workshops on Nonviolence (Sept. 23, Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 2017)

Outreach Programs on and Off Campus
- Appointment to Governor Raimondo’s Gun Safety Work Group. Statewide Committee to study gun violence in Rhode Island and formulate policy and legislative proposals (2017-18)
- Central Falls Second Step Violence Prevention Program (10th year of service)
- Central Falls Rhody Reader Program (September – May)
- URI 101 Information Sessions on Nonviolence (September - November, 2017)
- Mystical Arts of Tibet Mandela Compassion Sand Painting for URI Campus (September 18 – 22, 2017)
- Rhode Island 8th Grade Gandhi Essay Contest (8th Annual, October 2 – May 4)
- “Mindful Eating” Peace Talk for Preschoolers at the Child Development Center (October 12, 2017)
- “Raising Peaceful Children” Workshop for Central Falls Parents (October 27, 2017)
- “Using Nonviolence in Midterm Elections” for IndivisibleRI Statewide Meeting (April 9, 2018)

Special Events
- URI Day of Peace with 200 students forming a Human Peace Sign (September 21, 2017)
- Peace Vigil to Honor Victims of Violence (September 21, 2017)
- Vigil for Victims of Las Vegas Shooting (October 4, 2017)
- Annual Tancrell Scholarship Fundraiser Dinner in Smithfield, RI (October 14, 2017)
- “Ping Pong for Peace” for Puerto Rico Hurricane relief in Union Ballroom (November 16, 2017)
- “Open Mic for Peace” for Puerto Rico at 193 in Union (November 16, 2017)
- Performed in URI Diwali Event (November 18, 2017)
- Inner Peace and Spiritual Harmony” Speech by Thupten Tendhar at Unitarian Universalist Church (December 3, 2017)
- Sandy Hook Candlelight Memorial at URI Carother’s Library & Learning Commons (December 14, 2017)
- Documentary Film, “King: Beyond the Dream, Discover the Man” for MLK Week (February 6, 2018)
- “Remember and Act” Speech Holocaust Remembrance Day at MSSC Patio (April 17, 2018)
- Beloved Community Dinner as part of the International Nonviolence Summer Institute (June 11, 2018)
- An Evening Public Conversation with Dr. Bernard LaFayette, Jr. (June 12, 2018)
- Stabilization Symposium at Johns Hopkins University, Invited Organizational Participant (June 26 – 27, 2018)

**Interdisciplinary On Campus Connections**

- International Relations Master’s Degree Program – Political Science NVP/PSY500 Theory & Research of Nonviolence & Peace (Fall 2017)
- Annual URI Day of Peace Collaboration with URI Women’s Center & Campus Public Safety (September 21, 2017)
- Campus Leadership Team – Culture of Respect – Committee Member (Meetings February 26, March 8, April 12, May 10, 2018)

**VI. Goal - Organize Guest Speaker and Public Lecture Series**

- His Eminence Geshe Lobsang Yeshi, the Dalai Lama’s Abbot, on “Preserving Inner Peace Amid Outer Turmoil” (November 28, 2017)
- Geshe Khempo Pema Wandak from Tibet speaks to URI students on “Cultivating Compassion” (December 7, 2017)
- Geshe Nima Lobsang from Tibet, invited scholar in residence, conducted weekly Inner Peace Research Seminar (Spring semester, 2018)
- Amani Matabaro Tom, Action Kivu and D.R. Congo Peace School, public lecture (March 28, 2018)
- “Say Something” Project, Wendy Bowen, former Sandy Hook Teacher, speaks to PSY479 class and campus students (April 17, 2018)

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND UPDATED CENTER ACTIVITIES:**

- Center Home Page
- Monthly Center News - Peace Posts