



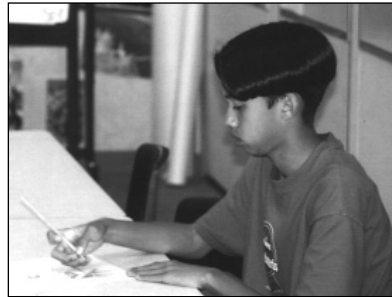
What is the Essence of Acceptance?

The Essence of Acceptance teaches human rights through a unique combination of coursework and oral history taking. Community members representing a variety of racial and cultural groups are invited into class to share their stories of discrimination and loss of human rights, to which the students respond artistically. The power of the program lies in the opportunity it creates for students to confront their own personal prejudices and values. Experience demonstrates that both students and interviewees are transformed.

With increased diversity in the schools come conflicts precipitated by misunderstandings among ethnic and cultural groups. Schools are bastions of confrontation, which can turn violent or hurtful. Our program creates a foundation that encourages and enables students to develop empathy for and understanding of others. The ultimate goal is to eliminate violence, defensiveness, and cruelty while promoting tolerance, openness, and community awareness.

As a whole, the curriculum reinforces values taught in public schools. All individuals deserve respect for being human; the Essence of Acceptance provides the contact that promotes a permeation of common humanity throughout the school and surrounding community.

For a detailed account of the Essence of Acceptance curriculum, see page 2.



Maria Carillo student,
Kenny Harjak,
works on a
creative project
for the
Essence of
Acceptance

Several Grants Help Bring The Project to Schools

In the last few months, the Survivor Project has been honored to receive several prestigious grants from public and private sources.

A grant from the **Community Foundation Sonoma County** brings the Essence of Acceptance program to all three Petaluma High Schools. This award funds teacher training, curriculum materials, and onsite support for one year. A portion of the funds goes to the *Healthy Communities Consortium (HC²)*, who will be responsible for presenting the program to community organizations, recruiting local interviewees, and arranging for the display of student work.

To implement the project in The Sonoma County Court, Community, and Alternative Schools, we are utilizing a second year of funds from a two year **Tolerance Grant from the California Department of Education** through a contract with the Sonoma County Office of Education. Participating schools include the Adera Teen Mother Program, Community Schools, the Classroom at Los Guillicos Detention Center, and the Valley of the Moon Children's Home. These special schools and-

...continued on page 3

Curriculum is Complete!

The Essence of Acceptance curriculum is finally finished (we hope!) and it truly was a collaborative effort. The final project reflects the hard work of creator and editor Phyllis Rosenfield, and curriculum writer Kathryn Mayo-Hudson, who so skillfully took the content and created teacher-friendly lesson plans.

The curriculum serves as a road map for the integration of human rights and diversity lessons into classroom activities. Trainings help familiarize teachers with the prodigious curriculum, which includes video and audiotapes. Carl Wong, current superintendent of the Petaluma School District and incoming County Superintendent notes “a clear linkage of the Survivor Project concepts to the State Curriculum Standards for Social Science and Language Arts; therefore, the curriculum can be part of our course work in classes required for graduation with a diploma.” According to Carl, “given the demographics and diversity our region, working with the Survivor Project is not only educationally sound, I believe it is socially responsible.”

“Given the demographics and diversity of our region, working with the Survivor Project is not only educationally sound, I believe it is socially responsible.”

—Carl Wong

The Essence of Acceptance program is divided into four sections, the first of which is an overview of human rights. Students study the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, learn the difference between human rights and civil rights, and compare the U.S. Constitution to that of other countries. These lessons prepare the students to write their own Declaration of Human Rights.

In the next section, students learn the process of oral history taking. Included in this section are lessons on body language, attentive listening, and interviewing techniques such as eye contact, open-ended questioning, and safe to sensitive questioning. Students learn by first, practicing on each other, then interviewing family and neighbors. This section offers students the opportunity to master important skills for daily interaction that are rarely taught outside the home.

**Your Support Makes A
Difference!**

**Help us bring
the Essence of Acceptance
to more schools.**

**Use the enclosed envelope to mail
your check in today!**

After learning about the oral history process, students invite a member from a cultural group into their class who they feel has lost rights. Interviewees represent a wide range of racial and cultural groups, such as Shoah/Holocaust Survivors, African Americans, Japanese Americans, and homosexuals. The goal of the interview process, according to Phyllis Rosenfield, is “not to wallow in tragedy but to learn lessons of the past to apply to today and the future. The listener has a brief opportunity to attempt to step into the shoes of another.” Through this process, the Essence of Acceptance helps to build a school community based on positive values, while teaching students the importance of guarding their rights and maturing into responsible adults.

Finally, students reflect on their experiences through a creative project done individually or in small groups. Past projects have included video, photography, murals, sculptures, poems, and essays. The students are given the opportunity to share their experiences with the community at large through public exhibitions of their work. This process allows for a unique community exchange, where members of various cultural groups share with the students and in return, students give back to the community by showing their work in public venues, such as Chops Teen Center, the Sonoma County Museum, and the Finley Community Center.

Special thanks to **Liora Abrahams-Brosbe** and **Cynthia Hayashi** for their contributions to the Essence of Acceptance.

**If you would like to look at the curriculum,
please call our office!**

A Few
Thoughts
from
Phyllis...



As you all know, this is an especially challenging time for non-profits. However, over the last few years we've been on an extensive fishing trip. Our fish swim in the shapes & myriad colors of grants and contracts. We are now proud to have several on our table. (See page 1). Do you know of other interested schools or funding support for them? Please let us know where those fish are swimming!

This issue includes an article about Cynthia Hayashi. Cynthia and I met on the Human Rights Commission. Coincidentally, her father, Sam Miyano, was telling his story to students at Petaluma High School under the auspices of the original Sonoma County Survivor Project. It was such a moving experience for Mr. Miyano that Cynthia became interested in The Survivor Project. Together we developed ideas and started curriculum for what would become this non-profit 501(c)(3) and our Essence of Acceptance program. Cynthia has given so much—She will be deeply missed on our Board.

A very special welcome to all our new Board Members: Les Adler, Lisa Hardin, Jim Leddy, Virginia Marcoida and Victoria Mwangi. We are so fortunate to have such dynamic, committed additions to an already excellent Board.

Since early June we've been fortunate to have had a series of young, college and recent college graduates office assistants supporting our work. Perhaps you've called and spoken with Liara Brosbe, Caitlin Costin, Leah Lander or Amanda Mihalik.

For the past two years I've been writing this newsletter. This issue, an aspiring young journalist, Caitlin Costin, has done the writing. A special thanks to Susan Curry for doing the lovely layout for this issue and all of our previous ones.

We're patient, tenacious fisherpeople, but we need and greatly appreciate your volunteer & financial help. Please give generously—Every dollar is being well used for promoting understanding and acceptance of human diversity in our community and beyond.

Phyllis

Welcome to New Board Members

Les Adler was the Sonoma State University Director of the Original Sonoma County Survivor Project. Presently, he serves as the Dean of Extended Education for the University. Les is thrilled to return to The Survivor Project as a board member.

Lisa Hardin became interested in The Survivor Project at a presentation given by Phyllis to her Miwok Indian Tribe. A native Santa Rosa, Lisa decided to become more involved after attending the Michel-Schlumberger Event.

Jim Leddy, raised in west Sonoma County, is the District Director for State Senator Wes Chesbro. A member of the Santa Rosa School Board, Jim wants to help extend the Essence of Acceptance to all local schools.

Virginia Marcoida is a defense attorney in the Public Defender's Office. Living in Paris in the early 80's, Virginia worked for Amnesty International reviewing applications from African citizens requesting political asylum.

Vicky Mwangi is a CPA with Zainer Rinehart Clark, DFK; she works with non-profits to align the organizations purpose and mission with their financial information. Originally from Kenya, she brings a unique international perspective to the board.

...**Grants** (continued from page 1)

classrooms provide education for some of our most at-risk students.

Outside Sonoma County, we have received a **Discretionary Grant from the Peninsula Community Foundation** that allows the Survivor Project to work with all eight 9th grade social studies teachers at Sequoia High School in Redwood City. Here, the Survivor Project will collaborate with the *Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center*, who will find public venues for student work and serve as our local resource for interviewees.

San Francisco Chronicle

The Survivor Project in the News

Did you see the July 12th issue of the *San Francisco Chronicle*? An education feature entitled "Survivor Project Teaches Children About Human Rights," detailed the history of the project as well as its current application in schools.

Author Karen Pierce Gonzalez explained, "the goal is to make the Projects Essence of Acceptance program available to more schools. Working with teachers, Rosenfield and others provide training in how to teach human rights."

Quoting teachers, survivors, and executive director Phyllis Rosenfield, Pierce Gonzalez gave an intimate picture of the need for a human rights curriculum. As Rosenfield explained "All human beings deserve to have freedom from fear." The curriculum, which teaches tolerance through oral history and the arts, aims to bring that freedom through education. Aside from documenting the history and purpose of the project, Pierce Gonzales also used the story of Morris Turner, author of *America's Black Towns and Settlements* as an example of an interviewee who participates in the project. Growing up as the only African-American in several of his elementary school classrooms, Morris said "Some days I felt like I couldn't breathe."

View the entire article online at www.sfchronicle.com.

Finley Center Exhibits The Survivor Project

The Finley Center is the latest venue to showcase student work done in connection with the Essence of Acceptance. This show, which opened on October 24th, exhibits the work of the original Survivor Project along with that of Maria Carrillo students. **It will run through December 5th, so be sure to check it out!**

What's Cookin'...

Take a look at what's heating up in the Survivor Project's pot...



Much to our interest, a bill promoting **Holocaust and Human Rights Education** was recently signed into law in California. Proposed by Assembly Member Paul Koretz (D-Los Angeles), **Assembly Bill 2003** encourages "all state and local professional development activities to provide teachers with content background and resources to assist in teaching about civil rights, human rights violations, genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust." At present, we are exploring the possibility of participating in this important upcoming state program.



The new Survivor Project website will be up and running shortly at **www.thesurvivorproject.org**. Web surfers will be able to access general information about The Survivor Project. An important function of the site is to act as a teaching tool; both teachers and students will be able to access photographs and oral history excerpts from the entire original Sonoma County Survivor Project. In addition, student work from the Essence of Acceptance will be accessible to other students participating in the project. A special thanks to graphic artist and website designer Susan Bailyn for all her help.



We are presently exploring the possibility of working with two teachers from the **Jewish Community High School of the Bay**. In its second year of operation, the school has recently moved from a temporary facility in Tiburon to a beautiful new site at Ellis and Scott in San Francisco. The Survivor project is impressed with the quality of education offered to students and is proud to be considered as a part of the school's curriculum.



Teachers at **Drake High School** in San Anselmo have expressed their interest in the Essence of Acceptance. We will be offering a training in Marin in January at the **Marin Office of Education**. All Marin high school teachers are invited to participate. For further details, call our office.



*In Recognition of
Co-Founder
Cynthia
Hayashi*

Cynthia Hayashi has always been passionate about education. As a board member of the Survivor Project, she has served her passion well, going above and beyond to form a solid foundation for the project and contribute creatively to its success. At its early stages, Cynthia was instrumental in securing 501(c)(3) status for the Survivor Project as well as serving as co-founder of the Essence of Acceptance.

A third generation Petaluma resident, Cynthia, like her father and sons, attended Petaluma High School. "Education," she says, "was always a strong part of family life."

This focus on education in her youth served as inspiration for the choices made in her adult life. With an undergraduate degree in Psychology from San Jose State University and a masters in Leadership and Organization from St. Mary's, Cynthia put her skills to use while serving on the Petaluma School Board. In a position at the UCLA Satellite School Management Program, she was responsible for bringing change to school districts through a unique teacher coaching process.

It was a combination of her interest in education and her family history that brought Cynthia to the Survivor Project. Utilizing skills learned at the UCLA Satellite, Cynthia worked with Phyllis to create concepts for the Essence of Acceptance.

Pegged as suspicious due to his race, Cynthia's grandfather was interviewed by the FBI. Then, during World War II, her parents, along with all Sonoma County Japanese Americans, were held at Amache internment camp. Her older sister, Sandy, was born while the family was interned.

...continued on page 6



*Board Chair
Deborah
Walton*

One of many baby boomers named after actress Deborah Kerr, this Deborah was born in Hollywood as a paternal first generation American. Her father, born in the coal-mining region of England, worked in public relations for Shell Oil Company; her mother was a homemaker.

The life of an oil family caused several relocations. The family moved to Mill Valley, and then to Ossining, New York: home to the infamous Sing Sing Prison. Coming from segregated Mill Valley, Deborah was both surprised and thrilled to be in a more diverse environment, where rich, poor, and middle class kids attended the same high school. The recipient of a generous scholarship and work-study package, Deborah attended all girls' Russell Sage College in Troy, New York, graduating in three and one half years with a double major in English and Psychology.

A seemingly idyllic childhood gave way to hardship in Deborah's early twenties; during her senior year, her mother was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Returning to Marin to care for the family, Deborah was married shortly before her mother passed away. One short year later, her father succumbed to a heart attack.

Back in New York, Deborah was beginning to find her path in the working world, exploring several careers from writing and advertising to public affairs for a non-profit television and radio station, to producing for an advertising agency. During this time, her daughter, Jennifer, was born. Two years later, she and her husband divorced.

A longing to return to California finally got the best of Deborah. After traveling around Europe with then 6 year-old, Jennifer, Deborah settled in Santa Rosa with significant other, Tim Schaible. They were

...continued on page 6

Cynthia's father, Sam Miyano, spoke publicly about his internment for the first time through The Sonoma County Survivor Project to students at his alma mater, Petaluma High School. During this time, Cynthia met Phyllis Rosenfield while they served together on the Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights.

Sam never believed that his story was worth telling, but through the process, came to realize the power of his words. After hearing Sam, one student was so moved he gave Sam a hug in gratitude for sharing. Watching her father's story transform both himself and the student was a powerful revelation for Cynthia, and the ultimate inspiration for her participation with the project.

Even though Cynthia has left the Board of The Survivor Project, her efforts to promote education continue. Currently, Cynthia works at Edward Jones Investments in Emeryville. Here, she is able to teach financial security, a lesson so often ignored in traditional education, but so integral in planning one's future.

The Board of The Survivor Project gives a very special thanks Cynthia for the hard work and long hours she has dedicated for many years.

married shortly after opening an advertising agency, Genus Group.

Shockingly, at age 11, Jennifer was diagnosed with a brain tumor. While living in the Ronald McDonald House in San Francisco during the week, Jennifer somehow gathered the strength to excel in her schoolwork despite an escalating battle with her disease. After many painful treatments, Jennifer died at the age of 12. In her memory, Deborah has created the Jenn Lioy Education Foundation "to ignite the spirit of adventure in learning." Deborah serves as the president of what is now called the Education Foundation of Sonoma County.

Deborah's new passion is the 28-acre ranch she bought with her husband in West Petaluma. On her property, along with Cashmere goats and Babydoll Southdown sheep, a restored barn serves as an art gallery and studio for her husband Tim.

Somehow, Deborah Walton finds additional energy to contribute to the Survivor Project as the first chair of the Board. It is her passion, enthusiasm, and sheer tenacity to give back to her community that makes Deborah's participation such a gift to the Project.

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- Meg Alexander** for helping to set up our traveling panels in multiple locations
- Caitlin Costin** for writing this newsletter
- Susan Curry** for, again, doing the computer production for this newsletter

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Jacques & Barbara Schlumberger for donating the use of the Michel-Schlumberger Winery and wines for our annual fund raiser

Healdsburg Dry Creek Kitchen for a large party dinner donation;

Donna Bernheim for use of her home on McDonald Avenue for the dinner party (where the Alfred Hitchcock film, Shadow of a Doubt was filmed);

Gaye LeBaron for contributing her historical knowledge to the dinner;

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Our Mission

The Survivor Project promotes understanding and acceptance of human diversity through education, oral history, and the arts.

Our Vision

As our communities become increasingly diverse, it is imperative that we find meaningful ways to respect and understand the rich and complex cultures among us.

Our goal is to work to eliminate prejudice and intolerance in order to promote true acceptance of others.

We achieve this by working with communities to develop oral history/arts projects with personal histories of community members who have lost human and/or civil rights.

Each project becomes a catalyst for positive change through introspection and application.



• THE SURVIVOR PROJECT •

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