

Dear friends,

It's hard to believe, but CRT is ten years old this year. We are proud of what we have accomplished, and deeply grateful for your support over the past decade. Our mission and activities will continue to focus on religious tolerance, women's empowerment and interfaith peacebuilding. However, it is time for a few changes. Most notably, we have decided to replace our competitive "mini-grant" program with targeted capacity-building grants. The mini-grant program was quite successful in supporting the development of grassroots projects and organizations. Several of these organizations are now ready to expand to a new level, and they need funds and technical support to develop necessary infrastructure. This past year, we focused on capacity-building with Shin, the organization featured in this newsletter. Shin already had a successful track record, but at a retreat in 2014 we saw how they could significantly increase their impact by adding a few key paid staff positions and raising their international profile. With CRT support, Shin has received a major USAID grant, launched a website in English, and developed a wider network of supporters. They are now rapidly expanding their leadership in the region. Our hope is to help other peace groups similarly expand their impact.

CRT is also raising our profile here at home. In 2015 and again in 2016, we joined with other local groups to host a series of public conversations on Israel and Palestine called "Finding a Path to Peace." The 2015 series was so well received that we were invited to do a bi-weekly radio show on WSLR, our community radio station. I now co-host an interview show called "Let's Talk about the Middle East" along with CRT's new program assistant, Juliana Musheyev.

Also, starting with this issue, we are streamlining our communications. From now on, our newsletter and annual financial report will be combined. In addition, we'll send out an email news update or blog several times a month. Our website is being redesigned, and we will continue to post information and events on Facebook. We hope this communication strategy will keep us in closer contact with our supporters, and also save trees!

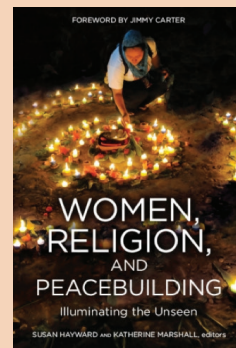
We are confident that CRT will continue to make a difference in the coming years. Please contact us if you have feedback, ideas for topics or guests for the radio show, or other thoughts and suggestions.

In peace,

Andrea Blanch, PhD, Director

CRT Project Featured in New Book

CRT director Andrea Blanch and co-authors Esther Herzog and Ibtisam Mahameed contributed



a chapter to an edited volume on women, religion and peacebuilding published by the United States Institute of Peace in September, 2015. With a forward by Jimmy Carter, the book highlights women working for peace around the world. A case study of CRT's Women Reborn project describes Jewish and Muslim women in Israel working together to build conditions for sustainable peace. Two additional CRT peacebuilders, Jackie Ogega from Kenya and Monica Maher from Honduras and Ecuador, also contributed chapters.

Juliana Musheyev Joins CRT



A native English and Russian speaker, Juliana Musheyev also speaks Hebrew and Spanish. A month in Spain and three months in Israel during her junior year at New College of Florida exposed her to new controversies and turmoil and increased her desire to learn more. Juliana believes that change comes not by forcing ideas on others, but by forming relationships and building trust. "I used to feel an urgent need to convince others...now I see my job is to share my honest opinion and trust that people will come to their own understanding. I'm really happy I get to do this working for CRT." Juliana is helping to strengthen relationships between CRT and other peace and justice groups in Florida.

Healing Trauma, Building Peace

Unhealed trauma is a significant barrier to peace. Trauma can make people hypersensitive to threats, particularly from members of a group historically seen as “the enemy.” When trauma is triggered, the rational part of the brain is suppressed, and safety becomes the dominant concern. Epigenetic research demonstrates that the impact of trauma can be transmitted across generations, perpetuating conflict and creating cycles of violence. CRT has been on the forefront of exploring the role of trauma healing in peacebuilding. Current efforts include:

In 2015 Peace4Tarpon, a “trauma-informed” community initiative led by CRT board member Robin Saenger, was one of 14 municipal projects to receive a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This groundbreaking effort is striving to create a peaceful, productive and healing community by educating people about the impact of trauma. For more information, contact robinsaenger@hotmail.com

CRT board member Judith Allen and others in Seattle used knowledge about trauma to host a successful dialogue about Israel and Palestine in a local synagogue. Many American Jews find it profoundly difficult to talk with other Jews – even family and close friends – about the ongoing conflict. Following the lead of other Jewish communities, they used a structured conversation format to create a safe space for people to think deeply and personally about the issues without becoming reactive. The dialogue allowed patience and acceptance to replace rage and withdrawal. To learn more, contact domesticwarrior@gmail.com



Hundreds of “peace flags” in Tarpon Springs educate citizens about the impact of trauma

Let's Talk About the Middle East

Our new radio show airs every other Saturday morning on WSLR 96.5 FM and is archived at talkmideast.podomatic.com

Episode 1: This is What a Feminist Looks Like. Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana

Episode 2: Who Was There First? Uzi Baram

Episode 3: Everything in Moderation. Mohammed Dajani

Episode 4: Grassroots Peacebuilding: “Cute” or Critical? Joel Braunold

Episode 5: Is Israel a “Settler Colony?” Jimmy Johnson



Juliana Musheyev and Andy Blanch co-host “Let's Talk about the Middle East”



2015 Religious Courage Award

The 2015 Elizabeth Schilder Religious Courage award was given to Pastor Carl vom Eigen of Tarpon Springs. A retired Presbyterian Minister, Pastor Carl is Treasurer of Peace4Tarpon; serves youth in the community as a tutor, mentor, and guardian ad litem; and has led interfaith discussions regarding sacred texts. By creating opportunities for citizens to speak out - particularly those who have been forgotten or subjected to social injustice - he demonstrates that the sum of seemingly ordinary acts can add up to an extraordinary life.

Shin: Israeli Jewish and Arab Women Working for Change

Shin is the Israeli movement for the equal representation of women in economic, social and political spheres. Founded in 1989 by Esther Herzog, Shin has a long list of accomplishments, including establishing the first women's political party in Israel and advocating successfully for legislation eliminating pornography on television. In 1999, Shin started the Women's Parliament, a feminist political forum for critical debate about prevailing policies and discourse in Israel. The Parliament gathers six times a year in different sites across the country. In 2002, Shin also founded a Jewish-Arab women's leadership group called Anuar.



Young Women's Parliament meeting in Herzliya

In 2008, with leadership from Ibtisam Mahameed and support from CRT, Shin established Women Reborn, an Israeli Arab women's empowerment program in a Palestinian village in northern Israel. Three years later, the project expanded to a second village. The impact of the project on the women – and on the villages – was profound. Hundreds of women went back to school or work, often for the first time. Others became active in their community and in local politics. For the first time, hundreds of Arab Israeli village women were participating along with their Jewish Israeli sisters in fighting for social and political change.

The power of working together was not lost on the younger generation. Soon the daughters of Women Reborn participants were asking for their own program. In 2011, 2012, and 2013 CRT provided small grants to Shin to develop and pilot-test a Young Women's Parliament (YWP) for Israeli Arab and Jewish high school girls. Like Women Reborn, the project focused on selected villages in order to create ongoing support

groups for the girls involved. The Arab and Jewish girls came together periodically for events modeled on the Women's Parliament. The year ended with a visit to the Knesset, where they met members, watched debate, and introduced their own legislation.



Women's Center Director, Vice Mayor and staff from US Embassy at YWP event

In 2015, with CRT assistance, Shin received a sizeable USAID grant to expand YWP and explore possibilities for making it available in all Israeli cities and towns. To date, 8 groups have been established in Jewish and 5 in Arab communities from the Galilee to the Negev. The first event, "Turning Differences into Success," held in Herzliya in December, drew 700 girls from across the country. Highlights included a panel of girls talking about their experience of "being the Other" and inspirational talks from a professional soccer player, a TV star, and the Mayor.

The USAID grant has opened new doors for Shin. The US Embassy has become a key supporter, Shin has partnered with other women's organizations on peacebuilding efforts, and a strong Jewish/Arab women's movement is emerging. Anuar now hosts a



Professional soccer player was the Arab girls' favorite speaker

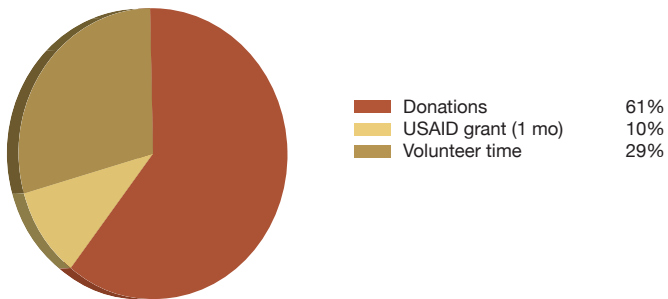
Jewish-Arab women's film club and a weekly radio show called The Voice of Peace, featuring Arab and Jewish women commenting on issues of concern. And although Shin has had a Facebook page for several years, with CRT support they launched their first website – in English – with the goal of increasing international exposure.

For more info, visit www.shin-women-equality.org.il

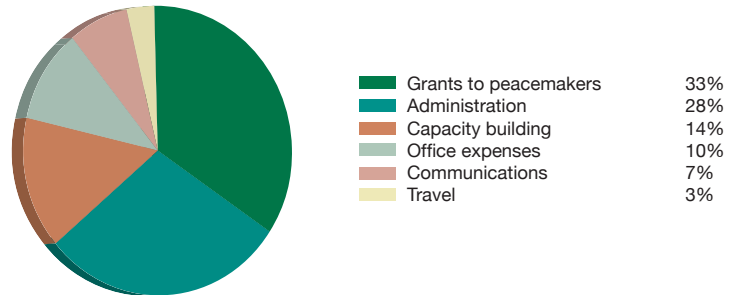
CRT Financial Report

CRT activities are conducted almost exclusively by volunteers and are funded with a combination of donations and grants. Estimated value of volunteer time in 2015 was \$16,800. Contributions from donors totaled \$35,817. A grant of \$100,000 from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) began in December. This grant supports the expansion of the Young Women's Parliament program, to be administered through Shin, a CRT partner in Israel. Total resources in 2015 (including volunteer labor and 1 month of the USAID grant): \$58,173. Expenses included direct grants to peacemakers, capacity building for selected organizations, office expenses, administrative support, travel, communications, and events. Expenses were covered by donor contributions. Total CRT expenses in 2015 (not including Young Women's Parliament): \$35,471.

CRT Resources



CRT Expenses



Thanks to the following individuals who gave freely of their resources, time and creativity

Lynn Strauss & Alexander Albee	Kathleen Burgess	Carole Fleming	David L. Shern
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	Farida Essack	Liana Salima Rael	
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Diana Coleman	Foundation for Roanoke Valley	Juliana Musheyev	
Steve Corrado & Robin Saenger	Peter & Gail Knight	Howard Nelson	

Visit the Center for Religious Tolerance at C-R-T.org to view upcoming events