



THE TALKING PIECE



Joint Judiciary Committee Testimony at the State House September 16, 2015

Pictured left to right, testifying: Representative Sean Garballey (D - Arlington, West Medford), Chief of Police Fred Ryan (Arlington), and the Honorable John Cratsley (*ret.*)—joined by officers from C4RJ partner towns. Pictured left to right: Lt. Cleary (Wellesley), Det. Sowle (Lexington), Det. Evelyn (Lexington), Ptl. Rosenberg (Wellesley), and Det. Camilleri (Concord)—The group advocated for H.1313, *An Act Promoting Restorative Justice Practices* and over twenty restorative justice advocates were in attendance to lend support. If passed, the bill would establish restorative justice as an option for law enforcement and courts statewide, create an Office of Restorative Justice and Advisory Committee to support the administration and evaluation of restorative justice *and* the bill includes a much needed confidentiality clause that would help protect truth-telling!

What Does the Future Hold for C4RJ?

While the Massachusetts legislature considers the future of restorative justice across the Commonwealth with Senate Bill S.71 and companion H.1313, *An Act Promoting Restorative Justice Practices*, the C4RJ Board recently held a strategic planning retreat to help shape the future of our organization. Thanks to a grant from the Sudbury Foundation, C4RJ was able to invite consultants Eric Murray and Charlie Coiro of Team Training Associates (TAA) to lead the board in developing a strategic plan. TAA was recommended based on their experience leading strategic planning and organizational development work for a number of our partner police departments.

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The A, B, Cs of C4RJ in the Classroom

A —

What does Restorative Justice look like when practiced in a school setting?

The applications can range from dealing with disciplinary incidents to running community building circles that give students an opportunity to share ideas, dreams, and concerns with one another in a safe and supportive way.

B —

For the past two years, with grant support from an anonymous family foundation, C4RJ has been providing these restorative experiences for students in Malden High School, recently dubbed the most diverse high school in Massachusetts.

Candace Julyan, is the C4RJ Malden team leader. She is a long-time restorative justice practitioner and Malden resident, and had worked with schools in this capacity prior to joining C4RJ.

C —

Our program has helped resolve conflicts among students, between students and teachers, and among the teaching staff. While finding resolution is central to restorative justice, using restorative justice practices to create a sense of community is a critical element of the work in schools.

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Each participant is holding a picture that represents where we'd like C4RJ to be in five years.

What Does the Future Hold for C4RJ?

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The development of the Strategic Plan began well before our September 26th retreat, and it involved more than just the members of the C4RJ's board. In July and August, tailored surveys were distributed to our funders, volunteers, community members, and police partners, inviting them all to weigh in on the current state of C4RJ. At the same time, the C4RJ staff, Case Coordinators and Board were asked to think about the organization's values, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Thank you to everyone who contributed their thoughtful insights to this process—especially to the nearly **100 people** who took the time to respond to the surveys. The resulting data has proven valuable and has directly fed into the development of the Strategic Plan.

The first goal of the strategic planning retreat was to come up with a statement that would capture the aspirational nature of our mission, while making it shorter and more memorable for volunteers and community members. We are proud to say that C4RJ is dedicated to:

"Building strong respectful communities by responding to crime in ways that heal, hold accountable and put right."

The off-site group worked with our consultants to include input from staff, partners, and volunteers to identify C4RJ's core organizational values. We are proud to say that C4RJ carries out all of our commitments with C.A.R.E.:

Collaboration — We collaborate in all we do. Through our circle process and in our partnerships with various stakeholders in the Justice System we work to bring people together to promote restorative justice whenever possible.

Accountability — We work to promote accountability when harm is done and we are responsible to ensure that victims are served in a safe and caring way.

Respect — Through our circle process we promote respectful exchanges and preserve the dignity and humanity of all who are involved.

Effectiveness — We seek an effective process that helps reduce the harm felt by victims, reduces recidivism, and increases feelings of public safety in our communities.

Throughout this process, it has been clear that the strength of C4RJ is the quality and commitment of the individuals that serve, support, and partner with our organization. Whatever the future holds for C4RJ, we will move forward with a shared perseverance and passion for strengthening our communities through restorative justice.

We recognize that the plan is just the first step before the real work begins. Come to the November 4th Annual Meeting to hear more details about the process and to see how you can get involved.



New Recruits

The latest C4RJ new volunteer training was held on October 16-17 at the Trinitarian Congregational Church in Concord. Thank you TriCon! Our new volunteers come from a wide range of professions including law, social work and education. The next new volunteer training will be held in April 2016. Interested in volunteering? Find out more and download a volunteer application at <http://c4rj.com/getinvolved.teamspirit.php>.



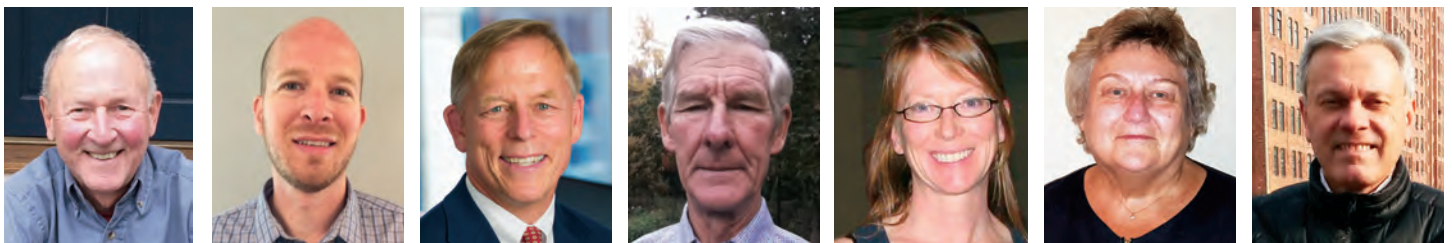
New C4RJ volunteers: (Front row, seated l. to r.) Lisa Blais (Waltham), Pat Loria (Acton), Charmi Sperling (Lincoln). (Second row, standing l. to r.) C4RJ Executive Director Erin Freeborn, Anamika Twyman-Ghoshal (Milton), Kathy Bentley (Wellesley), Ashley Feldman (Framingham), Bonnie Zimmer (Cambridge), Cara Voutselas (Acton), Heather Wilson (Acton). (Third row, standing l. to r.) Kimberly Yeasir (Cambridge), Jack Green (Dismas House), Richard Barbieri (MV Mediation), Jim Stokes (Wellesley), Peter Meleney (MV Mediation), C4RJ Program Director Chris Sanders, Michelle Robinson (Carlisle).



C4RJ Continuing Ed

In July, over two dozen C4RJ volunteers participated in a lunchtime mini-training entitled "When Do I Have a Record?" at the Bedford Police Department. C4RJ volunteer Annie Connor, Public Defender in the Roxbury District Court, and C4RJ Executive Director Erin Freeborn guided the attendees through the ins-and-outs of criminal records, and how they pertain to C4RJ clients. A three part volunteer training series called, **Teaching Responsibility with Developmental Empathy**, will be November 18th, January 20th, and March 16th at the Concord Police Department, 6pm. Stay tuned for more details.

Changing of the Guard on the C4RJ Board



New board members (from l. to r.) Pete Funkhouser (Concord), Jeff Nulsen (Topsfield), and Dave Wilson (Acton).

Board members concluding their service (from l. to r.) Jim Saltonstall, Holly Kimball, Anne Rarich, and Jeff Campbell.

We will miss them! It is with deep gratitude that we at C4RJ say goodbye to four members of our board who are retiring from the board this fall. Jim, Holly, Anne, and Jeff C., have more than 25 years of service to C4RJ—as board members and, in some cases, as facilitators and case coordinators. Their leadership and their passion for restorative justice have been integral in the organization's success over the years.



COMMUNITIES FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

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INSIDE THIS FALL 2015 ISSUE:

- Update on Restorative Justice Legislation
- Planning for C4RJ's Future
- C4RJ at Malden High
- New volunteers
- ... and more!

www.c4rj.com

You're invited to the C4RJ Annual Meeting!

Wednesday, November 4th, 4–6 p.m.

**The Great Room in Bedford's Old Town Hall
16 South Road, Bedford, MA 01730**

Featuring Malden Embraces Youth with Restorative Practices

(A C4RJ partnership with Malden High School)

Come hear from Principal Brown and others
who have participated in circles!



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About C4RJ

Communities for Restorative Justice (C4RJ) is a community-police partnership that offers restorative justice to those affected by crime. Restorative justice recognizes that crime is a violation of people and relationships, not just a violation of law. Police refer cases to us. In the aftermath of wrongdoing, our "circle" process includes in the decision-making those affected by crime: victims, offenders, loved ones, supporters, community members, and law enforcement officials.

Go Green!

Help us save on paper, printing, and mail costs by opting for our e-newsletter instead of our snail mail newsletter. Visit www.c4rj.com and click on the button that reads "Sign up for our e-newsletter."

Contact Us

Contact us at info@c4rj.com or by calling 978.318.3447 to relay your thoughts.

The A, B, Cs of C4RJ in the Classroom

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Malden High's principal, Dana Brown, embraced this idea in the second year of our pilot when he invited seniors to join the "principal's circle."

With topics ranging from courage:

- "How would you describe courage?"

to personal qualities like:

- "How would your best friend describe your strengths?"

to more playful aspects like:

- "If you could be a superhero, what superpower would you choose? Why?"

students have a rare opportunity during the school day to open up to their peers, build trust with their teachers and create a restorative community in the process.

Principal Brown has continued his circle this year and is now joined by 10 teachers, social workers and counselors, who hold weekly circles.

To hear more about this work, attend C4RJ's annual meeting on November 4th.