

## Restorative Practice Circle Training

*Written by Nancy Kelley, Restorative Justice & Mediation Coordinator*



In her annual letter to parents, Dawn McWilliams, CEO of Boys and Girls Club of Topeka, commits to providing a safe environment for youth and teens to thrive in these most confusing times.

That commitment was demonstrated when Nancy Kelley, TCPJ Parent/Adolescent and Restorative Justice trainer was invited to train BGC staff members to incorporate restorative practice community building circles in their work with students.

The intent of restorative circles is to provide the students a safe, structured space where they can share concerns and learn strong community building skills.

The 90 minute training took place on November 12 at the Adams Club facility. It was attended by six staff and included Ashley Rudolph, the Teen Services Director. The six staff members are responsible for teaching and working with the 6th through 12 grade students. They collectively work with between 38-40 students a semester.

Kelley conducts her training by having the attendees participate in a circle so they have the experience of the circle and can more easily see what it can accomplish. The response from the teachers at the Boys and Girls Club was positive. They felt that they got to know their co-workers better and that gave them a sense of ease with one another. One teacher observed that Circle is an opportunity to listen for the sake of listening. They intend to implement a restorative climate in their facility and will use some version of circle every day with their students.

A similar training was presented at the Ross Elementary School After School Program that is sponsored by the YWCA. Maggie Babinka-Repic, Youth Services Program Director for the YWCA, invited Kelley to meet with her staff on December 21 for lunch and community building circle experience. Five adults and two students were in attendance for the gathering. The student involvement added a twist but also provided an interesting insight for teachers who will be implementing restorative culture in their programs.

Approximately 35 students who participate in the YWCA after school program in grades K-5th will benefit from the training. However, since four teachers in the program also teach in the school, 100 or more students will benefit from their teacher's training in Restorative Practices.

Kelley has been invited to present Restorative Practice training at Pleasant Hill Learning Campus on January 4. The training in Restorative Practices that Kelley received through KIPCOR and through Colorado State University was provided by funding from the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice.



*Carl Frazier*  
**Board Chair**

**Topeka Center for Peace and Justice Mission:** *To promote justice and peace through education and action for social change by working with individuals and organizations in Topeka.*

Happy New Year! As the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice (TCPJ) Board Chair and acting Executive Director, most of my recent responsibilities have been around reviewing policies and procedures while establishing new and maintaining existing relationships. While the policies and procedures may seem understandable, I'd like to elaborate a bit on the relationships. Relationships are vitally important for any organization, but relationships, partnerships and collaboration opportunities are the lifeblood of nonprofits.

Our goal, as stated in our mission, is to effect change by working with individuals and organizations in this community. Simply stated, that is the essence of a relationship. This effort requires transparency and TCPJ strives to be the footprint for peace and justice in our community. We thank all of you who have played a significant part in the history of the center, but also, we need each of you to help with the mission of the organization as we move toward its great future.

Despite organizational changes in the recent past, we are excited about the current staff and the awesome work they are doing. As we continue to evaluate TCPJ, we will search for ways to collaborate in the community. We realize justice work is all-encompassing and can't be done by isolated organizations.

As we welcome 2022, we will have a renewed focus on the mission of the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice, especially the restorative justice principles, which include:

- Inviting full participation and consensus
- Working towards healing what has been broken
- Seeking direct accountability
- Reintegrating where there has been division
- Strengthening the community and individuals and preventing further harm

These principles are implemented via communication, participation from the victim, creative problem solving, and relationship building.

In fact, as we search for our new Executive Director, we will be seeking candidates who have worked within and have had extensive experience in the restorative justice arena.

With the opening of local courts, TCPJ is beginning to see an increase in referrals to our restorative justice and mediation services. This, along with the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare's Parent/Youth Facilitation's conflict resolution program, is allowing youth to pursue alternative solutions and opportunities for second chances.

*...continued on page 3*

...continued from page 2

Quickly approaching on the calendar is our 29th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. *Whose Dream Is It?* event. We are excited about the diverse participants for this community-wide celebration and our collaboration with the Living the Dream committee. Due to increased COVID numbers and extreme caution, this year's event will once again be a virtual celebration. We look forward to seeing you on Monday, January 17, 2022, at 7:00 PM.

One change that you will notice in 2022 is the absence of the Strategies Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) program. The group violence intervention program's administration and programming have moved to Topeka Prevention and Resiliency Services (PARS), effective January 2022.

As we move forward with the work of TCPJ, if you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me; I'd love to speak with you. God bless each of you.



### *Amanda Sayler*

#### **Office & Fund Development Coordinator**

Hi! My name is Amanda Sayler and I want to introduce myself to you all and take this opportunity to express how excited I am to be joining the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice (TCPJ). After working in healthcare for 10+ years, I decided to change gears and help people in another way. I started to work for another non-profit in the area. When the opportunity to work for TCPJ opened, I jumped at the offer. I find the work rewarding. It is a wonderful way to help my community and still be a full time mom to my 7 year old son Nolan.

As a mother, my goal is to broaden my son's and my own horizons. I recently took my son to see his first play "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" at the Topeka Civic Theater. It was a great introduction to theater! We also recently took a vacation to see my parents who have retired in Mexico. I feel it's important we are open to new experiences, as well as keeping with important traditions. My son and I are regular attendees and volunteers at our church. We are always looking for new ways that we can help our community.

My normal hours in the office are 8:30 am—12:30 pm Monday through Friday. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to get in touch or have any questions or concerns. I am looking forward to getting to know all of you and working together to further the TCPJ mission!

## Parent/Youth Facilitation

*Written by Nancy Kelley, Restorative Justice & Mediation Coordinator*

Fifteen year old Joe and his mom have finally reached the end of their rope according to Joe. He has decided that he will stop going to school and spend his time in his room where he can listen to his own music and do his own thing. Joe's mom has no idea how to get him out of his room and heading to school. The school has called. She has excused him until she can't anymore. What are they to do! Finally a letter from the Shawnee County District Attorney (DA) gets the family some of the help they need.

Parent/Youth Facilitation (P/YF) is a pilot program whose focus is on 14-17 year-olds and their families who are at risk of entering into foster care. The aim is to provide the family facilitated conversations that allows them to develop a family plan.

The Topeka Center for Peace and Justice has been selected to coordinate P/YF in Shawnee County. Wyandotte County and Saline County are the only other counties in Kansas to provide P/YF. The program is a part of Families Strong, funded through the University of Kansas school of Social Work. It is a research based program that calls for gathering data and adherence to protocols.

The District Attorney's office receives the information that a family might be in distress. After gathering information to determine if the family falls into the parameters of P/YF, the DA refers the family to the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice where data is collected, family contacts are made, and the family determines if they wish to participate in the program. If they choose to participate, a facilitator is paired with the family for the facilitation sessions.

The families not only work with the facilitator to develop a plan of action for addressing family issues, they determine possible resources in Shawnee County that can be accessed to benefit the health of the family members.

The Topeka Center for Peace and Justice once again has taken the opportunity to make a positive impact on families through mediation and facilitation and community collaboration.





# TOPEKA'S

## 29TH

### ANNUAL

#### WHO'S DREAM IS IT?

# Dr. *Martin*

## LUTHER KING, JR.

### 01.17.2022

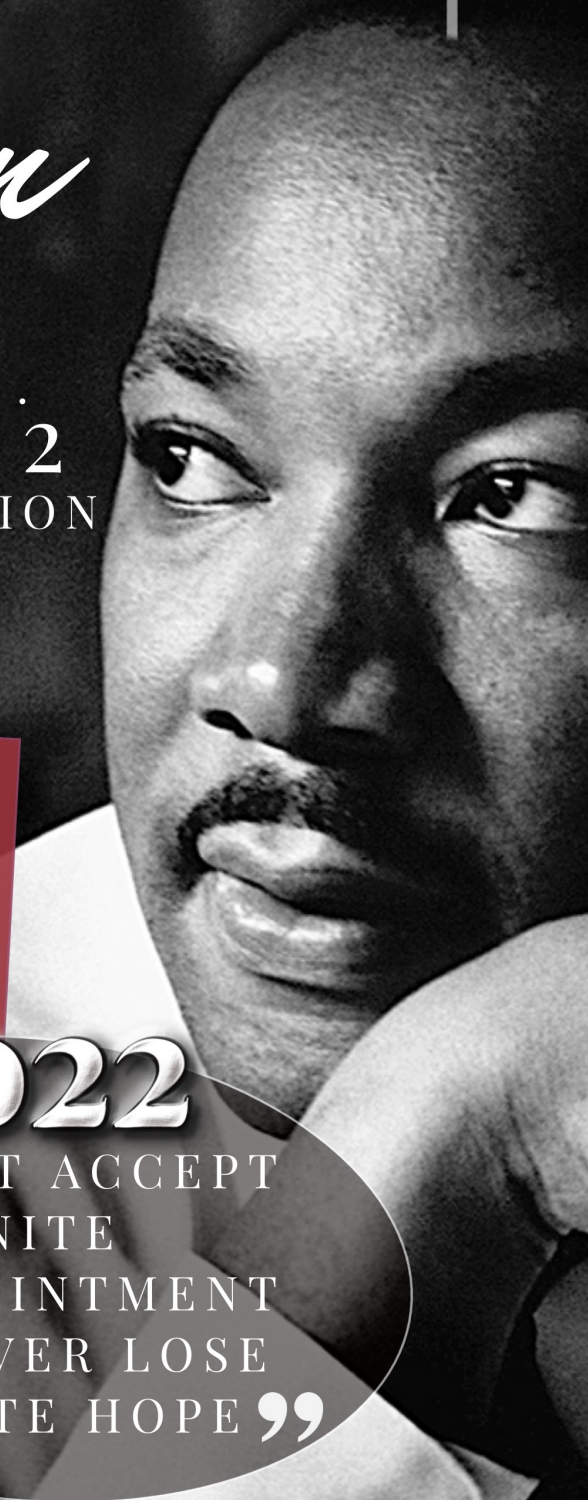
7:00 P.M. VIRTUAL CELEBRATION  
STREAMING LIVE

[WWW.TOPEKACPJ.ORG](http://WWW.TOPEKACPJ.ORG)  
[WWW.GVHOT97FM.COM](http://WWW.GVHOT97FM.COM)

LIVING THE DREAM, INC.  
IN COLLABORATION WITH  
THE MARTIN LUTHER KING,  
JR. NATIONAL HISTORICAL  
PARK IN ATLANTA, GA &  
BROWN VS. BOARD OF  
EDUCATION | TOPEKA, KS

MR. ALVIN BROOKS  
CIVIL RIGHTS &  
POLITICAL  
ACTIVIST, KCMO  
TOUR OF DR. KING'S  
CHILDHOOD HOME  
MUCH MORE

**2022**  
“WE MUST ACCEPT  
FINITE  
DISSAPOINTMENT  
BUT NEVER LOSE  
INFINITE HOPE”







*Richard Alexander*

**Written by Pastor Carl Frazier, Chair**

When I joined the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice (TCPJ) board, one name that continued to resonate within conversations and casual mentions was the name Alex. While not familiar with a board member by the name of Alex, I wondered to whom others were referring. Who was this, Alex? When I finally had the opportunity to meet Alex, I quickly discovered that he was a very intelligent individual who had a heart for TCPJ. As I got to know him better, I learned about Alex's love of cycling and how, on a good day, you could find him cycling downtown or around Shawnee County.

To know Alex is to be aware of his generous support of TCPJ. Pre COVID, the board's annual holiday dinner and fundraiser were sponsored by Alex, whether at his home or at a local restaurant. Regardless of location, we could count on him to encourage and enlighten the audience.

In the fall of 2021, Alex's generous donation of \$30,000 provided not only our largest, one-time gift but a much-needed boost to our organization. It has allowed us the time to seek new funding streams while continuing the hard work of justice.

We would like to take this time to thank Alex for his selfless generosity to TCPJ and support of the mission for many years. Kathy Calvin, former Chief Executive Officer for the United Nations Foundation, said "Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference", and you have truly made a difference for the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice.

The TCPJ board encourages each of you to consider a donation to support the work of justice. One option that you might consider is your employer's company match program. Many organizations have recently revisited policies and giving strategies around matching funds to organizations that focus on diversity, equity, and justice and increased matches as much as 2:1.

**Current TCPJ Board Members**

Carl Frazier, New Hope and Love Community Church, Chair

Rev. Donna Gilchrist, West Side Christian Church, Vice Chair

Carol Christensen, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Secretary

Lou Saadi, Islamic Center of Topeka, Treasurer

Virginia Barnes

Lori Brown, Ba'hai Community

Rebecca Morrissey

Rev. Clarence Newton, New Life Baptist Church

Dr. Glenda Overstreet-Vaughn

Dr. Gianfranco Pezzino

Esther Potts, Temple Beth Sholom

Megan Waltner

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS IN 2021!

Alden Hickman	Herman and Sondra Hafenstein	Patrick Yancey
Allyn Lockner	Interfaith of Topeka	Paul Post
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority	James Murphy	Peggy and Stan McAdoo
Carol Rank	Jana Koch	Randy & Debra Clayton
Carolyn & Jon Zimmerman	Jane George	Rebecca and Doug Harden
Chris and Kate Hamilton	Jerry Hopper	Richard Alexander
Cindy White	Jim and Charlotte McCollough	Roger & Joanie Underwood
Clark and Susan Duffy	John and Lila Bartel	Ronald Cobb
David Ritter	Judi Salyer	Rosemary Menninger
David Rodeheffer	Judith Kooser	Roxanne Emmert & Ron Davis
Deborah Dandridge	Judy Lambert	Sarah Laing
Debra Stewart	Judy Langley	Sharon & Brad Avery
Dennis Bosley	Karen and Mark Herrmann	Shawnee County
Douglas Phenix	Karen Hiller	Southern Hills Mennonite Church
Duane and Elvera Johnson	Kathy and Bill Rich	Stan and Donna Voth
Elizabeth Rohleder	Ken and Marion Cott	Stanley and Sandra Vogel
Ellen Neufeld	Kevin and Linda Carr	Susan and Kent Garlinghouse
Emilie Doekersen	Kroger	Susan Nelson
Erin Roberts	Larry James	Temple Beth Sholom
Esther Potts	Lauretta Hendricks-Backus	Topeka Baha'I Spiritual Assembly
Ethel and Jim Edwards	Lee Rathbone McCuan	Topeka Friends Meeting
Eva Brown	Linda Jeffery	Trinity Presbyterian Church
Eva Brown and Meredith Williard	Lyle Burkholder	Trudy and Ric Racine
Georgia Sandlin	Margaret Ahrens	United Way of Topeka
Gerald & Treva Lichti	Martha Peterson	Vicky Walters
Gianfranco Pezzino	Mary Ann Jennings	Victor & Cheryl Moser
Great Plains Annual Conf. of UMC	Mary Lou Weidenbach	Wayne & Carole Stucky
Gregory Inkmann	Mayra Ferman-Romero	West Side Christian Church
Gregory Monaco	Meredith Williard	
Gwen Elliott	Oliver and John Green	

*If we missed your donation, please let us know!*