

# Greetings from Topeka Center for Peace and Justice, Inc.



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After a whirlwind summer, the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice is plowing into Fall and you're invited! Get ready for an incredible celebration at the 2024 Peace Party. The TCPJ Board and Staff have been busy propagating this year's annual event, "Growing in Peace." You'll be inspired by youth and young adults whose talents and leadership abilities are coming to fruition through restorative practices. Mark your calendars for October 10<sup>th</sup>, and root for restorative justice work that has made a difference in Topeka. Snag your tickets at \$100 each or \$750 for a table of eight and be sure to check out the details for corporate sponsorship on our website. Finally, let's not forget the Peace Awards. If you know of a local peace hero, send us their details and why they'd make a great awardee. The 2024 Peace Awards are a way to spotlight youth, individuals, and organizations who are harvesting peace in the world and helping peace flourish in Topeka!

- Donna Gilchrist





## The Male Factor

The Topeka Center for Peace and Justice's inaugural, The Male Factor, was a resounding success, providing a memorable and impactful experience for men in our community. Held on Saturday, June 15, at First Baptist Church, the event offered a unique opportunity to honor and empower men through ap-



preciation, connection, and meaningful dialogue. Pastor Jason Mills, Tracy Selsor, and Chef Sean Hall, who had previously shared their excitement about the event on Eye on NE Kansas, delivered a program that lived up to its promise. Mills expertly moderated a thought-provoking panel discussion that included Chef Sean as one of the panelists. Chef Sean not only contributed valuable insights but also delighted attendees with his exceptional catering, making the event a feast for both the mind and the palate. The morning began with the engaging panel discussion, where attendees gained fresh perspectives and inspiration. Following the panel, Tracy Selsor led vibrant table conversations, fostering deep connections and encouraging participants to explore the themes presented. With a well-received catering service and an enthusiastic turnout, The Male Factor truly celebrated its mission to maximize the impact and influence of men.

- Reshon Moore



### Upcoming Event

**The Male Factor:  
Empower, Connect, and Inspire**  
**September 21st, 2024**  
**10 AM - 1 PM**  
**First Baptist Church**  
**3033 SW Macvicar Ave, Topeka**

Mark your calendars for September 21st, 2024, and prepare for a transformative experience at The Male Factor, a dynamic event designed to maximize the impact and influence of men through appreciation, connections, and meaningful conversations. RSVP today and be part of a movement that celebrates and enhances the role of men in our communities!

Don't miss this opportunity to engage in impactful discussions, enjoy delicious food, and expand your network. We look forward to seeing you there!



## Letter from Board Chair

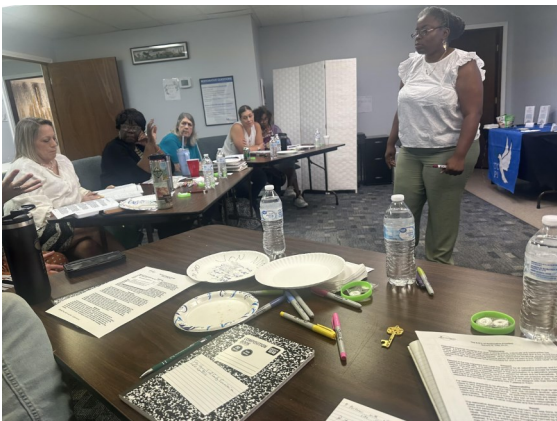
During the past couple of years, staff at TCPJ have been busy growing partnerships, seeding new initiatives, finding grants, and planting peace. A brand new group of mediators was trained and is flourishing in helping youth through challenging times. Peace Camp has expanded to reach middle school youth, and is exploring further growth possibilities. Restorative Circles are being integrated into the public schools where they are most needed, and new projects such as “The Male Factor” and Leadership Circles have enhanced the community.

Right now the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice needs you! If peace is your passion, come volunteer with us. School has started and as restorative practices transform the lives of our children and youth, volunteers can help to lead circles and collect data. Serving as a neighborhood Accountability Board member or a mediator are ways to empower our community and our youth to draw upon their strengths and work together for a common good. Peace Camp planning for 2025 is underway, and there is a need for volunteers to help plan as well as to work at camp during the summer: with the kids, in the kitchen, or as special guests. Finally, the TCPJ Board always needs skilled leaders who are excited about creating more peace in the world. If you want to learn more about ways to volunteer, contact the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice to say you'd like to be part of expanding peace in Shawnee County and beyond. -Donna Gilchrist



## A New Beginning

The esteemed Topeka Center for Peace and Justice Inc. recently had the honor of hosting our first on-site Intro to Restorative Justice training. It was a pleasure to engage with the dedicated participants. A significant portion of the registrants were TCPJ board members focused on comprehending the fundamental principles of Restorative Practices and their potential impact on our local community. The training effectively provided participants with a comprehensive understanding of how Restorative Justice can be applied within our local community, as well as equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to cultivate a more positive and productive environment in their respective workplaces or communities. - Regina Platt





## Letter from Executive Director



Topeka Center for Peace and Justice (TCPJ) is excited to have Dr. Robert Kenagy, President, and CEO of Stormont Vail Health as the guest speaker for our 2024 Peace Party. We are so fortunate to have him speak, especially since he just announced his retirement effective May 2025. The picture above is me and Dr. Kenagy, at “A Day In The Life” at Stormont Vail Hospital. This event invites the community to see hospital operations such as surgery, lab, administration, helicopter landing pad, and more. Similarly, TCPJ is preparing to showcase our effects in promoting peace and justice at the Peace Party.

All the Peace Party committees are very busy planning for the event. The Peace Party is impossible without their efforts alongside the board, staff, and friends of TCPJ – Thank you. The Peace Party serves as a fundraiser that helps bridge the gap in funding for the year, as well as an opportunity to recognize individuals and organizations for bringing peace into our community.

We are looking forward to seeing you on October 10, 2024, at Grace Cathedral (701 SW 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. Topeka, Kansas). There will be a Happy Hour from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm, followed by dinner from 6:30 pm to 7:00 pm; and the recognition program starts at 7:00 pm.

If you or your organization would like to support bringing peace and building justice in Topeka, please go to our website. Sponsorships are still available and tickets are \$100 per individual and \$750 for a table of eight. See you there!

- Carl Frazier



*“Peace comes from being able to contribute the best that we have, and all that we are, toward creating a world that supports everyone. But it is also securing the space for others to contribute the best that they have and all that they are.”*

- Hafsat Abiola

*“Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict - alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence.”*

- Dorothy Thompson

### **Restorative Questions #1**

What happened?

What were you thinking about at the time?

What have you thought about since?

Who was affected by what you have done?

In what way?



## Welcome, New TCPJ Member!

Shella Boyd has joined Topeka Center for Peace and Justice, Inc. as the new restorative justice and mediation manager. She comes to TCPJ from Topeka 501 where she worked for 13 years as a counselor and truancy coordinator. She has been married for 47 years and has a grown son and daughter, two grandchildren, and one great-grandson. Shella graduated from Prince George Community College and received an associate degree in paralegal. She has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration from the University of Guam as well. Shella also has a master's degree in forensic psychology from the University of Phoenix and a master's degree in psychology from Grand Canyon University. She is currently in the process of taking her last 23 credits for her PhD.



*"The quest for peace begins in the home, in the school, and in the workplace."*  
- Silvia Cartwright



## Graduates

Since arriving at TCPJ she has completed core mediation and parent adolescence training and is waiting to receive her state-approved mediation certificate.  
- Shella Boyd

The four mediators that I am working with have all been approved for dispute resolution and state-certified as a mediator.

1. Timothy Kampsen: Works only with PYF(Parent Youth Facilitators)
2. January Scott
3. Hakim Saadi
4. Zinaia Armstead

Each mediator has a clear and precise understanding of what is needed and mandated by the state to perform a mediation.

### ***Restorative Questions #2***

What did you think when you realized what had happened?

What impact has this incident had on you and others?

What has been the hardest thing for you?

What do you think needs to happen to make things right? To help those harmed by other's actions?



## Peace Camp: Elementary

“Growing in Peace” was the theme for Peace Camp 2024. A variety of kids attended the elementary camp including some siblings of “seasoned” Peace Campers. On Monday, the kids learned how raining positivity affects those around you. Our guest, Annie Buckland taught us about planting seeds of peace/kindness, sharing gratitude, and being optimistic. One traditional Monday activity that all the kids enjoyed was creating a Peace Camp t-shirt to wear on field trip day. On Tuesday, Diana Zimmerman and her therapy dog, Bella, visited to share why good nutrition is a healthy choice for being at your best. Visiting with Bella and making ice cream were the high points of the day. Kids also made cookbooks with a healthy recipe they could try at home, and enjoyed healthy lunches all week, cooked by Martin Pittier. Often growing things face hardship, and the “heat of the day” can be rough on everyone. On Wednesday, Guest Greg Lombard Rea, helped kids understand how their brains work during stressful times and shared some tips on staying self-regulated. Campers created glitter jars to use at home when they’re feeling stressed. Excitement was in the air on Thursday’s field trip to Bethany Gardens where the children explored peace for the earth. Kids experienced the culinary garden, created an art project out of found pieces in nature, and had some time to sing and play. Celebration and peace for everyone was the high point on Friday. Kids showed off posters about what peace means to them, and returned home with a deeper knowledge of peace and abundant memories. A special thanks goes out to our Peace Camp Director, Kit Pittier. Thanks also to every volunteer, all our campers, and their parents. We appreciate your dedication to growing peace in Topeka!



- Donna Gilchrist



## Peace Camp: Middle School

With great pleasure, I share insights into the transformative experience of the TCPJ, Inc. Peace Camp 2024, designed for middle school-aged participants. This significant week catalyzed fostering a culture of "Growing in Peace." The peace camp team, guided by a Restorative Justice Approach, meticulously planned a week that emphasized creativity, advocacy, and fellowship. Each day, volunteer staff warmly greeted participants, conducting individual check-ins to establish a welcoming and supportive environment. Check-ins at the beginning of each day and inclusive dialogue circles following activities were fundamental components of the program, ensuring that the student's active participation and input were central to its overall success. Participants were served breakfast, lunch, and snacks daily.

### **Peace for Me (Steve Twemlow):**

On Monday, participants were graciously welcomed by volunteers who exuded enthusiasm and positivity. The students engaged in a session focused on cultivating inner peace, exploring healthy choices, meditation, mindfulness, and bystander training themes. Mr. Steve Twemlow, a revered figure from the local Meditative and Martial Arts School in Topeka, Kansas, generously dedicated approximately an hour to engaging the participants with his profound knowledge. Throughout the session, participants mirrored Mr. Steve's movements step by step, mastering breathing techniques, posturing, and voice commands. They gained confidence in their ability to protect themselves without resorting to aggression. Additionally, Mr. Steve provided the students with an opportunity to take turns with the singing bowl, allowing them to showcase their skills while others respectfully observed.

### **Peace for Us (Swimming):**

On Tuesday, participants were thoughtfully paired for various activities. During this time, they engaged in positive affirmations and commenced the creation of their peace board projects. Group projects included a peace board game, dance, and a poster displaying the chains that needed to be broken for the community to operate peacefully. The activities included swimming, which was accompanied by music, and games with peers. engaging in meaningful conversations with one another.

### **Peace for the Earth (Erma Forbes - Gil Carter Initiative):**

On Wednesday, participants were treated to a fascinating tour at the Gil Carter Initiative, where Erma Forbes passionately shared the inspiring history of Gil Carter and the profound importance of healthy eating, embodied in the New Start acronym. The experience concluded with a delightful lunch served at the Gil Carter building.



## Peace Camp: Middle School: Part 2

### Peace for Others (Standup 4 Life and Monster Cookies):

On Thursday, the participants dedicated themselves to finishing their projects and peace boards. Stand Up for Life offered a supportive and secure environment in the dialogue circle for them to openly discuss their community concerns and mental health challenges. Throughout the week, it became evident that most of the participants lived in single-parent homes where the father was absent. Additionally, it was heartbreaking to learn that violence and drug addiction had been common experiences among them. Each participant created a monster cookie jar with dry ingredients to give to someone in their community.

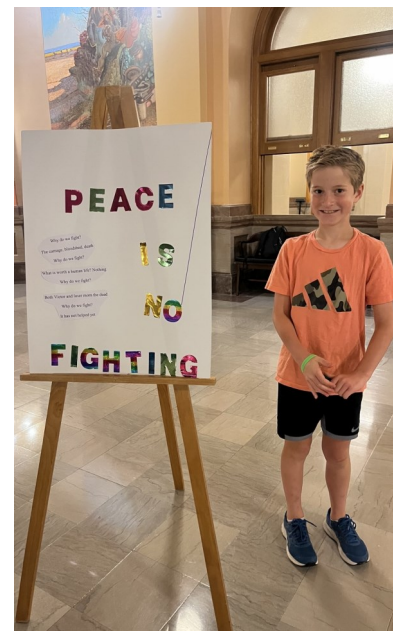


### Peace for Everyone (Capitol Tour and Peace Walk at Capital):

On Friday, the participants embarked on a tour of the State Capitol before presenting their peace boards and participating in the 1st Peace Camp Youth-centered Peace Walk. Due to rain, the program was relocated inside to the first floor. It was a truly moving experience as participants shared their stories, sang, and danced. At one point, as Sophia Ellington sang, the voices of the youth and adult participants merged into one. This was amazing to end such a powerful week.



We, the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice, Inc, extend our sincere appreciation to LHEAT/COPE for their invaluable support during the week of Peace Camp at the middle school location. A total of 22 students were served, with only three participants having parents able to cover the registration fee. It is with deep gratitude that we acknowledge the significant role played by LHEAT/COPE in providing these youths with the opportunity to participate in this meaningful program. We are truly grateful for your commitment to creating a haven for the youth of Topeka, Kansas.



- Regina Platt



TOPEKA CENTER FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE INC.



# 2024 Peace Party Sponsorship Levels



## Diamond

**\$5,000**

VIP Table for 8

Company Logo prominently displayed on our website as Sponsor & Partner and email communications.

Opportunity to provide branded item in gift bag for honorees

Social Media Post and Verbal Recognition during Event

## Platinum

**\$3,500**

VIP Seating includes 6 tickets to awards show and dinner

Company Logo prominently displayed on our website as a sponsor as well as email communications.

Social Media Post and Verbal Recognition during Event

## Gold

**\$2,500**

VIP Seating includes 4 tickets to awards show and dinner

Company Logo prominently displayed on our website and email communications

Social Media Post and Verbal Recognition during Event

## Silver

**\$1,500**

4 tickets to awards show and dinner

Company Logo prominently displayed on our website and email communications

Social Media Post and Verbal Recognition during Event

## Bronze

**\$500**

2 tickets to the awards show and dinner

Social Media Post Recognition