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## Teaching Peace in Democracy's Colleges

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*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to  
change the world. —Nelson Mandela*

This book examines the convergence of two rising phenomena that have important implications both for Americans and for internationalists in promoting a future society that is stable, safe, and peaceful. The first is the emergence of community colleges as a major force in educating individuals of all ages, ethnicities, cultural groups, and personal circumstances, using approaches that promote global awareness—whether by fostering appreciation and understanding of international events and thereby increasing public engagement, or by honing aptitudes and instilling attitudes that can be used to secure employment in an increasingly globalized world. The other phenomenon in play is the increasing importance of promoting broad-based educational strategies to advance the work of peace. As communities continue to be prone to conflict and violence, education is playing an increasingly important role in promoting worldviews, teaching personal and professional skills, and supporting local capacities that foster stability and build peace. And two-year colleges, because of their open enrollment, ethnic and cultural diversity, adaptability to changing societal needs, and focus on community building, are increasingly being seen as a critical linchpin in these efforts' success.

In the United States, increasing student cultural and ethnic diversity is challenging educators to focus on personal and group conflict and violence, not only in local contexts but also in distant communities where immigrant populations originate. Thus, teaching peace today in community colleges has both local and international dimensions. A useful approach for viewing the work of peace today is through the lens of peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is broadly defined as the “full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships” (Ledrach 1997, 20). It may encompass a range of strategies, including “providing

humanitarian relief, protecting human rights, ensuring security, establishing nonviolent modes of resolving conflicts, fostering reconciliation, providing trauma healing services, repatriating refugees and resettling internally displaced persons, supporting broad-based education, and aiding in economic reconstruction” (Snodderly 2011, 40). Community colleges, through their missions and strategies, can play an important role, not only in raising awareness of peacebuilding activities but also in providing students and public audiences with skills and foundational knowledge on which successful professional careers and personal engagement can be built. The next generation of community activists, conflict resolvers, peace educators, humanitarian workers, and others working to promote a better world can start their peacebuilding journey in community colleges—and many of them will.

Community colleges in the United States are often referred to as “democracy’s colleges” (Boggs 2010). This moniker stems from both the objectives of community colleges and the populations they serve. Established in the early twentieth century, these institutions provide educational offerings for all but, in particular, the middle and lower socioeconomic strata of society, which are burgeoning today because of social mobility and immigration. A successor to the populist Chautauqua educational movement, which was characterized by holistic public education, community colleges today are viewed as places where education is available to all, regardless of one’s position or station in life. Today, *lifelong learning* (providing learning opportunities to all, including adult learners) and *developmental education* (promoting education to increase reading, writing, and computational abilities, frequently among marginalized and disadvantaged groups) are fully integrated into their identities and missions. Whether working in rural or urban communities, with minority populations, with women, or with immigrant groups, community colleges have been true to their original purpose: to serve the aspirations of those most in need of broad-based education and vocational training.

While community colleges have become a fixture on the American educational landscape, the concept of using education to promote peacebuilding is relatively new, though the actual work of peacebuilding has a longer history. Working within societies to promote stability and creating opportunities for citizens has long been an important goal of the international community, particularly in post-conflict environments. The first modern major global effort was an American one: the Marshall Plan after World War II, which used a primarily economic strategy aimed at bringing hope and stability to postwar Europe. The Marshall Plan had important long-term implications for building in Europe a society that enshrined respect for human rights and promoted broad-based democracy. Arguably, the political and economic integration of Europe resulting in the European Union

was seeded by this large-scale effort. In the years since the Marshall Plan, the United States and the greater international community have focused on societies emerging from conflict, with the objective of creating stability and peace. United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his 1992 manifesto "An Agenda for Peace," argued for peacebuilding as a critical obligation of the international community, particularly in societies emerging from internal strife (Boutros-Ghali 1992). Since then, peacebuilding has taken on a broader interpretation, meaning not only efforts in post-conflict environments but also the wide array of strategies that are employed to prevent conflict (Levinger 2010).

The role of education in teaching peace in the postsecondary environment has been carefully examined.<sup>1</sup> Though there is clear consensus that teaching about peace has important value, targeted efforts at the community college level were lacking in the past.<sup>2</sup> In community colleges today, teaching about global peace finds a close alliance with international education. Nevertheless, efforts to promote globally educated students have been uneven. Attempts to strengthen global education have been launched by an array of organizations, including the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), Community Colleges for International Development (CCID), and the American Council on International Intercultural Education (which merged with CCID in 2007), working with such philanthropic groups as the Stanley Foundation. However, many efforts by community colleges are nascent if they exist at all. Global education has, at times, been difficult to emphasize in community colleges, where local concerns and priorities dominate.

The field of peace studies in U.S. academia is over sixty years old, and the related field of conflict resolution dates from the 1980s. Manchester College established the first undergraduate program in peace studies in 1948, while George Mason University is often thought of as having the first graduate program in conflict resolution, establishing a master's degree program in 1981 and then a doctoral program 1988. It is now estimated that there are nearly 100 graduate programs in conflict resolution, peace studies, and related fields in the United States, with another 85 in other parts of the English-speaking world (Salisbury Univ. 2007). Although Berkshire Community College (MA) established a program in 1982, until recently few established programs at the community college level focused on teaching students about peaceful approaches to conflict, and the skills of conflict resolution (see box 1.1).

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1. See Aall, Helsing, and Tidwell 2007; McElwee et al. 2009; Harris, Fisk, and Rank 1998; Harris and Shuster 2006.

2. See Smith 2008, 63-78; but see Lincoln 2001, 37-39.

**Box 1.1: Early Efforts**

The current efforts at building peace and conflict initiatives at community colleges have built on the visionary work of others. Starting in 1990, the League for Innovation in the Community College supported the development of peace and global studies efforts through its “Educating for Global Responsibility” project. The effort consisted of faculty development workshops and efforts at curriculum design. Projects were started at Dallas County Community Colleges, Miami Dade Community College, Cuyahoga Community College, Kern County Community College District, and Lane Community College. These efforts were led by Barbara J. Wien and Edmund J. Gleazer Jr., president emeritus of the American Association of Community Colleges.

The programs began with local conflicts, which had broader regional, national, and global dimensions. Faculty workshops and curricula then demonstrated how these deeply rooted conflicts could be resolved using peaceful approaches and a conflict resolution lens. Many leaders and grassroots sectors were sought out and engaged in brainstorming, problem solving, and consensus building at forums and in study circles to generate creative solutions. As a result, community colleges became laboratories for fostering peacemaking skills and educating for social and global responsibility.

Programs and initiatives have started to emerge, and as of 2012, twenty-one exist across the United States. (See appendix B.) With nearly 1,200 community colleges currently enrolling nearly 8 million credit students—44 percent of all U.S. undergraduates—there is much room for growth (AACC 2012). Many of these students attend community colleges for vocational education and, hence, will likely not participate in further formal education upon completing their program. For this reason, the window of opportunity available for students pursuing vocational careers is small, and it is vitally important that faculty take advantage of it. As this book will reveal, the lack of peace and conflict programmatic efforts available for either career or transfer students does not reflect a lack of faculty and institutional motivation or innovation.

This book represents a commitment by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) to support community colleges in giving their students the opportunity to study complex issues of global conflict and promote peacebuilding, through teaching and training as well as through example and practice. As a congressionally established national institution, USIP is charged to serve America “through the widest possible range of education and training, basic and applied research opportunities, and peace information services on the means to promote international peace and the resolution of conflicts among the nations and peoples of the world without recourse to violence.”<sup>3</sup> To that

3. *U.S. Institute of Peace Act*, Title XVII of the *Defense Authorization Act of 1985*, Public Law No. 98-525 (Oct. 19, 1984), 98 Stat. 2492, 2649, 22 U.S.C. 4601-4611, as amended.

### Box 1.2: USIP Collaboration

In 2010, at Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, Michigan—a city where nearly 40 percent of the population is of Arab descent—USIP cosponsored a seminar on teaching conflict resolution and peacebuilding in an Arab-American cultural context. USIP has also sponsored seminars focused on peacebuilding in Arab and Muslim contexts at Mission College in California (2009), Madison Area Technical College in Wisconsin (2008), and Minneapolis Community and Technical College and Century College in Minnesota (2007).

At Northern Virginia Community College (2007), USIP held a seminar titled “Identity and Global Conflict: Implications for the 21st Century,” which focused on the challenges facing diaspora groups. Nearly 170 ethnic and cultural groups are represented at the college.

At Richland College in Texas (2006), USIP held a seminar titled “Global Responsibility: How Educating for Peace Fosters a Better World.”

Working with nine community colleges, USIP held a seminar on teaching about global conflict for the South Carolina International Education Consortium in Columbia, South Carolina (2000).

end, starting in the 1990s, the Institute sponsored faculty development opportunities designed to build capacity in community colleges for teaching and building peace. These efforts took two basic forms. The first consisted of weeklong seminars that brought faculty and administrators together to explore war and peace and approaches on how to bring these issues into the classroom. During these programs, participants were tasked with developing projects that they would implement at their colleges. More frequent than the weeklong seminars were focused workshops collaborating with community colleges and associations around the United States. These more localized approaches often resulted in the convening of local organizations and constituents that had not worked together before but now realized the great potential of collaboration with a community college in achieving important goals. These events often had a specific focus such as a regional conflict (e.g., in the Middle East or Africa), looked at that conflict through a specific ethnic, cultural, or religious lens (e.g., that of an Arab expatriate community), or examined a specific discipline or approach to promoting peace (e.g., human rights or peace studies) (e.g., box 1.2). Frequently, a seminar had elements of all three approaches. Also, the Institute has offered its expertise in helping community colleges design sustainable efforts to teach about the field. These combined efforts have resulted in Institute staff working directly with more than 200 two-year institutions across the United States. These multiple approaches have fostered a community of educators working for peace. In working closely with community colleges, USIP has been able to increase peacebuilding awareness not only in these institutions but also, more importantly, in the diverse communities they serve. These efforts continue today

through the Institute's Global Peacebuilding Center and Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding.

This volume is designed to guide the community college professional, whether a junior faculty member searching for her teaching niche, a senior administrator looking to promote the college with new audiences and environments, or a trustee exploring how to set his college apart from others. The authors, for the most part, are education leaders who have participated in USIP programs and have succeeded in translating their experiences into tangible efforts at their institutions. Their writings are augmented by those of experts in the fields of peace studies and global education who know community colleges well and can speak to their potential in teaching about global peacebuilding. Each chapter endeavors to tell a story of how a community college can play an essential role in promoting peace. Together, these stories serve as a guide to community colleges in developing their own visions of teaching about peace.

## **Structure of the Book**

This book is designed to consider a range of strategies for developing peacebuilding efforts in community colleges. It functions as a how-to for faculty and administrators considering practical and tested ways to transform the teaching and learning environment. With this in mind, most chapters are augmented by materials that can provide the starting point for community college professionals.

Part 1, "Making Connections," introduces the reader to different authors' notions of the field and how it intersects with international education. John Paul Lederach's chapter provides insights to his own path to peacebuilding which was first nurtured at Hesston College, a two-year school in Kansas. George A. Lopez's chapter provides a primer on the current forces in the field, and how they can be considered in a community college context. Both Lederach and Lopez are with the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Kent A. Farnsworth, recently retired endowed professor of community college leadership at the University of Missouri St. Louis, argues for constructivism as a learning theory and as the necessary bridge between the need to find peace and the global world we live in. Farnsworth also traces the work that has been accomplished in community colleges to promote global education.

Part 2, "Building Programs and Initiatives," reviews specific programmatic ways of making peacebuilding studies a structural part of a college. Abbie Jenks, from Greenfield Community College in western Massachusetts, and Jeff Dykhuizen, from Delta College in mid-Michigan, present

their models on developing academic programs in global peace studies. Both programs also look at peace through an ecological lens, thus demonstrating the ability of community colleges to develop curricula that are responsive to community and societal needs. Jennifer Batton, director of Cuyahoga Community College's Global Issues Resource Center in Cleveland, and Susan Lohwater, who teaches at the same institution, tackle the process of developing a coherent peace and conflict studies program for students. They focus on the steps that might be required to launch a program that has specific career and skills-based objectives. Kara Paige and Tu Van Trieu collaborate to look broadly at teaching peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the community college setting. They discuss the strategies of San Antonio's Northwest Vista College and Howard Community College in Columbia, Maryland, for teaching about conflict resolution. Karen Davis writes about the experiences of Pasco-Hernando Community College's community-focused Peace and Social Justice Institute and the lessons learned, particularly as they relate to the Florida college's annual Peace Week. Vasiliki Anastasakos of Northampton Community College in Pennsylvania, drawing on her experiences in Turkey and Costa Rica, shows how students and faculty can engage in peace-focused study abroad. Finally, Scott Branks del Llano, from Richland College in Dallas, shares his school's experiences in teaching English as a peacebuilding objective in Mozambique, which suffered a brutal civil war in the 1980s.

In part 3, "Educating Peacebuilders," the writers focus on pedagogical approaches they have used to create engaging and rigorous classroom experiences. Jennifer Haydel and John Brenner, faculty members at community colleges in suburban Maryland outside Washington, D.C. (Montgomery College), and rural Virginia (Southwest Virginia Community College) respectively, provide guidance to approaches for teaching in demographically different environments. Human rights and international humanitarian law are considered together in a chapter by Cindy Epperson, of St. Louis Community College, and Isabelle Daoust, formerly of the International Humanitarian Law Unit of the American Red Cross. Sarah Zale, of Shoreline Community College in Washington State, and Jane Rosecrans, of J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in Virginia, share their approaches to teaching peace within a humanities context: Zale through English composition and Rosecrans through religious studies. Paul Forage discusses his efforts to establish at Indian River State College in Florida a humanitarian training center designed to give students hands-on experience working in conflict zones such as Haiti. An aspect of his program involves taking students to Macedonia for a two-week extended role-play immersion activity in a simulated humanitarian crisis. Whittier College's Joyce Kaufman developed the

International Negotiations Modules Project (INMP) in the 1990s to provide experience for community colleges using Web-based negotiations, and Gregory P. Rabb of Jamestown Community College in New York has been using INMP with his students for over fifteen years. Their chapter explores the benefits of the program, and opportunities for engaging students in simulation-based learning. Barbara Thorngren and Michelle Ronayne, both New Hampshire educators, examine the pedagogical approaches necessary to promote learning in a peace and conflict-themed classroom.

The final section, "Future Implications," provides a common frame for community college efforts, discusses important trends among those efforts, and presents future challenges that must be faced, and opportunities that can be leveraged. Two appendixes are included: the first is a list of resources that colleges can consider in developing peacebuilding strategies, and the second lists colleges that are supporting peace and conflict programs and initiatives, thereby showing the growth of the field, particularly in the past five years.

For the teaching of peace in community colleges to get a firm footing, more path clearing and foundation building is still needed. The contributors hope that this book will serve as an important and useful resource for professionals as they consider furthering the community college mission of globally educating students and encouraging them to see themselves as peacebuilders in their professional and personal lives.

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