2014 D.C. Human Rights Learning and Advocacy Summit Report

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D.C. Peace and Economic Justice Program
American Friends Service Committee
July 11, 2014
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Friends,

The American Friends Service Committee’s Strategic Plan clearly states that “Offering young people alternatives, along with knowledge, integrity, values, and skills, can make positive impact on their lives, their communities, and ultimately, their countries and the world” (AFSC Strategic Plan-November 2012 Board Meeting, p.8).

Human rights education “teaches the values of human dignity, tolerance, multiculturalism and non-violence, and the skills of critical analysis and civic participation” (Human Rights Resource Center, 2000).

Following the huge success of our first ever Youth Human Rights Summit in 2013, it is with great pleasure that we would like to share this internal report of our 2nd Youth Human Rights Summit. The Summit helps our young people learn to frame the problem(s) or issues of conflict in their communities in terms of human rights violations, identify solutions and speak with confidence about the problems and solutions they identified.

We would like to continue to be a learning organization. The report is intended to provide us with an objective tool to look critically at the successes and challenges of the project.

All my gratitude to Kiely Barnard-Webster, our summer program intern (colleague) for her dedication in putting this together. Same gratitude to all my colleagues including Briana O’Neal, Toni Etheridge, Lida Shepherd, Bilal Taylor, Joshua Cooper, Melanie Robinson, David Culp, and all those who made this possible.

We hope to expand the project to more youths across the organization and we look forward to your continued support!

Sincerely,

Jean-Louis Peta Ikambana
Program Director
AFSC-DC Human Rights Learning Project,
Peace and Economic Justice Program

July 31, 2014
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Introduction

In 2013, AFSC-DC hosted the first youth D.C. Human Rights Learning and Advocacy Summit in the nation’s capital hoping to both encourage Human Rights learning and also to inspire witnesses of injustice to step forward and speak up for the eradication of the problems before them. The specific goals for this initial Summit were to introduce youth to human rights as a vehicle for addressing conflict and social injustice in their communities, to deepen their commitment to peace, justice, and activism and to increase their public speaking, research and advocacy skills. For nearly a century, the American Friends Service Committee has passionately sought to promote the seeds of change and respect for human life that transform social relations and systems – a goal that was markedly observed and fruitfully carried forward by the 2013 Human Rights Summit and its graduates.

Perhaps it came as no surprise, therefore, that such positive momentum led to a secondary D.C. Human Rights Learning and Advocacy Summit during the summer of 2014 in Washington D.C., hosted again by AFSC-DC. The following report summarizes the activities of the Summit and conclusions drawn therein during five days of work with ten American students visiting from five different states. Both the Program Director and Program Intern desired a comprehensive Report following this year’s Summit in order to better understand the progress of the Summit’s second year.

Conclusions drawn from this report include a desire by participants to arrive more prepared to begin advocacy training at the Summit, to continue learning in an interactive training setting and to encourage group presentations with valuable feedback from youth and staff participants.

While this Summit provides many participants the opportunity to advance their advocacy techniques, it is still a work in progress. To become a more effective tool for all youth, this report concludes with several important recommendations for future Summits in Washington D.C... Specific recommendations addressing an increase in youth presentations, early clarification of personal goals during the week of the Summit, and enhanced after-hours support for each participant to conduct issue-specific research are provided.

From the Summit

“The issue I was advocating for was funding for alternative education or programs like Check and Connect to be implemented in Logan schools. In communities like Logan, students don’t focus on their school work, they act out, or simply don’t care…Overall it was a great experience. I am really uncomfortable talking to people, especially people I don’t know, and this helped me to become more comfortable expressing my opinion. That’s really important.” –Elijah Coleman (11th grade), AFSC-West Virginia
D.C.-Based Advocacy

All 2014 Human Rights Summit participants and staff were active members of communities from around the country. Holding the Summit in Washington D.C. served two purposes to attendees: 1) participants spoke directly with some of the highest level decision-makers on issues of importance to them, and 2) participants created forward-momentum and opportunities for advocacy in their immediate communities after the Summits’ close.

This section details the key local issues participants chose while advocating in the nation’s capital, the names and offices of staff that participants spoke with, and information about the additional support offered by AFSC staff and D.C. professionals during to Summit.

Key Local Issues Identified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFSC Student</th>
<th>Issues Identified and Relevant Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justin Anderson</strong></td>
<td><strong>Education Reform</strong> (Equal Opportunity to Obtain Education, Check and Connect in Logan Public Schools) UdHR Articles: 24, 25, 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFSC-West Virginia</td>
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<td><strong>Elijah Coleman</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Breial Kennedy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Education Reform</strong> (Implement LGBTQ Inclusive Comprehensive Sexual Health Education in Louisiana’s Public and Charter Schools) UdHR Articles: 16, 26</td>
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<td>AFSC-New Orleans</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Matlhodi Sebolai</strong></td>
<td><strong>Education Reform</strong> (Increase D.C. Public School’s student achievement rates and lower high school dropout rates); UdHR Articles: 2, 26</td>
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<td><strong>Austin Smith</strong></td>
<td><strong>Urban Violence</strong> (Violence Reduction); UdHR Articles: 5, 26</td>
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<td>AFSC-New Orleans</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Juliet Smith</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prison Reform &amp; Educational Outreach</strong> (Eliminate Detention Bed Quota and Increase Cultural Sensitivity Training Among Police Forces) UdHR Articles: 14</td>
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<td>AFSC-North Carolina</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Glenn Sullivan</strong></td>
<td><strong>Education Reform</strong> (Cultural Training for Louisiana Public School Teachers and More Highly Trained Local Teaching Staff) UdHR Articles: 26</td>
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<td>AFSC-New Orleans</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>David Wheaton</strong></td>
<td><strong>Housing Reform</strong> (Increase Georgia Foreclosure Aid and Mortgage Help); UdHR Articles: 16, 17</td>
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<td>AFSC-North Carolina</td>
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Advocacy Visits

New Orleans, Louisiana
One female participant and two male participants met with Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) staff and Representative Cedric Richmond (D-LA 2nd District) staff.

North Carolina/Georgia
One male participant and two female participants spoke with Representative Howard Coble (R-NC 6th District) and Representative David Scott (D-GA 13th District) staff.

Virginia
One female and one male participant attempted to meet with Representative Gerry Connolly (D-VA 11th District) and Senator Mark Warner (D-VA) staff. No meetings occurred.

District of Columbia
One female participant met with Councilman David Catania staff member Shawn Hillgendorf.

Logan, West Virginia
Two male students met with Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) staff, Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) staff, and Congressman Nick Rahall (D-WV 3rd District) staff.

AFSC Staff Involvement and External Support at the Summit
“I strongly urge other AFSC youth programs to consider attending the next "HRYS" (Human Rights Youth Summit). High School and college students will expand their human rights knowledge, advocacy & lobbying skills. What better place to do it than in D.C.
Plus, it was good to observe Jean-Louis introduce "RPP" (Reflective Peace Practice) to these new script writers for social change!” – Toni Etheridge, Program Associate, AFSC-North Carolina

• AFSC-DC Program Director of Human Rights Learning, Jean-Louis Peta Ikambana, introduced all Summit participants to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights through workshops mirroring his D.C. Public School Human Rights Learning curriculum. During the academic school year, Mr. Ikambana challenges D.C. high school students to identify social injustices and human rights violations in their immediate communities through his Human Rights Learning curriculum.
AFSC regional staff members attended the 2014 Human Rights Summit to assist youth participants and to support their advocacy efforts throughout the course of the week. At the Human Rights Summit, one AFSC staff member, Lida Shepherd, introduced the idea of starting a regular update about Summit alumni for AFSC staff and youth. Such an update would systematically inform AFSC staff members about the evolution of participants’ advocacy in their own cities, while simultaneously informing current Summit participants about the issues that have been explored at past Summits.

Other AFSC Program Associates helped youth participants get to know one another through ice-breaking warm ups. Briana O’Neal helped students break barriers and bond as a group through her warm up ‘Mingle Mingle,’ in which participants first walked around an outer patio while music was playing. As the music stopped, participants quickly found a new partner for a short amount of time, learning about why they were attending the Summit and where they were coming from. AFSC regional staff member Toni Etheridge also led an icebreaker called ‘Juba,’ in which participants shared with the group both what made them happy and what troubled them about the world around them.

AFSC-DC summer Program Intern Kiely Barnard-Webster helped with the logistics of the Summit so that participants could more easily learn from the Summit trainings. She helped organize food, transportation and meetings with other offices in D.C.

David Culp of the Friends Committee on National Legislation led interactive workshops with Summit participants, helping them imitate ‘role play’ scenarios when meeting with political officials during their ‘Advocacy Day’ at the Capitol. Mr. Culp has 15 years’ experience on nuclear arms control and disarmament legislation.

Melanie Robinson, a former AFSC-DC Human Rights Learning intern, helped participants prepare and execute meetings with political officials. Ms. Robinson’s workshop focused on one-on-one trainings and helped youth members’ learn techniques for how best to advocate for each of his/her issues. She is based in the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association’s Washington, D.C. office. As Policy and Programs Coordinator, she is instrumental in the passage of the nuclear testing moratorium in 1992; the ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1997; and the defeat of a new nuclear warhead, or nuclear “bunker buster” in 2004. Previously he was a lobbyist at the Indiana legislature for a statewide citizens group, successfully opposing two nuclear power plants. He is one of six registered lobbyists on nuclear disarmament on Capitol Hill.
responsible for assisting the Policy Director with NAPABA’s policy initiatives, coordinating internships, and the NAPABA Annual Lobby Day. She also works with NAPABA Committees and serves as the NAPABA staff representative on the Collaborative Bar Leadership Academy Steering Committee. Before joining NAPABA, Ms. Robinson was a program instructor with Close Up Foundation, teaching middle school and high school students civics and advocacy. She received her undergraduate degree from American University in International Relations and Spanish Studies.

- Bilal Taylor, a program officer at American Friends Service Committee Headquarters in Philadelphia, led a public speaking workshop for participants during the 2014 Summit, helping guide youth to learn effective communication techniques for future human rights advocacy and meetings with political officials. Mr. Taylor works with many program staff across AFSC and, before joining, spent over 14 years working with and for youth in the greater Philadelphia region in various capacities. Bilal is a student of Public Policy, Political Science, and Political Philosophy.

- Joshua Cooper from the University of Hawai‘i and Hawai‘i Institute for Human Rights trained participants on the basic framework of the United Nations, the process of the Universal Periodic Review and why the United States has, to date, only ratified three of the ten core international human rights treaty bodies.

Community-Based Advocacy
(SEPTEMBER)

Youth in Action at Home: Follow Up
Evaluations & Outcomes

The evaluations in this report both qualitatively and quantitatively analyze the 2014 Human Rights Summit to provide staff with essential outcomes.

Qualitative evaluation and outcomes inform overall changes that AFSC-DC staff observed in participants’ understanding of peace practice, advocacy and most importantly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

AFSC-DC staff with the help of Dr. Kevin Callahan from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) analyzed an exit survey and pre-/post- tests to gauge participant experience during the Summit, including impacts of exposure to Summit material as well as individual opinions on the logistical and administrative processes of the Summit. The findings for this work can be found under quantitative evaluations and outcomes.

Qualitative Evaluations and Outcomes

The Program Director and Program Intern organized the 2014 Human Rights Summit with the aim of introducing youth participants to and familiarizing them with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The goal of the Summit was, simultaneously, to help youth identify problems of social injustice in their day-to-day lives, advocate on behalf of these exposed communities and contribute to ‘Peace Writ Large’ as per the greater mission of the American Friends Service Committee.

For AFSC staff, qualitative evaluation and analysis of these Summit outcomes was more easily executed because of the framework provided by the Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) Program model. This RPP model provided youth participants with a clear framework to organize plans for advocacy, allowing staff to better understand where issues arose for participants.

However, participant response drawn from an exit-survey taken by both youth and staff at the end of the week also contributed to a qualitative analysis of the Summit’s procedure and logistics. Overall, participants appreciated the group exercises and the practice speaking in front of the group, with feedback provided by the Program Director and other AFSC staff. The negative participant responses included critique of the structure of longer training days, the amount of information presented about the Universal Periodic Review and the logistics of Metro card distribution.
RPP: Youth Problem Analysis and Theories of Change

Examples of participant problem analysis worksheets and outlined Theories of Change can be found below. The Problem Analysis worksheets (from RPP training material) were the launching point for participants’ apprehension of peacebuilding frameworks and advocacy planning. The following examples are taken directly from youth work, and showcase the learning process begun by young people at the Summit. While nearly all youth participants had some confusion understanding individual vs. socio-political level actors and factors, staff soon saw these concepts taking on a more internalized definition for participants, as youth began crafting their Theories of Change. All examples below have remained unchanged from their original forms.

Example #1 Juliet Smith (Issue: Prison Reform & Educational Outreach)

1. Problem Analysis
   a. Key Driving Factors
      i. Individual level: Stigma/misinformation about immigrants; media
      ii. Socio-political level: laws/stigmas on national level
   b. Key Driving Actors
      i. Individual level: local politicians; community organizers/organizations
      ii. Socio-political level: communities; politicians/law makers

2. Theory of Change

   “If the expectation for a minimum of 34,000 detention beds to be filled with immigrants is eliminated, then both the United States economy and the lives of wrongly persecuted immigrants will improve because taxpayers will no longer be investing $2 billion dollars each year into detention beds and immigrants will no longer be subjected to arbitrary detainment.”

Example #2 Julia Keehn (Issue: Education Reform, Virginia’s Preschool Initiative)

1. Problem Analysis
   a. Key Driving Factors
      i. Individual level: N/A
      ii. Socio-political level: Insufficient governmental funds; inadequate allocation of funds per pupil
   b. Key Driving Actors
      i. Individual level: Local government
      ii. Socio-political level: U.S. Government; Congressmen

2. Theory of Change
“If the VPI bill is reformed to expand the per pupil funds to match those of the Head Start program (~$8,000) then more at risk 4 year olds will be able to attend VPI preschools because more districts in the state of Virginia will be able to provide slots in their programs for those students.”

Example #3 Matlhodi Sebolai (Issue: Education Reform in DC Public Schools)

1. **Problem Analysis**
   a. Key Driving *Factors*
      i. Individual level: Constant testing leaves no time to learn because it’s by the test, not by the book and scores have gone down; higher tuitions = less privileged students to get a good education (non-resident tuition is $10,795)
      ii. Socio-political level: No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 signed by President Bush focused on improving disadvantaged students, leaving others behind, one size fits all academic progress, required to bring students to a “proficient” level

   b. Key Driving *Actors*
      i. Individual level: Students (low-income, Hispanic and black mostly male 16-24 year olds have dropped out since 1990-2012)
      ii. Socio-political level: President Obama sent Congress in 2010 a Blueprint for reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, a revised NCLB

2. **Theory of Change**

   “If we create a revised, updated NCLB, it will result in a growth in progress for DC Public School students, increase student achievement, lower the high school dropout rates and make the standards meaningful to DC Public School students.”

*RPP Curricula for Youth*

The Reflecting on Peace Practice Program (RPP) model, developed by the Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, worked in three discernible ways to increase the *quality* of each youth participant’s experience during the Summit. The RPP model: 1) let staff members more easily measure participant progress throughout the week, 2) contributed to the creation of a ‘problem analysis’ for each participant’s issue, and 3) helped lead students to develop a ‘theory of change’ to guide current and future advocacy.

A recent increase in RPP training for AFSC staff led the Program Director and Program Intern to choose the RPP model as a wonderful tool for introducing young human rights advocates to a future of dedicated impact within their communities. As this framework was not used at last
year’s Summit, its added benefits as an organizational peacebuilding tool for youth was evident upon use at the 2014 Summit. Upon arrival, many students at the Summit did not yet feel as though they had decided on one definitive issue affecting their immediate communities. However, afterwards many felt definitively more capable of identifying gaps in their research and confidently asserting advocacy goals because of the structure provided by the RPP framework.

The trajectory for each participant during the week was more clearly defined through the use of problem analysis worksheets. Constructing Theories of Change, taken directly from RPP training material, were directly used by several youth participants in meetings with representatives on Advocacy Day. The Theories of Change also helped participants organize a plan of action for future advocacy efforts.

Qualitative Evaluation from Participants

Pro’s
Lunch; constant presenting allowing comfort with speaking aloud and discussing topics; working with other people to reach a common goal; open discussions and the practice it provided (“the feedback was very useful”); discussing the UDHR and the significance of its Articles in the context of participants’ lives; Joshua and Bilal’s presentations; learning through film, for the visual learners; lobbying and learning to connect human rights to the issues faced each day; visiting the Capitol and sharing concerns with representatives about their communities; Bilal’s interactive presentation.

Con’s
Lecture-style presentations; not moving around enough; not enough breaks; portion talking about treaties, it was a little too heavy of an introduction to human rights; too many sitting sessions in a row; the trip to FCNL; Metro card distribution: “it would have been nice to already have cards on hand prior to going to the station and having adequate funds to cover the trip to and from destination”.

Quantitative Evaluations and Outcomes
The Program Director and Program Intern organized the 2014 Human Rights Summit with the aim of introducing youth participants to and familiarizing them with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. AFSC-DC staff used pre-/post- tests, one internal survey on the efficacy of Summit planning/procedure, and the help of Dr. Kevin Callahan at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to quantitatively evaluate the impact of the 2014 Summit on youth development outcomes. [Sample Test : Appendix 1]

The Pre- and Post- Test results showed that participants cared most about human rights learning and development of leadership skills. Interestingly, the tests showed that youth cared the least about lobbying elected officials and traveling to D.C..

The internal process evaluation survey showed that most youth and staff were pleased with the topics covered, satisfied with the exercises and activities chosen, and felt secure/comfortable.
during sessions. The greatest visible area of dissatisfaction demonstrated that participants experienced difficulty in understanding some of the information presented in lectures.

**Evaluation of Summit Objectives: Pre- and Post-Test**

**Human Rights Summit, June 23-27, 2014**

**Analysis of Pre- and Post-Summit Surveys of Student Participants**

**Dr. Kevin Callahan, AAAS**

**Sample Characteristics**

- Ten students completed the pre-summit and post-summit surveys. The average age of this student sample was nearly 18. Six of the students were male, and four were female. The average grade level and the most frequent program affiliation are difficult to determine because some of the students did not provide their grade and/or program affiliation. [AFSC Staff Note: Not all students provided grade/program affiliation on pre-/post-test analyzed by Dr. Callahan].

- Opportunities to learn about human rights and develop leadership skills were the two most important factors in the students’ decision to participate in the summit. The opportunity to meet other youth was somewhat less important, but the least important factors in the students’ decision were the opportunities to lobby elected officials and to travel to DC. Interestingly, the average importance of each opportunity in these students’ decision to participate in the summit was greater after the summit than before.

- All of the students had participated in a volunteer activity in the year prior to the summit. Nine of ten students had performed community service, while six of ten had participated in a community organizing activity. However, only three of ten had participated in a lobbying activity. Fewer of the students had played a leadership role in each of these activities in the year prior to the summit: Nine of ten students had played a leadership role in a volunteer activity, while only five of ten had played a leadership role in a community service activity. In addition, only four had played a leadership role in a community organizing activity, and only two had played a leadership role in a lobbying activity.

**Pre-Summit/Post-Summit Survey Findings**

1. **Have the Goals of the Summit Been Met?**

   **A. Goal 1: To increase knowledge about human rights**

   - Analysis of the responses to four questions in the surveys (Q1, Q4, Q5, and Q10) provided the most objective method of detecting an increase in the students’ knowledge about human rights. Results from Q4 and Q5 suggest a significant increase in knowledge during the summit, whereas results from Q10 suggest no change. Results from Q1 (not shown) were not included in this analysis because all of the students who completed the surveys identified the correct answer in the pre-test (that is, before the summit began).
B. **Goal 2: To train students how to effectively advocate before elected officials**
   - The summit significantly increased students’ opinion of their skill in meeting public officials, but it did not increase students’ opinion of their leadership skills or teamwork and collaboration skills. It slightly increased the students’ opinion of their research skills and their confidence in public speaking and interacting with adults, but these increases were within the margin of error.
Confidence in public speaking

- Pre-test: 4.0
- Post-test: 4.3

Skill in meeting public officials

- Pre-test: 3.1
- Post-test: 4.0

Leadership skills

- Pre-test: 4.3
- Post-test: 4.3

Teamwork & collaboration skills

- Pre-test: 4.5
2. How Have Opinions and Perceptions about Human Rights Changed Because of this Learning?

- The summit did not appear to change students’ opinion of their ability to identify human rights violations that affect them, their families, and their communities. However, all of the students’ felt that they had this ability even before they participated in the summit, so no positive change in opinion was possible following the summit.
• The summit did not appear to change students’ belief in the importance of learning about human rights. However, all of the students’ believed in the importance of learning about human rights even before they participated in the summit, so no positive change in the students’ belief in the importance of learning was possible following the summit.

![Graph showing change in belief about learning human rights](image)

3. Are Youth Who Have Increased Knowledge of Human Rights More Likely to be Agents of Peace and Justice?

• The summit significantly increased students’ confidence in taking action when they identify a human rights violation.

![Graph showing change in confidence in taking action](image)

Suggestions for Improving Pre-Summit and Post-Summit Surveys

• Encourage students to provide grade and program affiliation information. Revise survey to enable students in college to select their grade (freshman, sophomore, etc.).
• Replace Q1 with another question that is more challenging (e.g., one that not all students can answer correctly before participating in the summit).
- Eliminate Q2 from the post-summit survey. Q2 tells us something about student motivation to attend the summit, but it is unlikely to tell us anything about the ability of the summit to increase knowledge, change opinion, or engage in advocacy based on increased knowledge.
- Translate Q4, Q5, and/or Q10 from a true/false format to an interval scale format to better detect changes/increases in knowledge.

07/23/2014

**Evaluation of Summit Procedures: Content and Materials**

Data gathered from the exit survey administered by the Program Director can be found in Tables 1.1, 1.2a and 1.2b. Overall, participants appreciated the group exercises and the practice speaking in front of the group with feedback provided by the Program Director and other AFSC staff. The negative participant responses included critique of the structure of longer training days, the amount of information presented about the Universal Periodic Review and the logistics of Metro card distribution.

![Bar Chart](image)

**Table 1.1 - Meeting Planning and Logistics**
Table 1.2a - Training and Activities

Table 1.2b - Training and Activities
Best Practice Models & Recommendations

A 2011 Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA) Report about the Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) model highlights the various methodologies used for program evaluation, asserting that, overall, “[e]valuative thinking is a means of thinking or of viewing the world. It is an ongoing process of questioning, reflecting, learning and modifying: asking oneself ‘what are we learning and how can we use those lessons to improve our performance?’” (7)* As the 2011 CDA report claims, “[i]n simple terms, more use of findings implies a closing of the learning loop which is of course one of the core drivers behind evaluation.” (6)* In pursuit of the achievement of these goals the following section continues the ‘ongoing process’ of evaluation, through carefully-articulated recommendations for future Human Rights Summits.

First, several best practice models created by authors Gisela Konopka (1973) and Karen Pittman (1991) are highlighted as effective tools for evaluating youth development techniques within youth programming. Three of the eight best practice models are more extensively explored in the AFSC Recommendations for the Future subsection.

Participant recommendations are also provided below. Particularly important participant recommendations include: more individualized activities based on the issues chosen, scheduling meetings with representatives further in advance, and have more breaks during longer training sessions.

*The 2011 CDA Report on RPP can be found at this link: http://dmeforpeace.omnidev3.com/sites/default/files/Church_Use%20of%20RPP%20in%20Peacebuilding%20Evaluation.pdf

Evolving Best Practices – Youth Development

The University of Minnesota Extension Center for Youth Development focuses on positive youth development research, offering their resources to practitioners hoping to build programs specifically designed for youth development. Contributing researchers at the Center, Patricia Almquist, Barbara Brekke, Sara R. Croymans, Kari Fruechte, Mary Matlack, Betty McAndrews, Patricia Morreim, Jolie Ogg-Graybill, Barbara Piehl, Joyce Walker and Tom Zurcher, created a document entitled “Keys to Quality Youth Development,” in which, through additional inclusion of other authors’ work, they emphasize important youth development best practice.

“The Eight Keys”
Gisela Konopka (1973) and Karen Pittman (1991) concluded there were eight basic needs that, when met, led both youth and adults to feel gratified and validated in their experience.

1. Youth Feel Physically and Emotionally Safe
2. Youth Experience Belonging and Ownership
3. Youth Develop Self-Worth
4. Youth Discover Self
5. Youth Develop Quality Relationships with Peers and Adults
6. Youth Discuss Conflicting Values and Form Their Own
7. Youth Feel the Pride and Accountability that Comes with Mastery
8. Youth Expand Their Capacity to Enjoy Life and Know that Success Is Possible

2014 Human Rights Summit: Three Best Practice Models

Based on work by Konopka and Pittman, this report highlights three of the Eight Keys as relevant ‘best practice’ models for the 2014 Human Rights Summit: 1) Youth Develop Self-Worth Through Meaningful Contribution, 2) Youth Develop Quality Relationships with Peers and Adults and 3) Youth Feel the Pride and Accountability that Comes with Mastery.

1. Youth Develop Self-Worth Through Meaningful Contribution

Konopka and Pittman highlight how activities which focus on youth empowerment, community appreciation for youth contributions, youth being recognized as resources, and young people serving weekly in the community all lead youth to develop a greater sense of self-worth.

Konopka and Pittman deduce that those programs best able to promote feelings of self-worth in youth are those that encourage participants to:

- contribute individually to the group experience.
- work together with adults to create the experience.
- are challenged.
- are recognized for their contributions.
- know that their experience or contribution was valued by others.

2. Youth Develop Quality Relationships with Peers and Adults

Konopka and Pittman conclude that youth are more likely to understand and nurture important relationships with peers and adults if a program encourages them to:

- interact as equal partners in planning, implementing, and evaluating the program.
- have time to meet and learn about each other.
- are able to continue friendships with other youth and adults.
- interact with adults to learn and have fun together.
3. Youth Feel the Pride and Accountability that Comes with Mastery

Konopka and Pittman assert that youth feel pride and accountability with mastery when they, “experience success by completing activities appropriate for their stage of development and preferred style of learning. Youth set goals and celebrate accomplishments.”

Konopka and Pittman recommend programs in which youth are encouraged to:

- determine personal goals for the program/experience.
- will be accountable for their personal goals.
- gain knowledge leading to mastery through hands-on experiences.
- reflect and receive feedback on what they accomplish.
- receive public recognition for their accomplishments.
- share accomplishments with each other.
- have opportunity to practice skills until they master them.

Participant Recommendations

Among participant responses to the survey administered at the end of the Summit, some suggestions for future Summits are as follows:

- Begin to schedule Senate and House meetings two months in advance. This will hopefully eliminate individuals not meeting any representatives.
- Have more breaks (“Ex: Josh had an awesome presentation but it was a lot of information at once.”)
- Have a bigger space (“Ex: New Orleans moving to living room to write”)
- Requirements to meet for research on our topics in the few weeks leading up to the Summit, to be more prepared for the Summit.
- More time during the Summit to research our topics, “so we can ask for help/guidance.”
- Have more individualized activities, based on the issues we have chosen for the week.
- Break up the movies so they’re not back-to-back.
- Make the training [Note: make the Summit itself] a few days longer so the information does not have to be rushed.
- More information on the price of food, transportation, and a list of fun things to do for young people in D.C..
- More field trips.
- A “funday”
- More presentations by youth.
AFSC Recommendations for the Future
Based on the three “Key” best practice models chosen from Konopka and Pittman’s “Eight Keys,” the Program Director and Program Intern propose the following recommendations for future Human Rights Summits with AFSC-DC.

1. Youth Develop Self-Worth Through Meaningful Contribution
   - **Sharing Individual Goals.** In order to encourage youth to feel they are making important progress both personally and externally, i.e. affecting positive social change, we recommend an activity on the first day of the Summit when youth each contribute one personal goal for the week. If these goals are shared publicly during the exercise and then revisited at the end of the week, this will provide one avenue for youth to feel as though their individual self-worth has increased.
   - **Youth Presentations.** For both youth and adult advocates to feel as though their work will continue to carry importance in the future we suggest (as was also suggested by a participant in the anonymous survey) the inclusion of a youth presentation during the Summit. As more Summits take place, more Summit alumni with knowledge about social advocacy will have the ability to present on their own experience during and after their Summit work, showing participants the importance of their own advocacy efforts.
   - **A Group Community Service Experience.** Konopka and Pittman recommend youth community service as one activity in which youth develop self-worth. Similarly, the pre-/post- test results determined that, overall, youth were least excited to travel to D.C. for the Human Rights Summit. We recommend, perhaps very early on in the week with the introduction of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that the group of youth participants learn about the D.C. community through a service trip to any variety of D.C. community service organizations. Perhaps this experience can be made more personal for youth if led by a D.C. staff member or D.C. youth participant who feels particularly connected to their community.

2. Youth Develop Quality Relationships with Peers and Adults
   - **Youth Scheduling with Representatives.** In the internal survey, one participant mentioned scheduling meetings with representative up to two months in advance to ensure a meeting would take place during the Summit. If participants were, themselves, required to email the representatives’ offices to schedule the meetings this far in advance they would quickly establish relationships with the adults they would be speaking to and feel more confident about communicating with them once in D.C..
     - We Further Recommend: that AFSC Regional Program Directors begin choosing youth participants as early as March 1st so the timeline for the Summit is lengthened, allowing more time for logistical planning, student preparatory research and communication.
We recommend youth have scheduled meetings with representatives by May 1st. In this way, if meetings have not been scheduled by youth at this time there still remains a margin for youth and staff to contact representatives’ offices. As previously, the Summit will most likely take place the last week in June, so meetings must be scheduled by June 15th at the latest.

- **Youth Planning.** Konopka and Pittman mention that when youth are more involved in planning, implementing and evaluating a program they feel more included in quality relationships with peers and adults. Similarly, one participant response mentioned a desire for more pre-Summit research requirements. We recommend that youth and staff research, and submit proof of research, to the Program Director and Program Intern at least two times prior to arrival in Washington D.C. for the Summit. If youth, supported by their adult chaperones and AFSC staff, researched their issues before arriving at the Summit then there would be time available during the week for participants to present on their issues to the larger group. This would not only solidify relationships with peers and adults but would also provide youth with necessary feedback and confidence in their public speaking. Note: This year, Bilal Taylor led a public speaking workshop in which small groups of students did exactly this. We believe that was incredibly important to the youth’s development and should occur each year the Summit takes place.

- **Research Requirements Prior to Summit:** Requiring two demonstrations of research on an issue for advocacy before attending the Summit would help participants learn more about issue-based advocacy and would help Summit staff more effectively teach participants about advocacy techniques and public speaking in Washington D.C.. The *Advocacy Planning Form* [[Appendix 2]] provided for this year’s Summit will be required for this research.

3. **Youth Feel the Pride and Accountability that Comes with Mastery**

- The following recommendations pertaining to this best practice model are the most imperative suggestions in this report. Each quality highlighted by Konopka and Pittman within the category of Pride and Accountability should remain the primary focus for youth development during the Human Rights training session at the Summit.

- **Accountability for Personal Goals:** As mentioned earlier, students should be encouraged from the start of the Summit to define personal goals, both publicly with the group, but also personally for themselves.

- **Hands-on, Issue-specific Experience:** Since we recommend students arrive at the Summit prepared with research and prior knowledge about their issue, we also recommend that staff at AFSC-DC organize specified: trips to visit organizations relevant to these issues, role play advocacy scenarios for each student, outreach to D.C.-based advocacy organizations with individual participants. Note: in the future, selecting one Summit alumni to act as an intern with the Program Director would
also provide hands-on experience for that participant and give them opportunity to further network and connect in D.C.

- **Continue Constructive Feedback:** As this component of the Summit received positive encouragement, consistent and constructive feedback by staff and other students should remain a component of the Summit.

- **Public Recognition in Print:** This year we had one student publish an essay about his issue in the *Washington Post*. We should provide students the option of arriving at the Summit with a piece of writing, or create one during the week, to be published in a local journal, newspaper, or website.

- **More Support for After-Hours Practice:** Several students took to working “after hours” at the end of the day to research independently. The staff intern for the Summit and chaperones staying with the students at the hotel should plan to provide at least one hour of additional support during this time to encourage students to practice their advocacy techniques and assist participants with research.

### 4. Other Recommendations

- One concern from Dr. Callahan’s analysis of the pre-/post-test scores demonstrated that “youth cared the least about lobbying elected officials”. In the future, this should be investigated further as it is one major component of the participants’ experience at the Summit. Does lack of interest stem from disillusionment with specific political representatives in office? Does it stem from misunderstanding about how officials enact the social change youth advocates are looking for?

- **Assess Youth Expectations for Advocacy:** Include in the Summit a conversation with participants about both the positive and negative realities of advocacy. This may, in turn, prepare them to become more resourceful and creative advocates. Perhaps, participants will continue to remain disinterested in lobbying elected officials but they might then become more interested in supporting effective lobbying organizations that address their issue, for example.

- **More Accurate Testing:** Not all youth included information asked of them on the pre-/post-tests. For quantitative evaluation and analysis purposes, the name and age of youth (both things asked at the beginning of either test) must be collected.
  - **Dr. Callahan’s Further Recommendations on Testing:**
    - Replace Q1 with another question that is more challenging (e.g., one that not all students can answer correctly before participating in the summit).
    - Eliminate Q2 from the post-summit survey. Q2 tells us something about student motivation to attend the summit, but it is unlikely to tell us anything about the ability of the summit to increase knowledge, change opinion, or engage in advocacy based on increased knowledge.
    - Translate Q4, Q5, and/or Q10 from a true/false format to an interval scale format to better detect changes/increases in knowledge.

- **Continue to Include Nametags:** Nametags, which are important for practical purposes, also made several youth feel more ‘legitimate’ and confident at their
meetings with representatives. Continuing to emphasize the importance of nametags and participant accountability should remain a priority at future Summits.

*Please find the University of Minnesota Extension Center for Youth Development’s website at this link: [http://www.extension.umn.edu/youth/research/keys-to-quality-youth-development/#toc02](http://www.extension.umn.edu/youth/research/keys-to-quality-youth-development/#toc02)
Appendix 1: Sample Pre-/Post Test Questions

1) Define human rights
   a) Rights given to people by their government
   b) Rights people inherently have as human beings
   c) Don’t know

2) Rank how important each of the following was in your decision to participate in the Human Rights Youth Summit on a 1-5 scale (1= least important, 5=most important)
   a) Opportunity to meet youth from around the country
      1 2 3 4 5
   b) Opportunity to develop leadership skills
      1 2 3 4 5
   c) Opportunity to lobby elected officials
      1 2 3 4 5
   d) Opportunity to travel to Washington DC
      1 2 3 4 5
   e) Opportunity to learn more about human rights
      1 2 3 4 5

3) Rate your skills in the following areas using a 1-5 scale (1=low, 5=high)
   a) Confidence in public speaking
      1 2 3 4 5
   b) Meeting with public officials
      1 2 3 4 5
   c) Leadership
4) What organization created the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*?

5) List 5 rights that are included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

6) List the 3 most important human rights issues in your community
   1.
   2.
   3.

7) I am able to identify human rights violations that affect me, my family, and my community
   True    False    Not Sure

8) I am confident I can take action when I identify a human rights violation
   True    False    Yes, but don’t know what action
9) I believe it is important to learn about human rights

   True    False    Neither Agree nor Disagree

10) Define “civic engagement” in 1 sentence:

11) Have you participated in any of the following activities in over the last year (circle all that apply)?

   Community Service   Volunteering   Lobbying   Community Organizing

12) Have you played a leadership role (student leader, active organizer, lead fundraiser) in any of the following activities over the year (circle all that apply)?

   Community Service   Volunteering   Lobbying   Community Organizing

13) If you circled any of the activities in questions 11 or 12, please describe what motivated you to be involved in them. What were your responsibilities?:

July 31, 2014
Appendix 2: Advocacy Planning Form

2nd AFSC Youth Human Rights Summit
Washington, DC, June 23 to June 27, 2014

Advocacy Planning Form

1. Issue(s)
   - Please briefly describe what is/are the issue(s) you would like to bring to the attention of your elected official (US Representative, US Senator or DC Delegate or Councilmember). Include statistics, where available.

   - Why is/are this (these) issue(s) important to you and your community?

   - Who is/are the most affected by the issue(s) in your community?

2. Legislative Record
   - Do you have any records of your elected official position on this (these) issue(s)? If so, please briefly describe it.

3. Your Request to Your Elected Official
   - What action do you want your elected official to take to resolve your issue(s)?

   - What is your proposed solution to resolve the issue(s) and why?

4. Scheduled Congregational Visit and Expect Outcomes
   - Who will you meet on June 26, 2014 and at what time?

   - Tell us about any outcomes of your visit: