Volunteers & Continuing Support Needed!

KIPCOR works in part because of generous assistance from volunteers, many of whom have now retired from their volunteering days (thanks to every one of you!). We are calling all volunteers! The gift of your time or a referral to others who might help is most welcome!

**FOOD:** KIPCOR is known for the quality of food provided during our trainings & events. Do you enjoy cooking and baking? Volunteer to help and we’ll contact you to see if it would be convenient for you to provide baked goods, or perhaps a full meal (cooking duties can be shared with another volunteer).

**MAILINGS:** We have a large mailing list and our mass mailings (newsletters, for instance) need many hands to help with folding, sealing, and labeling. Volunteer and we will add your name to the contact list so you will know when we need help.

**ROLE-PLAYERS:** KIPCOR trains student mediators throughout the year, and part of that training can include rigorous role-play practice...which requires help from volunteer thespians. Do you long for the stage every now and then? Volunteer and play the part of a parent fighting for more parenting time, a landlord or tenant, a consumer or business owner, or an unhappy neighbor.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT:** We are associated with Bethel College, but almost entirely self-funded. Since money does NOT grow on trees, we need to find it somewhere else. Without the generous support of friends and corporate/foundation sponsors, our work simply cannot continue.

If you can help us in our mission of peacemaking, please contact our Office Manager, Doug Lengel, at: 316-284-5217 or dlengel@bethelks.edu. He will be happy to explain the volunteer process to you.

We’re on the Web www.kipcor.org and on www.facebook.com/kipcorks

KIPCOR’s Strategic Planning Process ~ Sheryl Wilson, Director

For the first time in 20 years, KIPCOR has begun a strategic planning process. Over a two-day period in April, KIPCOR staff met with over 20 constituents to discuss the future of the organization. Facilitators from Wichita State University’s Community Engagement Institute, Seth Bate and Danny Barrera, worked with the staff from the conception phase to help the staff derive clear goals from the time of convening with constituents. They have a proven track record, and we especially appreciate the knowledge that our facilitators already possessed concerning the nature of KIPCOR’s work. Seth Bate, Director of the Center for Leadership Development at the Institute, was our lead facilitator, with over 25 years of experience working with groups in transition. Danny Barrera is a Bethel graduate (class of 2014), and has experience in nonprofit management, coaching and facilitation.

KIPCOR’s constituents were thoroughly engaged throughout the process. We had the great fortune to have the participation of Bethel staff and faculty, representatives from local businesses and organizations, KIPCOR volunteers, panelists of the Community Mediation Center, and court professionals. Several of our constituents fully participated during both days of our process – even a few who mentioned that they couldn’t attend both days managed to rearrange their schedules to join us on the second day anyway. I was so appreciative of their dedication.

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~ Sheryl Wilson

Sarah Balzer wins Bi-National C. Henry Smith Peace Oration Award

For the second time in two years, Bethel College’s C. Henry Smith Peace Oration winner has gone on to win the Bi-National contest as well. Sarah Balzer of Inman, who won Bethel’s contest last Spring as a Junior, was announced as the winner of the Bi-National (Canada and the US) contest over the summer. KIPCOR is proud to continue to sponsor this contest and the excellent students at Bethel who participate in it. Sarah’s presentation was “Environmental Inequalities in the Age of Plastics” and you can see the video at kipcor.org/our-work

Congratulations, Sarah!!

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Strategic Planning

On the first day of the process, constituents were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of current programming. By the second day, constituents were giving their forecasts of the future and dreaming alongside KIPCOR staff about what is possible. Throughout the process, many of the constituents were able to voice what they appreciated about different initiatives, express what programming needed improvement, and bring up new ideas.

The new KIPCOR Advisory Council members will be selected by the end of 2018 and begin service in early 2019. Stay tuned to find out more about the changes that will impact KIPCOR and grow our reach in the coming year.

In addition, we heard from constituents about other priorities that include marketing, assessing gaps in services, and addressing capacity issues.

KIPCOR on the Road

Here are some of the conferences we have attended and presentations we have made in various places in Kansas and around the country over the past few months.

- June 11-15 Notre Dame, IN: Teaching Peace at Kroc - Sharon and fellow Bethel College faculty colleague Kip Wedel attended this conference for Peace Studies faculty members for program development.
- June 21-23 Wichita: Kansas Leadership Center Activate Conference - Sharon and Sheryl presented on tools for conflict resolution in the workplace.
- Oct 3 Bethel College: Life Enrichment - Sheryl presented on “Finding the Right time to have Difficult Conversations”
- Oct 5 Kansas City, MO: Global And Multicultural Education Conference - Sheryl presented on creating diverse spaces in educational communities.
- Oct 8-9 Wichita: ESSDACK conference - Sharon coordinated and supported trainers Alison Replogle, Jenny Mu relegated and Sheryl from KIPCOR’s Restorative Schools Initiative to present on the integration of social emotional learning and restorative justice in schools.
- Oct 16 Wichita: KMUW panel - Sheryl served as a panelist for “Democracy on Tap” and discussed how to handle conflict during the mid-term election season and throughout the holidays.
- Oct 27 Kansas City, MO: Greater Kansas City Peacebuilding Conference - served as a panelist for “Everyday Peacebuilders” and presented a breakout session on “Calling it Success: The Long Road of Peacebuilding in Urgent Crises”.
- Nov 2-4 Denver CO: National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation national conference - Sharon attended this conference to learn more about how to bring people together across divides to tackle today’s toughest challenges.
- Nov 7-10 Denver CO: Association of Family and Conciliation Courts Conference - Dan attended this regional Symposium in Denver to learn about child custody topics from national & international experts.
- Nov 16 Moorhead, MN: Practicing Restorative Justice Conference - Sheryl served as a keynote speaker and spoke on the importance of growing one’s practice in the field.
- Nov 16 Bethel College: Kansas Council on Social Work Education - Sharon presented a workshop on “Circles in Tense Times”
- Nov 30 Bethel College: Annual meeting of CMC Dispute Resolution Specialists and local judges - Dan facilitated this meeting of specialists and judges to discuss various issues that have an impact on CMC’s unique Dispute Resolution Triage Program, which helps resolve conflict between divorcing and separating parents in Harvey and McPherson counties.

KIPCOR’s 2018-19 Film Series is at the halfway mark with two more provocative movies on tap for November.

See You at the Movies!

KIPCOR’s 2018-19 Film Series is at the halfway mark with two more provocative movies on tap for November.

Be sure to reserve SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2019 on your schedule and come to the Luyken Fine Arts Center (Krehbiel Auditorium) on the Bethel College campus at 3:00 p.m. On that day, KIPCOR will screen “More Than a Word,” a film that will take you inside the controversy over Native American-based sports mascots, with a particular focus on the growing movement to change the nickname of the Washington, D.C. professional football team. The film’s directors – who are brothers and members of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe – trace how the nickname has evolved from one of racial derision to one that is enthusiastically embraced by many fans of the NFL franchise. The film also features the voices of Native American activists and scholars to place the mascot controversy in a wider societal context.

Following the screening of “More Than a Word,” we are excited that Dr. Edward Valandra has agreed to lead what is always an active and engaging post-film discussion. Dr. Valandra, Dean of Academic and Professional Development Studies at Saint Francis Indian School in South Dakota, is a member of the Očeti Sakowin Oyate/Sicangu Tlumän Nation and is also the uncle of the film’s narrator. He will also be the featured speaker at Bethel’s Convocation on February 18 at 11:00 a.m.

KIPCOR will close its 2018-19 Film Series on Sunday, April 14, 2019 (same time and location) and is still considering a number of films to screen for our audience.

We also extend a big THANK YOU to everyone who attended our first two films of the academic year and participated in the post-film discussion. We kicked things off in September with two short films about immigration – one chronicling the five-year journey of a Syrian family fleeing the war in Homs; and the other focusing on immigrants held in U.S. detention centers, many of which are operated as for-profit prisons. In November, KIPCOR screened “Digital Disconnect,” a film that examines the relationship between the Internet and Democracy in our current age of fake news, filter bubbles, and security breaches.

Each film is followed by a 20-30 minute Q&A/Discussion period. All films shown at 3:00 PM in Krehbiel Auditorium in the Luyken Fine Arts Center.

Donating to KIPCOR online is REALLY easy, and REALLY SECURE.

STEP 1: Go to the KIPCOR website at www.kipcor.org.
STEP 2: Click on "Get Involved" in the ribbon at the top, and then on “Donate/Volunteer”.
STEP 3: Read the information on the Donate page; pay particular attention to “Donation Instructions”.
STEP 4: Click on the “Donate Online Today!” button.
STEP 5: Fill out all of the information required. At the bottom, just before entering your credit card data, is the “Gift Destination” selection. The box says “Select One” and has a downward facing arrow at the right. Click anywhere in this box, and a box will appear with choices. Click on “Other.” When you do that, a second box will appear. In that box, type the word KIPCOR. Fill out your credit card information, and click on "Submit Form." That’s all there is to it!

STEP 6: (Optional) If it’s not too much trouble, let Doug (dlangenstine@bethels.edu or 316-284-5217) or Sheryl (swilson@bethels.edu) in the KIPCOR office know that you’ve made an online donation so we can watch for the receipt from the development office, and give you a proper THANK YOU!!
The Continued and Urgent Need for Skills-building for Healthy Congregations

~Sharon Kniss

After I graduated with a Justice, Peace, and Conflict Studies degree, I began working for Bridge Builders – an ecumenical ministry based in London, England with an expressed mission to "transform church conflict." Our organization provided training for church leaders throughout the UK in handling conflict – from interpersonal disagreements, to strategic planning and structural change, to transforming the entire church culture to be one that could handle conflict well. We also provided consultancy, mediation, and facilitation support for congregations that found themselves in conflict. Having graduated with ideals about how exciting it would be to support a peace process in Colombia or end street violence in the US, I chuckled that my daily work was instead "teaching church leaders how to love each other" – a basic tenet of the Christian faith. And yet, I also realized, if the Church can't do this (a body which is formed based on this expressed value) – then what hope is there for anyone else?

I've continued to support congregations in this important work throughout my career. In my first year at KIPCOR, we received 2-3 enquiries for congregational support, none of which transpired at the time into further engagement. In the last 18 months, we have received 10 enquiries and have worked actively with 7 congregations in some capacity. I'm not sure if there's a particular reason for the upick in enquiries and requests recently, since the challenges in the congregations run the gamut: a crisis incident that throws a congregation off-balance, "safe and welcoming" concerns relating to policies surrounding sexual abuse and offenders, rumor-mills coupled with leadership concerns, ingrained patterns of communication and behavior leaving the congregation barely holding on together, articulating theological approaches to political concerns, scapegoating, and more. At the same time, I know our faith communities are not isolated islands – they reflect and respond to wider society's concerns. The polarized national political climate seeps into our communication patterns with each other, pushing us either to be silent or not rock the boat, or speak too harshly out of our passion. The #MeToo movement has likely contributed to more voices willing to speak out and push congregations to better address safety concerns around sexual abuse and harassment.

With only a few staff members and associates, KIPCOR doesn't have the capacity to adequately support all the requests we receive while maintaining our own educational and case commitments. Therefore, two key needs emerge:

- **We need to equip more congregations, with their ordained and lay leaders, to address conflict, crisis, and change in healthy and productive ways.**

Additionally, KIPCOR and the Community Mediation Center offer two classes for divorcing parents each month. We offer the Divorce Impact Education class the second Thursday of the month at 5:15 PM in McPherson, and we offer the same class the fourth Tuesday of the month, also at 5:15 PM, in North Newton.

Contact the Community Mediation Center at (316) 284-5829 or CMC@bethelks.edu for more information on these classes.

We offer classes in Restorative Schools throughout the year. Contact Education Director Sharon Kniss at skniss@bethelks.edu or (316) 284-5882 for more information on Restorative Schools.

To learn more about KIPCOR’s work in Congregational Health, contact Sharon Kniss at (316) 284-5882 or skniss@bethelks.edu.

To learn more about Managing Differences & Disagreement within Faith Communities (Jan 3-4, 2019) go to kipcor.org

To learn more about the pool of outside facilitators ready to support congregations when they enter difficult periods or crises.

There are two ways we are addressing these needs: In a few weeks, January 3-4, we offer our semi-regular training course on "Managing Difference & Disagreement within Faith Communities" which will offer more skills and insights for building healthy(ier) congregations. Please consider signing up 2-3 members of your congregation to attend and learn these skills and insights to take back and help transform your community. We currently have too few registrants to run the class, but we don’t want to have to cancel because we know these skills are needed in our congregations!

Secondly, the skills used in supporting congregations are diverse – group facilitation, mediation, strategic planning, community organizing, systems theory, organizational development, trauma healing, and restorative justice are all skill sets I have used in working with congregations. In addition to schooled training, a lot of my learning came from practice and mentorship because of the unique dynamics in congregational life. Recognizing this, I'm interested in mentoring colleagues who feel called to support this work, particularly young people of color who see themselves as potential leaders in this field.

I know there is hope for our faith communities to lead the way in transforming relationships and communities to be healthy and vibrant, even in the face of conflict. Join us in this important work!
Getting to Know KIPCOR: Senior Mediator & Facilitator Dan Wassink

Where’s your favorite place in the world?

As a way of getting to know KIPCOR Senior Mediator & Facilitator Dan Wassink, we asked him the following questions:

What’s the best concert you ever attended?

I've got to go with the Rolling Stones in candlelight service.

What’s the most important thing you’ve ever had?

Pure glutony!

What is your favorite smell?

Pretty much anything my Grandma Was- ker area was like.

What is your favorite sound?

Right now, I'm nearly to the end of the funny, serious, and incredibly "infinite Jest" by David Foster Wallace. I nearly stopped reading 50 pages in, but now I'm at it for nearly a year now and am getting anxious about all the books still waiting (I refuse to read more than one at a time). My next selection is gonna have to be something light and breezy after this.

What is your favorite sound?

My cats purring. The sound of pure con- tentment.

What is your favorite smell?

A fresh-poured, West Coast-style IPA, heavy on the Cascade hops.

If you could ban the usage of one word or phrase from the English language, what would it be?

Hmmm... that's a toss-up. But if forced to choose, "at the end of the day" I would go with it "is what it is."

What was the toughest part of your transition from Wisconsin to Kansas?

Leaving politics aside, I'd have to say the weather. I don't tolerate the Kansan Summer heat well; Wisconsin actually has an Autumn season that lasts more than a week, and I miss biking along tree-lined paths when the leaves are turning; and my cross-country skis are gathering dust in my garage.

What is the best meal you've ever had?

The newsletter in the mail, contact the office to set up a mailing list, send us your email address, we will send you our newsletter to electronic- ly instead of through the mail.

KIPCOR Goes Green to Improve Stewardship of Our Limited Resources

With this Fall 2018 newsletter KIPCOR has made the transition to an electronic newsletter. If you have your email address, we send our newsletter to you electronically instead of through the mail.

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