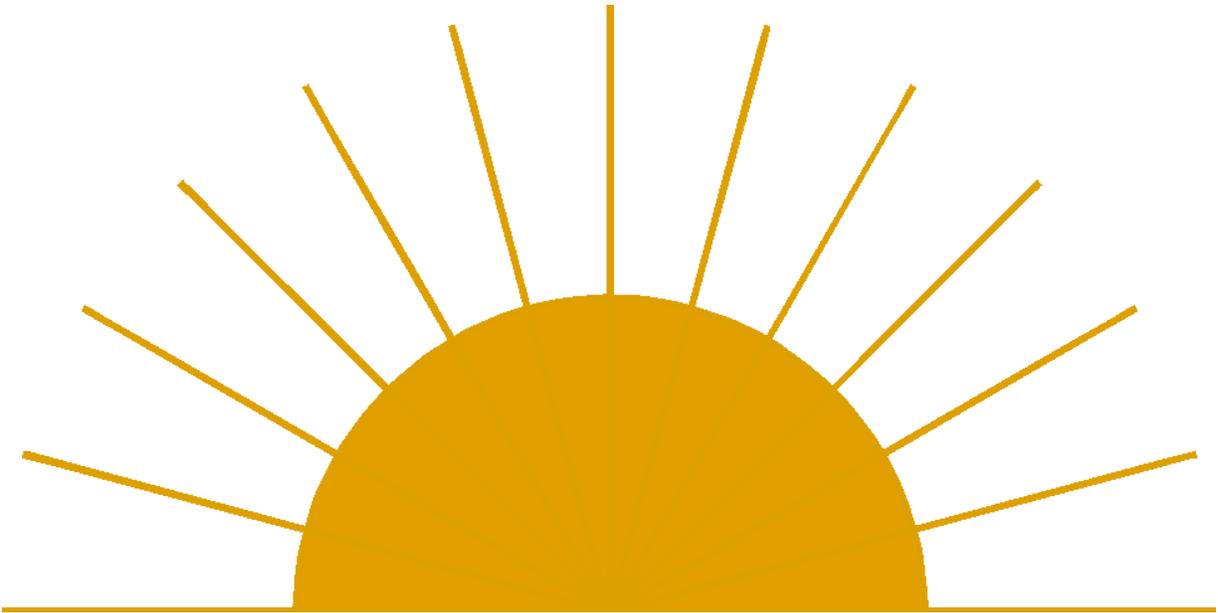


PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Citizen-Police Trust-Building Project to Promote Truth & Reconciliation



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION



What is the “Truth and Reconciliation” Concept?



- The truth and reconciliation concept, used extensively in Africa and Latin America, has developed into an effective global strategy for dealing with human rights abuses, war crimes and violence fueled by hatred.
- The approach is one of "**restorative justice**," which differs from the customary adversarial and retributive justice. The truth and reconciliation process seeks to heal relations between opposing sides by uncovering all pertinent facts, distinguishing truth from lies, and allowing for acknowledgement, appropriate public mourning, forgiveness and healing.
- Although in many cases truth & reconciliation projects has been sponsored by governments, the focus often is on giving victims, witnesses and even perpetrators a chance to publicly tell their stories with the intention of uncovering clues to the healing process and to bring about dramatic transformation.
- The first truth commission was formed in Uganda in 1974. The most famous is the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. More than thirty nations, including Peru, Ghana, East Timor and Sierra Leone, have utilized the truth commission model since the inaugural use of this powerful model. Additionally, the United States has quietly utilized the model in places like Greensboro, N.C. & Detroit, MI.
- With an initial \$4 million grant from the Ford Foundation, one of the chief architects of South Africa's truth commission founded the **International Center for Transitional Justice** (ICTJ) in 2001 to advise other nations employing the process. This resource will, of course, be available to us as well for our project.
- Truth and reconciliation promotes the belief that confronting and reckoning with the past is necessary for successful transitions from conflict, resentment and tension to peace and connectedness. When the ICTJ advises projects in the United States (or wherever they may be developed), it helps the organizers to tailor the process - as all who use it must - to its unique circumstances, history and needs.

***HISTORY:** There are over 40 “**Truth & Reconciliation Projects**” (Commissions, etc.) around the world... Which can be described in this way: *A **truth commission** or **truth and reconciliation commission** is a commission tasked with discovering and revealing past wrongdoing by a government (or non-state actors) in the hope of resolving conflict left over from the past. They are, under various names, occasionally set up by states emerging from internal unrest, civil war, hatred, ongoing violence and repeated poor treatment of citizens.*

Here is a list of them by countries, that was taken from Wikipedia at the following link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_truth_and_reconciliation_commissions

- Argentina
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Canada
- Chad
- Columbia
- Congo (Democratic Republic)
- Chile
- Czech Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Fiji
- Germany
- Ghana
- Guatemala
- Haiti
- Kenya
- Liberia
- Mauritius
- Morocco
- Nepal
- Nigeria
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Poland
- Philippines
- Rwanda
- Sierra Leone
- Solomon Islands
- South Africa (*Most referenced)
- South Korea
- Sri Lanka
- Timor-Leste (East Timor)
- Togo
- Tunisia
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- Uruguay
- Yugoslavia

-- **United States: Greensboro, North Carolina...** The [Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) was a non-governmental body that ran from 2004-2006 to investigate events in the city that took place around 3 November 1979.

Our Truth & Reconciliation Project will be a “Brain Trust”

After three years of work around the issue of police-involved violence, it has become crystal clear to the Next 50 Years Project (NEXT-50), as well as our facilitation partners, that deep level healing and reconciliation is needed if we ever want to completely address and uproot the social ill of violence involving police... For some time now citizens have engaged in dialogue and aired their grievances in forums and town hall meetings, but the problem continues and it is glaring that the job of really healing relations, establishing genuine trust, and, most especially, preventing harm is not happening. Therefore, we are partnering with high ranking LAPD officials, leadership from the University of Southern California (USC) and other Community Leaders in Los Angeles to form a **“Brain Trust.”** Our vision is to conduct a **“Truth & Reconciliation”** type project focused on Law Enforcement, Communities of Color, Youth and Thought Leaders wishing to go deeper and mutually discover solutions. The Project will also include the participation of college students, professors and research experts to capture best practices and help disseminate our finding to other police departments and jurisdictions in the United States. This work will begin immediately, and the plan is to roll it out in phases.



“We have 16,000 police chiefs and law enforcement officials gathered here in San Diego and it is an important message to spread. Communities and law enforcement need to begin a healing process and this is a bridge to begin that dialogue. If we are brave enough to collectively deliver this message, we will build a better and safer future for our communities and our law enforcement officers. Too many lives have been lost already, and this must end. It is my hope that many other law enforcement executives will deliver this same message to their local communities, particularly those segments of their communities that lack trust and feel disenfranchised.”

-- Chief Terrence Cunningham, October 17, 2016

The Brain Trust model was utilized by President Franklin Roosevelt during one of the most difficult times in America when we were riddled with problems during his administration. A Brain Trust invites citizens to think and act with government to find sorely-needed solutions; specifically, to share the responsibility for BOTH discovering what to do about serious challenges as well as to get directly involved with the actual steps that need to be taken. One recent example of a notable citizen embracing such ideas was when Dr. Aliah brought **Lora King -- Rodney King's daughter** -- together with the LAPD and a cadre of young (“at risk”) conservation workers from the L.A. Conservation Corps on September 15, 2016

***LINK TO STORY:** <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/170cfde017da4c09853db565c990ab9c/rodney-kings-daughter-build-bridges-police>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0n48dU0aW0&feature=youtu.be...> Dr. Aliah's objective was to shift the idea of police-involved shootings, the dangers of our fears and the insidiousness of a lack of trust being the *sole responsibility* of the police by introducing the Los Angeles community to a methodology of “truth-telling, mutual responsibility and collective leadership. Dr. Aliah had mentored Lora (King) during the summer to support her preparedness and model the skills needed to effectively facilitate difficult conversations. The session with Lora (King) was picked up by the Associated Press and blasted worldwide.

***Some Key Project Premises...**

Citizen-Police Trust-Building Project to Promote Truth & Reconciliation

We'll begin by determining a **"Clear Framework"** and mutually developing our specific methodologies, including deciding upon the particular **"Common Language & Definitions"** that we will use for the project.

Our reconciliation work will focus on **relationships and identities**; therefore, **what has happened historically between police and communities of color** will be examined, for the purpose of **inspiring responsibility and engendering accountability...** These goals will be **carefully and respectfully facilitated** by a diverse group of qualified people, and this vision involves participation by various organizations and disciplines.

Our primary goal will be to **"re-think" reconciliation** and arrive at a relevant vision for the Los Angeles community, one that will both inform the work for our city as well as assist other police departments and communities that may wish to learn from us.

***Key Question: "How do WE want our particular reconciliation project to look and feel?"**

Specifically, we will re-think reconciliation to be much more flexible, meaning our work will address different contexts **and have far fewer pre-conceptions and expectations attached to it than traditional commissions.** In our work, reconciliation will not only be about seeking to address historical grievances, it will be about us as stakeholders **"thinking together about the future"** – forming a **brain trust** – and us being aligned with the intention to not ever force normative models onto uncooperative realities.

One important, but admittedly previously elusive goal in trust-building between police and the communities they serve, is the **long-term transformation of the fear-producing and adversarial environment** that exists between law enforcement and several target groups – most especially, Black men and other people of color... And, our ultimate goal will be to have the work we do evolve and truly be a force for lasting change.

The reconciliation project that we are collectively creating will be an **ongoing mutual process based on "common consent"**... And, even at its outset, everyone who is participating in the project will agree that what we are doing has no guarantees, and we will embrace the idea that genuine **"healing"** is a personal **"choice"**, something that we must deliver to ourselves and take responsibility for – both now, and in the future.



PROJECT OBJECTIVES...

What is the problem we are looking to solve? To reverse the unfortunate trends that are constantly being reported in the news, the coverage of officer's excessive use-of-force senseless shootings of police officers, racial tension, violence, conflict, hate crimes and etc.

What populations will our efforts focus upon? People of color, Black men, Latino men, youth ages 14 – 29, all citizens of Los Angeles, immigrants, citizens from what is called disadvantaged communities, individuals flirting with trouble (those at risk) and anyone who needs help in the area of our project's focus . The task is to identify the "problems" in the Los Angeles area that involves Law Enforcement, as well as discover and build the community's capacity for trust by developing relationships among the different factions who will work together in a positive fashion utilizing a "**Brain Trust**" model – especially, engaging **USC Students & Educational Leaders** to help address issues & document the best practices.

How will this be done? The starting place is to identify the specific goals of this project and gather educational leader-collaborators to assist us to "think" about what will be the most effective and far-reaching. This will be done by offering facilitated **Planning Sessions** to determine what attitude-shifting events, trainings or, perhaps, classes that might be helpful to begin developing "equal-footing" encounters with Law Enforcement and citizens (with a focus on youth) to begin working toward "reconciliation" and to find never-been-tried-before solutions. ***NOTE:** The events and processes of this project will be offered in three different environments to ascertain which environments are most effective for the work.

The outcome we are seeking is for both Law Enforcement and community members to begin to listen with "**new ears**" and to learn to trust each other in ways that have not yet been explored. Everyone participating will take responsibility for creating the fresh means to address issues of police-involved violence and build bridges between the community and the police. Additionally, there will be an emphasis on harvesting the ideas of our young people – as well as the utilization of the particular forms of communication that youth favor and use!

