

Peacebuilders

Project Proposal by Laura Fleming Ospital



L-R: Shilpa Banerjee (New Matriarchs: Louisville 2004), Oydin Rahim With Her Family (New Matriarchs Louisville 2015), Joshua Huettig (Donated, Discarded & Ditched 2014)

Overview of Peacebuilding Project

I am proposing an oral history project featuring seven individuals who have been involved in diverse peacebuilding efforts in Louisville. The goal of this project is to spread the word about the breadth of peace in our own community, and hopefully inspire more individuals to become peace promoters. In addition to audio-recording oral history interviews with each person, I will pull together a series of photographs that help tell the story of each participant's life and his or her peace-building experiences. Photos from my previous projects are shown above.

Images, interviews and other materials collected during this project will be permanently housed at University of Louisville Digital Archives and Western Kentucky University Special Collections Library for research purposes. Select images and text will also be exhibited in galleries and public spaces. Exhibition venues will be determined based on exposure to diverse audiences. I will attempt to find locations in Louisville, as well as other communities.

In conjunction with exhibitions, I will try to generate interest about the topic among media outlets. Possibly there will be an opportunity for a panel discussion with some of the project participants.

Oral history interviews are lengthy (usually two or more hours), and they are intended to give voice to people who otherwise might not be the focus of public attention. These are the “everyday man’s” recollections about how events happened, which makes them very well suited to sharing stories about Louisvillians who have improved our community through their ability to resolve conflicts, protect human rights, or provide trauma healing services.

Project Co-sponsors

I will approach two entities to see if they might lend their support to this project. As co-sponsors, a significant value they would add is in generating public awareness about the work. I will not ask co-sponsors for financial support. But having their names attached to this project gives it an added degree of credibility, which is helpful when persuading people to be interviewed, and when seeking exhibition space or media coverage. Another value the co-sponsors may offer would be providing advice about any aspect of the project, based on their own expertise and experience.

Co-sponsor #1: Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer: Mayor always seeks ways to make Louisville “an even more compassionate city.” His mission is compatible with an oral history project about Louisville residents who help build peace for our residents and visitors to our city. Former Mayor Jerry Abramson’s Office of International Affairs

sponsored my first photo essay about mothers who immigrated to Louisville in 2003-2004. It meant a lot to have the mayor's support, and I would like to approach Mayor Fischer about lending his name, or the name of one of his departments, in support of this peace project.

Co-sponsor # 2: University of Louisville's Peace, Justice and Conflict

Transformation Certification Program: This program prepares students majoring in any field to enhance their abilities to recognize and transform conflict in the world and in their own life. Because I am a student in this program, I would like to share its mission with the community. I believe as a co-sponsor, the relationship would be mutually beneficial.

Researching Possible Interviewees

Peacebuilders impact the lives of Louisvillians in so many ways that I need a strategy for determining what combination of people might bring the right energy to this project. I am using a brainstorming strategy that I learned when working as a student artist in the City of Tacoma's Mural Art Program. In that situation, we brainstormed ideas for the most suitable themes for a community mural. In this case, I am determining what peacebuilding themes I think will be most important to share with our community.

For this method, I determined three core peacebuilding themes based on subjects discussed in conflict transformation class: personal peacebuilding, community peacebuilding and international/war peacebuilding. Branching out from each of those core themes, I wrote down ideas that become increasingly more specific. Pages five and six of this document demonstrate this approach.

I also created a list of peacebuilders in Louisville based on my research in publications and on-line sources. I will compare the brainstormed themes with my list of names collected from research. From there I will determine what might be the most interesting directions to take. I will begin developing connections with people in the community who can put me in touch with peacebuilders who would be like to participate in my project. There are two short lists of peacebuilders on page seven.

Brainstorming The Most Relevant Themes For Oral History Project (Figures A & B)

Figure A: Main community ideas are: personal peacebuilding, community peacebuilding and international/war peacebuilding. First layer ideas branch out from main ideas. See Figure B for sample of second layer ideas. They become more specific.

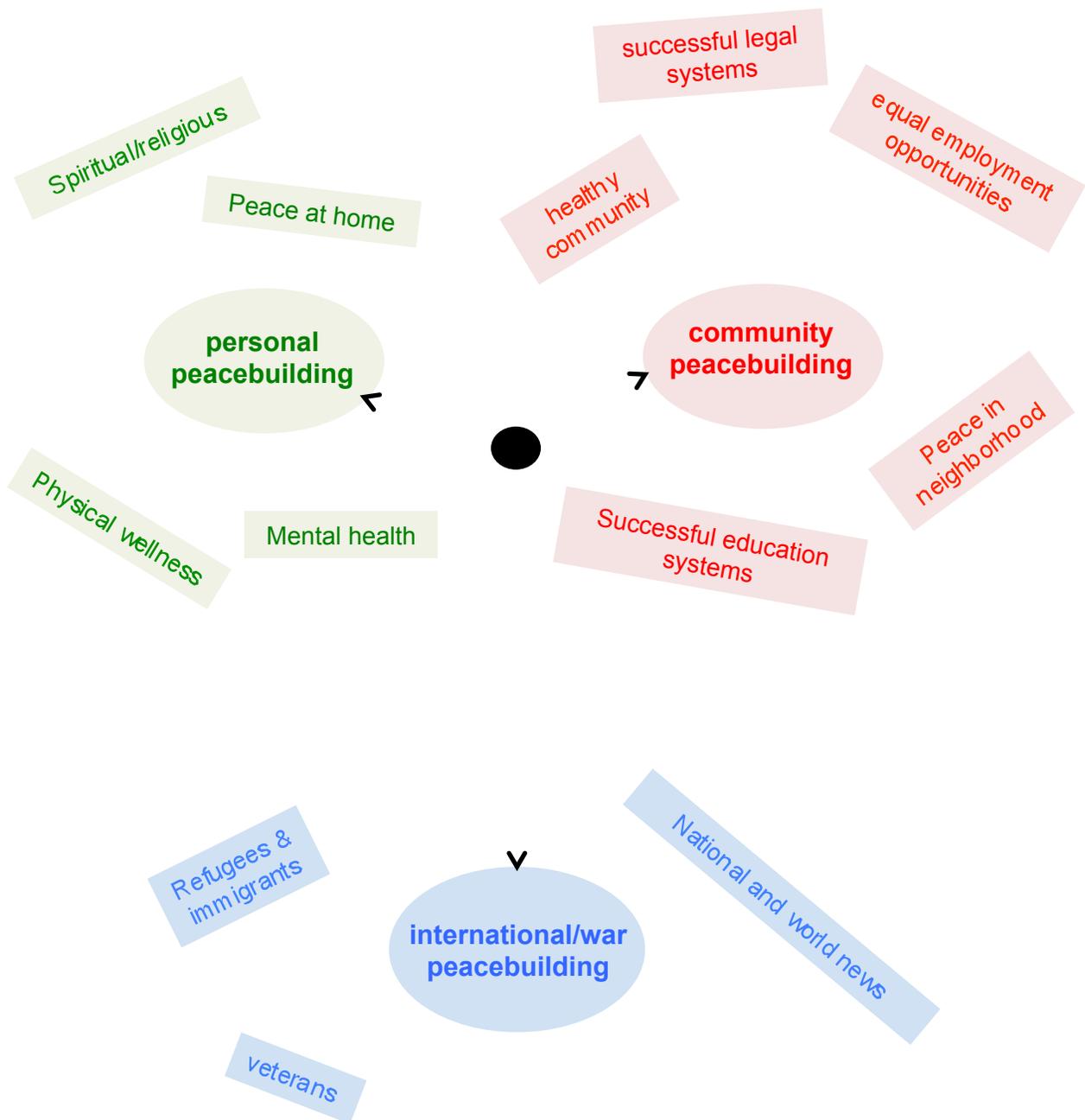
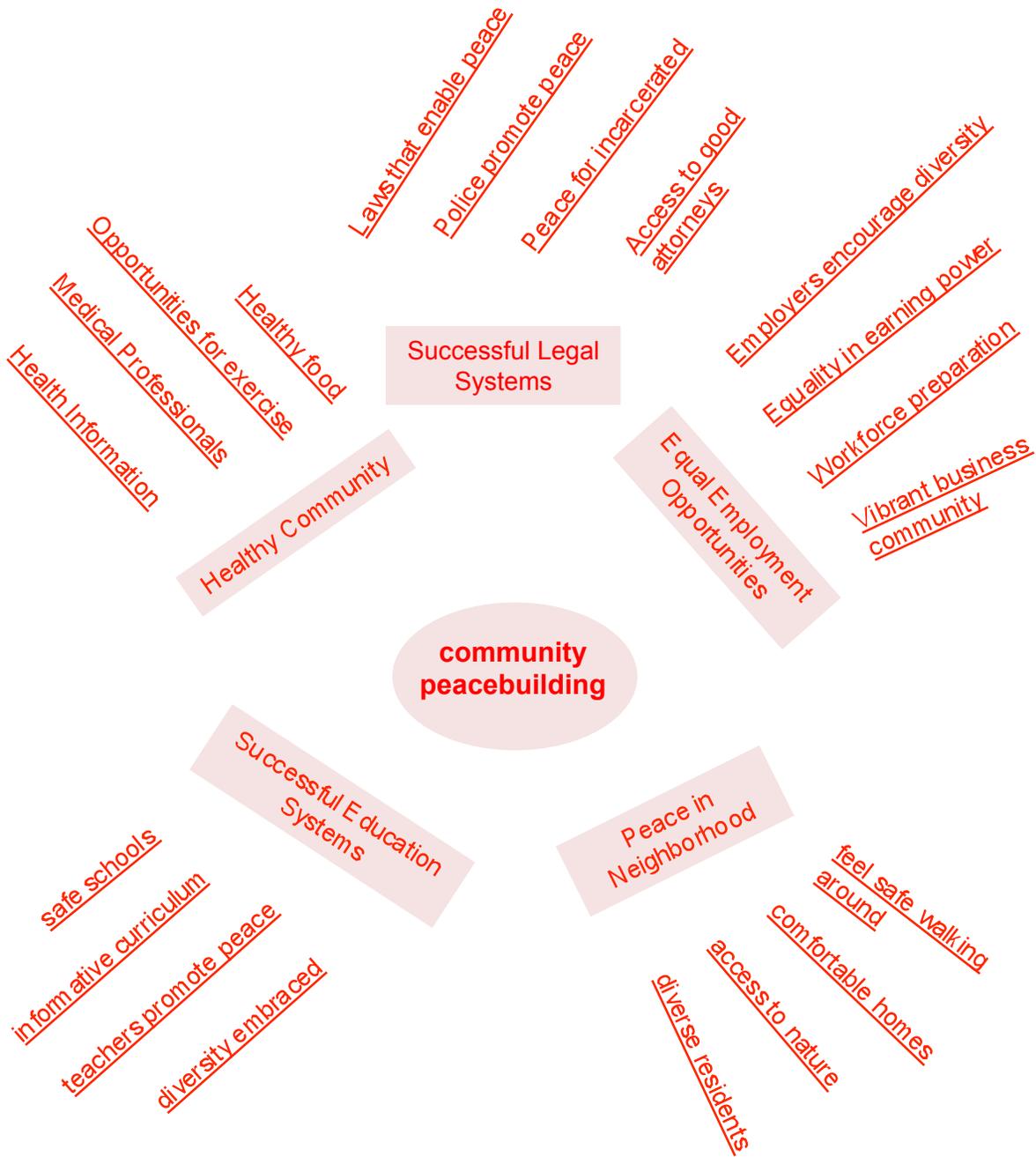


Figure B: Community peacebuilding ideas become more specific in the second layer, shown here in underlined words. Then I can take each one of the underlined words and break it down in even more specific terms.



Networking

Here are two very short lists of individuals and organizations that I came across in my early peace-related research. I will continue to add to the lists. I will then compare my lists with my brainstorming to determine where I should begin networking.

A. Individuals

<u>Name</u>	<u>Significance</u>
Anne Marshall	Louisville Magazine In-depth reports on West End
Lt. Emily McKinley	Head of LMPD homicide unit
Christopher 2x	Well-known community activist
Yvette Gentry	Mayor's chief of community building/oversees Youth Detention
Michelle Sircy	JCPS grief counselor
Lee'Vaughn Morris	Helped start "HOPE" – Helping Our People Eat by Having Opportunities & Providing Empowerment
Yusuf Bibb	Works with Morris @ HOPE, also Urban League
Sharonda O'Bannon Morton	JCPS teacher works with troubled youth (maybe retired?)
Michael L. Jones	LEO Weekly reporter, article on Louisville gangs
Norman Martin	No More Red Dots team coordinator
Auberbach Family	Founders of Rainbow Blossom Grocery
Maddie Dalton	Transgender rights, teenager, Atherton High School 2016

A. Organizations

<u>Name</u>	<u>Significance</u>
Crane House	Asian Cultural Center
No More Red Dots	Conflict resolution program for gangs
Kentucky Youth Advocates	bullying, safety, obesity, child abuse awareness
TARC	Transit Authority of River City
Baxter Community Center	At Beecher Terrace housing project
Food In Neighborhoods	Committee of the mayor's office
Dept. Health & Wellness	Metro Louisville government
Dare to Care	provides 13 million lbs. food to est. 192,000 people
Farmers' markets	Smoketown, Gray Street, Phoenix Hill & Victory Park
Smoketown Dollar Plus	only store in area to increase healthy food access
W. Chestnut St. Baptist	church in Russell access to health food
Iroquois ValuMarket	food of different cultures, grocery
JCPS Newcomer Academy	ESL school
Ctr. for Interfaith Relations	promotes social activism for peace in Louisville
Drepung Gomang	Tibetan buddhist monastery promoting compassion

Timeline

This will be a timeline of more than a year. I do not work quickly. The timeline will first move from initial research, through asking for sponsors, into starting to make calls to people in the community who might be able to connect me with people willing to be interviewed. From there I will ask people if they would like to be interviewed, I will develop questions and then conduct the interviews and take photos to accompany the recordings. Once the interviews are complete and I'm typing transcripts, I will begin to approach venues about exhibiting the work. A year or more after beginning, I will be able to submit the project to the archives and begin exhibiting.

Challenges

The biggest challenge is paying for the cost of preparing materials for exhibition. The only cost involved with recording interviews and taking photos is the purchase of a flash drive. Enlarging photos and text for exhibition would not be extremely expensive, but depending on materials might cost several hundred dollars.