

SEACOAST PEACE ACADEMY

Collaboration
Resources
Education
Discourse

Peace: "...the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part." The Earth Charter

Special Edition Newsletter

Youth Justice Leadership!

Winter Issue - 2020



The Seacoast Peace Academy is an educational resource aimed to develop and encourage communities of learning to foster and enhance a sustainable culture of peaceful relationships in the Greater Seacoast Region of New Hampshire and Maine. Our current programs include the Youth Justice Leadership and The Truth Telling Project, in addition to an evolving Resource Center at the Portsmouth Public Library.

Our founders and current members are: Melinda Salazar, Kay Morgan, and Alex Herlihy.

The Seacoast Peace Academy formed in 2012 by 3 former teachers from the Oyster River High School in Durham who organized The Teaching Peace Conferences for teachers, parents and students at the high school from 2005-07. Our hope for the Seacoast Peace Academy was to bring communities of learning together outside the classroom to talk about peace learning skills, knowledge and behaviors, and to address current issues, such as gun violence, the impacts of lasting wars, increasing economic disparity, and environmental damage from climate disruption. Inspired by the National Peace Academy, we use the 2000 Earth Charter definition of peace: *"...peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, and the larger whole of which all are a part."* We also borrow their holistic framework that connects 5 interrelated spheres of peace as a way to help us understand how to build "right relationships" at the personal, social, political, institutional and ecological levels.

We are grateful to The Grassroots Fund for their generous support allowing us to build partners with youth organizers and leaders from area high schools in the Seacoast. This year, we are building partners with:

- Youth Climate Organizing Project, a group in based in Durham, NH, who work directly with 350NH. Mentors for this initiative are Kristin Forselius, from the Community Church in Durham, and Lila Kohrman-Glaser, of the 350NH Team.
- We Speak - New Hampshire Listens Youth Forum on Social Justice, facilitated by Portsmouth High School science teacher and mentor, Kimberly McGlinchey.
- The Oyster River Sustainability Club, lead by science teacher Jon Bromley

Youth Climate Organizing Project



350NH is an independent state wide climate organization working to stop the climate crisis by building grassroots support for a just transition to renewable energy and an end to fossil fuel use and expansion. We are running campaigns to shut down the last major coal fired power plant in all of New England, in Bow, NH and to stop the Granite Bridge Fracked Gas expansion. We have local chapters around the state as well as a statewide fellowship program for high school students. We won our longest running campaign to bring offshore wind to the gulf of Maine in 2019 and launched our political arm 350NH Action in 2020 to elect climate champions at every level of government. We have a staff team of 5 women and hundreds of volunteers around NH. We are an independent affiliate of the national group 350.org and do all of our own fundraising.

Oyster River Sustainability Club



Oyster River Sustainability Club is a student group that works to educate the high school community to reduce our impact locally and globally, promote environmental justice and create a more conscious society. This year's plan calls for the high school Sustainability Club to work with the Town of Lee on a no-waste community dinner to take place on Earth Day, April 22, 2020. Former teacher, Paul Gasowski is the Chair of the Lee Sustainability Commission and along with Maggie Morrison, who is the Coordinator for Sustainability Club, is organizing an "Exposition and Art Exhibit" as part of the dinner to showcase area efforts in sustainable living and eco-arts.

We Speak New Hampshire Listens Youth Forum on Social Justice

Another group with whom we've partnered this year is based in the Portsmouth High School. 15 PHS students who call themselves We Speak have led an initiative to work with New Hampshire Listens, school board members, teachers and Superintendent Zadravec to create an open forum on social justice.

Along with students across campus, they aim to embrace and discuss issues of social justice in our schools and community. To kick off the training students from the We Speak traveled to UNH to see the "Niceties": a play that entices students to reflect on the history of racial issues and the necessity of bringing those issues into the spotlight. To add to the discussions, New Hampshire Listen's visited the school for a four hour intensive on social justice, followed by Portsmouth Listens sponsorship of three roundtable events. Each of the trainings and events were designed to lead students in becoming agents of change. The We Speak organization meets weekly and is an inclusive group designed to foster dialogue on issues of social justice within our Pk-12 community, while Portsmouth Listens has a mission of making Portsmouth the best place to live, work and play. Below is the mission statement of the We Speak - New Hampshire Listens Organization. Included is the mission statement of the WE Speak forum, photos from our work sessions and play.





We speak, New Hampshire Listens

Youth Forum on Social Justice

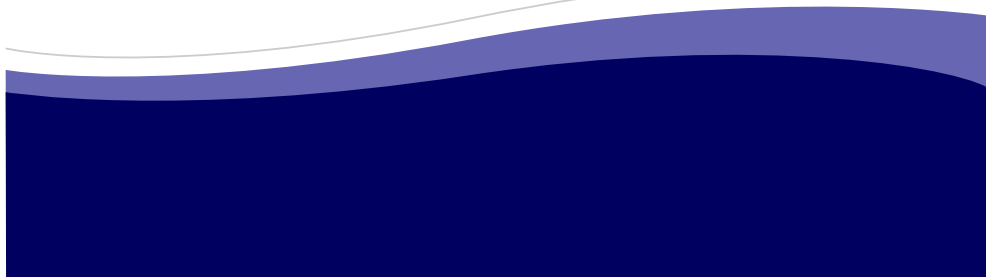
Who we are! The “We Speak, New Hampshire Listens Organization (WS-NHLO) is an open and welcoming group of Portsmouth High School Students who are working within the pk-12 community to bring focus to issues of social justice within our community.

What we offer: The WS-NHLO will serve as a forum that will address issues of social justice in a trusting environment for all to attend. We will provide opportunities for listening, visioning, learning and communicating important student-driven issues based on social justice; we will include all members of our learning community in our quest for systemic change; we will take action to address issues using a solutionary approach, and we will welcome all to our learning community regardless of age, race, gender, economic status, language, ethnicity, religion, abilities, sexual orientation or learning style.

Vision: The Portsmouth School District will function as a fully inclusive, safe place to grow, and a joyful place where students and staff have trusting relationships and practice progressive educational practices that value all individuals and their differences- including, but not limited to age, race, gender, economic status, language, ethnicity, religion, abilities, sexual orientation or learning style. Students and staff will experience an enriched community where all voices are recognized as important and strengthened due to our differences- not in spite of them.

Vision for our work

- Action network -a network of students and teachers working toward open and respectful dialogue with a mission of engaging the community in areas of social justice. This includes the classroom, school, and community.
- Improved access to points in the school that allow students to communicate areas of stress, concern, and discrimination, as well as points of pride.
- Create a positive educational and learning based environment in the PSD



Five Interrelated Spheres of Peace and Right Relationships

Seacoast Peace Academy provides you with this explanation of what each of the 5 interrelated spheres of peace are and how they are interdependent upon one another. Take a look at this framework and talk amongst yourselves about what this means to you. Some questions might be: What surprises you about this framework? What did you know? What is new to you? What does this mean to you personally? To the work your group is doing? To our seacoast community? To the world?



personal

act upon our internal conflicts, attitudes, actions, and emotions toward living with integrity.

The personal refers to “the awareness of one’s authentic being, and living from and relating to others from that awareness” (Snauwaert, 2008). In the personal sphere, peace requires that we actively strive to establish right relationship with our self. Personal peace is pursued through inquiry into how we manage and



social

interpersonal conflicts and differences, and how we give to and receive from others the qualities and conditions that comprise human dignity.

The social refers to the relationships of individuals with other individuals and to their collective coexistence. In the social sphere, peace requires that we actively strive to establish right relationships with others. Social peace is pursued through inquiry into our attitudes, intentions, and actions regarding how we manage our



political

within and between groups of people, communities and organizations that are supported by just, nonviolent procedures and institutions for making and implementing policy and planning decisions at all levels of social

The political refers to the sphere of human relationship in which diverse individuals and groups come together to discourse, collectively make decisions, and engage in action to create a world together (Arendt, 1958). In the political sphere, peace requires that we actively strive to establish right relationships



institutional

organization. Political peace is pursued through action derived from inquiry into our attitudes, intentions, and actions regarding how we engage in decision-making processes and public discourse.

The institutional refers to the ways in which organizations and institutions are organized, and the systematic structures and processes through which power is mediated and human affairs are governed. All institutions are essentially political. In the institutional sphere, peace requires that we strive to institutionalize right relationships within and between all forms of organizations, government(s), businesses, systems of organization, and civil society structures to support the development and maintenance of peace systems. Institutional peace is pursued through inquiry into our attitudes, intentions, and actions regarding how we organize and institutionalize the values, principles and norms of justice into systemic structures that moderate human affairs.



ecological

The ecological refers to the interdependent and dynamic interrelationships between and among all organisms and their surroundings in a living system. In the ecological sphere, peace requires that we actively strive to establish right relationships with Earth and its ecosystems of which we are a part and on which our survival and quality of life depend. Human systems are not separate from but integral to all living systems, and, as such, human organization affects and is affected by all other ecological systems. Ecosystems are both resilient and fragile, and human life depends upon our respect for, stewardship of, and kinship with the entire planet. Ecological peace is pursued through inquiry into our attitudes, intentions, and actions regarding how we take responsibility to shift our relationship to the natural environment from one based on control over, to one based on interdependence and living with and within.

