

**2014 Annual Report
Toward Right Relationship Project
Boulder Friends Meeting
October 1, 2014**

Submitted by Paula Palmer, Project Director

Intertwined Journeys

I have experienced this year's work in the TRR project as three intertwined paths. Some Boulder Friends have accompanied me along all three paths; others have focused their attention on one path, or two. People outside the meeting have been fellow-travelers on one or more paths as well. The three paths are (1) growing in the Spirit, (2) the evolving Toward Right Relationship work, and (3) the project's relationship with the Boulder meeting.

Growing in the Spirit

During this year, my spiritual leading has grown into a ministry, nourished by guidance from the four members of my Spiritual Care committee (DeAnne Butterfield, Steve Clark, Judy Huston, Janet Kilby), by Native American teachers (living and deceased), the larger Quaker community, and my own spiritual practice.

The Spiritual Care committee is the meeting's greatest gift to me. In our monthly gatherings, we worship together and consider queries that go to the heart of the spiritual challenges and opportunities that arise out of the Toward Right Relationship work. The practical and programmatic issues that I deal with day to day are held in the Light, allowing us to open to deeper contemplation and spiritual revelation. We have meditated on such questions as, "How is God present in this work?", "How do I experience God's guidance?", "How is this work an expression of universal love (ref. John Woolman)?", "How is self-care in this work an act of love?", "What do I believe about how God works in the world and through me?", "What is ministry?", "What is the heart of my ministry (beyond or underlying my activities in the TRR project)?", "In times of criticism and conflict, where is God and how does faith sustain me?", "What is different about doing this work as Quaker ministry vs. doing it as a project?", "How can I develop work plans that leave room for Way opening?" "What is Spirit-led fund raising?" During the course of my meetings with the Spiritual Care committee, as we explore these questions through worship sharing, I often experience a profound shift, a felt sense of deeper knowing, faith, trust, and peace.

Working toward right relationship with America's Native peoples has opened other avenues for spiritual growth, too. It led me to Pawnee attorney Walter Echo-Hawk's book, *In the Light of Justice*. Echo-Hawk lays out five steps for healing the wounds of colonization and genocide, drawing on the wisdom of many spiritual traditions. He says that all Americans suffer (in different ways) from these wounds, we all need to participate in a healing process, and we all stand to benefit from the healing. The first of Echo-Hawk's five steps is: Recognize the harm that has been done. I have come to see that the Toward Right Relationship workshops help people take this first, critical step. From there, we begin to contemplate a way forward through the remaining steps, grounded in our shared and distinct spiritual beliefs and practices.

This year I presented workshops in ten states. To prepare for each of these, I researched the experience of the Native peoples of the region. I learned as much as I could about their histories, their cultures, their leaders and legends, and their spiritual practices, and I wove some of this material into the workshops. I was profoundly moved by the participation of Native elders in some of the workshops and by what they shared (in Syracuse NY, for example, the Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace and the

deeply moving Thanksgiving Address through which our minds become one in universal gratitude). These and other Native American expressions of the oneness of all life, the sacredness of the land, and gratitude to the Creator resonate in harmony with my own faith and with Quaker faith and practice. They illuminate the meaning of “right relationship” and the path toward it for me and for all who participate in this work.

In my travels to present the Toward Right Relationship workshops, I have been richly blessed through worship and other interactions with Friends meetings and Quaker colleges and organizations. I have met Released Friends and other Quaker ministers who shared with me their journeys and lessons learned, both spiritual and practical. Worship with Friends at such places as Pendle Hill, Friends General Conference, Haverford College, and the Quaker Institute for the Future, as well as many monthly meetings, has broadened and deepened my experience of our faith and practice.

Nurtured by all of these spiritual experiences, I still struggled with the notion that my work toward right relationship is in fact ministry, that my calling is to be a minister in the manner of Friends. Having grown up Lutheran, these terms are not easy ones for me. They felt utterly presumptuous until I was reminded often enough that as Friends we are all ministers. Through this year, my spiritual practice has been to live in submission to God’s call, as faithfully as I can discern it. Through submission I am growing into acceptance of this calling, relying on God’s grace to show me the way.

The Evolving Work Toward Right Relationship

This year’s work has been guided by the objectives set forth in the contract been the meeting and myself as director of the Toward Right Relationship project. I’ll summarize the year’s accomplishments in fulfilling these objectives, and then describe some trends that are emerging as the ministry evolves.

TRR Project Objectives, October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014 **And Accomplishments**

1. *Present the “Toward Right Relationship” workshop 24 times, averaging twice a month, hosted by faith communities, high schools, colleges, and civic organizations around the country.*

During the year, we presented workshops 36 times (12 Quaker Meetings, 3 Quaker organizations, 8 Unitarian Universalist Fellowships, 2 Episcopal churches, 1 Lutheran church, 3 high schools, 5 colleges, and 2 civic organizations). The workshop spreads by word of mouth as participants recommend it to other groups. We respond to the invitations we receive, guided by the wisdom of Way opening.

2. *Train and coach 10 other groups or individuals to present the workshop on their own.*

I trained 6 facilitators in Bellingham WA, 7 facilitators in Syracuse NY, and 12 facilitators in Boulder CO.

3. *Publish 3 articles in magazines, journals, or websites about this work*

I published "Healing our Nation's Oldest Wounds" in the Jan/Feb 2014 issue of *Western Friend*. AFSC and QEW both published my online articles about the TRR workshops. Friends Council on Education will post information about the program for middle schools and high schools, "Re-Discovering America: Understanding Colonization." Friends Association for Higher Education has requested an article for their Fall 2014 issue.

4. *Engage with Quaker organizations (QEW, FGC, yearly and monthly meetings, Pendle Hill, AFSC, FCNL, etc.), and Quaker schools and colleges about Indigenous peoples concerns, the Doctrine of Discovery, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.*

I gave presentations to these Quaker organizations: Quaker Institute for the Future, Friends Association for Higher Education, Friends Council on Education, Friends General Conference, American Friends Service Committee, and Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges, in addition to 12 monthly meetings. I applied for a scholarship at Pendle Hill (pending) to research Quaker involvement in the Indian Boarding School era, and I am corresponding with several Quaker scholars concerning research on Quaker/Native American relations from colonial times to the present. I am scheduled to present workshops to FCNL and Pendle Hill as well as several monthly meetings in New England during October and November 2014.

5. *Assess the need and feasibility of developing other workshop formats (e.g., a program for middle-school-aged youth; a longer workshop format, perhaps a full day or weekend)*

One of the most frequent comments from Native Americans and non-Native workshop participants is: "Why are we not teaching/learning this history in our schools?" It became very clear that we needed to develop a version of the adult workshop for use in the schools. In collaboration with the Ojibwe educator Jerilyn DeCoteau, I developed a middle school program, titled: "Re-Discovering America: Understanding Colonization." In May, we pilot-tested the program at Horizon Middle School in Boulder. The Reading to End Racism program of the Boulder County YWCA asked us to train their volunteers to offer this program in Boulder Valley middle schools beginning Fall semester 2014. Jerilyn and I trained 12 RER volunteers to present the program, and we received excellent feedback from them.

Participant feedback and evaluations of the adult workshop ("*Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change: Toward Right Relationship with America's Native Peoples*") and conversations with Native advisors point to a need for a follow-up workshop, Toward Right Relationship Part II, to help groups take concrete steps toward right relationship in their own communities. Developing this workshop is included in the Work Plan for the second project year.

Native Americans who participated in the workshops frequently noted that Native communities don't know their history either (we all went to the same schools, as Jerilyn

DeCoteau says). Jerilyn and Richard and Susan Silversmith (a Navajo couple in Denver) have begun exploring ways to adapt the workshop and take it into Native schools, churches, organizations, and communities.

6. *Create a directory and listserv for Friends engaged in work toward right relationship with Indigenous peoples.*

I am continually gathering names and contact info for Friends around the country who are engaging with Native Americans in one way or another. This may eventually coalesce as a listserv or Facebook group or other form of organization, as Way opens. It may also expand to facilitate collaboration with people in other faith communities who are engaged in similar work.

7. *Raise funds to support this work through grants, honorariums, and individual and group donations to the Meeting's TRR Fund.*

This year we raised \$9,164 from workshop honorariums and donations, and \$11,906 from individual donations, in addition to the \$15,169.50 individual donations that we raised in the 2013 fiscal year. A \$3,000 grant to me from the Lyman Fund reduced TRR project expenses for my compensation by \$3,000 (this is shown as a savings in that line item of the budget). The IPC committee, the Spiritual Care committee, and the TRR Oversight committee asked Boulder meeting to designate \$17,500 of this year's available budget excess (\$23,500) to the TRR project. Meeting approved \$10,000 for the project.

We were able to reduce expected travel expenses significantly by clustering workshop presentations in geographic areas and through generous donations of frequent flyer miles and local hosts' provision of ground transportation and lodging. The project will end the 2014 fiscal year in the black, but fund raising must be the first priority for work in the 2015 fiscal year.

8. *Undertake new project initiatives as guided by the IPC committee, Native American advisors, Quaker organizations, and the Inner Light.*

Although we developed the adult workshop primarily to educate non-Native people, we have been pleased that Native Americans have participated in most of the workshops and that they frequently offer to read the part of the Native American in the workshop script. Their participation enriches the experience for everyone, and their suggestions provide valuable guidance as the workshop formats evolve. This year we especially valued the contributions of Brett Shelton (Lakota), Ray Ramirez (Tohono O'odham), Jerilyn DeCoteau (Ojibwe), Dennis Seymour (Cherokee), Harris Lacey (Ute), Dora Bannert (Ojibwe), Richard Silversmith (Navajo), Susie Silversmith (Navajo), and Juanita Jefferson (Lummi).

One new project direction that has emerged this year is a request from the National Native American Indian Boarding School Healing Coalition. They and the Native American Rights Fund are calling on Christian churches to conduct research into our histories as managers of Indian Boarding Schools, to reflect on the consequences of this history, and to consider what obligations and opportunities we have today to address the intergenerational trauma that the boarding schools inflicted on Native families and communities. Some initial research into our Society's role as promoters, policy designers, managers, and teachers in the boarding schools moved me to consider how I might help Friends engage in such a process of research and reflection. I was led to apply for a Cadbury Scholarship that would allow me to spend an academic year doing this work at Pendle Hill. Boulder Meeting's clerk kindly provided a letter of recommendation. My application for the 2015-2016 academic year is pending.

What We Have Been Learning

From workshop participants

We ask all workshop participants to fill out evaluation forms, and most of them do. From their comments, we learn that most people:

- Don't know how Christian doctrine was used to deny and violate the rights of Indigenous peoples worldwide, with ongoing impacts on Native communities
- Don't know our own country's history of genocide and colonization
- Think the workshops are a very effective means of education
- Appreciate the Quaker elements of the workshop (worship sharing, silence, holding in the Light)
- Think this history should be taught in our schools and churches
- Want to learn more, especially about local tribes and their issues
- Don't know any Native people personally
- Feel some sense of responsibility for the ongoing injustices
- Want to know how they can contribute toward building right relationship with Native people

From Native people who have participated in the workshops, we learn that they:

- Appreciate that Christian people of European descent are doing the work of educating themselves and others
- Think that grassroots education is the only way that change can happen (because it won't happen in Congress and the courts without pressure from the citizenry)
- Think the workshop should also be presented in Native American schools and communities because Native people need to understand this history, too

In building financial support for this work, we have learned:

- Most congregations and colleges can reimburse travel costs and offer a small honorarium (\$200-\$300 is average).
- Actual average cost of preparing, rehearsing, publicizing, presenting, and following up on a single local workshop is \$600 (staff time, printing, materials). Actual average cost of preparing, rehearsing, publicizing, presenting, and following up on a single out-of-state workshop is \$1,400 (staff time, printing, materials, and travel). Staff time is calculated at \$20/hour.
- The project cannot be sustained by income from the workshop presentations alone.
- Many private foundations do not give grants to religious organizations, which eliminates the TRR project from their consideration.
- National Quaker organizations give high marks to this work but do not have means of supporting it financially, at least not in the short term. They are struggling financially themselves and their program priorities are established, leaving little room for new initiatives. We have stimulated fresh discussion, however, among AFSC and FCNL staff who would like to build more work in support of Native peoples into their programs.
- We need to come up with successful new fund raising strategies to sustain this work.
- We are blessed by the generous contributions of time and skills of many Friends, Native American advisors, and other volunteers who help us keep project costs extraordinarily low.

Emerging Trends in the Toward Right Relationship Ministry

As we move into the second project year, we are focusing more attention on:

- *Developing and implementing new fund raising strategies.* These include: Solicit funds from people who have participated in past workshops; solicit funds from monthly meetings and other churches that have sponsored past workshops; crowdsourcing; solicit funds from sources that support national Quaker organizations; develop alliances with other denominations (UUs, Episcopalians, Methodists); acquire more volunteer assistance with correspondence and project administration; raise funds through Facebook and social media; ask Friends and workshop participants for their suggestions and enlist their help.
- *Training more people to facilitate the workshops on their own.*
- *Developing a strategy for training teachers to present the workshop in schools.*
- *Considering whether the project should remain housed in the Boulder Meeting or elsewhere.*
- *Developing and promoting Part II of the adult workshop as a follow-up to “Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change”*
- *Carrying the work beyond Quaker circles into other denominations and academic settings*
- *Working with Native American advisors and organizations to offer the workshops in Native American schools and communities, with Native American facilitators. The Ojibwe educator Jerilyn DeCoteau and I are developing this together.*

The Toward Right Relationship Project's Relationship with the Boulder Meeting

The Toward Right Relationship project has given Boulder Meeting visibility within our yearly meeting, other yearly meetings, and Friends organizations nationally. In addition, local media (radio and newspaper coverage of the workshops) have raised awareness about Quakers and our historic and ongoing concern for right relationship with Native peoples. Another opportunity will come with the December 2014 celebration of International Human Rights Day, where I will receive the United Nations Association of Boulder County's International Human Rights Award. The workshops themselves are a form of outreach, an opportunity for people of other faiths to experience Quaker process, including silence, worship sharing, holding in the Light, and social witness.

The Toward Right Relationship project is enormously grateful for the many ways that members of Boulder Meeting have participated in its work this year, including: as members of the Indigenous Peoples Concerns committee (13 people), as members of the Spiritual Care Committee (4 people), as members of the Oversight committee (3 people), as the meeting's treasurer and bookkeeper (2 people), as readers for workshop presentations (6 people in addition to members of the committees), by holding the workshop in the Light during presentations (Care Committee members plus 1), by attending the workshops (we don't have a complete record of attendance), by making individual donations to the TRR restricted fund (23 individuals or couples), and by recommending the workshop to other people and organizations. Friends have devoted an enormous amount of time during meetings for worship with a concern for business to deliberations concerning the Toward Right Relationship ministry.

In the project's third quarter, when it became apparent that efforts to raise funds through grants were not meeting with success, the IPC, Spiritual Care, and Oversight committees asked meeting to donate \$17,500 of the meeting's 2014 budget surplus funds (total available was \$23,800) to the TRR project. The meeting was not immediately in unity with this request. At a second meeting for business, Friends approved \$10,000 from the 2014 budget surplus for TRR. During these and subsequent discussions, Friends expressed many and varied concerns. Some Friends questioned the content, value, and effectiveness of the project. Some felt that the project should raise its own funds and not ask meeting for financial support. Some felt that Quaker process had not been well followed in the meeting's discussions about the project. At a program hour on September 28, Friends shared their views about the relationship between the meeting and the Toward Right Relationship project.

As project director, I continually seek Divine guidance to be faithful to my leading, courageous in my ministry, and mindful of the sense of the Boulder Meeting as I act on their behalf and in their name.

TRR Project Timeline

March 2013: Paula asks meeting to consider recognizing her leading as a Released Friend.

April 2013: O&M nominates a Clearness Committee; meeting approves.

May 2013: Clearness Committee reports to meeting, recognizes Paula's spiritual leading, and recommends that Paula be *"supported in whatever ways the Meeting feels called to offer."* Meeting approves.

Meeting establishes a restricted fund for Toward Right Relationship Project

Meeting approves \$3,000 for the TRR restricted fund, from 2013 available surplus funds

Clerk asks M&W to develop a policy for recognizing leadings, including requests to be Released Friends.

- August 2013: M&W offers a minute in unity with Paula's work, which meeting approves. The minute reads: *"Boulder Friends Meeting is in unity in supporting the work of Paula Palmer, to act on our behalf and in our name, and with our grateful support, to pursue (1) Right relationship, in place of continuing oppression against the native peoples of this land which we all now call home; (2) Healing, in the place of grievous suffering, aggression and the enduring wounds of genocide among ourselves and our neighbors; and (3) Justice, in the place of inequality. We do this with faith in the power of an active love to heal wounds of the past, and to create a more just future; and in recognition of Paula's leading and capacity to act in this power of love."*
Meeting approves formation of an Oversight Committee for TRR project.
- Sept. 2013: Oversight Committee, Treasurer, and Finance Committee review proposed contract for TRR Director.
O&M create informal Spiritual Care Committee which begins meeting with Paula.
- Oct. 2013: Meeting's treasurer and Paula sign one year renewable contract.
- Nov. 2013: Meeting approves Friends to serve on Paula's "official" Spiritual Care Committee.
Paula gives verbal program report at meeting for business.
- January 2014: Paula posts first quarter report.
M&W submits a draft policy for supporting Friends' leadings, which meeting approves.
- March 2014: Paula gives verbal program report at meeting for business.
- April 2014: Paula posts second quarter report.
IPC, Oversight, and Spiritual Care committees ask meeting to designate \$17,500 of 2014 available surplus funds to TRR; meeting is not in unity.
- May 2014: IPC, Oversight, and Spiritual Care committees ask meeting to designate \$17,500 of 2014 available surplus funds to TRR; meeting approves \$10,000 for TRR.
Clerk asks Friends who have concerns about the TRR project or the process of designating surplus funds to speak with M&W convener.
- July 2014: Paula posts third quarter report.
IPC committee withdraws remaining request for surplus funds, since funds are sufficient to carry the project through the end of the fiscal year.
- August 2014: IPC committee includes a line item of \$10,000 for TRR in its 2015 budget request; meeting is not in unity.
- Sept. 2014: IPC committee submits a revised budget, withdrawing the \$10,000 line item for TRR and including TRR in a line item of \$1,100 for Education/Outreach/TRR
Paula gives meeting a verbal summary of her 2014 annual report.
A program hour titled, " Meeting's Relationship with the TRR Project"

2014 Financial Report
TRR Budget vs. Actual Report, Oct. 1, 2013 – Sep. 30, 2014

	Budget FY14	Actual FY14	Budget FY15
Beginning Balance, 10/1/13	\$15,000	\$15,170	\$4,700
Income			
Individual donations	\$10,000	\$11,906	\$17,000
Crowdsourcing	0	0	8,300
Workshop host organization donations	12,300	9,164	9,500
Boulder Meeting donations	2,000	10,900	500
Grants (Waskey Fund and others TBD)	<u>10,000</u>	<u>204</u>	<u>10,000</u>
Total Income	\$49,300	\$32,174	\$50,000
Expenses			
Project Director Compensation	\$42,000	\$39,000*	\$42,000**
Consultants (crowdsourcing, social media)	0	0	3,000
Conference fees	3,000	308	1,500
Supplies, printing, postage, other	1,200	1,133	1,000
Travel	<u>6,100</u>	<u>2,131</u>	<u>2,500***</u>
Total Expenses	\$52,300	\$42,572	50,000
Fund Balance, 9/30/14		\$ 4,771	

* A Lyman Fund grant offset \$3,000 of Paula's compensation for the month of Oct. 2013

** Personnel costs are greatly reduced by the labor of many volunteers. An Ojibwe educator, Jerilyn DeCoteau, and an Episcopalian volunteer, Ann Cairns, contribute their professional skills in program development, communications, and outreach. Bob Bernthal volunteers his time to do data entry. IPC committee members and dozens of additional Friends facilitate and participate in workshop presentations. The meeting's treasurer and bookkeeper and members of the Oversight committee contribute their skills in program management.

***Cost of travel is reduced by in-kind donations. Local workshop organizers arrange for some ground transportation, some meals, and all lodging. Gifts of frequent flyer miles and travel vouchers can also cut travel costs.

Project Director's Time Allocation	2014
Administration	5%
Compose written and verbal financial and program reports	
Keep workshop participation records	
Meet with IPC, Oversight Committee, Spiritual Care Committee	
Fund Raising	10%
Research and write grant proposals	
Solicit individual donations	
Networking	
The Workshops	75%
Create and circulate publicity and correspondence	
Rehearsals, presentations, and follow-up	
Travel	
Develop new middle school program	
Program Evaluation and Development	10%
Meet with Native Americans and other program advisors	
Reading and research	