



Back to SCHOOL



Back to school. It means different things to different people. For some it spells the end of daily tedium, a welcome relief from a summer vacation that dragged on too long. For some it brings the excitement of a fall sport. For some it means reconnecting with friends on a daily basis. For some it's a question mark and a mix of fear and opportunity, not knowing exactly what this school year will bring.

There's a common thread here: excitement and anticipation. Students may not always show it, but it's there. It's certainly there for the adults who work in a school setting.

And we've got it, too. We share those same feelings. Here are some of the things we're excited about for the 2010-2011 school year with the Civil Rights Team Project:

The Fall Trainings

Registration materials for the fall trainings, both for faculty advisors and student teams, go out on August 30. Check your mail!

We won't say too much about this year's fall trainings except that they are important and excellent. We expect that you make every effort to attend both the faculty advisor and student team trainings.

Descriptions of the fall trainings are included with these registration materials. You can also access this information online at our Moodle site in the "What's Going On" section.

Fall training dates are included in the "Upcoming Events" section on page 17.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the fall trainings, feel free to contact Debi Lettre at 626-8856 or debi.lettre@maine.gov.



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Expectations of Civil Rights Teams

This is something new for us. We're shooting for clarity in terms of what we expect from civil rights teams. These expectations create an outline; you and your team fill in the details. You still have independence and autonomy, just with more guidance than before.

These five expectations were announced in a special *Torch* bulletin last June:

1. Create a team identity.
2. Increase the team's profile.
3. Identify school issues.
4. Address school issues.
5. Respond when things go wrong.

We will expand on all five of these expectations over the course of the year, starting... now! Attached to the back of this newsletter is a one-page expanded summary of the five expectations. That will give you a general idea of the philosophy behind them.

In the fall trainings for faculty advisors, we will take an in-depth look at these expectations. We'll specifically examine the "nuts and bolts" and what it will take to meet these expectations. Ultimately, we'd like to see a compilation of project ideas for each of the five.

We also want to use these expectations to guide our communication throughout the school year. We will use them as an outline in looking at what you and your team have accomplished and have planned for the future.

We are hugely excited about these expectations and can't wait to see them in action!

Another Great Year of *The Torch*

Expect more of the same. We're going to stick with the same form that we used last year: predictable monthly features. This monthly newsletter remains our most consistent form of communication, and in a year where we're introducing new expectations, we think that *The Torch* will be especially important.

Here's what you can expect in this month's newsletter:

The Director's Cut: Thom looks at refugee populations here in Maine.

Team Spotlight: Teams typically aren't active during the summer, so we have nothing to report here.



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Activity Ideas: Not one, not two, but *three* activity ideas this month! These are packed together as part of our new training guide for new teams, but don't let the "new teams" part discourage you from using them. These activities are for everyone.

Pop Culture Winners and Losers: A long and busy summer means lots of pop culture to report on! We've got advertisements, sports, movies, and an upcoming television show.

FA Issues: We are keeping things simple. We just want to know what you're excited about right now.

Relevant Resources: Celebrating Ramadan with a great new book from some friendly faces right here in Maine.

Upcoming Events: Plenty of things here to get you checking your calendar.

Brandon Baldwin – Newsletter Editor, reachable at brandon.baldwin@maine.gov

This newsletter is written and distributed by the Civil Rights Team Project, a state-wide program under the auspices of the Maine Office of the Attorney General. The mission of the Civil Rights Team Project is to increase the safety of high school, middle school and elementary school students and to reduce the incidence of bias-motivated harassment and violence in schools.

Janet T. Mills—Attorney General

Thomas A. Harnett—Director, Civil Rights Education & Enforcement Unit

Debi Lettre—Civil Rights Project Administrator

Brandon Baldwin—Schools/Curriculum Coordinator



The Director's Cut

A monthly column from our Director, Thom Harnett:

They Come From Away

I moved from New York to Maine in January of 1989. As I was becoming accustomed to living here, I occasionally heard the phrase "He's from away" when I was introduced to people. At first I thought nothing of it. Over time, as I heard it more and more, I asked people what it meant. They nonchalantly told me, "It just means you're not from Maine." I found it odd that anyone would be labeled in such a way; it was certainly something I had never heard in New York, where millions of people could be placed in the category of "from away." I remember asking a friend who was born in Maine if I would still be "from away" if I lived here 20 years. He simply responded, "You will be from away forever." His answer bothered me and still does today, 21 years after he said it.



Now many of you who are reading this might be thinking, "Wow, this guy is oversensitive and how can he possibly be bothered by some comments after 21 years?" Labeling a person as "from away" and telling them that they will *always* be from away is just not welcoming and whether intended or not, it creates walls and unnecessary distinctions between people. Nonetheless, my transition to Maine went relatively smoothly and Maine is now my home. When people ask me where I am from, I say Maine. It would be ludicrous for me to say, "Well, I am from Maine, but I am *really* from away." However, a large part of the reason my transition to Maine went so well is that I look and sound, absent some Maine expressions, like most everybody else here. I am white and I speak English as my first language. Those two things are often not true for people who are, using Maine vernacular, "from *really* far away." I am talking about refugees and immigrants who make Maine their home. Imagine for a moment what it must feel like for a refugee from Darfur or an immigrant from Pakistan to be told over and over again, "You're from away and it will *always* be so."

This summer I had multiple opportunities to meet, listen to, and talk to people who came to Maine as refugees or immigrants. I was also able to spend time with college age students from North Africa and the Middle East who were in Maine to learn about our state and the immigrant and refugee experience in Maine. Since people often use the words *refugee* and *immigrant* interchangeably, it is important to understand what the words mean. Here is how the federal government defines refugee: "A refugee is a person who is outside any country of such person's nationality or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of



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persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” That is quite a mouthful. In plain English, a refugee is a person who is no longer safe in their home country and in danger of being persecuted due to their race, religion or some other personal characteristic. Being a refugee is not a choice; refugees are forced to flee their homelands. Maine has refugees from Somalia, the Sudan, Iraq, Burundi and other countries. An immigrant is a person who comes to a country where they were not born in order to settle there. Immigrants leave their native lands for many reasons including seeking greater freedom and economic opportunity. Most Americans had immigrant ancestors.

Listening to refugees and immigrants talk about their migration experience is very powerful. On July 23, I attended a conference that featured multiple speakers who were refugees living in Maine. They shared harrowing experiences of being forced to leave their homes in the middle of the night, watching family members and neighbors being murdered, raped and mutilated, and then walking hundreds of miles in search of the relative safety of a United Nations refugee resettlement center. They spoke about living in refugee camps for years. They told the audience about being sent to Maine, not choosing Maine as their destination, and arriving often unable to speak a word of English and totally unaware of Maine’s customs, weather, education system and just about any other aspect of life you can identify. Immigrants, while being able to have more control over where they live in the United States, face many of the same hurdles.

The most amazing part of hearing these stories is seeing that people have remarkable strength and are able to overcome the myriad of obstacles thrown their way. I could not imagine surviving the situations they described. Speaker after speaker also told of their admiration for our country, the education that is available to those who seek it out, and how grateful they are to Maine and its people for literally saving their lives and allowing them to create new ones. However, paired with those sentiments was an obvious pang of missing their homelands and a desire to be able to return home to reclaim their heritage and reestablish their countries. As I said earlier, these stories are incredibly powerful.





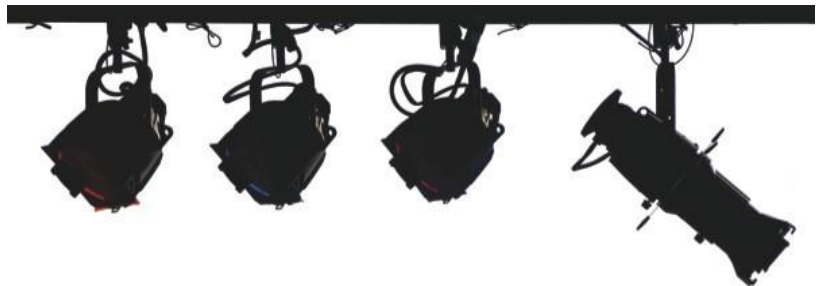
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So what does this all have to do with being “from away”? Our knowledge of events in Maine’s recent history shows us that refugees and immigrants have not always been treated well or welcomed with open arms. We probably all remember when the mayor of Lewiston wrote an open letter to Somali refugees in October of 2002 asking them to exercise “self-discipline” and stop moving to Maine. The mayor said this while acknowledging that the United States Constitution protected the refugees’ right to move about our country freely. His letter made it clear that the Somali refugees were “from away” and should *stay away*. Every time we emphasize what might make us different from refugees and immigrants by what we do or what we say, we increase their feeling of isolation and force them to ask themselves if Maine will ever be their home. We may even make them feel less safe. Even if we do not mean to do that, our actions have those consequences. We cannot afford to treat any person that way.

What I learned this summer in my time spent with people from over a dozen countries is that the more we meet and talk, the more we realize that *they are us and we are them*. Only when we reach that point can we truly recognize and celebrate our differences while at the same time understand that we have so much more in common and that our shared humanity trumps differences in skin color, language, religion, nationality, and all the other characteristics and traits that make us who we are as people. The lesson I learned is that no one is “from away.” Instead, people are from *here, there, and everywhere*. We are best off when we focus on the fact that we are all *just here* and should make the most of our time together.

Team Spotlight:



Every month here in *The Torch* we like to shine the light on you. We use the monthly “Team Spotlight” feature to highlight civil rights teams and what they’re doing.

This is an especially valuable feature in *The Torch*. It offers the students some great exposure and emphasizes the importance of their work. But it’s not just for them; it’s for our readers. You know that what you read about in the “Team Spotlight” section is tried and true. Theory and philosophy take a backseat to practicality. Whatever you read about here has been done, meaning you can replicate it.



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We think it's important that we profile your civil rights teams and projects, but the only way we can do so is by staying informed. Please keep us informed; we want to know what's going on.

A few simple guidelines, then, for keeping us in the loop:

1. No project or initiative is too small or trivial to let us know about it. Civil rights work and improving school climate is constant work. It's a series of ongoing efforts. Let us know about your ongoing efforts *and* big events. Not everything you tell us about will go in *The Torch*, but that's OK.
2. Let us know about events before they happen. This gives us the option of attending.
3. If your team gets any press coverage, please let us know about it.
4. Whatever your team does, take notes and pictures! It makes for better reporting

We thank you in advance for keeping us informed. Your communication efforts allow us to feature civil rights teams every month here in the "Team Spotlight" and help out other advisors and their teams.

Activity Idea: New Team Start-Up Guide

"OK... so now what do we do?"

It's a question that I imagine most new faculty advisors ask almost immediately after joining the Civil Rights Team Project, but perhaps are too polite, scared, or confused to ask.

And we've never really had a standardized response to that question... until now. We now offer a series of lessons/activities designed to train new civil rights teams. These lessons/activities should keep new teams active and engaged for at least the first month. Even more importantly, the lessons/activities will lead team members to a common understanding of what civil rights issues look like in a school setting and the role that civil rights teams play in addressing these issues.

The best part about these lessons/activities, though, is that **they are not just for new civil rights teams**. Anyone can use them, and we recommend some (if not all) of them for use with your team. These lessons/activities are specifically designed to





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address the first of our five expectations for civil rights teams: coming together as a team. They help create the common understanding necessary for civil rights teams to be effective.

These lessons/activities should work equally well with new and veteran teams. They can be used and re-used. Some of them will seem familiar, and some are completely new. The one thing we can say with complete confidence is that you should check them out, because surely you can find something worth using.

Interested in checking them out? There are two ways to do so.

You can go online to our Moodle site and check them out there. Simply follow this link:

<http://civilrightsteams.org/mod/resource/view.php?id=235>

You can also e-mail Brandon and he'll send you copies of the lessons.

Finally, let's take a closer look at three of the six available lessons/activities. These three are designed to get students thinking about civil rights issues in the school setting:

1. Why We Have Civil Rights Teams

This is our most general introductory lesson/activity. It's good for students of all ages and experience levels. The focus is a simple question:

What are some of the things that students get teased, made fun of, and harassed about?

This question always generates a long list of answers. The inevitable conclusion is that students are often targeted because they are somehow different. This simple conclusion brings us to the mission of the Civil Rights Team Project: *all* students should feel safe and welcome in school.

2. The Sneetches and School

This is a revived classic from the 2008 fall trainings. It uses the silly and yet thought-provoking film *The Sneetches*, a Dr. Seuss parable about accepting and valuing differences. While *The Sneetches* is an animated musical about purely fictional characters who behave ridiculously, it is a startlingly accurate look at the realities of student behaviors and group identifications. Questions encourage students to think about how social interactions in their school look a lot like what they see in the film.



3. Assessing Our School

Another revived classic, this time from the 2009 fall trainings! This asks students to think about the protected categories from the Maine Civil Rights Act and how they relate to the school setting. Which categories are the “issues” in their school? Individual and group work helps students answer this important question and perhaps see their school in a new light.

This activity is particularly valuable in its ability to help you and your team meet our second expectation: identify school issues.

* * * * *

So there you have it. These three activities/lessons, used in any combination, can help you prepare your team this fall. And these were just the first three! There are six in total, and next month we'll look at the other three.

Pop Culture Watch: Summer 2010

The Pop Culture Watch is where we offer our opinions on what's going on in popular culture from a civil rights perspective!



A gum ad that matters?

It feels just a bit ridiculous giving pop culture props to Dentyne gum, but chew on this. Dentyne Pure's commercial that opens with an interracial kiss is something rare in the world of advertising. Interracial couples aren't seen on television very much, especially in the conservative world of advertising.

But this Dentyne Pure ad opens with an interracial couple *kissing*. White woman, black man... and he even has a 'fro.



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Perhaps you think we're making too big a deal of this, but online racists seem repulsed, vowing never to buy Dentyne gum again because of this "in your face" ad. That kind of response shows that even a 15-second advertisement for gum can be a big deal.

Watch the ad, and if you can stomach it, read some of the online comments at:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHqDPOXJRzY



South Africa plays great host

No sporting event lends itself to civil rights connections quite like the World Cup. It's a true global event, as billions tune in to watch nations compete in the world's most popular sport.

The 2010 World Cup was held in South Africa, the first time it has been on African soil. Leading up to the event, there were questions about the country's readiness; there always are. The questions and criticisms this time, though, were often tinged with an assumption that an *African* nation couldn't pull this off. Security was a popular concern, to the point that some were waiting for imminent disaster.

But it never happened, the World Cup was a great success, and South Africa proved itself a worthy host. This was a major moment for the post-apartheid South Africa, but perhaps even more so for the entire continent, and even the world and its ability to welcome Africa into the international community.



Anthropologie loves India for what it offers privileged white women

Anthropologie is a retailer of high-end women's clothing, designed to appeal to 30- to 40- something affluent professional women with total family income above \$200,000. (Thanks, Wikipedia!) In other words: White Privilege Central.



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As the name might imply, many of their clothes take inspiration from different cultures around the globe. Where Anthropologie really goes wrong, though, is how it celebrates multicultural fashion in such an exclusive manner.

All of their models are white. And in the May catalog, we get lots of pictures of white models wearing the Indian-inspired clothes in India. The only Indians who appear in the catalog are in the background, essentially serving as props. It reeks of imperialism.

It might seem like Anthropologie values different cultures and fashions, but only when they make white women look fabulous. Isn't that the very definition of cultural appropriation?

You can check out the catalog at:

www.anthropologie.com/anthro/catalog/category.jsp?popId=CLOTHES&navAction=jump&id=CLOTHES-CATALOG2



YELLOWFACE.

***The Last Airbender*: as bad as we had hoped!**

I've been following this story for a year. The casting decisions for the theatrical release of *The Last Airbender* were a major part of our Media Matters workshop/presentation last year. At issue was director M. Night Shyamalan's decision to cast white actors as the story's main protagonists. In the popular television show that the movie is based on, these characters are Asian/Inuit.

To say that there was a firestorm of controversy is a great understatement. Shyamalan and the *Airbender* film got ripped. Fans of the show were angry that the film wouldn't be authentic, but a more nuanced and significant form of criticism emerged, examining the casting controversy from a racial perspective. Most notably, an organizing called Racebending sought to educate people about the long history of racist casting decisions in Hollywood.

Through it all, Shyamalan defended his decisions, stating that the parts went to the best actors. The casting calls suggest that race was a major factor, though. The original calls stated that they were looking for actors who were "Caucasian or any other ethnicities." Interesting how Caucasian is the only race specifically mentioned...



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The movie finally hit theaters, and critics almost universally hated it. On the film review site Rotten Tomatoes, which compiles critic reviews, it got a positive rating of 8%, meaning that only one in twelve critics gave it a positive review. This made *The Last Airbender* the worst reviewed film of the summer. (And a summer that included *Grown Ups*, for the record.)

Of particular note is the number of critics who specifically mentioned the terrible acting of the three white leads. Shyamalan's constant claims that race didn't enter into his casting decisions fell flat on their face. If these were the best actors he could find, maybe he should pay more attention to race, and get some good Asian and Inuit actors who can actually deliver some lines.

Check out the excellent anti-*Airbender* website Racebending at:

www.racebending.com/v3/



***The Kids Are All Right*, but what about this movie?**

Immediate disclaimer: we haven't seen *The Kids Are All Right*. But it's a big enough deal that we feel the need to highlight it anyway. Here's the rundown of the positives and negatives:

Positives: A movie with big name actresses, Annette Benning and Julianne Moore, playing a lesbian couple. This film accepts gay and lesbian parenting as a reality, something rare in Hollywood. And the family portrayed is just as normal as any other, including dysfunction.

Negatives: Why, why, why does the Julianne Moore character need to have a sexual relationship with the sperm donor of their children? Why? This only serves to reinforce the ridiculous idea that lesbian women just haven't met the right guy yet. If there were more films about lesbian women, maybe it wouldn't be such a big deal... but reality dictates that the less common something is, the more it will be scrutinized.



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The new face(s) of Old Spice

Old Spice garnered itself plenty of publicity for its summer advertising campaigns for body wash. You probably saw the ads on television, and maybe even the accompanying online viral campaign.

These campaigns are noteworthy because of their spokesmen, Isaiah Mustafa and Terry Crews. Both are African-American men. Old Spice created these characters, and in the world of advertising, fictional characters are rarely people of color.

Both are extremely popular and have even achieved status as sex symbols; the Mustafa character for his suavity, the Crews character for his ridiculous hypermasculinity. (You could even argue that these ads are critiquing concepts of masculinity, but that might be a stretch.) The Old Spice ads may be completely ridiculous, but the fact that the company chose two black men to serve as the face and voice of this campaign is definitely worth noticing.

Oh, and this just in: sales of Old Spice body wash are up 55% since the new campaign.

Watch a few of the ads here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=owGykVbfgUE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tI4CbCniBI



The dilemma of minority representations on *Outsourced*

Outsourced, a sitcom about an American call center that relocates to India, premieres on NBC on September 23. We have our concerns, and we're not alone.



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Every summer, networks preview new programming and present panels to the Television Critics Association. When the *Outsourced* panel began, this was the first question: "If someone were to hypothetically say that this show traffics in a very large number of Indian stereotypes, would that person be right or wrong?"

Ouch. Watch the show's official preview and you'll see why this "hypothetical" is a very realistic concern. The show's humor seems to derive from mocking Indian people for being Indian.

But also consider this: *Outsourced* probably doubles the number of South Asians that appear on network television. The sheer number of Indian characters allows for a diversity of character traits and even the possibility of individuality.

We'll just have to wait and see what happens. Let's hope that we're not stuck with that nagging pop culture question of whether stereotyped portrayals are better than nothing at all.

For more information on the show, check out:

www.nbc.com/outsourced/

FA Issues:

What Are You Excited About?

Welcome back to another year of FA Issues. The purpose of this Torch section is engaging and connecting faculty advisors in topics specific to leading your civil rights teams.



Last year was our first year with this monthly feature. While it certainly served its purpose of introducing topics for thought, it did not effectively engage advisors in discussion. This year, we plan on taking a different approach.

We will introduce a topic. We will say very little about it. We are offering opportunities for you to engage with other advisors all across the state. You can learn a lot from each other, and we highly recommend that you do so.

So... we're going to keep our September "FA Issues" topic very simple. It's the beginning of the school year, and that means that the world is full of possibilities. The great thing



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about September is the fact that it feels like a fresh start. This is equally true for novice and veteran advisors alike.

In September, it's absolutely true that anything can happen.

With you and your civil rights team, then, what are you most excited about for the 2010-2011 school year?

We would like to leave this question open-ended. Different people are excited about different things. We hope that in answering this question and connecting with other faculty advisors, your enthusiasm will become contagious.

To answer this question and engage with the issue and other faculty advisors, simply go to our Moodle site at:

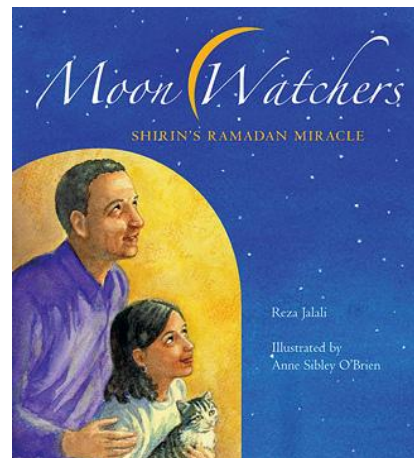
<http://civilrightsteams.org/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=49>



(Need help with Moodle? Forgot your password? Need to set up an account? Just plain intimidated? Contact Brandon.)

Relevant Resources: ***Moon Watchers***

"This quiet story adds to the small collection of books about Muslim families that can counteract the often harmful messages seen in the media." Kirkus Reviews



Timely and relevant: that's how I would describe the new children's book from erstwhile friends of the Civil Rights Team Project, Reza Jalali and Anne Sibley O'Brien. Perhaps those names sound familiar. Both Jalali and O'Brien have led workshops at our annual spring conference. Jalali, *Moon Watchers*' author, led a workshop on his book *New Mainers* and immigrant populations in our state. O'Brien, who provided the pictures for *Moon Watchers*, led last year's elementary school workshop, *The Colors of My World*. Both are engaged in civil rights education efforts here in Maine.



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Moon Watchers looks at the Muslim practice of Ramadan. Here's a description from the book's author, Reza Jalali:

Moon Watchers offers an inside view of daily life in a Muslim family during Ramadan. For Muslims around the world, Ramadan is a month-long time for prayer, fasting, and charity. This "month of blessing" is not viewed as a time of hardship but instead as a time to develop self-discipline and increase awareness of and compassion for the poor and the hungry. For this much-anticipated month, Muslim people gather together to break their fasts and pray. Ramadan is as important to many Muslims as Christmas and Easter are to many Christians, and Passover, Yom Kippur, and Rosh Hashanah are to many Jewish people. Ramadan ends with a gift-giving celebration called Eid ul-Fitr, which means "festival of breaking the fast."

Readers from all faiths will appreciate this universal story with its thought provoking focus on family life. With many Mainers practicing Islam these days, it is important to learn about this religion, with 1.4 billion followers all over the world, and become familiar with our old and new neighbors' traditions and customs.

So why is this such a timely and relevant book? Let's count the reasons:

1. Ramadan is happening right now.
2. The Muslim population in Maine and the United States is growing. Learning something about this growing demographic and the diversity that exists in our communities makes sense.
3. Prejudice against Muslims is a powerful force here in America. The foundation of this prejudice is ignorance. The surest way to combat this prejudice is through education and understanding.

We really like this book. It's a simple portrait of a Muslim American family observing and celebrating an important holiday tradition. It shows Ramadan as both religious and cultural, so that students of all faiths, or no religious faith, should be able to connect with it. The book effectively shows that Muslim Americans are like other American families, and that in spite of different belief systems and cultural traditions, we all share much in common.

The book is intended for an elementary audience, but because of its educational value and the general lack of knowledge many Americans have towards the Muslim religion and the practice of Ramadan, we can imagine that this book would be useful with middle level and high school age students.



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For more information on *Moon Watchers*, go to the Tillbury Press website, where you can check out some of their other civil rights-related titles:

www.tilburyhouse.com/childrens/moon-watchers.htm

Also, it's worth noting that you can celebrate the end of Ramadan on Friday, September 17 at the University of Southern Maine. All are welcome! For more information, skip ahead to the "Upcoming Events" section of *The Torch*.

Here's a great website that maps the world's Muslim population. Many of us have little idea about where the world's billion plus Muslims actually live in the world.

<http://pewforum.org/Muslim/Mapping-the-Global-Muslim-Population%282%29.aspx>

Upcoming Events:

Faculty Advisor Trainings:

September 27 in Orono
September 29 in Portland
October 1 in Augusta

Civil Rights Team Trainings:

November 2-3 in Augusta
November 5 in Farmington
November 8-9 in Brewer
November 15-16 in Portland
November 19 in Presque Isle



(Elementary school trainings on Nov. 3, 9, and 16 at the locations listed above.)

September 17: End of Ramadan Celebration

Portland, USM, Woodbury Campus Center cafeteria, 4:30 pm

Come and join USM in celebrating the end of Ramadan with food and culture.

September 21: International Day of Peace

Learn more about this day of global unity at www.internationaldayofpeace.org



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September 25: Perspectives on Teaching about the Holocaust Workshop

Augusta, UMA, Michael Klahr Center, 46 University Drive, 8:00am-5:00pm, free

Designed for middle and high school level social studies and language arts teachers, with six CE credits available.

View an event summary and register online at:

www.ushmm.org/events/maineworkshop

September 28: *Indian or Native American? Deconstructing Stereotypes about American Indians*

Bar Harbor, The Abbe Museum, 6:30-8:00 pm, free

Presented by Curator of Education, Raney Bench, and James Eric Francis, Sr. Tribal Historian for the Penobscot Nation, will present a skit and lead a discussion highlighting all those things people want to ask about Indians but are afraid to.

(And if this sounds familiar, it's because it was a workshop at our spring conference!)

First Thursday of October, November, and December: Abbe Museum Film Series on Native Americans

Bar Harbor, Abbe Museum, 7:00-9:00 pm, free

Each month, the Abbe Museum will feature films about contemporary issues in Native American life. Films will be followed by panels and discussion groups. Scheduled films include *Language of America* on 10/7, *Reel Injun* on 11/4, and *Club Native* on 12/2.

October 22: Ernie Weiss Shares Family's Holocaust Survival Story

Portland, Longfellow Books, 1 Monument Way, 7:00 pm, free

Local author Ernie Weiss will be here to share his family's remarkable story of survival. *Out of Vienna* follows the Weiss family's long flight through thirteen European countries to escape the Nazis' iron fist and cruelty. Engrossing from beginning to end, its dialogue and vivid descriptions of places and events are based on personal interviews, research and the author's own personal reflections.

For more information on Out of Vienna, go to: www.outofvienna.net



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October 26: MPA Conference, Guiding Principles: Creating Safe Schools for GLBT Students

Augusta, MPA Conference Center, 50 Industrial Drive

Sponsored with the Center for Preventing Hate.

October 30 and 31: *Reel Injun* screening

Portland, Portland Museum of Art, 2:00 pm, tickets \$7.00

Hollywood has made more than 4,000 films about Native people; there is more than 100 years of movies defining how Indians are seen by the world. *Reel Injun* takes an entertaining and insightful look at the Hollywood Indian, exploring the portrayal of North American Natives through the history of cinema.

www.reelinjunthemovie.com/site/

November 9: National Mix It Up at Lunch Day

Learn more about this annual event at www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up/lunch-day





What We Expect of Our Civil Rights Teams



1. Create a Team Identity

This includes basic education at the beginning of the year. Students need to understand why they are on a civil rights team. They have to want to be there, and they need to believe in the core mission of the Civil Rights Team Project. After that, they can come together as a team.

2. Increase the Team's Profile

We think it's important that your school knows about the civil rights team. Everyone should know that the school has a civil rights team; as much as they know that there's a basketball team. Not only should everyone know that the school has a team, but they should know what the civil rights team is for and about. Ideally, everyone knows who is on the team and what they do.

The civil rights team should primarily be active in the school, but it's important that the community knows something about the team, too. We do great work, and should advertise it more.

3. Identify School Issues

The civil rights team shouldn't be operating under any assumptions. You need to know what's going on in the school. Each school is unique, and so it will take some work to identify the civil rights and climate issues most relevant to your school.

4. Address School Issues

This is the most important thing that civil rights teams do. They need to be active in addressing the important issues in the school. This should not be abstract or indirect; there should be clear activities and projects that take dead aim at civil rights and climate issues relevant to the school.

The work should be ongoing. Nothing gets fixed through a single event. Whatever you do... it needs proper framing. People must understand why they're doing it.

5. Respond When Things Go Wrong

Teams should be ready to respond when something goes wrong in the school or community environment. Incidents deserve immediate attention. This might mean dropping whatever the team is working on to offer some sort of public and visible response.