



Volume 24, Issue 9, September 2006

### From The Administrator

The 12th Restorative Justice Conference at Fresno Pacific University happens this month October 20-21. The theme is "Restorative Justice: Focus on the Victim" with featured speakers Dr. John Dussich, President, World Society of Victimology; Dr. Mario Gaboury, President, American Society of Victimology; Dr. Bernadette Muscat, California State University Fresno; and Dr. Arthur V.N. Wint, California State University Fresno. A wide variety of workshops will be available both days. The conference brochure, schedule and other information is available on the Web at <http://peace.fresno.edu/rjp/> or by calling the Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies 559-453-3418.

This conference is an excellent place to learn about restorative justice and for our mediators to upgrade their skills. There is an all-day basic RJ training October 19 for those wanting a full introduction to the topic. One unit of graduate credit is also available. Information on various credit options, including MCLE, is available at 559-453-3418.

This conference is a wonderful opportunity for those interested in improving victim services. See you there.

### Restorative Discipline - Jill Shellenberg

Fresno Pacific University has implemented a restorative discipline system that is similar to VORP. The key difference is that EVERY case is sent through the Restorative Discipline System as opposed to only certain cases being referred to VORP by the Department of Probation. This systemic implementation has proved to be very effective with the result that many more cases are able to be handled informally. When a rule violation is filed, the victim and offender are informed about what mediation is. The parties are invited to choose whether they would like to proceed with mediation or take the case to a Student Judicial Board made up of students, staff and faculty. Students (both victim and offender) could then appeal to the Dean of Students if they didn't feel the ruling was fair, respectful and restorative.

Some of our goals in developing this new system were:

- Restoration of individuals
- Recognition of wrong
- Opportunity to make things right
- Restoration of community
- Opportunity for cooperative problem solving
- Creation of a structure that would promote student growth and mental, spiritual, and emotional development
- Victims need their feelings and interests addressed in every case. Just like VORP, the new discipline gives victims a voice that was often lacking in the old system.
- Offenders need to feel that the agreement was fair, respectful and restorative.
- The system brings the community into the process. Students are encouraged to bring their mentor, coach, favorite professor, parents, boyfriend/girlfriend, etc to the mediation.
- In a university system, the likelihood of victim/offender interaction is often unavoidable. When there are personal problems or rule violations on campus, students don't have the option of avoiding the offending party. People run into each other in class, at the library, in the cafeteria, at social and sports events, and so on. Having a way to deal constructively with the offense is a relief to

*(Continued on next column)*

## Victim Offender Reconciliation Program

of the Central Valley, Inc.

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## New Interns!

The VORP office has recently included 8 new interns from Fresno State University! They have been a great asset to our office and have allowed us to expand in the currently existing programs VORP is involved with. We would like to introduce a couple of them to you each month.

### Katrina Hernandez

Hello, my name is Katrina Hernandez. I'm currently a senior at California State University, Fresno majoring in Criminology with an option in Victimology. I am also, getting a minor in Psychology. The reason I decided to major in Criminology is I really wanted to make a difference in juvenile's lives and help them realize that committing a crime is not the only way to get what you want. Plus, it is important for them to understand that their actions have consequences that not only affect the victim but others around them. Therefore, I'm really glad that I am able to work as an intern here at the VORP office. Being an intern with VORP will give me the experience I need to work with both the victim and the offender.

### Lia Chacon

Hi, my name is Lia Chacon and I am an intern from Fresno State. I am very excited to do my internship at VORP because it gives me the opportunity to work with offenders and victims. I really believe in the program and I hope to get as much experience as possible. As an agreement manager I will be working closely with juveniles, helping them to follow-through and complete their agreement with the victim and VORP.

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### Restorative Discipline Continued...

So, now we've had one year of implementation and it is time to ask ourselves if the system is working. Because no other university that we are aware of has this type of system, it was difficult to predict what resources would be needed. We thought that probably about one third of the cases would go to the Student Judicial Board and two thirds would try mediation. To our surprise, all of the cases except one went to mediation. The longer the school year went on, the more cases were handled informally by the residence directors and assistants. Everyone became more familiar with mediation and used it as the preferred method of handling conflict on campus.

The Restorative Discipline System is helping to change the Fresno Pacific University culture.

Jill Schellenberg teaches Conflict Management and Statistics at Fresno Pacific University and had her first VORP training in the 1980's. She is working on her Victimology/Criminology Ph.D. dissertation in "Victim Recovery in a Restorative Justice Framework." Next month she will speak at a conference in British Columbia on "Conflict Management with Developmentally Disabled Children. She is happily married and has three adorable children.

## Volunteer Mediator Training

October 6-7, 2006

November 10-11

Friday 6:30pm - 9:30pm

**ALL MEDIATORS!!!!**

If you have ever taken our mediation training course you are qualified to TAKE A CASE!!! We always have cases ready for a mediator, so please do not hesitate to call or come in and get one. We always really appreciate our mediators because without you our program could not exist.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* **NEED SOME WORK DONE AROUND THE** \*  
 \* **HOME OR YARD? CALL VORP at 455-9803 if** \*  
 \* you have you have a project at home that you could \*  
 \* use a little help with: housekeeping, cleaning out the \*  
 \* garage, yard work, washing the car etc. This is a great \*  
 \* way to help young people (especially those under 16) \*  
 \* earn money to pay restitution! \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

*Interns continued from front page...*

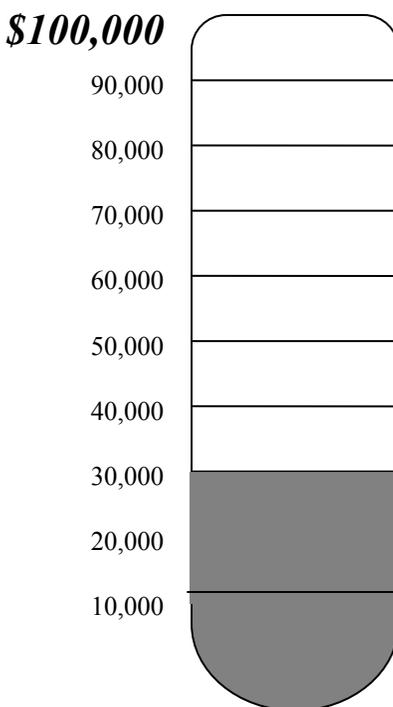
**Mechelle Richardson**

Salutations! My name is Mechelle Richardson I'm 20 yrs old, I attend California State University, Fresno I'm a senior and my major is Criminology with the victimology option. I choose to do my internship at V.O.R.P because I took a class with Arthur Wint at school and he talked about the program in class. He was very passionate about the program, I wanted to learn more about the program and hopefully have the same drive and passion for the program.

**Toni Atherley**

Hello, my name is Toni Atherley and I am a 22 year old senior at Fresno State. I am a Criminology major and my option is corrections. I decided to do my internship here at VORP because I am interested in working with juveniles and I thought this would be a great place to get some experience in that area. I look forward to learning as much as I can while I'm here at VORP.

**Growing**



**\$30,000**

**Matching Grant  
October 2006**

**12th Annual Restorative Justice Conference**

**Theme:** "The Victim in Focus"

**Dates:** October 19-21

**Location:** Fresno Pacific University  
McDonald Hall, Ashley Auditorium

**Keynote Speaker:** Dr. John Dussich  
American Society of Victimology

**VORP Staff**

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Duane Ruth-Heffelbower | Administrator     |
| Johnny Phouthachack    | Agreement Manager |
| Noelle Daoudian        | Mediation Manager |
| Barry Guenther         | Finance Manager   |

**VORP Board Members**

|                                  |               |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Michael Blue, Chair              | Arthur Wint   |
| Dave Purvis, Secretary/Treasurer | José Chaparro |
| Eleanor Richards                 |               |

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