



NEWS

Victim Offender Reconciliation Program of the Central Valley, Inc.

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Noelle Daoudian on the Santa Barbara Restorative Justice conference

As we have had those heat waves that usually come around this time of the year, it is always nice to be able to break away and cool off at the coast. I recently attended and spoke at a Restorative Justice Conference conveniently located in Santa Barbara. The conference was aimed at involving and energizing the local faith community to be part of the efforts put forth by the Restorative Justice Task Force. The area has had Restorative Justice (RJ) programs and even a VORP at one time, thus this idea has been around for a while. Now, there are quite a few people in the area who are working diligently to move the county in that direction using existing programs as springboards to develop a way in which to make RJ more prevalent and accessible to their community.

The conference primarily included people who did not know too much about RJ so it was very informative and exciting for those who came. It is always fun to speak to people who know very little about RJ because I see their faces light up as they start to understand and realize the value of RJ in the various systems they may be involved in. I spoke about RJ in California and the hype and excitement currently surrounding various programs which promote accountability and reconciliation as an important option.

The plenary speaker was our very own Elaine Enns, who was our previous case manager. She spoke about the importance of the faith community being involved in Restorative Justice. She cited examples from her time at VORP in Fresno of how the faith community stepped up and supported VORP with their financial contributions and volunteer mediators by becoming Sustaining Friends. With the church supporting our program it flourished and was a time when VORP was seeing major increases in support. In return, the church members learned how to deal with conflict in a respectful and restorative manner both in the cases they worked on as well as in their own lives and churches.

Towards the end of the conference the participants talked about how they could get involved with Restorative Justice and how they could see this working well in their community. There was a high level of energy as they talked about the groups they could start in their own churches and what their church could do to reach out to troubled youth who have begun to head down the wrong road. I am excited to see what the future holds for the Restorative Justice Task Force of Santa Barbara and pray that their efforts will be blessed.

As they begin their new venture, I look at our program which has been around for more than 25 years and the dedication that went into sustaining this program and am truly impressed. I know that the people in our community value VORP and its work which is why they continue to give their time, energy, and money to our organization. I would like to thank you all for your commitment to reconciliation and making our community a better place to live.

Blessed are the peacemakers!



Special points of interest:

- ✓ Developing ways to make RJ more prevalent & accessible in the community
- ✓ Sustaining friends
- ✓ Members learn how to deal with conflict in a respectful and restorative manner beyond just in their cases
- ✓ Involvement
- ✓ Thanking our Community

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I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to VORP:

\$200 \$100 \$50 Other _____

Name: _____

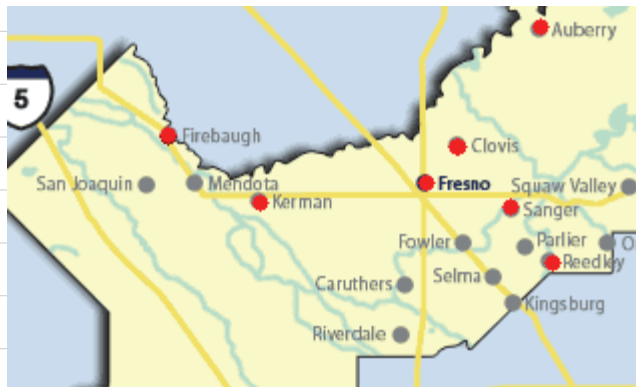
Change of Address or Phone # : _____

Cases in Stock- Morgan

Recently I sent out an email to mediators who have volunteered with VORP letting them know that we currently have a wide variety of cases in the office. I got some favorable responses, hearing back from people who have taken some time off. I have also been able to update our database this way by some people responding of their departure from California to other places.

This article is a follow up to that email. Knowing that all our VORP volunteers current as well as in years

past do not all use email, I thought it might be more helpful and easier to contact those mediators who are interested in taking a case through our newsletter. Currently we have cases in Auberry, Kerman, Fresno, Clovis, Reedley, and Sanger. If you live in any of these areas and would like to take on a case please call the office 559-455-9803. We can mail or fax you the case.



If you would like to attend the training then you're in luck as well as the table below has all updated trainings for the Fall. I look forward to hearing from you.

Case manager

VORP Board Members

Michael Blue, Chair	
Dave Purvis, Secretary/ Treasurer	
Ron Blalack	Jose Chaparro
Arthur Wint	Jason Ekk
Magi Fainer- Towne	

VORP Staff

Noelle Daoudian	Director
Johnny Phouthachack	Agreement Manager
Morgan Crawford	Case Manager
Norma Cabrera	Bookkeeper

Center for Peacemaking

Ron Claassen	Director
Holly Mattos	Administrator
Duane Ruth-Heffelbower	VORP Webmaster



Special points of interest:

- © VORP TRAINING SEPTEMBER 12TH & 13TH
- © VORP TRAINING OCTOBER 3RD & 4TH
- © VORP FUNDRAISER OCTOBER 18TH
Visit <http://vorp.org> for details
- © VORP TRAINING NOVEMBER 14TH & 15TH

Please contact us if you are interested in attending any of these functions for more information.

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