

Center's work recognized with prestigious awards

LOS ANGELES — The work of the Southern Poverty Law Center garnered praise and recognition in a series of recent important awards.

The National Education Association, the nation's largest teacher organization, selected Morris Dees to receive its 2001 Friend of Education Award, its highest honor, and made the presentation at its annual assembly here in early July.

"For over 30 years, Morris Dees has made innovative and tremendously important contributions towards the progress of civil rights, tolerance education, and, consequently, character education in the United States," said NEA president Bob Chase when he announced the award before the 9,000 NEA delegates.

"At this time in the history of American education, when safety and tolerance have suddenly come into a sharp and urgent focus on the national education agenda, it would be very difficult for us to find a person more deserving of this award than Morris Dees," Chase said. "We honor the groundbreaking work that Dees and the Center have done to address hate and bias in communities and the classroom."

Previous recipients of the NEA's Friend of Education Award include Lyndon B. Johnson, Roy Wilkins, Hubert H. Humphrey, Thurgood Marshall, Jimmy Carter, Richard Riley, Bill Clinton and Edward Kennedy.

In his acceptance of the award, Dees credited the Center's employees for their commitment and dedication as key to the success of the Center's work. "While I am deeply grateful for this recognition, the fact is an honor like this belongs to the staff of the Southern Poverty Law Center," he said.

Dees was nominated for the award by the Alabama Education Association, which also recognized the Center at its annual leadership conference on July 28 in Birmingham.

Other significant awards presented to Dees and the Center recently include:

- The 2001 Roger E. Joseph Prize was presented on May 20 by Hebrew Union College — Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. They were honored "bringing to justice those who participate in bigotry and violence." The international prize is given annually to an individual or organization that, by virtue of religious or moral commitment, has made a distinctive contribution to humanity. Other recipients include Victor Kugler, who gave refuge to Anne Frank and her family; Helen Suzman, the South African anti-apartheid activist; and Rosa Parks, the mother of the modern American Civil Rights Movement.
- Dees was presented the **Barnard Medal of Distinction** at Barnard College's commencement on May 15. The



Morris Dees (right) receives the 2001 Roger E. Joseph Prize from Rabbi Norman Cohen at Hebrew Union College in the presence of Joseph family members.

citation read at the presentation noted: "There is no more valuable thing than the struggle against injustice and intolerance. With rare courage and tenacity, you continue to fight on behalf of us all." Previous medal recipients include Toni Morrison, Vernon E. Jordan Jr., Marian Wright Edelman, Cyrus Vance, Walter Cronkite, Madeleine Albright and Maya Lin. "You should know that the unanimous standing ovation you received is not a common audience reaction at Barnard," wrote Barnard College President Judith Shapiro afterwards.

- On July 17, Dees was presented the 2001 Harry M. Philo Justice Award by

the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (ATLA) at its annual convention in Montreal. He also served as keynote speaker at the organization's membership and awards luncheon that same day. In making the award, ATLA cited Dees' success in taking hate groups to court.

Established in 1946, ATLA is the world's largest trial lawyers' association with 60,000 members in the U.S., Canada and abroad. It was founded to safeguard victims' rights, strengthen America's civil justice system, promote injury prevention and foster the disclosure of information crucial to public health and safety.

Aryan Nations compound destroyed

HAYDEN LAKE, Idaho — The Aryan Nations compound, for decades the home of a who's who of violent white supremacists, was demolished in mid-July when firefighters torched its seven buildings during a unique training exercise. Once the debris is cleared, the 20-acres will be allowed to return to its natural state, and it will serve as a "peace park" for local communities.

"It's a beautiful piece of property, with huge trees and a little meadow," said Spokane Fire Department investigator Mike Zambryski, who participated in the training. A local Native American tribe has been asked to conduct a consecration ceremony on the land.

Philanthropist Greg Carr bought the compound last spring from Victoria and Jason Keenan, whose successful lawsuit against the Aryan Nations forced its leader,

Richard Butler, to hand over the property to the mother and son. Represented by the Center's legal team, the Keenans won a \$6.3 million verdict after a weeklong trial in September 2000. They were chased and shot at by Aryan Nations security guards near the compound in 1998. A jury ruled that Butler and his organization were grossly negligent in selecting and supervising the guards and awarded compensatory and punitive damages to the Keenans.

Volunteers and full-time firefighters from several area departments took part in the unusual training opportunity. As they burned the buildings, they studied smoke behavior and practiced rescue and fire suppression drills. The experience was much closer to real-life fires than most fire trainings, which are usually held in a concrete tower where fires are set and controlled by burning wooden pallets.



Flames pour from the windows of the Aryan Nation's "church" as firefighters destroy the structure during a unique training exercise. It and all of the other Aryan Nations compound buildings were burned to the ground in mid-July.

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MAILBOX

Center donors yearn for hate-free world

I'm a monthly supporter of the Center. I just wanted to say how happy I am that you're around. I have a seven-year-old son. He told me the other day that he wanted to be a civil rights activist like Dr. Martin Luther King. This is a little white boy in 1st grade! I was so proud of him, and I told him so. I want so much for him to grow up in a world without hatred, bigotry, fear and racism.

You help make the world a safer and more just place for all of us. The Web site [www.tolerance.org] is great. I showed it to a friend who teaches 5th grade, and she's going to show it to her class. God bless you.

S. S.
Lyons, Kansas

I received your letter thanking me for my donation. It's good that an organization such as the Center exists; it's a sad necessity in our society today.

I was named after a relative who was an officer in the Confederate Navy during the Civil War. I am proud of my family history in the south. I am also ashamed by the history of slavery, a poison that continues to infect even today. I look forward to the day when we live in a world free from hatred and violence. Only then will we truly be a free people.

Thank you for your efforts.

H. P. H.
Orlando, Florida

I am glad that people like you at the Center are so fervently committed to destroying racism and hate in all its forms. You are the pioneers of a new and better world. I just wanted to say "thanks" on behalf of anti-racist punks everywhere.

R. P.

Pompano Beach, Florida

Thank you for your impressive and inspiring "One World" poster set. Our children, staff and parents have responded so positively to the beauty and messages provided by the posters. Keep up the good work!

D. D.

Wilmington, Delaware

I just saw Morris Dees at a speaking engagement. His gentle presence was very powerful. Thank you all for fighting the good fight. The Center is about what is right about America. I hope you continue to be a voice for those who cannot speak — and stand up for those who are not strong enough. I will keep you all in my prayers.

P. R.

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

I work for a facility that deals with juvenile delinquents. Basically, this is their last chance before prison. I have been using the Teaching Tolerance videos and booklets for about three years, and they are wonderful! Keep up the good work. I know that your program has made a huge difference!

M. W.

San Antonio, Texas

Organizations like the Center are needed now more than ever. With the economy declining, hate groups are shifting toward the mainstream, trying to appeal to anyone looking for a scapegoat to blame their misfortunes on. With conservative leaders condemning any anti-racist efforts as "political correctness," the work of the Center and its allies becomes more and more challenging. For that reason, the Center needs and deserves the support of all Americans of good will.

W. E. B.

Cicero, Illinois

Thank you so much for providing this wonderful [Teaching Tolerance] resource for us. As a substitute teacher, I am constantly put into situations in which I must use quick judgments in order to assess the community of learners that I have entered. It is my goal to use tolerance and understanding so that I do not fall into the trap of prejudging my students because of their appearance or any other immediately apparent stimulus.

D. D.

Stockton, California

I have just reviewed the [Seeking Justice] tape you sent me for joining your cause. It was wonderful, and I was very impressed by the work done by your organization thus far. I am a retired educator who just joined the Center this year. I am very happy to be a part of such a wonderful group. Keep up the good work. The videos that you send out to the schools, especially, are what needs to be done to fight intolerance around the planet.

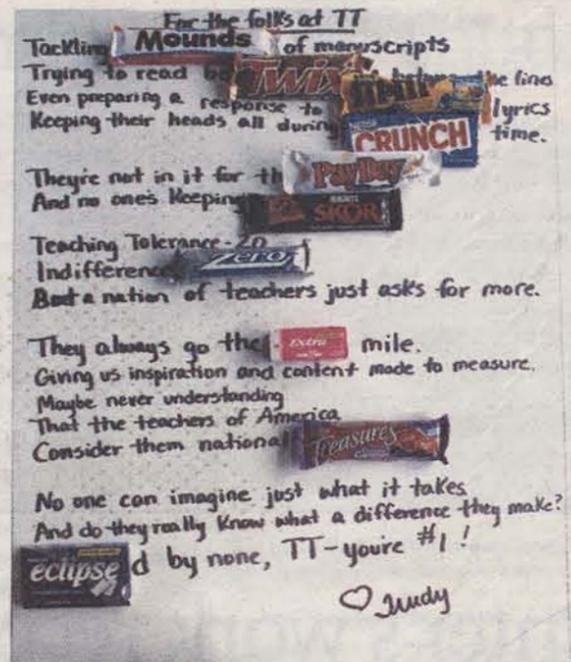
B. O.

Delray Beach, Florida

I just discovered the new Tolerance.org site. What an incredible job you've done. It has such quality and depth. The lessons are powerful, the links rich. I'll be using it as one of the model sites in my classroom.

T. M.

New Paltz, New York



A sweet farewell to Teaching Tolerance

Research fellow Trudy Moss, who returned to her North Carolina home in June, said goodbye to her Teaching Tolerance colleagues in a unique way. She wrote a poem based on a variety of sweet treats. Entitled "For the Folks at TT," it reads: Tackling Mounds of manuscripts, Trying to read between the lines, Even preparing a response to M&M's lyrics, Keeping their heads during Crunch time. They're not in it for the Pay-Day, and no one's keeping Skor. Teaching Tolerance — 20, Indifference — Zero. But a nation of teachers just asks for more. They always go the Extra mile. Giving us inspiration and content made to measure. Maybe never understanding that the teachers of America consider them national Treasures. No one can imagine just what it takes. And do they really know what a difference they make? Eclipsed by none, TT — you're #1!

Brownstein named Center's legal director

Rhonda Brownstein, the Center's senior staff attorney since 1995, became its fifth legal director on June 20. She is the first female to hold the position. Richard Cohen, legal director for the past 15 years and the Center's vice president for programs, will now devote all of his time to oversight of the Center's programmatic activities.

A graduate of Penn State and Temple University Law School, Brownstein was the first person hired when he selected her as the Center's inaugural legal fellow in 1986, the same year he joined the staff as legal director. She spent her fellow year amidst the Michael Donald case, the landmark lawsuit in which a jury awarded \$7 million to the mother of a young black man who was lynched by one of the country's most notorious Klan groups.



Rhonda Brownstein

As legal director, Brownstein is responsible for overseeing Center litigation, managing a staff of lawyers and support persons, and helping to develop and guide the Center's advocacy efforts. "I'm honored to assume this leadership position," Brownstein said. "There is no other organization more dedicated to promoting equality and justice, and I am happy to have an integral role in its mission."

Experience in serving poor clients

In the decade between her Center fellowship and her return as a staff attorney, Brownstein worked for organizations providing free legal services to poor people in Mobile and Pittsburgh. She handled a wide range of poverty law cases, including evictions, bankruptcies, domestic violence cases, welfare and Social Security disability cases. She also worked for three years at a private law firm representing union members.

Since returning to the Center in 1995, Brownstein has been involved in a wide range of cases. She spearheaded the litigation that forced Alabama to halt its use of chain gangs. She did much of the behind-the-scenes legal work for the Center's successful cases against William Pierce, the head of the neo-Nazi National Alliance, and the Klan group accountable for the burning of two black churches in South Carolina.

As legal director, Brownstein is responsible for overseeing Center litigation, managing a staff of lawyers and support persons, and helping to develop and guide the Center's advocacy efforts. "I'm honored to assume this leadership position," Brownstein said. "There is no other organization more dedicated to promoting equality and justice, and I am happy to have an integral role in its mission."

"Rhonda is a great lawyer who'll lead by example," said Cohen. "Her passion for justice — so evident in all that she does — will inspire everyone around her."

Other Center legal directors were Center president Joe Levin; John Carroll, a former U.S. magistrate judge who became dean of Samford University's Cumberland Law School this summer; and Dennis Balske, who now practices law in the Portland area.

'Patriot' and militia groups decline

More than seven years after Mit began, the so-called "Patriot" movement, characterized by gun-toting militiamen angry with the federal government, is a shadow of its former self. The execution of Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh on June 11 may have marked the dying gasps of the militia phenomenon.

The Center's Intelligence Project identified 194 antigovernment Patriot groups that were active in 2000. That was a drop of almost nine percent from the year before, and the fourth consecutive decline since the Patriot movement peaked with 858 groups in 1996. On the World Wide Web, the Intelligence Project identified just 155 Patriot sites in early 2001, a drop of 41 percent from the 263 Web sites counted a year earlier.

The counts marked the lowest ebb of a militia threat that captured the attention of the nation throughout much of the 1990s — a threat predicted by the Center in a 1994 letter to the U.S. Attorney General, six months before the Oklahoma City bombing. It was that 1995 attack, which killed 168 people, which shoved the Patriot movement into the international limelight.

Today, many militia members have gone home, disillusioned and tired of waiting for the revolution that never seemed to come. They have been scared off, frightened by the arrests of thousands of comrades for engaging in illegal "common-law" court tactics, weapons violations and even terrorist plots. And they have, in great numbers, left the relatively non-racist Patriot world for the harder-line groups that now make up most of the radical right.

What remains of the Patriot scene today is generally harder core, increasingly influenced by the racist and anti-Semitic Christian Identity theology favored by some American neo-Nazi groups. Some have embraced another radical theology, Christian Reconstructionism.

Behind the fears

It's important to remember that America's militiamen embodied real grievances and fears. Especially in America's heartland, many were alienated by a vision of post-Communist globalism summarized in then-President Bush's "New World Order" speech in 1990. To them, globalism threatened



In 2000, the number of antigovernment groups dropped for fourth consecutive year.

American jobs and robbed the country of its independence and culture.

Their anger was seen in the "Republican Revolution" of 1994, when a large number of candidates were elected on explicitly antigovernment and anti-internationalist platforms. Many in the West and Midwest resented gun control, especially the 1993 Brady Bill, and regulation of the environment. They were angered by international trade agreements that seemed to transfer jobs from America to cheap Third World labor markets. And they were infuriated by two events that seemed to show how the federal government treated dissenters.

The first was the 1992 federal siege of white supremacist Randy Weaver, whose wife and son were killed at their Ruby Ridge, Idaho, home. It was in response to this that extremists convened at a key meeting — the "Rocky Mountain Rendezvous," held in Estes Park, Colo. — and laid out the contours of the militia movement.

But what really ignited the militia movement was the federal siege of the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, which ended in a conflagration that left some 80 Davidians dead. Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh, who says he was inspired by the events at Waco, blew up the federal building on the second anniversary of the fiery end of that siege.

The Patriot movement is a particular expression of the radical right that is almost certainly fizzling. But that does not mean that radical antigovernment sentiment, which has been with the United States since its founding, is going away. The only question is precisely what form the antigovernment extremist right will take in decades to come.



Former law clerk visits Center

Steven D. Stark, (right), a summer law clerk at the Center in 1978 when he was a student at Yale Law School, brought his family by the Center on June 11 while visiting Montgomery. For 12 years, Stark was a lecturer on law at Harvard Law School, where he taught upper-level courses on writing. He is the author of *Glued to the Set: The 60 Television Shows and Events That Made us Who We Are Today and Writing to Win*. A Center donor since 1981, Stark is currently working on a book about the Beatles. He is pictured with wife, Sarah Wald, and their sons, Jake and Harry.

Intelligence Briefs

tracking extremist activity

Boston bomb plot uncovered

BOSTON — A MEMBER OF THE neo-Nazi White Order of Thule and his white-supremacist girlfriend have been indicted here on federal counterfeiting and explosives charges in what officials say was a plot to blow up local monuments and trigger a "racial holy war."

Leo Felton and Erica Chase were arrested April 19, after she tried to pass a counterfeit \$20 bill at a Boston doughnut shop. A search of Felton's apartment uncovered not only uncut counterfeit bills, but also illegal guns, bomb trigger devices, 10 bomb fuses, ammonium nitrate, a recipe for the explosives like those used in the Oklahoma City bombing, and white-supremacist materials.

The indictment claims that Felton and his girlfriend worked with a small, self-described "cell" of conspirators, and that Felton persuaded others to clear out incriminating evidence from his apartment after his arrest.

Felton has spent 11 of his 30 years behind bars for a long list of violent crimes. Though he once went to prison for almost killing a black taxi driver and has reportedly expressed a desire to randomly kill New York City blacks, Felton is biracial, with an estranged black father. Felton faces 65 years in prison if convicted; Chase faces 35.

Racist patriarch dies in Oklahoma

ELOHIM CITY, OKLA. — ROBERT "Grandpa" Millar, 75, whose isolated compound near Muldrow, Okla., has served for years as a crossroads of the radical right, died on May 28. Millar built Elohim City in 1973 to escape mainstream American life and create a haven for racial separatists.

Over the years, Millar hosted a slate of violent racists, from members of the Aryan Republican Army who robbed Midwestern banks in a bid to fund white revolution, to James Ellison, leader of the heavily armed 1980s white supremacist group The Covenant, the Sword and the Arm of the Lord, who is now married to Millar's granddaughter Angela and lives on the compound.

Timothy McVeigh called the compound in the days before the Oklahoma City bombing. Millar's burial plot in the Elohim City Cemetery lies near that of Richard Wayne Snell, a white-supremacist follower of Millar's who was executed for murdering a pawn shop broker Snell mistakenly believed to Jewish.

With the elder Millar's death, son John Millar is apparently assuming leadership of the compound of about 100 residents

Tiny Chicano group pushes racism, homophobia

LOS ANGELES — LA VOZ DE AZTLAN is a Web-based magazine as racist and anti-Semitic as many neo-Nazi pages, yet it is produced by a tiny group of extremist Chicanos here. "Aztlan" is the mythical Aztec homeland that supposedly existed in Mexico and the southwestern United States before the Spanish conquest of 1519.

La Voz hopes to take it all back, even if it means genocide. The site's articles rail against "Nazi" Jews, "demonic" lesbians and "the Jew/Gay Democratic Party." The site approvingly quotes ancient Aztec law requiring disembowelment for homosexuals. It blames Jews for Los Angeles' political problems and provides the entire text of the infamous anti-Semitic *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*.

La Voz editors have denied promoting anti-Semitism, but few agree.

"La Voz de Aztlan does not represent the vast, vast majority of Latinos," says Thomas Saenz of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund. "This kind of hate and intolerance is just deplorable."

Racist killed by police after meat locker standoff

LINDENHURST, ILL. — ERIC HANSON, a member of the neo-Nazi National Alliance, was killed in a grocery store on the morning of June 5 after shooting two policemen and enduring an all-night, 14-hour standoff.

The confrontation began the day before when police tried to arrest Hanson for unlawful possession of two handguns. Hanson was barred from owning firearms after a 1999 felony hate crime conviction for assaulting an interracial couple, for which he served a year in prison.

Hanson shot two police officers, both of whom survived, and entered a grocery store. After ordering customers and employees to leave, Hanson conducted ultimately futile negotiations with police via telephone for several hours. A team of officers entered the next morning and found Hanson in a meat locker. He was killed after initiating a second gun battle.

Hanson, a former U.S. Marine, traveled around the country to attend racist Skinhead music festivals and racist rallies.

August 2001

Center advocates lead fight for juvenile justice reform

NEW ORLEANS — Since its creation in 1998, the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana (JJPL) has become what its architect hoped it would be — “A force for reform for a juvenile justice system that was one of the worst in the country,” said JJPL director David Utter, who conceived the idea for the program. Supported both financially and substantively by the Center, the Louisiana project is serving as a model for the rest of the country.

Encouraged by JJPL's successful advocacy efforts, the Center has expanded its juvenile justice initiatives into other states. In Texas, the Center funded and collaborated on a major study documenting serious problems in the state's juvenile justice system. The study helped prompt legislation passed this spring that marked a significant step in major reform in Texas. In Alabama, Center lawyers recently sued the state to get treatment and rehabilitative services for troubled teens held in detention centers.

Using strategic litigation coupled with dogged advocacy, JJPL has changed the way juvenile facilities are operated in Louisiana. One of the most important was the end of the state's reliance on private corporations to run its juvenile institutions. Additionally, in September 2000, the state agreed to sweeping changes in its operation of juvenile prisons in a landmark settlement of lawsuits brought by JJPL, the Center and others to stop guards from abusing the youth in their care and to secure safer conditions and treatment services. The historic agreement requires Louisiana to provide more funding for juvenile justice programs; increase the number of teachers in its facilities; provide adequate training for guards; and

provide medical, dental and mental health care services for the incarcerated youth.

“JJPL has both helped troubled children in Louisiana and established itself as a national leader in juvenile justice reform,” said Center vice president Richard Cohen. “It is our goal to help others replicate these strategies in other jurisdictions in the South.” In addition to the Center's financial support, the Center's legal staff provides consulting and technical expertise to the project and serves as co-counsel in litigation.

The need to increase the quality of representation for juvenile offenders was highlighted in a study released in June by the American Bar Association's Juvenile Justice Center. By not having adequate legal representation, youth — who disproportionately are black — often become trapped in the justice system and “graduate” into the adult penal world. JJPL and the Center collaborated with the ABA to produce the report.

The Texas study, *Selling Justice Short: Juvenile Indigent Defense in Texas*, compellingly documented the need to improve the quality of legal representation for indigent juveniles in that state. Catherine Stewart, the principal investigator for the study, said the report was instrumental in getting the Texas Fair Defense Act passed in April. The law sets new guidelines for juvenile justice in the state and also appropriates state funds for the first time to help counties pay for indigent defense lawyers.

In Alabama, Center legal director Rhonda Brownstein is co-counsel in a lawsuit filed by Montgomery lawyer Robert Drummond to require the state to move juveniles committed to Department of Youth Services (DYS) out of local detention centers and into treatment programs. The lawsuit alleges that unreasonable delays in transferring the youths violate both state law and the U. S. Constitution and cause the juveniles to suffer irreparable harm.



David Utter



Students enjoy Mary Beth Mathe and her wheelchair demonstration.

Grant helps students gain respect for differences

KAUKAUNA, Wis. — Sister Barbara Mathe, the Kaukauna Catholic School System (KCSS) guidance counselor, knew just the right person to talk to students about people with special needs. Her own sister, Mary Beth Mathe, has sight and hearing loss and uses a wheelchair.

With the help of a Teaching Tolerance grant, Sister Mathe purchased resources to incorporate character education into the KCSS curriculum. As part of the new program, she invited her sister to discuss with students in three schools the importance of respecting all people, especially individuals with special needs.

Mary Beth first pointed out to the children that she always has a place to sit. Then she showed them her special cane and demonstrated how she uses it to assist her in walking.

using dots, just as they learn to read using alphabet letters.

“It was exciting to see the students' reactions to the various assisting devices Mary Beth uses,” said Sister Barbara.

“I liked getting my name card in Braille,” said one student. “It was neat to hear her play music with her hearing aid,” said another. One student wrote in a letter to Mary Beth: “I liked that you came to talk to us. Thank you for showing us your blind stick and Braille book.”

“The opportunity for students to interact with Mary Beth made them see her disabilities less, and it encouraged them to view what persons with special needs are able to do,” said Sister Barbara. Mary Beth helped the students appreciate the senses they do have but often take for granted, she said.

“Our students often focus on neighborhood and class differences,” said Sister Barbara. “As a consolidated system, we need to work toward positive character development as a means of broadening their horizons.”

Teaching Tolerance grants have funded more than 500 innovative projects for educators nationwide.

Focus is on fun

Mary Beth also focused on fun things that she can do. She spun circles with her wheelchair to demonstrate her style of dancing, and she made music with the beep of her hearing aid. She showed students Braille and explained that she learned to read

Teaching Tolerance expands presence on new Web site

In September, Teaching Tolerance will unveil its new home on the Internet.

“When school begins this fall, educators will find all of our materials in one, easily accessible place — at TeachingTolerance.org,” says Jennifer Holladay, Teaching Tolerance's producer for new media. “Our goal is to create an online community in which educators can share ideas, obtain tools and information, and work to foster equity and justice both within and beyond school walls.”

Magazine will be online

Teaching Tolerance's new home on the World Wide Web will feature an online version of the award-winning magazine, *Teaching Tolerance*, a collection of classroom activities and detailed information about the project's grants program.

These staples of the Teaching Tolerance line-up will be joined by new, Web-exclusive materials,

including special forums for educators and an innovative tool that will help teachers assess Web sites for reliability and tolerance relevance. And, for the first time, Teaching Tolerance will report daily on news events that impact school communities.

Users will be able to find the new site at www.teachingtolerance.org or by selecting the “For Teachers” area of the Center's new Web site, Tolerance.org.

In addition to materials for educators, Teaching Tolerance will release new products in the

children's area of Tolerance.org, PlanetTolerance.org. Guides for teachers and parents will accompany a new bilingual audiobook, a game focusing on the multicultural roots of U.S. English and a user-personalized storybook.

Teaching Tolerance and Tolerance.org chose Imagistic, a California-based Internet company, as their partner for the fall expansion. “Imagistic's creativity and professionalism impressed us,” said Holladay. “Plus, the CEO is a former classroom teacher — and a Center supporter.”

Tolerance.org wins praise

In its first three months, the Center's new Web site, Tolerance.org, won praise for both its message and its design. More than 250,000 people visited the site and about 50,000 took one of the online hidden-bias tests.

Organizations ranging from law firms to newspapers to schools are using Tolerance.org in online seminars for their employees. They especially like its positive, practical tips for promoting tolerance in their communities.



Ten Ways author addresses international group

On May 20, an international audience in Marseilles, France, was briefed on the Center's community strategies by Jim Carrier, author of the Center's popular handbook, *Ten Ways to Fight Hate*. Carrier (second from left) was invited to a conference of the nonprofit group, *Non a La Violence*, by Sam Brock, the U.S. Consul General for southern France and a longtime Center supporter. Shown here at a reception for Carrier overlooking the Mediterranean, are, from left: Albert Konan-Koffi, the director of the nonviolence group; Carrier; Brock and the deputy mayor of Marseilles, Michel Bourgat. Bourgat, who is also a physician, spoke about the murder of his son by African immigrants and his determination to turn the incident into a positive force for tolerance education in Marseilles.

Teaching Tolerance grant helps New Jersey town fight prejudice

CHERRY HILL, N.J. — A swastika carved into a cornfield across the street from a local high school was a call to action for Susan Brengel, former policy director for the Cherry Hill Township. Pilots from nearby McGuire Air Force Base were the first to report the 60-foot swastika, which turned out to have been neatly chopped at knee level amid eight-foot stalks of corn. In a city that prides itself on being a leader in human relations, Brengel decided to use the incident as a focal point for developing long-term educational strategies on diversity issues.

With the aid of a Teaching Tolerance grant, Brengel, Mayor Susan Bass Levin, community leaders, teachers and high school students from nine school districts came together for a conference on tolerance. The goal of the conference was to train students to be diversity and tolerance advocates. "Participants will take their knowledge and train-

ing back to their schools and communities and promote tolerance so that we reach as many people as possible," the mayor said.

A challenge to look inward

Eric Rowles, a trained facilitator and director of Leadership Through Motivation, was hired to lead the conference. Rowles guided students in many exercises designed to teach them to honor people's differences. In every activity, he challenged participants to look inward and face their own stereotypes and prejudices. Then, he took the lessons a step further to teach the participants to fight prejudice.

An exercise called "Crossing the Line" began with students standing on either side of a line. When Rowles asked a question — "Who considers themselves middle-income?" for example — those who responded affirmatively would step forward. "Look who stands with you," Rowles would say, followed by "Look

who does not." One student found himself alone across the line in response to "Who has a physical disability?" A teacher was surprised to find herself alone across the line when Rowles asked a question about age. It made her realize that "at any point, any of us could be a minority," she said.

The conference provided several components, including activist measures for students to take back to their schools and community groups. "Our youthful participants have a renewed resolve to fight prejudice, promote goodwill and celebrate diversity," Mayor Levin said.

"It was extremely productive," said Brengel. "Bringing a training program to students in southern New Jersey proves the strength of the community and commitment to these issues. The Teaching Tolerance conference made a real impact on our students — one that will resonate positively in their schools and communities."

Center staffer contributes to understanding of 'white privilege'

M.T. VERNON, Iowa — On the sixth anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing this spring, more than 300 people chose to spend their day away from work or school. They gathered instead at King's Chapel on the campus of Cornell College here, and the crowd of high school students, teachers, college students and academics pledged to identify ways to challenge the hatred that had underscored the nation's most deadly domestic terrorist attack.

The participants at Cornell College's second annual Conference on White Privilege tackled the problems of racism and hatred in a different way than attendees at most anti-bias workshops. Instead of examining overt forms of bias against peoples of color, they chose instead to examine the ways in which white people benefit from racism and its legacy on a daily basis.

Coined by women's scholar Peggy MacIntosh, the term "white privilege" refers to the transparent preference for white-

ness that saturates U.S. society. As participants at the conference learned, privilege reveals itself in small perks — "flesh color" bandages that match white skin tones and not others — and in more serious ways — a white person's ability to walk through certain neighborhoods without fear of detainment or arrest.

When Eddie Moore Jr., Cornell College's Director of Intercultural Life, started the conference two years ago, one of the first calls he made was to the Southern Poverty Law Center. "The Center has a reputation for countering white supremacy," says Moore. "I felt confident that a representative from the Center would bring a unique perspective to the conference."

The representative Moore found was Jennifer Holladay, Teaching Tolerance's producer for new media, who, in addition to her duties at the Center, researches and writes on white privilege.

"Ms. Holladay's presentation has become a staple of the program," Moore said. "She explains the concept of privilege clearly and breaks it down in ways that give people tools to see it and to challenge it."

The daylong conference offers a series of workshops with a wide range of focuses — from "The Roles of Whites in Antiracist Activism" to "The Color of Immigration and the American Dream" — and culminates in a keynote speech.

Cornel West of Harvard University, noted philosopher and author of the best-selling book *Race Matters*, delivered this year's final address. He challenged participants to look critically at their own internal battles, to celebrate individual bravery in the face of hatred, to remember history, and to help

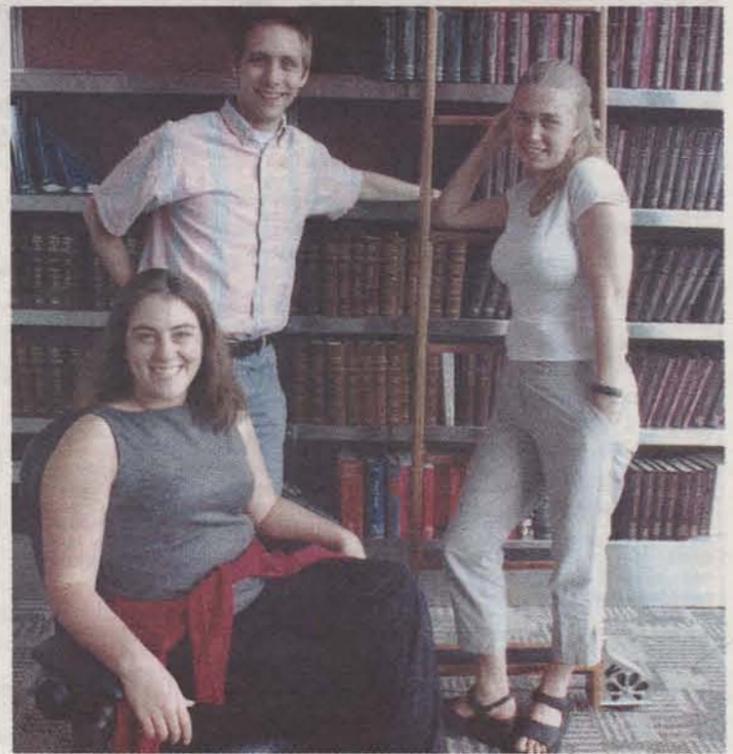
create a future that embraces every person. MacIntosh and Victor Lee Lewis, director of the Center for Diversity Leadership, are scheduled to speak next year.

"With the ongoing support of the community, people like Dr. West and groups like the Center, Cornell College's Conference on White Privilege will remain an annual event," said Moore. "Working together, we can learn how to live peacefully, respectfully in a diverse world."

For information on the 2002 Conference on White Privilege, contact Cornell College's Office of Intercultural Life at (319) 895-4484 or visit its Web site, www.cornell-iowa.edu/intercultural_life.



Teaching Tolerance's Jennifer Holladay (right) and noted writer Cornel West both spoke at the recent Conference on White Privilege in Iowa.



Law students Kerry Kornblatt (from left), Chris Lund and Sadie Ishee

Students learn 'how-to' skills from Center staff attorneys

Three law students put aside their legal textbooks for the summer to learn practical "how-to" skills from the Center's civil rights attorneys. One student, Sadie Zea Ishee, from Brooklyn Law School, said the experience helped her to "put a human face" on the Center's work.

"I learned a lot about the kind of work involved in practicing civil rights law," said Ishee. "Because the lawyers here are so good about keeping us involved in their activities, I'll come out of the summer understanding much more of the 'how-to' kinds of things that you don't really learn in law school."

Ishee researched a possible language discrimination case in Oklahoma, constitutional violations in a county jail, and the failure of prison doctors to treat hepatitis C victims in a state prison. She also worked on a *habeas corpus* petition for a man on Alabama's death row.

Kerry Elizabeth Kornblatt, from the University of Virginia School of Law, and Chris Lund, from the University of Texas School of Law, agreed with Ishee's assessment.

Work includes variety of issues

"I've been lucky to work on a whole range of issues in a short amount of time," Kornblatt said about her assignments. "One thing unique to clerking here is that the legal work isn't abstract. The work we did, and the people we did it for, are tangible. This has been most rewarding for me."

Kornblatt worked on a Supreme Court case concerning excessive use of force and traveled to Mississippi to conduct interviews about children with special educational needs. Meanwhile, Lund, worked with Center law fellow Rohit Nepal on cases against Jeff Berry, the leader of

the American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan leader, and helped research a possible education case in Texas. He also drafted the Legal Brief section of the Center's most recent issue of the *Intelligence Report*.

Lund, a *summa cum laude* graduate of Rice University in Houston, serves on the board of the Texas Law Fellowships group and is a member of the *Texas Law Review*. Last year, he interned for a Texas Supreme Court justice and clerked at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Inc. in Los Angeles and at a Houston law firm. He also co-authored an article on affirmative action published in the *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*.

Ishee, a recipient of various scholarships and fellowships, is a 1997 honors graduate of Oberlin College. As a public interest fellow with the children's rights division of Human Rights Watch in New York last year, she drafted policy papers regarding violations of international human rights. She also represented immigrants at the Safe Harbor Asylum Clinic in Brooklyn and volunteered with the New York Civil Rights Coalition.

Kornblatt serves on the *Virginia Journal of Social Policy* at her school and heads up the Student Legal Forum. Last year, she co-directed a conference on public service and the law and clerked with a Memphis law firm. Kornblatt graduated in 1999 from Rhodes College in Memphis with a degree in political science. She was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa National Honor Society, and she received recognition for excellence in legal studies, political science and for her research and study of the Holocaust.

All three students expect to receive their law degrees next spring and are planning careers as public interest lawyers.

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Experienced leader brings skills to Center

Sam Whalum, the Center's recently hired director of human resources, brings a broad range of management, leadership and technical experience to his new position. In addition to oversight of employee relations, workforce diversity and benefits administration, he will also be responsible for management of the Center's information technology.



Sam Whalum

Whalum joined the U. S. Air Force in 1974, just three years out of high school, with the intention of learning metrology — the science of measurement — and serving the nation. After mastering his technical skills, he quickly progressed into management and supervisory positions, serving as superintendent of metrology laboratories worldwide. In 1987, he was recognized as one of the Air Force Twelve Outstanding Airmen of the Year. In the early 1990s, he began a decade-long commitment in professional military education, starting as an academic instructor at the Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery. For two years he managed all resource requirements, including technology, for the College for Enlisted Professional Military Education.

Whalum continued his civilian education while serving in the Air Force. He obtained his bachelor's degree in electronic engineering from Colorado Technical University and master's degrees in human resources management and computer and

information science from Troy State University at Montgomery.

By the time Whalum retired in March 2001, he had served for more than three years in one of the most important enlisted positions in the Air Force — Commandant of the Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy at the Air University.

"We are fortunate that Sam ended his military service here and decided to remain in Montgomery," said Center president Joe Levin. "He has extraordinary talents to offer the Center, and we are very happy to have him join our staff."

The oldest of six children, Whalum grew up in Chicago and rode the train south to spend summers with his grandparents in Marion County, Mississippi, where he completed high school. His first year at East Marion High School coincided with the school's first year of mandatory integration, an experience that remained a work-in-progress through graduation. The times were turbulent, but Whalum's equanimity enabled him to easily navigate the tense environment.

In Montgomery, Whalum has volunteered his time in a number of community efforts. He served on the board of directors for Montgomery United Way, the Montgomery Area Red Cross and the Montgomery Education Foundation. He participates in Toastmasters International and is a graduate of the 1999 class of Leadership Montgomery.

"Virtue, courage, brotherhood, community and family— these are some of the things I value most in life," said Whalum. "I want to be part of a team with these strong values, and I've found that here at the Center."



Sam Whalum (right), the Center's new director of human resources, greets longtime donor Russell Prickett of Austin, Texas. Prickett, a lawyer who made his career in the Foreign Service, visited the Center for the first time on June 18.

Bequests

The Southern Poverty Law Center pays tribute to the memory of its deceased supporters and gratefully acknowledges that the Center was included in their wills and other planned gifts. These bequests were received from June 1, 2000, through June 30, 2001.

Margaret Alsworth
Frank Anderson
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Nathan Bercovitz
Walter G. Bergman
Carolyn M. Blouin
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Kathleen Rita

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Supreme Court limits scope of civil rights law

Washington, D.C. — Ruling in a Center case, the U.S. Supreme Court on April 24 substantially limited the effectiveness of one of the nation's most important civil rights laws. The court said that individuals can not sue federally funded agencies over policies that have an unjustified discriminatory impact on members of minority groups.

The ruling, arising from a challenge to Alabama's decision to administer its driver's license exam only in English, settled a

major dispute over the scope of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in favor of states' rights. The court overturned an appeals court ruling that allowed Mexican immigrant Martha Sandoval to sue a state agency for failing to offer its driver's license exam in Spanish.

"The Supreme Court turned its back on 25 years of federal court precedent as well as on victims of discrimination," said Center legal director Rhonda Brownstein. The Center represented Sandoval in the case.

In practical terms, the case was a great victory. After a favorable trial court decision, the state began providing its driver's license test in Spanish, French and five other languages in October 1998. Sandoval and 7,815 other non-English-speaking Alabama residents have since successfully acquired their driver's licenses. Alabama Governor Don Siegelman said the current policy will continue, despite the Supreme Court decision.



Center donors tour new building

Gloria Haister (left) and Milton Hesslein (right) of Margate, Florida, visited the Center on June 4 as they traveled to visit friends and relatives in the Midwest. Introducing them to staff was Juli Verma (center), a University of Virginia senior who indexed 30 years of SPLC Reports over the summer. "We were impressed with all the activity going on and are pleased to be a part of it. You can rely on our continued support," wrote the couple after their return home. They have contributed to the Center's work since 1985.

New video wins film award, draws enthusiastic response

HOUSTON— The video component of the newest Teaching Tolerance curriculum kit, *A Place at the Table*, won the Gold "Lone Star" Award for best documentary at the prestigious Houston WorldFest Film Festival in April. The gold "Remi" statuette, named for the sculptor Frederick Remington and manufactured by the same firm that makes the Oscar, will be on display at the Center's office.

"We're delighted to receive this recognition from a major film festival," said

director Bobby Houston of Hudson & Houston, the Ojai, Calif., company that produced the film with Teaching Tolerance. "We hope it's the first of many."

"The award confirms our belief that this video can reach beyond the classroom to engage a broader audience," added Teaching Tolerance director Jim Carnes. The video, in which eight contemporary young people narrate their families' struggles for equity and justice against the backdrop of U.S. history, is the

fourth in the Teaching Tolerance series. Since the January release of *A Place at the Table*, more than 30,000 middle and high schools have requested the free video-and-text curriculum package.

Response to the kit from both teachers and students has been overwhelmingly positive:

"We (the students and myself) thank you for sending us another quality video. You may have outdone yourself with this one," wrote a New Jersey teacher who enclosed copies of his students' enthusiastic essays about *A Place at the Table*.

"It was a stroke of genius having young people present their stories," said a Tennessee high school teacher. "The students give more attention to profound lessons delivered by peers. It avoided the feeling of being talked down to."

"This was a very compelling and thought-provoking video," wrote an Ohio college student. "I had to hold the tears back more than once. It should be a mandatory video in junior high and probably again in high school. I also think it should be shown in parenting classes. Maybe if people were able to understand that everyone is equal and that we all want a good life, we might not be so quick to judge."



Teenagers talk about their families' struggle for equality and justice in the Center's newest video.

Teaching Tolerance joins initiative linking college seniors to local schools

A new initiative between the Teaching Tolerance project and three like-minded national academic organizations offers college seniors majoring in communications an opportunity to earn college credit for promoting positive communication in their communities. The program will enter its second year this fall.

Communicating Common Ground (CCG) links Teaching Tolerance with the National Communication Association (NCA), Campus Compact and the American Association of Higher Education. The program seeks to connect traditional service-learning initiatives in higher education with identified needs at the local school level, thus integrating the basic principles of the communication discipline throughout the education chain.

In its first year, CCG implemented 31 partnerships around the country between college and K-12 schools. The participants use Teaching Tolerance materials to help students learn skills for conflict resolution, intercultural communication and identifying and counteracting hateful speech.

IN MEMORIAM

Alfred A. Fothergill (1922-2001)

Alfred A. Fothergill, longtime consumer watchdog, founder of the Idaho Citizens Coalition and ardent Center supporter, died at his home in Boise, Idaho, on March 15, 2001.

Born on October 7, 1922, Fothergill devoted his life and career to helping the poor. He worked in anti-poverty programs in Alaska, Ohio and Colorado before moving to Idaho, where he remained a strong advocate for human rights until his death.

During the late 1960s, Fothergill was an activist in Alaska. In Idaho in the 1970s, Fothergill continued his leadership on issues affecting consumers. He led a successful fight to block a coal-fired power plant near Boise, arguing that it would increase air pollution and raise electricity rates.

In 1974, he created the Idaho Citizens Coalition and successfully represented consumers before the Idaho Public Utilities Commission. In this role, Fothergill educated many Idaho citizens about utility issues.

Fothergill was also a strong advocate for civil

rights. His beliefs lead to his dismissal from a college professorship in the 1950s after expressing his opposition to existing social distinctions between blacks and whites.

Fothergill was pleased about the Center's successful case against the Aryan Nations in his home state. "He really appreciated all of the work done by Morris Dees and the Center," said daughter Emilie Fothergill.

Friends and colleagues of Fothergill described him as caring and compassionate. "He was a tireless worker on behalf of the common man," said a former friend and employee.

According to Emilie Fothergill, her father believed very strongly that the nation's biggest problem is economic prejudice. "He spent his life working to help close the gap between the haves and the have-nots," she said.

In keeping with his legacy of service and compassion, his family requested that donations in his memory be made to the Center, one of the charities he admired most.



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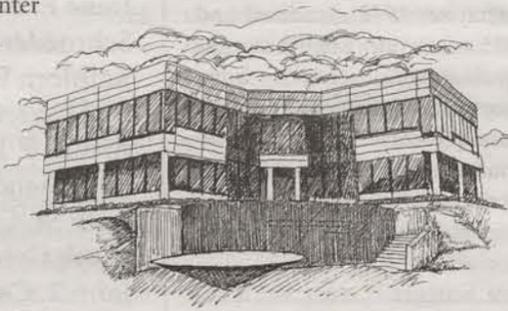
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