2006 Annual Report

October 1, 2005 to September 30, 2006



A Message from the Board Chair & Executive Director

We've come a long way! Last year's report highlighted our financial difficulties and the budget cutting we needed to sustain ourselves. This report is different. We started this year with a number of goals. Keeping our financial health was high on the list. In difficult circumstances we planned ambitious programs focused on education, economic justice, military recruitment, the legislative agenda, and a refocused racial justice program, all the while continuing to be the hub of peace work and Vermont's premier fair trade store.

We are proud to report that we accomplished much of what we set out to do in what was truly a year of transition. Transition is an understatement. In January, Chris Meehan, our Executive Director, announced she was leaving in April. In April, Hilla Collins Gilpatrick, our Peace and Human Rights organizer, announced she was moving in June. In June, Emma Mulvaney-Stanak, our Economic Justice Director, announced she'd been offered a position as the Field Director for the Scudder Parker gubernatorial campaign and took a leave of absence in July.

It is incredible to reflect on what we've done. Our staff

deserve accolades for continuing great work through all the turnover, tight economic times, fully participating in the hiring process, transition activities and strategic planning exercises, while running all the programs of our \$300,000 organization.

The Board also deserves praise for putting in the time,

intelligence, and energy that it took to keep us growing. This could have been a year of crisis, but it was not. It was a year of transformation. Lastly, our members, our lifeblood, deserve thanks too. Without our members we would not continue to exist.

Our programmatic accomplishments, which range from publishing *Phase 9 of the Job Gap Study* to protesting the air show at the Burlington Waterfront to participating in community forums on racism, are highlighted inside.

Our media work – the Peace & Justice Review, Peace & Justice News, Action Alerts and website – chronicled events and perspectives not covered by the mainstream media. Our own Ed Everts was awarded a Hometown Hero by the United Way for his long running weekly TV show, and Robin Lloyd taught us about the School of the Americas (SOA) and the price of conscience through stories from prison after being convicted for protesting the SOA.

The year proved to be a modest success financially. With incredible frugality, the generosity of members and the savvy of Kathy and Jennifer, we made budget and increased our cash reserves by some \$18,000. This was achieved despite almost \$7,000 less in grants and having to absorb \$150/ month increase in rent and 18% increase in employee healthcare costs.

At the end of the year of transition, Serena Chaudhry came on board as the new Executive Director with a vision to take the Peace and Justice Center to the next level.

Together, over the course of the next year, the board and staff

Our Mission is to create a just and peaceful world. To this end, we work on the interconnected issues of economic and racial justice, peace, and human rights through education, advocacy, training and non-violent activism, and community organizing. will focus on the "**P**'s" of Peace and Justice; *people*, *programs*, *and partnership*. Through outreach, dialog and surveys we will work to better understand how the Peace and Justice Center is perceived by the *people* of Vermont. How can we better serve the people who comprise this community and

our members? Internally, we will commit to supporting our staff (our *people*), by exploring and pursuing professional development opportunities.

The PJC is comprised of four *programs*, two of which, the Economic Justice Project and Peace & Justice Store, have full time staff. Our goal is to build programming across the organization and move towards employing full time program staff to lead the Peace and Human Rights Project and Racial Justice Project. In the spirit of collaboration, we will strengthen *partnerships* with old allies and forge *partnerships* with new groups. We know that we cannot do this work alone. We are enthusiastic about the year that lies ahead and even more excited about engaging you to work in solidarity with us!

gene bergman fine Chulky

peace (%) justice center

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STAFF

Chris Meehan / Serena Chaudhry Executive Director

Wendy Coe Office Manager and Newsletter Production Editor

Andrea Arratoon Development Director

Emma Mulvaney-Stanak Director, Vermont Livable Wage Campaign

Hillary Collins-Gilpatrick / Jen Berger Peace & Human Rights Project

Kathy Bouton Co-Manager, P & J Store

Jennifer Reay Co-Manager, P & J Store

Megan Harlow Store Assistant

Evan Long Store Assistant

Donald Barnes *Racial Justice Project*



Staff posing for Store ad. Back Row: Megan Serena, Kat (workstudy), Donald; front row: Emma.



The PJC's Victories and Successes

PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Our work on peace and human rights was tangible in 2005-2006. The war in Iraq escalated. The genocide in Darfur persisted. Violence in the colonial city of Oaxaca flared. The U.S. Congress renewed the Patriot Act. Through all of this, the Peace and Justice Center played an active role in negotiating issues of peace and justice locally and globally.

• Recruiting for Peace Project

We celebrated the passing of an addendum (H.538) that requires Vermont schools to send home opt out forms to all students at the beginning of the year. Parents and can now opt out of having student information sent to military recruiters without effecting students ability to receive information about employment and educational opportunities.

• Truth in Military Recruitment We facilitated discussions at places like King St. Youth Center where youth, ages 12-18 learned about military recruitment and their rights in making choices for themselves. They were so excited to learn, they wanted to talk about how wrong they thought the war is!

Action

We mobilized over 70 people to join together in a demonstration against the National Guard Air Show. The slogan, "War Is Not Entertainment," was seen on banners, posters, t-shirts and heard in chants that corresponded with the Raging Grannies anti-war songs. All this against the backdrop of onlookers singing the national anthem. We were also joined by Bread & Puppet who performed in Battery Park as the first plane of the day took off! A group of dedicated activists spent the following morning, in the pouring rain, at the foot of the Air Base in Essex with banners. We were happy to host the Burlington portion of the Citizens Awareness Networks Walk for a Nuclear Free Future. We hosted a talk at

Burlington College and a candle light vigil on Lake Champlain in honor of those who died at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We also held a three part film series at the Fletcher Free Library in August and September to increase awareness of dishonest recruitment tactics.

• The Declaration of Peace

By signing the Declaration of Peace in conjunction with the International Day of Peace on September 21st, we continue to advocate for peace here in Vermont and around the world.



Jen Berger (back left) leading a workshop.

RACIAL JUSTICE PROJECT

In the spirit and history of the Racial Justice and Equity Project led by John Tucker, the Racial Justice Project, has re-invigorated its work. This fall the PJC brought on a VISTA volunteer to support us in this effort. Subsequently, we have re-connected with colleagues and community members across the state in some of the following ways:

• Racial Justice Committee

We established a board and staff committee that will work collaboratively to guide the project in its new endeavors

Networking

By attending and engaging in meetings across the state from the ALANA Community Center in Brattleboro to Anti-Racism Action meetings in Burlington, the PJC is learning who is doing what in regards to racial justice.

• Collaborating

The Racial Justice Project is preparing to organize and facilitate a statewide meeting on racial justice to assess which groups are engaged in this work, how they are meeting community needs and where the gaps lie.

• Undoing Racism. The PJC is exploring different training opportunities for members and the community at large on undoing racism.

PEACE & JUSTICE STORE

The Peace & Justice Store continues to be a vital asset to the community providing fair trade and local products purchased from organizations that support human rights and fair labor practices.

• The PJC Store supported the Fair Trade Federation's fair trade day with special programming and samples in the store. During the summer months, we did more tabling on Church Street and were part of special community events including the UU Women's conference and Pride.

• As the mid-term elections drew closer, companies such as Bush's Last Day(01-20-09) and Unemployed Philosopher's Guild drew in many customers. 01-20-09 stickers, pins, and magnets seemed to be inspiring for many as well as the "Impeachmints" and "National Embarssmints". As additional troops were sent abroad, VT Peaceworks peace magnets provided a way for many folks to express their discontent with US policy and demand change.

• For this upcoming year we have been inspired by our new director, Serena Chaudhry to dream about "what can we be." We are looking into a new cash register/sales system to support our ever growing and changing inventory, researching new fair trade companies as well as local companies to support our fair trade ideal of local and global communities, and forging new cooperative relationships with local businesses to support each other's work and business.





The PJC's Victories and Successes

ECONOMIC JUSTICE PROJECT

• Community Organizing

The Burlington School Worker Livable Wage Campaign entered its second year of community solidarity work for Burlington school support staff in 2006. The campaign expanded from paraeducators to include food service, maintenance and administrative workers so that all workers earning less than a livable wage were included in the struggle. In the fall of 2006 paraeducators began to negotiate their contract with the school district.

Educational Work

We led 51 livable wage workshops/ talks which reached 2400 people across the state in several settings: college classrooms, high school classrooms, churches, conferences, and in Americorps trainings. The Teaching Economics As If People Mattered (TEAIPM) curriculum in high schools continued to expand. Currently we have 30 educators trained to use TEAIPM in their classrooms, representing 13 schools in six counties. A conservative estimate reveals that over 1,000 high school students are exposed to the curriculum every year.

Research

We published Phase 9 of the Vermont Job Gap Study: Economic Development in Vermont: Funding Priorities, and Performance in February 2006. The Study broke new ground by identifying several recommendations and new methods for analyzing economic development strategies and programs in Vermont. The legislature adopted one recommendation from Phase 9 in 2006-requesting the state to produce a unified economic development budget so all expenditures can be examined in a unified manner.

Legislative

The tipped minimum wage bill was introduced in the Senate in January 2006. The Senate Economic Development Committee heard compelling testimony organized by VLWC. A dozen tipped workers and allied organizations (AFL-CIO and VT Low Income Advocacy Council) testified on the importance of increasing the tipped minimum wage to better support tipped workers. Several of the tipped workers were CCV students who interned with VLWC in the fall of 2005. Over the summer, we released the 2005-2006 Economic Justice Voting Record based on the votes of Vermont legislators on the minimum wage, health care, and other economic justice related issues during the biennium.

General

In September 2006, VLWC turned 10 years old! We celebrated our victories over the last 10 years at the Old Labor Hall in Barre with a community dinner and award ceremony for leaders in the livable wage struggle in Vermont.



VLWC Steering Committee 2006

John Berkowitz, Vermonters for a Fair Economy & Environmental Protection, Putney

Patricia Buck, Southwest Vermont Education Association, Bennington

Ellen David Friedman, Vermont-NEA, Montpelier

Angela DiGiulio, UVM Student Labor Action Project, Stowe

Michelle Frank, Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger, Burlington (finished term)

Joseph Gainza, American Friends Service Committee, Montpelier

James Haslam, Vermont Workers Center, Montpelier **Richard Kemp**, Unitarian Universalist Social Action Ministry, Burlington

Karen Lafayette, Vermont Low Income Advocacy Council, Burlington

Traven Leyshon, *AFL-CIO and High Road-Vermont*, *Middlesex*

Rene Nill, paraeducator, Vergennes

Drew Palcsik, Vermont Legal Aid, Rutland

Peggy Park, retail worker, Vergennes (finished term)

Christine Peterson, non profit worker, Barre

Ellen Reed, United Electrical Workers City Market Local, Burlington (finished term) Jill Richard, Vermont Network Against Domestic Assault, Montpelier

Sharon Rives, *Randolph Livable Wage Group*, *Braintree*

Jesse Rosado, cook, Marshfield

Laura Rubenis, college professor, Bethel

Kurt Staudter, meter reader, Springfield

Kelly Stoddard, non-profit worker, Montpelier

Bentley Washburne, United Church of Christ Social Justice Committee, Montpelier

Rose Wenzel, paraeducator, Vergennes

peace (> justice center

BOARD OF DIRECTORS '05-'06

Gene Bergman - chair Assistant City Attorney, Burlington

Ed Everts - emeritus

Guen Gifford Staff Attorney, Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, Inc.

Dan Goossen Intervale Compost Project

Kelley Goulette Constituent Advocate for Senator Bernie Sanders

Jerry Greenfield Co-founder of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream

Traci Griffith Asst. Professor of Journalism & Mass Communication St Michael's College

Hilary Martin- treas/sec Organic Farmer

Megan Peek Health Education & Community Outreach Coordinator Blue Cross/Blue Shield of VT

Laura Philipps ACLU Staff Attorney

Bill Roberts Teacher

Laura Rubenis College professor

Moise St. Loius Director of Multicultural Student Affairs, Asst. Dean of Students St Michael's College

Sydnee Viray Advocate/Direct Services Co-Coordinator at Women's Rape Crisis Center

I always feel fortunate to live in Vermont where there are dedicated and inspiring folks such as yourselves doing really important work!

Andrea Van Liew,
Training Director,
Vermont Center for
Crime Victim Services



MEMBERS

Thank you to the members of the Peace & Justice Center. You are partners in our work for peace, human rights, and racial and economic justice.

Anonymous Jacqueline Abbey Bonnie Acker & John Davis Susan & Peter Alden Judd Allen Patricia Alley Miriam Almeleh Naomi Almeleh Abbas & Susan Alnasrawi Kaitlin Alsofrom Richard Alther & Ray Repp Carolyn Altieri Carol Altobelli & Penny Libercent Gary & Lorri Ameden John Ames Ed Amidon Karen Amirault **Emily Anderson** Roger & Susan Anderson Sharon & Jerry Anderson Ann Andersson Carl & Rosalind Andreas Tiki Archambeau & Rebecca Taylor Katherine Arthaud William Aswad Ethan Atkin Harry Atkinson & Lisa Marchetti Mike Austin & Jessica Dion Nat & Linda Ayer Charlie Backus Betsy & James Bahrenburg Gretchen Bailey & Jed Lowy Leslie Baker Andrew Barker JB Barna & Heidi Pfau Diana Barnard Tom & Mary Barritt Kevin Barry Charles Bartlett Dean Batt Marion Bausch Alison Bechdel Lisa Bedinger & Bonnie Jean Aharonian Ruth Beecher Kevin Behm Alice Beisiegel Mary & Bob Belenky Malcolm & Nancy Bell Elliott Benay & Janice Muramami Julie & Jeff Benay Mary Bentley Mary & Dick Benton Joanna Berk & John Hinckley John Berkowitz & River Mryddin John & Betty Berlenbach Linda Berlin Anne & Arthur Berndt Barry Bernstein Ellen Bernstein & Ron Manganello Richard Bernstein & Carol Hanley Geoff & Kim Beyer Diana Bingham Todd Binzen & Janet Cavanagh Tracy & Chuck Black Dean Bloch & Valerie Wilkins John Bloch & Rebecca Sheppard

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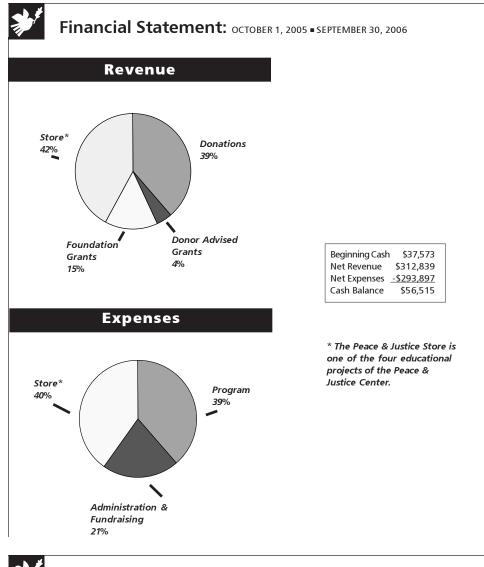
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If we inadvertently omitted your name, we apologize. Please let us know.



Praise for the work of the Peace & Justice Center

"I hope this center remains open long enough so that my children will get to experience the same joy I have."

> Amy Vetters, Burlington CCV Student

"There's really no other place to shop. I love everything in here."

— Lucinda Ransom

"Thank you for such excellent leadership and communications in the vision of peace and justice!" — S.M.

"This [Livable Wage] workshop helped remind the VISTAs why they do their work and will help them serve as VISTAs with greater awareness and understanding."

— Rachel , VISTA training in Montpelier "Thank you for all the essential work you do." — Martha Whitney

"I never had any idea about how many people lived below the poverty line and why they did. This [Livable Wage workshop] just really opened my eyes and makes me want to do something to change the system."

— student at St. Michael's College, fall 2006

Organizational Support

Includes financial awards and

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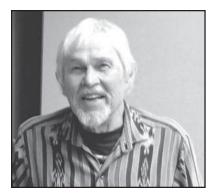


Zabby's Stone Soup

Thank You



Chris Meehan Executive Director from May 2002 to April 2006. With thanks for her dedication and spirit. The PJC would like to thank the Board members who left in 2006: Jerry Greenfield, Megan Peek, Kelley Goulette, Laura Rubenis, Laura Philipps, Jesse Bell, and Bill Roberts



Ed Everts Producer of the Peace & Justice Review from September 1992 to February 2007. Our own PJC Hero!

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