



# ReVision

re (ri) *n.* I. anew, again **vision** (vizh'ən) *n.* I. the manner in which one sees or conceives of something

## YES Works to Impact Episcopal Church



Episcopal Bishops with Director Martha Fugate, at the Province IV Annual Meeting.

As audiences go, they don't get much tougher. A conference of Episcopal bishops representing the full spectrum of differing viewpoints on gay clergy once again proved the effectiveness of the YES communication model. And, despite the time constraints – participants received only a four-hour version of the two-day course – the model was so well received that YES Institute Director Martha Fugate and Bishop Leo Frade are hopeful that the session may open the way for greater work within the Episcopal church.

**“You dealt with the exact situations we face as bishops. Each individual engaged openly and honestly. There is hope even though the struggle will be harsh.”**

- Bishop J. Gary Gloster, Charlotte, NC

The evaluations were overwhelmingly positive, with the only complaint being the brevity and expressed need for more depth of information on this important topic. YES created a condensed presentation of Communications Solutions for the annual meeting of the bishops of Province IV in Key West, Florida on Dec. 1. Approximately 25 bishops from the nine-state southeastern region of the U.S. were in attendance. Their views on gay ordination ranged from supportive to adamantly opposed, with the group including one bishop involved in discussions regarding separation from the mother church over the issue. All found the message of reconciliation helpful, noting the benefits of communicating in a respectful way even when you do not agree – and recognize that you may never agree.

“Our bishops find the techniques very useful,” said Mary Cox, communications director for the Diocese of South Florida. “And not just for the headline-making issues. That may be where the (YES) model started, but the point is you can use it in any kind of conflict. Bishops have all kinds of conflicts within their congregations, from which side of the altar you put the Episcopal flag on to the potential need to close a church.”

Bishop Robert Johnson of Western North Carolina noted that many of his colleagues commented how their afternoon sessions following the morning YES presentation were more productive than ever. “We're all friends and get along together very well despite our differing viewpoints, but the YES presentation improved our existing relationships.



David Reed of KY, Don Johnson, Bishop of West TN.

The afternoon sessions ran more smoothly and were much more productive as we engaged each other more,” said Bishop Johnson. He hopes the church will continue to take advantage of the program, and has already recommended YES to a friend in another state. (See “Bishops” on page 2)

## Delaware Draws Diverse Audiences



Counselors and child welfare workers in Dover, DE.

YES Institute workshops and techniques enhance even trained professionals' knowledge, offering new tools to focus on connecting with clients. “In just a few short hours, it helped me better understand every textbook, every journal, and every lecture I've been exposed to in social work,” said Norwood J. Coleman, Jr., a professional with the Brandywine Program IOP/ACT in Newport, Delaware. “This is what all social workers are

ethically charged to do ... it's not about 'me' even if we disagree, it's all about finding ways to reach clients.”

Coleman, part of a first contact response team, attended Essentials of Orientation, one of three workshops held in Delaware Nov. 15-17, rating it one of the best he's ever attended. More important, he shared the information with his team who began using it immediately. With their new, heightened awareness of the stress of gender identity, he feels they are better able to prioritize crisis issues and connect youth with the correct agencies to provide the support they need. “It brought a piece to the table that wasn't there before,” said Coleman. He cited a crisis call that day where a bisexual youth had made suicidal statements, and his team recognized the seriousness of addressing the gender component. Coleman was one of 40 human services

**“It really changed my thinking about how I practice as a social services worker.”**

- Norwood J. Coleman, Jr., BSW

professionals from both public and private sector organizations at the workshops, sponsored by Hanover Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, DE and underwritten by a grant from the Arsch-Canon fund.

The Essentials of Orientation workshop was presented twice, at an evening session in Wilmington Nov. 15 and again in Dover the next afternoon. (See “Delaware” on page 2)



Youth advocates, therapists, parents, and clergy in Wilmington, DE.

These events are made possible by your generosity. To participate in keeping all youth safe, visit [www.yesinstitute.org](http://www.yesinstitute.org) to learn more.

# YES Speakers Reach University Students, Professional Staff



St. Thomas University graduate counseling students.

From community colleges to Ivy League universities, the YES Institute continues to spread its message on gender issues and awareness to those who work with - or will work with - youth. Recently our work reached over 80 college orientation directors and graduate counseling classes at three major Miami-area universities.

In October, YES presented to the Gay and Lesbian Caucus of National Orientation Directors Association (NODA) during their conference at the Hotel-Intercontinental in Miami. To express their appreciation for the YES workshop, NODA sold rainbow ribbons during the conference and donated the proceeds to the YES Institute. NODA is a professional organization for administrators that direct college orientation programs.

Training future counselors in how to address the needs of the gay, lesbian and transgender population is daily work at the YES Institute. This past fall, YES speakers enriched university classes at three separate south Florida institutions. A total of over 60 graduate counseling students

were exposed to YES Institute techniques at University of Miami, St. Thomas University, and Carlos Albizu University.



NODA Gay & Lesbian Caucus at Hotel Intercontinental, Miami, FL.

## Counselors and Teachers Generate Powerful New Ideas



YES speaker Magda Pantaleon talks about the Institute.

At their annual meeting at YES headquarters, approximately 35 Miami-Dade County TRUST Network counselors brainstormed with YES staff on how to solve the all-too-common problem of reaching parents, particularly those who make one contact regarding their child and then are never heard from again. The answer: a new web-based course, where parents of gay youth can log on in the privacy of their own home to find answers to their questions about gender, homosexuality, and how to support their children. The one-hour course will be developed in both English and Spanish. Additionally, the counselors proposed having the Miami-Dade County school system sponsor a Communications Solutions

“A web-based introductory course would be an exciting new approach to reach hidden and fearful parents.”

- TRUST Specialist, MDCPS

course that would be open to all Sexual Minority Youth counselors in the TRUST Network program.

In other recent work with the Miami-Dade County school system, the YES Institute held a basic introductory course on Nov. 14 for a group of approximately 30 elementary, middle and high school teachers.

## Bishops See Benefits of YES Model

(Continued from Page 1)

“The presenters were excellent,” said Bishop Johnson. “They have a way of drawing you in that’s very disarming. No matter what your objections are, you start to see your defenses just don’t hold up. We’re all living with different groups of people and we can’t be so defensive of our point of view that we can’t listen to and honor different opinions.”

YES worked closely with Bishops Frade and Ottley following the controversial consecration vote of Gene Robinson, the first openly-gay Episcopal bishop, conducting the full two-day Communications Solutions course for the Southeast Florida diocesan staff in January 2004. Believing their colleagues would also benefit from YES communication, the bishops invited YES to demonstrate this model at the annual conference of bishops.

“Of all the workshops we’ve done, this may prove to be one of the most impactful,” said Fugate. “Many of the bishops that attended expressed an interest in working with us to help bring healing and reconciliation to their home bases.”

## High School Students Pack Workshop



Barbara Byrne, right, addressing over 70 students and parents who attended the four hour workshop.

Early one Saturday in December 2005, the scene at the South Miami YES Institute headquarters surprised even the organizers - a room packed so full of ninth and tenth graders that the students sat on the floor when chairs ran out. “The turnout was fantastic,” said YES Institute’s Education and Training Coordinator Joseph Zolobczuk. “We had over 70 young teens here - primarily heterosexual - who got up early and voluntarily gave up a weekend morning to learn about gender issues.” The workshop was a

special Essentials of Orientation presentation tailored to their age group. The students were encouraged to attend by Coral Reef High School teacher Melissa Duarte, who extended the invitation to all of her biology classes. Attendance was optional, although the students received extra credit. A number of parents also stayed for the presentation by Zolobczuk, who was assisted by YES speakers Barbara Byrne, LCSW, and Riveria Presbyterian’s minister, the Reverend Dr. Laurie Kraus.

## Delaware Events Enhance Skills

(Continued from Page 1)

The Gender Continuum was presented in Dover on Nov. 17. Attendees included State of Delaware employees, child welfare staff, counseling agencies and community educators.

“We issued an open invitation to the human services community,” said Alice Davis, the event organizer. “We had YES present their Communication Course back in 2002 for clergy and other area religious leaders, and people wanted to invite them back to continue the work so we kept working on a way,” said Davis. Hanover Presbyterian and the Arsch-Canon fund will sponsor the full Communication Course in March, which will be open to an even wider public audience in Delaware.

# Kiaora Society Membership News

It is the incredible generosity of Kiaora members that allows YES Institute to stay at the forefront of educational programs that make the world a safer place for our youth. Kiaora contributors are the backbone of our organization, and provide the foundation of our annual budget. We hold this team of committed supporters as part of the YES family, and gratefully acknowledge their support.

Board Chair Tim Birrittella and his partner Meredith Birrittella continue their stunning support of YES Institute by becoming Kiaora Luminaries. We are very grateful for their dedication, generosity and invaluable contributions to our work and organization.

Renewing as Champions are long time friends Greg Baldwin & José Castro, Peter Pilotti & Joseph Rodano, and Carol & Ed Williamson. We thank them for their friendship and continued support. Inspired to even greater generosity Trae Williamson & Daniel Carter have increased their Kiaora contribution and renewed as Champions. Marsha Oldakowski & John Butler and Jorge Vazquez & Robert Armada, have increased their contributions this year, becoming Kiaora Leaders. We also thank Paula Morabito & María

M. Yip for renewing as Kiaora Society Leaders. We heartily welcome and thank new Kiaora Leader The South Florida Tennis Club, and new Mentors Enrique Carrillo, The Kiwanis Club of Key Biscayne, Ellen Leesfield & Pamela Perry, F. Lynn Leverett, Robert Longstreth, John A. Marazza, Edward McIntyre & Jojo Corvaia, Cesar Nivar & Russell Wagner, Damian Pardo, and John Saavedra, as well as The Church of St. Michael the Archangel of Lexington, KY.

A heartfelt thank you to renewing mentors and dear friends, Bob Cole, Barbara Gray, Hortensia Soriano, Robert Flanders & Walter Goodman, Lawrence R. Hyer, Marty Schildhouse & Ed Miller, José Alonso, Bruce A. Christensen, Scott Dansky & John Dawson, Raul Valdes Fauli & Shed Boren, Thomas H. Gellman & Carlos Yudica, Joseph M. Kraus, Richard Milstein & Eric Hankin, Gordon F. Rhodes, Thomas Taylor, Howard Snoweiss & Lin Childress, William Vaughn, and Robin Wolff & Cathy Gregory.

We are extremely grateful for the continued support of Dade Community Foundation, Ruth Anderson Foundation and Roblee Foundation, and the commitment they share for all youth.

## Bet on Fun Times

Sat. April 1, 2006  
Las Vegas Spectacular  
We're Not Fooling!



On the evening of April Fool's Day, a fabulous fine dining, fund-raising, glitz, glamour and gambling ... Vegas-style! Order your \$125 ticket today which includes dinner, open bar, casino privileges, music, dancing, and free valet parking. Each ticket brings a chance to win a trip for two to the REAL Las Vegas, including airfare and two nights hotel accommodations.

**Event Tickets:** [yesinstitute.org/vegas](http://yesinstitute.org/vegas)



## Win a Mercedes

Support our work by entering our spectacular drawing to win a 2006 Mercedes-Benz ML 350! Drawing will be held at the Las Vegas Spectacular III event on April 1st - winner need not be present. We thank Bill Ussery Motors, Inc. for this opportunity. Raffle Tickets are \$100 each. Only 1,000 tickets are available. Order online now or call the office at 305-663-7195.

**Raffle Tickets:** [yesinstitute.org/mercedes](http://yesinstitute.org/mercedes)

## Breakthroughs in Communication



Martha Fugate and Joseph Zolobczuk lead the course.

**By Jenny Skyler, UM Counseling student**

As a therapist, I have good listening skills and read people well. But, when I took the Communication Solutions course, I was profoundly humbled. I learned listening - not as a scholastic skill - but as a way to truly hear another. Using this in my therapy practice was a radical shift when my clients stopped talking *at* me and starting talking *to* me. The only thing that changed was me, and the way I listened. I also learned how to stop talking *at* other people. The challenge is not to change opinions, but giving up the fight to be right. Our defense mechanisms are in place for survival in a big, bad world. But, if our greater purpose is to change this world, re-directing the conversation

is the secret to teamwork even if your opinions are as opposite as Dr. Ruth and Dr. Laura. I was programmed for reacting with defensiveness, sarcasm, judgement, and the need to "fix" other people. I am still acclimating to this new way of communicating. I am certain that this new method of communication is authentic and centered on my greater purpose. For me, a greater purpose is what it's all about.

“When someone attacks your ideas, it's difficult not to think they are attacking you. Learning how not to demonize, connect with others, and be effective 'agents of change' was remarkable.”



- Suzanne Gordon, frequent contributor to the Boston Globe and author of "Nursing Against the Odds," reflecting on her Communication Course experience.

### Kiaora Society

Kiaora Society members donate \$1,000 or more to the YES Institute annually.

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## Conference of Bishops and Delaware Successes

## A Parent's Voice



Twenty Somethings youth with Eva Leivas-Andino (center) of YES Institute.

**“I wish we could have stayed and talked the whole night.”**

- Twenty Somethings youth

One of the most formidable challenges young teens grapple with is talking to their parents about their gender identity and orientation. Eva Leivas-Andino spoke with students from the Twenty Somethings youth group, a Friday night social and support agency in downtown Miami in November. Eva shared her powerful story, as well as the difference education made in her life.



New GSA debuts with YES visit.

## GSA Previews YES

The new Gay-Straight Alliance at PACE requested a preview of YES educational courses as their first official activity. PACE School for Girls, where YES spoke last year, is an alternative middle and high school for at-risk youth. Harry Congdon, LCSW, and Eva Leivas-Andino spoke about YES courses and important distinctions around orientation and gender. “They were really intrigued with the information,” remarked Congdon.



305-663-7195 www.yesinstitute.org

### Vision

A community in which ALL youth develop as healthy individuals free of suicide, violence and discrimination.

### Mission

To prevent suicide and ensure the healthy development of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and ALL youth by initiating dialogue, providing education and creating support systems.

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## Statistics

### Gay Youth:

- 33% of all teen suicides
- 50% rejected by their parents

### Heterosexual Youth:

- 80% of youth harassed "as gay" actually identify as heterosexual
- 97% of all students hear anti-gay comments

### A Gay Issue? Or an Issue for Everyone?

“Harris and Kliebold were tortured daily,” reported a former Columbine student. “They were called faggots, wierdos, and freaks.”

A football team member bragged after the massacre, “Sure we tease them, if you want to get rid of someone, you tease ‘em. The whole school would call them homos.”

“I think he suffered horribly before he died. For not seeing that, I will never forgive myself” said Susan Klebold, 5 years after the murders.

Ames, Mark. (2005). “Going Postal: Rage, Murder, and Rebellion”. Soft Skull Press.

### Accreditations



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Roaring Fork Valley School District (RE-1) Teacher Education

## Our New Editor

We welcome Ann McMaster as editor of ReVision. A marketing communications consultant, her professional experience includes positions in corporate, academia and news outlets.

