

OPERATION RESPECT



CREATING SAFE COMPASSIONATE
Environments For Children and Youth

ANNUAL REPORT 2016



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MESSAGE FROM MOLLY McCLOSKEY CEO AND PRESIDENT

2016 was a year we will not soon forget. We saw new levels and different forms of bias and violence that intersected with class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion. We witnessed, all too often, adults behaving badly and children listening and following their lead.

And yet, we saw moments of extraordinary progress. Moments and movements of joy and equity and compassion inspired us all to live love, teach peace, and fight all that is unfair in our world. Calls for civility, kindness, and empathy issued forth from us, from our partners and allies, and countless caring organizations and individuals.

At Operation Respect, we heard the calls and responded. As you will see in this 2016 annual report, we launched a brand-new website and updated our cornerstone *Don't Laugh at Me* social and emotional learning curriculum, a combination which has resulted in 1000 downloads a month of our lessons, free of cost to educators and others who work with children and youth. We renewed our commitment to professional development which builds educators' capacity to create and sustain caring learning communities in their classrooms, schools and districts, free from bias, bullying and violence. We asked the children what it feels like to be bullied and shared their message on social media

with tens of thousands of adults viewing their powerful plea.

In this moment in time, we must redouble our efforts in schools, classrooms and communities around the world. We must know that social and emotional learning and academic success work hand in hand to prepare our children for further education, meaningful careers, active civic engagement, and inspired personal lives. And, we must understand that this education is the cornerstone of peace.

Together we can create ridicule-free environments, in which bullying, violence and all forms of cruelty are so outside the cultural norms that they cease to exist. Together we can build in our children the capacity and the desire to form communities of respect and a world premised on peace. Together we can defeat hate and all its expressions.

Over the past seventeen years, your generosity has made it possible for us to reach tens of thousands of educators and hundreds of thousands of children from Las Vegas, Nevada to Tel Aviv, Israel, from New York City to Hong Kong. You keep us singing, teaching, and advocating every day. You make the vital difference for us to carry on this work, and we are forever grateful.



WHO WE ARE

WHO WE ARE

Operation Respect is a non-profit education and advocacy organization dedicated to transforming schools, summer camps and other youth-serving organizations into safer, more respectful, bully-free environments for children and youth. Founded in 1999 by Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul and Mary, and Dr. Charlotte Frank, Senior Advisor at McGraw-Hill Education, Operation Respect disseminates its own classroom based curriculum, the *Don't Laugh at Me* Program, free of charge to thousands of schools in the United States and around the world. Operation Respect's inspiring music, social-emotional learning curriculum, and highly-regarded professional training provide adults with the tools they need to help children express their feelings constructively, resolve conflict peacefully, celebrate diversity, and engage with each other in a spirit of caring, compassion and cooperation.

MISSION

The mission of Operation Respect is to create respectful, safe and compassionate climates of learning, free of bullying, ridicule and violence.

VISION

Our vision is a world in which children experience equity and justice in their homes, schools, and communities; a world with less violence and more understanding, in which children may develop as productive, compassionate and civically engaged members of society committed to peace.



REFLECTIONS FROM PETER YARROW

CO-FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT EMERITUS

For Operation Respect, one of the most productive years in our history has been counterpointed by a shift in the American cultural landscape that has shined a piercing beam on the importance of our work but also reflected a grave source of concern.

On the one hand, under our CEO and President Molly McCloskey's leadership, the visibility of Operation Respect through its recreated website has sparked greater interest and energy than we've ever seen before. A thousand downloads of the program each month by teachers, school counselors, and administrators indicate that we remain a preferred and cutting edge provider of character developing tools that make school climates warmer, friendlier, and more bully and ridicule-free.

The expansion of Operation Respect in Nablus now brings us into a pivotal position that is enjoyed by no other program of its sort, one in which we can truly help build the spirit of peace-building within children on both sides of a painfully conflict-ridden area. Alliances between Operation Respect's *Don't Laugh At Me* Program and other programs like No Place For Hate and Respect for All in the New York City schools are flourishing and expanding.

However, at the same time, we've seen the crying need for the work of Operation Respect increase exponentially with the vitriol, animosity, and even hatred that has emerged between fellow Americans attacking each other in the media and real life in ways that are frightening and traumatizing to our children and youth. Adults struggle to guide these children while they themselves suffer dislocated hearts and self-described PTSD.

The question is: what are we going to do about it, and how can we rid ourselves of this toxic environment that challenges the premise that we are good and caring people who know how to get along?

I maintain that we will only be able to reconstruct America's (or any other country's, for that matter) good will if we directly include our children—and the education of their hearts and their character—in this effort.

Adults carry with them the legacy of hurt and disappointment, inherited fears and biases, and the dimming of their lights of idealism and optimism. Children, on the other hand, are by definition new and fresh. They need not be reconstructed. If they



are given the tools to affirm one another, the gifts of knowing the pleasures and rewards of giving to and serving one another, the clear sense that they can all be brothers and sisters who respect and, yes, love one another, they can grasp these light-filled dreams and make them a reality and hence establish a precedent for their later lives. Growing up in a caring, giving culture in early life is an inoculation against buying into a culture of mean-spiritedness, bullying, materialism, and selfishness in later life.

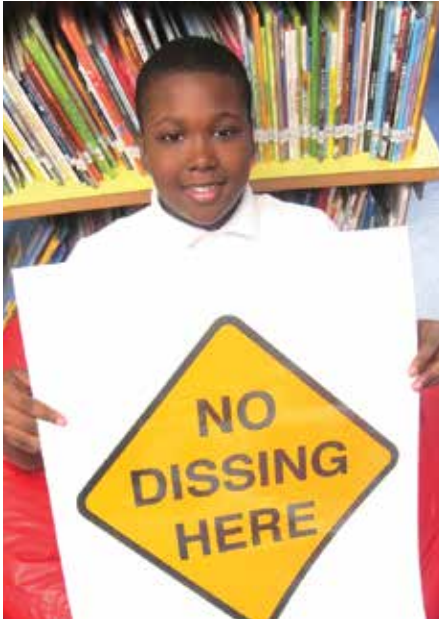
Yes, as adults, we must surely reach across the divide to dissipate this hovering cloud. We must listen to and try to understand the narratives of those whom we assume to be irrational or imperiously disdainful. If we do so, our preconceived stereotypes will, in my experience, disappear—more often than not.

But even as we work to dissolve the grim cloud of ill-will that has beset our nation and beyond, this effort will not be even a wisp of a cure unless we educate, nurture, help, love, and give our children and youth a hearty dose of what is best in ourselves, the better angels of our nature. In the long arc of change, it is, in my opinion, only by bringing up our children in a way that dispels the psycho-social illnesses of the past that we can hope to build a better future where the institutions founded on good will, on “us-ness” not “me-ness”, community as opposed to cruel and unnecessary competition, and regard and respect for what's inside us rather than worship of the material wealth that surrounds us, will we succeed in reclaiming our lives, our country and meet the dangerous challenges of these times.

2016 BY THE NUMBERS

>140,000

VIEWS OF “WHAT DOES GETTING BULLIED FEEL LIKE” VIDEO



63

THE PERCENTAGE OF
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
COUNSELORS WHO
USE *DON'T LAUGH
AT ME* IN ISRAEL



10TH
year of
Respect for All
partnership in NYC

800

EDUCATORS WHO RECEIVED
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FROM OPERATION RESPECT



1,000

downloads
per month of
*Don't Laugh at
Me* social and
emotional learning
lessons



MESSAGE FROM DR. CHARLOTTE FRANK CO-FOUNDER AND CHAIR

In 1982, I was the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction for New York City Public schools when we launched a new program we hoped would bring students to a greater concern for the life, well-being, and dignity of others. My commitment to Operation Respect over the years has been an extension of the urgency of that time and is matched now by an ever-growing sense that our work is needed more than ever.

Similarly, in February 2016, Congressman John Garamendi, a former Board member and longtime friend of Operation Respect, took to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives because of his concern about the mean-spirited way that political leaders were communicating with each other on both sides of the aisle. The speech was entitled, “The Children are Listening,” and was supported by data provided by Operation Respect. Congressman Garamendi exhorted his colleagues and, by extension, all of us, to remember that our words, our actions, our attitudes are internalized and imitated each day by the children and youth around us in ways which can be destructive and which are certainly detrimental to their long-term success and well-being.

This urgency is why we refreshed and renewed our cornerstone *Don't Laugh at Me* curriculum and launched a brand-new website in 2016 to support educators, summer camp counselors, and others who work with children and youth around the world. Today our lessons are downloaded, free of cost, an average of 1000 times per month from our website and from others including the powerful *Share My Lesson* platform of the American Federation of Teachers.



Building a caring, safe, and compassionate learning environment for children takes time, patience, hard work and a great deal of support, so in 2016 we expanded our professional development offerings to include personal leadership coaching for administrators seeking to strengthen their school climate, model social and emotional learning skills in their policies and practices, and implement restorative justice throughout the school community.

The children are listening and your commitment and support of Operation Respect is a significant way to let them know that you and we are dedicated to helping them express their feelings constructively, resolve conflict peacefully, celebrate the rich diversity of our world, and engage with each other in a spirit of caring, compassion and cooperation.

BUILDING A CARING, SAFE, AND COMPASSIONATE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN TAKES TIME, PATIENCE, HARD WORK AND A GREAT DEAL OF SUPPORT.

YEAR IN REVIEW

Throughout 2016, Operation Respect and our dedicated team of consultants provided updated and innovative program materials, transformative professional development opportunities, engaging student development sessions, and inspiring songwriting workshops and assembly programs for diverse groups of educators and students around the world.

NEWLY UPDATED

“DON’T LAUGH AT ME” CURRICULUM

First published in 2000, our cornerstone *Don’t Laugh at Me* program was completely updated in 2016 to include even greater arts integration, links to Common Core and other curricular standards, and grade level specific modifications so that it may be used from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Don’t Laugh at Me engages students in research based experiences and social and emotional learning through the four cornerstone themes of:

1. Expressing Feelings
2. Building Community
3. Resolving Conflict Creatively
4. Celebrating Diversity

Together, the nineteen lessons of these themes build essential skills for reducing bullying and conflict, establishing a peaceful, supportive learning environment, and engaging young people in active participation in their community

As has always been our commitment and unique contribution to the field, the newly refreshed curriculum is available free of cost through our website and we have seen an average of one thousand downloads per month.

OPERATION RESPECT WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA LAUNCH

To support the revised curriculum, Operation Respect launched a dynamic new website with a fresh and modern design, easy navigation, up-to-date information, and weekly blogs that speak to the heart of our mission. At the same time, a social media strategy was launched to promote our work and to increase the visibility of the new website and materials via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.





DON'T LAUGH AT ME IMPLEMENTATION

CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NEVADA

The Operation Respect partnership with Welcoming Schools, of the Human Rights Campaign, and Teaching Tolerance continued in Clark County, Nevada, throughout 2016. Operation Respect's Education Director, Mark Weiss, returned to Clark County in March, June and October, to provide professional development workshops for teams of five educators from each of the 25 participating schools and conduct school visits to support their work. Fourteen school-based leaders, trained through intensive Operation Respect/Welcoming Schools train-the-trainers workshops, have been successful as facilitators and "experts" on the OR/WS project within each of their own schools.

STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK

In Staten Island our partnership with community schools in District 31 entered its 6th year, with the addition of two schools, PS 21 and PS 74, in the fall of 2016. The professional and student development in Staten Island is funded by a new 5-year grant from the New York State Department of Education, awarded to District 31 in 2016.

ISRAEL

The *Don't Laugh at Me* Program, translated into Hebrew and Arabic, is used by more than 63% of elementary school counselors across Israel. Our partner, the Center for Educational Technology (CET), provided training in 2016 to a new group of 22 schools through a pilot distance learning program. CET also began work to expand the website which provides materials free of cost for all Israeli educators and took the first steps to develop additional resources for 1st and 2nd grade students.

HONG KONG

Throughout 2016, the social workers and trainers of the Boys and Girls Clubs Association (BGCA) of Hong Kong provided intensive school-based support to 10 schools utilizing teaching activities adapted from the *Don't Laugh at Me* curriculum, along with additional materials focused on compassion and respect. Educators participating in this project report that it has had a positive impact on school climate overall. They are more alert to the issue of bullying, more aware of how to address it, and experiencing improved daily interactions with their students.

YEAR IN REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout 2016, we continued to work to ensure children and youth around the world live, learn and play in safe, caring and compassionate environments. Each month brought opportunities to live out our mission and vision.



JANUARY

Operation Respect enters the 10th year of a partnership to provide Respect for All workshops through the New York City Department of Education's Office of Safety and Youth Development, and in collaboration with the Anti-Defamation League, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), and the Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility.

01

FEBRUARY

The Operation Respect Board of Directors convenes in NYC for strategic planning.

02

MARCH

Songwriting workshops, assembly programs and the video shoot for "What Does Getting Bullied Feel Like?" all take place in Staten Island schools.

03

APRIL

Refreshed *Don't Laugh at Me* curriculum and new Operation Respect website are launched as Congressman John Garamendi cites Operation Respect in a powerful message, "The Children are Listening," from the floor of the House of Representatives.

04

MAY

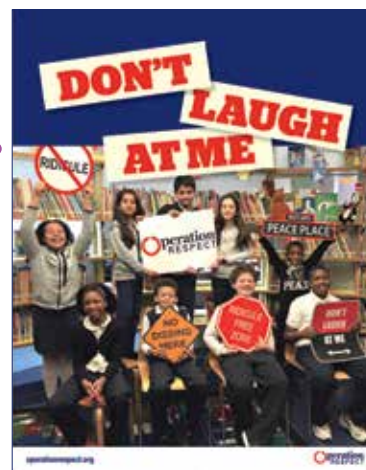
Operation Respect collaborates with the Rotary Club of Denver Southeast and Peter Yarrow is inducted as an honorary member.

05

JUNE

Operation Respect staff travel to Israel to plan next steps with our partners: The Center for Educational Technology and Sheba Medical Center/MSR.

06



07

JULY

All attendees at the American School Counselor Association Conference receive electronic copies of the revised *Don't Laugh at Me* curriculum.

08

AUGUST

Operation Respect provides restorative justice and peer mediation workshops for educators and students in New York City.

09

SEPTEMBER

@OperRespect serves as co-host of Twitter chat on the arts and social and emotional learning during National Arts in Education week.

10

OCTOBER

Operation Respect joins the Peace Boat's 92nd Global Voyage as the ship docks in New York City.

11

NOVEMBER

Peter Yarrow presents at the National Israeli Pediatricians Conference in Tel Aviv to promote collaboration between the medical and education communities to end bullying.

12

DECEMBER

Operation Respect provides professional leadership coaching for principals and superintendents in New York City, Putnam Valley Central School District and Somers Central School District in New York.





YEAR IN REVIEW

UKRAINE

Alternative V, Operation Respect's partner in Ukraine since 2010, collaborated with Schools for Democracy, a program of The European Wergeland Center and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the Peace Corps, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the Academy of Peace and Dialogue (Georgia), and Crossing Borders Denmark to provide *Don't Laugh at Me* resources and training to educators, Peace Corps volunteers, and students in regions across the country.

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP COACHING

Building a caring, safe, compassionate learning environment for children takes time, patience, work and a great deal of support. It also hinges on the success of the people leading the effort.

In 2016, we enhanced our customized, relationship-based professional coaching process, based on the work of Star Factor, for leaders in critical areas including social-emotional learning, working effectively in cross-cultural situations, and creating positive changes in the learning environment. Our

model, which closely aligns with implementation of *Don't Laugh at Me*, restorative justice, and other related efforts, provides a two-part approach to improving school culture overall and developing the social and emotional skills of all members of the



“WHEN STUDENTS WRITE THEIR OWN SONG, THEY ARE MORE APT TO LIVE BY THE WORDS AND QUIETLY CONVINCE OTHER STUDENTS TO DO THE SAME.”

school community. *Don't Laugh at Me's* cornerstone themes for children and youth—expressing feelings, building community, resolving conflict, and celebrating diversity—are mirrored in the coaching process for adults. In 2016, Operation Respect provided effective and results driven coaching to principals and superintendents in New York City, Putnam Valley Central School District (NY) and Somers Central School District (NY).

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

Throughout 2016, Operation Respect provided professional development and student training sessions in New York City schools. In Manhattan, our work at VOYAGES (Viable Option for Young Adults to Grow Excel and Succeed) Preparatory High School focused on the implementation of a counselor and teacher advisory circle model designed to positively impact school climate as well as increase attendance, lower the dropout rate and increase the graduation rate. In the Bronx, Operation Respect partnered with Effective Alternative in Reconciliation Services (EARS), to offer Peer Mediation training as well as anti-bullying and restorative practice workshops for students and staff at JHS 80.

We also continued to lead Respect for All workshops for teams of educators in New York City. For ten years, we have partnered with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) and the Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility to provide hundreds of anti-bias and LGBTQIA cultural competence training sessions across all five boroughs. This initiative, launched by the New York City Department of Education's (NYC DOE) Office of Safety and Youth Development, ensures that all students learn in a safe, supportive school environment, free of bullying and bias-based behavior.

SONGWRITING AND ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Operation Respect Board member and Grammy-nominated songwriter, Steve Seskin, returned to New York and New Jersey to provide songwriting workshops and assembly programs to schools. The goal of this program is to instill a love of creative expression in the students, as well as help them create their own songs that speak to issues that affect the entire school community, including bullying, respect, peer pressure, diversity and self-esteem. As Steve says, “When students write their own song, they are more apt to live by the words and quietly convince other students to do the same.” The songs the students write with Steve often become “school songs” that students and staff sing at monthly assembly programs.



GRATITUDE

The first theme of our *Don't Laugh at Me* curriculum is expressing feelings so we want to express one of ours – gratitude. We all realize that what really matters are the gifts of caring and being cared about, loving and being loved, giving and being given to, by those we hold dear. Our most heartfelt gratitude in 2016 to our many friends and supporters!





FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Operation Respect depends on the generous support of individuals, corporations and foundations. Many donors have contributed to make it possible for us to thrive and increase our effectiveness. Our thanks go out to each and every one of them. Thousands of classrooms are evolving into safer and more respectful learning environments because of all who help us. We appreciate and value your support, offered in so many ways, more than we can ever express.

ABOVE \$30,000

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\$20,000-\$29,999

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 Steve Seskin
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 Lisa Walsh
 Peter Yarrow

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION 2016

DECEMBER 31,	2016	Summarized Financial Information 2015
ASSETS		
Cash	\$174,219	\$201,221
Investments	—	\$4,985
Contributions and other receivables	\$50,623	\$57,719
Computer Equipment, net of accumulated depreciation of \$41,913 and \$39,730	\$2,083	\$2,218
TOTAL ASSETS	\$226,925	\$266,143
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$25,708	\$24,650
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$25,708	\$19,693
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted	\$198,458	\$183,251
Temporarily restricted	\$2,759	\$58,242
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$201,217	\$241,493
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$226,925	\$ 266,143

The Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities on the following page were derived from the 2016 financial statements audited by our independent accountants, West, Rhode and Roberts. A copy of the audited financial statements and form 990 for 2016 are available upon request.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES 2016

Year end December 31,	2016			2015
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total	Summarized Comparative Information Total
REVENUES AND SUPPORT				
CONTRIBUTIONS				
Individuals	\$227,576	\$17,500	\$245,076	\$199,425
Contributed services	\$70,209	—	\$70,209	\$107,290
Foundations and other contributors	\$66,015	—	\$66,015	\$18,610
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$363,800	\$17,500	\$381,300	\$325,325
Educational workshops and performance fees	\$174,300	—	\$174,300	\$140,944
Special Events	\$122,343	—	\$122,343	\$194,017
Investment income	\$1,645	—	\$1,645	—
Net assets released from restrictions satisfaction of program restrictions	\$72,983	(72,983)	—	—
TOTAL REVENUES AND SUPPORT	\$735,071	(\$55,483)	\$679,588	\$660,286
EXPENSES				
Program services	\$439,824	—	\$439,824	\$407,170
Management and general	\$154,453	—	\$154,453	\$138,196
Fundraising	\$125,587	—	\$125,587	\$93,595
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$719,864	—	\$719,864	\$638,961
Change in net assets	\$15,207	(\$55,483)	(\$40,276)	\$21,325
Net assets at beginning of year	\$183,251	\$58,242	\$241,493	\$220,168
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$198,458	\$2,759	\$201,217	\$241,493

STAFF

STAFF

Molly McCloskey, CEO and President

Mark Weiss, Education Director

Elizabeth Kolodny, Program Director

TRAINERS

Edwin Figueroa, Consultant

Javier Francisco Diaz, Consultant

Marcy May, Executive Director, Effective Alternative in Reconciliation Services

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Charlotte K. Frank, Ph.D., Chair and Co-Founder, Operation Respect and Senior Advisor, Research and Development, McGraw-Hill Education

Jim Graves, CEO and Chairman, Graves Hospitality

Charlotte Kea, Deputy Director, Office of Gifts and Grant Management, Peace Corps

Arthur A. Klein, MD, President, Mount Sinai Health Network

Victor Kovner, Partner, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP

Michael P. Miller, Treasurer and Secretary, Operation Respect and former Chair, Toys 'R' Us Children's Benefit Fund

Larry Moses, President Emeritus and Senior Philanthropic Advisor to the Wexner Foundation

Steve Seskin, Singer/Songwriter/Educator

Gloria Smith, Philanthropist

Richard Stoff, Vice Chairman, Operation Respect and President and CEO, Ohio Business Roundtable

Noel Paul Stookey, Peter, Paul and Mary

Chad Wick, Founder and President Emeritus, KnowledgeWorks Foundation

Peter Yarrow, Peter, Paul and Mary and Co-Founder and President Emeritus, Operation Respect





Operation Respect would like to thank McGraw-Hill Education for underwriting the cost of printing this annual report.



Operation Respect is a public charity under sections 501c(3) and 509(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code. Our 2016 Form 990 is available upon request.



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