



Be Peace. Choose Peace. Create Peace.

PEACE THROUGH ACTION EVENT INFORMATION SHEET

Event Title	Peaceful Cities: Local Strategies for Peacebuilding & Nonviolence
Date, Time, Location	10/26/2023, 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm ET
Event Webpage	Here
Event Description	

Peaceful Cities: Local Strategies for Peacebuilding and Nonviolence explored how ordinary people can transform their cities to be more peaceful and connected places. In partnership with Pace e Bene's Nonviolent Cities Project, this event featured a panel discussion joined by leaders of place-based peacebuilding initiatives and city-wide nonviolent projects throughout the United States. Participants in this virtual learning event left with a better understanding of how to create harmony, justice, and positive change in their local areas using a variety of community organizing and bridgebuilding methods. In addition to our national panelists, Peace Through Action USA discussed how its capstone Calvert Peace Project works to build and nourish a culture of peace through an emphasis on social and civic engagements. This free virtual learning event examined a variety of nonviolent approaches that participants can implement right at home.

Presenter Biographies

Rivera Sun is the Program Coordinator for the [Nonviolent Cities Project](#) and other programs run by Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service. She is an activist and the author of numerous books and novels, including *The Dandelion Insurrection* and the award-winning *Ari Ara Series*. Rivera is also the editor of [Nonviolence News](#) and her articles are syndicated by Peace Voice and published in hundreds of journals nationwide. Learn more about Rivera at www.riverasun.com.

The Nonviolent Cities Project works in dozens of communities across the United States to advance nonviolence and nonviolent solutions in all aspects of our local communities. Wherever systemic or structural violence exists, Nonviolent Cities work to dismantle it and replace it with the viable alternatives that form the infrastructure of a culture of nonviolence.

Ruth Ann Angus is the Director of Yes We Can Peacebuilders, a division of People of Faith for Justice San Luis Obispo, CA. She is also a facilitator and trainer of nonviolence practices and principles and coordinates the Nonviolent Cities Project in San Luis Obispo County, California.

With a degree in marketing/merchandising from the Fashion Institute, Ruth Ann has worked as a professional writer and photographer specializing in lifestyle, people, travel, nature, business, folk music, history, and peace, publishing in regional, local, and online publications. She also teaches photography for the Cal-Poly Extension Program and writing for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In addition to teaching workshops in positive peacebuilding with area youth groups, she holds monthly peace workshop discussion groups with members of the adult community. She also co-created the website for The Beatitudes Center with international peace activist John Dear and helped establish the center which offers online lectures by many prominent peace activists, authors, and speakers.

As a 27-year member of the Education and Outreach Board of the Morro Bay National Estuary Program, she has taught environmental education to the public and assigned grant monies to environmental education projects. She also served as the president of the advocacy group Friends of the Estuary that lobbied to obtain entrance into the Environmental Protection Agency's National Estuary Program.

During the second term for Governor Jerry Brown of California, she was also appointed to his staff as a Special Assistant to the Governor. Learn more at www.yeswecanpeacebuilders.org and www.ruthannangus.com.

Migdalia Garcia, of San Antonio, TX, is a passionate peace and social justice educator and practitioner at Northwest Vista College. Her borderland beginnings have shaped her intersectional approach to living, learning, and scholarship. Currently, she leads the San Antonio Peace Center with a wonderful team of activists. The Center collaborates on various programs and initiatives that foster strong connections with the campus and community to cultivate compassion, challenge structural inequities and promote our collective well-being.

Migdalia serves as a board member of various organizations whose missions are to make the local and global community more robust and equitable.

To recharge she likes to read, travel, spend time outdoors, pet her dogs, and spend time with her family.

Mary Bonney, of Prince Frederick, Maryland, is a peace agent with Peace Through Action USA. Mary is responsible for organizing and delivering the Calvert Peace Project, a civic and social engagement project for youth and adults in Calvert County, Maryland, to which she brings experience in event planning, nonprofit support and management, and service. Prior to joining Peace Through Action USA, Mary worked as a project director at Deliver. She has also worked as a technology specialist with Deliver and an event planner with Brigham Young University. Mary also served for 18 months as a full-time volunteer missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in southern Chile. Mary is an active volunteer with Deliver as a member of the board of directors, and with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Mary holds a Bachelor of Science from Brigham Young University.

Chris Walonski, of Saint Petersburg, Florida, is the director of programs and partnerships development and delivery with Peace Through Action USA. Chris is responsible for designing instruction in civic engagement and social engagement concepts and practices; writing and editing educational and promotional materials; planning and delivering educational activities; implementing performance management procedures; and engaging with organizations and networks aligned with Peace Through Action's mission. Chris's programmatic work has engaged a broad range of community intervention strategies and performance-based teaching methods. Prior to joining Peace Through Action USA, Chris served as a program researcher and professor of public speaking at East Tennessee State University. In this capacity, Chris married his passion for project development with the power of personal narrative to help produce a campus-wide sexual consent training program. Chris' love for crafting educational experiences has taken him from public schools in Thailand to the Amazon rainforest of Peru. Upon returning to the United States as a program manager for the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), Chris designed and delivered a bilingual training program that incorporated an array of community partnerships serving multicultural and multilingual youth. Chris has served as an AmeriCorps member through Teach For America's Colorado Corps. Chris holds a Master of Arts in communication and storytelling studies from East Tennessee State University. As an avid learner, Chris has completed

training in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) and holds a CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) certification from Cambridge University. Chris is a grateful recipient of the Hemera Foundation’s Fellowship for Contemplative Education and is an eager student of Buddhist meditation. In his personal time, Chris has toured the U.S. as a spoken word artist and National Poetry Slam champion.

Learning Resources

- [Event Webpage](#)
- [Event Presentation](#)
- [Event Recording](#)
- Discover how to replace systems of violence with nonviolent approaches in this article from Transcend Media Service titled [“The Architecture of a Nonviolent City.”](#)
- Explore Pace e Bene’s [Nonviolent Cities Project](#) and learn more about Nonviolent Cities efforts in your local area.
- If your community is not listed, consider [joining](#) a Pace e Bene cohort for new and emerging groups.
- Read Yes We Can Peacebuilders’ blog post titled [“What Is a Nonviolent City?”](#) to learn more about citywide peacebuilding initiatives.

Resources and Services in Calvert County, Maryland

- Engage with the [Calvert Peace Project’s](#) mission to increase understanding, collaboration, and community among youth and adults in Calvert County, Maryland by providing civic and social engagement activities with a focus on peace.
- The [Community Mediation Center of Calvert County](#) provides conflict management services and education to empower people to create and develop their own solutions to aggressive conflict.