



# CHARITIES Committee

Tom Meade, Chairman



The RISAA Charities Committee exists to lend a helping hand to others in need, and is a way of giving back to our community.

## THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTION

### Institute for the Study & Practice of Nonviolence

Report by  
**RALPH ORLECK**



In the year 2000, thirty people were murdered in Providence and forty-five people were killed statewide. One of the more notorious events was the slaying of 15 year old Jennifer Rivera. She was gunned down in front of her house the day before she was expected to testify as the state's key witness in a murder trial. The data shows this was not an isolated incident.

Clearly, there was the need to do more to address the challenges posed by crime and violence. The following year, Sister Ann Keefe and Father Ray Malm founded the **Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence (ISPN)** in the rectory of St Michael's church in South Providence. The core philosophy of the organization is to build upon the principles of Dr. Martin Luther King, which is incorporated into their mission.

The mission of the ISPN is to "teach, by word and example, the principles and practices of nonviolence, and to foster a community that addresses potentially violent situations with nonviolent solutions." The Institute offers a number of programs and services to fulfill its mission.

The Streetworker Outreach team goes into the community to build relationships, gather information and mediate conflicts to prevent violence. Streetworkers can be found at school dismissals, after school programs, community events, and anywhere where they see the potential for violence to occur. They provide mentoring and advocacy in an effort to serve as positive role models for high risk youth.

The ISPN's training program will teach the principles of nonviolence to any group upon request. The training has

been conducted for diverse groups such as the Adult Correctional Institution, Providence College, the Boston University School of Theology, and others.

The Institute will also support its clients with education and training. They have developed a program with the support of the RI Mentoring Partnership called "Let's Make This Work" which is a 10 month intensive job readiness program to focus at risk youth in a positive direction. Its goal is to develop skills in participants to enable them to successfully gain employment.

Other services include Reentry Services and Living Victim Support. Reentry Services work with incarcerated individuals prior to release to prepare them to succeed in the community. Victim Support services include help with Victims Compensation application assistance, healthcare advocacy, legal/law enforcement advocacy, and basic case management services.

Programs such these can have a huge impact in a person's life. The Institute's "Master Trainer" Sal Monteiro earned his GED as a student of mine while incarcerated at the ACI in the early 90's. Sal was incarcerated for over 12 years (1992-2004). Sal started as a streetworker for the ISPN and received his bachelor's degree from College Unbound in the spring of 2017. When reviewing his profile online, I feel a sense of pride in the man Sal has become and feel the work of the ISPN can help others turn their lives around as Sal did.

To learn more about the ISPN or make a donation, please visit their website at <https://nonviolenceinstitute.org>.



**P.J. Fox, Executive Director, received RISAA check from Ralph Orleck**

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