

FORAGE CENTER

ANNUAL REPORT

2021



Forage Center for
Peacebuilding and
Humanitarian Education, Inc.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

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2021 was a busy year for the Forage Center. We continued virtual learning, focused on building our internal capacity, and offered face-to-face programming where possible and safe. Notwithstanding the precautions the pandemic still requires, we were able to advance our important work.

Starting in 2020, and continuing in 2021, we have offered our Forage Center Conversations webinars as a means of bringing the humanitarian training community together. Our Zoom-based conversations in February, May, and June provided an opportunity to consider some of the most pressing issues facing professionals, including advancing career opportunities for women, exploring the role of trauma, and assessing lessons from the current pandemic.

For the second year, we co-sponsored the National Community College Peacebuilding Seminar, which offered a chance for community college students, often coming from marginalized populations, and educators to learn about critical contemporary issues, including war and conflict, peacebuilding education, and extremism.

Taking advantage of the wane in the pandemic in early October, we held our first face-to-face program in nearly two years at Arcadia University near Philadelphia. We worked with graduate students in the university's peace and conflict program to offer a three-day experiential-based simulation on humanitarian practices. We were mindful to hold a safe program, with students and role-players masked throughout and vaccinations required. We are hoping to offer a face-to-face program in June 2022 at our site in Western Maryland, provided we can maintain safety for role players and attendees.

To me, the most noteworthy developments this year focused on adding to our dedicated team. In April, Kate Fergus joined as our communications manager. Her experience as an editor and communications professional is supported by her training in disaster response as an EMT and emergency medical volunteer. At our board meeting in November, Dr. Cindy Epperson joined our board. Cindy is a retired college and university educator who has done considerable work in humanitarian education.

Logan Varker, Ninette Irabarata, Heather Payne, and Will Muehl also joined our volunteer staff as program specialists. They all had first experienced our work as student attendees and continue to show enthusiasm for our mission. I am always heartened by the commitment and enthusiasm of our team for the important work we do.

We look forward to the opportunities and challenges that 2022 offers. Please join us in our journey to prepare the next generation of humanitarian and peacebuilding professionals. And thank you for taking the time to read our 2021 annual report.

David J. Smith, J.D., M.S.
President



The Forage Center for Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Education is a 501c3 not-for-profit corporation that provides educational opportunities for students, educators, and professionals working in environments where peacebuilding and humanitarian responses are needed.

The late Dr. Paul Forage recognized the need for realistic and evidence-based training in humanitarian and emergency management practices. His first programs were offered for college students in South Florida in the 2000s. Today, the Forage Center — operating from our training site in Western Maryland — continues his legacy with educational, public, and professional groups.

What We Do

- Develop and run live scenario programs for higher education and professional audiences designed to improve the skills and knowledge base of those working in conflict, disasters, and other complex emergencies
- Offer educational programs for colleges and universities, professional groups, and the general public on peacebuilding and humanitarian issues
- Consult with professional groups, academia, non-governmental organizations, and governments on the best practices for working in complex emergencies



This past fall, the Forage Center held a three-day live simulation at Arcadia University, our first in-person program in two years. Ten graduate students in Arcadia's International Peace and Conflict Resolution program attended the immersive simulation designed to test their ability to apply humanitarian principles in unfamiliar contexts.

The Forage Center also co-sponsored the 9th Annual National Community College Peacebuilding Seminar, held virtually on three consecutive weekends in October and November. The 2021 seminar brought together 60 faculty, administrators, and students from 20 colleges and universities to consider issues in peacebuilding, human rights, social justice, international affairs, conflict, and nonviolence.

We extended the virtual programming we began in 2020, hosting three webinars in our Forage Center Conversations series:

- Emergency Management as a Leadership Career Path for Women: Challenges and Opportunities (February 12)
- Integrating Community Trauma Into Humanitarian Work (May 21)
- Post-Crisis Community Well-Being: Applying Peacebuilding and Reconciliation to COVID-19 Recovery (June 18)

And we promoted our own Chelsea Cornwell to program manager and added six new members to our team — program specialists Heather Payne, Ninette Irabaruta, Will Muehl, and Logan Varker; communications manager Kate Fergus; and board member Cindy Epperson.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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Forage Center for Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Education, Inc. For the Period Ended December 31, 2021

Statement of Financial Position

Assets

Total Assets	\$8,188.78
Liabilities	\$0.00
Opening Balance Equity	\$6,470.26
Retained Earnings	\$1,321.00
Net Revenue	\$2,840.17
Total Equity	\$11,023.50
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$11,023.50

Revenue

Amazon Smile	\$127.07
Individual Donations	\$3,950.00
Program Fees	\$13,094.08
Gross Revenue	\$17,171.15

Expenditures

Office/Administrative Expenditures	\$2,152.67
Contractors	\$4,736.68
Program Expenditures	\$8,114.16
Insurance	\$1,261.00
Total Expenditures	\$16,264.51

The Forage Center received generous donations from board members and the public in 2021. These donations helped us run our programs and pay financial obligations. The Forage Center operates on a small budget and has historically spent all of its money on programmatic activities.

In 2022, we have committed to donating 10% of net revenue (after expenses) from the programs held at our training site in Western Maryland to Indigenous causes. Our training site occupies the traditional home of the Massawomeck and other Indigenous people, and we are grateful to work, live, and educate here.



We are hopeful in the coming year that we will be able to move to more face-to-face programming, expand the audiences we work with, continue to develop our innovative programming, and advance progressive and inclusive approaches to our work.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The humanitarian practices we seek to advance require us to recognize oppression and the suppression of human rights. Our training site in Maryland occupies the former home of the Massawomek and other Indigenous people, and in 2022 we have committed to contributing 10% of our net revenue from any programs we offer at there to Indigenous causes.

In addition, we will make advancing diversity and inclusion in our programming a priority this year by acknowledging the variety of identities that we all hold. Many of our staff and board have indicated their pronouns on our website in the past year, and our programming in 2022 will reflect our need to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in all our work.

PROGRAMS

We are planning a multiday in-person simulation at our training site in Western Maryland in June 2022, pandemic permitting. This will be the first time we have held a simulation at our site since 2018.

Later in the year, we hope to continue our partnership with Arcadia University by repeating the simulation held there in October 2021.

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We will continue to offer our online programs in 2022, including our Forage Center Conversations webinar series and the 10th Annual National Community College Peacebuilding Seminar in the fall.

CONSULTING

The University of San Diego's Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies approached us to develop a virtual humanitarian simulation for the university's online master's degree in humanitarian assistance. This project will begin in February and will, for the first time, allow us to work with an outside partner in curriculum development.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Finally, in 2022 we will be looking for experts to join our newly created advisory council to support our programming and mission. Members will include faculty and professionals in the field who periodically offer insights and advise our work. Former board member Dr. Ernest Ogbozor will serve as the first member of the council, with others to follow.





The Forage Center has seven board members: President David J. Smith, Vice President Peter Reynolds, Treasurer Doda Johnson, Secretary Matt Collette, Sarah Lough, Armen Gregorian, and Cindy Epperson.

The board is governed by a set of bylaws drafted at the establishment of the organization and guided by a strategic plan updated every 3–5 years. The board cannot exceed 10 members or fall below three. New members are nominated and elected by existing board members and serve three-year terms. Members hold an annual board meeting and three quarterly board meetings each year. A quorum of at least 50% of the board is required to vote at meetings.

The Forage Center has a mostly volunteer staff led by director of education & training Jess Bonnan-White and program manager Chelsea Cornwell. There are seven program specialists on staff: Christy McGuire, Lena Choudhary, Sydna Cooper, Will Muehl, Ninette Irabaruta, Logan Varker, and Heather Payne. There is one paid staff member, communications manager Kate Fergus.