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Intersections International

Our Mission

Intersections International leads people to unite across lines of difference in mutual pursuit of social justice, globally and locally.

We create safe space at the crossroads of some of our world’s most intractable problems, engaging conflicted communities in dialogue, service, advocacy and artistic expression.

Together we work toward a just world united in diversity.

Can you imagine a time when our distinct identities no longer incite division, discrimination, destruction and despair? We can. Despite the past year’s troubling headlines, we consistently see the galvanizing of generations and meaningful change through our programs.

Intersections works for a just world — one in which human differences do not generate fear and friction, but serve to advance connection, equality, respect, and abundance for all people. We do this work by creating dynamic interactions to build partnerships across lines of difference.

Our four interactive programs reach into divided communities in need of healing:

● **Arts at the Intersection** ignites insightful conversations among conflicting communities — such as police and the neighborhoods they serve — through drama, music and dance.

● **Believe Out Loud** empowers Christians to advocate for LGBTQ equality in the church and across the country.

● **Global Peacemaking** initiates dialogue and collaboration across borders to address intercultural strife and religious violence.

● **Service Together** inspires veterans and civilians to join forces to improve their communities.

Intersections International creates safe space for diverse people to come together to discover common ground and pursue justice. We enter the delicate spaces where our lives intersect to strengthen our collective ability to address the world’s most pressing issues. There is an important place at the table just for you.
Friends:

Against a backdrop of relentlessly tragic headlines — conflicts between law enforcement and communities; senseless massacres in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere; mass incarcerations in the US; ongoing brutality against the LGBT community, especially transgender women of color; and civic dialogue devolving into vitriol, even in the Presidential campaign — Intersections continues to work at those “thin places” where the potential for intolerance, conflict and violence lies just beneath the surface — sometimes bubbling up into the open.

As we enter our ninth year of life as an organization, we reflect on our efforts to heal the rifts in our society, bring people together across lines of difference and strive for peace and justice in places fraught with hostility, isolation and fear. It is hard to believe that our first decade lies just over the horizon. I am humbled by the lives we have touched, the projects we’ve launched, the relationships we’ve created, the advocacy we’ve undertaken. This report is but a snapshot in the life of Intersections, a moment in time when we can take stock of the past year and look forward to possibilities yet to be.

From our first annual Danita Branam Dialogue on race and identity, to the world premiere of *Purchase of Manhattan*, to tireless hours toiling over *Uniform Justice*, we have encouraged untold individuals to become curious about “the other,” thereby bringing unexpected voices to conversations about some of the world’s most pressing problems. Such a paradigm shift serves as a significant first step on the path to sustained impact.

Sometimes, an initiative’s true success is not measured in numbers but in the moments that transform how we think about who we are and what we are called to do. This past year marked many such moments: The soulful letter from one of our veterans about how Intersections saved his life; the gratitude expressed by a young woman in the tribal regions of Pakistan who rose above culture and class to organize a sustainable agriculture program that empowers women; Believe Out Loud’s prominent role among people of faith in the fight for marriage equality. Intersections has been engaged in ways large and small, global and local, that make a real difference in the world.

Blessings,

Rev. Robert Chase
Founding Director
Arts at the Intersection redefines the role of arts in manifesting change by dissolving boundaries and inspiring innovative solutions for creating justice.

Art has become a thread in the tapestry of all of our programming here at Intersections. The four initiatives of Arts at the Intersection — Theatre, Engagement & Action (TE’A), The Dance Collective, Community Outreach Initiative, and Studio 145 podcasts — have addressed multiple issues and needs this year.

**TE’A**

*There’s Something About America* (*TSAA*) represents TE’A’s most ambitious project in our ongoing quest to break new ground in the aesthetics and effectiveness of theatre for social change. The TE’A company has advanced from researching to designing to workshopping *TSAA*, providing a counterpoint to the runaway dynamic of political and cultural polarization in America. To this end, TE’A created and led ten Insight Design Labs (IDLs), or spaces for creative collaboration among the artists using the Insight approach to conflict transformation, based on a theory of human understanding by Bernard Lonergan. We also held one four-day workshop residency at Irondale Ensemble Project in Brooklyn.

The fruit of this work is a theatrical performance designed to transform the personal experience of polarization in audience members. *TSAA* awakens us to the inner constraints of prejudgment and certitude, and enables the audience to experience the compelling transformation from certainty and righteousness to curiosity and empathy.

To our knowledge, this approach to Insight theatre is not happening anywhere else in the world. The result is that *TSAA* will enable audiences to explore the reality of polarization in America, their role and participation in the way things are, and the possibility of change.

In April, TE’A was invited by the acclaimed West Coast Methods Institute at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles to present the findings of our IDLs in a plenary session of Insight scholars gathered from around the world. In our 90-minute showcase, TE’A explained the
symbiosis between Insight theory and dramatic performance, and demonstrated this link by performing scenes from *There’s Something About America*.

In preparation for the *Uniform Justice* spring performance tour, TE’A designed and led 12 hours of Insight facilitation training for five TE’A company members, training them to facilitate post-performance Insight conversations with *Uniform Justice* audiences. (See page 7.)

**The Dance Collective**

Dance has become an integral part of Intersections’ outreach programming. Performances have been created with a social justice foundation uniquely expressed from a multi-faith, multi-cultural perspective. The company is made up of dancers from Japan, France, Czech Republic and around the United States and who represent Christian, Muslim, and Buddhist traditions. They move to a mix of musical traditions. The Dance Collective has grown to seven members who choreograph collectively. This year’s concept piece, called “Moving Forward,” was born out of movements for social change, such as the Civil Rights movement, voter registration drives, the march on Selma, the women’s movement, and Gandhi’s teachings. Research and conversations about how these movements affect communities and the dancers themselves are translated into dance. Performances of “Moving Forward” and interactive workshops were presented at Judson Memorial Church and Ft. Washington Collegiate Church, both in New York City, as well as in conjunction with our Community Outreach Initiative. (See page 6.)

A special program for homeless men and women was created by Artistic Director Maryann Perrone and presented for the New York Coalition for the Homeless. The program increased their feelings of comfort and personal empowerment as they move out into the world to seek jobs and housing. Two other members of the Dance Collective were featured performers in an original piece addressing race entitled “Identity Card” at the first annual Danita Branam Dialogue.

One of my favorite things about TE’A is the personal interaction it creates with the cast and the audience. TE’A really gets everyone involved and engaged, something a lot of people have a hard time doing. TE’A creates an intrapersonal story and connection with nearly every individual they’re trying to get their message across to, and the stories are raw and profound.

— John Jay College student

I think you are on to something and have created a simple structure people can use to diffuse tension and create dialogue in conflict situations. Your recipe is brilliant: “How to respond to a conflict is to respond only after first being curious about every aspect of the situation: curious about the other, curious about myself, curious about my valuing, curious about what exactly I hope to accomplish.”

— Rosemary Bova
Community Outreach Initiative

Our Outreach Initiative uses art to help low- to moderate-income children, youth, and adults see themselves as vibrant leaders and as powerful agents of change in their communities. We provide leadership development by bringing bold, successful artists to work directly with school children and community members in underserved metropolitan New York neighborhoods. The sessions deliver interactive educational experiences that awaken new realities of color, form, rhythm, melody, and language to stimulate creative action.

Thanks to the leading support of TD Charitable Foundation, we have served over 7,000 individuals since our initiative’s launch in 2010. This past year, over 1,900 children and community members were served at 14 sites.

Studio 145 Podcasts

Studio 145 is a weekly podcast featuring “all things art” — interviews with artists, musicians and poets, and discussions about the Intersections approach to merging artistic expression with social justice. Premiering in October 2014, the 36-program season included a special 18-part series hosted by TE’A Founder and Director Vieve Radha Price called the TE’A Podcasts.

The other 18 podcasts were hosted by Arts at the Intersection Program Director Farid Johnson, featuring interviews with artists, parents, educators and clergy, and offering live community outreach broadcasts.

We featured Jay Klein, Founding Director of Arthread, a visual arts program in conjunction with Carnegie Mellon University, that provides software to children in pediatric cancer wards, allowing them to create and share art online with other young patients.

Our students are always filled with joy and inspired by the authenticity of your sharing, the extremely high level of engagement, and the meaningfulness of your presentations. You and your musician friends lift their souls and help them to transcend their own boundaries. This euphoria spreads into the classroom and reconnects them to a greater sense of self and purpose.

— Omigbade Escayg, Head of School, Brooklyn Charter School
Uniform Justice is a story that explores the issues of conflict, crime, violence, law, retaliation, and the desire for justice.

What began as a single staged reading of the new play Uniform Justice for a New York City audience of 45 at Intersections, became a string of 14 more, including an 11-performance regional tour in New York, New Jersey and Ohio. The play, which addresses police-community conflict and retaliatory violence in Memphis, Tennessee, and which originally premiered there in March of 2014, has become not only a platform for constructive dialogue on the themes of community relations and police tactics, but also an example for other cities across the nation of what can result from artistic engagement coupled with an application of the Insight approach to conflict transformation. Insight theory, an analysis of how the mind operates when engaging and disengaging in conflict, is at the core of the methodology of TE'A.

The staged readings also served as opportunities to introduce communities to the concept of Insight policing: officers applying Insight to law enforcement methods, shifting the focus to de-escalation rather than arrest-based outcomes. Uniform Justice was created as part of a two-fold initiative

The storytelling and discussion I experienced at Uniform Justice helped me to see more sides of this than I had seen before. I didn’t necessarily change my opinion about the issue, but it definitely made me want to learn more and hear from other perspectives.

— Gwen Stembridge, Director of Programs of the Lorain County Volunteer Connection
that first included Insight policing training developed and led by Dr. James Price of George Mason University.

Underwritten by several corporate and foundation sponsors, including HFZ Capital; COOKFOX Architects; Carter, Ledyard and Milburn, LLC; The United Church of Christ and The Collegiate Churches of New York, the tour began in New York City with a performance at Middle Collegiate Church on May 17 and concluded at Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland, Ohio on June 30.

Standing ovations were followed by an Insight facilitated dialogue. Audience members — representing both law enforcement personnel and the community at large — were noticeably appreciative of the safe (and rare) environment to speak freely. The long-term impact of Uniform Justice is to serve as a catalyst for establishing this effective engagement model in different communities. Plans are underway to replicate the initiative in northern Manhattan; Montclair, NJ; Cleveland, OH; and Paterson, NJ. In the coming year, we will continue this important work addressing police-community conflict — an issue that is more polarizing today than ever.

Uniform Justice Sponsors

Carter Ledyard & Milburn LLP • The Collegiate Churches of New York
COOKFOX • Genesis Fund/UCC • Greenpoint Reformed Church
HFZ Capital Group • Middle Collegiate Church • Mt. Zion Church
Near West Theatre • UCC New York Conference • The Riverside Church
St. Albans Congregational Church • Trinity Cathedral

Uniform Justice is utterly engrossing theater, but more importantly, it compellingly speaks to the issue of community/police relationships. Civic leaders and residents in Montclair, NJ realized how important it is to strengthen those relations within our own town and we’re moving forward with the spark this play ignited.

— Roxanne Kent, Chair, Christian Outreach, Union Congregational Church

Uniform Justice is more than a performance, it is an experience. As a child who grew up in Los Angeles and lived in the midst of the Watts Rebellion, I was pushed back to my youth as I watched Uniform Justice capture the divide between cops and communities of color. The focus on trust or, more precisely, distrust between police and the people they serve is significant for a bridge to a new future. Uniform Justice is powerful and brings forward the essential elements on both sides of a broken relationship.

— Rev. Art Cribbs, ED of the California-based Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity
Believe Out Loud moves hearts and minds toward understanding and supportive action by shattering the false dichotomy between LGBTQ justice and Christianity.

Believe Out Loud is an online community that provides information, tools and inspiration for Christians to work for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) equality. Reaching up to five million people each month, we are the leading platform in Christian faith and LGBTQ advocacy.

Members of Believe Out Loud hold many distinct identities, and together we are creating a world where all Christian churches welcome and affirm LGBTQ people. On our daily blog and social networks, we offer a community where friends and allies can access resources for their journeys, and share their own stories of Christian faith and LGBTQ advocacy. Rooted in a framework of justice, Believe Out Loud affirms our members in their identities and challenges LGBTQ Christians to “go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37).

Believe Out Loud focuses its work in three key areas:
Storytelling • Cultivating Dialogue • Inspiring Action

Storytelling

Believe Out Loud’s daily blog continues to be at the heart of our work. The life-changing and thought-provoking stories we share on our website are an important source of support, inspiration and education for our loyal following.

More than 250 bloggers, representing over 17 different denominations, are a critical part of our success. Our blogs offer unique and personal perspectives at the intersection of LGBTQ equality and Christianity, and they strive to represent the true diversity and many experiences found throughout our community.
The testimonials in this report demonstrate just how much impact our stories have. Believe Out Loud is honored to have the trust and partnership of so many amazing storytellers and readers from across the LGBTQ Christian movement.

Cultivating Dialogue

Believe Out Loud’s social media platforms have become an important and effective tool for our audience as they discuss a wide range of complex issues facing the LGBTQ Christian community today. Our community continues to grow in size and engagement as we find new and exciting ways to cultivate dialogue among our followers.

Our most active and popular social media platform is our Facebook page. To date, Believe Out Loud has over 176,000 followers on Facebook alone. The content we share on Facebook is seen by millions of people each week; we broke our own monthly record in June of 2015 by reaching an astonishing 19.8 million unique users on our Facebook page.

Inspiring Action

In an effort to mobilize our online community to take offline action in support of LGBTQ justice, Believe Out Loud has begun the next phase of its work by developing strategic action-based campaigns in partnership with state and denominational leaders across the LGBTQ movement.

Each campaign is unique and designed to engage our community on a deeper level, providing our most committed audience members with the action steps they need to create change in their local communities. Our most recent campaign was launched on June 26th as a reminder that there is still much work to do to before justice for all people, including the LGBTQ community, can be fully realized.

So many people need the message of Believe Out Loud — a message of kindness, respect and love.

— Julie Wood, Mother & LGBTQ Ally

I don’t normally write on pages like this but I wanted to say keep up the good work. I’m transgender, out and proud, but was kicked out of my church and rejected by my (lapsed) Catholic mother... I guess part of me doesn’t see why LGBT people would want to be associated with the church, BUT as long as organizations like this exist I still have a sliver of hope.

— Lou G.

Photo courtesy of Joe Delorio, Beyond Labels at Ft. Washington Church

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— Lou G.

Photo courtesy of Joe Delorio, Beyond Labels at Ft. Washington Church
Our Pledge Beyond Marriage Equality

As an LGBTQ Christian or ally, I know our work toward justice for the LGBTQ community does not end with nationwide marriage equality.

I pledge to use my voice as an advocate to end violence and discrimination against LGBTQ people. I pledge to work with members of the LGBTQ community to prioritize the issues that deeply impact their lives and well-being.

As an affirming Christian, I pledge to continue my own journey to grow beyond simply accepting what I understand, to affirming LGBTQ people as they are.

Most of all, I pledge to honor the expansive love of God, standing in solidarity with all members of the LGBTQ community as we work together to achieve justice for ALL.

To make a pledge, go to http://on.fb.me/1MGkXtY.

Amen! So many issues... adoption...violence, equality in jobs, home ownership and on and on and on. We need to be advocates for all humanity!

— Vicki Budd Sharp

...for me, that’s what this pledge is about. It’s a promise to keep showing up, again and again, because I suspect our work toward justice will never be finished.

— Gwenyth Lewis

TAKE THE PLEDGE:
Christians Work For Justice Beyond Marriage Equality

We are Christians who have raised our voices to support the freedom to marry, but we must realize our work toward justice for the LGBTQ community is not yet finished.

Join us as we pledge to work for justice for ALL LGBTQ people — whether or not they look like us, pray like us, or love like us.

Join us as we commit to walk with LGBTQ people, whether their journey takes them down the aisle toward marriage, through a gender transition, through homelessness or violence, or through prison or poverty.

Compelled by God’s expansive love, join us as we grow beyond simply accepting what we understand, to affirming LGBTQ people as they are — working to extend God’s welcome beyond our own limitations.

As LGBTQ Christians and allies — WE PLEDGE to work for justice beyond marriage equality.
Marriage Equality

2012: Believe Out Loud collaborated with LGBTQ movement leaders, state leaders, and local clergy and churches to amplify the voices of LGBTQ affirming Christians in Maine, Maryland, Minnesota and Washington. Each state had a marriage equality initiative on the ballot, and BOL was a leader in the effort to include affirming people of faith in the conversation.

As election season unfolded, the narrative around marriage equality took a dramatic shift, from “I can’t support marriage equality because I’m Christian” to “I support marriage equality because I’m Christian.” Believe Out Loud was founded on the idea that this shift in Christian values would lead the way to popular support for LGBTQ people, and we provided the platform for Christians from all denominations to voice their support. This strategy was a success as voters in all four states voted on the side of equality. The impact of the LGBTQ affirming Christian could no longer be denied or ignored.

2013: Believe Out Loud joined thousands of marriage equality supporters in Washington, DC as the Supreme Court heard its first two cases on marriage equality. Hundreds of prominent religious leaders marched and spoke out for equality during those historic hearings, forever changing the landscape of what a Christian looks like in the United States. As the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act on June 26th, cheering could be heard not just in local pride marches, but in thousands of churches across the country as well.

2014: The Supreme Court’s ruling in 2013 cleared the way for states to challenge their own state bans against marriage equality. Over the next year and a half, same-sex couples began to challenge the state laws preventing them from getting married. As each state case came up, Believe Out Loud worked to ensure that LGBTQ affirming Christians were heard. With each passing month we saw state bans falling. By the end of 2014 it was legal in more than half the country for same-sex couples to get married, a reality many never dreamed they would see in their lifetime.

2015: With mounting pressure from across the nation, the Supreme Court once again agreed to hear arguments on marriage equality. On April 28, cou-
People in Michigan, Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio made their cases for their right to marry, no matter where they lived. Once again Believe Out Loud marched to the steps of the Supreme Court with supporters from countless faith traditions to proclaim our commitment to love. And once again, on June 26th, exactly two years after their first rulings on marriage equality, the Supreme Court ruled once and for all that every same sex couple, no matter where they live, has a constitutional freedom to marry. This historic ruling, decades in the making, will be remembered as a triumph for both the LGBTQ and Christian communities.

Today’s historic Supreme Court ruling means same-sex couples will soon have the freedom to marry and equal legal acknowledgment and protection of their marriage rights across the United States. This is a momentous win for freedom, equality, inclusion, and above all, love!

Believe Out Loud recognizes the millions of people of faith who joined the decades-long movement for marriage equality. We are grateful for the clergy, congregations and believers of all denominations whose Christian faith compelled us to support the freedom to marry. Our voices are and will continue to be critical to the movement as we seek justice for all LGBTQ people. This is not just a victory for our country but a victory for our churches as well.

Even before the celebrations are over, we hope state officials move swiftly to implement the Constitution’s command in the remaining 13 states with marriage discrimination. Same-sex couples and their families have waited long enough.

As we look ahead to a movement beyond marriage equality, we know that the work of affirming Christians is not yet finished. It’s now time for churches to move beyond simply accepting what we have learned, to affirming LGBTQ people as they are — whether we understand them or not. All too often, our affirmation of LGBTQ people is dependent upon whether they fit into our ideas about gender presentation, family structure, and sexual ethics. As Christians, we can stand firmly in the truth that God’s love is expansive; it isn’t bound by human expectations and limitations. When we are compelled by the love of God, we can dare to love beyond difference.

If we can accept the challenge to love without limitation, then we will be better equipped to address a host of other challenges still facing the LGBTQ community today — spiritual abuse, homelessness, violence against transgender women of color, poverty and employment discrimination — and intensify the fight for trans-inclusive healthcare, racial justice, international LGBTQ rights, and equality for LGBTQ seniors and families.

Thank you so much for joining us in this important work as we seek to achieve justice for all LGBTQ people.
Global Peacemaking

Paving the Way for Peace

Our Global Peacemaking program brings together diverse groups across religions, cultures and international borders to promote cooperation and reconciliation.

During the Thanksgiving season, we worked with our Collegiate colleagues and the Lenape Center in New York City to honor the five-year anniversary of Healing Turtle Island. “Turtle Island” is a common reference among indigenous peoples for the land European settlers called “the new world,” and in 2009, 400 years after Henry Hudson’s arrival, the Collegiate Church — the oldest surviving institution of New Amsterdam — held a healing ceremony with the Lenape, the Native Americans who met the Dutch settlers.

In this spirit, more than 600 attended the 2014 world premiere of the concert opera Purchase of Manhattan by acclaimed Native American composer Brent Michael Davids. One group of middle schoolers from New Jersey memorized the music, and when they returned home, sang the libretto to their classmates who could not attend, to teach them the Native American version of the popular myth of Manhattan’s “purchase” from the Native Americans who first lived there.

Halfway around the world in Kazakhstan, Rev. Robert Chase served as a U.S. delegate to the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, moderating a panel of global religious leaders and holding up Intersections’ U.S.-Pakistan Interreligious Consortium (UPIC) as a concrete example of how interreligious dialogue can lead to positive interaction across national borders.

This year, two outcomes of our UPIC work stand out. The Golra Sharif Scholars project, under the leadership of Rabbi Reuven Firestone, brings together academics from North America and Pakistan to collaborate on a series of research projects associated with Pir Meher Ali Shah, whose ideas and activism during the late 19th to mid-20th centuries had a major impact on Islamic thought and practice in South Asia. Of particular interest is his enlightened approach to problem-solving and his talent for engaging in dialogue.

Photo courtesy of Nora Varcho
with theological and ideological opponents on the basis of knowledge.

Shanzae Asif, an undergraduate student from the Lahore University of Management Sciences, came to New York as a summer intern for Intersections. While here, she met with Elizabeth Dabney Hochman, founding editor of *KidSpirit*, an online and printed magazine edited by and for young people ages 11–18 with satellite editorial boards in Maryland, New Jersey, California, Texas, Massachusetts and Mumbai, India. Inspired, Shanzae initiated an editorial board among students at her former Middle School in Karachi. Now there are two thriving editorial boards in Pakistan, in Karachi and Lahore. Seventeen-year-old Ammara Mohsin wrote the essay “Rising Above Borders,” published in *KidSpirit* magazine and *Huffington Post* in honor of World Peace Day. The article debunks those who say there are irreconcilable differences between us. (See page 16.)

Intersections Director of Strategic Initiatives Farid Johnson spent time in Israel and Palestine, using his unique approach to community building across lines of difference through music with Israeli Arabs and Jews. Intersections is engaged in preliminary discussions with religious and civic leaders in Israel, exploring the feasibility of a peace summit in Jerusalem in 2016. Farid met with those leaders at Hebrew Union College and began a framework for the 2016 convening.

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UPIC has been instrumental in pursuing perhaps the most important level of dialogue between the US and Pakistan, and that is at the level of civil society engagement and understanding. The core of UPIC’s approach is that sustainable, long-term goodwill and harmony between the two countries will only occur when their respective communities — with all of their diversity — connect with each other in encounters meant to transcend the vicissitudes of any particular ‘crisis’ or period of tension that periodically arise. And the UPIC team especially prides itself in being inclusive of, and bringing on board, those sections of both countries that are organically linked to their communities, faith traditions, and to groups striving for peace, harmony, and justice in their societies.

— Junaid Ahmad, Director of Center for Global Dialogue

A grant from The Collegiate Churches of NY and Intersections to Support Humanity helps organize trainings to empower women to create their own biodiesel fuel for self-sustainability in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.
It was with much excitement over the prospect of being able to visit a different country, albeit from afar, that I visited the Indo-Pak Wagah Border in Lahore. This is the boundary dividing India and Pakistan, with the eastern half of the Wagah village in India and the western half in Pakistan. I am from Pakistan, and as our car came to a screeching halt some miles away from the border gate, so did my anticipation. A whirlwind of emotions hit me. The first was disappointment, for India and Pakistan were as similar as a pair of monozygotic twins. Where was the “other country” I was promised?

Secondly, I felt profound confusion. I couldn’t fathom why the rivalry between these two countries existed when they are so similar. Then disappointment came swirling around again, this time coupled with anger about the loss that both of these nations in particular, and humanity in general, incur by twisting a potential friendship into such pronounced enmity.

The border looked as though a mirror had been placed in the middle of the gates. The scene was painted in green, red, orange, and white; the colors of both nations’ flags. The two flags stood together at the entrance gates, tall and proud. Border guards with stern expressions stood as erect as buildings. A huge crowd had gathered, and they watched in awe as the magnitude of the situation slowly dawned on them.

Patriotic songs of both countries were played and were accompanied by loud chants of Pakistan zindabad (“Long live Pakistan”) and Bharat mata ki jai ho (“Victory for Mother India”). Sitting on a balcony step, watching the synchronized parade of soldiers from each country, I couldn’t help but smile. I smiled because I saw there was nothing here to hate. These are just people like us sitting across an imaginary line. I smiled because there is so much that unites us.

This perceived wall does not only exist between India and Pakistan, it occurs within countries all across the globe. We have, for some reason, decided to attribute more importance to nationality, geography, or religion, instead of focusing on our similarities: our sense of self, values, and ethics.

There are many reasons to care about people across borders, be it food, festivals, cultural heritage, even hospitality. We can have the best things that each country has to offer if we only embrace each other with open arms and warm hearts. All we need to do is ask ourselves: are the borders that divide us more important than the thousand reasons that unite us? After all, we are all human beings and are taught the same basic principles.

As I scrutinized the solemn expressions on the faces of the people present, I could see that many of them had undergone this epiphany. I couldn’t help but feel our overwhelming similarities, not just those of race, values, or culture, but our common humanity and shared capacity to love. Once this is understood, the borders blur and become mere dividers of geography, not affecting our sense of self, and certainly not dictating how we behave with our fellow human beings.

In this moment, I realized that there is hope. Not all has to be lost to hatred or the lust for power. We can progress, we can rise above the lines that separate. We can explore the capacity for love, sharing, and tolerance.
In October 2014, we introduced the first annual Danita Branam Dialogue. The event is named in honor of Danita Branam, current Intersections Board Chair, in recognition and appreciation of her steadfast and continued dedication and generosity in support of Intersections. The inaugural event drew 50 people into a safe space for open discourse about the theme “Race and Identity.”

Intersections recognizes the importance of being part of a national dialogue concerning race. America still in many ways wrestles with its history of racial inequity that created a divide we still struggle to bridge. We felt it fitting to launch a conversation about how we can move forward together with the Danita Branam Dialogues. Danita is personally committed to illuminating racial misconceptions and forging new pathways to understanding.

The first gathering was led by Dr. Atira Charles, a leading organizational behavior and management expert from Florida State University, and author and prominent lecturer on how individuals manage and leverage their various identities for personal and professional success. In addition to dialogue and small discussion groups, the evening included artistic presentations of spoken word, music, and an original dance piece conceptualized and performed by two members of the Intersections Dance Collective titled “Identity Card.” Future dialogues will address a broad spectrum of topics that reflect cultural nuances and influence the social structures of our ever-changing world.
November 2014 marked a milestone in Intersections’ commitment to support veterans by creating pathways to understanding a veteran’s journey, assisting with educational needs, and providing opportunities for communities to engage in service. The program’s transition from Veteran-Civilian Dialogue to Service Together reflects a renewed focus on positive, empowering partnerships that bond and elevate communities through dialogue and action.

In Service Together, veterans and civilians join in meaningful community service projects and participate in live discussion events about our country’s hopes and fears. Dialogue is sparked by documentaries, the arts, panel discussions, audience response and small group interaction. The goal is to cultivate a deeper understanding of one another, improve relationships and shatter existing stereotypes. This face-to-face interaction enlivens a sense of possibilities, a greater awareness of common ground, and an experience of reintegration that is empowering to veterans and civilians alike.

This year saw several service projects aligned with other veteran support groups. In collaboration with Mission Continues, a veteran community service organization, Service Together hosted a “Celebrating Books and Reading” day in March, thanks to the generous support of Barnes & Noble. Children were invited to Intersections from elementary schools in the Bronx and Brooklyn to sit in reading circles and have books read to them by teams comprised of one veteran and one civilian. After the reading, the children were invited to create art at tables set up on the perimeter of the reading circles. At the conclusion of the event, the children shared their artwork and each child was given copies of all the books read during the program.

In May we hosted a Paint Social event in cooperation with Team Red, White, and Blue, a national veteran support and service group. The event was a relaxed opportunity for veterans and civilians to break bread together and create art. Canvases and paint were provided, and the 25 participants could either create an original piece or follow a pattern created by one of the RWB team leaders. It was a fun and spirited safe space for getting to know each other.
Service Together teams provided dinner for families four times this year at The Ronald McDonald House in East Manhattan. Ronald McDonald House provides housing and kitchen facilities for families of children who are receiving long-term critical care treatment at area hospitals. The organization supports non-resident family members who travel from out of town to visit children during treatment. Twice a month, Service Together’s volunteer members purchased, prepared, and served meals to the visiting families in support of Ronald McDonald House. The positive impact was both humbling and empowering for participants, and immediately created a team bond as everyone scurried around in the kitchen crafting meals for these most deserving families.

Service Together volunteers in New York participated over two days in December with the United States Marine Corps’ annual Toys For Tots drive. Participants assisted in wrapping and packing toys for area children in need.

**National Outreach Services**

Service Together is a model for relationship development and enrichment between veterans and civilians. In February, three members of the Intersections staff were invited to Iowa by the Greater Des Moines Business Partnership to help create a welcoming and economically attractive destination for returning veterans and their families. Sessions were convened with the academic community, artists, business leaders and the military community, and Intersections hosted a Service Together panel discussion and dialogue. Our team was supported by the leadership of Military Resilience Project.

**Ground Hero Program**

A collaborative partnership between The Military Resilience Project and Intersections, Ground Hero brought together active duty military personnel, veterans, civilians, and emergency first responders for a community experience at the National 9/11 Memorial in
New York City. These events are an ongoing opportunity to increase mutual understanding and create a sacred space for personal growth and healing.

**StoryCorps**

Service Together created the opportunity for veterans and civilians to share their stories with America as a part of the StoryCorps recordings in New York. StoryCorps is a national nonprofit whose mission is to provide Americans of all backgrounds and beliefs with the opportunity to record, share, and preserve the stories of our lives.

**Service Together and the Arts**

Two theater companies from the Bedlam Theatre and Aquila Theatre worked with Service Together to give voice to the realities of the warrior experience and consequences of conflict. Traditional, Shakespearian, and Greek theatre comprised our successful effort to provide a unique forum for sharing ideas and understanding. We found that art can serve as the bridge from apprehension to compassionate curiosity when engaging conversation between veterans and civilians.

This year also brought the opportunity to meet with veteran musicians, composers, photographers, and spoken word artists who were invited to participate in our dialogue events. In the coming year, we plan to showcase many of these talented artists on our Facebook page, in our Studio 145 podcasts, and as an ongoing, integral part of our Service Together program.

**WE ARE GROWING AND CHANGING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF VETERANS OF ALL AGES AND CREATE HOLISTIC COMMUNITIES THROUGH ACTS OF SERVICE.**

**Uniting veterans and civilians by building community and providing mutual service to others.**

**Veteran-Civilian Dialogue is now Service Together!**

**Service Together!**

**Veteran-Civilian Dialogue is now Service Together!**

*Photos courtesy of Military Resilience Project*
### Summarized Financial Statements (unaudited)

#### Statements of Financial Position
**Fiscal Year 2014–2015, ending June 30, 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Unrestricted/Restricted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and Cash Equivalents</td>
<td>$166,013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pledges and Grants Receivable*</td>
<td>$71,295</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Assets</td>
<td>$1,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$238,903</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liabilities and Net Assets</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
<td>$54,505</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deferred Revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Liabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accrued Expenses/Vacations</td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
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<td>Unrestricted Net Assets</td>
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<td>Restricted Net Assets</td>
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<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* $70,795 received as of July 31, 2015, reducing receivables to $500

#### Statements of Activities
**Fiscal Year 2014–2015, ending June 30, 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support and Revenue</th>
<th>Unrestricted/Restricted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions &amp; Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madison Fund Revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donated Goods &amp; Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Support and Revenue</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Unrestricted/Restricted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donated Goods &amp; Services</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Revenue</th>
<th>Expenditures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53% Madison Fund Revenue (Endowment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>27% Donated Goods &amp; Services</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19% Contributions &amp; Grants</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>01% Other Income</td>
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<tr>
<td>35% Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>33% Program Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>26% Donated Goods &amp; Services*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>06% Fundraising</td>
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*Donated Goods & Services include in-kind contributions of facilities, professional services, goods, and staff benefits.

**Please note:** The financial statements presented here will be audited by Grant Thornton LLP.
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