

## Shalom Farm, cont'd.

own in the inner city or elsewhere. The farm is dedicated to growing nutritious food for the hungry and teaching the hungry to grow their own food for personal use or for sale.

Second, Virginia Cooperative Extension is developing an educational curriculum to teach children and adults alike about gardening, nutritious eating, and food preservation. The curriculum is a train-the-trainer model, meaning that community volunteers can be taught to be instructors. The curriculum being developed is for use with Shalom Farm participants and other similar projects within Virginia. The youth curriculum is

being designed with public school students in mind. Learning objectives of the educational program are coordinated with the state's standardized testing benchmarks, known as the Standards of Learning. UMUMR has formed partnerships with three inner-city schools to offer after school programming and camp experiences at the Shalom Farm. Through this partnership, Shalom Farm will provide eighty youth (and their parents) exposure to the curriculum in 2009-2010 school year.

Third, the Shalom Farm project uses an asset-based community development (ABCD) model called Communities of Shalom to catalyze neighborhood empowerment. Asset-Based Community Development

was originally created by the Community Development Program at Northwestern University's Institute for Policy Research. Proponents of the approach focus on helping citizens come together and identify strategies to solve their own problems; using the skills and talents available amongst the neighborhood's residents; and better utilizing outside resources. In Hebrew, the word shalom has multiple meanings, including "well-being."

In Metro Richmond, UMUMR currently employs the Communities of Shalom model with issues outside of food security impacting issues such as racial reconciliation. One existing and two emerging Communities of Shalom (of which there are a total of ten in Richmond)

have already agreed to participate in the Shalom Farm project and look forward to establishing community gardens or cooking programs in their neighborhoods.

Food security is an increasingly important issue across the country, and food itself continues to be an engaging and powerful force in bringing people together. Since its inception in 2008, the Shalom Farm has gathered an impressive array of community supporters including such organizations as the United Way and the Central Virginia Food Bank. The Shalom Farm will begin delivering its healthful social, economic, physical, and spiritual benefits to Metro Richmond in 2009 and beyond.

## National Shalom Summit Set for Columbia, South Carolina, Oct 28-31

UMNews Service—The seventh national "summit" of Communities of Shalom, a movement promoting faith-inspired community development, is slated for Columbia, South Carolina, October 28-31. The theme is "Stepping Up to Shalom: Seeking Systematic Change through Community Development." The 2009 summit agenda will include worship, workshops, nationally-known speakers, and the introduction of new training resources, according to an announcement from the Shalom office at Drew University Theological School in Madison, New Jersey. The South Carolina Annual (regional) Conference of The United Methodist Church is

hosting the event.

Dr. Michael Christensen recently told Global Ministries directors responsible for community ministries that Shalom is seen as a viable model of community building within and beyond the church. The South Carolina Annual Conference, the summit host, has a well-developed Shalom presence and is the place that has demonstrated the adaptability of Shalom to rural as well as urban areas.

Much of the time at Shalom Summit VII will be spent in practical workshops to better equip the 250 community-development practitioners who will be attending. These range from topics as specific as

building community-based health partnerships to as broad as raising funds for Shalom zones.

Plenary speakers will include Bishop John Schol of the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference. Other speakers or worship leaders are Bishop Gregory Palmer of the Illinois Great Rivers Conference, the current president of the United Methodist Council of Bishops, The Reverend Tanya Bennet, Director of Religious Life at Drew University, and Bishop Joseph Sprague, instigator of Shalom in 1992. Shalom Summit VII will take place at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center in Columbia. Registration is \$300, includes eight

meals and full event participation, which includes site visits to ShalomZones in the area. Partial registration is available for local people who cannot attend the full program.

Online registration is available and preferred; select the registration option at [www.communities-ofshalom.org](http://www.communities-ofshalom.org). That site also offers detailed information on workshops and the schedule. The room rate at the Radisson is \$104 per night plus taxes. Those reservations can be made by direct telephone, 803-731-0300; toll-free, 888-201-1718; or fax, 803-731-4892. The promotional code is "SHALOM."shalom@drew.edu 973-408-3848

"What we want to do is make this a neighborhood for all people to feel like they belong here."

*Jerry McLeese, Volunteer*

"Seek the shalom of the city where I have sent you, for in its shalom, you will find your shalom."

Jeremiah 29:7

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# Shalom Nexus

## NEWSLETTER

FALL 2009

## Macon, GA – A City of Shalom



As the movement deepens and expands across the land, Communities of Shalom increasingly is seen as a viable model of community development. Last spring, for example, the city of Macon, Georgia, adopted the Shalom model for congregational-community collaboration, identifying needs and targeting zones for shalom, and mobilizing resources to improve the quality of life in the city.

According to The Telegraph, a local paper in Macon, Mayor Robert Reichert called together

more than 100 community leaders, pastors and residents and prodded them to organize small groups and begin revitalizing their neighborhoods block by block. Reichert's idea is for residents to determine their neighborhoods' needs — social, economic or housing related — and develop a plan to address them through Shalom Zones. Macon's local TV station, FOX24, covered the event and aired a report on their nightly news.

Mayor Robert Reichert was introduced to the Shalom concept by United Methodist leaders in South Carolina. When Bishop James King, Jr., and Dr. Brad Brady, Macon District Superintendent, heard the Mayor's vision for 'creating safe zones in the city' to reduce crime, rid neighborhoods of drugs, rebuild dilapidated houses and improve community life, they informed him about the Communities of Shalom initiative of the United Methodist Church. Impressed by the similarity of vision and approach, the Mayor and his staff researched the move-

[Continued on pg. 2](#)

### POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The seventh National Summit of Communities of Shalom is set for Columbia, SC, October 28-31, 2009. Previous National Summits took place in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Charlotte, Washington DC, and Chicago.
- Generally, the process of starting a Shalom Zone takes a full year, including five months of training. Currently, there are 103 Shalom sites in the USA and Africa.
- The ShalomZone model® of community development was instigated in 1992 as a positive and holistic response to the social uprising in Los Angeles that Spring. Since then, over 360 Shalom Teams have been trained in asset-based community development.
- Shalom Coffee sales benefits Communities of Shalom in Africa. \$500 was wired to sites in Ghana in September.

Communities of Shalom at  
**DREW UNIVERSITY**

[www.communitiesofshalom.org](http://www.communitiesofshalom.org)

## Macon, GA, cont'd.

ment and contacted the National Shalom Resource Center at Drew University.

National Director Michael Christensen, and Program Associate and Trainer, Annie Allen, were invited to come to Macon for a day on April 23 to present the Shalom model of asset-based community development. Over 100 leaders from the city, representing UMC, AME, CME, Missionary Baptist and Pentecostal churches, sat around tables with heads of city agencies, council members, Jewish rabbis, NAACP leaders, and police officers, to hear and discuss Shalom. The Mayor shared his vision and introduced two resources: a Federal grant program for community development and ShalomZone training.

After Dr. Christensen and Ms. Allen presented the Shalom model



and introduced training content in a workshop format, there was enthusiastic discussion as those gathered responded positively to the idea of Macon becoming a 'City of Shalom' and organizing four shalom teams to prepare for future training.

Mayor Reichert said, "I'm hoping to inspire groups of people to come together and organize in their neighborhood, to lay claim to

a defined area within their neighborhood and through partnering with the city to bring resources into the area".

Communities of Shalom Program Associate Annie Allen says Macon has all of the necessary ingredients for the concept to be a success. "This is a wonderful opportunity. There's a wide range of people here today. A great group



Mayor Robert Reichert, Dr. Michael Christensen, and Rabbi Larry Schlesinger

of people who, I think, with just a little bit of alignment, can make a huge difference in Macon."

Dr. Christensen stated, "Usually, a local United Methodist Church, a District or an Annual Conference initiates Shalom in their area. This is the first time that I know of that a Mayor of a city heard about Shalom and initiated the application process. At least five zones in the city of 200,000 have been identified – there is incredible momentum here!

View the news article online here: <http://www.macon.com/198/story/693325.html> and the Fox24 news video here: <http://www.fox24.com/news/local/43576292.html>

## New National Shalom Trainer Offers Training in New Jersey and Georgia in October



Annie Allen, who graduated from Drew in May, accepted the offer to become a National Trainer and Program Associate for Communities of Shalom. Having nurtured emerging Shalom sites in Newark, Monclair and North Camden, NJ, and presented the Shalom approach to community development in the city of Macon, GA., she anticipates offering ShalomZone Training® in New Jersey and Georgia in 2009-2010.

Allen has had a life-long calling to social justice work, especially the improvement of race relations and religious pluralism. She

brings to her new role 30 years of experience in higher education, government and community organizing in the areas of civil rights, multicultural education, and human relations. She received a Masters in Public Administration (MPA) from Fairleigh Dickinson University and her MDIV from Drew Theological School in 2009. She is a member of Redeemer Episcopal Church in Morristown, NJ, and is the proud mother of Gregory, age 22, and Jeffrey George, age 20.

In preparation for her present role, Annie completed 30 hours of training in Community Organization from Industrial Areas Foundation, 30 hours of ShalomZone Training®, a ten-week summer internship at Shalom sites in Richmond, VA, a one-year internship as national site coordinator at the National Shalom Resource Center at Drew, and has served as teaching assistant to Dr. Michael Christensen this summer for the Summer Internship course.

Here, in part, is how President Robert Weisbuch introduced Annie at the Drew University Commencement in May: "It is now my pleasure to introduce the speaker representing the student associations of the Caspersen and Theological Schools. Annie Allen will receive her Master of Divinity degree today. She came to Drew in 2006 after a 30-year career in social justice that included service on the New Jersey Governor's Commission on Racial Violence and the Bergen County Rainbow Coalition. In New Jersey, she has fought alongside state legislators for more comprehensive bias crime and education laws. Having worked with the U.S. Department of Justice, she has done the same on the national level."

"At Drew, she has become deeply important to the United Methodist Church's Communities of Shalom program. As a national trainer, she is charged with helping clergy and local leaders around the country build

multi-faith, multi-racial coalitions for the betterment of their communities."

"In the classroom, she is known for expressing her opinions in a convincing, but respectful, way. Her professors say she has "a strong sense of justice and values all types of diversity." After taking Michael Christensen's class on the theology and practice of shalom, she did a summer internship in an underserved community in Virginia. When she returned to campus the next fall, she brought all she had learned into the classroom and chapel, which makes her civically engaged in the truest possible sense."

"Annie joins three other long-time National Trainers and Program Associates— Will Dent, J-P Duncan and Pickney Love—in offering ShalomZone Training®, technical assistance and relational support to over 100 Shalom sites in the international network."

## How to Start a Shalom Zone Near You

Generally, the process takes a year and begins with an information meeting conducted by a representative of Communities of Shalom. This two-hour session provides an overview of the five month ShalomZone Training® program, and in-depth answers to specific questions about the Shalom approach to asset-based community development. A short PowerPoint presentation is available when a representative cannot be sent.

Interested parties build Shalom Teams consisting of congregational members, community residents, agency

representatives, coalition members, partner organizations, and community leaders (about 8-15 people representing the diversity of a particular community). When there are at least three prospective sites in a given geographical area (a city, district, annual conference or region), applications can be submitted to the National Shalom Resource Center. Applications are available online at [www.communitiesofshalom.org](http://www.communitiesofshalom.org).



org. Once these three Shalom sites are endorsed by a judicatory, an initial consultation can be scheduled with the potential Shalom teams.

During the initial consultation, if there is sufficient commitment to the process of becoming a ShalomZone, the five training days can be scheduled (usually over a five month period, totaling 30 contact hours).

The specific issues a Shalom

team will focus on will depend on the specific neighborhood needs and resources. A Community of Shalom may focus on creating affordable housing, reducing gang violence, providing job training, or planting a community garden, etc. Each team will work out their areas of focus as part of their training. Once a Shalom Plan is created and approved, your new ShalomZone is part of the international network. For further information, contact the National Shalom Resource Center: [shalom@drew.edu](mailto:shalom@drew.edu) 973-408-3848

## Nine Strong Women

Seeks to mentor young women (ages 13-16) at risk for violence and gang activity in Newark, led by Jessica Jacques ("Jayda"), now a youth counselor and motivational speaker. The organization received its first grant from the United Methodist Special Program on Substance Abuse and Related Violence (SPSARV) in December 2008, and celebrated their 'graduating class' of 'nine strong women' at Drew University in April 2009. Jayda and members of Nine Strong Women will join other Shalom Teams in Montclair and North Camden, New Jersey, for a five-month ShalomZone training program in asset-based community development, beginning October 17, in Ocean Grove, NJ.



'Nine Strong Women', Newark NJ

## Shalom Farm: Growing Food, Family and Friends



By Jonah Fogel and Rev. David Cooper

The Shalom Farm is a faith-based food security project, initiated in the spring of 2008. The project was developed in a partnership between the United Methodist Urban Ministries of Richmond (UMUMR), a 501 (c)

(3) nonprofit organization, and Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE).

The goals of the project are to increase access to healthy foods in the inner city, build community, and improve the self-sufficiency of those involved. Richmond, Virginia, has a rich and diverse history. Many great Americans

have connections to the place such as Edgar Allan Poe, Patrick Henry, Maggie L. Walker, and Arthur Ashe. A patchwork of neighborhoods has emerged over time. In some areas of the city, high poverty exists which often leads to the following problems: limited access to fresh, healthy foods; residents with higher incidence of nutrition related diseases like obesity and diabetes; high crime rates; and poor school performance. Considering these issues, and mindful of substantially increased demands on food banks, UMUMR and VCE have teamed up along with three low-income neighborhoods to bring Shalom Farm into being. Shalom Farm is composed of three interrelated parts.

First, a 780-acre United Methodist camp in rural Goochland County (forty minutes west of Richmond) is host to the Shalom Farm site. Ground breaking was in March 2009 on two acres. This farm site uses a high-yield design to grow ten crops producing 16,000 pounds of fresh nutritious food for the hungry. Volunteers will staff the farm and they come from a variety of backgrounds and locations including area churches, synagogues, mosques, and civic, government, NGOs and various community organizations. The crops and growing techniques used at the farm were chosen to be easily replicable by volunteers looking to create gardens of their

Continued on pg. 8



### Feast of Sacrifice, cont'd.

current economic crisis; until the Interfaith Dialog Center community heard about the need and decided to share their food and funds with her organization. It was an inspiring story of how Muslims and Christians not only can get along, but collaborate on feeding the hungry in the name of peace.

After we enjoyed a delicious, traditional Turkish meat dish, dessert, raffle and dancing, Levent shared about the deeper meaning of the Feast:

"One of the two main festivals of the Muslim calendar is the Feast of Sacrifice (Eid al-Adha),

which marks the end of the Hajj (the holy pilgrimage). It is a festival with many social aspects: the pilgrimage, the sacrifice of an animal, remembering and helping the poor, and the reunion of visiting relatives, friends, and neighbors. In the tradition of Abraham's great act of faith many centuries ago, millions of Muslims prepare to demonstrate their own submission to God by sacrificing an animal. Muslims commemorate Prophet Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son after God's order, as well as God's mercy in sparing his son and replacing him with a ram.

At the end of the pilgrimage, each Muslim sacrifices an animal. The meat is then distributed to those in need all over the world. The feast is a time for thanking God for His blessings and for giving to the less fortunate,

regardless of their religion, race and color.

The Qur'an describes Abraham (peace be upon him) as follows: "Surely Abraham was an example, obedient to God, by nature upright, and he was not of the polytheists. He was grateful for our bounties. We chose him and guided him unto a right path. We gave him good in this world, and in the next he will most surely be among the righteous." (Qur'an 16:120-121)

And "We made him (Abraham) pure in this world and in the hereafter; he is most surely among the righteous. When his Lord said to him: 'Submit,' he said: 'I submit myself to the Lord of the Worlds.'" (Qur'an 2:130-131)

It is very important to understand that the sacrifice itself, as practiced by Muslims, has nothing to do with atoning for our sins or

using the blood to wash ourselves from sin. This is a misunderstanding by those of previous generations: "It is not their meat nor their blood that reaches God; it is your piety that reaches Him" (Qur'an 22:37).

The symbolism is in the attitude: a willingness to make sacrifices in our lives in order to stay on the Straight Path. Each of us makes small sacrifices by giving up things that are fun or important to us.

A true Muslim, one who submits his or herself completely to the Lord, is willing to follow God's commands completely and obediently. It is this strength of heart, purity in faith, and willing obedience that our Lord desires from us.

This year, the Muslim Feast of Sacrifice will coincide with Thanksgiving. So let us join together for an even bigger Feast.

## Three New Shalom Sites Commissioned in South Dakota

Shalom is on the loose in South Dakota as 23 people in three new Communities of Shalom were commissioned on April 18 and 19. Two of the Shalom sites are on Native American reservations, and the third is an urban site in the city of Sioux Falls.

The Sioux Falls Community of Shalom is sponsored by the Wesley United Methodist Church, and focusing upon ministry with at-risk children in the neighborhood. The church already has a large and popular after-school program, but during its Shalom training built a collaborative team of school

officials, school administrators, church leaders, business and community groups that are addressing housing and safety issues in the neighborhood. Rev. Laura Borman, Dakotas Conference Shalom Coordinator, leads the Shalom team in Sioux Falls.

The Crow Creek Wodakota (Shalom) Community, on the Crow Creek reservation in the center of the state, is focusing its work on suicide prevention and reclaiming cultural traditions. Crow Creek is one of the oldest

reservations, formed after the 1862 Sioux Uprising in Minnesota when all the Dakota peoples were forcibly moved west to the banks of the Missouri River near Fort Thompson. Like many other res-

ervations, Crow Creek is plagued by chronic high unemployment and a very high suicide rate. It is the poorest county in the US. The site coordinator is Peter Lengkeek, and the sponsoring organization is Tree of Life Ministries in Mission, SD, about 90 miles southeast.

Tree of Life ministries was the



## New Class Expands Communities of Shalom

By Woody Woodrick  
Advocate Editor

CRYSTAL SPRINGS – Better housing. Education. Improved health. Socialization.

Each is a component of community development, and each is a planned project for the five new Communities of Shalom in Mississippi. A graduation service was held for the five communities Aug. 8 at New Zion United Methodist Church. With the new graduates, Mississippi now has six Communities of Shalom.

"These new groups are important because they will develop their communities, and we have churches to train and help within the community," said the Rev. Fitzgerald Lovett of the Mississippi Conference staff who coordinates the program for the conference. "They are going to be a big boost to getting community development started under the United Methodist umbrella."

Although created by the United Methodist Church, one of the requirements is that Communities of Shalom be ecumenical and involve a cross-section of the community it is intended to serve.

The Communities of Shalom initiative began as a response to the conditions that impelled, and the aftermath of the Los Angeles rioting in 1992. An original Community of Shalom was created in Los Angeles.

The creating mandate, adopted by General Conference of the United Methodist Church, on May 6, 1992 reads: "That in solidarity and consultation with the indigenous persons and local churches in a selected neighborhood, The United Methodist Church, commits itself to the creation in Los Angeles of a Shalom Zone... with the hope that the Shalom Zone concept becomes a prototype for proactive ministry in other places."

The model has been replicated throughout the United States and around the world. Training for Communities of Shalom has taken place in more than 40 annual conferences, as well as Central Conferences and autonomous church locations in Southern and



West Africa. Groups apply to become part of the program, and then must go through five training sessions where participants learn about

organizing, setting reachable goals, setting specific goals, funds development, public relations and other skills.

The new Communities of Shalom locations and their overall projects include:

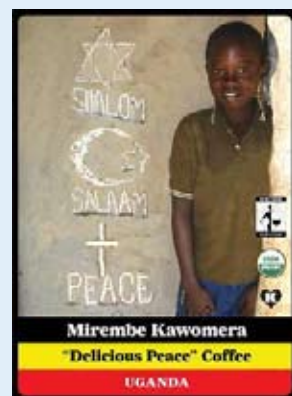
- Greenville – The group plans to work with children to improve education and establish GED programs.
- Greenwood – Plans call for repairing run-down homes with a goal of helping those in the community become homeowners.
- Crystal Springs – The Free-town group has joined some 11 churches to improve health orientation and community development partnering with local schools and the city.
- Jackson Central – The group plans to join in the development of Farish Street by offering socialization skills for children in the

site of the graduation and commissioning on April 18. It is situated in the center of the Rosebud reservation where the third team, the Wolakota/Shalom community, will develop a Native American artists' co-op designed to strengthen the reservation's economy and deepen cultural awareness. It is also focusing on Equine (Horse) Therapy for children and adults, as well as a re-entry ministry for individuals returning home from prison and their families. The Wolakota/Shalom site coordinator is Wendy Barcaro.

## General Board of Global Ministries Awards Grants to Shalom

The General Board of Global Ministries awarded 5-10k grants to three distinct models of Shalom work in late 2009:

- The Richmond District (UMUMR) started a new Shalom Farm collective on United Methodist land to supply fresh produce to nonprofit food programs in Greater Richmond. The Shalom Farm also provides agrarian science and ecological systems care education for children, youth and adults, and offers ministry opportunities for Richmond District churches to participate in feeding and educating, while promoting low carbon footprint farming and microenterprise development for sustainability. The Richmond District submitted a proposal to start the new Shalom Farm collective and received a grant from Town and Country Ministries of the General Board of Global Ministries.
- Nine Strong Women is a grass-roots effort in Newark, NJ to mentor young women (13-16) at risk for violence and gang activity, led by a former gang leader. The group submitted a proposal for start-up funds and received its first grant from the United Methodist Special Program on Substance Abuse and Related Violence (SPSARV) and celebrated their 'graduating class' at Drew University in April 2009.
- Emory Beacon of Light is focused on affordable housing immigration clinic, economic development and youth empowerment in Baltimore.



### Shalom Coffee

This is a bag of Shalom Coffee, which embodies of values of Communities of Shalom: It's organic - Grown on a collective farm. Not just organic but fair trade - The farmers and roasters receive a decent wage. Not just fair trade but interfaith - Jewish, Christian, Muslim growers. Not just interfaith but international -Dark roast, full-bodied, coffee from Uganda. Not just a cup, but a Just Cup – Supporting socially responsible community initiatives. It's delicious Coffee from Thanksgiving Coffee Company. One dollar from each bag sold directly supports Communities of Shalom in Africa. Available from Shalom@Drew.edu for \$11 per bag



## Shalom Seed Grants Mark Completion of Training and Submission of Plans

The National Shalom Resource Center at Drew University provided 30 hours of ShalomZone Training@ to 13 teams and commissioned 97 ministers of Shalom in the network in 2008-09. A total of eight Shalom Plans were submitted to the National Resource Center for approval. The Advance fund at the General Board of Global Ministries has awarded \$2,000 'seed grants' to seven approved sites in 2009:

**1. Ames Shalom Community, Inc.,** Baltimore, MD. Program Focus: Assist male and female inmates returning to their communities. Provide mentoring, assistance in obtaining identification, two-week bus passes and clothing vouchers to prepare for job searches.

**2. Mt. Zion Community of Shalom,** Baltimore, MD. Program Focus: Help create affordable housing, youth summer jobs, violence and youth homicide

prevention, provide on-going education seminars and health clinics, and development of youth sports leagues.

**3. The Shalom Project, Inc. – Peter's Creek Community Initiative,** Winston-Salem, NC. Program Focus: Community economic development through a coalition of artists, gardeners, businesses and churches committed to improving housing, education, and business sector physical appearance; raise the quality of life in the Peter's Creek Community, attracting more business customers and residents.

**4. Pharr Literacy Project, Inc.,** Pharr, TX. Program Focus: Collaborative community development project involving neighborhood childcare, literacy classes, employment readiness, cultural arts, community outreach, and opportunities for spiritual development. Present opportunities to co-sponsor work with Methodist Healthcare Ministries, GBGM

Health and Welfare, and National Hispanic Plan.

**5. Ward Street Mission Community of Shalom,** High Point, NC. Program Focus: Substance abuse case management ministry, community outreach and business coalition building for re-zoning action for economic community development; 'branding' recognition of greater Ward Street area which is 'invisible' in the city. Emerging from community outreach is a new recovery-targeted worship service at Ward Street UMC.

**6. Mount Winans-Westport Shalom Zone,** Baltimore, MD. Program Focus: Collaborative approach to multi-neighborhood revitalization project that involves securing a public school building and transforming it into a community development center to house a health clinic, learning lab, adult day-care and child care programs, recreation center, and rehab program for those in recovery.

**7. Rosebud Walakota Shalom Community,** Mission, SD. Program Focus: Development of a native art 'co-op' to organize local artists and market their crafts for shalom. Expand the co-op to empower entrepreneurs and preserve traditional art works. Allow for cross-cultural participants to work together in a common medium of expression. Bring many different organizations together to work on common goals for improvement of their neighborhoods.



## Upcoming Shalom Training Opportunities: 2009-2010

### Regional Shalom Trainings:

West Virginia Annual Conference –Fall 2009  
Upshure County and Fairmont Shalom sites  
First training session: September 28-29  
Training Facilitator: Rev. Dick Bower, robow@aol.com

North Texas Annual Conference:  
Refresher course for all active NTC sites.  
Two weekend sessions: September 11-12 and November 6-7  
Commissioning Ceremony at End of Year Celebration on Dec. 5  
Training Facilitator: Sally Vonner, vonner@ntcmc.org

Macon, Georgia—"City of Shalom"  
Mayor's Office initiative for new sites  
Five Saturdays for five months: October 10, November 8, January 10, February 14 and March 14. All sessions are all day, from 9:00am - 4:00pm, lunch included  
Training Facilitator: Annie Allen, AAllen1@drew.edu

New Jersey Shalom Sites:  
Respond, Inc. North Camden Shalom  
Nine Strong Women, Newark  
Five Saturdays for Five months: October 17, November 21, January 17, February 21, and March 21. All sessions are all day, from 9:00am - 4:00pm, lunch included  
Training Facilitator: Annie Allen AAllen1@drew.edu

### National Training Events

1. "Stepping up to Shalom"--National Shalom Summit in Columbia, SC, October 28-31, 2009. Radisson Hotel and Conference Center. Register online at [www.communitiesofshalom.org](http://www.communitiesofshalom.org) before October 1.

2. "Soaring High: Cooperative Ministries Changing Lives, Congregations and Communities" Oct 15-17, 2009 in the Von Braun Civic Center and Embassy Suites in Huntsville, Alabama. Contact: Dorsey Walker, [dhwalker@centurytel.net](mailto:dhwalker@centurytel.net)

### International Trainings:

Mzuzu, Malawi, July 15-20, 2010  
Training Facilitator: Dr. Michael Christensen

### Shalom-related Courses:

Leadership Skills for Community Organization (3-credits) for MDIV/MTS credit at Drew Theological School  
Dates: January 4-8, 2010; May 17-21, 2010.  
Trainers: Michael Geckin and Ojeda Hall-Phillips  
For more information, contact Dean Anne Yardley, [ayardley@drew.edu](mailto:ayardley@drew.edu)

### Equipping for Shalom

5-day intensive for regional trainers and site coordinators  
Dates: June 20-25, 2010  
Focus: New ShalomZone Training (beta version)  
Offered at Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association, Ocean Grove, NJ  
Instructors: Dr. Michael Christensen, National Director, Shalom Initiative; and Annie Allen, National Program Associate and Trainer

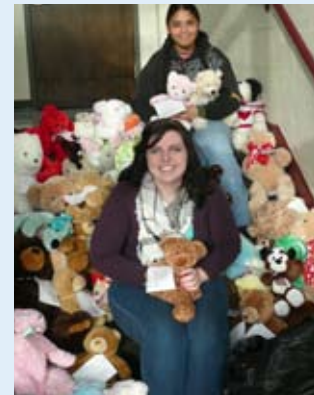
### Information Meetings:

Learn about Shalom vision, values, mission, model, principles, goals, strategies, skills and training units needed to start new Shalom ministries in a city, region, or UMC Annual Conference. Apply through National Shalom Resource Center at Drew University

To register for any of these training opportunities, to request additional information, contact:

Dr. Michael J. Christensen, Ph.D.  
National Director, Shalom Initiative  
Drew University Theological School  
12 Campus Drive  
Madison, New Jersey 07940  
[shalom@drew.edu](mailto:shalom@drew.edu)  
[www.communitiesofshalom.org](http://www.communitiesofshalom.org)  
973-408-3848

## Gallatin, TN ShalomZone – A Place of Refuge and Renewal



The volunteer-lead Gallatin ShalomZone (GSZ) has been working in the Clearview Heights area for over twelve years providing college scholarships, developing youth programs, and refurbishing a once drug-infested city park. Two years ago the Board of Directors hired the first full-time staff member, Executive Director P.J. Davis, who has a Masters degree

in Public Service Administration and over 25 years' experience as a social worker.

The Gallatin ShalomZone is building strong, empowered communities and families by the development of strong programs and activities centered on the GSZ facility. As noted in the following story, barriers are being broken down and lives are being transformed.

Sixteen-year old Betty (name changed for privacy), along with her two-year old toddler, lives with her mother and six siblings in a small two-room apartment. Betty is struggling to stay in school. The family came to the GSZ last summer when her brother volunteered to become a counselor at the GSZ day camp. Betty wanted to help, so she brought her baby to day

camp. Although she would like to be a normal teen, there is nothing normal about her life. Two of the children sleep in one chair and for part of the winter they had no electricity. Each child received one gift for Christmas provided by the GSZ. Betty's mother works as a nursing assistant for \$8.00 an hour, not nearly enough to feed and clothe everyone.

Betty came to the Gallatin Shalom Zone one day to ask for help. She needed diapers for the baby who was soaking wet and had nowhere to turn. Her mother was at work, and she was alone. The GSZ provided immediate assistance.

Betty has since entered into an eight-week career development class taught at the GSZ with twelve other teens. Betty walked over two miles in the pouring rain

just to attend the class. The class teaches team building and skills that include: resume building, job interview, conflict resolution, business etiquette, appropriate job behavior, work ethics, dressing for success, and time management.

Betty's goal last semester was to STAY IN SCHOOL. Betty thought if she could get a job, she could help her mom with bills. The GSZ has worked with Betty (and her mother), to focus on the baby and her school work. She continues to stay in school and proudly passed Geometry, which was a real achievement. The GSZ has helped this young mother focus on what positives might be in her future. The Gallatin ShalomZone, the largest site in the National network, making a positive impact in its community.

## The Feast of Sacrifice (Eid al-Adha) by Michael Christensen

I had never gone to such a feast before, but last year when Levent invited my family and me to join his Muslim community and interfaith friends to their Feast Day at the end of the holy season of Eid, in commemoration of father Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son (Ishmael), I responded with enthusiasm.

Levent KoÅs, Ph.D. is Executive Director of the Interfaith Dialog Center in New Jersey, and his organization has sponsored interfaith events at Drew and

elsewhere, and takes people on cross-cultural trips to Turkey. In so doing, this progressive Muslim community helps us find common ground among the three Abrahamic religions in the spirit of shalom/salaam/peace.

About 75 people of good faith gathered in Carlstadt for the Feast of Sacrifice. Together,

we shared in a common meal and gave thanks for the Lord's provision of a 'ram in the thicket' as a substitutionary sacrifice instead of Abraham's son—the sacred story of how the ancient people of God learned that human sacrifice is not required,

but rather faithfulness to the will of God.



The guest speaker for the Feast was a United Methodist minister--Rev. Pat Bruger, a former student of mine from Drew and Executive Director, CUMAC Food Program in Paterson (originally a shalom zone). Pat shared about how thousands of low-income families in northern New Jersey count on this regional Food Pantry for supplemental food from time to time; and how they were forced to close their doors in during the

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