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GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Darfur 2009: The Art of Peacebuilding in Siena

By Daniel Rothbart, ICAR Professor, drothbar@gmu.edu

he Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) is actively engaged in peacebuilding efforts in response to the conflict in Darfur, a conflict that has left over 300,000 dead and two million people displaced from their homes since 2003. Such peacebuilding efforts constitute a core mission of the Institute. and were given a boost in July 2009 when 17 representatives from six armed movements involved in the conflict met in a neutral setting for a consultation aimed at

promoting peace in this ravaged region. The movements represented were: the United Resistance Front, the United Revolutionary



Three other groups actively engaged in the conflict chose not to attend, including the Justice Equality Movement.

The venue for this



Members of the Darfur consultation gather in a courtyard in Siena. Photo: Rothbart.

monastery outside of Siena, Italy—offered a stark contrast to the kind of devastation that Darfuris have experienced. The facilitators attending the consultation included Christopher Mitchell and Daniel Rothbart from ICAR, Ronald Fisher from American University, and Suliman Giddo from the Darfur Peace and Development Organization in Washington, D.C. Their work benefitted enormously from the contributions of graduate assistants Tres Thomas, Fatima Hadji, Ashad Sentongo, and Martha Mutisi. ICAR professor Wallace

Warfield provided expert guidance in the

consultation—a tranquil 13th century

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Kevin Avruch Appointed as Rice Chair:

His Vision For Point of View

By Nawal Rajeh, ICAR M.S. Student, nrajeh@gmu.edu

t the beginning of the 2009-10 academic year, the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution named Dr. Kevin Avruch the new Henry Hart Rice Chair.

ICAR'S Rice Chair, carries a three-year term with a mandate to oversee the development of academic programming and the study of conflict resolution practice at Point of View (POV), ICAR's research, retreat, and conference center. POV is situated on 40 acres of pristine nature, secluded on idyllic Belmont Bay, in Mason Neck, Virginia.

The center, which is located just 25 miles south of Washington D.C., was a gift from the Lynch family. While expectations for the future are that POV will become an internationally renowned center for research and conflict resolution, it was always Edwin and Helen Lynch's hope that their home would simply "be used as an instrument to help people resolve differences and work through disputes in a secluded and restful environment."

The Rice Chair was endowed by Ed Rice in of honor his father, Henry Hart Rice. The Rice and Lynch families were close friends. The endowment for the Rice Chair is also a gift to ICAR to help expand the work of POV.

Dr. Kevin Avruch, who was a member of ICAR's original faculty advisory group in 1981, is an internationally recognized anthropologist and a pioneer in the development of theory and practice relating to cross cultural approaches to conflict resolution, as well as issues of ethnicity, nationalism, negotiation, and mediation. He has published more than 50 articles and essays and is the author/editor of several books.

Last year Dr. Avruch served as the Joan B. Kroc Peace Scholar at the University of San Diego, where he lent his expertise as a consultant, in addition to teaching. This spring, he will teach "Approaches to Violence," which explores levels of violence, from interpersonal to international, considering its roots and sources as well as approaches to intervention.

Dr. Avruch sees his appointment as Rice Chair as abounding with opportunities. "It's a very exciting chance to help guide POV to fulfill its potential and achieve the dreams of Ed and Helen Lynch and their family and the vision they had." He also sees it as an opportunity to help foster the vision of his colleagues at ICAR and invest the energy that will centrally locate POV on the conflict and peace studies map, building on the current momentum.

As part of his Rice responsibilities, Avruch chairs POV's Academic Committee, which sets

academic policy for the center and consists of both ICAR and non-ICAR GMU faculty. Current committee members are: Andrea Bartoli, Susan Allen Nan, Peter Mandaville (from GMU's Public and International Affairs Center for Global Studies), Chris Mitchell, Jeremy Peizer, and Creative Services. Iamie Price.



Kevin Avruch is a Professor of conflict resolution at ICAR. Photo: GMU Creative Services.

Over the

years, ICAR has hosted a variety of events at POV, including conferences on various topics, monthly advanced theory seminars for Ph.D. students, workshops, classes, and ICAR community gatherings. ICAR also provides a reflective space where its students can work on research, presentations, and dissertations. In the future, activities that incorporate theory-building and practice in the form of problem solving workshops, conferences, retreats, and classes, will all be part of POV's offerings.

While ICAR already enjoys broad national and international recognition, the development of POV is seen as a chance to enhance and add to the field so that others will benefit from its programs and natural setting. In its next phase of development, (POV will soon undergo major expansive construction), Avruch forecasts POV as a place where other universities and organizations will also benefit from its use. He points out that "It is essentially a place for the whole community."

Dr. Avruch encourages ICAR students who have not yet had the chance to visit POV, to take advantage of every opportunity to do so. He believes that, "the name itself really tells a lot about the ambiance. It is a wonderful place to get away from the daily hustle of Washington and think through matters of peace and conflict."

According to Dr. Avruch, "POV is a place where research, theory, and practice will come together, reflecting ICAR's long term commitment to reflective practice and the development of theory and of the conflict resolution field."

ICAR Working Groups:

Emerging Applications of Theory and Practice

By Lori-Ann Stephensen, Editor and ICAR M.S. Student, Istephea@gmu.edu

hile the idea of working groups at ICAR is not a new one, the initiatives and outcomes they produce are always dynamic as new groups form around diverse topics and are infused with the energy and input of each incoming cohort. Though their particular emphases vary, each working group shares the same genesis: two or more minds coming together with a desire to know more and to do something with that knowledge. ICAR's working groups are open to all members of the ICAR community including faculty, staff, alumni, and students from each of the four programs. The range of possibilities for new groups is bounded only by the imagination and drive of the collective community. An overview of some of ICAR's current working groups illustrate their potential:

The Africa Working Group (AWG), which has been ongoing for sometime at ICAR, is comprised of a group of practitioners, students, academics, and alumni who seek to foster an in-depth understanding of conflict, peace, justice, and sustainable development in Africa—providing opportunities for learning and action. Activities this past year include an African Dinner featuring speakers on conflict resolution as well as delicious regional cuisine. Dr. Wallace Warfield was honored at the event for his years of dedication as AWG's sponsor. AWG also co-hosted an event with the Office of Sexual Assault Service addressing sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition, AWG organized a panel discussion on the roots of militant Islam in Somalia, which featured ICAR professors Terrence Lyons, Wallace Warfield, Jamie Price, and AWG co-President Hussein Yusuf. New members were welcomed at AWG's annual retreat at Point of View



Members of the Africa Working Group gather at a recent event at Point of View. Photo: AWG.

in September, which featured Steve MacDonald, from the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, as the guest speaker.

The Consultancy Working Group was newly formed this semester to establish Conflict Resolution Consulting, for the purpose of explicitly branding conflict resolution practitioners as consultants and in an effort to help organizations improve their performance, through the analysis of existing conflicts and the development of plans for improvement and resolution. The group's efforts will be geared toward establishing "best practices" relating to organizational change, management assistance, coaching skills, and strategy development, in order to deliver acceptable outcomes to its clientele. This working group is undertaking a proactive approach at ICAR by offering students, faculty, and alumni an opportunity to rebrand conflict resolution within a profitable business model that merges academic and practical elements into a unified organizational structure and promote credibility for the field.

ICAR's Gender and Conflict Working Group, under the advisement of Dr. Sandra Cheldelin, is comprised of a team of faculty and students interested in the intersection of gender and social conflict. Their passion centers on raising awareness of gendered issues and developing a research portal aimed at educating the public on a variety of issues. Various topic specific committees have been formed within the group, including but not limited to: gender and culture, women and grassroots peacebuilding, gender and empowerment, gender and violence, gender mainstreaming, girls and conflicts, human rights, statistics, gender and sexuality, and globalization—as well as developing an educational training tool on gender-based issues. As gender underlies worldwide struggles, regional foci will include Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Americas.

The potential for synergism and evolution in ICAR's working groups initiative is illustrated by the current collaboration between the Gender and Conflict Working Group and the Africa Working Group as they prepare to co-host a Women and Peacebuilding roundtable in early February. Other active working groups at ICAR include Consciousness and Conflict Resolution, Public Policy, Languages, Grant Writing, and Terrorism. Contact information and updates for each of the groups is available at icarcommunity.ning.com. New members are always welcome and new groups are always only an idea away.



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TE'A Presents "Under The Veil"

ICAR Alumna & Co. Transform Conflict Through Theater

By Fareeha Khan, ICAR Undergraduate Student and Alumni Outreach Intern, fkhano@gmu.edu



CAR Alumna, Radha Kramer works as grassroots organizer committed to addressing the conflicts in America's backyard. Theatre, Engagement, and Action (TE'A), the organization she founded in 2008, has recently expanded from its birthplace in New York City to Washington D.C. TE'A is the product of a creative partnership between Radha Productions and Intersections International. Its mission is "to build peace by using interactive theatre to cross the barriers of race, class, culture, and religion that separate and divide Americans from each other." Through TE'A, Kramer uses art to explore social conflicts. Using either a universitybased model or a community-based model, TE'A uses interactive theatre and cutting edge conflict transformation techniques to study relevant issues and create material for theatrical performance. Her passion for the project is evident as she talks about it. Often the focus is on topics that the public finds hard to talk about. "When people fear something that means they care about it," Kramer says. "That's why it is important to talk about those fears." Her experience at ICAR has enabled her to be an effective facilitator as she engages audiences in the expression of identity through discussion.

On November 19th, TE'A performed "Under the Veil: Being Muslim (and Non-Muslim) in America Post 9/11" at the Arlington campus. As the title indicates, the short play explored the complexity of the human experience of Americans, particularly Muslim Americans, after the towers fell. The script, written by the troupe, was an artistic interpretation of lived experience gathered from interviews and observations leaving the audience with a sense of having experienced "the really real" and a space in which to consider their own experience. That space was expanded through a facilitated

debriefing with the audience. TE'A purposefully structures projects to stimulate honest and meaningful conversation. According to Kramer, "There is no conflict resolution but there is conflict transformation." Her experience traveling and studying

conflicts with a Masters in public policy and in conflict resolution from ICAR, with the Peace Corps in the South Pacific, and a GMU study abroad trip to Israel, has provided her with an important scope on the dynamics of community. Kramer hopes



TE'A founder and ICAR Alumna, Radha Kramer. Photo: TE'A.

to take TE'A throughout the country and continue her focus on transformation surrounding current conflict laden issues in America.

At the conclusion of the performance on Thursday evening Kramer announced that TE'A will begin the formation of a new troupe, incorporating the ICAR community in exploring new topics and tensions from human experience. Anyone interested in participating in the project should contact Rhada Kramer at radha@teaproject.com.

Everyone in the ICAR community should treat themselves to a visit to the TE'A website (teaproject.com) for clips of performances and background on the Under the Veil project as well as webcasts on various issues. TE'A's most recent video on headscarves has already inspired many viewers to express their opinions on Facebook.

TE'A Players Left to Right: Christa Quallo, Christian De Gre', Chuck Obasa, Ashley Williams, Felipe Aguilar IV. Photo: TE'A.

Upcoming ICAR Community Events

Thursday, December 3, 2009 GSCS Townhall Meeting

7:30 pm - 9:00 pm, Trueland Building, 555 Contact: Melanie Smith, msmir@gmu.edu

Thursday, December 17, 2009 ICAR Holiday Party

6:00 pm - 10:00 pm, Point of View Contact: Erin Martz, emartz@gmu.edu

http://icar.gmu.edu/events.htm

ICAR STUDENT OPINION

Turkey-Armenia Protocols Signed: Understanding the Existential Concerns From the Armenian Side

By Margarita Tadevosyan, M.S. Student, Peace Operations Policy, mtadevos@gmu.edu and Tamar Palandjian, M.S. Student, Conflict Analysis and Resolution, tpalandj@gmu.edu

Armenia and Turkey signed protocols on the normalization of relations on 10/10/09. Reaction from Armenians throughout the world ranged from opposition, "demanding justice, not protocols," to support and a belief that it is the only resolution to the conflict. Following the signing of the protocols, Armenia's President Serge Sargsyan said, "And let no one ignore the fact that, contrary to any slogans, the Armenian nation is united in its goals and is strong with its sons and daughters. And let no one try to split Armenia and our brothers and sisters in the Diaspora in presenting their concern over the future of Armenia as an attempt to impose something on the Republic Armenia." In fact, it's false that there is no resistance on this issue within Armenia and the Diaspora.

There are serious rifts over the protocols and Armenians and Diasporans' concerns are based on different issues. For Armenians living in Armenia, the concern is about how the protocols will impact the Nagorno Karabakh conflict while Diasporans' concern is about the restoration of historical justices. Representing both the Diaspora and Armenia, we share these concerns with the hope that it will lay the groundwork for dialogue between these communities.

The modern history of independent Armenia started with war over Nagorno Karabakh and its unresolved status continues to influence social and political life in the country. Genocide recognition, while an important element of identity in Armenia, is subordinate to more pressing issues such as Nagorno Karabakh. Most Armenian citizens have strong memories of the war and understand that the unresolved Nagorno Karabakh conflict can go either way. The situation is further complicated with the recent legitimacy crisis facing the country's unpopular leadership. Many people see protocols as another tool to be used against Armenians in determining the future of Nagorno-Karabakh – the only real victory Armenia has had since medieval times. All of these factors make Armenians not only distrustful of the protocols, but also concerned about the country's future.

For a Diasporan, the Genocide and seeking Turkish recognition of what happened in 1915 is at the core of one's identity. Any threat to obtain recognition is seen as an attack to one's identity. Thus, for Armenian Diasporans, the formation of a historical commission as a part of the protocols could potentially question the Armenian Genocide as a historical fact. For that reason, there has been an intense and emotional reaction from the Diaspora, which has even caused some people to call President Sargsyan a "traitor" and "Turk." The concern with the historical commission is that in the end, Turkey will have its way and force Armenia to retract from the use of the word genocide.

Obviously, there is a contrast of opinions within the Armenian side. Whether protocols are ratified or not, these concerns are raised in both communities. Moving forward, there is a need for further discussion and dialogue amongst Armenians throughout the world on the differences that exist in reality and not seek artificial unity through an overarching concept of "Armenianness." Only through dialogue will the Armenian side begin to understand its own internal existential concerns, preventing further division as the protocol process moves forward.

Recent ICAR Articles, Op-Eds, Letters to the Editor

Redefining the "Jewish" in Jewish State

By Marc Gopin, ICAR Professor Common Ground News Service, 11/12/09

What Can Palestinians Learn From the American Civil Rights Movement?

By Aziz Abu Sarah, CRDC Director of Middle East Projects Common Ground News Service, 11/12/09

The Search for the 'Why' of Fort Hood

By Paul Snodgrass, ICAR M.S. Almunus New York Times, 11/11/09

Enemy-centric Approach in Pakistan Doesn't Work

By Lisa Shirch, ICAR M.S. Alumna and Saira Yamin, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate Common Ground News Service, 11/10/09

EU Threat Has Inspired Panic Rather Than Reform

By Carrie Chomuik, ICAR M.S. Student *Financial Times, 11/05/09*

Can J Street Sideline AIPAC?

By Roi Ben-Yehuda, ICAR Ph.D. Student Al Jazeera, 11/04/09

Failure on Three Fronts

By Masanobu Yonemitsu, ICAR M.S. Alumnus *European Voice, 10/29/09*

Bosnian Serbs Spurn EU Carrot

By Masanobu Yonemitsu, ICAR M.S. Alumnus *The Guardian, 10/20/09*

Should Palestinians Accept Israel as a Jewish State?

By Roi Ben-Yehuda, ICAR Ph.D. Student and Aziz Abu Sarah, CRDC Director of Middle East Projects *Haaretz*, 10/12/09



Wallace Warfield Honored

As ACR Bestows Lifetime Contribution Award

By Mara Schoeny, ICAR Assistant Professor and Certificate Program Director, mschoeny@gmu.edu

hen the Association for Conflict Resolution gathered in Atlanta, Georgia, from October 7-10 for its 9th annual conference, Wallace Warfield was invited to be the keynote speaker. His address, "Challenging Conventional Identities," was offered in response to the conference theme: "Convening the 'Whole of Community': Integrating Approaches & Practices to Address Conflict in a Chaotic World." At the conclusion of his remarks, Warfield engaged a panel of conflict resolution experts, Robert Benjamin, Homer C. LaRue, and Joyce Neu, in a discussion of current issues and future directions for the field. Then the floor was opened to conference attendees for Q&A.

Two significant events occurred that morning, in what could otherwise be considered standard fare for the opening session of a conference: First, the substance of Warfield's message issued a challenge for the field to reflect on its own identity and relevance to the full range of complex and persistent conflicts. Second, Warfield was presented with a Lifetime Contribution Award.

ACR's Rachel Barbour presented the award saying, "I concluded last night that the English language is inadequate," [as a medium for expressing the breadth of his contribution]... "As a conflict resolver you have positively impacted so many lives at all levels of society from the streets of New York to the countries of Liberia and Columbia. You have changed the structures of our government from local agencies dealing with ethnic and racial conflict to the creation of new dispute resolution processes



Pictured from Left to Right: Robert Benjamin, Rachel Barbour, Wallace Warfield, Joyce Neu, Homer LaRue. Photo: ACR.

in the federal sector. Your gift to the field has also been your tireless mentoring of a new generation of reflective practitioners and scholars who continue to shape and grow our field. For this, we at the Association of Conflict Resolution honor you and thank you."

Faced with the task of writing about the award for this newsletter, I can appreciate Barbour's difficulty in finding words to fully express Dr. Warfield's many contributions to the field of conflict resolution, as well as to my own learning. His long career reflects a commitment to leadership, ethics, reflective practice, community, and going to the difficult conversations. As his student, I benefited immeasurably from his mentoring and as a colleague I

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Bravo Erica! Welcome Erin Martz, New Events Coordinator

By Lori-Ann Stephensen, Editor and ICAR M.S. Student, Istephea@gmu.edu



Erica Soren. Photo:

CAR's Open House, held November 12th, signaled a seamless transition in the Events Coordinator position as Erica Soren leaves to prepare for her December graduation from the Masters program and her upcoming marriage and Erin Martz steps in to fill her shoes. Soren has provided the magic (and the muscle) behind ICAR events, including Orientation, the Welcome Dinner, and the Lynch Lecture since she joined the staff as a student worker last year. Erin Martz, is an ICAR Certificate student with two Masters degrees. Martz also teaches at Nova Community College. If Thursday's Open House was any indication, the ICAR community will continue to benefit from the legacy of Soren's flair as it enjoys Martz's panache. Bravo Erica! Welcome Erin!



Erin Martz. Photo:

The Art of Peacebuilding in Siena

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months preceding and following the consultation, which also benefited from analysis and advice provided by a "second circle" of Darfur scholars and other experts who are engaged in the issue on a regular basis.

Designed as a problem-solving workshop, the objectives of the consultation were:

- •To open new channels of dialogue among the factions of the Darfur movement
- •To establish a forum for solidifying harmonious relations among these factions
- •To develop a strategy for negotiating with all parties in the conflict
- •To recognize that the differences among the Darfuri factions should not be used to undermine the commitment to peace.

Throughout the course of the conference, the facilitators revised the designs and plans in real time, as critical breakthroughs emerged in the process. In effect, the participants began to take control of the consultative process itself, affirming in practice their commitment to work together for a common purpose and to build harmonious relationships. By the end of day two, the original design was reimagined in ways that enabled participants to work efficiently towards formulating their position statement.

Recognizing the importance of these objectives, the participants actively engaged in constructive dialogue on the conflict's root causes, the sources of fragmentation among the armed movements, and a shared vision for a future Darfur and Sudan. Participants paid careful attention to fundamental questions that are often ignored in discussions by actors engaged in the immediacy of events on the ground. In effect, the constulatation participants exhibited skills that we in the field attribute to reflective practitioners—probing deep into analytical and normative questions that lie submerged beneath the empirical questions about events, statements, and policies. Such skills also include reflection on presuppositions of group actions, beliefs, and strategies. As an example, one question that was formulated focused on how, exactly, to define a movement given the amorphous character of the

groups and their frequent fragmentation. Another moment of critical reflection centered on how the question of how to prioritize the known causes of violence in explanations of the conflict—or how to provide a comparative evaluation of the problems of marginalization of Darfuris versus those of land reform.

Behind the scenes the participants deliberated into the night about past grievances, accusations,



Dan Rothbart is a Professor at ICAR. Photo: GMU Creative Services.

and apologies. These dual modes of dialogue (by day and by night) operated to mutual effect, as the sequence of events in the daytime problem-solving workshops intertwined with the labor of reconciliation at night. Such private exchanges were fostered by Suliman Giddo who had developed personal relationships with some of the participants, which enabled him to wade through the twists and turns of many tense conversations.

In the end, the partnership between the consultants and the participants was fruitful, yielding important results. The participants crafted a position statement that represented a bold commitment to seek a harmonious relationship among the various movements. With their unanimous assent to the Siena statement, the participants, in effect, renounced the use of violence as a means of settling disputes and accepted the necessity of establishing a common platform in preparation for the negotiations with the Government of Sudan. The Siena consultation complements the work of official negotiations currently underway by providing an unofficial forum for dialogue and analysis that can be used to increase understanding and build relationships among the parties.

What's New at the John Burton Library

By Jay Filipi, ICAR M.S. Student and John Burton Librarian, jfilipi@gmu.edu

he John Burton Library, located on the 6th floor of the Truland building is pleased to welcome Jay Filipi to our library staff, joining Molly Tepper, Librarian and Anand Rao, Technology Assistant. In addition to assisting with library and resource needs, Jay will provide support for ICAR's website by producing and editing video content as well as tracking and sharing ICAR publications. ICAR's librarians are also available to assist with document scanning, transcription, and other technological services.

Gretchen Reynolds, the ICAR and Social Work Liasion Librarian from the Arlington Campus Library is now holding office hours at the John Burton Library. Anyone needing assistance or having questions relating to research is encouraged to schedule an appointment. Her office hours are: Mondays, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. Gretchen can be reached at greynol3@gmu.edu.

Please keep an eye out for the upcoming writing seminar series, "Beyond 'Now What?" designed to help students with a variety of academic and field-oriented writing styles. Proposed topics for the seminars include: grant writing, journal writing, writing for the media, and writing (and presenting at) academic conferences.

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Warfield's Lifetime Contribution Award

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continue to learn from and be challenged by his insights. The following list is by no means complete, but perhaps begins the task of tracing his influence in my own practice and scholarship:

- •Learn everyone's name. Right from the start. It is a sign of respect and recognition that we do not work with "parties" and "interests" but with people.
- •Jazz is a useful metaphor for conflict resolution. Both are patterned as well as improvisational. A musical score or conflict resolution process is a starting point, one that anchors individual interpretations as well as emerging conversations. As he observed in the keynote, intervenors are parties too and the field suffers when processes and identities become too reified. Any new conflict or intervention is neither wholly exceptional nor wholly conventional.
- •When in doubt, ask. An emphasis on reflective practice stems in part from the recognition that people often know more than they realize, as well as from a recognition that communities in conflict develop hard won insights and wisdom. Parties must do most of the hardest work, requiring humility on the part of intervenors with regard to their own influence, presence and impact.
- •Vision and values matter. Seeds of outcomes are buried in the process, and seeds of the process are found in outcomes, as well as the conditions of the setting. Too often in

the field when discussing the intersection of practice and assessment we are stymied within a false debate about process versus outcomes. In the hands of a seasoned practitioner, such a dichotomy does not exist—the two are inextricably intertwined. Throughout his long career Dr. Warfield has reminded us that vision and values matter in conflict resolution and that those who would offer help need to consider the deeper ethics and implications of their practice, while finding ways to engage with immediate as well as deeper concerns.

 Teaching isn't telling. Experience, practice and reflection are essential for learning how to work with conflict. While he might inspire with a compelling story or diagram, the implications of a key theory, in the end what is asked of students is trying it out. Along the way, students might learn as much from reflecting on an experience as a party as one where they were attempting to be helpful.

Wallace Warfield's long career reflects a commitment to leadership, ethics, reflective practice, community, and going to the difficult conversations. His keynote last month was a challenge, a call for the field to examine its assumptions, relevance, and effectiveness. But it was also a call to community, for shared learning and reflection in order to be of better service to those facing increasingly complex and persistent conflicts. He's given us some important homework.



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