

## **CCPB Annual Review (2023-24)**

Drafted by Daniel R Brunstetter on June 17, 2024

The Center for Citizen Peacebuilding had a busy and exciting year, rich in activities. The year, however, was marred by the continued war between Russia-Ukraine and the terrible escalation between Israel and Hamas beginning in October 2023. The war continued throughout the academic year, sparking mass protests on campus, a student encampment, and the use of riot police to disband the encampment. Many board meeting discussions revolved around this. The year was also marked by personal loss, with the premature death of a founding members, Larry Kugelman, who passed away unexpectedly.

The Center continued its support of undergraduate peacebuilders, providing funding and mentoring for the SGP student club who hosted many events. In addition, the Center sponsored an undergraduate fellowship. Two student projects were funded [Olivia Sirchio, Nandini Sharma]. The Certificate in Conflict and Conflict Resolution was awarded to seven graduating seniors [Janice Chavez, Zamir Eleusizov, Nardeen Gerges, Deng Liu, Katherine Molleja, Cecily Rice, Nandini Sharma].

The Center continued its support for graduate students through the Kugelman fellowship. Due to the student protests, the riot police, and the controversy surrounding the related strike, the annual presentation ceremony was postponed. This year, the Center received seventeen applications, funding eight [newly funded: Nahreen Aref, Anibal Serrano, Gvantsa Gasviani, Sarah Burke; continued funding: Hanna Dosenko, Alexis Jenson, Muhammad Raqib, MacKenzie Bonner].

The Center hosted numerous events. These included the two iterations of the Hal Smith lecture series. The first featured prominent Black theologian, Prof. Juan Floyd-Thomas, who also spoke at St Mark Church. The second was Dr. Johanna Solomon - a former Kugelman fellow - who spoke during the political science day prospective grad student visiting day. In partnership with UCI's political theory emphasis, the Center helped to host Kevin Duong. The Center continued its effort to support a peace-building program related to the Russia-Ukraine war in partnership with George Mason University's Center for Peacemaking Practice in the Carter School for Peace and Conflict. Meetings were held abroad and domestically. Several events related to the Pantheonization of the WW II Armenian resistance fighter honored in France were organized and co-hosted. One event with the Armenian and French consulates in Los Angeles, another with UCI's Armenian Studies Center.

Finally, planning for new initiatives and events is underway. These include a grant from the Miner Anderson Family Foundation to create an outreach program on teaching about peacebuilding aimed at local high school teachers and a climate/peace-building summit involving local actors and students.