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Dear Friends,

As I look out on the landscape from this little rest stop tucked away on a side road between Cheyenne and Torrington, I am struck with a realization. What I see in the distance is a couple ranches. Off to the left I can see a tall structure on the horizon. I see a few houses and a lot of cattle. The realization I have is that someone built that from nothing. I realize that in order for what I am seeing to exist, someone had an idea or a dream. Everything before me, all the cattle, the buildings, the fences, all of it is the result of hard work, sacrifice and an unrelenting drive to accomplish that dream. Suddenly, I was brought back to where I was, sitting at this rest stop, and I simply heard in the back of my mind, "You are building to accomplish a 'dream'".

Friends, Restorative Justice is not another job. Restorative Justice, for me and for many of you, is a dream. RJ is the area in which many of us become extremely excited and passionate. It is about building a system where offenders can be held more accountable for the harms they cause, where true reparation can take place, and where victims can be heard and finally have their part in the cases. We are hopeful for a day when key stake holders in communities become voices for change and seek to be instruments of accountability in helping offenders once again become productive members of society. We long for legislation that works to make RJ processes and programs easier to accomplish. We are excited to partner up with our Criminal Justice representatives in order to build a society where viable options exist, yet at the same time maintaining the proper path for those crimes that require certain offenders to be imprisoned for the safety of society. We look for the day when our school systems are actively implementing RJ practices, not only in dealing with harms but also working to develop an RJ mindset and philosophy in our children. We desperately desire the day when the school to prison pipeline is dismantled.

Cont'd on pg. 2

*It is the **mission** of the Wyoming Restorative Justice Council to foster the values of and provide equal access to the principles and practices of Restorative Justice throughout the state.*

*It is the **vision** of the Wyoming Restorative Justice Council that all Restorative Justice Principles are interwoven into the daily practices of all Wyoming citizens.*

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Martha Doyle, member
Special Education teacher, RJ
facilitator and trainer, Laramie, WY

Cassidy Drew, member
Victim Advocate, Sheridan, WY

This is our dream for Wyoming and this is what we are building.

In order to accomplish this, it will take time. It will take an unrelenting determination by all who are passionate about RJ. It will require hard work, sacrifice, and above all, it will require unity and partnerships among RJ professionals, Criminal Justice professionals, school administrators, family care professionals, therapeutic community, and community members in every city and town across the state.

In November 2017, the board had a strategic planning session. One of the plans that we put together through this session was to hold town hall style meetings in multiple communities across the state. The purpose for these meetings is to introduce RJ to these communities. Our desire is not only to inform our state about RJ but to foster relationships and partnerships for the growth and advancement of RJ in Wyoming. We are still in the planning stages of this and will bring you more information as we move towards these meetings. We also updated our WRJC website. We filed for a grant to not only aid in accomplishing these meetings but also to provide more training for the council board members. We are looking at ways to expand our resources and our impact in school settings. Finally, our board members are working hard to create more in depth relationships with all of our members and friends. We need your help and your voice. If you are passionate about RJ and want to see RJ advance in Wyoming, please contact us. All of the board members are here to help you and listen to you. We want to know your victories and your struggles. Above all, we want to help you succeed. When you advance in RJ, we all advance in RJ.

Thank you all and I stand in great anticipation of what 2018 will bring.

Sincerely,
Rick Prince, WRJC President

Click the Facebook logo
below for the latest
restorative
justice stories, news, and
cultural happenings!



L to R: Cassidy Drew, Martha Doyle, Rick Prince,
Jennifer Miner, Randi Losalu

Victim Offender Dialogue in Wyoming

Randi Losalu

What is Victim Offender Dialogue (VOD) you ask? Good question. The VOD program enables victims/survivors the ability to meet with their offenders face-to-face in a safe and secure environment to discuss how the crime has affected them and their loved ones, and to ask questions only the offender can answer.

The Wyoming VOD program is a victim-centered program that can provide a pathway to a sense of further healing and justice for those that choose to participate. It can offer victims the chance to give voice and feel heard while getting some answers, and give offenders an opportunity to better understand the devastating effects of their actions and to take responsibility for those actions. It is victim-initiated and victim-centered while also being offender-sensitive. It is a completely voluntary program for which only victims can initiate, and either party may discontinue participate at any time during the process.

This program may not be for all victims, but for certain victims/survivors of severe violence this program can be a very empowering experience. With thorough preparation with a trained facilitator, this program can be very effective for both the victim and the offender. Both victim and offender participants in previous VODs report gains in their own healing, recovery, and rehabilitation.

The purpose of the VOD program is to provide victims of felony crime the opportunity to participate in a structured face-to-face meeting with their offender in a safe and structured setting. Goals for the program are to:

- provide victims the opportunity to address the trauma of their victimization with their offenders, and to ask questions and receive answers which only offenders can provide.
- provide offenders the opportunity to take responsibility for their behavior, to learn the full impact of their actions, and express remorse related to their offense and its resulting impact, and to answer questions for the purpose of personal assistance for the victim.

Should you have any questions about the WY VOD program, know of someone who may want to participate, or you are someone who would like to initiate the process, please contact Randi Losalu at 307-777-5390 or randi.losalu@wyo.gov.

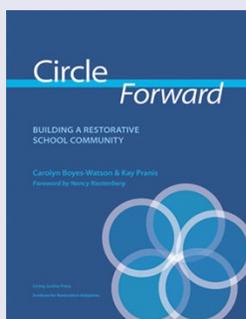
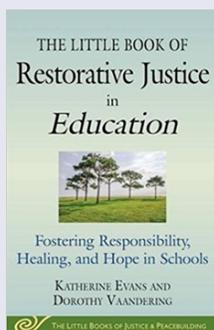


NACRJ: Member Access

“The National Association of Community and Restorative Justice is a non-profit organization that provides a professional association for educators, practitioners and others interested in restorative and community justice.”

As a member of the Wyoming Restorative Justice Council, you have unlimited access to the a NACRJ membership.

Head to page six to **learn how** you can become a member, and receive the username and password upon purchase, then visit NACRJ.org to start explor-



Resources for Restorative Justice in Education

Martha Doyle

Many schools across the country are looking into practices to increase community, improve culture, and decrease discipline referrals. Some schools are integrating restorative practices into their district's existing discipline, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) structures in order to align restorative practices to existing structures. Other schools are facilitating Circles with students with disabilities to support community building and instruction within the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

[Restorative Justice in Education: Fostering Responsibility, Healing, and Hope in Schools](#) by Katherine Evans and Dorothy Vaandering is an excellent tool for all staff to use as a professional learning and community building opportunity. Groups can meet in Circle to discuss the main themes of the book. Topics include building and maintaining healthy relationships, creating equitable learning environments, and transforming conflict within the framework of core values and beliefs that “people are worthy and relational.”

Another resource for educators is [Circle Forward](#) by Kay Pranis and Carolyn Boyce Watson. This tool has foundational information for using Circles with staff and students, and has easy to follow templates for staff to facilitate Circles in classrooms. Visit www.livingjusticepress.org for these and many other resources.

Additional articles and information for Restorative Practices in schools.

[Denver Restorative Practices](#)

[Restorative Practices in Schools](#)

[National Implementation Research Network \(NIRN\)](#)

News from Natrona County Restorative Justice

Jen Miner

NCRJ is now a couple months into their pilot project, *RJ Juvenile Conferencing Pilot Program*. Referrals are received from Natrona County’s single point of entry team, and those cases referred are in lieu of prosecution. With help from trained volunteers, NCRJ has processed a total of 6 youth through the conference process. Going through the pre-conference and final conference circle process with victims, youth, and their families has been an incredible learning experience. Not only in the sense of refining RJ skills, but also learning about human relationships and the powerful dynamics that often are a result of this process. In other areas, NCRJ is currently coordinating restorative justice training for Casper Police Department personnel – slated for early winter, 2018.

Our website has been updated!

To start off the new year fresh, the Wyoming Restorative Justice Council is excited to (re) introduce our website! We invite you to learn about our mission, vision and values, as well as our goals for 2018 and beyond. Watch a few short clips about Restorative Justice. And if you are an existing Restorative Justice program in Wyoming, consider publicizing your program on our website or in our newsletter. Our goal is to make our website an accessible and informative resource for you and your community, wherever you are in the Restorative Justice process.

Visit www.wyomingrjc.com for more information!

Board Spotlight: Jen Miner

Jen Miner is a founding member and current Vice Chair and Treasurer for the Wyoming Restorative Justice Council, as well as chairperson for Natrona County Restorative Justice. She is the full-time coordinator the Youth & Adult Community Service Program at the Casper Police Department.



A native of northern Illinois, Jen graduated in 1992 from Aurora University with a Bachelor of Social Work. Her early career consisted of working for the Converse County (WY) Coalition Against Family Violence & Sexual Assault, followed by five years with the WY Dept. of Family Services. In 1998 Jen transferred to the WY Dept. of Corrections, Probation & Parole. It was while in the capacity of a probation officer that Jen first attended training on restorative justice peace circles in Sheridan, WY. Taking a one year hiatus in 1999, Jen obtained a Master of Criminology from Indiana State. After returning to WDOC she has attended various RJ conferences and trainings, most recently completing RJ Conference Facilitator training in 2016 and again in 2017.

In 2009, Jen left the Dept. of Corrections to work for CPD running the Youth Community Service Program, with the program expanding to include adults in 2015. About this time, Jen rekindled her interest in restorative justice. She began by attending the national RJ conference followed by doing some site visits to various RJ program in Colorado. By fall of 2015 Jen had organized a group of interested individuals in Casper. This group's monthly meetings led to the formation of Natrona County Restorative Justice and the eventual Restorative Justice Symposium in March, 2017. NCRJ is currently in the beginning stage of their pilot project, *RJ Juvenile Conferencing Pilot Program*.

Jen resides in Casper with her husband Mike and three children, Sadie, Chloe, and Korbin.

Community Spotlight

As a growing organization, we have members from around the state that are actively committed to cultivating Restorative Justice programs and practices into their everyday work. With that being said readers, we'd like to hear from you!

What's the buzz on Restorative Justice in your community? What kinds of collective work is happening in your particular region of the state? What are your visions for Restorative Justice in Wyoming?

Please send your stories, comments, and questions to

wyomingrjc@gmail.com .

We'd love to know what's happening in your corner of Wyoming!

Wyoming Restorative Justice
Council

822 W. Walnut

P.O. Box 427

Rawlins, WY 82301

(307) 321 - 8584

wyomingrjc@gmail.com

For more information, visit our
website at wyomingrjc.com or
follow us on Facebook below!



Become a Member!

The WRJC was created to support Restorative Justice implementation around the state. The goals and vision of this council are not obtainable without the direct involvement of Wyoming citizens. This is why it is vitally important that those individuals and professionals who are interested in Restorative Justice team up and make a concerted effort to advance RJ across this great state.

It is impossible to create and implement RJ as an individual. If you desire to see RJ grow in Wyoming, please join the WRJC and become a member of our council. By becoming a member of WRJC you will be instantly joined to a team of RJ professionals who are passionate about the advancement of RJ.

With a membership:

- You will have access to resources that would normally take much research and time to discover.
- You will be updated on training opportunities for your continued growth in RJ.
- You will have access to a team that can help you get your own RJ programs off the ground by providing everything from advice to program development and even organizing training for those who will be a part of your program.
- Finally, you will be a part of a team that is working behind the scenes to bring about RJ legislation that will make the advancement of RJ much easier.

Membership Fee:

Private \$50

Organization/Group \$100 (up to 5 people)

Send us an email at wyomingrjc@gmail.com for a membership form.

