2012 Year-in-Review

Mobilizing networks of men, in alliance with women, for violence prevention and positive masculinity – Men’s Resources International is fulfilling this mission locally through our work with MOCHA, and through consulting and training activities around the world. The MRI training has now been developed into a detailed 8-session “Masculinity Reflection Group” curriculum. A growing pool of mentors and trainers can lead MRI workshops and masculinity reflection groups in Springfield and in Africa.

MEN OF COLOR HEALTH AWARENESS (MOCHA)
http://springfieldy.org/spring.asp?ID=249

On Monday, December 19, the men and women celebrating the eighth MOCHA graduation stood in somber silence to honor the memories of the children and teachers of Sandy Hook School. As we spoke the words of the MOCHA pledge, we renewed our commitment to ourselves, each other and our community.

"My community is in need. It is in need of me. It is in need of my fatherhood and brotherhood. I pledge to be present. My presence depends on my health. My community depends on me. I pledge to be healthier in mind, body and spirit. I will foster this in my family. I will carry this in my community."

Since the founding of MOCHA in 2009, one hundred and ten men have graduated from MOCHA. Twenty have gone on to become MOCHA Mentors.

The weekly Healthy Manhood Class is the central program and entry point for participation in MOCHA. Most Monday evenings at the YMCA in downtown Springfield there is a room full of 20 – 30 men, predominantly African-American and Latino from 17 to 70 years old, engaged in animated and heartfelt discussions about masculinity, the training of boys, what makes a healthy man, and becoming a positive

MOCHA graduates and Mentors
role model and an agent of social change. MOCHA Mentors, trained by Men’s Resources International, facilitate the opening and closing activities for every class. The MRI curriculum facilitated by MRI consultants, James Arana and Steven Botkin for five of the eight sessions guides men through these “masculinity reflection” activities.

On June 15 a **Prostate Cancer Symposium** was organized by MOCHA and held at the MassMutual Center in Springfield. Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health the event was attended by over 200 men and women from diverse communities, and included James as a featured speaker. Hopefully, this will be the first annual “Healthy Manhood Symposium” for the region.

MRI also serves on the **MOCHA Steering Committee** and provides consultation and support to the **MOCHA Coordinator**, David Smith.

**Strategic goals** for MOCHA in 2013 include
- offering a **Healthy Manhood Class in Spanish** in the North End of Springfield
- engage more **boys and young men** in MOCHA programs and activities.

The **next Healthy Manhood Class** will begin with a mandatory Orientation/Assessment session on Monday, January 7, 6:30 – 8:30 at the YMCA. The next MOCHA Mentor training will take place on Saturday, January 5, 9 am – 4 pm.

**RECENT CONSULTING/TRAINING**

**Women and Men as Partners in Peacebuilding** (November 2012, Rwanda)
Steven Botkin and Olivia Dreier, Karuna Center for Peacebuilding executive director, co-led a “learning exchange” with representatives from women’s and men’s organizations from Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi to develop a vision for a Women and Men as Partners in Peacebuilding initiative in the Great Lakes Region of Africa. See “In Development” (below) for follow-up plans.

**CARE Mali and Niger** (July 2012, Niger)
[www.care.org/careswork/countryprofiles/84.asp](http://www.care.org/careswork/countryprofiles/84.asp)
[www.care.org/careswork/countryprofiles/78.asp](http://www.care.org/careswork/countryprofiles/78.asp)
CARE International in West Africa, contracted with MRI to develop a Masculinity Reflection Group Toolkit for CARE in Niger and Mali Women’s Empowerment Programs. In early July, Steven and James conducted a 5-day workshop in Niamey, Niger for CARE Niger and CARE Mali staff, engaging them in the MRI curriculum and methodology, getting their feedback about adapting these activities for their cultural contexts, and supporting them in

*with Fatma and Alimou of CARE Niger*
developing individual and country action plans. Based on this experience, the toolkit “Masculinity Reflection Groups for Men and Women” includes a strategy document, an eight session curriculum and a facilitator’s documentation tool was written and has now been translated into French.

**Women’s Peacemakers Program** (June 2012, Cote d’Ivoire)
[www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org/](http://www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org/)

James served as a consultant, trainer and resource person for the Women’s Peacemakers Program (WPP) and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) during their three-day Learning Exchange on “Gender Sensitivity in Preventive Action Practice: Comparing Challenges, Finding Solutions.” Participants from Eastern & Central Africa, West Africa, Southern Africa, Southeast Asia and South Asia, as well as WPP and GPPAC worked on integrating a gender perspective including masculinities into a Conflict Analysis Framework and developing country and sub-regional actions plans.

**African Canadian Development and Prevention Network** (March 2012, Montreal)
[www.acdpnetwork.org/en](http://www.acdpnetwork.org/en)

James conducted an introductory workshop during their conference.

**The Performance Project** (January and February 2012, USA)
[www.performanceproject.org/](http://www.performanceproject.org/)

James and Steven conducted a two day Positive Masculinity and Violence Prevention training for their First Generation program and again in February for their Mural Project.

**The Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts** (February 2012, USA)
[www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/studentdevelopment/leadershipconference/](http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/studentdevelopment/leadershipconference/)

James and Steven conduct a “Stepping Out of the Man Box” workshop for their student leadership conference in North Adams, Massachusetts.

**UPCOMING CONTRACTS**

**CARE Mali and Niger** (January – February 2013)

Steven and James will conduct a follow-up training of trainers on January 28 – February 1, 2013 with the staff who attended our July 2012 workshop (see above). Ghanian colleague, Alimou Diallo (from the 2009 – 2010 Women’s Peacemakers Program male peacebuilder training) will attend as an MRI trainer-in-training.

**Concern Worldwide – Liberia** (April 2012)
[www.concern.net/category/country/Liberia](http://www.concern.net/category/country/Liberia)

We are finalizing plans for an on-site consultation with organizational leadership, program staff and community partners to develop a country-wide Concern program for engaging men and boys in violence prevention and gender equality. Concern Worldwide was referred to MRI for this contract by our colleague Gary Barker from Promundo.
IN DEVELOPMENT

CARE Benin
Based on the positive feedback from the CARE Niger/Mali workshop, CARE Benin has requested an introductory training in the Masculinity Reflection Group model.

Women and Men as Partners in Peacebuilding, Africa Great Lakes Region
Based on the enthusiasm and feedback from the November 2012 Learning Exchange with women and men from Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC, MRI and the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding are working with Pro Femme (the Rwandan network of women’s organizations) to develop and submit funding proposals for a mult-year regional initiative to develop, pilot and evaluate a “Women and Men as Partners in Peacebuilding” model in these three countries.

Peace Corps, Moldova (Ukraine)
Steven has been providing organizing and program planning consultations via Skype to Peace Corps volunteers in Moldova since March 2012. Based on this input, they have developed a concept paper outlining a plan to identify and train teams of government, youth and women’s group leaders to implement engaging men and boys projects in 10 communities. An MRI training would provide the basis for team-building and project planning. The volunteers are now seeking funding to implement this plan.

Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA), Sudan
www.sihanet.org/
We are in email dialogue with SIHA about providing a training for Mentors to lead groups for young men to address gender relations and violence against women.

Western Massachusetts Healthy Manhood Symposium
Discussions are underway with the Men’s Resource Center, Safe Passage, NELCWIT, the Center for Women and Community (formerly the EveryWoman’s Center) and other colleagues to develop an annual regional event for networking and strategic planning among individuals and organizations working on issues of masculinity, ending violence, and health and empowerment for youth, women and men.
AFFILIATIONS

North America MenEngage Network (NAMEN)
www.menengage.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33&Itemid=14
Steven represents MRI on the steering committee of this newly formed regional network, and serving as interim co-facilitator of the monthly conference calls. In addition, he continues to serve as an advisory member of the Global MenEngage Alliance steering committee, and attended a two-day meeting in New York in March.

Safe Passage
www.safepass.org/
Steven joined the board of directors for Safe Passage (the domestic violence organization in Hampshire County) in December 2011 for a two year term. He currently serves on the Prevention Working Group, where male involvement is a central topic.

Men’s Resource Center for Change
www.mrcforchange.org/
Steven will be co-chairing the re-forming MRC board of directors with long-time colleague Rob Okun as of January 2013. Next steps being discussed are focus groups with colleagues throughout Western Massachusetts, and an annual masculinity summit/forum/symposium.