

HRE USA

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATORS USA

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

**You can't
separate peace
from freedom
because no one can
be at peace unless
he has his freedom.**

– Malcolm X

**When the power of
love overcomes the
love of power, the
world will know
peace.**

– Jimi Hendrix

*Peace cannot be kept by
force; it can only be achieved
by understanding.*

- Albert Einstein

*Peace can only last where human rights are
respected, where the people are fed, and
where individuals and nations are free.*

- Dalai Lama



I truly believe the only way we
can create global peace is through
not only educating our minds, but
our hearts, and our souls.

- Malala Yousafzai

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CO-CHAIRS MESSAGE

There was difficulty in finding the right words to begin this report. As many of you have repeatedly heard, this last year was challenging for everyone. For the Human Rights Educators USA (HRE USA) community, it was especially so, given that last August 2020, we lost our very own Kirby Edmonds, founding member and Steering Committee Co-Chair of HRE USA.

While we continue to be deeply saddened by this great loss, we continue Kirby's legacy and remain steadfast in our commitment to building a national network dedicated to building a culture of human rights. A network, with more than 1100 individuals and organizations across the country, who are part of our human rights education (HRE) movement.

In remembering Kirby, we came across one of his recorded speeches from 2013, at [TedXCornellU](#), that discussed, "how can we eliminate structural poverty?" While not explicitly focused on HRE, Kirby talked about the structural design necessary for economic equity and shared that "the most elegant design is not going to work if we do not build and repair our relationships across race, class, and place. It's probably going to be the most challenging thing to do."

In listening to these wise words, we thought about how relevant they were to our human rights education movement. Indeed, part, if not much of HRE work is about repairing relationships; relationships damaged by white supremacy, sexism, religious discrimination, and other violations of human rights. Undoubtedly, our work in a post-pandemic world will depend on what we can do to build a culture of human rights together.

We are proud to share what we collectively have accomplished over this past year. You will read about many of these accomplishments throughout this report. Some of the highlights include:

The development and implementation of the Kirby Edmonds Fellowship Program. The Fellowships will "support hands-on leadership experience in human rights education and further Kirby's work to engage young people in building human rights-friendly schools and communities." In this report, you will learn about what our three inaugural fellows worked on during the summer 2021.

Our first virtual International Human Rights Day Celebration. On December 10th, 2020 HRE USA organized a virtual celebration to commemorate the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations on December 10, 1948. The event featured keynote speaker, Loretta Ross, academic, feminist, and activist, along with poetry and a multimedia presentation from youth activists and artists. During this event, we also honored the 2020 Edward O'Brien Human Rights Education awardees and the 2020 Flowers Fund grantees.

Our continued commitment to HRE USA education during the pandemic. Through our robust Regional Representative network and other partners, we continued to develop and disseminate curriculum, host webinars, and advocate for human rights education in state standards.

These are just a few examples of our work this past year. As we move through 2021 and onward, through human rights education and our commitment to justice, may we continue to build the relationships we need for a more equitable society. While challenging, it is the most important thing that we can continue to do.

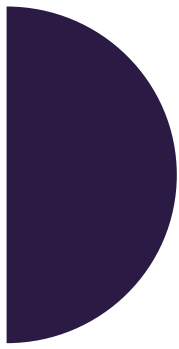
Onwards,
Kristina Eberbach and Marissa Gutiérrez-Vicario
Co-Chairs, Human Rights Educators - USA



Marissa Gutiérrez-Vicario



Kristina Eberbach



MISSION

To promote human dignity, justice, and peace by cultivating an expansive, vibrant base of support for human rights education (HRE) within the United States. Consistent with our opposition to all forms of discrimination, we commit to dismantling systemic racism and confronting white supremacy that manifests itself across our nation.

HRE USA was founded in 2011 by leaders in the field of Human Rights Education (HRE), including seasoned educators, students, higher education faculty, members of non-profit organizations, representatives from both major national teacher unions, and other stakeholders. The network draws inspiration from the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, adopted by the UN General Assembly in December, 2011. The Declaration underscores the globally recognized importance of human rights in every person's education.

To fulfill our mission, we shall maximize our efforts and support those of our members and partner organizations to:

- Build a national movement for human rights education;
- Advocate for the recognition of international human rights and humanitarian law and for a national commitment to educating individuals and communities about their principles and expectations;
- Promote national and regional policies that support human rights education;
- Integrate internationally recognized human rights standards, including those recognized by the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, into formal and non-formal educational settings;
- Advocate for the inclusion of human rights education in national and state education standards, curricula, and pedagogy;
- Promote the incorporation of human rights education into pre-service and in-service teacher training programs;
- Develop and provide resources and training for educators;
- Empower educators and learners to continuously embody human rights principles;
- Participate in global networks and forums to share best human rights education practices;
- Contribute to research and scholarship on human rights education.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES & VALUES

HRE USA is committed to the basic human rights principles of human dignity, equality, and non-discrimination as articulated in the [United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#). In accordance with these principles, we value diversity, inclusiveness, transparency, and consensus-based decision making and commit to treating each other with dignity, integrity, caring and respect in all our undertakings.

We believe effective human rights education is transformative, empowers individuals and communities, and promotes the respect for and embodiment of these human rights principles and values.

The **HRE USA Steering Committee** consists of eighteen members. There are twelve seats for organizations and individuals that are nominated by the Executive Committee, and six at-large seats chosen through election by HRE USA members. The Executive Committee consists of two co-chairs, treasurer, and secretary. Members serve three-year terms and officers serve two-year terms.

LEADERSHIP

HRE USA STEERING COMMITTEE

* Indicates Co-chair

Rosemary Ann Blanchard
HRE Community of NCSS

Angelica Brooks
Silent Voices Project

Kristina Eberbach *
Columbia University

Jessica Evans
Murray State University

Bill Fernekes
Rutgers University

Cynthia Gabriel Walsh
Amnesty International USA

Marissa Gutiérrez-Vicario *
Art and Resistance Through Education

Elana Haviv
Generation Human Rights, Inc.

Page Hersey
University of San Francisco

Harry Lawson
National Education Association

Lina Lenberg
University of San Francisco

Laura Michalski
Chicago Public Schools

Glenn Mitoma
University of Connecticut

Kristi Rudelius-Palmer
HRE Consultant

Lindsey Shelton
Learning for Justice

David Shiman
University of Vermont

Sandra E. Sohcot
The World As It Could Be

Yvonne Vissing
Salem University

STRATEGIC PLANNING

In August 2020, the Steering Committee conducted its virtual strategic planning meeting. We reviewed and refined HRE USA's direction setting elements that include our mission statement, guiding principles and values, 10-year vision and 5-year direction setting goals. We examined current issues of access to education and furthering racial justice and how our work could have positive impact. We also identified other significant opportunities and challenges affecting our mission and achieving our goals. Consensus was reached on the Strategic Priorities to address over the next three years including specific objectives and action plans to guide our efforts. HRE USA's strategic priorities for 2020-2023 are:

1. Provide youth with HRE leadership, training, and other opportunities to engage in HRE initiatives.
2. Understand the current priorities, contexts, and initiatives of our individual and organizational members for the purpose of enabling a more inclusive and diverse membership and leadership, including HRE USA's Steering and Executive Committees.
3. Build members' HRE capacities through training, leadership opportunities, resource-sharing, and the development of collaborative projects.
4. Influence HRE policy and practices in the U.S. by strengthening our Committees and Regional Chapters, Projects, and Partners, enhancing communication and measurement of accomplishments connected with HRE USA's Strategic & Action Plans.
5. Become an original source, rather than just a conduit to other sources, by increasing online resources, presenting at HR-related forums/conferences, and hosting webinars.
6. Collaborate with our organizational members and with other organizations to further the guiding principles and values, vision, and priorities of HRE USA.
7. Creating supportive relationships with individual members to further vision, mission, and priorities of HRE USA.

WORKING GROUPS

As a volunteer-led organization, our mission is only made possible by volunteers. HRE USA has several **volunteer actions teams, committees, and working groups**. Each committee meets regularly by teleconference. All members are welcome to join.

Advocacy & Policy Team

This team develops, reviews, and undertakes collaborative action projects in conjunction with HRE USA partners. Projects include submitting shadow reports on HRE in the U.S. to the United Nations, following legislation at state and federal levels that affects delivery of HRE, developing a HRE Curriculum Guide, and advocating U.S. states to integrate HRE into education standards while promoting HRE as a necessary related field for civics education in an inclusive, democratic society.

Impact, Membership, and Communications Team

This committee develops ongoing strategies to engage and grow the involvement of HRE USA individual and organizational members. This includes outreach to regional representative groups, management of the HRE resource library, and communication on how to get involved within the network.

Innovations & Partnerships Team

This team develops and carries out the fundraising goals of HRE USA including establishing relationships with and soliciting funding from prospective donors, identifying and submitting grants, identifying potential projects to attract funding and cultivating major gifts prospects for the organization.

Online Media Team Committee

This team develops a cohesive approach and process to managing, organizing and showcasing HRE USA's online media presence. The goals of the team are to provide oversight on the use and implementation of the organization's multiple online media platforms, while developing effective strategies that will establish more sustainable management systems.

Edmonds Fellowship Committee

This committee is responsible for administering, selecting, and providing oversight for the recipients of the Kirby Edmonds Summer Fellowship.

Edward O'Brien Award Committee

This committee is responsible for administering, selecting, and arranging the awards ceremony for the recipients of the annual Edward O'Brien Human Rights Education Award, which recognizes an outstanding contribution to human rights education in the United States.

Flowers Fund Grants Committee

This committee is responsible for selecting the recipients of and administering the annual Flowers Fund Grants that support innovation and mentorship in human rights education (HRE) in the United States.

Convention on the Rights of the Child Working Group

This group is working to galvanize support for three goals: U.S. ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), endorsement of the CRC at state, local, and school district levels, and increasing awareness of the importance of the CRC and how the U.S. falls short in fulfilling the rights of the child.



REGIONAL CHAPTERS

HRE USA has a national network of [Regional Representatives](#) (Regional Reps) who volunteer as contact persons for human rights educators in their region, state or city. They help area members connect, share ideas, and support each other's HRE efforts. In turn, Regional Representatives provide feedback on regional members' interests, needs, and concerns. Representatives are involved in HRE advocacy, serve on HRE USA committees, and come from schools, universities, and organizations that work locally on human rights. Presently, HRE USA has 28 representatives across the nation, who contributed 547 in-kind hours to support HRE community efforts..

HRE USA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

ALABAMA

Angelica Brooks

CALIFORNIA (Central)

Maureen McCorry

CALIFORNIA (North)

Jazzmin Chizu Gota

Lina Lenberg

CALIFORNIA (South)

Pam Bruns

Kristin Ghazarians

COLORADO

Ellen Moore

CONNECTICUT

Chris Buckley

Jacob Skrzypiec

FLORIDA

Laura Finley

HAWAII

Joshua Cooper

ILLINOIS

Laura Michalski

IOWA

Brian Farrell

MASSACHUSETTS/

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Yvonne Vissing

MINNESOTA

Kathy Seipp

Kristi Rudelius-Palmer

NEW JERSEY

John Terry

NEW MEXICO

Rosemary Blanchard

NEW YORK

Michelle Chouinard

Benil Mostafa

TEXAS

Rick Halperin

VERMONT

David Shiman

VIRGINIA (Eastern)

Gail Barker

VIRGINIA (Western)

David Brunsma

WASHINGTON, DC

Karen Hopkins

Rachel Bergsieker

WEST VIRGINIA

Bill Price

WISCONSIN

Nicole Palasz



MEMBERSHIP

HRE USA is a coalition of hundreds of members across the country, and we continue to grow daily. We are academics, activists, parents, educators, students, unions, policy makers, social scientists, software engineers, professors, artists, and non-profit organizations united with a common mission: education about, for, and through human rights. This past fiscal year, 46 individuals and organizations joined HRE USA as new members, increasing our membership from 1057 members to 1103 members.

HRE USA offers [memberships](#) for both individuals and organizations. HRE USA members are a special part of our network. While we open our events and activities to anyone interested, our members are uniquely engaged in what we do. Through an annual fee, members provide HRE USA with consistent revenue and receive several benefits in return. Over the past COVID-affected year, HRE USA remained virtually connected to its members through webinars, resource-sharing, HRE advocacy, and more.

2021 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Over the past year, HRE USA conducted a survey among its network and the findings confirmed that HRE USA continues to be a valuable and important resource for its members. The survey revealed:

- The majority of respondents are engaged in HRE activism and advocacy, K-12 HRE, and to a lesser degree Higher Education HRE, community HRE, and HRE training
- Respondents prefer emails and newsletters to connect with HRE USA
- Obtaining curriculum resources is the main interest of the respondents
- Networking, learning about events and activism, and legislation are also very important
- Attending events is more important than being involved in developing events
- Respondents are moderately interested in influencing state standards, developing workshops or webinars, and curriculum development
- Respondents were less interested in conducting webinars, serving on committees, attending trainings, conducting research, being a regional representative, or working on the digital archives
- Respondents showed the least interest in fundraising and development, and being an HRE trainer

EVENTS & WEBINARS

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY CELEBRATION

On December 10, 2020, HRE USA held a virtual [Human Rights Day Celebration](#) to commemorate the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations on December 10, 1948. The event featured keynote speaker, Loretta Ross, a nationally-recognized women's rights and human rights leader whose work emphasizes the intersectionality of social justice issues and how this transforms social change. HRE USA also honored the 2020 O'Brien Human Rights Education Award winners and introduced HRE USA's 2020 Flowers Fund grantees. The event included poetry by [Uma Menon](#) and included youth voices from around the world speaking on the UDHR, coordinated by HRE USA, ACT Center for Disability Leadership, Generation Human Rights, and Human Rights Watch Student Task Force. [>> Watch Video](#)



WEBINAR ON HRE FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS

In April 2021, HRE USA held a webinar with Kaylee Taylor Bradford who presented her research on how HRE is currently being taught to preservice teachers in the U.S. and to what extent preservice HRE courses are implementing recommended practices in the field. The session examined the tension between transformative HRE pedagogy and practical applicability for preservice teachers, stressing the need to humanize HRE content to further decolonize HRE classrooms. The session revealed various challenges, including program priorities, classroom demographics, overburdened schedules, etc and participants discussed next steps. In the post-event survey, participants indicated a desire for further HRE training. As a result, HRE USA created a 6-month Teacher Education Research Scholar position for Kaylee.

[>> Watch Video](#)



COSPONSORED EVENTS

In 2020, HRE USA also co-sponsored multiple partner webinars, including:

- "Human Rights Education's Curriculum Problem," World Education Research Association (WERA) International Research Network on Human Rights Education
- "HRE in humanitarian settings: opportunities and challenges," WERA
- "Tackling sexual harassment at school using a human rights framework," WERA
- "The role of law and legal knowledge for a transformative HRE: addressing violations of children's rights in school," WERA
- "Decolonial human rights education: Changing the terms and content of conversations on human rights," WERA
- "Gender and Racial Justice through a Human Rights Lens: A Dialogue with Loretta Ross and Dawn Wooten," University of San Francisco, International & Multicultural Ed. Department
- "unMASKing: Human Rights and the Pandemic," Institute of World Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- "Teaching about and for Immigrant and Refugee Rights," University and College Consortium for Human Rights Education (UCCHRE)
- "Teaching for Racial Justice," UCCHRE
- "Teaching about and for Children's Rights," UCCHRE



AWARDS, GRANTS, & FELLOWSHIPS

THE EDWARD O'BRIEN HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AWARD

HRE USA presents two annual awards honoring significant contributions to human rights education in the United States, one for an individual and the other for an organization or institution. The **O'Brien Awards** were established in honor of Edward O'Brien, a pioneer in the field and founding member of HRE USA who died in 2015. The Award for individual contribution went to Pam Bruns, founder and Executive Director of the **Human Rights Watch Student Task Force** of Los Angeles. The award for an organizational contribution went to **ACT Center for Disability Leadership**. The award was accepted by ACT Center Executive Director Mary Kay Kennedy. Because of the restriction during the Covid pandemic, the 2020 O'Brien Awards were presented as part of HRE USA's Human Rights Day Celebration on Thursday, December 10th.



PAM BRUNS created the vision for the Human Rights Watch Student Task Force (STF) in 1999 when she served as Director of Human Rights Watch in Southern California. Under her guidance STF has worked for 21 years to develop students' leadership and communication skills and their commitment to defend and protect human rights, both locally and globally.



ACT CENTER FOR DISABILITY LEADERSHIP (ACT) is a grassroots disability rights organization located in St. Paul, MN run by and for people with developmental and other disabilities. As part of the broader human rights movement, since 1979 ACT has been creating leaders in self-advocacy, supporting people with disabilities to stand up for their rights and the rights of others.

KIRBY EDMONDS SUMMER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

HRE USA established the **Kirby Edmonds Summer Fellowship** in honor of HRE USA founder and leader Kirby Edmonds, who died in 2020. The fellowship was created to support hands-on leadership experience in HRE and further Kirby's work to engage young people in building human rights-friendly schools and communities. The fellowship is supported by the Dorothy Cotton Institute (DCI) with financial support from DCI, the Puffin Foundation, the Community Foundation of Tompkins County, and individual contributions. HRE USA is pleased to welcome our inaugural 2021 Edmonds Summer Fellows: Ashleigh Deno, Winnie Ho, and Danielle Lucksted.



ASHLEIGH DENO

History Teacher, Warren Central High School, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Project: Online Media Strategy. This project involves conducting qualitative and quantitative analyses of the usage, management and public engagement of HRE USA's online media platforms. The fellow will also experiment with innovative strategies for social media engagement and develop recommendations on best practices and sustainable models to implement in the future with the overall goal of creating a streamline, cohesive strategy for HRE USA's online media.

FLOWERS FUND GRANT PROGRAM

The **Flowers Fund** was established in 2017 in honor of Nancy Flowers, founding HRE USA member and international leader in Human Rights Education. Every year, the Fund provides small grants of up to \$1000 to support innovation and mentorship in human rights education (HRE) in the United States. The fund aims to encourage new philosophic and theoretical thinking, new pedagogies, and new outreach methods for HRE, as well as emerging leadership in the field. The Grantees for the 2020-2021 academic year are:



CHRIS BUCKLEY & JAKE SKRZYPIEC

Connecticut Council for Youth Advocacy and Action, Connecticut

Project: Student Activism. This project supports students from the Connecticut Council for Youth Advocacy and Action to participate in the National Council for Social Studies Conference in order to directly engage with members of the human rights education community and increase their activism through HRE within Connecticut.



PETER RAKITA

Physicians for Human Rights Chapter, Georgetown University School of Medicine, Washington, DC

Project: Physician Training. This project provides training for clinicians and medical students in the D.C. area on how to conduct crucial medical and psychological evaluations to be used in an asylum seeker's case for asylum. The project will also provide ongoing advocacy and educational events throughout the year focusing on human rights issues.



JOHN TERRY

Wayne Township Public Schools, New Jersey

Project: Online Teacher Training. This project produces a series of online videos that showcase the model human rights lesson plans published in HRE USA's Curriculum Integration Guide. The videos, that feature the guide's curriculum writers, will be available for teachers to access and earn professional development credit.



DANIELLE LUCKSTED

Stony Brook Sociology PhD Student & IPV Community Educator, New York, New York

Project: HRE Training of Trainers. This project is focused on developing a virtual Training of Trainers (TOT) for human rights educators to engage HRE USA members in cross-network human rights learning and activism. The 3-tiered training will include 1) an overview of human rights in general and HRE, 2) a 4-week clinic aimed at helping educators integrate human rights into their contexts, and 3) an intensive capacity-building TOT to develop an HRE USA training corps.



WINNIE HO

Program Coordinator, National Resource Center for Academic Detailing, Boston, Massachusetts

Project: Landscape Mapping and Outreach. This project entails researching organizations engaged in HRE in the United States and developing a robust landscape mapping database. The database will be published on HRE USA's website as a resource for professionals in the field of human rights education and training (HRET). The fellow will also conduct outreach to foster stronger relationships and identify potential points of collaboration with HRET organizations.

PROJECTS & PUBLICATIONS

HRE USA Monthly newsletter

The [monthly e-newsletter](#) highlights the latest news, action alerts, publications, events and partner announcements related to human rights education in the United States.

Human Rights Educators USA Online Shop

[HRE USA's online store](#) features key human rights education materials including human rights treaty booklets, curriculum, and more. The resources also include HRE USA's original human rights-themed posters featuring the UDHR that can be used to promote and educate about human rights in the classroom and the community.

K-12 Human Rights Education Resource Library

In 2021, HRE USA continued to curate and update their online [K-12 Human Rights Education Resource Library](#) which offers a detailed overview on how to get started in HRE and provides a vast library of HRE resources, lesson plans, curricula, and other materials that have been vetted for quality, usefulness, and relevance. Visitors to the library can access resources by topic and subject matter.

HRE Curriculum Integration Project

During 2020-21, one new lesson was developed for [HRE USA's Curriculum Integration Guide](#) and K-12 resource library. The lesson, entitled "[Digital Rights](#)," was prepared by Karen Hopkins and Shabnam Mojtahedi, HRE USA members in Washington DC and field-tested by HRE USA member and social studies teacher Jake Torsiello with students at Randolph HS in Randolph Township, New Jersey. Due to the COVID pandemic, outreach efforts to deliver professional development using lessons in the Curriculum Integration Project archive were necessarily limited, although selected lessons were featured during online professional development sessions offered by the NJ Council for the Social Studies.

Since 2014, 21 lessons with their supporting materials have been developed, field-tested, revised, and mounted on the HRE USA website, and we fully anticipate this project will not only continue but expand in the future. The lessons were developed and field-tested by elementary, middle, and secondary school teachers in New Jersey, all of whom received peer and expert feedback on their lessons during the development stage. Field-testing was conducted in public schools ranging across urban and suburban New Jersey districts that reflect New Jersey's vibrant cultural diversity.

As of August 1, 2021 John Terry, the NJ/PA regional representative for HRE USA, will assume the coordinator role for the Curriculum Integration Project as HRE USA Steering Committee member Bill Fernekes, moves on to other human rights related projects. The HRE USA network wants to thank Bill Fernekes for his vision, mentorship, and significant contribution to the development and implementation of this HRE USA initiative for the past six years.

HRE Teacher Education Resource Hub

HRE USA has formulated a Teacher Education Advisory Team to assist in developing a Teacher Education Resource Hub for the HRE USA Website. Additionally, she has created a mapping of the United States' teacher preparation program



accreditation process to be presented with a recommended advocacy strategy for incorporating HRE in accreditation standards. Moving forward, Kaylee, in collaboration with HRE USA members, will collect and review HRE teacher education resources to establish the online HRE Teacher Education Resource Hub. Additionally, she will be partnering with the Training of Trainers Institute to create Teacher Educator/Trainer specific workshops, helping these professionals further incorporate HRE into teacher education and development.

Racial Justice Resource Collection for Educators:

The [Racial Justice Resource Collection for Educators](#) was developed in partnership between the National Council for the Social Studies HRE Community and HRE USA. In response to the racial awakening across the United States in the aftermath of the George Floyd murder and the ongoing human rights crises stemming from countless incidences of racial injustice, the NCSS HRE Community and HRE USA teams assessed the need of educators to be equipped with effective, tangible and impactful resources to be able to teach about racial justice through a human rights lens. This educator collection was cultivated as an initial resource set that could assist pre-service educators, in-service K-12 teachers, and others with valued pedagogical, content and skill support to effectively teach about racial justice in their classrooms and educational spaces. Collaborative partners at the [Upstander Project](#) deepened this educator resource collection with valued teaching materials on educating about the human rights of Indigenous Peoples in the classroom. This collection is consistently being strengthened with additional resources and materials. In the coming year, this partnership team hopes to continue its development, and bolster this educator collection to build on its already widespread impact.

Your Vote, Your Voice Resource Collection for Educators:



The [Your Vote, Your Voice Resource Collection for Educators](#) was developed in partnership between the National Council for the Social Studies Human Rights Education Community and HRE USA. The right to vote reflects essential civil and political rights. That right has been threatened with challenges stemming from the global covid-19 pandemic and explicit threats to the integrity of the voting process itself. In October 2020, the NCSS HRE Community and HRE USA teams assessed the need of educators to be equipped with meaningful and impactful resources to be able to teach about and engage their students in understanding the purpose and civic importance of the right to vote. Moreover, the creators of this collection hoped to cultivate a resource set that would enable pre-service and in-service educators to help young people see themselves as active players in supporting the right to vote, and taking action to protect it in their communities and at large. This collection is a resource set that will be enhanced and added to in the months ahead, with additional resources that can provide educators meaningful tools beyond and between election cycles.



POLICY & ADVOCACY

HRE USA develops, reviews, and undertakes collaborative action projects in conjunction with our partner organizations. This includes submitting shadow reports on HRE in the U.S. to the United Nations, advocating U.S. states to integrate HRE into education standards and promoting HRE as a necessary field for civics education in an inclusive, democratic society.

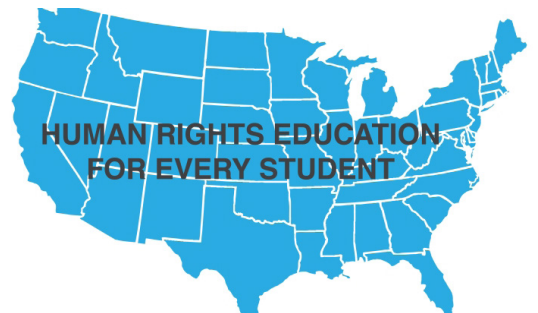
The past year provided both challenges and opportunities in HRE USA's efforts to advocate for a stronger HRE presence in social studies education across the country. Many state education agencies and local school districts were greatly affected by pandemic-related regimens of virtual, hybrid and socially-distanced in-school learning. Many planned activities such as work on revisions of content standards and curriculum frameworks were modified or delayed and conferences in which ideas for education innovations are typically exchanged were conducted in virtual formats. These changes affected the dynamic of interpersonal collaboration and advocacy. At the same time, the growth of virtual platforms for engaging in advocacy work and policy development provided surprising opportunities.

2020-2021 was rife with flash points around themes of racial justice, policing and public safety, equity in health care, and climate change. Increases in hate-based speech and actions, conflicts around public-health requirements associated with the pandemic, the conspiracies and violence surrounding the 2020 Presidential election and transfer of power and, most recently, the push for tighter restrictions on access to voting have brought human rights into mainstream discussions of how to maintain both democratic civic life and secure public space.

HRE USA has sought to engage with these flash points to promote the too-often-silenced voices of racial, ethnic and gender minorities, to address the social, cultural, and economic dimensions of human rights and to seize opportunities arising in the public space to #StandUp4HumanRights. Some of those seized opportunities are described below.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN STATE STANDARDS

HRE USA continued to advocate for the inclusion of HRE in national and state education policies, standards, curricula, and pedagogy. These efforts have supported positive language addressing [HRE in state standards](#) in states as diverse as California, Colorado, Kansas, Massachusetts, New Jersey and South Carolina. Some states, such as Minnesota, are still engaged in the final review and approval of social studies standards for which HRE USA has provided commentary and recommendations.



Minnesota: In commenting upon the proposed Minnesota social studies standards during the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd by law enforcement officers in Minneapolis, HRE USA noted with particular concern that the human rights perspective is not applied to the domestic social, economic and political issues that arise within the United States. The absence of a human rights lens for understanding domestic controversies and conflicts within the United States deprives students of an important analytical tool. It also contributes to the historic failure within the United States to consider globally accepted standards (even when supported by treaties ratified by the United States) in setting political, social, economic and cultural expectations for American behavior or identifying the relationship between disparate treatment of particular groups and an overall failure to acknowledge the human rights foundation for equitable, participatory democracy. HRE advocates in Minnesota are addressing this concern as the Minnesota standards move toward final approval.



New Jersey: HRE USA and its Advocacy and Policy Team have engaged with the development of social studies standards for New Jersey public schools which have now been approved by the New Jersey State Board of Education and will go into effect by September of 2022. William R. Fernekes, a retired NJ social studies supervisor, Rutgers University adjunct faculty, and HRE USA Steering Committee member served on the standards development committee, assuring that the HRE perspective was present in their deliberations. The updated [New Jersey Social Studies Standards](#) now provide a vision of social studies education that specifically recognizes “fundamental values of democracy and human rights” as essential to social studies education. “Civics, Government, and Human Rights” are linked across the standards at all grade levels and throughout the Performance Expectations, Disciplinary Concepts, Core Ideas and Practices.

In addition, [HRE USA's Curriculum Integration Guide](#) conforms to New Jersey's social studies standards. The guide, which was created by a team of New Jersey educators, led by HRE USA's William R. Fernekes, provides lessons and supporting materials that are easily accessible to educators and linked to the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards for Social Studies. Both the references to HRE in the New Jersey standards and the guide to integrating HRE-relevant curricula with the standards provide models for other states and for school districts across the country.



Washington, DC: In 2008, the District of Columbia was declared the first human rights city in the United States. This historic City Council Ceremonial Resolution specifically noted the importance of continuing to educate DC residents about their human rights. In the intervening years, the call to action included in the resolution has inspired significant progress in HRE in DC. The 2021 State of Human Rights Education in Washington, DC Report, written by HRE USA Regional Representatives Rachel Bergsieker and Karen Hopkins, details the efforts of multiple organizations, including HRE USA, to promote and expand human rights education in the District of Columbia.

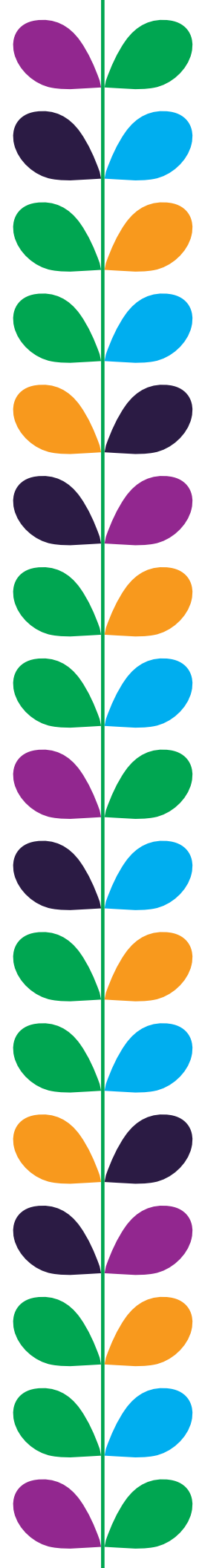
The School Board and Department of Education for the District, are currently engaged in a major revisioning of their social studies standards. HRE USA DC Regional Representative Karen Hopkins participated in a Social Studies Standards Advisory Committee which developed guiding principles for the Social Studies standards that have been adopted by the DC State Board of Education. The [DC Guiding Principles](#) require that the standards “Ensure comprehensive coverage of human rights principles” that are “integrated throughout Pre-K-12.”

HUMAN RIGHTS IN FEDERAL LEGISLATION

HRE USA advocates for the United States Government to abide by their treaty commitments including teaching the U.S. population about human rights and international humanitarian law.

Civics Secures Democracy Act

HRE USA has joined iCivics, CivXNow, and civic, history and social studies educators across the country in endorsing H.R. 1814 (Introduced by Reps. DeLauro, Cole, Blumenauer) / S. 879 (Introduced by Sens. Coons, Corwin), the Civics Secures Democracy Act of 2021, legislation intended to enhance the place of education in civics and history in U.S. public schools through a series of investments in state and local education agencies, in teacher preparation programs and in development of innovative and effective curricula and related resources for civics and history education. Although the bill does not have a specific HRE focus, it is a major initiative to enhance the status of and resources for civics, history and related subjects in public schools. Becoming a listed supporter of this legislation is part of HRE USA's effort to gain recognition for HRE as a necessary companion to civics education in an inclusive, democratic society and as an important lens for exploring the ups and downs of U.S. history in regard to racial, ethnic, cultural and other minorities.





U.S. Department of Education Priorities

In May, 2021, HRE USA submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) on its proposed priorities for the American History and Civics Education programs to support the development of culturally responsive teaching and learning and promotion of information literacy skills. The HRE USA comments urged ED to “include explicit acknowledgement of the central role of human rights education in American History and Civics generally, and in the proposed priorities specifically.” HRE USA urged ED to reference the U.S.’s treaty obligations under Article 7 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) to promote education on Human Rights, including the UDHR and the anti-racism provisions of ICERD. The U.S. ratified ICERD in 1994, but has not, at the national level, ever met or acknowledged its responsibilities under Article 7 to “to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups, as well as to propagating the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and this Convention.” The ED priorities are still under development.

U.S. Department of State CERD Roundtable

On June 16, 2021, HRE USA participated in a Roundtable conducted virtually by the U.S. Department of State to prepare for the U.S. responses to the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) on U.S. compliance with ICERD. Once again, both in written questions submitted prior to the Roundtable and in questions and comments at the Roundtable, HRE USA representatives urged State and ED to work together to address compliance with ICERD, Article 7.

Office of Management and Budget Request for Information

HRE USA submitted comments to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for its Request for Information “to identify ... effective methods for assessing whether agency policies and actions (e.g., programs, services, processes, and operations) equitably serve all eligible individuals and communities, particularly those that are currently and historically underserved.” HRE USA’s comments, drawing upon our statements to the U.S. Departments of Education and of State described above, once again urged OMB to use human rights treaties already ratified by the United States but not reflected sufficiently in U.S. domestic policy to link U.S. domestic policy implementation to the human rights criteria the U.S. has already sworn to uphold. HRE USA continues to stress that contemporary efforts by the U.S. government to address systemic racial inequality would be strengthened by reference to existing U.S. HR treaty obligations.

Convention on the Rights of the Child Initiatives

HRE USA works to galvanize support for U.S. ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) through our [Every Child, Every Right Campaign](#) that provides a resource kit for teaching and learning about the CRC and an advocacy campaign calling for the ratification of the CRC in the United States. In February, HRE USA’s Project Curator, Kristi Rudelius-Palmer, co-facilitated a session for K-12 teachers on child rights in the classroom with Fadia Thabet from the Transformation Collaborative and Maddy Wegner from the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC). The session was part of a six-part virtual series for educators entitled Teaching for Action: Human Rights and Civic Engagement in our Global Communities. The series was organized by NYLC, the Institute for Global Studies at the University of Minnesota, and the Institute of World Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The program drew 35+ educators from a variety of content areas who were interested in engaging their students in learning for action on human rights. Several participants subsequently developed curricular resources inspired by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), including a lesson on the connection between culture and endangered languages and a lesson using the CRC as the foundation for a research-based argument essay exploring children’s rights globally and locally.

HRE USA collaborates with member organizations on advocacy initiatives, research projects, curriculum development, and collective action.

PARTNERSHIPS



American Association of the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

HRE USA co-sponsored the [American Association of the Advancement of Science \(AAAS\)](#) Science and Human Rights Conference held on Oct. 22-23, 2020. HRE USA leaders also presented a twenty-minute online showcase presentation at AAAS entitled Network of Human Rights Educators: Infusion Strategies for Science and Technologies. The showcase served as an example of how science organizations and human rights education agencies can combine their expertise to develop creative programs to inspire students to use technology to make an impact on human rights. For too long, science education and human rights education have been viewed and taught as separate subjects rather than combined as a tool to inspire youth to create impact in today's world. The following four HRE USA members presented at the session: Kristina Eberbach (University & College Consortium for Human Rights Education), Elana Haviv (Generation Human Rights), Kristi Rudelius-Palmer (Human Rights Educators USA), and Felisa Tibbitts (Human Rights Education Associates). HRE USA is committed to increased collaboration to develop integrated and exciting technology infused human rights programs for students!



US Human Rights Network

HRE USA is a member of the [U.S. Human Rights Network \(USHRN\)](#). The USHRN is a "national network of organizations and individuals working to strengthen a human rights movement and culture within the United States, that is led by the people most directly impacted by human rights violations." This past year, HRE USA was a signatory to some of the letters written by USHRN, in collaboration with the ACLU calling for a United Nations inquiry into U.S. police violence. Most notably, this included a [letter submitted to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights \(UNCHR\)](#) and another [letter submitted to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of African States](#). This letter was a follow-up "to HRC Resolution 43/1 urging them to support the demands made by families of victims of police violence, civil society organizations and UN Special Procedures in June 2020" (ACLU). These letters were signed by relatives of 165 victims of police brutality backed by the ACLU and 250 civil society groups worldwide, including HRE USA.



National Council for the Social Studies

HRE USA maintains a partnership with the [National Council for the Social Studies \(NCSS\)](#) through engagement with the NCSS Human Rights Education Community (HREC). Following seven years of strategic and visionary leadership from Rosemary Blanchard, NCSS HREC transitioned in 2020 to Christopher Buckley (Brookfield, CT Public Schools and RFK Human Rights) and Jacob Skrzypiec (Manchester, CT High School), both of whom also serve as HRE USA Regional Representatives for Connecticut. The NCSS HREC continues to be represented on the HRE USA Steering Committee. Over the past year, NCSS was a key contributor to multiple HRE USA endeavors mentioned in this report, including the Racial Justice Resource Collection and the Your Vote, Your Voice Resource Collection for Educators. The 2020 NCSS virtual conference included multiple sessions with themes related to human rights education and several HRE USA members were key presenters at two of these sessions including. This year, the NCSS House of Delegates (HOD) and Board of Directors (BOD) recognized HRE USA as an "organization committed to ending systemic racism in American society," as part of a resolution approved by the HOD (see [Resolution 20-04-03, Making "Black Lives Matter" in Our Schools](#)).



University and College Consortium for Human Rights Education

In 2020-21, HRE USA collaborated regularly with the [University and College Consortium for Human Rights Education \(UCCHRE\)](#), whose mission is to further human rights learning, research, policy, and practice within and across university and college communities through collaboration. Activities included virtual webinar discussions, an HRE reading group, networking opportunities, co-sponsorship of events, cross-disciplinary research, and the cre-

ation and maintenance of a clearing house of information about HRE in higher education on our website. Webinars included discussions on teaching for children's rights, immigrant and refugee rights, and racial justice as well as a presentation on incorporating HRE into U.S. teacher education programs. In spring 2021, HRE USA Steering Committee member Yvonne Vissing presented both a webinar discussion in the Pedagogy and Project Series on "Teaching about and for Children's Rights" and a reading group discussion on her book chapter, "Review of Human Rights Education in Higher Education," published in *Human Rights Education Globally*.



The Brainary

HRE USA collaborated with [The Brainary](#) to share their new [Human Rights Board Game](#) which included delivering the game to President Biden, Dr. Jill Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, along with letters that explain the benefits of HRE. HRE USA also partnered with the Brainary to provide a Human Rights Game workshop for educators at the NCSS virtual conference in December 2020. HRE USA members, Glenn Mitoma, Kristi Rudelius-Palmer, Jake Skrzypiec, and John Terry facilitated the workshop. Many Regional Representatives requested games to use in their local communities and were provided a mini-training demonstration with the video. The Human Rights Board Game is now available for purchase through [HRE USA's online shop](#). HRE USA receives a donation from each game's purchase.



CivXNow Coalition and the Educating for American Democracy initiative

The growth of populist and White nationalist political movements driven by hatred or fear of the "other" within the U.S. threatens to undermine the fundamental principles of constitutional democracy on which the nation is founded. In response, educators have joined in

a common effort to restore the study of democratic practice and constitutional principles to a more central place in public education -- to "build better" the capacity and willingness of the people within the United States to "promote the general welfare" through shared civic endeavor.

In 2019, [iCivics](#), a "non-profit organization in the United States that provides educational ...[resources] to promote civics education and encourage students to become active citizens," obtained significant grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities to engage "scholars, classroom educators from every grade level, practitioners, and students from a diversity of viewpoints, demographics, and roles" to "pool their expertise to create a strategy for providing excellent history and civics to all students." With this funding, iCivics created a project called [CivX-Now](#) to house the [Educating for American Democracy \(EAD\) initiative](#). In March 2021, EAD launched a "Roadmap" for revitalizing civics and history. This original Roadmap only contains brief references to human rights and has not sufficiently addressed the domestic significance of respect for human rights in maintaining a diverse democratic society. To remedy this gap, HRE USA applied to both CivXNow and the EAD initiative to become part of their coalition. Both related projects agreed that HRE USA's advocacy for HRE for all was an appropriate value for their efforts and soon identified HRE USA as a Coalition Member in CivXNow and a Champion for EAD.

As an EAD Champion, HRE USA developed, with EAD staff and with support from EAD leadership, an educational brief detailing the need for HRE as essential preparation to participate in "an inclusive, democratic society." The joint [HRE USA/EAD brief](#) acknowledges: "A core purpose of the U.S. Constitution, according to the Preamble, is to 'promote the general welfare.' When that 'general welfare' is not equitably available to some members of society, threats to fundamental human rights are present and need to be resolved to realize the ideals of our democratic republic and its Constitutional democracy."

HRE USA PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Act Center for Disability Leadership
American Association of the Advancement of Science
Amnesty International
Amnesty International USA
Antioch Community High School
Art and Resistance Through Education (ARTE)
The Brainary
Bylo Chacon Foundation
Center for Civic Education
Childhood Education International
Creative Educators International Network, Inc.
Discovery Education
Dorothy Cotton Institute
Educating for American Democracy
Educators' Institute for Human Rights
European Wergeland Centre
Facing History and Ourselves
Generation Human Rights
Girls Learn International
Human Rights Education Associates
Human Rights Watch Student Task Force
Humane Education Coalition
Institute for the Study of Human Rights
Learning for Justice
National Council for Social Studies - HRE Community
National Youth Leadership Council
Puffin Foundation
San Diego State University
Silent Voices Project
Southern Methodist University, Embrey Human Rights Education Program
Spiraling Music Co.
University of Iowa, Center for Human Rights
University of Connecticut, Thomas J. Dodd Research Center
University of Vermont, Center for World Education
UNICEF USA
Universal Human Rights Initiative
University and College Consortium for Human Rights Education
Upstander Project
US Human Rights Network
Voice of Witness
The World As It Could Be





FINANCIAL REPORT

FUNDRAISING & IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2020, HRE USA worked on the following development initiatives:

- Designing a model for training teachers on Human Rights Education (HRE) that includes collaborations among HRE USA members, as well as with local-area community and/or educational organizations, that could be carried out in different regions of the U.S., and which could be attractive to a broader set of funding organizations.
- Conducting a number of meetings with possible collaborators in the New York City area as a starting point, in the hopes of re-submitting a grant application to a New York-based Foundation. In these meetings we outlined a viable prototype for a training model that would include the teachers and students of up to 5 schools that could be presented virtually over 2-3 days. The training would help the participants not only learn more about HRE, but also how to apply HRE to address such issues as racism. We also agreed that there ought to be a research component to the training to assess the impact of the training over time. This work is now being incorporated as part of the responsibilities of the Kirby Edmonds Fellowship Program.
- Reviewing and updating the communications sent to donors and renewing members to include language that articulates how their contributions make a difference in furthering the positive impacts of HRE.
- Developing language that clarifies the connection of HRE to social justice and civics education in order to strengthen current and future collaborations and attract funders who may not realize how social justice work or civics education is directly connected to HRE.
- Participating in the Giving is Gorges fundraising campaign organized by GiveGab from June 23-30, 2021. The campaign raised \$2396 for the Kirby Edmonds Fellowship Program through generous HRE USA donors.

We are pleased to describe the following fundraising results and collaborative efforts:

- The Puffin Foundation, Ltd. awarded HRE USA a two-year grant, totaling \$53,000 (\$26,500 per annum) for our communications, training, and education initiatives. The award letter noted the fact that HRE USA was able to successfully carry out its mission with numerous initiatives even amid the challenges of the COVID pandemic. The Puffin Foundation also highlighted HRE USA in its [May 2021 Spotlight on Human Rights issue](#).
- An anonymous donor provided a \$35,000 gift to HRE USA for general operating efforts.

HRE USA operates on a very lean budget. The bulk of the work conducted on HRE USA activities and projects is done through the in-kind donation of time and energy given by dedicated members. In fiscal year 2021 alone, Steering and Advisory Committee members contributed over **2,552** in-kind hours.



FINANCIAL STATEMENT JULY 1, 2020 - JUNE 30, 2021

ASSETS	
Checking and Savings	\$ 87,258.70
Total Assets	\$ 87,258.70
LIABILITIES & EQUITIES	
Retained Earnings	\$ 24,850.36
Net Income	\$ 62,408.34
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 87,258.70

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR DONORS:

GIFTS OR GRANTS OF \$5,000 - 50,000

Puffin Foundation
Anonymous Donor

GIFTS OF \$1,000 - \$4,499

Nancy Flowers
David Shiman

GIFTS OF \$250 - \$999

Cynthia Gabriel
Pam and Bill Bruns
Page Hersey
Amnesty International USA

GIFTS OF \$100 - \$249

Rosemary Blanchard
Lina Lenberg
Carol Mallison
Glenn Mitoma
May Y. O'Brien
Mary Jane Onnen
Kristi Rudelius-Palmer
Sandy Sohcot

GIFTS OF UP TO \$99

Penelope Bailer
Dennis Banks
Dick Bernard
Andrea Cohen
Kristina Eberbach
Emily Farell
Brian Farrell
William Fernekes
Jazzmin Gota
Marissa Gutierrez
Elana Haviv
Nan Heffken
Arthur Kanegis

GIFTS OF UP TO \$99

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Joseph Paul Martin
Laura Michalski
LaVonne Molde
Janice Nigro
Nicole Palasz
Ute Ritz-Deutch
Karen Robinson-Cloete
Kathy Seipp
Sandra Sirota
Jake Skrzypiec
Felisa Tibbitts
Yvonne Vissing



HRE USA would like to thank the [Puffin Foundation](#) for its generous support without which this report and our programming activities would not be possible. The Puffin Foundation Ltd. has sought to open doors of artistic expression by providing grants to artists and art organizations who are often excluded from mainstream opportunities due to their race, gender or social philosophy.



HRE USA is a fiscally sponsored project of the [Center for Transformative Action](#), a 501(c)(3) organization. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to help HRE USA continue to advocate for and further develop programming that supports human rights education across the United States.



HRE USA

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DESIGN BY HOPSCOTCH CONSULTING

