



SEMINAR REPORT

## “Community Revitalization: Addressing the Different Forms of Conflict and their Resolution”



**Date and Time:** Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 2:00 PM (EST)  
**Location:** Decatur, Georgia, USA  
**Topics:** Human Rights & Community Violence  
**Host:** HWPL Northern Seoul and Gyeonggi Branch – Atlanta Region

**Speakers:** Ms. Norma Barnes, USA, CEO/Founder, Community Council of Metropolitan Atlanta  
Ms. Letitia Delan, USA, Chief Assistant Public Defender, DeKalb County Public Defender’s Office  
Ms. Jameelah Ferrell, USA, Family Violence Intervention Program Supervisor, Georgia Commission on Family Violence  
Dr. Denella Ausborn, USA, Mental Health Specialist

**The Human Rights Seminar on Community Revitalization was held to address concerns about conflict across the Atlanta Metropolitan Area by bringing together experts from different fields in the community. The audience was able to engage with the speakers to see how each member of the community can serve as better advocates for peaceful resolution.**

**“Without becoming violent, you can agree to disagree. I might have a different political view than you do or a different religious view than you do. It doesn't mean that we can't have a conversation. We should have a dialogue about that.”**

**Letitia Delan**

## **Introduction of Seminar**

On February 25, 2023 HWPL (Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light)'s International Law Sector hosted its first segment in the Human Rights Seminar Series focusing on “Community Revitalization: Addressing the Different Forms of Conflict and their Resolution.”

This seminar was held following human rights interviews conducted in 2022 with different government officials and non-profit leaders who shared a common concern of community violence and lack of well-being throughout neighborhoods. Through the seminar, experts addressed the concerns of conflict among youth, domestic violence, offender rehabilitation, and PTSD/trauma.

Four speakers shared about their experience and expertise regarding the topic including Ms. Norma Barnes, Ms. Letitia Delan, Ms. Jameelah Ferrell, and Dr. Denella Ausborn. They each gave a brief speech about their topic area, the role their organization holds in resolving it, and what the community needs to be aware of regarding conflict resolution.

## **Background Information**

Recent history in Georgia shows that violence is an ongoing issue and the COVID-19 pandemic only made the situation worse. Research shows that over 37% of women are victims of intimate partner violence while over 30% of men are victims of the same. Additionally, Georgia has the 9<sup>th</sup> highest rate of gun violence in the U.S. Residents in Georgia are seeking for their communities to be healed and they want to act on creating a culture of peaceful conflict resolution.

Georgia, particularly Atlanta, is the home of civil rights in the U.S. This is the place where civil rights leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr. carried out the civil rights movement to bring equality through non-violent means. Through the next generation, there is still a will to advocate for a better world among all people and for the generations to come. Conflict is present in many communities and takes different forms. It happens so much that people have become desensitized to it. Awareness needs to be raised about the issue of conflict to actively address it.

As a collective, the speakers shared about conflict being the result of one's environment, access to resources, and general upbringing. They emphasized that people should be taught peaceful means of conflict resolution at an early age, yet one is never too old to learn how to resolve conflict peacefully either.



## Points of discussion

**Ms. Norma Barnes**, Founder and advocate of empowering youth, expressed how young people need creative programs and initiatives to feel engaged with society. She shared how so many young people are touched to have organizations and people around them care about their well-being by introducing them to programs that teach them to resolve conflict in a peaceful manner. Ms. Barnes noted how a person's upbringing impacts the adult they become and we all have a responsibility to help each other resolve conflict in a peaceful manner.

**Ms. Letitia Delan**, representing the accused for over two decades, shared the importance of education in transforming the choices that a person makes. She shared her experience working with the accused and how important it is for everyone to have someone in their corner to support them. Ms. Delan noted that conflict is so prevalent that it causes us to lose sensitivity to it. She emphasized how the community and families should be mindful of how someone's environment can influence the choices they make.

**Ms. Jameelah Ferrell**, a specialist in family violence intervention programs, raised the importance of knowing the signs of domestic violence and how to provide better support for families. She noted that the COVID-19 pandemic revealed an already existing issue of domestic violence within homes. Ms. Ferrell shared that there are communities who do not talk about domestic violence enough and people often feel discouraged from seeking the help that they need. She emphasized that both men and women suffer from domestic violence

**Dr. Denella Ausborn**, a mental health expert for over 30 years, spoke on the manifestations of trauma such as PTSD. She emphasized that PTSD can take many shapes and forms after a person has a traumatic experience. Dr. Ausborn shared how a person's behavior can be understood by looking at their past behavior and their environment. With the understanding of working together, she shared how important it is for us to recognize signs of PTSD and intervene when a person needs help.

## Highlights

**Ms. Norma Barnes:** With our young men, I used an acronym called PAUSE when they are confronted with a conflict. P-A-U-S-E.

The P stands for Pray--Pray for guidance.

The A stands for Ask--Ask yourself: what is this really about? What are the consequences?

The U stands for understand--Try to understand the other persons view as well as yours.

Understand the consequences.

The S stands for (you have to do this real fast) seek a win-win situation, because many times you can seek that. And the E stand for empower yourself to make the best decision.

**Ms. Letitia Delan:** The court system now, in particular, the juvenile court system has a lot more programs available for youth when they get into trouble or they have those mishaps. There are programs that they can go into that teach some skills. They help their skills that can help them throughout their lives. In the adult system, we have a lot more accountability course. Instead of just putting people in jail and punishing them, they can seek treatment whether it's a substance-abuse problem or a behavioral health issue.

**Ms. Jameelah Ferrell:** I think we should go in looking at everybody the same and I know that's hard to do. We've grown up in a world where we all have our own prejudices against things, but even in a domestic violence community where I work, even though we work with those who have committed acts of violence, don't look at them as being a monster. We try to encourage to look at them as human beings as well, they just have done something wrong and we've gotten it wrong a lot in the domestic violence community

**Dr. Denella Ausborn:** The detention center shouldn't be a place where early intervention takes place. We should intervene before it gets to that point.

### **Next Steps**

Our next step is to thoroughly review the content of this seminar to plan the next topic that we should focus on together with an action plan for the community to participate in.

### **Contact Information**

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