Lifelong educator Jeanne Strong gave teachers in Burundi a way to teach children to become peacemakers. And it’s happening because of you. Courage & Renewal facilitator for 14 years, Jeanne Strong was looking for her next volunteer opportunity in Africa. She discovered a project underway for healing trauma in Burundi, a small country that has experienced genocide and civil war the same as Rwanda.

The organization was called Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities. HROC brings together Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, Christians and Muslims, for intensive trauma recovery and community reconciliation.

Jeanne contacted the HROC co-founder, Adrien Niyongabo. He said, “We’re starting a pilot project with teachers to develop a curriculum so students learn the tools of peace. We invite you to join us.”

Jeanne went to Burundi and attended a HROC trauma-healing workshop. She also met with 15 teachers at three schools. They had already felt a personal and professional transformation after the initial training and wanted more.

“Teachers in Burundi talked openly about their own depression, anger, fear, thoughts of suicide,” said Jeanne. “The teachers shared how hearing others’ stories helped them know they were not alone, to open up and understand the effects of trauma.”

They realized the children were also suffering.

“You’re Planting the Seeds of Peace & Trust in Africa” continued on page 4
Lin-Wood School District was not in a good place in 2003. Morale was at an all-time low. Budget cuts were causing fear and distrust. Teachers avoided each other outside the classroom. The atmosphere was toxic for teachers and students alike.

But thanks to your support, Lin-Wood's schools discovered the spirit of community and collegiality that had been missing.

“It transformed the whole culture of our school district. I feel like we now live and teach in a supportive, nurturing environment,” said high school English teacher Heather Krill.

Lin-Wood staff went through a two-year Courage to Teach® retreat series led by Courage & Renewal facilitators Anne Riley and Jean Haley. “It gave us an opportunity to talk openly and honestly about our school, our community and ourselves,” Heather said.

“These retreats have had a long-lasting impact in the classroom. I was a better teacher every time I returned.”

Because of your gifts, the teachers brought forth their own leadership. Staff meetings used to be a nightmare. People complained, grumbled and ignored each other. Now they’re listening wholeheartedly and seeking solutions together. Teachers make continuous efforts to support each other outside the classroom.

In 2013, Lin-Wood High School was named Best Small High School in New Hampshire by U.S. News and World Report. Data collected by Antioch University New England showed an increase in student achievement and staff morale.

Ten years later, the teachers still talk about how much Courage to Teach changed the school.

“Every teacher would benefit from participating in a two-year Courage to Teach,” Heather said. “Public education is not going anywhere. With every additional responsibility piled onto teachers, they need a way to sustain themselves. Otherwise, new teachers won’t want to come into this profession.

“Courage to Teach builds such profound connections within and between people that I really feel like it could save public education.”

Your support helped Heather and her students thrive!
I believe there comes a time in our lives when we must stand up and say, ’I’m not going to stay silent. I’m not going to pass the microphone. I have something I need to say,’ ” said Reverend Alison Harrington.

There was little time to think. If no one acted soon, Daniel Neyoy Ruiz would be deported to Mexico. His 13-year-old son Carlos and his wife Karla would be left behind.

After 14 years of working, paying taxes and raising a family in the U.S., Daniel faced the horrifying prospect of returning to Sinaloa. Sinaloa is home to the world’s most powerful drug cartel. A dangerous place. Daniel’s only hope of keeping his family together rested with a nearby church.

Thanks to your support, Reverend Alison Harrington led her church’s decision to answer the call for social justice. “We are making sure his son and wife do not become an orphan and widow,” she said.

As a Fellow in the Beatitudes Society, Alison participated in a retreat series led by John Fenner, Courage & Renewal Director for Clergy Programs. That gave her the confidence to trust her inner wisdom during a hectic, chaotic time.

“I needed more courage than I normally do. But because of all the amazing work John Fenner had done with us, I was able to stay centered and draw upon a deeper strength.”

Tucson’s Southside Presbyterian Church made the brave decision to offer sanctuary to Daniel. The first church to start the Sanctuary Movement 30 years ago once again kept an immigrant family together.

Your support encouraged Alison to see herself as a leader. She used her voice to lead a movement on behalf of Daniel’s family and all other families threatened with separation by our broken immigration system.

“Thank God for the Courage work,” Alison said. “If I didn’t have those touchstones and the habits of the heart, I would be lost in a sea trying to navigate my own inner journey. I wouldn’t have this life preserver keeping me afloat as I figure out how to how to lead in a way that is authentic and responsible.

“Our entire community became mobilized and awakened. We worked and struggled to protect Daniel’s family. It shows we’re all in this together,” said Alison. “Together we kept a family together—it doesn’t get better than that!”

Your generous donations help leaders like Alison to speak up for what they know is right. Thank you!
Jeanne said. “Those kids never miss school. They don’t pick on each other. They have the tools for getting along.”

The teachers have seen changes in themselves. “It sounded like what we hear after Courage to Teach retreats, “ Jeanne said. “The teachers say, ‘I’m not angry any more. I listen to my children. I laugh with them. I’m at peace.’ ”

In the introduction to the curriculum, Jeanne wrote: “As teachers we can make a difference, it is our modeling that can teach our children compassion instead of hatred, respect instead of shame, solutions instead of blame.”

Six teachers were scheduled to come to the HROC office and train with Jeanne. But in a twist of fate, Jeanne was struck by a minibus while walking on the road on her final Saturday. She had to quickly train the local HROC in Schools coordinator to take her place.

“I knew I couldn’t pull it off. So Léandre came and sat on the end of my bed all day, and I explained the details of each activity in the curriculum.

“In the end, that worked out perfectly. Rather than a white woman telling them what to do, the local teachers owned it. They became the leaders who will teach more teachers.”

That was in March 2014.

You make hope happen all over the world when you support Courage & Renewal facilitators like Jeanne.

---

**Reflection**

Of all the tensions we must hold in personal and political life, perhaps the most fundamental and most challenging is standing and acting with hope in the “tragic gap.” On one side of that gap, we see the hard realities of the world, realities that can crush our spirits and defeat our hopes. On the other side of that gap, we see real-world possibilities, life as we know it could be because we have seen it that way. It’s a chasm that will never be closed, so no one devoted to high values and significant purposes can stay the course without learning how to stand and act in the tragic gap.

What keeps you standing and acting with hope in the tragic gap?

— from *Healing the Heart of Democracy*

“The culture in the classrooms has already changed,” Jeanne said. “Those kids never miss school. They don’t pick on each other. They have the tools for getting along.”

The teachers have seen changes in themselves. “It sounded like what we hear after Courage to Teach retreats,” Jeanne said. “The teachers say, ‘I’m not angry any more. I listen to my children. I laugh with them. I’m at peace.’”

In the introduction to the curriculum, Jeanne wrote: “As teachers we can make a difference, it is our modeling that can teach our children compassion instead of hatred, respect instead of shame, solutions instead of blame.”

---

You’re Planting the Seeds of Peace

continued from page 1

“They realized the children were also suffering. Though they were too young to have witnessed the bulk of the violence, it is in the air everyone breathes.”

Jeanne spent the next week in Bujumbura writing up fun, instructional activities the teachers could use with their children. She combined her experiences from the HROC workshop with the Courage & Renewal practices.

“It was some of the most important work I’ve ever done, bringing together so many different strands of my life. I brought Courage work into a setting where few read or write. Instead, we used songs and dance.”

Six teachers were scheduled to come to the HROC office and train with Jeanne. But in a twist of fate, Jeanne was struck by a minibus while walking on the road on her final Saturday. She had to quickly train the local HROC in Schools coordinator to take her place.

“I knew I couldn’t pull it off. So Léandre came and sat on the end of my bed all day, and I explained the details of each activity in the curriculum.

“In the end, that worked out perfectly. Rather than a white woman telling them what to do, the local teachers owned it. They became the leaders who will teach more teachers.”

That was in March 2014.

You make hope happen all over the world when you support Courage & Renewal facilitators like Jeanne.

---

**I support courageous lives!**

Yes! I will help amazing leaders, teachers and pastors like Jeanne, Heather and Alison in their good work to help people thrive.

Please accept my gift of:

- $50
- $100
- $250
- $______ to help others thrive.

All gifts to the Center for Courage & Renewal are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. 1402 Third Avenue, Suite 709 Seattle, WA 98101


---

**CREDIT CARD**

- [ ] I wish to give by credit card
- [ ] Visa  [ ] MasterCard
- [ ] American Express  [ ] Discover

- [ ] CARD NUMBER
- [ ] NAME ON CARD (Please Print)
- [ ] PHONE NUMBER
- [ ] EXP DATE  [ ] CVV CODE
- [ ] SIGNATURE
- [ ] EMAIL ADDRESS