

# Reconciliation Notes



Education for Conflict Resolution  
PO Box 275  
North Manchester, IN 46962



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Conflict Resolution

## Dear Reader, Are You There?

Letter from the **ECR** Executive Director: Linda Troop



Sometimes when I sit down to write these letters to you, **ECR** friends and supporters, I wonder who my real audience is? Do the people, who receive these newsletters, read them? Or is file #13 (recycle bin) my real audience? It is such a one-way conversation conversing with a recycle bin (LOL). No one writes back. Though, truth be told, I would love to hear from you or the recycle bin, as the case may be. If you feel so moved, you can email me at [director@workitout.org](mailto:director@workitout.org) or send **ECR** a letter to PO Box 275, North Manchester, IN 46962.

But back to my musings. Being the former English teacher and the perpetual lover of words that I am, I yearn to say something in “these lines from time to time” that is worth your time to read. I want you to be eagerly awaiting the arrival of that next **ECR** Director’s Letter that just cannot be missed. (Ha!) But, alas, that is not the purpose of an organizational newsletter, is it? Our purpose is to let you know what we have been doing all winter and what is next on the horizon for **ECR**. We want you to know that we have been good stewards of the monetary support that you have provided during the 2023-24 fiscal year.

**So here is some of what we have been up to.**

**ECR** conducted 16 school attendance mediations in Wabash County this academic year, but the real joy for us is that because we did two **SAM Mediator Trainings** in 2023, attended by participants from Huntington, Steuben, Kosciusko, and Wabash Counties, we have extended our **SAM** outreach to 59 other students in those counties for a total of **75 youth** reached.

Our school mediation program garnered some national attention in March when the creators of the “Here 2 Hear, Keeping it 100” Podcast for the **National Association of Community Mediation (NAFCM)** invited us to do an interview with them discussing what they consider to be a unique and promising use of mediation—our **SAM** program. You can see and hear it on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iV3N-ghFqGI>

**ECR** kicks off its summer with our **Annual Meeting on June 27 at 6:00 PM**. Our **Board of Directors would love it if you could stop by and visit us**. We are meeting in Rm 149 in the Manchester University Academic Center, with light refreshments, updates on our programs and services, updates on our strategic plan, and introductions to the **ECR** 2024-25 Fiscal Year Budget and to the newly elected board officers. It’s nothing fancy, but we invite you to come see us and sit awhile.

Meanwhile, amidst all the beauty and wonder of spring and summer, I want to remind you to breathe deeply and be fully in the present moment. After all, it is the only moment that truly belongs to us.

**Our Spring SAM Mediator Training** attracted a small but lively group. We nearly cancelled when only 7 persons registered for the training, but now we are so glad we didn’t because this group proved to be ultra-engaged and highly teachable. The **photos** here were taken by **Jack Fisher** during our Role Play Training Day when we ask trainees to participate in 4-5 simulated mediation role plays. Participants that day really **got into** their roles and claimed they acquired a better understanding of what it means to be the parent, the student, the administrator, or the lead mediator during a **SAM** Mediation.



### Announcing the Fall **ECR** SAM Mediator Training: A 15-Hour Training

**September 12, 19, & 26**

7.5 Hours online via Zoom on 3 consecutive Thursdays from 6-8:30 PM

**September 28** (on Saturday in person)  
7.5 Hour Role Play Day

**Training Cost: \$500**

Full scholarships available to Wabash County Residents

Call the **ECR** office for details or register on our website at [www.workitout.org](http://www.workitout.org)

SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER



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# ECR Board Update



## Assistant Professor of Peace Studies at Manchester University, Anuj Gurung, Joins ECR Board

Anuj Gurung was born and raised in Kathmandu, Nepal. Anuj got his M.A. in Conflict Resolution from Georgetown University and his Ph.D. in Political Science from Kent State University. He is completing his second academic year as the Gladdys Muir Assistant Professor of Peace Studies at the Peace Studies department of Manchester University. Anuj has intervention-based experiences in the international context (working for UNHCR) as well as community-centered programs and dialogues (Akron, Ohio). Anuj teaches a range of courses, from Mediating Conflict to Migrants and Refugees at Manchester.

His professional experience has taught Anuj the incredible value of grassroots organizations such as **ECR**, working hard to offer conflict resolution and problem-solving resources to the community.

## Retired Professor of Mathematics at Manchester University, Andy Rich, Joins ECR Board



Andy Rich grew up in North Newton, Kansas, and Tokyo, Japan, in a Mennonite college professor family. After graduating from the American School In Japan, he returned to Kansas to do his undergraduate years at Bethel College and then went on to graduate study in mathematics at the University of Chicago. During the long Ph.D. years, he met and married Sally, and they lived and taught in Indonesia before he eventually completed his degree. After a few years at Kansas State University, he spent most of his career teaching at Manchester University, hoping to instill in students an appreciation for the beauty of mathematics. Along the way, he and his wife had four children and spent sabbaticals in Korea, Scotland, and Nicaragua. He retired in 2022 but still enjoys thinking about math problems and reading the news, history, science, and fiction.

Since coming to North Manchester, he has been a member of the Church of the Brethren. He has a lifelong interest in peace, nature, learning things, and exploring other cultures.



# What's Going On With ECR?

## Making Tax-Wise Donations to ECR

If you own an IRA (Individual Retirement Account) and you are now age 70½ or older, or will turn 70½ this calendar year, using your IRA to support ECR can reduce your income taxes.

You can direct the custodian of your IRA to make your financial gift to ECR directly to ECR. Distributions from an IRA are normally treated as taxable income to you. But, if you are 70½ and the payment goes directly to a qualified charity such as ECR, it is not subject to federal or state income tax. This kind of distribution is called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).

If you are 73 years of age or older in 2024, you must take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA. Here's more good news about qualified charitable distributions. You can use your QCD to satisfy all or part of your RDM. What would have been subject to federal and state income taxes can thus pass directly to ECR, without taxation. This is especially appealing to donors who do not have enough charitable contributions and other deductions to itemize on their federal tax return. You can take the standard deduction amount, and still get the tax benefit of a QCD from your retirement account.

We suggest you consult with your tax advisor, or do your own research, as individual circumstances may vary. Some individuals will have even more benefits from reducing their taxable income.

**Steve Hammer, member of ECR's Finance Committee**

## Thank You for Supporting Us! Donations 11/17/23 - 5/6/24

John & Beth Beams	Jan Fahs	Dennis & Carol Horn	Denis & Mary Schwartz
Dean & Reba Beery	David & Janice Fairchild	Sally Johnson	June Stealy
Beth Beery	Eileen & Jim Flory	Diane Kneller	Shannon Steward
Lynn Blocher	Norris & Grace Friesen	David Kreps	Nancy Cripe & Linda Troop
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Mary Ebey	Monie Harley	Eric & Jennifer Reichenbach	
Bev & Joel Eikenberry	Richard & Jane Harshbarger	Jan Rhoades	
Nan Erbaugh	Steve Naragon & Pam Higgins	JoAnn Schall	

## You're Invited to Our June Annual Meeting

The **ECR Annual Meeting** will be held at the Manchester University campus on **Thursday, June 27, 2024, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.** in Cunningham Academic Center, Room 149. It will be a regular board meeting, but our friends, supporters, and the public are invited to attend.