

Friends of Restorative Justice 2016-17 Annual Report

Submitted by: Kathy Friedrichs and Carolyn Madden

The Friends of Restorative Justice of Washtenaw County (FORJ) of UUAA is part of an interfaith and secular group of people committed to transforming the criminal justice system from a punitive or retributive system into a healing, restorative system.

Our work promotes the inherent worth and dignity of every person and justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.

FORJ activities during this last year include:

- Bringing in former Iowa prosecutor Fred Van Liew for several meetings and presentations to educate and motivate our community on a new perspective of justice;
- Organized a workshop and presentation to engage in a dialogue with Washtenaw County prosecutors, judges, county commissioners and the community about restorative justice;
- Held an informative panel at the Gerald Ford School of Public Policy featuring Fred and Sheriff Jerry Clayton;
- Organized and participated in a pilot project on juvenile court watching;
- Participated in circle keeping, an integral part of the family reunification juvenile court.
- Held a workshop on circle keeping and restorative justice at the UUAA Justice Fair.

Future plans include educating the community to enable more restorative practices to be brought into the courts and schools. Continue the court watching program into the adult courts. Working with the Washtenaw County Commissioners to understand and influence County participation in Restorative practices in our courts, jails and prisons. Organize a panel with community support to promote awareness of prosecutorial practices that are detrimental to a more restorative approach to our justice system.

Active members of Friends of Restorative Justice of UUAA include: Kathy Friedrichs, Lucia Heinhold, Mary Ann Hergengrother, Joanna Courteau, Carolyn Madden, Margaret Pekarek, and Kate Warner.