**Who We Are?**

*Axis of Hope* is a non-profit organization dedicated to developing in young adults an understanding of alternative, non-violent approaches to resolving complex conflicts locally, nationally and internationally.

**Axis of Hope’s Mission:**

*Axis of Hope* teaches middle and high school students of diverse backgrounds about conflict analysis, management and prevention in ways that enliven the imagination, awaken moral reasoning, and impart lifelong social and civic skills. Through highly interactive workshops in public and independent schools, *Axis of Hope* introduces students to the study of international conflict. Interactive workshops, such as one using our “Whose Jerusalem” Case Study, introduce students to current world conflicts and foster the development of valuable negotiation skills.

**Our Purpose:**

*Axis of Hope* is a revolution in conflict resolution that seeks to confront conflict and to create the prospect of future peace in middle and high schools.

- Using our innovative case studies, we foster effective global citizenship skills in middle and high school students and teachers.

- We teach the world’s young adults to develop trust, compassion and empathy for people both locally, nationally, as well as internationally.

- By promoting intensive, hands-on learning opportunities through “intellectual Outward Bound” geo-political simulation case studies, students gain important negotiation skills.
Case Study Design

Axis of Hope uses its unique case study approach to bring matters of international importance right into the classroom. These case studies have been thoughtfully constructed so as to avoid biases or prejudices and present only the facts. Furthermore, they are designed to promote interactive learning so that each case study includes not just the case study's history, but also its chronology, a glossary of important terms, and six different possible roles to take on. Each of the six different roles offer their own unique perspective on the conflict, and they are what allow our students to empathize with the involved parties, walk in the shoes of others and eventually adopt a position from which they can then negotiate throughout the workshop – even if they may not agree with their given position.

Case Study Contents

History – The history portion of our case studies is formulated to give students a manageable and unbiased historical overview of the conflict being addressed. These materials are distributed prior to the program so that students may consider a variety of the issues at large and come to the workshop prepared and ready to engage the topic.

Chronology – The chronology is included to give the students a useful timeline that offers important events to buttress the historical overview materials. This segment of the case study is also provided before the Axis of Hope workshop.

Glossary – Like the chronology, the glossary is a reference guide for the students. This glossary provides students with a resource to learn more about important people, significant locations, or any complex or specific vocabulary associated with their case study. This is given to students before the workshop.

Confidential Instructions (or six sides) – This is the most important feature of our case study, as it is what guides the students in their approach to workshop negotiations. The six sides are designed to represent a wide spectrum of opinions and perspectives in the conflict – from the extremist viewpoints to the more moderate. It is this portion of the case study that is not provided to students until the beginning of the workshop.

Supplementary Materials – Various materials such as video files, practice quizzes and tests, and interactive exercises associated with each case study will also be provided to the students in order to allow them an authentic perspective on the conflict at large, promote media literacy, and give them an even more thorough understanding of the conflict's history.
**Whose Jerusalem? (Israeli/Palestinian Relation)**

This case study focuses on the complex political, religious and socio-economic issues in the Middle East surrounding the millennia old conflict for control of Jewish, Christian and Muslim Holy Lands. Students will be immersed in this complex dispute by dealing with multiple religious, ethnic, economic, and ideological aspects. The conflict resolution process becomes even more intricate when the will of foreign powers such as the Unites States and the Arab League come into consideration.

**We S.A.I.D. AIDS!: South Africa's Invisible Death (South African HIV/AIDS Crisis)**

Nearly one out of every five South Africans is HIV positive. Debate on how this pandemic can be alleviated has raged for years. Students will be brought into a conflict which involves the governments of multiple countries, private pharmaceutical companies responsible for making expensive AIDS medication, and the traditional South African healers who have opposed western influence for centuries.

**Rwanda: Reconciliation and Reconstruction or Return to Conflict? (Post-Genocide Rwanda)**

In the wake of the Rwandan Genocide, tensions are still high, extremism is prevalent and many factions wish to gain control of a fragile government. Students must revisit and begin to comprehend a long and troubled past and, by learning to walk in the shoes of others, reconcile age-old ethnic differences and stabilize a country that is still on the edge of destruction.

New case studies are always under development; please contact the AoH team if there is a specific topic you wish to see covered or brought to your classroom. We work to fit your curriculum!
Students arrive in conference room / students are split into six predetermined role-play groups which represent disputing factions involved in the conflict. These six different perspectives on the same conflict will each receive their own confidential instructions on their objectives, backgrounds, and relationships with the other five factions. Students should immerse themselves in their new role, becoming comfortable and knowledgeable about the beliefs and motivations of their groups.

Welcome/overview of workshop by Professor Carl Hobert, Founding Director

Icebreakers and team building exercises. Students must complete set objectives while familiarizing themselves with each other and their environment.

History of Arab-Israeli Conflict lecture by Professor Hobert (including Part 1: PBS Video “Elusive Peace”); introduction to Whose Jerusalem? Case Study; students are also provided with major areas of dispute which will guide negotiations throughout the day.

Role-play groups read their Whose Jerusalem? confidential instructions separately. These outline the individual background, beliefs, motivations, and overall objectives of the factions. The groups then privately discuss their confidential instructions, devise a two-minute summary statement on their stances, and elect a group speaker to relate their summary to the rest of the assembly.

The elected speaker from each group presents his/her faction’s two-minute summary statement. The summary statement is a preliminary overview of the group’s opinions, objectives and attitude towards the negotiations and the areas of dispute.

Role Play: Round 1 of Paired Negotiations – the six role-play groups are split into pairs which must attempt to settle inter-factional concerns and reach an accord. With each new round the pairs are changed and more disputes are revisited while the pairings themselves are designed to become more controversial as the rounds progress.

Role Play: Round 2 of Paired Negotiations

Role Play: Round 3 of Paired Negotiations

Debriefing of morning negotiations

LUNCH (including Part 2: PBS Video “Elusive Peace”)

Role Play: Round 4 of Paired Negotiations

Role Play: Round 5 of Paired Negotiations

Groups come together to author 250-word Mideast Peace Proposal on the major areas of dispute to be sent to President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

Negotiation debriefing

Student evaluation of conference

Meeting of interested faculty members/staff/parents

Parent/Trustee Dinner and lecture on Preventive Diplomacy: The New Mideast Roadmap to Peace
Conflict course: RHS students take part in unique conflict resolution seminar

Story and Photos by Seth Daniel

For decades politicians and statesmen have been confounded by the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process. But a unique program conducted this year by a Boston professor has allowed some Revere High School (RHS) students to take a crack at the age-old problem.

After meeting RHS teachers and Principal Lourenço Garcia at a conference in Boston last fall, Professor Carl Hobert brought his ‘Axis of Hope’ program to RHS quickly and to great fanfare. “We had just met him the previous week and he came out and did a full-day seminar with 50 of our kids, free of charge, the following week,” said RHS Teacher Nancy Barile.

“This has been a great program for our kids,” said Garcia. “Kids don’t get this kind of exposure to this kind of teaching every day. This is unique.”

More than 50 students from RHS participated in last fall’s program with Professor Hobert. Students from every level and every grade - a true mix - participated in the seminar and it was wildly popular and played out very passionately.

In fact, it was such a hit that Professor Hobert returned this spring to conduct a second seminar with RHS students and a contingent of Weston High School students who made the trip to Revere just for the seminar.

“These are unbelievable students here at Revere,” Hobert told the Journal. “I’ve worked with kids in Harlem and on the South Side of Chicago with this program. You go into a place where there is conflict and problems and you get kids to focus on resolving conflict situations somewhere else in the world and then they take the tools they’ve learned and apply them to their own lives. It really ends up working for them. We’ve seen great successes.”

The conflict that RHS and Weston students focused on was the conflict over land in East Jerusalem.

Groups of several kids are assigned to four competing groups in the conflict, include the Likud-Labor Party, the Arab League and the Fattah-Hamas Party.

After being informed of the problems, the competing groups begin to negotiate their differences and try to work out compromises.

In between, Hobert offers one-of-a-kind learning experiences on how to solve conflicts, such as trying to get 10 young people to fit into a very small space by cooperating and problem solving.

“Interestingly enough, the best solution to that exercise came from some elementary school students,” he said. “Instead of trying to squeeze together, they all began to lay down on top of one another and hold each other so no one fell. That was pretty interesting to watch.”

By the end of each session, students have come away with an understanding of how difficult it is to solve major conflicts, but they also leave with some tools to apply to their lives.

Students and teachers now hope that they can host Hobert again next year, but it still remains to be seen.

“I was incredibly impressed by the program,” said Barile. “These weren’t just a bunch of honor students participating. These were kids of all abilities and everyone was engaged and excited to participate.”
CPS students taught conflict resolution by studying Arab-Israeli issues. February 02, 2011|By Erin Calandriello, Special to the Tribune Keith Gaiter, a sophomore at Chicago Academy High School on the Northwest Side, knows the face of violence and has witnessed its repercussions.

"In my neighborhood, the blacks and the Hispanics don't like each other. If you walk into the wrong neighborhood with your hat on the wrong way, you can get killed," said Gaiter, 16.

But after recently participating in the Axis of Hope Conflict Resolution Workshop at the school, Gaiter understands that what happens in his own backyard often mirrors the bloodshed that occurs on the other side of the world. And he is learning that there is a better way. "My eyes have been opened up to what's going on in the world and how we should work out our disagreements in a more peaceful way, by talking it out, rather than through violence," he said.

The national workshop, founded by Boston University professor Carl Hobert, encourages global citizenship and helps middle- and high school students comprehend alternative, nonviolent approaches to resolving complex conflicts locally, nationally and internationally. It also allows students, many who live in underserved neighborhoods, to learn about the Arab-Israeli conflict and relate it to their own situations.

Axis of Hope reaches thousands of students in public and private schools across the country, and Hobert and his staff from Boston University have made several trips to Chicago schools. Most recently, they held a workshop for about 80 students, ages 14 to 18, at Chicago Academy.

School officials say the workshop, which uses simulation exercises to help students grasp the Arab-Israeli conflict, is popular because it gets students to understand conflict on a broader scale in an interesting way.

"We have big gang issues in Chicago. The workshop broadens out the bigger 'gang' issue from one happening in our own neighborhoods to one happening on the other side of the world," said Gerald Stewart, the manager of education support at the Academy for Urban School Leadership in Chicago. "The workshop gets students talking about the Arab-Israeli conflict. It helps them develop critical thought and have that epiphany, that 'aha' moment about being global citizens."

Stewart said many of the Chicago Academy students who participated had behavior issues and had been disciplined by the school. So the workshop was also a means to stimulate constructive behavior, he said. "The thought pattern was to challenge students with behavior issues and give them some tools, which will readily help them resolve their own conflicts in a more positive way," he said.

The workshop begin with ice-breaker exercises such as unraveling a human knot or having students line up by birth date. Then Hobert gives students a history of the Arab-Israeli conflict and a chronology of important dates in Jerusalem's history dating back to the 19th century.

Students are then split into six groups — Hamas, Fatah, the Arab League, the Quartet, Likud and Labor — and attempt to divide Jerusalem peacefully. Afterward, each group drafts a treaty, which will be sent directly to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and President Barack Obama.

"We're giving students the skills to listen, communicate and compromise. We're making them problem-solvers," said Hobert. "Negotiating is about being able to see the problem and understand how to get through that problem."
"When we go into a school that is struggling with gang violence or a country in the midst of a civil war, we begin by getting youth to focus on a conflict far removed from the classroom or the streets. Then they are able to step back and apply what they have learned to the conflict in their own lives."

- Carl Hobert, Founder, Axis of Hope

**Testimonials**

"My son, Jacob, participated in the workshop at his high school on Dec. 10. It was an amazing experience for him. In fact, when he spoke about it, he called it the most educational experience he’d ever had. He said he had learned more in the one day workshop, in terms of communication, leadership, conflict development and resolution, as well as the issues surrounding Kashmir, than in all his years here!"

-EK, Parent

"I can’t thank you enough for coming to our high school today. You have profoundly impacted my students in such a positive way! I am still reeling from the experience, and I know that they are, too."

-NT, High School Teacher

"As you already know, this workshop opened so many doors for me. Meaning, I began to seek more in life, in others and how everyday life is. There are always situations everywhere we go; no matter if it’s world conflicts or if its just simple everyday conflicts. I began to see both side’s point of view, to look at the world differently than I did before I was introduced to the Axis of Hope workshop. It is such a big movement that we are working on here, at this generation."

-MT, High School Student
If interested about learning more about Axis of Hope or organizing an event such as a student or faculty workshop please contact Leslie Sale at leslie.sale@axisofhope.org or call 617-353-4749

If interested in speaking to a reference for Axis of Hope please contact

Joanne Hoffman, Board Chair and Former Head of School at Moses Brown
joannephoffman@gmail.com

Robert Greene, Director of Community Connections at Marin Country Day School
rgreen@mcds.org

Inae Piercy, Head of School at Soundview School
ipiercy@soundview.org

Wally Swanson, Global Affairs Director at Wilbraham and Monson Academy
wswanson@wma.org

Nancy Barile, English Teacher at Revere High School
nbarile@revere.mec.edu

Gerald Stewart, Administrator with Chicago Public Schools Chicago Academy
gstewart1@cps.k12.il.us

Axis of Hope is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization (Federal tax ID number 27-0273015) and all contributions are tax deductible to the extent of current tax laws.