

CCEJ's 2023-24

CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE



FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

Youth Development & Anti-Oppression Menu of Services

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Updated
August
2023

CCEJ Mission

The California Conference for Equality and Justice (CCEJ) is a community based organization dedicated to educating and empowering youth and adults to lead change for equity and justice in our communities. We envision a world where people live free of oppression and thrive.

Our Impact

Building Bridges for Youth is CCEJ's youth-centered team that provides experiential and interactive training and learning experiences to youth and adults focused on Anti-Oppression Education and Leadership Development. During the 2021-2022 school year, we served over 1,000 youth through partnerships with schools, organizations, and community groups.

Our Approach

CCEJ integrates a "Head, Heart and Hand" approach in all of our work. We believe that opportunities for learning and growth exist at every point of conflict, interaction and sharing. Dialogue is central to our process. It can be difficult and uncomfortable, and requires vulnerability, courage and openness to unpack the issues we explore. We integrate anti-oppression education (common language, definitions, terminology, concepts) with experiential activities and dialogue (personal story telling, circle practice, courageous conversations). We approach our partnerships with the recognition that all of us hold powerful knowledge and experiences that can be activated in the service of challenging oppression.



Our pedagogical approach centers on the use and uplifting of personal stories and experiences for the purposes of learning. Throughout our trainings and programs, CCEJ staff are intentional about utilizing trauma informed and restorative practices in our approach. We look to leverage strong relationships in training spaces to encourage risk taking, honesty and curiosity.

Billing Process

CCEJ invoices partners on a regular basis as services are utilized. Hours are not transferable beyond the length of specific contracted services. Please notify CCEJ of specific requirements you have regarding billing/payment of contracts beforehand.



Program Details

Training contracts are created as part of a consultation with CCEJ. Pricing and suggested session combinations vary by partner. Workshops can be combined into customized dialogue series of varying lengths and can include affinity groups where appropriate.

Session duration will vary based on goals, activities, and other factors. At minimum, CCEJ requires **two hours per training session**. CCEJ will recommend training hours designed to provide enough time to meet training goals effectively and safely.

Trainers are chosen based on specific contract requirements and availability. CCEJ is not able to accommodate specific trainer requests in all circumstances. Generally, a 1:20 trainer to participant ratio is used. However, some trainings require more or less trainers at CCEJ's discretion. All in-person trainings require two trainers to ensure all safety precautions are being taken. Pricing is based on a number of factors including company, organization or school size, overall budget, training complexities, facilitator availability, and hours involved. In-person trainings are priced higher than virtual trainings due to travel, materials, and safety precautions involved. Contact CCEJ to discuss your specific needs: info@ccej.org

Testimonials

"I recommend every person has the opportunity to go through the CCEJ training because not only were our 2 teachers incredibly fun and engaging, but the entire curriculum worked to educate us and make us more socially aware of the current injustices going on and how we can foster change. I felt as if I had a voice and I had the platform to both speak and listen." - Conscious Classrooms Student

"I learned that many people have different identities and we shouldn't judge them because of them." - Conscious Classrooms Student

"This was a helpful program that everyone needs to understand ourselves." - Conscious Classrooms Student

"It was moving how students started to open up and feel trust amongst their classmates. When I asked them for reviews afterwards, they were saying things like, 'I felt seen.' It was touching to see a number of boys say, 'I got to talk about my emotions and it felt safe.' It was a very powerful experience." - Teacher

"Building Bridges Camp is an opportunity to educate yourself on the experiences of people from various backgrounds. It has provided me with so much wisdom and inspiration to do good in my community." - Building Bridges Camper



IN-PERSON COVID-19 SAFETY

For in-person trainings, to help navigate the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, CCEJ has created policies that establish clear expectations, balance collective safety with the unique experience of in-person activities and draw on public health guidelines.

Partners contracting with CCEJ for in-person services are expected to understand and follow these procedures:

CCEJ Program Participant Vaccination Policy: While vaccination is not required for participation in programs and events, CCEJ strongly encourages program participants and guests be updated on vaccinations for COVID-19 to protect themselves and others.

Mandatory CCEJ Staff Vaccination Status: CCEJ requires that all its staff, with few exceptions, be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, including available boosters.

Masking: Masking is optional for all CCEJ staff and guests visiting the office or participating in CCEJ programs. CCEJ staff and guests are encouraged to do what helps them feel safe and comfortable.

Testing: Testing is not required for participation in CCEJ programs and events. If staff and guests are experiencing any cold-like symptoms, we suggest testing for COVID-19.

Minimizing touch-based activities: CCEJ will intentionally structure programming to minimize or, where possible eliminate, the expectation that program participants engaged in touch-based activities, including but not limited to teambuilders, circle activities, and games. All participants will have the opportunity to opt-in or out of touch-based activities. If program participants lead or facilitate any activities at CCEJ events, we also ask for touch-based activities to be minimized or eliminated as much as possible, with options for individuals to opt out always available.

Asking for consent to touch: CCEJ honors that everyone has different comfort levels with touch-related greetings. CCEJ asks participants to explicitly ask for consent before instigating handshakes, hugs, high fives or similar ways of engaging with other program participants or CCEJ staff.

Staying home when sick: If CCEJ staff or program participants are sick, showing any symptoms of sickness, related to COVID-19 or not, or testing positive for COVID-19 they will not be allowed to join shared in-person spaces until cleared by a doctor, or only after 10 days since symptom onset and 72 hours of no fever.

Building Bridges Camp

Overnight Social Justice Program for High School Youth

Building Bridges© Camp is a unique, overnight weekend experience, held in the mountains of San Bernardino. Diverse groups of 9th - 12th grade students learn self-awareness, build mutual respect and learn to value differences. Students participate in interactive exercises and dialogue sessions that increase their understanding of oppression, and of their own power to help create social justice in their schools and communities.

At Building Bridges Camp, we will:

- **Think critically** about the conflicts, social divisions, discrimination, and oppression in our communities and country
- **Create a community** of honesty, self-awareness, and respect through risk taking and dialogue. In this community
- **Practice valuing all people** in all of their identities
- **Become advocates** in our everyday lives.



Building Bridges currently offers two camps:

Racial Justice Camp - Students explore racial identity, confront the ways Racism divides us, and build alliances for advocacy.

Gender Justice Camp - Students explore gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation; confront the ways Cisgenderism, Sexism, and Heterosexism divides us; and build alliances for advocacy.

Building Bridges Camper Testimonials:

"It was a safe space to be able to share your thoughts and feelings about your race and identity with people that will listen to you. It is also a great place to not only reflect, but to learn from other people's experiences and interact with people of other identities."

My biggest takeaway from camp was that there is no specific answer of how to be an ally. I learned that everyone in my affinity group wants to actively become a better person. Nobody is perfect but the first step is always acknowledgment. Once you have done that, you then can grow. Ultimately, I want to spend my life striving to make those around me feel valid, safe, and know that they are loved and will be given space if they need so."



Building Bridges Camp (Continued)

Overnight Social Justice Program for High School Youth

How does Building Bridges Camp help schools?

Students leave camp energized to challenge discrimination in every part of their lives. Students return to school ready to dialogue with their peers, take stands against harmful actions, and build communities of inclusion. CCEJ also provides follow-up programs including **Camper Reunion Mixers**, and in-class **Conscious Classrooms** units. Students can also return as Youth Leaders the following school year after attending the **Summer Youth Leadership Institute**. Camp is just the beginning.

How does CCEJ create a safe camp?

CCEJ professional staff attend and coordinate camp throughout the entire weekend, and background checked volunteer staff participate and lead Building Bridges. Adult Staff are from diverse professional backgrounds and may include administrators, teachers, classified school employees, & staff from community-based agencies. A nurse is on site 24/7, and physicians at a nearby hospital handle medical emergencies. In the event of an emergency, CCEJ staff will coordinate transportation to the nearest hospital.

What can I expect for housing and meals?

Each camp is held at professionally-managed camp facilities located in the San Bernardino Mountains. Lodging is in heated cabins equipped with beds, storage and restrooms. Meals are served three times a day and snacks are provided each evening.

How much does Camp cost?

The full cost of participation for each student is \$500. However, CCEJ fundraises extensively to reduce that cost to **\$110 per student**. CCEJ can also provide transportation to and from the camp for an **additional \$40 fee per student**. Students pay an investment sliding scale fee of \$5-\$25. Staff and Youth Leaders from schools and serving as volunteers are never charged.

For more information or to sign up for Building Bridges Camp, contact **Sarah Rana** at srana@cacej.org today!

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Conscious Classrooms: Education for Justice

In-School Program for K-12 Students

Conscious Classrooms is a set of learning opportunities for students to build knowledge of social inequities in the world and develop skills to transform their schools and communities to be more inclusive and just. Through experiential, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) grounded in Restorative Justice Practices, Conscious Classrooms creates opportunities for school communities to come together and engage in topics such as Race and Ethnicity in the United States, LGBTQIA+ History and Justice, Gender Norms and Expectations, and Immigration among others.

Conscious Classrooms utilizes Common Core and California standards - aligned curricula to engage students on a variety of social justice issues with the purpose of cultivating empathy for self and others. Students will have the chance to reflect and learn about healthy communication, conflict resolution, and celebrating differences among their peers. Conscious Classrooms is available in-person and online via Zoom.



Conscious Classrooms Student Testimonials:

"This program sincerely cares about the students, appreciates their inputs, and somehow motivates them to make themselves vulnerable. To elaborate, being vulnerable is a great thing since you can resonate with others and lift a weight off your shoulders." - 8th Grader

"I will use what I learned to continue to educate myself on certain topics and make sure to try and normalize gender pronouns so no one has to feel outed. I will make sure to help others feel welcomed and accepted within a community." - 9th Grader

"Throughout this whole experience I have felt an overwhelming feeling of warmth and safety. I love the type of activities we did and then also the outcome of them. I feel like bringing this program to our school was such an amazing idea. It made me happy to know that our school went to this type of effort for us." - 11th Grader

"Connecting with others opens doors to better leaders. Sharing helps others feel safe. Conscious Classrooms has helped me remember what type of leader I can be and how to become one." - 11th Grader

"I learned that many people have different identities and we shouldn't judge them because of them." - Conscious Classrooms Student

For more information or to sign up for Conscious Classrooms, contact **Tobías Vasquez** at tv Vasquez@cacej.org today!

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FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

Conscious Classrooms Units

Belonging in the “United” States (Immigration) – How do we decide who belongs in the U.S.? Students will get the chance to learn about the various reasons why people from around the world migrate to the United States. Space and time for dialogue will be provided for students to make personal connections around issues of migration, such as debunking immigration myths and cultivating compassion for immigrant communities and neighbors.

CommUNITY Over Violence (Gang Violence) – Why do gangs and gang violence exist? In this unit students will engage in activities and dialogue examining the social and political conditions that lead to gang violence. Students will dissect poetry and song lyrics to connect issues of poverty and racism to gang violence.

Gender IDentity and ME (Gender Norms and Expectations) – In this unit we scratch the surface of the gender binary. What are the societal expectations related to gender? How does that affect us throughout our lives? Students will be invited to reflect and dialogue on the ways gender norms show up in their lives and how to practice respecting differences in others’ gender identities and expression.

Queering OURstory (LGBTQIA+ History and Justice) – Students will have the opportunity to reflect on the injustices faced by the LGBTQIA+ community, as well as their strength and resiliency. Through experiential activities, students will unpack the ways that various identities are given value in society. Historical accounts of multiple sexual and gender identities and experiences will be explored to further contextualize the contemporary space that the LGBTQIA+ community takes in our current culture.

Voices for Change (Empathy for Myself) – Students are invited to cultivate their social and emotional well-being by participating in activities that foster awareness of communication, conflict, and self-care. Poetry, role play, scenario, and discussion activities will be utilized to spark reflection and encourage students to nurture their own emotional wellness practices.

From Bystander to Ally (Empathy for Others) – This unit engages students in developing their social awareness and investment in their peer community. Students will get the chance to reflect on their own experiences with exclusion and interpersonal conflict, as well as brainstorm ways to restoratively resolve conflict.



Conscious Classrooms Units

Who Am I? Who Are We? (Race and Ethnicity in the U.S.) – How do we understand racial, ethnic, and national identity in our society? This unit, students can begin to unpack the history and process of racialization in the United States, and how that impacts their daily lives. Students will be encouraged and shown ways to honor and respect the racial and ethnic diversity in their communities.

Looking Back to Move Forward – How have social justice leaders historically navigated times of struggle? What can we learn about resiliency from social justice movements of the past? This unit will utilize knowledge of freedom fighters of the past as a way to identify practices that will help to ground us in uncertain times. Students will begin to identify ways that they can apply learnings from the past, to live a stronger present, and help build a better future.

Quarantining the “Other” – How do ISMs show up in times of panic? How do mainstream narratives harm our communities? This unit will explore ways in which historical moments of panic have created narratives that further marginalize our most vulnerable communities. Students will work to connect the past to the present moment and identify ways that they can practice solidarity and allyship.

Racial Justice In These Times: Antiracism and the BLM Movement – The Black Lives Matter uprisings of June 2020 are moments in history that undoubtedly changed our country’s social and political landscape. What are the lessons that we can proactively take away from this? In this unit students will reflect on these lessons from our recent history and apply them to their daily lives. Students will get the chance to engage in reflective identity-work, historical dialogue, and more to continue the legacy of antiracist work BLM has inspired in society.

“Human connection is the first step towards sparking change. I loved being able to just talk, and connect with my classmates, and understand how we can come together to foster accepting and respectful communities.” - 12th Grade Conscious Classrooms Student

Have a topic in mind, but you don’t see it here?

Let us know! We can explore a potential customized Conscious Classrooms unit for you and your group!



Building Bridges for *Your* Youth!

Customized Youth Leadership Workshops

In addition to our core programs, Building Bridges for Youth can create customized Youth Leadership Workshops for your organization's youth that support young people in discussing social justice topics including, but not limited to:

- Stereotype, Prejudice, Discrimination
- Racial Justice
- Gender Justice
- Intersectionality
- Conflict
- Peer Leadership

Customized Youth Leadership Workshops with Sample Objectives:

Equity and Inclusion in Healthcare

- To investigate our personal biases and how these may shape the way we approach healthcare workplaces.
- To learn about Cultural Humility and identify ways to practice Equity and Inclusion in the medical field.

Leading Toward Equity and Inclusion

- To share aspects of my identity and hear how my identity is similar to and different from others.
- To make a commitment to taking personal responsibility in transforming my community.

Affinity Group Dialogues for Youth

Interested in creating a space for youth of shared identities and/or experiences to dialogue with one another? Building Bridges for Youth can facilitate Youth Affinity Groups to explore conversations on identities, experiences, oppression, or other topics of interest to your youth.

When we use Affinity Groups, participants explore justice topics deeply and authentically while honoring the differences in our experiences and action steps based on our identities. Affinity Groups are guided by facilitators of specific identities, leading to increased costs depending on the demographics of the cohort.

Possible Affinity Groups:

- Racial Affinity Groups
- Gender Identity Affinity Groups
- Sexual Orientation Affinity Groups
- Age or Grade Level Affinity Groups
- Religious Identity Affinity Groups

Your school site or organization might already have some form of these affinity groups that you might want to engage more deeply.

Some examples:

- Black Student Unions, Latinx Clubs, Asian/Pacific Islander Student Associations
- Gender & Sexuality Alliances, LGBTQIA+ Clubs
- Grade level groups



Customized Adult Allyship in Action Workshops

Building Bridges for Youth supports adults in becoming adult allies to youth through dialogues and trainings on Adulthood. If you are interested in strengthening your skills and knowledge to better show up for young people, check out our workshops on Adult Allyship in Action. These trainings are customizable and are tailored to each group's needs.

Understanding and Challenging Adulthood – This introductory workshop provides adults an opportunity to learn about the concept of Adulthood. Adults will reflect on the ways Adulthood shows up and how it impacts their ability to work with young people.

Building Youth-Adult Partnerships – In this follow-up workshop, adults will strategize ways to show up in stronger partnership to young people. Emerging adult allies will share commitments to uplifting and supporting youth, creating a plan of action.

Technical Assistance & Coaching Services Cost accrued per hour per CCEJ staff

- **Consulting Services:** CCEJ offers consulting expertise for curriculum development, site specific implementation design, workshop or dialogue planning and curricula, design of trauma sensitive, anti-oppressive assessments, troubleshooting, and presentation design.
- **Custom Trainings:** CCEJ's seasoned trainers and curricula authors will design and facilitate a training based on your site's specific needs and areas of skills improvement. This training is billed based on hours of training and hours of design prep at a ratio of four hours of preparation for every one training hour.
- **Coaching for Youth:** Direct small group coaching for young people designed to address challenges and opportunities that arise in youth leadership development, identity formation, self-care and community care, or other topics is available in-person and through online modalities.
- **Facilitation:** Experienced CCEJ staff are available to facilitate meetings, dialogues, or community building circles for teams and committees through responsive agenda design based on site needs and strategic planning framing. Dialogues and circles can be used to explore issues, navigate conflict, and strengthen relationships and community in a time of high stress and social isolation.



Our Training Team

SERENA PADILLA (*Pronouns: She/They*)

DIRECTOR, BUILDING BRIDGES FOR YOUTH

Serena is a facilitator, educator, and consultant with 10+ years of experience working with youth in the non-profit, food justice, and education sector. She is a collaborative leader with a commitment to community building, transformative justice, climate resilient farming, racial justice, food justice, and uplifting youth voice. She studied Latin American and Latinx studies and minored in Education at UC Santa Cruz, and has managed youth programs at non-profits and community based organizations in San Francisco, Oakland, Southeast Michigan, and in the Hudson Valley of New York. She values joy, intergenerational learning, and loves working with youth! She believes in transformative values at the personal and professional level, and is a certified Circle-Keeper and Restorative Justice facilitator. She is nourished by time in nature, cooking delicious food connected to her Chumash and Mexican ancestors, and sharing love with queer community.

SARAH RANA (*Pronouns: She/Her/Hers*)

BUILDING BRIDGES PROGRAM COORDINATOR—RESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP

Sarah Rana is the Building Bridges Program Coordinator for Residential Leadership, where she oversees Building Bridges camps and helps support CCEJ youth programs and trainings. Sarah has served as a nonprofit professional and volunteer in Oklahoma and California for over a decade working with schools, faith organizations, and with community members to provide skills to become positive change agents in their communities.

TOBÍAS PABLO VASQUEZ (*Pronouns: They/Them/He/Him*)

BUILDING BRIDGES PROGRAM COORDINATOR—SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Tobías Pablo Vasquez is a self-identified Brown, Queer, Chicanx Community Builder and Educator from Southern California. As the Program Coordinator for School Leadership, Tobías supports youth in their social justice education and leadership through the Conscious Classrooms and Building Bridges Clubs Alliance programs at CCEJ. This entails curating educational spaces for students to dialogue and organize for just school climates, where all students can thrive. They work to build intergenerational bridges in school communities where marginalized youth feel inspired to share their stories and advocate for justice.

DANIEL E. SOLÍS, MA (*Pronouns: He/Him/His*)

CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER

Daniel has worked locally and nationwide in anti-oppression training and organizational change design for over 15 years, supporting schools, workplaces, healthcare providers, nonprofits and communities build their power and readiness to enact changes for justice. Daniel is the proud product of social justice youth leadership programs, having attended NCCJ Los Angeles' Brotherhood-Sisterhood Camp, the Salvadoran American Leadership and Educational Fund's Civic Leadership Program, and been a Gay-Straight Alliance club leader in high school. Daniel's writing has appeared in Readings for Social Justice - Second Edition /Third Edition, and IMANIMAN: Poets Writing in the Anzaldúan Borderlands.

To discuss the needs of your specific site or to contract CCEJ for training or coaching services, please reach out to **Serena Padilla** at spadilla@cacej.org or call (310) 699-6684.



Meeting Room Rental in Long Beach

3605 Long Beach Blvd, Suite 100, 90807



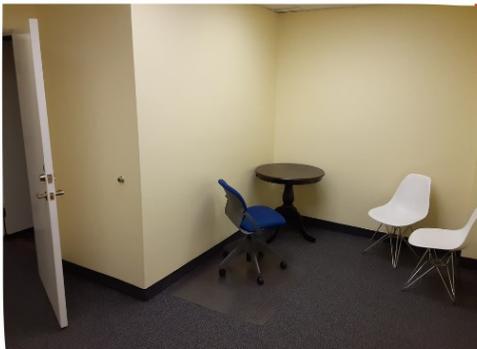
LARGE MEETING/TRAINING ROOM

- Capacity: 60 people
- Moveable tables & folding chairs
- Projector screen
- Rates start at \$150/hr



CIRCLE/CONFERENCE ROOM

- Capacity: Up to 15 people
- Moveable tables & folding chairs
- Sofa and pillows for more casual seating
- Rates start at \$100/hr



SMALL MEETING ROOMS

- 3 smaller rooms accessible by staircase on mezzanine level
- Capacity: 5-10 people depending on room configuration
- Moveable tables & folding chairs
- Rates start at \$75/hr per room

INCLUDED IN RENTAL:

- 4 gender-neutral bathrooms (1 accessible)
- Kitchenette
- LCD projector (upon advance request)
- Wifi
- Access to Lobby/Seating area may be arranged
- CCEJ staff person on-site to provide support

Email Jessy at jneedham@cacej.org for more information.