

Victim Offender Reconciliation Program

2529 Willow Ave., Clovis, CA 93612 - (209) 291-1120

VORP News - January 1985 - Fresno County

1984 REVIEW

The most important parts of VORP can't be put in statistical form. We are glad to report that many lives of victims, offenders, and mediators were affected in a direction of being less violent or hostile to becoming more caring and considerate.

During 1984 about 12% of our referrals did not come to meetings because either the victim or the offender refused (VORP is a voluntary process and must be in order for mediation to work). After meeting with one or both of the parties involved it was occasionally determined that there was no restitution due or in some cases there were other circumstances that caused us to terminate the case at that point. 71 cases came to victim/offender/mediator meetings and/or contracts for restitution. Many of these contracts include agreements reached regarding new behavior for the future. These restitution contracts accounted for \$7,187.82 and 316 hours of work.

Presentations were made on the average of about two per month to Churches, Schools, Service Clubs, Sunday School Classes, Criminal Justice related organizations, etc. At these presentations we shared the purpose and mission of VORP and the need for volunteers and financial support.

In 1984 24 volunteers were trained in conflict management and mediation skills and the VORP process. Volunteers mediated approximately 33% of the cases. We expect this figure to rise as we mature and accept more cases.

Our Board of Directors met at least monthly providing vision, direction, insights, and policy decisions as needed. They also formed a committee to work specifically on our financial needs. They have (with your cooperation) made a good start toward providing a stable financial base for Fresno County VORP. Total contributions for 1984 from Board members and other interested individuals and churches was \$18,536.90. We also received a grant from Mennonite Mutual Aid Fraternal Funds for \$4,700.00. This total income of \$23,236.90 for 1984 compares favorably to the \$16,874.21 received in 1983.

When we first started in the fall of 1982, Criminal Justice Alternatives, Inc. agreed to allow us to be a program under their corporate umbrella while in the introductory and experimental stages. This spring we agreed that it was time for us to incorporate as a separate organization. (We thank them for their help in giving birth to VORP in Fresno County.) In December we received our recognition of tax exemption from IRS and the Franchise Tax Board (thanks to Duane Heffelbower, our board Chairperson, who donated time and effort and his attorney expertise to see this process to completion). All contributions made to VORP have been tax deductible because of the status of Criminal Justice Alternatives, Inc. in the past and now because of our own non-profit, tax exempt status.

Our program has been able to serve a substantial number of people on a very limited budget because of the following reasons. Volunteers mediated many of the cases. Our Board of Directors volunteered their time and expertise. Our full-time case manager provided her services to us through Mennonite Voluntary Service for a subsistence allowance. I worked for VORP as program director 2-3 days per week. Our secretary, Roxanne, worked as needed. Our space, heat, and lights were donated by College Community Mennonite Brethren Church.

1985 goals and direction include, first of all, providing high quality service to more victims and offenders. We intend to train more volunteer mediators and have our first training session planned for the evenings of January 14 and 21. Please share this information with people in your church who you think might be interested. There is no charge for the training and many of the skills learned are valuable in settings other than VORP. We ask that volunteers be prepared to work with at least one case every two months (a case generally takes 5-8 hours to complete). Pre-registration is requested. Please complete the form below or call the VORP office at 291-1120.

VORP Training Registration Form

..... Yes, I am planning to attend the two part training session to be held at the College Community Mennonite Brethren Church Fireside Room on January 14, 1985 and January 21, 1985 from 6:00 - 10:00 P. M.

Name.....

Telephone.....

In order to expand our services to more victims and offenders we will need more volunteers as mentioned above and more staff support for volunteers and more staff follow-up, a very important part of VORP. In order to bring reconciliation and restoration to more victims and offenders we will need more financial support from "Friends of VORP".

"FRIEND OF VORP" PLEDGE FORM

..... I/We would like to be a "Friend of VORP" by investing monthly in the way indicated:

.....\$100 \$50 \$25 \$15 \$10 other

.....I/We would like to be a "Friend of VORP" by investing yearly in the way indicated:

.....\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 other

Name:.....

Shalom,
Ron Claassen

Thank you for the \$800.00 you gave V.O.R.P. directly in 1984. We appreciate all your hard work for the program.