

Peace Alliance Department of Peacebuilding Campaign  
**ADVOCACY DAYS 2020**

**Building Bridges, Not Walls - A Day of Inspiring Speakers**

September 20, 2020 (Sunday) - 9am - 3pm Pacific/ Noon - 6pm Eastern

**SPEAKER & DEPARTMENT OF PEACEBUILDING COMMITTEE  
BIOGRAPHIES**

**SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES – in Speaker Order**

**FOCUS ON THE UNITED STATES**

**Segment #1 - WHY PEACEBUILDING & A DEPARTMENT OF PEACEBUILDING**

**9 am - 10:45 am PT/ noon - 1:45 ET**

	<p><b>CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE</b> A life-long advocate for peace and justice, Congresswoman Barbara Lee (CA-13) has sponsored legislation to create a cabinet-level Department of Peacebuilding (HR 1111) since 2013. She has worked for racial justice and healing, LGBT rights, voting rights, women’s rights, elimination of poverty, violence and war prevention and healthcare in many capacities, including social worker, small business owner, Chief of Staff for Rep. Ron Dellums (CA), and CA state legislator. She founded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom Center for Oakland youth. Since 1998, Rep. Lee has represented “the country’s most woke” Congressional District which includes Oakland and Berkeley.</p>
	<p><b>FORMER CONGRESSMAN DENNIS KUCINICH</b> Dennis Kucinich served in Congress from 1997 – 2013, introduced the first 20th century Department of Peace bill in 2001, and reintroduced it in every Congress through 2011. A former Cleveland mayor, OH state senator, Cleveland City Council member, presidential candidate, and an OH gubernatorial candidate, Kucinich champions peace, worker's rights, environmental sustainability and other humanitarian causes. He saved the Cleveland municipal electric company from sale and privatization and received an “F” rating from the National Rifle Association, which he emphasized during his 2018 gubernatorial campaign to reinstate a ban on assault weapons.</p>
	<p><b>RITA MARIE JOHNSON</b> Rita Marie Johnson is an educator and author who initiated a bill to create Costa Rica’s Ministry of Justice and Peace, which passed in 2009. She and her trainers worldwide, help adults and children resolve inner turmoil and outer conflicts using the Connection Practice. Rita Marie created this social-emotional skill, which she taught at the United Nations University for Peace and it won the Ashoka Changemakers Innovation Award. Her book, Completely Connected, is an Amazon bestseller and won a Nautilus Award in the Psychology Category. Over 100,000 adults and children in the US, Costa Rica, Japan and other countries have learned the Connection Practice. (<a href="http://connectionpractice.org">connectionpractice.org</a>)</p>

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[FOCUS ON THE UNITED STATES \(Cont.\)](#)

**Segment #2 - A BELOVED COMMUNITY & PEACEBUILDING**

**11 am - 12:45 pm PT/ 2 pm - 3:45 ET**

	<p><b>CYNTHIA GILLIAM</b> Cynthia Gilliam is a peacebuilder and an organizer who has worked on the Department of Peacebuilding (DoP) and justice issues with young people since about 2008 when her granddaughter, Cierra Cloud (then 6 years old), started participating in SE San Diego Kids for Peace. Collaborating with schools, law enforcement, the spiritual community, local and national elected officials and others, Cynthia and the San Diego DoP group organized many events to promote a DoP and to build community peace.</p>
	<p><b>AZIM KHAMISA</b> In 1995 Azim Khamisa's 20-year-old son, Tariq, was killed while delivering pizza in a random act of gang violence by 14-year-old gang member Tony Hicks. That year, Azim forgave Tony and founded the Tariq Khamisa Foundation to break the cycle of youth violence by saving lives, teaching peace, and planting seeds of hope in their future. Azim -- who was born in Kenya and has over 45 years of experience as a successful international investment banker -- is an author, peace activist, thought leader, and inspirational speaker who has reached millions of students and inspired nonviolent leaders to become proactive peacebuilders. (<a href="http://TKF.org">TKF.org</a>)</p>
	<p><b>MARIANNE WILLIAMSON</b> Peace Alliance Co-founder Marianne Williamson is a bestselling author of 14 books -- four of which have been #1 New York Times best sellers, a political activist and a spiritual thought leader. Throughout her career, and as a 2020 presidential primary candidate, Williamson worked on poverty, anti-hunger and racial reconciliation issues and advocates for creation of a U.S. Department of Peacebuilding and a cabinet level Department of Children and Youth to adequately address the chronic trauma of millions of American children. (<a href="http://Marianne.com">Marianne.com</a>)</p>

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**GLOBAL FOCUS**

**Segment #3 - WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW: INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE**

**1 pm - 2:45 pm PT/ 4 pm - 5:45 ET**



**AMBASSADOR ANWARUL K. CHOWDHURY**

Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury is founder of the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace. His legacy in advancing the global community are imprinted in his pioneering initiatives at the United Nations General Assembly in 1999 for adoption of the landmark Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace and in 1998 for the proclamation of the “International Decade for Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)”. He served as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations in New York from 1996 to 2001 and as the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations, responsible for the most vulnerable countries of the world from 2002 to 2007.

**GAMIP REPRESENTATIVES** (Global Alliance for Ministries & Infrastructures of Peace)



**DR. SAUL ARBESS**

Devoted to building a culture of peace in Canada and abroad, in which restorative practices are at its heart. Co-founder and National Co-chair, [Canadian Peace Initiative](#) (2005-2011). Co-founder, and Chair, GAMIP (2005-2011). Currently, a Board member of both organizations.



**ALICIA CABEZUDO, Ph.D.**

ALICIA CABEZUDO is a university professor as well as a trainer on Peace Education, Culture of Peace, Intercultural Dialogue, Democracy/ Citizenship and Human Rights. She is currently Coordinator of a Social Education Research on Culture of Peace and Citizenship Education in Colombia (launched by Believe in Peace Foundation), is a Board member of GAMIP and is working to establish a South American Regional GAMIP.



**PRINCE OSEREMEN IRENE**

Dr. Oseremen Irene is a Nigerian and a University Lecturer. He serves as the President of GAMIP and also as the Executive Director of the Center for Peace and Rehabilitation of Displace Persons, and NGO based in Nigeria.



**DR. DOT MAVER**

Dr. Dot Maver is an educator and peacebuilder whose keynote is inspiring cooperation on behalf of the common good. Dot is a co-founder of the Global Silent Minute and is a founder and board member with the [National Peace Academy USA](#), the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures of Peace, the River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding and Garden of Light. From 2005–2007 Dot served as Executive Director of the Peace Alliance and the Campaign for a US Department of Peace, and prior to that she was the National Campaign Manager for Kucinich for President 2004.

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## **NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF PEACEBUILDING COMMITTEE BIOGRAPHIES**

Advocacy Days 2020 organizers are members of the Peace Alliance National DoP Committee and our 2020 Intern, and are listed in alphabetical order. [Department of Peacebuilding](#).

	<p><b><u>ANNE CRETER</u></b> is a retired Licensed Social Worker who has served the Peace Alliance in many capacities: DoP Committee, both NJ State and Congressional District Coordinator and Board of Directors. She is a UN NGO representative for Peace Through Unity and UN Liaison to the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace; also a founding member of the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace.</p>
	<p><b><u>KAREN JOHNSON</u></b> began conscious, fruitful recovery from childhood and cultural violence in 1991. Along the way, she dedicated her life to service and her focus funneled to peacebuilding and the DoP Campaign in 2005. This is an ounce of prevention along with a pound of cure in our current culture of violence. Karen works as a paralegal, was elected to her township board and serves on state and local political party boards.</p>
	<p><b><u>NANCY MERRITT</u></b> is the Peace Alliance DoP lead and a member of the National and CA DoP Committees. She has been involved with peace and justice issues, including issues relating to the American Indian Movement and Tibet, for many years. She has also worked as part of the CA DoP team to secure endorsement of DoP legislation by the CA Democratic Party and inclusion of peacebuilding ideals in its Platform. She works to build a peaceful world for generations to come, including for her four amazing sons and their partners and her three completely awesome grandchildren.</p>
	<p><b><u>KENDRA MON</u></b> - As the daughter of a career military officer father and a civil rights activist mother, Kendra works to protect herself and others by investing in and building a culture of peace from the inside out and from local community to the federal government by supporting a cabinet-level U.S. Department of Peacebuilding.</p>
	<p><b><u>DEBRA POSS</u></b> began working with the Department of Peace Campaign in 2005, and advocated for a DoP in D. C. congressional offices in 2005, 2007 and 2009. She joined the DoP Committee in 2014 and continued advocating for a DoP in D.C. in 2014, and every year since, through 2019. Along with "walking the halls of Congress," serving on the DoP Committee, reaching out to D. C. and local district offices during the year, she also participates in the DoP bill revision suggestion process every two years.</p>
	<p><b><u>PAT SIMON</u></b> - Inspired by a 2002 NPR interview about Department of Peace legislation with Congressman Dennis Kucinich, Pat and others began to lobby and, in 2004, started a MA state campaign – as a Social Action Project at the First Parish in Concord. They have connected with local groups and programs to promote peace, including the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, an Urban Ministry Program, creating a Youth Summer Program; an Art Builds Community program, where youth paint murals on city walls.</p>
	<p><b><u>JERILYN STAPLETON</u></b> is a member of the National DoP Committee and CA DoP Team. She has been an activist all her life starting with Racial Justice, Union Organizing, on the front lines for the ERA and women's issues with National Organization for Women – NOW. She is passionate about ending violence against women and girls and about Restorative Justice as a means of settling conflicts nonviolently. She has served as her Los Angeles City Councilman's appointment to the Domestic Violence Task Force.</p>
	<p><b>(DoP 2020 Intern) <u>FERNANDO I. ANDRADE</u></b> founded Andrade &amp; Assoc. Consulting Services in 2009, which provides mediation, interpretation and advocacy for civil rights/human rights and public speaking. Andrade is a member of Mediators Beyond Borders Int'l., Community Liaison for the Latin Peace Officers Assoc. of GA, and former Chair Commissioner of Human Relations Commission of Gwinnett County GA. He will complete his master's in Int'l. Conflict Mgmt. and Peacemaking from Kennesaw State University this year, while doing an internship with the Peace Alliance DoP Campaign.</p>