



Pre-school Open House

For the 10th year, we hosted this event for parents in South Orange, Maplewood and neighboring communities. The evening opened with a brief presentation on how to select a pre-school/childcare service. Then, parents visited over 20 agencies at their information tables to learn about the different types of pre-school programs, schedules, fees, and teaching philosophies. And, a few toddlers got some hands-on pre-school experience!

Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner

People enjoyed great food, company and conversation in homes throughout our two towns while serving our mission of racial integration and true inclusion. Our volunteer hosts provided guests with the chance to meet new people of different backgrounds, to enjoy time getting to know one another, and to learn about the Coalition on Race.



Two Towns Sing-ins: Making a Joyful Noise in SOMA

Locals who love to sing produced some amazing music at the Burgdorff Center in Maplewood in our music workshops. The conductors brought so much knowledge and talent to the Sing-ins this year. All the participants left having made new connections with people they didn’t know before and having learned new music—including how to make some very interesting sounds!



Foundation, Community & Corporate Support—Thank You!

- Academic Resource Center
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Beyond Our Borders:

We Are Ambassadors for South Orange & Maplewood and for Integration

We were invited to a live panel discussion hosted by the **Brian Lehrer Show of WNYC-FM** at Montclair State University to talk about our towns in the decade after 9/11. Guest panelist Governor Kean gave accolades to our community for leadership in integration.

Leadership New Jersey invites leaders from across the state to a seminar on diversity. Each year the seminar is held in our towns and the Coalition's Executive Director Nancy Gagnier makes a presentation on intentional integration strategies for diverse suburbs.

We participated in the **Bipartisan Legislative Briefing on First Suburbs**, a follow-up to the White House’s Forum on Older Suburbs, Inclusion, Sustainability, & Economic Growth organized by Assemblywoman Mila Jasey.

The Briefing was an opportunity for the Coalition to share pro-integrative strategies for the benefit of older suburbs like South Orange & Maplewood.

Nancy Gagnier was a panelist on “Leading Community Building: Emerging Planning Concepts for Diverse Communities,” a forum sponsored by the NJ chapter of the **American Planners Association**. She presented the Coalition's strategies for creating diverse, integrated communities.



Audrey Rowe, WNYC Radio Host Brian Lehrer, & Nancy Gagnier



SOUTH ORANGE | MAPLEWOOD
COMMUNITY COALITION ON RACE

Our Vision: To achieve & sustain the benefits of a thriving racially integrated and truly inclusive community that serves as a model for the nation.

2011 Annual Report

Community is our middle name...



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Audrey Rowe, Program Director
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We celebrated 15 years of community service in 2011! Our passion for integration and inclusion is as strong as ever. We are so fortunate in South Orange and Maplewood to have dedicated resources committed to building a community in which people of different races and ethnicities live together, interact, form friendships, and participate fully in the community’s economic, political, civic, and cultural life.

The move from a diverse community to an integrated one is about continuous change. What did we do in 2011 to move from yesterday's diversity to today's integration? Take a look inside to see how we make those changes for our community. Whether it’s *Talking to Children about Race*, *Integration through the Arts*, *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner*, *Realtor Focus Groups*, or *Conversations on Race*, we work on integration throughout the year.

Our new annual report is greener: we are printing and mailing fewer copies, using instead electronic distribution channels—email, our website, social media—to spread the word about our mission. Visit our website for up to date information and to see how we plan move our mission forward in 2012. Friend us on Facebook and help us connect to even more friends interested in a truly inclusive community.

We are so grateful to all our donors (listed inside). We ask for your support—individual donations are our greatest financial resource—now more than in years past as we face changes in our funding sources. Giving is easy—just go to the donate button on www.twotowns.org. Or, call us anytime to discuss your giving plans.

Volunteers are the heart and soul of our community work. Join us for a project, a committee, or offer your professional skills! Each day we try to show that Community really is our middle name as we live out our mission. We are grateful to serve and would be honored to have you serve with us in 2012.

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What we did 2011...

10th Annual MLK Celebration

We celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the spirit of the Beloved Community! The CHS Special Dance Company performed a moving piece set to Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. Music was performed by Voices in Harmony, a choral ensemble that brings together people from multicultural and ecumenical backgrounds. The keynote speaker, Dr. Patrick Swift, praised the South Orange/Maplewood community for celebrating diversity and the Coalition for helping us all face race in meaningful and constructive ways.



Guest Speaker
Dr. Patrick Swift



Integration Theater for Children

Our theatrical production of Dr. Suess’s *The Sneetches* and *Green Eggs & Ham* was staged at the SOPAC Loft for over 400 children and parents. Children and adults alike were spellbound by the performances of actress Emily Zacharias, opera singer Lori Mirabal, tenor Keenan Buckley, (pictured left), orchestra leader Jim Buchanan and his fine musicians, and the CHS Special Dancers—all under the direction of Ruthanna Graves. “Our goal was to bring our message of integration out to a younger audience,” according to Program Director Audrey Rowe.

Through the Lens of Integration

In this *Integration through the Arts* program, community members took photos highlighting racial integration while learning about digital photography from local photographers. The participants said they gained knowledge about their cameras and about photo composition from the workshops. Most moving were their accounts of the wealth of images they found in our towns that reflect integration.



Talking to Children about Race

Dr. Diane Hughes, Professor of Applied Psychology at NYU, presented research on how parents talk (or fail to talk) to their children about race. “There is no manual for parents raising kids in an integrated community,” said Hughes "and the community itself doesn’t suffice for raising kids who respect and appreciate racial differences." The discussions that followed allowed parents to share their concerns and their stories of difficult questions and situations they have faced. All the tables presented their strategies to the group about keeping the race conversation alive at home.



Conversations on Race: NJ’s First Suburbs

We continued our long-standing tradition of holding Conversations on Race, a community-wide conversation on integration. We hosted a special screening of “The New Metropolis,” an award-winning film about the unique challenges faced by ‘first suburbs’ like ours. Directed by Andrea Torrice, the film uses compelling, personal stories to facilitate a national dialogue on intentional integration and how it helps communities handle demographic and economic change.



Celebrating Integration

Over 140 supporters attended the Celebrating Integration: Living Our Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion dinner to benefit the pro-integrative work of the Coalition and to honor Robert A. Marchman, a founding member and past chair of the board. Mr. Marchman praised the Coalition for its 15 year commitment to integration. He noted that "Our country is at a critical cross-road: we can take the path of fear or the path of hope. We travel the path of fear when we fear the ‘other’—a different race, gender, sexual preference, religion, or economic status. We take the path of hope in South Orange and Maplewood by working together to make substantive changes. There’s a real return on investment in supporting the Coalition.”



Guest Speaker Marc H. Morial & Honoree Robert A. Marchman



Program Director Audrey Rowe, 2011 Chair Chip Madsen, & Executive Director Nancy Gagnier



Coffee & Conversations with Realtors

The Marketing Committee convened 3 focus groups that included 15 real estate agents. The Committee met with the realtors to:

- Hear from their perspective about the state of the market
- Determine what kinds of printed materials realtors like to have and what we can put on our website to best serve prospective buyers
- Determine the best places to post our ads for highest impact

CHS Students Develop Top Ten Tips Brochure

Students at the Montrose campus of Columbia High School launched the *Top Ten Tips for Academic Achievement in High School*. This brochure, part of a series authored by the Schools Committee of the Coalition, is the first written and designed by students. The goal of the brochure is to educate Columbia students and the public about best practices for getting the most out of our high school.



Report to the Community: Integration Then & Now

Executive Director Nancy Gagnier opened the evening by tracing the history of our community’s commitment to integration. At least as early as the 1960’s, there have been community groups working on fair housing, bias, and race relations issues. Gagnier noted that “our two towns are anomalies of integration in a primarily segregated state and we still have work to do.” The Coalition Committees reported on how they, with the strength and devotion of volunteers, nurture our integration culture.



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