

# RITA SUZANNE BELLECI

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## QUALIFICATION SUMMARY

Experienced international and intercultural restorative justice leader and educator working successfully for over 26 years as grant manager, program director, trainer, teacher-trainer, consultant and peacebuilding practitioner.

- Proven success in creating, implementing and managing constructive programs in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the United States
- Experienced team member and leader, supervising and fostering warm-hearted and effective faculty, student and administrative teams in the US and abroad
- Accomplished and highly regarded teacher, leader and trainer, designing and leading workshops, seminars and courses in restorative practices for schools, diversity and identity, conflict transformation, multicultural team building, social justice, teacher education, values awareness, youth leadership and action planning for critical change.

## EDUCATION

### **Master of Arts, International and Intercultural Management**

SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont

Focus in *Building Multicultural Communities; Conflict Transformation; Youth Peacebuilding; Training*

### **Certificate, Conflict Transformation Across Cultures**

SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont

### **Post-Baccalaureate Diploma, Teaching English as a Foreign Language**

University of California, Berkeley: Highest Honours

### **Bachelor of Arts Degree, World History and Political Science**

University of California, Berkeley

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Greater Falls Community Justice Center, Bellows Falls, Vermont 2017 - Present      Executive Director**

Head the justice center; manage all grants; design and implement trainings in restorative justice and restorative practices in schools and community organizations; facilitate circle processes for conflict resolution and community building; supervise staff; coordinate volunteers; lead negotiation processes; manage budgets.

### **SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont and Washington, DC 2002 - Present      Adjunct Faculty**

Teach courses in Organizational Behavior: Effective Multicultural Teams, Intercultural Communications, Capstone Seminar to Master's Degree students. Receive top evaluations on course content and teaching methodology. Teach Sunni, Shia and Kurd university students in the Iraqi Youth Leadership Program, in DC, VT and in Iraq.

### **World Learning and SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont 2002 - 2019      Co-Creator/Faculty**

#### ***CONTACT Conflict Transformation Across Cultures***

Provide effective teaching, program development and cross-cultural understanding for approximately 60 – 80

adult peacebuilders in a four-week, intensive Peacebuilding Institute. Successfully work in partnership with faculty team leaders. Lead sessions on *Interfaith Ritual, Diversity & Tolerance, Conflict & Identity, Restorative Practices in Schools, Peace Education*. Counsel domestic and international students from regions in turmoil and/or post conflict.

**World Learning and SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont**

**Adjunct Faculty**

***CONTACT Graduate Certificate Program* 2013 – 2017**

Co-teach and co-lead the hybrid, Graduate Certificate in Peacebuilding for global practitioners. Lead two face-to-face components: one in Vermont and one in Rwanda or Sri Lanka. Organized the logistics; designed the courses, counseled students living and working in conflict regions. Taught Fall and Spring online. Skillfully juggled a diversity of student learning styles, academic ability and religious contexts where conflict may be rife.

**Community College of Vermont, Brattleboro 2010 – Present**

**Adjunct Faculty**

Design and teach courses in Conflict Resolution, Peace and Turmoil in the Modern World, Intercultural Communications, and Dimensions in Freedom. Meet with each student for feedback sessions, support & advising; earn high marks on faculty evaluations. Include service-learning component for increased community involvement

**Marlboro College, Marlboro, Vermont 2011 - 2013**

**Associate Director of World Studies**

Headed four concurrent programs while managing two large grants. Designed and led trainings in cross-cultural adjustment, restorative practices, reentry skills and global internships. Advanced international recruitment and global partnerships. Counseled domestic & international students, organized trips abroad. Managed SEVIS s

**Los Medanos College, Pittsburg, California 2007 – 2009**

**Consultant; Program Designer and Director**

Project 1: Researched, advised and facilitated the transformation of the Student Services Department to reflect the changing demographics of the multi-ethnic community. Tasked to help staff develop intercultural competencies that will in turn help the department to re-design services they provide.

Project 2: Researched, planned, created and managed the *Grow Your Own Teachers* program for a college campus in connection with the City of Pittsburg. Created diagnostic tools, conducted extensive interviews of stakeholders. Prepared in-depth, written reports based on the above findings. Led trainings for K-12th grade teachers and staff in Restorative Practices in three school districts county-wide.

**Educational Testing Service (ETS), Princeton, NJ 2005 – 2006 Project & Curriculum Designer; Senior Author**

Wrote three teacher training manuals published by ETS, based on a successful training project I co-designed and co-led for high school teachers in the Jenin Governorate of Palestine. Designed new training materials, edited existing materials, met daily writing deadlines. Worked well with editor and junior collaborator in nurturing a team spirit of congeniality, creativity and mutual respect. Lived, worked in Palestine and in VT.

**Arab American University of Jenin, Palestine 2003 – 05 Project Designer/Teacher Trainer/Assoc. Professor**

Designed curriculum and led trainings for a US State Department funded project in Northern Palestine with ETS and the Palestinian Ministry of Education. Created a Training of Trainers course, training top student-teachers to become trainers in Phase II of the program. Taught courses in EFL and Conflict Transformation to Palestinian university students. Co-founded campus *Nonviolent Resistance Club*

**USAID/Karuna Ctr for Peacebuilding/St. Katerina Werk, Bosnia & Macedonia 2002 Training Designer/Trainer**

Designed and led Leadership, Advocacy & Social Change seminars for Bosnian, Serbian, Albanian and Macedonian youth. Created a safe atmosphere for the development of self-exploration, values awareness and trust re-building for youth exposed to trauma.

**Keene State College, Keene, New Hampshire 2002****Adjunct Faculty**

Taught Communications (cross-cultural, interpersonal, conflict, small group and leadership) to university students. Created experiential learning activities for reluctant learners, counseled students.

**SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont 2001 – 2002****Admissions Counselor**

Counseled undergraduate students and working professionals as to their goals and aspirations. Attended recruitment fairs representing SIT. Managed travel account budgets, a large database, marketing.

**SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont 1999 – 2000****Ombudsperson**

Created and maintained a supportive atmosphere of trust and safety. Experienced in using several multicultural community-building models, proven facilitation, mediation, student advising and peer counseling skills.

**College of Micronesia, Federated States of Micronesia 1996 – 1998****Associate Professor**

Using Experiential Learning methodology, trained future TEFL teachers. Developed and led Experiential Education workshops for high school teachers sponsored by Federal Department of Education. Taught undergraduate courses.

**California State Senate, Oakland, California 1989 - 1993, 1996****Senate Field Representative**

Senate and constituent liaison, aide and advocate. Resolved conflicts between the Senator's constituents and government agencies. Advised the Senator on public policy. Represented the Senator at public and private functions.

**GLOBAL ENGLISH TEACHING**

Florence Italy, The British Institute of Florence

Lisbon and Porto, Portugal, American Language Institute

California Piedmont City Adult School; The Academy Elementary School (Spanish)

Madrid, Spain, USIA/American Embassy School (ACHNA)

**SELECTED TRAININGS, WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS DESIGNED AND LED**

"A Daily Gratitude Practice: Encouraging a Resilient Life," Brattleboro, Vermont

"Active Listening for Deeper Understanding," Pakistani Educators at SIT Graduate Institute

"Iraqi Youth Leadership: Social Change and Leadership Skills," Erbil, Iraq

"Conflict Resolution Skills for Interdepartmental Faculty," Los Medanos College, California

"Peacebuilding and Peace Leadership Skills Building," Arava Institute, Israel

"Cycles of Revenge and Reconciliation," Sanski Most, Bosnia

"Adult Group Dynamics and Problem Solving," Jenin, Palestine

Hobbies: Hiking to pristine bodies of water, growing tomatoes, sharing a love of young adult fiction with my son!

**REFERENCE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**