

THE PARTNERS

YWCA Orange County

YWCA Orange County is a feminist, anti-racist, social justice organization dedicated to our national mission of eliminating racism and empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. WYCA Orange County offers programs addressing women's economic empowerment, racial justice, women's health and community advocacy.

The Orange County Human Rights Commission

The Orange County Human Rights Commission's primary purpose is to foster mutual respect and understanding among all groups in the county, including, but not limited to: racial, religious, gender, nationality, disability, and LGBTQ. They coordinate and facilitate education and awareness events in the community, in order to promote understanding of equity, acceptance, unity, and humanity.

The Mid Hudson Social Studies Council

The Mid Hudson Social Studies Council is a educational non-profit organization, affiliated with the New York State Council for the Social Studies. They provide educational and/or informational workshops, and keep members informed about what is happening on the state level with regard to Social Studies programs. They also provide members with lesson plans, book reviews, institutes and workshops for their professional use, via their newsletter.

The Hudson Valley Writing Project

The Hudson Valley Writing Project (HVWP) at the State University of New York at New Paltz is a professional development organization whose purpose is to improve the teaching of writing and to promote literacy development at all levels of education, preschool through university.

Contact Information

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A collaboration between:

Mid-Hudson Social Studies Council

Hudson Valley Writing Project



eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

TEACHING TOUGH TOPICS

A collaboration between YWCA Orange County, the Orange County Human Rights Commission, the Mid-Hudson Social Studies Council and the Hudson Valley Writing Project.



TEACHING AND LEARNING WITH
INTENTIONALITY, INCLUSIVITY AND
UNITY AT THE FOREFRONT.

THE PROGRAM

Teaching Tough Topics is a five week professional development course for educators, that explores strategies to approach important contemporary issues in our classrooms, including LGBTQ equality, racism, and immigration.



“The free and open discussion of topics that can be very Uncomfortable to discuss in the classroom (or anywhere for that matter) was refreshing...I particularly enjoyed the specific topic speakers, who shared their personal experiences in a way that helped me to more clearly understand the inequity and unfairness that surrounds these issues.”
-Cynthia Betters
Science Teacher
Cornwall



THE PARTICIPANTS

Middle, high school and college classrooms should be the setting for powerful exchanges regarding human rights and social justice. When students are given the opportunity to engage in civic discourse, they are better prepared to take an active role in a democratic society and become practiced in the art of critical thinking, leading to greater academic and personal achievement.

"I really want my students to learn how to take the perspective of their peers and listen to the opinions and thoughts of others. This course gave me strategies to encourage students to engage with one another with an open mind. I also learned a great deal about the issues we explored."

-Torrance Harvey
Social Studies Teacher
Newburgh Free Academy

THE WORKSHOPS

This workshop series is designed to provide teachers with support for teaching contemporary issues and promoting civic discourse. We do this through several strands:

- Issue Exploration: Participants will engage in participatory sessions including a basic overview of diversity & inclusion, LGBTQ equality, racism, and immigration.
- Inclusive Practices: We will explore strategies and practices that create a safe, welcoming classroom environment of mutual respect.
- Teachable Moments: Educators will discuss strategies for addressing issues when they arise in classrooms.
- Meeting the Standards: Together, we will try out and reflect on student-centered literacy strategies for engaging students in civic discourse. All of the strategies presented are aligned with the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards and the Common Core Learning Standards for grades 7-12.

TEACHING TOUGH TOPICS
