

**From:** Kathryn Wasserman Davis Collaborative in Conflict Transformation ConflictTransformation@middlebury.edu  
**Subject:** CT Collaborative Newsletter, Spring 2024  
**Date:** May 7, 2024 at 4:03 PM  
**To:** sbohler@middlebury.edu



## Letter from the Director



Conflict Transformation Skills (INTD 1259) students and faculty.

Photo credit: Sarah Stroup

*I learned that healing and amending is possible without retribution or revenge.  
In fact, in most cases in our world, it works even better.*

These hopeful words come from a student in restorative justice leader sujatha baliga's Winter term course. Conflict transformation and restorative justice offer compasses to help us navigate conflicts and harm. Two years into the CT Collaborative's work at Middlebury, I am heartened that our students are seeing possibilities for accountability and repair as a way to disrupt cycles of harm and create space for more constructive interactions.

Below, you will read about student experiences, community partnerships, professional development, and more. Next week, we will wrap up a year of CT work at the Institute in Monterey with a seminar on Friday, May 10. Read more below and [RSVP here](#)! In late May, our CT “pillar heads” from across Middlebury will gather to deepen our knowledge and reflect on the successes and challenges of these first two years. This summer, we will dig into a trove of data that will help with benchmarking our progress and informing the evolution of our work. We are building skills for students, faculty, and staff while constantly asking how those might humbly contribute to addressing the needs of our many communities.

We are also preparing for the year ahead, including the 2024 general election in the United States. One important lesson from these first two years is that you cannot wait until the hottest moments to talk about the hard things. While most Americans report that politics feels divisive and exhaustive, it is possible to structure curious and rewarding conversations. [Using our new videos and discussion guides](#), you can host a *good talk* about politics in your own community. Our Good Talks 2024 event series was featured in an [April research report](#) from the Constructive Dialogue Institute, full of helpful examples for maintaining community while welcoming wide ranging political discourse.

The many big projects of the CT Collaborative are built on individual talents and relationships of substance. I am so lucky to work alongside kind and talented Middlebury people, seeing their exceptional contributions to student learning that enriches our many communities. If you want to learn more about their work and its connection to CT, please reach out, follow us on [Instagram](#), or listen to our podcast [Opening Up](#).

With gratitude and hope,

Sarah Stutz

## Preparing for Intercultural Experiences in Summer 2024



During History in Translation 2023, the University of Waikato delegation shares story, song and te reo Māori ('the Māori language'), with the program cohort.

Photo credit: Kristen Mullins.

Undergraduate students will have **eight** different options for [experiential learning](#) opportunities this summer in connection to conflict transformation. On May 3, many of these students will meet for a pre-departure workshop at the CCE where they will reflect on their conflict styles, their comfort and skills in engaging across difference, and their initial understandings of conflict.

One of the several programs supported by the Center for Community

One of the several programs supported by the Center for Community Engagement is [History in Translation](#) – a deliberately intercultural, cohort-based summer series that addresses a new theme each year. History in Translation 2024 will be a work, college, and career mentorship program. Undergraduate participants from Middlebury, Trinity, and Yale will learn alongside and mentor high school students who are multilingual learners of English and have recently arrived in the United States. High school participants are being recruited through relationships established via the [Jiran](#) program and the New Britain (CT) YWCA.

When not engaging with the high schoolers, undergraduate students will participate in workshops to help them in their post-secondary mentoring. Workshop topics will include:

- US refugee and immigration policy
- Social services and education opportunities for newcomer families
- College access mentoring
- Language education
- Intercultural communication in applied contexts, and
- Conflict transformation in intercultural contexts.

## CT Teaching and Research in Cameroon







Class covers CT case studies of micro and meso conflicts affecting women.

This spring, the Middlebury School in Cameroon has introduced a new CT course, *The Roles and Experiences of Women in Transforming Conflict in Post-Colonial Cameroon*. Taught by the School director Christiane Magnido, this course describes and analyzes Cameroonian women as changemakers. Using the case study of internally displaced women from ongoing conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, students identify and analyze transformative approaches to political conflicts, learn from women changemakers, and participate in community-based efforts to transform the conflict. Conflict is discussed across numerous themes such as environment, education, food and water, economy, displacement, and public health.

Through academic writing and field-based learning with local and international NGOs, students have observed and reflected on how women negotiate freedom, re-integration, stability and reemergence for themselves, their families, and their communities in periods of conflict. The course began with students pairing literary foundations in CT and ethical community engagement with a survey of past conflicts in Cameroon, with a focus on women's resilience and empowerment. Students then learned from guest speakers about current women-led CT efforts in Cameroon. In a culminating project, students are selecting one conflict theme for a final paper. These projects are designed to use community-based global learning that supports student learning while also benefiting community partners.

## Partnership and Connection at MIIS



Composer John Wineglass (right) is joined by fellow musicians in performing  
"Big Sur: The Night Sun" at MIIS.

Photo credit: Brian Fagerstrom.

As the spring semester at MIIS wraps up, please join us on Friday, May 10 for our annual seminar, "[Transforming Conflict: An Interdisciplinary Conversation](#)." Follow the link to see the agenda and then please [RSVP here](#).

One incredible partnership was on display in March when MIIS, in collaboration with California State University, Monterey Bay, hosted the [California Indian Heritage Center \(CIHC\)](#) Central California Outreach Event. The CIHC will be a "center of statewide significance for cultural preservation, learning and

exchange, land stewardship based on Native American values, and a place to engage all visitors in celebrating the living cultures of California tribe communities.” Amaktoolik Studios, an Indigenous-owned consultancy group, has been organizing over thirty-five outreach events across California, to engage diverse Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities around the design, features, and foci of the planned Center.

The event began with local Indigenous community partners sharing blessings and music, followed by a performance of Emmy-award winning composer John Wineglass’ moving composition “Big Sur: The Night Sun”. Then followed by a delicious Indigenous-inspired brunch, and community engagement activities facilitated by Amaktoolik Studios’ Brian Fagerstrom and Lisa Jeliffe. On March 7, Amaktoolik Studios representatives engaged with Conflict Transformation Fellows and Middlebury faculty and staff, sharing their process of engaging in the complex, important work of critical community-based dialogue with an eye towards histories, present, and future.

## **Professional Development at the College in Dialogic Practices**





ELP's Opening Workshop with Essential Partners, February 8 and 9 at Kirk Center

The Engaged Listening Project faculty program is near the end of its Spring 2024 cohort, and applications have just closed for the Fall semester. The 18 fellows come from many departments and offices, including Psychology, History, Biology, Environmental Studies, Writing and Rhetoric, Mathematics and Statistics, Geography, Sociology, International and Global Studies, French, Japanese, Economics, Center for Careers and Internships, Center for Community Engagement, and the Scott Center. This February, with [Essential Partners](#), we introduced the main principles of a dialogic classroom in a two-day program. Over the semester, these fellows have met regularly, led by faculty facilitators--  
Will Nash (American Studies), Michele Biancosino (Theater), Lida Winfield



with Nash (American Studies), Michele Bianco (Theater), Lida Wheeler (Dance), and Chong-Suk Han (Sociology). The cohort creates a space to experiment with new tools and skills and provide feedback to each other. These faculty and staff support each other as they create dialogic moments in their identified spaces (classrooms, labs, intern teams), explore values they are committed to as teachers and leaders, and specify values to help them build community.

## **An Energizing Winter Institute for K-12 Teachers**



Participants at the inaugural Bread Loaf School of English Winter Institute: Teaching, Writing, and Acting across Difference. Photo credit: BLSE.

In our Winter newsletter, we shared our excitement about the then-upcoming, first-ever Winter Institute at the Bread Loaf School of English (BLSE). The February weekend was a dynamic weekend of professional education, themed

around “Teaching, Writing, and Acting across Difference,” and it was a full house! Fifty K-12 teachers came to the Bread Loaf mountain campus, and 70% of the attendees were joining the School of English community for the first time. Led by veteran BLSE faculty and staff, the group engaged collaboratively throughout the snowy weekend in discussions of inclusive teaching practices. Workshops and other interactive sessions focused on various modes of visual, verbal, historical, and theatrical storytelling. Participants experimented with innovative strategies for cultivating voice and presence within and across diverse learning communities. Institute attendees and faculty described the experience as “transformative,” “energizing,” “rejuvenating,” and “fun.” An exciting (and, we anticipate, permanent) addition to the School of English’s summer programs, the Winter Institute has invited a new cohort of K-12 teachers into Middlebury’s conflict transformation conversations and will continue to extend the School’s reach as a KWDC partner.

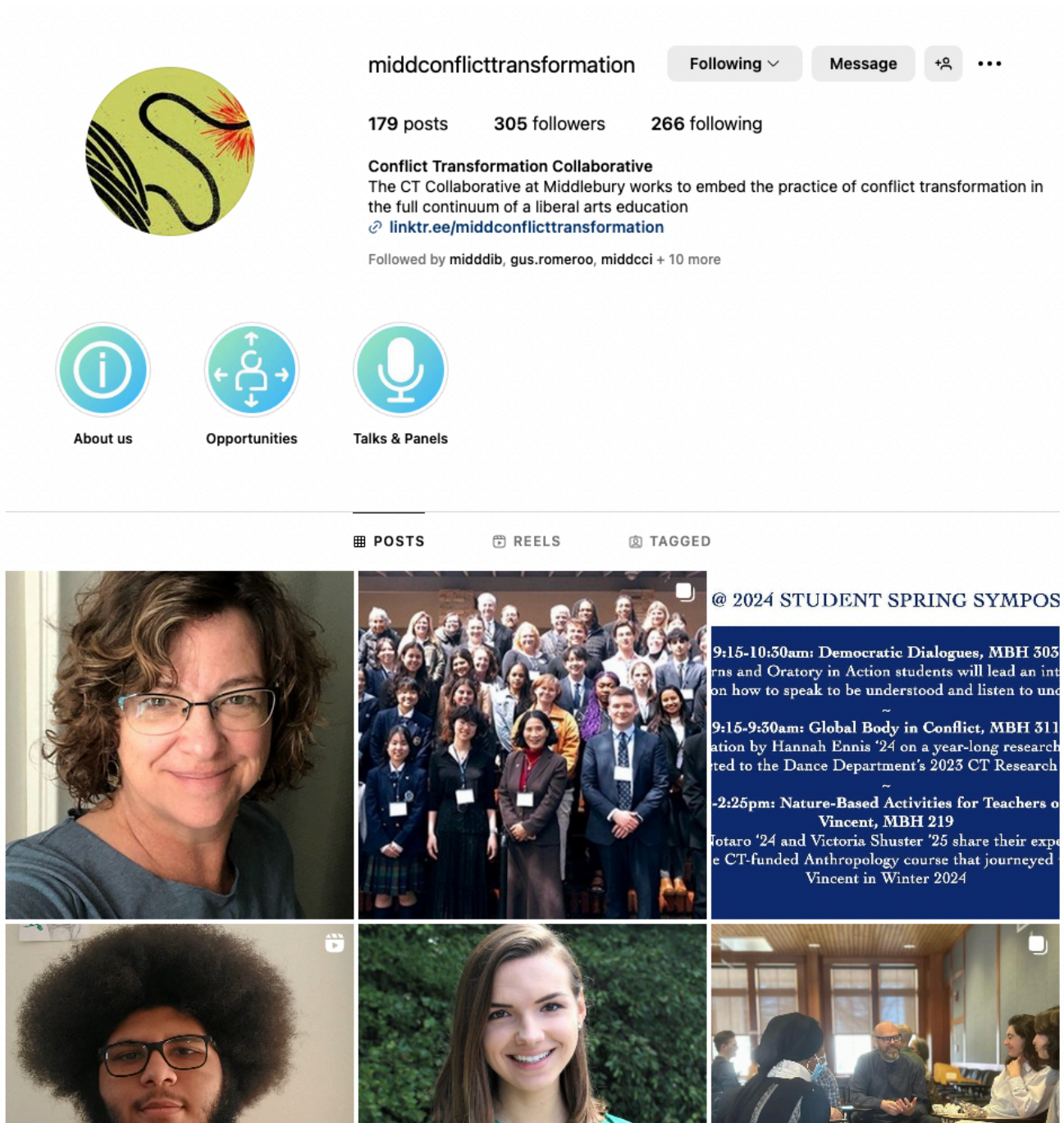
Looking forward, this summer BLSE will offer three courses within its Teaching, Writing, and Acting for Change Curriculum: “Transcultural Literacies,” “Creative Practice: Reimagining the Classroom,” and (new this year) “Zora Neal Hurston: Anthropologist, Folklorist, Novelist, Change Agent.” These courses will explore the ways that storytelling gives life to cultural understanding and culturally diverse classrooms. In addition, July 11-14 BLSE will host a retreat on the Bread Loaf campus for the BLTN [Next Generation Leadership Network](#) (BLTN NextGen), a cohort of 30 youth and teacher-mentors from ten different sites across the country, who collaborate year-round on advocacy projects that are themselves centered on powerful forms of storytelling. The centerpiece of the retreat will be a screening of films created by BLTN NextGen youth and allies through the BLTN “What’s the Story?” collaborative ([What’s the Story? The Young Filmmakers’ Social Action Team](#)). These stunning documentaries take on locally and nationally pressing social issues, such as indigenous rights and

representation, mental health, food insecurity, and climate-change.

## That's all... for now!

For continuous updates, check out our [website](#) and Instagram:

[@middconflicttransformation](#)



The image shows the Instagram profile for 'middconflicttransformation'. The profile picture is a circular logo with a green background, a black stylized 'S' shape, and a red burst of lines on the right. The bio states: 'Conflict Transformation Collaborative. The CT Collaborative at Middlebury works to embed the practice of conflict transformation in the full continuum of a liberal arts education. linktr.ee/middconflicttransformation'. It shows 179 posts, 305 followers, and 266 following. Below the bio are three icons: 'About us' (info icon), 'Opportunities' (people icon), and 'Talks & Panels' (microphone icon). The post grid shows a mix of photos and text. The first row includes a portrait of a woman with glasses and a large group photo of students and faculty. The second row includes a portrait of a man with an afro, a portrait of a woman, and a photo of people in a meeting.

middconflicttransformation Following Message + ...

179 posts 305 followers 266 following

**Conflict Transformation Collaborative**  
The CT Collaborative at Middlebury works to embed the practice of conflict transformation in the full continuum of a liberal arts education  
[linktr.ee/middconflicttransformation](#)  
Followed by middidib, gus.romeroo, middcci + 10 more

About us Opportunities Talks & Panels

POSTS REELS TAGGED

@ 2024 STUDENT SPRING SYMPOS

9:15-10:30am: Democratic Dialogues, MBH 303  
rns and Oratory in Action students will lead an int  
on how to speak to be understood and listen to und

~

9:15-9:30am: Global Body in Conflict, MBH 311  
ation by Hannah Ennis '24 on a year-long research  
ted to the Dance Department's 2023 CT Research

~


-2:25pm: Nature-Based Activities for Teachers o  
Vincent, MBH 219  
Totaro '24 and Victoria Shuster '25 share their expe  
e CT-funded Anthropology course that journeyed  
Vincent in Winter 2024






The Conflict Transformation Instagram page.

Contact Us



Follow us on Instagram



Kathryn Wasserman Davis Collaborative in Conflict Transformation  
152 Maple Street Suite 203 Middlebury, Vermont 05753  
ConflictTransformation@middlebury.edu

 Middlebury

[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt Out](#) using TrueRemove™  
Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.  
View this email [online](#).

152 Mapel Road Suite 203 | Middlebury, VT 05753 US

This email was sent to sbohler@middlebury.edu.  
*To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.*



