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"Hate has to stop now." Report from the Conroy Hate Crime Sentencing in Suffolk County

Last week, the Not In Our Town film crew [traveled to Suffolk County, NY](#) to continue our coverage of community response to the hate crime killing of Marcelo Lucero, an Ecuadorean immigrant who was attacked by seven local high school students and stabbed to death by one of them on November 8, 2008.

The story of young people roaming the streets of a town looking for "Mexicans" to beat up shocked the nation, and the case has become an alarming manifestation of the increasing animosity toward immigrants in this country.

Our story looks at the effects of the hate crime attacks on Marcelo Lucero and other immigrants in Suffolk County, and on how a diverse group of people in this community are trying to repair the divisions in the aftermath of this crime.

Visit [NIOT.org](#) for [an update from our Suffolk County trip](#), and [watch video](#) of Joselo Lucero's moving remarks after the sentencing.

Community Conversation: What Do You Do When You Witness Racism or Intolerance?

You're walking down the street, and witness an act of racism. How do you respond? One of our Facebook fans posted this question to our Wall, and an honest, thoughtful conversation ensued. You can [read the full discussion](#) and share your thoughts on the [NIOT Facebook page](#).



- *"I get involved if I think I can do some good to dissolve the situation. If I think someone, including myself, could get hurt or violent, I call the cops. Silence is usually not an option." (Briana L.)*
- *"It's not always easy to prosecute bias crimes if witnesses do not come forward and agree to testify. If you*

can intervene safely and help calm it down, please do." (Kitty O.)

- "I think that one question to ask in these situations, is 'who could I have positively affected, and what would it have taken to accomplish this effect?'" (Paul S.)



New Local Lesson: Turning Hate Into Opportunity in West Virginia

What can a community do when a hate group comes to town and targets a wide variety of organizations, each of which have different ideas of how to respond -- or not?

That's [what happened in Charleston and Wheeling, West Virginia](#) this March. The Westboro Baptist Church hate group announced it would picket Jewish and Catholic institutions, a local university, and, as a last-minute addition designed for maximum emotional anguish, the Montcoal Mine, where a dozen miners had just lost their lives.

How could the community respond, particularly when some people preferred to keep a low profile, while others wanted to stage a loud counter-protest? Who could even lead such a community response, given the different values of the targeted groups? **Find out how West Virginians explored these issues in our [new Local Lesson, "Turning Hate into Opportunity."](#)**

The Working Group

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