

Hello NIOT community!

We're excited to announce a webinar that will help bring Not In Our Town and Not In Our School materials into classrooms. A Not In Our School webinar about our upcoming film, *Not In Our Town: Light in the Darkness*, takes place Aug. 15. Teachers, make your schools safer and get college credit [here](#). This is the first in a series of Not In Our School webinars.

Over the past two weeks, we've heard stories from across the country of communities coming together to make a positive statement in the aftermath of a hate crime.

In Kentucky and Florida, hate-motivated vandalism raises questions of diversity, acceptance, and taking a proactive stance against hate.

The July 22 Norway killings sparked global attention as people around the world mourn the loss of a generation of leaders who embraced multiculturalism.

As always, thank you for helping us stop hate. Together.

The Not In Our Town team

Bringing NIOS to Your Classroom: Sign-up to Participate in a NIOS Webinar, Starting Aug. 15.

Please join Becki Cohn-Vargas, who helped launch NIOS Palo Alto, and William Paris, the Not In Our Town School and Community Engagement Coordinator, for a webinar about a new PBS documentary you can use to address issues of bullying and anti-immigrant intolerance, and promote safety and inclusion in your school. The webinar takes place on Aug. 15 at 4:30 pm PST.

[*Not In Our Town: Light in the Darkness*](#) tells the story of residents of a Long Island village taking action after a local immigrant is killed in a hate crime attack by seven teenagers. While starkly revealing the trauma of hate, the film provides a blueprint for people who want to do something before intolerance turns to violence. The film airs nationwide on PBS stations on Sept. 21.

The 75-minute webinar will feature:

- A preview of *Light in the Darkness* and ideas for showing and discussing the film in your school community.
- Ways you can participate in the *Light in the Darkness* Week



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July 26: The 21st Anniversary of the American Disabilities Act



Last year, a group of disability rights advocates marched in honor of the American Disabilities Act. Eliza Riley, diagnosed with cerebral palsy, was inspired to take action after being called a derogatory name by one of her peers.

In honor of this year's anniversary, we share her [video profile](#).

of Action, Sept. 18-21.

- Not In Our School short films, activity guides and lesson plans designed to spark dialogue and action about bullying, cyberbullying, diversity/multiculturalism, stereotypes and prejudice.
- Information on the monthly Creating Safe and Inclusive Schools Webinar Series, which focuses on ways schools and teachers can help staff, students, and communities learn to respond to bullying and stand up to hate. Graduate semester units are available.

To sign up for the Aug. 15 webinar, please visit the [NIOS Educator's Network](#), or contact wparis@niot.org for more information.

Berea, Ky. Community Helps Victims of Hate-Motivated Vandalism

"We want to teach kids in school, to say we're not going to tolerate this. When the mayor visits you, when people bend over backwards, it means so much."

-Melanie Stamper

In July, we received word that an interracial couple in Berea, Ky. had been the victims of hate-motivated vandalism. We wanted to share this couple's story and highlight how positive action can propel communities toward being proactive in the fight against intolerance.



On July 7, Damon Dunson and Melanie Stamper had their car spray-painted with racial slurs and a warning to get out of the neighborhood. The couple said they were both angry and hurt by the incident, but they are heartened by the town's support.

The day after the incident, about 40 concerned residents invited the couple to a potluck to

discuss "how horrible" it was and come up with "concrete ways to combat this", said Mae Suramek. She set up a fund at the U.S. Bank, which quickly filled up with donations toward the \$500 insurance deductible the couple would need to repair their car.

Berea town mayor, Steven Connelly, called the action "cowardly and deplorable."

Concerned residents urged the Berea City Council to look beyond this isolated issue and consider the underlying issues of racism and discrimination in their community. The council is now considering creating a human rights commission that would investigate all acts of discrimination and an ordinance that would further address issues of discrimination.

The response of Berea residents is an honorable one, felt not just by the couple harmed by this hate-motivated crime, but by the whole town.

Read the [full story](#) adapted from the [Lexington Herald-Leader](#) at NIOT.org.

Police and Community Members in Mount Dora, Fla. Take Action After Synagogue is Vandalized

A Florida community banded together after a new synagogue planning to

open in a couple of weeks was vandalized.

According to dailycommercial.com, citizens of Mount Dora stepped forward to denounce the hate crime. The Mount Dora police department, determined to bring justice to the perpetrators, have arrested 20-year-old Cory Gallman, the alleged leader of the group who spray-painted the temple.



Police are still on the lookout for another man and a teen suspected to be involved, but have also identified two juveniles, a boy and a girl, who will be charged in the hate crime.

Mount Dora Police Chief T. Randall and Mount Dora residents are sending the message that these bias crimes will not be tolerated. The juvenile boy's own mother even insisted that he confess to his involvement in the crime.

More than 100 residents turned out to help remove the graffiti and Mount Dora Mayor, Melissa DeMarco praised the outpouring of support from the community which included donations from residents who wish to help the synagogue install lights and security cameras.

Rabbi Chayyim G.Z. Solomon expressed his gratitude to the community for their support, saying, "To the city, the people, the mayor, the chief of police and all of the officers who were so kind to my congregants and my family, a thousand times, 'thank you.'"

We shared this story with our Facebook friends. Here's what one of them had to say:

"Hooray for Mount Dora, and the 100 citizens who turned out to repaint the walls of the synagogue. And to the mom who insisted that her high-school age son turn himself in and tell the truth!"

Full Article: [Suspects Named in Synagogue Vandalism](#)

Norway Shootings and National Action Reminds Us of How NIOT Began: Send Your Message of Support to Norway

"The only response that has ever worked is resistance and people standing together-teachers and clergy, writers and factory workers, baristas and executives, hard hats and soccer moms."

-Patrice O'Neill, Not In Our Town Executive Producer

On July 22, Norway drew global attention as the world received word that a bomb had been exploded in the center of a political district in Oslo, and that the bomber had reached an island where youth campers were lodged. The killer targeted the youth group because of their affiliation to the ruling Labor Party and their belief in multiculturalism.



NIOT Executive Producer Patrice O'Neill wrote about the Norway killings and its parallel to the hate-motivated tragedies of Sept. 11 and The Oklahoma City Bombing of 1995. Her op-ed, "[Norway and All of Us: Send Your Message of Support](#)" urges the NIOT community to make a pledge of resistance to hate and support for the people of Norway.

Just days after the massacre, thousands of Norwegian citizens took to the streets of Oslo in a national act of solidarity. Send your message of support for the people of Norway and commit to standing up against hate at today.

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