

EDITORS' PREFACE

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In the front matter of Tom Lickona's 1983 book on parenting for character, *Raising Good Children*, is an anonymous statement, "A child is the only known substance from which a responsible adult can be made." This is no small matter, as explained by Linda Creed's line, "I believe that children are the future," from the song she co-wrote with Michael Masser, "The Greatest Love of All." As editors of the *Journal of Character Education*, we further believe that there is no moral future without moral people. And as Lickona and Creed are telling us, moral people do not grow on trees and cannot be requisitioned from the commissary or supply cabinet. Heraclitus long ago opined that, "Character is destiny." So we came to realize that just as morality, writ broadly, relies on the morality of the people, peace specifically does likewise. Just as there is not moral future without moral people, there is no peace without peaceful people. And just as children are the only known substance from which moral people can be made, peace depends on the nurturance of peace in children.

We are aware that this is far from a revelation, at least to many educators, philosophers,

political activists, psychologists, and others who worked so hard to promote peace through education. Both of us have worked closely with such people. Jonathan Tirrell has worked on a broad set of projects in forgiveness and reconciliation in Rwanda, El Salvador, Uganda, and South Africa. Marvin Berkowitz has worked with a set of individuals and organizations in Colombia, including CoSchool and Aulas en Paz (Classrooms in Peace). We have watched our colleagues promote peace in very difficult parts of the world for a long time. John Graham, co-founder of the character education initiative "The Giraffe Project," has been promoting peace and conflict resolution in "hot spots" around the globe both professionally and personally. Peter Yarrow, to whom we dedicate this issue as he has passed away on January 7, 2025, spent so much of his career with the folk music trio "Peter, Paul and Mary" using music to promote peace around the world, more recently through his organization Operation Respect. Professor Zehavit Gross has been teaching classes of Israeli and Palestinian students in moral education for many years. Professor Andrew Garrod has used locally

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resourced theatrical productions to promote solidarity across violent ethnic divides in the Balkans and the South Pacific. This is just a partial list of the magnificent work being done to resolve conflict, end wars, promote reconciliation, and otherwise cultivate peace in the world. So much of this work is embedded in character education. An ancient Hebrew value is *Tikkun Olam*, which means to heal the world. The idea is that we are all obligated to heal the flaws in the world, to contribute to making it better than it is.

So we envisioned a special issue of the JCE focusing on this topic. And we turned to Andrea Bustamante, who studies in Colombia with Professor Enrique Chaux, one of the architects of *Aulas en Paz*, and who came to the

U.S. to earn her Ph.D. focusing on character education, with editor Marvin Berkowitz, so she could go back to Colombia and help her nation heal and move forward from a half century of violence and war. She understood that working in schools to promote moral, peaceful citizens was critical to transforming a nation that had known terror and violence for so long. She gladly agreed to serve as the Guest Editor of this issue. We put out a call for papers on this topic and what follows is what it yielded.

It is our hope that her work and the work of those who are included in this issue of the JCE will inspire others to join this most noble work of people building (nurturing character development) and world-building (*Tikkun Olam*, healing the world).