

Revive Civility and Respect Cities

“Revive Civility and Respect Cities” is a nonpartisan program of the University of Arizona’s [National Institute for Civil Discourse](#) (NICD) that works with and encourages communities to restore our values of civility, respect for each other, and respect for facts.

The Revive Civility and Respect Cities program kicks-off with a Mayor’s proclamation, declaring a specific month as that cities’ Revive Civility and Respect Month. **There are flexible and scalable ways for Mayors and Councils to be involved in any or all steps** (see below).

With the Mayor’s support, NICD works with community organizers to provide outreach to the local community. Community members come together to sign a Personal Pledge and participate in a living room or community conversation and/or a Text, Talk, Revive Civility and Respect activity.

The input and ideas provided by community members can be used to develop the next phase of revive civility action in the City. The results are presented to the local media and elected officials, and NICD provides support for community action moving forward.

The Revive Civility and Respect Cities program first started in Tucson, Arizona. Working with Mayor Rothschild, who proclaimed May 2017 as Tucson’s Revive Civility and Respect Month. The program kicked off with a Revive Civility event in April, 2017, with Tucsonans participating in Revive Civility activities during May and will continue throughout 2017 and 2018.

In June, 2017, Mayors from around the country joined Mayor Rothschild in unanimously voting to support “Mayors United to Revive Civility and Respect” at the US Conference of Mayor’s annual meeting in Miami (see Appendix A).

Step 1: Start with Mayoral Proclamation

The Mayoral Proclamation provides leadership support for the Revive Civility and Respect Month in the community. See Appendix B for a proclamation sample template
Steps are scalable from easy/light engagement to deep/more robust engagement:

Light



- Pass Proclamation and announce through media/social media
- Media interviews/work to elevate stories of civility in your community
- Dedicate a day or meeting where strengthening civility is core on the agenda
- Conduct city meetings, adapt policies utilizing civil discourse and deep listening

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Step 2: Encourage Community Members To Take a Personal Pledge

The Personal Pledge is a tool for use in community outreach that outlines the actions and activities community members can do to help revive civility in their community. See Appendix C for the Personal Pledge language.

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- Invite community members to take the pledge via social media
- Email city lists inviting individuals to take personal pledge
- Media event calling on community members to take the pledge
- Run a competition - engage neighborhoods/organizations to sign up the most personal pledges (they can be eligible for NICD community mini-grant)
- Provide a “Reviving Civility and Respect Award” to citizen(s), neighborhood(s), businesses and/or organizations (NICD organizing materials available)

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Step 3: Encourage Participation in Revive Civility Conversations

Basic discussion guides and training materials that are easy to use, are available to assist those who wish come together and talk about how to revive civility and respect in their community. These are some of

- One on One ("Unlikely Friendship) Conversations--The 5 minute video "Unlikely Friendships" shows a model for how connections can form across deep political differences; that video should be distributed widely along with basic information about how individuals can do something similar in their community; the conversations that take place when pairs get together will explore areas of common interest and discuss how to promote more civility and respect.
- Small Group Dialogues--These small group (6-12 people) conversations will bring together people of different views who usually don't have much contact with each other to talk about how to increase civility and respect. They can take place in living rooms, around a dinner table or in a church or community office. A special focus will be on pairing groups that have something in common, but that have different political views (i.e. church members from different denominations, voters from different parties, students from different organizations, etc.)
- Trainings on Skills for Civility - Trainings of different lengths (1-4 sessions) are available for those who want to develop skills needed to listen across differences, practice and promote civility in the community; these trainings can be for people who have divergent views or for groups with similar political views who want to reach out to others.
- Larger Scale Conversation – these are large group sessions where different neighborhoods and populations come together around a community issue or concern. The community conversations include skill-building exercises for participants to learn how to have a civil conversation across differences.
- Text, Talk, and Revive Civility and Respect- This is an activity that uses text messaging to facilitate a face-to-face conversation on reviving civility. It is particularly effective as an activity for high school or college aged students. Participants gather in small groups (3-4 people) with one cell phone per group and text CIVILITY to 89800 to receive a series of text messages that guides their group through a one-hour conversation on reviving civility.

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- Publicize Community Conversation and/or Text, Talk Revive Civility Conversations through social media/media
- Open an event - welcome participants at a Community Discussion
- Invite a staff person, council member, or city volunteer to engage with or serve on a community steering committee
- Lead or facilitate a community discussion (NICD has facilitator guides)
- Participate in ongoing relationship building process between policy maker(s), media representatives and community leaders
- Invest city resources in civility endeavors (e.g. community discussion outcomes, trainings, retreats, establish community mini-grants to sustain civility work)

Appendix A: Mayors United to Revive Civility and Respect

Resolution Number: 23 Passed on June 26, 2017

Sponsored by:

The Honorable Jonathan Rothschild, Mayor of Tucson
The Honorable Darrell Steinberg, Mayor of Sacramento
The Honorable Hillary Schieve, Mayor of Reno
The Honorable Jeff Williams, Mayor of Arlington
The Honorable John A. McNally, Mayor of Youngstown
The Honorable John Giles, Mayor of Mesa
The Honorable Lyda Krewson, Mayor of St. Louis
The Honorable Mark R. Holland, Mayor of Kansas City
The Honorable Mark Stodola, Mayor of Little Rock
The Honorable Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of Boston
The Honorable Mitchell J. Landrieu, Mayor of New Orleans
The Honorable Rebecca Casper, Mayor of Idaho Falls
The Honorable Richard J. Berry, Mayor of Albuquerque
The Honorable Roy D. Buol, Mayor of Dubuque
The Honorable Steve Adler, Mayor of Austin
The Honorable Sylvester 'Sly' James Jr., Mayor of Kansas City
The Honorable Ted Wheeler, Mayor of Portland
The Honorable William A. Bell Sr., Mayor of Birmingham
The Honorable *Allison Silberberg, Mayor of Alexandria*



WHEREAS, The 2016 election left our country feeling more divided than at any time in recent memory and the Weber Shandwick annual nationwide [Civility in America Survey](#) indicated that 75 percent of the American public were saying that incivility in America has risen to crisis levels; and

WHEREAS, heated rhetoric and a dramatic shift away from collaboration leaves us unable to solve the challenges confronting our communities; and

WHEREAS, civil discourse is the free and respectful exchange of different ideas in a way that respects and affirms all persons, while hearing their perspectives; and

WHEREAS, members of our communities should feel comfortable and respected while exploring worldviews outside their own; and

WHEREAS, civility reduces rudeness, ridicule, and lack of respect for the open exchange of ideas; and

WHEREAS, civility assists in the process of working together to create lasting solutions to our most pressing challenges, while fostering respect among opposing groups; and

WHEREAS, civility and respect help improve our well-being, restore our trust, and encourage Americans to participate in building a brighter future for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, when people take time to really listen to others who are different from themselves, they often find that there is more in common than they might have thought, including finding ways to work for the greater good together; and

WHEREAS, when Mayors and community members come together across differences, we demonstrate that we are part of communities grounded in hope and possibility and we make great things happen together; and



WHEREAS, there is an urgent desire by many elected leaders and the public for trust, respect and civility to be revived in our democracy; and

WHEREAS, now is a critical time when our cities, states and country need public leaders to stand together with civic courage across partisan lines and Mayors can help set a community tone that fosters civility and respect through our leadership and by our willingness to listen to others of differing perspectives; and

WHEREAS, Mayors and community leaders from large cities to small communities such as Tucson (AZ), San Diego (CA), Austin (TX), Columbus (OH), Upper Arlington (OH), Augusta (ME), Bangor (ME), Biddeford (ME), Bar Harbor (ME) and others, are leading an initiative to Revive Civility and Respect,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls on all Mayors and communities nationwide to join the initiative to Revive Civility and Respect and become visible ambassadors of civility, listen respectfully to people who have different views, support efforts to work together across ideological and political lines, and work to rebuild civic trust through civil discourse.

Appendix B: Mayoral Proclamation Sample

PROCLAMATION



CITY OF TUCSON • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

WHEREAS, civility reduces, rudeness, ridicule, and lack of respect for the open exchange of ideas; and

WHEREAS, civility improves our well-being, restores trust, and encourages Americans to participate in building a brighter future for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, civility assists in the process of working together to create lasting solutions to our most pressing challenges, while fostering respect among opposing groups; and

WHEREAS, community members should feel comfortable and respected while exploring worldviews outside their own; and

WHEREAS, The University of Arizona's National Institute for Civil Discourse headquartered in Tucson and Washington, D.C., was created for the purpose of reviving and restoring civility to achieve a higher quality of public discourse;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jonathan Rothschild, Mayor of the City of Tucson, Arizona do hereby proclaim May 2017 to be

REVIVE CIVILITY MONTH

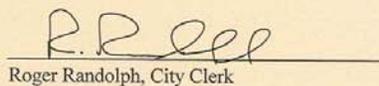
in this community, and encourage all our citizens to exercise civility and respect toward each other.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Tucson, Arizona to be affixed this 1st day of January, 2017.




Jonathan Rothschild, Mayor

ATTEST:


Roger Randolph, City Clerk



City Header

WHEREAS, *civil discourse is the free and respectful exchange of different ideas in a way that respects and affirm all persons, while hearing their perspectives; and*

WHEREAS, *heated rhetoric and a dramatic shift away from collaboration leaves us unable to solve the challenges confronting our community; and*

WHEREAS, *civility reduces rudeness, ridicule, and lack of respect for the open exchange of ideas; and*

WHEREAS, *civility improves our well-being, restores trust, and encourages Americans to participate in building a brighter future for generations to come; and*

WHEREAS, *civility assists in the process of working together to create lasting solutions to our most pressing challenges, while fostering respect among opposing groups; and*

WHEREAS, *community members should feel comfortable and respected while exploring worldviews outside their own; and*

WHEREAS, *recognizing the importance of civility and how it improves personal relationships leading to greater civil discourse, in recognition of the University of Arizona's National Institute for Civil Discourse's initiative, would like to invite all members of our community to exercise civility and respect toward each other and participate in reviving civility together.*

NOW, THEREFORE, I, [Name of Mayor], Mayor of the City of [City Name, State] do hereby proclaim [Month], 2017, to be REVIVE CIVILITY MONTH in this community and encourage all residents to practice civility by listening respectfully to people who have different views, avoiding language that is insulting or derogatory to others and supporting efforts to work together across ideological and political lines.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of [City Name, State] to be affixed this [XX day] of [Month], 2017.



[Name], Mayor (or appropriate official)

Official City Seal



Appendix C: Personal Pledge to Revive Civility

To help revive civility and respect in my community, I will:

1. Seek out a variety of reliable news sources in order to learn more about the forces that divide--and also unite--our country.
2. Listen respectfully and seek to avoid stereotypes or caricatures of people who have different views than my own
3. Encourage and support efforts to bring people of different points of view together in our community to have civil and respectful conversations;
4. Invite other people to join me in the Revive Civility Initiative and get involved in helping to connect people across political divisions.

Pledge is located on NICD website <http://nicd.arizona.edu/revivecivility>