

# WHAT NOW?

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Peacemaker Awards 2020

by Laura Walcher

Are this year's 'Peacemaker Awards' more important than ever? Inarguable, I declare, as each day's news delivers less and less peace in our country, and in our world. All the more challenging for our National Conflict Resolution Center (NCRC), dedicated to crafting, implementing, managing peaceful solutions to our society's, and our community's conflicts.

NCRC president Steve Dinkin, recently wrote, "So many of you have asked, how do we make sense of acts of hatred and intolerance? For NCRC, such questions have a common answer: We fervently believe that peace is possible when we are willing – and equipped – to talk with one another with respect and civility."

We talked:

**LW:** Well, Valentine's Day may be over, but "forgiveness" – NCRC's theme for the holiday – is surely something we need to embrace year-round! How significant is "forgiveness" in mediation? Isn't "agreement" (to agree or dis -!) sufficient?

**SD:** In mediation, forgiveness is not the end game. Mediation is more about an agreement to move forward – and feeling at peace with the resolution. Forgiveness may or may not come with time; if it does, it's icing on the cake.

**LW:** How does NCRC address the highly un-peaceful presence, tweets, remarks, snarky insults issues with great regularity by our president?

**SD:** We are living in a time when, unfortunately, incivility has become the norm. President Trump is not alone in exhibiting unpeaceful behavior. Rather than calling him out, we work to find solutions to the broader issues.

**LW:** NCRC's programs for youngsters, teens, appear to be the most promising directions for guiding our kids – having gone right, wrong – to more peaceful paths of behavior, belief in better lives? How do you assess NCRC programs' successes?

**SD:** Our work with youth is perhaps the most gratifying. We divert students who get in trouble from the juvenile justice system, keeping them in school and on a path toward more productive lives. So, we look at measures, such as high school graduation rates and recidivism, to determine success.

**LW:** NCRC provides mediation services for the community at large. How is this arranged?

**SD:** Mediation is a satisfying, cost-effective and convenient alternative to bringing a case to court. When a person contacts us, we take time to understand their situation and assess whether we can help (most often, we can). Once both parties agree to the process, we assign a mediator.

**LW:** How are NCRC's annual Peacemakers selected? The hope is there are sufficient candidates from which to choose. As always, the 2020 Peacemakers are impressive.

**SD:** NCRC's National Peacemaker is selected based on recommendations from our board of directors and advisors to the board. Each candidate is carefully vetted to ensure that their message aligns with ours. The Local Peacemakers were previously recognized as Community Heroes through our partnership with KPBS. They are selected by a committee; with input from the community.

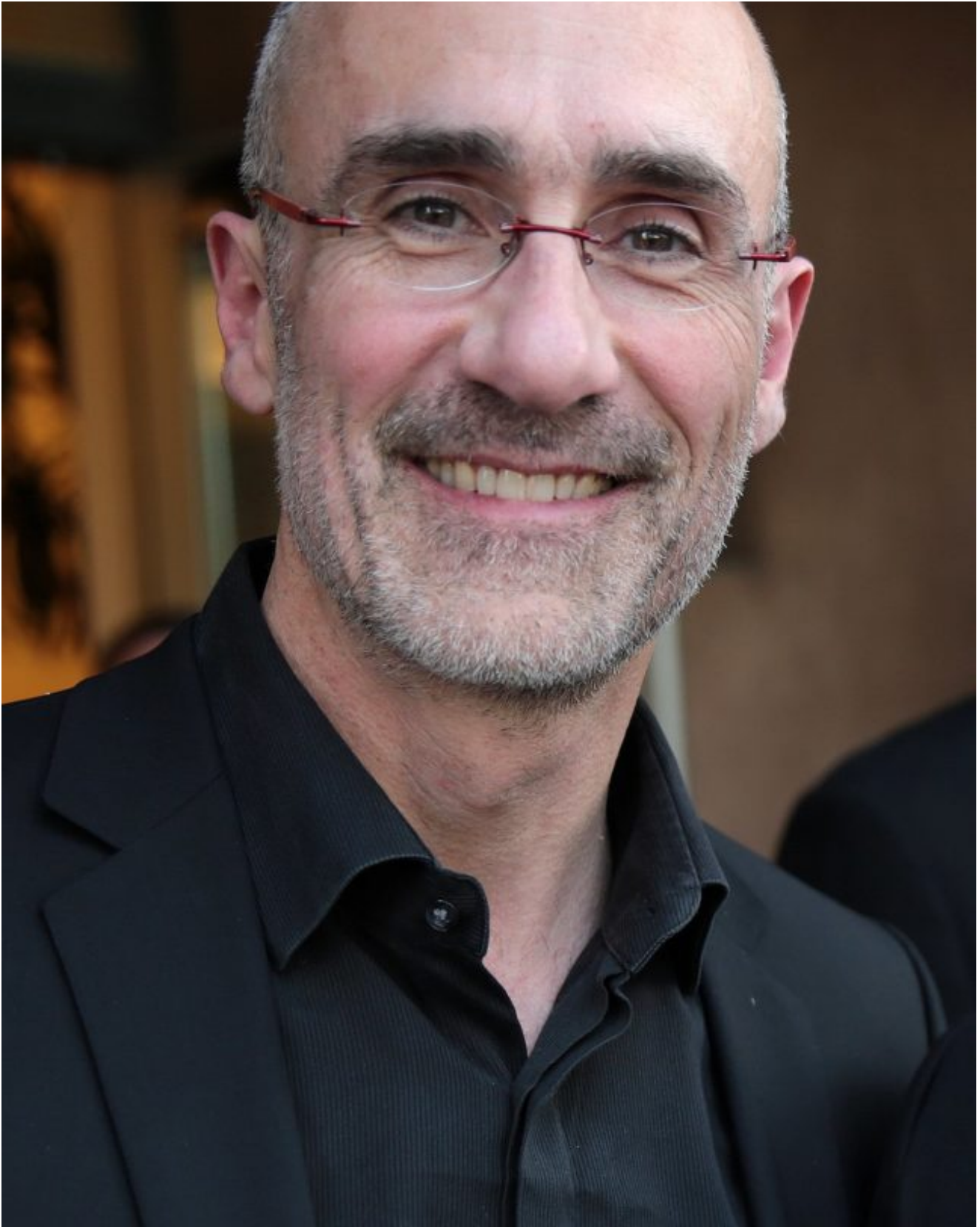
This year's Peacemaker Awardees exemplify the best in us; those who, when we learn their stories at the event, will surely inspire us to seek dialogue in any – and every – situation that fosters intolerance and hate.

The National Peacemaker Award goes to Arthur Brooks, *New York Times* best-selling author, *Washington Post* columnist, and Professor of Practice at the Harvard Kennedy School, speaking from his latest work, "Love Your Enemies: How Decent People Can Save America from the Culture of Contempt."

Philanthropy in Peacemaking honoree is awarded posthumously to Paul Palmer, for his visionary leadership in bringing people together to build a better world. Palmer was the former chief executive officer of Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego County, and longtime KFMB Radio manager.

The 32nd Annual Peacemaker Awards will be held from 5:30 to 9 p.m., Saturday, April 18 at the Hilton Bayfront Hotel, located at 1 Park Boulevard in downtown San Diego, CA 92101. Cocktail Reception is from 5:30 to 7 p.m., followed by dinner from 7 to 9 p.m.





Arthur Brooks, New York Times best-selling author, will receive the National Peacemaker Award.

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