

Salisbury University's Re-envisioning Ethics Access and Community Humanities (REACH) Initiative: Integrating Community and Curricular Ethics is grant-funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Humanities Connections Program. REACH, led by Co-Directors Michèle Schlehofer, Timothy Stock and Jennifer Nyland, focuses on ethics, ethics literacy and ethics agency through new curricular and co-curricular resources, connecting with the community.

REACH Guides Ethics Discussion for Candidates for Office

On October 21, the REACH team led potential candidates for office through a guided discussion on election ethics as part of the Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement's (PACE) two-day Candidate School. Offered in partnership with the Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce and Greater Salisbury Committee, this series provided free training for anyone interested in running for local office or serving on a local campaign. More than 30 people met at Salisbury University to learn from experts in fundraising, election law and campaign management.

The two-night event stressed that people should seek elected office for the right reasons: focusing on positive policies and a sense of community obligation and service, not as a means of personal gain or vendetta-setting. The REACH team, led by co-directors Drs. Tim Stock, Michèle Schlehofer and Jennifer Nyland, concluded the training with a discussion about a case study that helped buttress the idea of ethical leadership, inviting the more than 30 participants to consider the obligations that elected officials may (or may not) hold towards specific elements of their constituencies.

Campaigning for the 2022 mid-term, 2023 municipal and 2024 general elections is already picking up. PACE, the Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Salisbury Committee will continue to partner on events like this training and on candidate forums for the various contested seats around our area. REACH is looking forward to continued partnerships so we can offer another chance for those running, and the people they would represent, to grapple with the responsibilities of public service. Our communities deserve candidates who are principled, effective in addressing ethical problems and capable of expressing the values that would guide them in public office.

For more information on the workshop organizers, please visit their websites. REACH is available to facilitate ethics-focused, drop-in workshops for any community or civic group.

PACE: www.salisbury.edu/pace

Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce: <https://salisburyarea.com>

Greater Salisbury Committee: <https://greatersalisbury.org>



Join Us for Our Next Listening Session

The REACH Initiative is excited to announce that we are hosting our next listening session 6-8 p.m. Thursday, November 11, via Zoom. You are invited to participate!

You may join the session even if you have participated previously. Topics for discussion at each session are different. The upcoming session's topics include how we differentiate between ethics and morality, differentiating between an opinion and a conflict and handling conflict, and how competing interests are handled in our community.

If you would like to participate, please sign the consent form, available at: https://salisbury.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a9jx3KaWKmpq71Y

Questions can be directed to us at REACH@salisbury.edu. We look forward to hearing from you!



Introducing Dr. Jennifer Nyland to the REACH Team

We are excited to announce that Dr. Jennifer Nyland has joined the REACH team. Nyland is an associate professor in the Department of Biological Sciences and serves as the director of the Henson Honors Program in Science and Mathematics. Her addition to the team brings the perspective and training of the physical sciences. With experiences in environmental risk assessment and biomedical research in both animal models and human populations, Nyland is a great fit to complement the REACH team.

Many of the decisions that we make in areas of applied physical science – decisions, for instance, over whether and when to use medical interventions, how to protect our environment, or where and how to design new buildings and infrastructures – entail ethical components. Our listening sessions last year underscored how important these and other decisions, rooted in science, are to people living in our local community.

Nyland is very interested in working with REACH to enhance the science coursework experience of our students at SU with locally relevant ethical discussions to highlight the foundational role that ethics and ethical decision-making play in the physical sciences. We look forward to incorporating her guidance and expertise in our work with the local community.



ETHICS PROFILE: Habacuc Petion

Executive Director
Rebirth, Inc.

Tell us about your organization and what you do?

Rebirth is more than just an organization. It is an idea; a cause to advocate for legal rights and facilitate resources for immigrant workers. Being an immigrant myself, I understand the challenges and hardships others like me are facing. Rebirth was founded with the mission to ease the burdens placed on the immigrant community and to provide valuable supports, opportunities and resources to the most vulnerable members of our community.



We advocate for fair treatment and policies toward immigrants and refugees working at both the individual and community level. We advocate to help them not only to survive, but to live. As immigrants to America, our pursuit is the betterment of not only our lives, but our families' lives and the future generation coming after us. We advocate for immigrants to thrive in this new country they are in, racing toward the tomorrow of a day where we can all experience social justice and health equity.

Below are the various initiatives at Rebirth:

- Our radio station is called Radio Oasis. Tune in to 100.5 FM where we provide education, news and entertainment for the community.
- Our COVID-19 Virtual School Resource and Support Center called "Recovirsce" is now transitioning to afterschool support.
- We provide health education, prevention, literacy, outreach, referrals, and a COVID-19 mitigation and vaccination campaign.
- We provide immigrant advocacy for workers' rights and health-and-safety issues.

- We support opioid outreach education, prevention and treatment.
- We provide interpretation and translation services.
- We offer a back-to-school backpack giveaway for low-income families.
- Our Haitian Flag Day Heritage Celebration is an annual cultural festival event we started in Salisbury

Our most recent efforts are focused primarily on the marginalized Haitian-Creole population, which has been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 in terms of socioeconomic, physical, health and employment. At Rebirth, we have opened a technology, learning and support center dedicated for vulnerable communities in Salisbury. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools in our communities closed for in-person learning and offered only virtual learning for many students. The Wicomico County Public School system offered the best solution they could during this time of uncertainty. However, this situation caused the most disadvantaged students to fall behind their peers of higher socioeconomic status in their

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ability to keep learning. To address the language barriers to virtual learning for low-income communities, we decided to serve those affected by the language barrier (who speak English as a second language); of which, we have served over 600 children.

We seek to empower this historically disadvantaged population through our licensed radio station that provides public information/news in Creole (the native language of Haitians), health outreach/education, prevention, treatment referrals, interpreting/translation services, as well as youth and family navigation programs.

Rebirth has helped over 50 families register their children for the Wicomico County Public School during the beginning of the 2021 school year, by helping them through the application process, necessary medical appointments, vaccinations, physical check-ups, transportation, letters of income declaration, notarization, interpreting and translation services, as well as school meeting appointments and much, much more.

Our organization has helped families successfully apply for food stamps, medical insurance and attain mother/newborn supplies. We have distributed resources and PPE supplies to over 3,000 individuals; and we have donated over 10,000 face masks, hand sanitizers and thermometers to towns all over Maryland, Delaware and Virginia.

What drew you to be a part of the Community Ethics Network?

I wanted to participate in this great pilot opportunity to help contribute and make a difference on how I understand ethics in our community. Curiosity also was one of the main motivation factors that drew me to the Community Ethics Network. I wanted to find out how other people define and practice ethics, which often is hard to live up to when many say that they are ethical. Ethics and morality are inseparable in my eyes, and you one cannot talk about the other, leaving its other component behind. As contradictory as this statement is, they are interchangeable in nature, but different as well. Ethics refer to rules provided by an external source, like codes of conduct in workplaces or principles in religions. Morals refer to an individual's own principles regarding right and wrong, which will sometime lead to uncomfortable decisions in areas such as racism and discrimination/prejudice. Personally, I believe that ethics are relative to the feelings and interests of those who claim it because it takes courage and bravery to be ethical.

How does ethics improve your work?

Ethics are not a gift that you receive and toss into a corner; for me ethics are to be cultivated like a budding plant. One must work patiently and diligently every day to nurture, nourish and replenish their ethics.

“An ethical individual will not hurt another person for his benefit. Ethics help me strive for my lives, but not at the expense of another individual, even though, sometime it is tempting to do the contrary. Ethics are an essential tool for the functioning of the society we live in. It helps me to create a place for all humans to excel and live with equality. From these ethical standards, we get our justice system, constitutional rights and duties, and general criteria for a society to function. Ethics really means doing the right thing.”
(Kidadl)

Ethics help improve my network, by building trust and a stronger relationship with my fellow colleagues and the people that I am serving in our community, in what I do or say. Ethics guide not only myself; it is bigger than me. It's about the community and the lasting impact we want to have for generations to come. “Make the world a better place” is casually thrown around, but action must follow the words. If we truly want to make this world a better place, we must put effort in committing bright, positive acts of service, no matter how dark or negative the world may get. One bright star can light up the murky, dark night sky. And Rebirth, this little light of Salisbury, will shine.

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