

# Cornell University Intergroup Dialogue Project

Spring 2019 Newsletter

## A word from our Director

On August 18, 2018, after a full (last) day of preparation (and a little bit of celebration), Natasha and I stood on the front steps of Warren Hall watching over 70 IDP facilitators, both students and alumni, all wearing their black IDP shirts, dispersing in all directions with their materials for the first ever IDP Orientation Sessions.



IDP facilitators storm campus on their way to their first Orientation sessions

The decision to take on this ambitious project was made in late April, and we had fewer than four months to make it happen. In 4.5 days we facilitated 169 sessions and worked with over 3,000 new students. We couldn't have done this without our team of risk-takers, courageous educators, and relentless optimists who believe in the power of our community and in our capacity to bring about meaningful change.

It is hard to explain the depth of emotions we experienced when over 70 facilitators started trickling back in from their sessions, overwhelmed by exhaustion, exhilaration, and pride. Never in our wildest dreams did we think we would witness the oft-heard statement "everybody should do IDP" start to be realized. We are still in awe that in less than four years the entire undergraduate population will have been touched by intergroup dialogue.

In IDP we talk about and practice the idea of radical hope - we try to find ways to build communities across difference and to create a new vision for our present and future; we work together to find shared meaning and to challenge our preconceived assumptions; we try to learn from the lived experiences of the "Other" and to open ourselves to them. Watching our facilitators before and after their first Orientation session on August 18th, I had a rare opportunity to witness radical hope in action. I am thankful for Cornell's leadership, our campus partners, and our students for their enthusiasm, courage, and dedication. But above all, I am thankful for all the IDPeople who proactively

and empathetically create paths of change with students, alumni, faculty, and staff, and walk these paths every day.

~ Dr. Adi Grabiner-Keinan  
Intergroup Dialogue Project Director

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Spring 2019 EDUC 2610 Team

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## Cornell Giving Day 2019

Thanks to all of you who chose to support IDP for Giving Day last year. The funds raised, as well as other generous gifts from alumni, enabled us to expand our existing offerings for students, alumni, faculty and staff, as well as to develop unique programs for various groups and departments, including student leaders in student organizations, academic advisors in the colleges, faculty, peer-mentors and advisors, first-year students in residential communities, and residential staff. Your support allows us to bring dialogue into more spaces and to have a greater influence on campus climate.



[Give to IDP](#)

What does IDP mean to our facilitators in one word?  
Watch our Giving Day video to find out:



Join us today as we strive to create community across difference at Cornell!

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## New Developments

In the last year, IDP has played an increasingly important role in fostering an inclusive campus environment that supports a diverse community of students, alumni, faculty, and staff. Our expansion continues as we work to meet the needs of the Cornell community and to promote the University's vision for campus experience. There is a growing demand for learning and practicing communication across difference both on and off campus and intergroup dialogue continues to show its effectiveness in this regard.

See below for more information about some of our recent developments!

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### **IDP does Orientation!**



The student and alumni IDP facilitators who made IDP's Fall 2018 Orientation possible!

This past August we undertook our biggest project yet when we held 169 three-hour introductory dialogue sessions for all incoming first-year students during Orientation week. In the extensive outreach conducted by [President Pollack's Task Force on Campus Climate](#), they repeatedly heard that IDP is an excellent model for diversity education on campus and should be mandatory for all students. Thus an early recommendation emerged from the Task Force to offer 3-hour introductory intergroup dialogue sessions to all incoming first-year students and IDP Orientation was born.

Here's what one first-year student had to say about their experience: *"The abbreviated Intergroup Dialogue session during freshman orientation was one of the most amazing experiences. Previously, I was never given the opportunity to sit down with someone I had never met before and discuss my personal identity without judgment. I established ever-lasting friendships with other freshmen in my discussion. I learned an astonishing amount about myself, my leaders, and others. I would love to have the opportunity to participate in weekly discussions similar to what I experienced my first week at Cornell."*

[Read more in the Cornell Chronicle](#)

### **Assessment Initiatives**

The creation of the associate director position last summer has enabled IDP to start utilizing a range of assessment strategies including post-surveys after workshops, pre- and post-surveys for our academic courses, and qualitative data from students' written assignments and focus groups. Examples of recent findings include: students who participated in EDUC 2610 demonstrated a statistically significant increase in their motivation to use intergroup contact as an opportunity for learning, and data from over 350 undergraduates, graduate students, faculty and staff who participated in IDP workshops revealed that a majority of them expect the skills they practiced during the workshop to be helpful when they're engaged in a challenging conversation. We've shared assessment results with various partners on campus including University administration, and we look forward to sharing future results more broadly through conferences and academic publications. We are also eager to continue exploring our existing qualitative data in addition to investigating our impact on the campus community.

### **Alumni Outreach**

#### **Cornell Alumni Leadership Conference**

IDP alumni, Victoria Phillips, '17 and Dylan Van Duyne, '18 facilitated an IDP workshop at the Cornell Alumni Leadership Conference (CALC) in February. Diversity Alumni Programs volunteers were invited to participate in an hour-long session focusing on communication across difference. Participants practiced LARA (Listen, Affirm, Respond, Add information), a communication method we engage in on campus, and had the opportunity to dialogue with other volunteers about issues related to diversity and inclusion.



**IDP at CALC**

Left to Right: Victoria Phillips '17, Adi Grabiner-Keinan, DylanVan Duyne '18

### **President's Council of Cornell Women**

On May 3, 2019, the IDP team will facilitate a session for 200 members of the President's Council of

Cornell Women (PCCW). In this session, participants will learn how to cultivate and apply several skills of intergroup dialogue in the context of leadership and mentoring. Participants will engage in dialogue about their personal and professional experiences through interactive intergroup dialogue exercises and practice specific skills for communication across difference.

### Work with Student-Facing Staff

In the last year, we've continued to increase our engagement with student-facing staff to share some of the skills for communicating across difference we are practicing with their students and to support inclusive processes in their units and beyond. Some of our collaborations include The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, The College of Arts and Sciences The College of Engineering, the SC Johnson College of Business, Professional Academic Advising Leaders, and Student and Campus Life. We are looking forward to working with even more units!

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## Our director is a Game Changer!

Congratulations to our very own Dr. Adi Grabiner-Keinan on being honored with one of the President's Awards for Employee Excellence, the Game Changer Award, last semester! The Game Changer Award recognizes a staff member who developed and implemented a new approach, system, or idea. Many of you joined us in the nomination effort and we're thrilled she was recognized for the amazing work she is doing for IDP. We're also pleased to share that the IDP team was nominated for the ONE Cornell award (recognizes a team that implements a project that positively impacts Cornell and the greater community) and our Program Assistant, Natasha Steinhall, was nominated for the Mission-Possible Award (recognizes a staff member whose work demonstrates excellence in supporting the university's core mission areas of learning, discovery, engagement). Way to go team!



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## A New Face!



### Rachel Sumner ~ Associate Director

Rachel joined our team in May 2018 as the Associate Director of IDP. Fun fact: She started using the phrase "Teamwork makes the dream work!" in college (ironically at first, though now 100% sincerely) and doing this work as a member of the IDP team really is a dream come true. In addition to collecting, analyzing, and sharing data to demonstrate IDP's impact on campus, Rachel spends her time supporting undergraduate facilitators of EDUC 2610 and collaboratively designing and facilitating workshops and our 7-week course for MBA students. She completed a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology at Cornell, conducting research on the development of purpose in life and identity among college students and adults. After graduating she spent a year working at a nonprofit organization where she supported after-school program providers in New York City, Newark, and Las Vegas in their use of data for goal-setting and decision-making processes. In January 2017, shortly after returning to Cornell as a postdoctoral associate in the Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research, Rachel participated in the second IDP session for graduate/professional students and postdocs. Intergroup dialogue combined her academic interests and personal experiences in a way that was irresistible, so she is thrilled to be part of the team that brings similar opportunities to other members of the Cornell community.

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Check out our new [Humans of IDP](#) and [Spotlights](#) pages on our

website!

# DEVELOPING DIALOGUE ACROSS DIFFERENCE

