



Racial Healing Through a New Lens

Operation Conversation, All Stars Project's (ASP) newest bridge-building initiative, has been created to address the social and racial divides in America. In virtual and in-person workshops, adults aged 21 and above from diverse communities learn and perform with new tools that develop empathy, appreciation, active listening and curiosity skills. Using the power of performance, these workshops engage racism and promote healing in everyday life. Operation Conversation is led by Gabriele Kurlander (Founder of ASP's Performance Lab) and Antoine Joyce-Roach (ASP's Senior Vice President and Dallas City Leader).



ASP is currently working with Fortune 500 companies interested in integrating Operation Conversation as part of their diversity and inclusion efforts. Among those that have participated in workshops are First Presbyterian Church, Hunt Consolidated, a Big Four Accounting Firm and staff from the New York Jets.

Since 2020,
Operation Conversation
has hosted over
25 workshops with
250 participants
across the country and
with leading non-profit
and for-profit institutions.



THE POWER OF DIALOGUE & IMPROVISATION



Nathaniel Christian, III
ASP Board Chair

“When I participated in Operation Conversation, I found it challenging – and that’s what I liked about it. Under Gabrielle and Antoine’s leadership, we were able to discuss difficult issues and be uncomfortable together and, like everything at All Stars, that’s how we grow. We start from the premise that everyone belongs - there is no “us” or “them.”

Operation Conversation participants are supported to discover the assumptions we make about each other (and ourselves) and our perceived differences/attitudes. This is important because learning empathy is key to creating and growing a community that is vibrant, vital and sustainable.



Michelle Forbes, M.D.
Texas

“The workshop was different from any format I’ve ever participated in concerning difficult topics like racism and ageism. I’ve never seen myself as capable of improvisation... This practice allowed me to give myself permission to be just me.



Henry Ferris
New York

“The workshop was delightfully engaging. Antoine and Gabrielle were incredibly well-prepared, which made it move smoothly, with good balance throughout. I enjoyed conversing with people from different backgrounds and perspectives.





Ashleigh Everett
Hunt Consolidated, Texas

“Our group learned so much from our Operation Conversation session. It was incredible to see the power of listening to understand, as well as the benefit of engaging in constructive conversations about difficult topics. We were all unsure at the beginning, but Antoine and Gabrielle were extremely warm, welcoming, and engaging – they made everyone feel comfortable, while also challenging us to see the benefit of different perspectives.”



Zyair Crump
ASP Alumnus, New Jersey

“This is a space where one can heal in previously unthought ways and create something beautiful alongside others. This workshop is something to be experienced!”

RESULTS THAT SPEAK!

Almost all respondents said that performance had multiple benefits, with most reporting that performance enabled them to “listen better,” “learn new things,” and “be more open.”



90% of respondents reported that they had “many” or “some” new experiences and feelings.



Close to 100% of respondents said that the Operation Conversation workshops helped connect them to someone of a different race or identity.



Operation Conversation was created and is led by **Gabrielle Kurlander** and **Antoine Joyce-Roach**.



Gabrielle Kurlander is a theatre director, actor and nonprofit entrepreneur. As the founding CEO of the All Stars Project (ASP) from 1990 to 2023, she created an innovative performance approach to youth and community development and bridge building initiatives between diverse communities. Gabrielle serves on the boards of the ASP and TACA (The Arts Community Alliance).



Antoine Joyce-Roach is a Senior Vice President and the City Leader of the All Stars Project of Dallas. Antoine creates and executes cutting-edge youth development and bridge-building programs throughout Dallas and nationally. He serves on numerous local boards and is an All Stars alumnus.

CONTACT US

If you are an individual, organization or company interested in learning more about Operation Conversation, contact us at OperationConversation@allstars.org.

ABOUT THE ALL STARS PROJECT

The All Stars Project is a privately funded national nonprofit organization with a 40-year history of grassroots organizing and community building in poor neighborhoods. Its mission is to transform the lives of youth from under-served communities using the developmental power of performance in partnership with caring adults, giving everyone the opportunity to grow. ASP's award-winning programs bring people from all racial, economic and social walks of life together to create something positive, new and transformative for all involved. ASP operates nationally in New York City; Newark and Jersey City, NJ; Chicago, Dallas; and the San Francisco Bay Area with volunteers and partnerships in over 20 states.



www.allstars.org