

## 2010 SEASON FOR NONVIOLENCE CELEBRATING A DECADE OF DEDICATION



Measuring 10 years of nonviolence work isn't easy, but the impact is real, says Susan Allen, K-State's director of nonviolence education.

"There are more than 1,000 SafeZone door and backpack symbols visible to people on campus who may need help; hundreds of people are more flexible and healthy because they've participated in noontime yoga; Kansas highway 177 is cleaner between Manhattan and I-70 because we've picked up the trash; and thousands of K-State graduates and families have been shielded from the hateful messages of Fred Phelps by Date With Hate volunteers," she said. "These are the kinds of seemingly small, nearly invisible changes that add up and in time help people expect a safe and equitable campus and understand that it's up to all of us to make it a reality."

The impact of nonviolence education at K-State over the last decade will be celebrated during the 2010 Season of Nonviolence, Jan. 30-April 4. This year's theme is "For the Public Good."

The annual communitywide event is dedicated to promoting nonviolent relationships and takes place on the 64 days between the assassination anniversaries of two world-famous peacemakers:

Mahatma Gandhi, who was killed Jan. 30, 1948, and Martin Luther King Jr., who was shot April 4, 1968. The observance was started in 1998 and has grown into an international event.

The Season of Nonviolence is part of the ongoing Campaign for Nonviolence, which has worked for a decade to move the K-State and Manhattan communities toward better health through proactive, positive nonviolence projects, Allen said.

"If we wait for a crisis before responding to conflict, the only

### ***K-State projects aimed at nonviolence include:***

- \* SafeZone, which creates campus allies for individuals affected by homophobia, hateful acts and sexual violence;
- \* Noontime yoga, which is free and open to the public;
- \* The international TV in the Union exposes students to alternative perspectives;
- \* Empty Bowls, a hunger-fighting program;
- \* Date With Hate, a counter protest aimed at Fred Phelps' demonstrations at K-State's commencement ceremonies;
- \* K-State's Peace Pole, a 1,000-pound, granite symbol of peace, at the corner of Manhattan Avenue and Thurston Street; and
- \* The academic certificate in nonviolence studies offered through the College of Arts and Sciences, which requires 15-hours of coursework and is open to all undergraduates.

For a full list of nonviolence programming at K-State, go to: <http://www.k-state.edu/nonviolence>

option is to react after the fact," Allen said. "Nonviolent actions seek to change conditions that cause conflict before problems become so severe."

Events for K-State's Season for Nonviolence, all free and open to the public, include:

\* Monday, Feb. 1: K-State's Playback Theatre Troupe will have a community storytelling event at 6 p.m. in the K-State Student Union's Little Theater. Directed by Sally Bailey, associate professor of theater, the troupe is an improvisational group that listens to individual stories and plays them back to the audience.

\* Thursday, Feb. 18: Sister Jean Rosemarynoski from the Sisters of St. Joseph, Concordia, will discuss the Concordia Year of Peace project at 6:30 p.m. at the Manhattan Public Library, 629 Poyntz Ave.



\* Monday, March 1: A showing of "Poland -- We've Caught God by the Arm," noon in the Union courtyard. The film documents the 1980 Gdansk Shipyard strike that launched the Polish Solidarity Movement and provides a close-up look at the individuals who organized to bring a nonviolent end to Soviet rule.

\* Thursday, March 4: A community panel will discuss institutions that exist to serve the public good at 7 p.m. in Room 212 of the Union. Panelists will come from the

Manhattan Public Library, new local public radio station KONZ, K-State's master of public health program, UFM Community Learning Center and the K-State Credit Union.

A full listing of events for the Season of Nonviolence is available at <http://www.k-state.edu/nonviolence>

**Photos:** *K-State's Peace Pole stands tall at the corner of Manhattan Avenue and Thurston Street; Students clean up Kansas highway 177 to aid nonviolence efforts at K-State and in the Manhattan community.*