

Natalie Abdou

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Objective

To contribute strong facilitation, coordination and creative skills to relationship centered collectives and organizations committed to the pursuit of social justice and community transformation.

Key Strengths

- Facilitation of popular/adult education workshops for community building & learning
- Creative arts facilitation particularly Theatre of the Oppressed & embodied wisdom practices
- Commitment to transformative learning principles in curriculum design & facilitation
- Extensive partnership, community-based practice & event management experience
- International and local experience with diverse communities & populations

Education and Professional Development

- **Interplay** (body wisdom/movement based practice) (2016)
Teacher Practicum Training & Secrets of Leading
- **Ontario Institute for Studies in Education** (2011-2015)
Master of Adult Education in Community Development
- **Intensive Interpersonal Mediation** (2013)
St. Stephen's Community House
- **St. Francis Xavier University** (2010)
Positive Space Training Level I & II
- **Coady International Institute** (2009)
Participatory Training & Collaborative Facilitation
- **Humber Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning** (2005-2006)
Business Diploma, International Project Management
- **Oxford Seminars** (2002)
TEFL certification, teaching English as a second language
- **Queen's University** (1998-2002)
Bachelor of Arts (Honours), Sociology

Relevant Professional Experience

- **Community-Based Facilitator** (Jan 2014-current)
Freelancer
- **Creative Facilitator** (Sept 2015-current)
Bloom Consulting
- **Theatre Facilitator** (July 2012-current)
Branch Out Theatre, Toronto
- **Program Associate** (May 2011-current)
Youth Programs Coordinator (July 2008-May 2011)
Coady International Institute, Nova Scotia & Egypt
- **Rivercourt Engineering** (Jan 2017-current)
Community Development & Engagement
- **Community Participation Coordinator** (Oct 2012-Nov 2013)
Young People's Theatre, Toronto
- **Event Coordinator & Editorial Team Member** (Aug 2006-Sept 2007)
International Campaign to Ban Landmines, Jordan, Toronto & Yemen
- **Program Support Officer** (Aug-Dec 2006)
Yemen Mine Awareness Association / Mines Action Canada, Yemen
- **English Teacher** (Jan-May 2003)
YMCA, CES, NES Language Schools and Wat Visun, Thailand & Laos
- **Director of Queen's University Arts and Science Orientation** (Sept 2000-Sept 2001)
Queen's Faculty of Arts and Science Undergraduate Society, Kingston

Community Involvement

- **Catherine Donnelley Foundation – Righting Relations Program**
Righting Relations Southern Ontario Coordination Team member (June 2017-current)
- **Community Council Member** (Sept 2014-present)
Transformative Learning Community
- **Advisory Team Member** (Dec2012-present)
Recrear International, Toronto
- **Advisory Committee Member** (Sept 2009-2016)
Small Change Fund, Nova Scotia
- **Board Member** (Sept2010-May 2011)
Antigonish Women’s Resource Center, Nova Scotia
- **Social Justice Youth Camp Facilitator & Board Member** (August 2009-Aug 2012)
Tatamagouche Center, Nova Scotia
- **Distress Counselling Support** (Sept 2004– Sept2005)
Distress Centers of Toronto

Social Justice Facilitation & Training

- Provided support to community-based organizations in facilitation of mission/vision review, strategic planning, organizational learning & change, anti-oppression/equity & inclusion training, peace & conflict-resolution training, sensitivity & cross-cultural training, and accessibility issues
- Facilitated workshops on a breadth of social justice & development practice on: cross-cultural effectiveness, power & privilege, leadership, popular education, asset-based community development, partnerships monitoring & evaluation, embodied knowledge, advocacy and public engagement, food justice, activism & solidarity, creative facilitation
- Facilitated breadth of theatre-based workshops (using popular theatre & Theatre of the Oppressed approaches) with youth and/or adults exploring issues such as conflict transformation, cross-cultural diversity, self-empowerment, leadership, organizational learning & change, active citizenship, community building, oppression & social justice in both local and global contexts/environments
- Facilitated popular education, arts-based and theatre-based workshops in Egypt (conducted in both Arabic/English) exploring issues such as facilitation & training approaches, the use of arts for community learning, health, social accountability & peace and conflict transformation
- Annual facilitation of 3 week certificate on *Facilitation and Training Approaches for Community Change*, engaging learners on participatory approaches for community learning and transformation
- Annual facilitation of 2 week intensive *Arts & Social Change* Interplay workshop exploring the capacity of play and accessing body wisdom for the purpose of personal and collective learning and transformation
- Designed & facilitated international Accessible Publishing Summit, supporting a multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral process to identify ‘best practices’ for born-accessible publishing & balancing the diverse capacities and needs of participants including accessibility testers with diverse accessibility considerations
- Member of the Righting Relations Southern Ontario Coordination Team, exploring the ways in which adult educators/transformativ learning practitioners can support one another in our work, and engage communities, in understanding the dynamics of immigrant and refugee populations within the context of reconciliation and decolonization alongside First Nations
- On-going collaboration around visioning, curating and facilitating Bloom’s *The Learning Community*, a space for community activists, educators and practitioners to reflect on the intersection of community activism, healing and social transformation
- Supported week long *Community-Based Conflict Transformation & Peacebuilding* certificate at Coady Institute by incorporating use of creativity, arts and theatre to explore understanding and transformation of conflict scenarios
- Increased women’s capacity to take ownership of their own safety from the danger of landmines through gender-specific mine risk education sessions in rural villages in Yemen

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- Facilitated a variety of social justice sessions (Tatamagouche Social Justice Youth Camp) with 50 youth from diverse communities across the provinces, then acted as a board member for the camp

Project Design, Planning and Management

- Supporting the development, implementation and coordination of community development and engagement relationships, processes and learning for Rivercourt Engineering (engineering firm with deep commitment to community led carbon zero holistic greening processes)
- Conceived and developed philosophical grounding, marketing, recruitment and curriculum material for a 3-week social justice youth certificate, *Skills for Social Change* and acted as lead facilitator since inception
- Coordinated, implemented and facilitated community partnerships and programming with organizations across the GTA focused on utilizing theatre for personal reflection, leadership, community building and social change
- Coordinated and managed Coady Youth In Partnership and Student for Development Internship programs including fundraising; selection/recruitment; program orientation, in-country support and re-entry for 60 interns; conflict-resolution; public engagement; and monitoring and program evaluation; budget & volunteer management
- Strengthened Coady Youth Programs partnership and collaborated with 19 partner organizations in nine countries across the Caribbean, Latin America & Africa
- Facilitated participatory planning and implementation process for interactive learning between global development practitioners and Nova Scotian high school students
- Coordinated social, academic and fundraising activities for 2,500 incoming students, working in partnership with local businesses, community organizations, media and university administration
- Acted as a mentor to *Camp Inspire*, a social justice youth camp for “marginalized” youth in Antigonish County

Community Outreach and Public Education

- Collaborated with the Small Change Fund Advisory Committee team to increase awareness and support for local grassroots projects across Canada through small grant-making
- Developed innovative approaches to fundraising and program support for work of the Antigonish Women’s Resource Centre
- Coordinated public outreach forums to share the experiences of Youth interns with the greater Antigonish and Halifax communities
- Created outreach materials content (web and print) for Coady Youth and Educations Programs
- Researcher, writer and editor for *Landmine Monitor Report* (North Africa), Arabic media contact for ICBL (Jordan) and coordinated media events including press conferences and media event interviews (Jordan, Yemen)
- Acted as a liaison between the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and its government and non-government partners in Yemen and Jordan
- Engaged audiences of up to 2,500 in speeches, presentations and artistic performances
- Hired and managed committees ranging from 9 to 32 members and hired, trained and provided sensitivity training for 350 student volunteers

Financial Management and Information Technology

- Secured \$900,00 in CIDA funding for 3-years of Coady Youth Programming
- Secured \$42,000 in AUCC funding for 1 year Student for Development programming
- Managed and balanced budgets upward of \$250,000
- Raised \$40,000 for Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
- Solid knowledge of basic financial and accounting principles including budget structures, balance sheets, income and reconciliation statements
- Experience in database development/management and numerous software programs