



RICE | BONIUK

INSTITUTE FOR RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE



2015-2020
5 YEAR REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

OUR LEADERS

4

4 THE PROBLEM & OUR MISSION
5 OUR APPROACH

6

6 RESEARCH IMPACT
7-10 EDUCATION IMPACT
11-16 ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

17

HONORS & RECOGNITION

18

PANDEMIC PIVOT



OUR PHILANTHROPIC VISIONARIES

Dr. Milton & Laurie Boniuk

Rice University's Boniuk Institute was founded in 2013 with a \$28.5 million gift. It is an expansion of the Boniuk Center, founded in 2004.



OUR ADVISORS

From left, by row:
Charles Landgraf, Chair
Dr. Milton Boniuk
Jim Crownover
E. William Barnett
William J. Rouhana, Jr.
Hyder Kazimi
Justin Sable



OUR TEAM

Paula Sanders
Zahra Jamal
Gayle Pagnoni
Kate Eubanks





The Problem

With 84% of people globally identifying with a religion, there is significant religious diversity in America and abroad. Yet Americans know little about global religions.[1] Growing numbers stereotype, discriminate against, or commit violence against others different from them.[2] As of 2018, over 80% of hate crimes worldwide are committed against religious and racial minorities.[3] Schools, houses of worship, and people have been attacked, with hateful ideas and acts spreading in schools, media, and public fora in many countries.[4] Global citizens must be educated about world religions to foster sustainable and just civil societies.

Our Mission

To counter these insidious, violent trends and to foster understanding and respect, Rice University's Boniuk Institute researches forces driving hate and bias, and promotes religious literacy and tolerance among people of all worldviews through education, leadership training, and the arts. Our engagement in government, business, nonprofits, and the arts differentiates us from similar entities at other universities.



Our Approach

Inclusive. Collaborative. Global.

THE PROBLEM IS TOO VAST TO ADDRESS ALONE.
BONIUK INSTITUTE WORKS WITH OVER 80 PARTNERS* TO
ENHANCE RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AND LITERACY
LOCALLY, NATIONALLY, AND GLOBALLY.

Government

City of Houston
U.S. Department of State
U.S. Department of Justice
G-20 Interfaith Summit
United Nations

Culture

WindSync
Holocaust Museum Houston
Eddy Marcano & Trio Acustico
Exhibition Coexistence
Silkroad Ensemble

Civil Society

Junior League of Houston
Asia Society Texas Center
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Anti-Defamation League
Chautauqua Institution

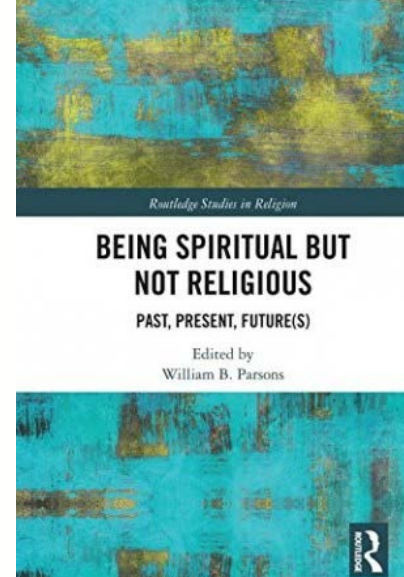
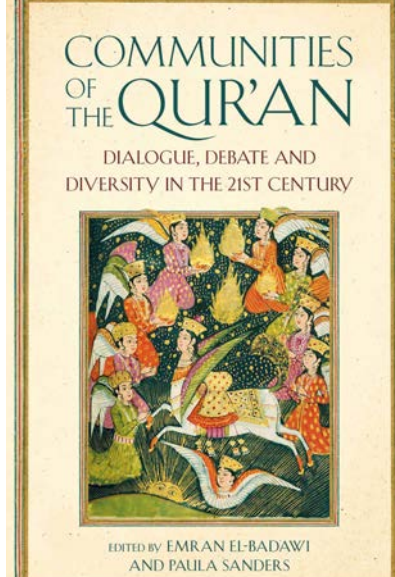
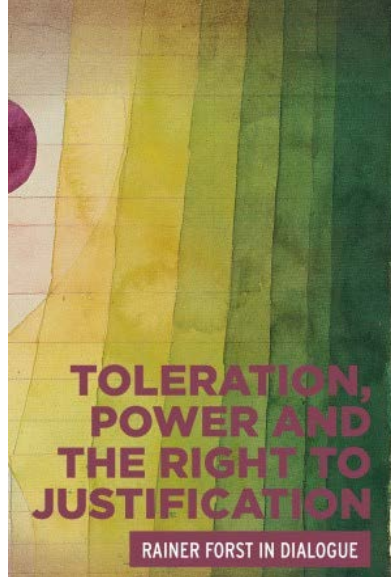
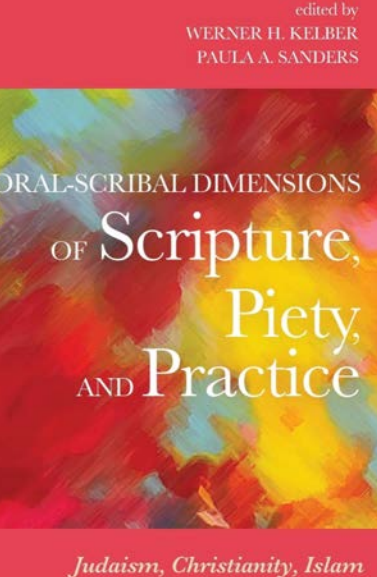
Business

Local Chambers of Commerce
National Diversity Council
Tanenbaum Center
Religious Freedom & Business
Foundation

Education

Houston Independent School Dist.
National AP Institute
National Council for Social Studies
American Academy of Religion
Asian University for Women

* See boniuk.rice.edu/our-partners
for a complete list



Our Research Impact

Through conferences, publications, and research grants, we support cutting-edge studies on the conditions under which religious tolerance flourishes or fails, and how different peoples understand, practice, or challenge interfaith cooperation across time and space.[5] Locally, we oversee research on hate incidents and crimes in greater Houston, including religious bias, via the Houston Coalition Against Hate.[6]

To understand and respond to youth experiences with religious tolerance, the Institute administered Rice University's participation in Interfaith Diversity Experiences and Attitudes Longitudinal Survey (IDEALS), a national, four-year longitudinal study examining Gen Z encounters with religious and worldview diversity in undergraduate life.[7]

Our staff have been featured [8] in three documentary films produced by UNESCO Global Peace, International Religious Freedom Peace Activist, and the Middle East Leadership Network. They have published with Oneworld Publications, Wipf and Stock, Duke University Press, Fortress Press, The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Foreign Policy, and The Hill. Institute staff have served as a reviewer for the National Endowment for the Humanities, Religious Freedom Center, and The Social Studies Texan, and as an Education Consultant for the Eternal Gandhi Museum Houston.

4

**EDITED VOLUMES
PUBLISHED**

**~40
million**

**REACHED VIA
FEATURES ON FILM,
RADIO, DIGITAL,
PRINT MEDIA**

\$92K

**IN RESEARCH FUNDS
GRANTED TO 19
CUTTING-EDGE
PROJECTS**



K-12 Teacher Professional Development

1000

TEACHERS
TRAINED

1400

CONTINUING
EDUCATION CREDITS
GRANTED

~210K

STUDENTS
TAUGHT
ANNUALLY

The demand for religious literacy education is urgent given the alarming consequences of widespread religious illiteracy.[9] Research shows that just one semester of required religious literacy education in high school by teachers trained in world religions showed increased passive and active tolerance toward minority “others” among students.[10] In the absence of a required course, religious literacy education in social studies must begin with training teachers who can promote student learning outcomes that create a more just, tolerant, and equitable civil society.[11]

Every semester and most summers, we offer professional development (PD) trainings for secondary social studies teachers nationally, based on teaching practices grounded in First Amendment principles.[12] We partner with Houston Independent School District, the largest district in Texas and seventh largest district in the nation. Our summer PDs have engaged teachers from 31 Texas Independent Districts, 1 TEA Region, Virginia's Henrico County Public Schools, the Maine Department of Education Conferences, and the National Council for Social Studies. Due to COVID-19, our 2020 summer PD has moved online enabling 80 secondary educators from 8 states (TX, CA, IL, GA, FL, MI, NJ, TN) and 7 countries (Afghanistan, Canada, India, Pakistan, Tanzania, UK, USA) to learn together and from experts about diverse world religions.



RESOURCES FOR K-12 YOUTH

Since the 2016 election, bullying, intolerance, and violence have increased on American college campuses, especially toward Muslim students[13], and toward racial, religious, and sexual minorities in middle and high schools.[14] In America, faith diversity in social studies curricula are not always comprehensive or academically robust. Boniuk Institute resources include[15]:

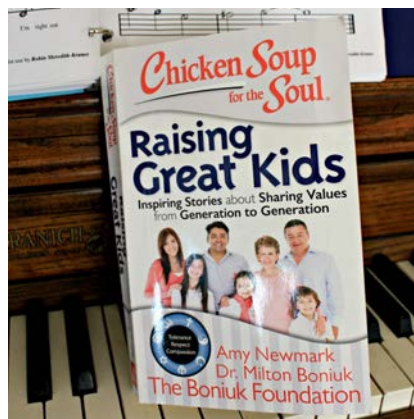
- Curricular resources on Abrahamic Traditions; Asian Religious Traditions; Religion and Music
- Religious Literacy Resource Guide for students & teachers
- Religious Literacy Club at Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts
- "Guidelines for Respecting Religious Differences" posters & bookmarks
- Workshops on interfaith social justice at youth camps in the U.S. and abroad
- Content available from Boniuk Foundation and Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment collaborations

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & GRANDPARENTS OF K-12 YOUTH



In partnership with Boniuk Foundation and Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment[16], we encourage families to help K-12 youth practice shared values like compassion, generosity, and respect for others through:

- * A special set of Chicken Soup for the Soul Books
- * Two TV shows: Hidden Heroes & New Americans
- * Parenting Workshops[17]
- * Featured on APlus.com



900K

BOOKS GIFTED TO
K-12 STUDENTS
& FAMILIES

42 million

VIEWERS OF NATIONAL
TV SHOWS FEATURING
INSTITUTE EFFORTS



Enhancing Religious Literacy at Rice University



Intolerance knows no boundaries. It is a centuries-old problem that has grown exponentially in recent decades.[18] Studies show that social media amplifies bigotry[19] as evidenced following attacks on religious and racial minorities and their houses of worship in Charleston 2015, Charlottesville 2017, Pittsburgh 2018, and Christchurch 2019. As of 2000, only 5% of American undergraduates took courses in religion.[20] To respond to current trends and fill the education gap, Boniuk Institute has:

Educated on Religious & Racial Bigotry

- Hosted Morehouse College's Dean Lawrence Carter Sr. to discuss the legacy of King & Gandhi and its impact on his work[21]
- Co-sponsored Rice's Black Male Leadership Initiative efforts bridging race, religion, and justice[22]
- Held teach-ins on anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and religion & politics

Expanded Interfaith Leadership Development

- Sent 12 Rice students to Interfaith Leadership Institutes, and added campus-wide interfaith service opportunities at Rice
- Trained 250+ undergraduates nationally in interfaith leadership

Enhanced Religious Life & Accommodations

- Supported designation of the first interfaith prayer space at Rice[23]
- Advised administration on relevant policies, trainings, and building projects

ENGAGING EXPERTS²⁴



From left: Dr. Milton Boniuk, Laurie Boniuk, Jonathan Turley, Jeremy Waldron, Paula Sanders, Rice President David Leebron, Y. Ping Sun

900

**EVENTS HELD,
INCLUDING 300+
SPEAKING
ENGAGEMENTS**

160K

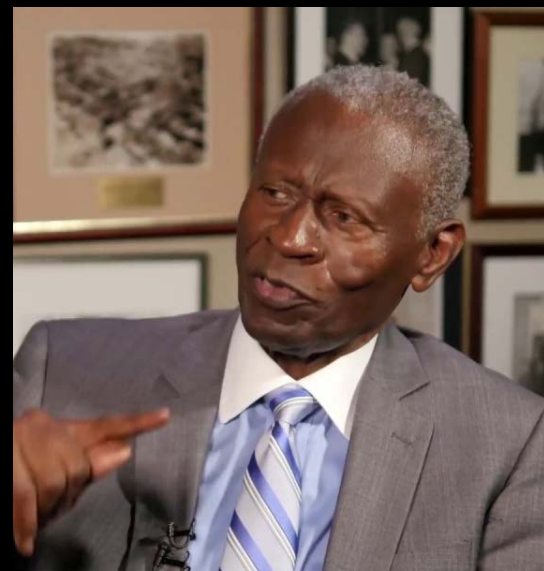
**ATTENDEES,
INCLUDING 113K
YOUTH & MENTORS
TO YOUTH**

2600%

**INCREASE IN
ATTENDANCE SINCE
FOUNDING IN 2013**



REP. ANDRE CARSON
D-Indiana, 7th



Dr. Lawrence E. Carter, Sr.
Dean, Martin Luther King, Jr. Int'l Chapel

COUNTERING ANTI-SEMITISM WITH OUR PARTNERS

Anti-Semitism—or hostility to, prejudice or discrimination against Jews—is the oldest form of structural hatred known. Attacks on Jewish institutions and communities in the U.S. reached a forty-year high in 2019. [25]

Boniuk Institute partners with local and national organizations to help the public understand and respond to anti-Semitism constructively. Examples include:

- * Working with Rice affiliates to deliver a teach-in & vigil after the Pittsburgh Tree of Life synagogue shootings
- * Partnering with Holocaust Museum Houston (HMH) and DaCamera to host concerts & talks on the Music of Mieczyslaw Weinberg at HMH, Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, and the Galveston Residency
- * Collaborating with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to train university faculty & staff how to combat white supremacist propaganda on college campuses, which is at an all-time high, and with ADL and Tanenbaum Center to train corporate leaders on bias and discrimination against religious minorities in the workplace
- * Co-sponsoring HMH's exhibition of "Coexistence", an installation of 45 vinyl panels—created by the Museum on the Seam, Jerusalem—in Houston's Hermann Park



1975

**YOUTH, COMMUNITY &
CORPORATE LEADERS
ATTENDED THESE
PROGRAMS**



Training Civic & Corporate Leaders

The religious and racial diversity of the global and American workforces continues to grow[26], including among Gen Z.[27] Yet, diverse workplaces without religious diversity-related training, policies, and metrics[28] are correlated with increased discrimination and decreased revenues, retention, and performance. Studies show that engaging stakeholders' religious identities at work increases revenues, workplace satisfaction, and inclusion.[29]

Boniuk Institute and its partners—including Tanenbaum Center, Religious Freedom and Business Foundation, and National Diversity Council—train and guide C-suite leaders, managers, and HR to engage religious diversity at work.

69K

LEADERS TRAINED

960K

LEADERS REACHED
VIA TRAIN THE
TRAINER

98%

OF CLIENTS
RE-ENGAGE
OUR SERVICES

FURNISHING EXPERTISE TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

The U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service (CRS) prevents and resolves community conflicts motivated by bias and hate against protected classes, like religion, race, gender, and national origin.[30]

In response to rising hate crimes against religious and racial minorities and attacks on places of prayer in the U.S., and to complement training on anti-Semitism provided by the Anti-Defamation League, Boniuk Institute works with CRS to train law enforcement, government officials, and community leaders on engaging and building partnerships with American Muslims.[31] Institute staff serves the CRS as a Subject Matter Expert, Trainer, and the sole National Trainer of Trainers on the customs and civil rights issues impacting the diverse American Muslim community.

At the invitation of CRS, our staff have participated in Bias Incidents & Hate Crimes Fora and Protecting Places of Worship Fora. We have also trained law enforcement at the behest of local police departments. [32]

2000

LAW ENFORCEMENT
OFFICERS TRAINED
NATIONALLY BY INSTITUTE
STAFF & PARTNERS

~30

million

AMERICANS SERVED BY LAW
ENFORCEMENT WE TRAINED



Providing Thought Leadership

Boniuk Institute has advised the G-20 Interfaith Form[33], United Nations Alliance-USA[34], the Asian University for Women[35], U.S. State Department's Office of Religion and Global Affairs[36] and Office of International Religious Freedom[37], and several task forces under Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner[38].

Each opportunity integrates religious freedom and literacy in the US and abroad to enhance understanding, respect and engagement among diverse peoples, and to reduce intolerance, bias, and violence.

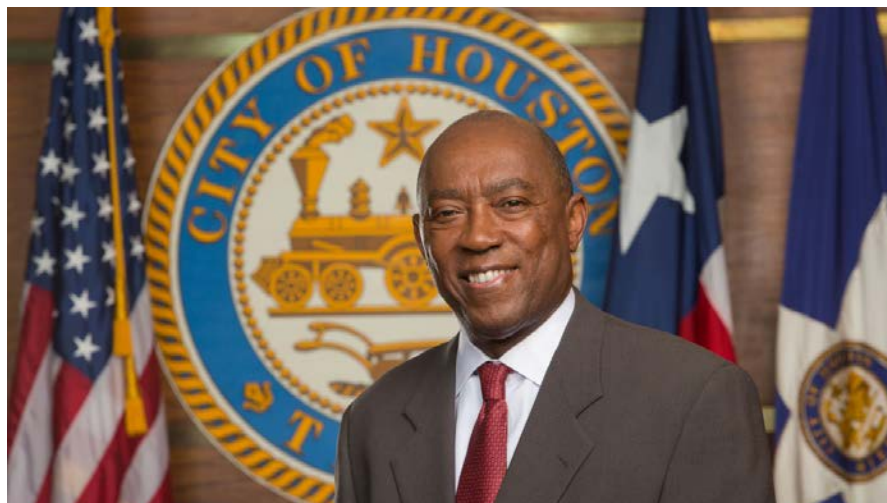


UNA USA



INTERFAITH SUMMIT

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE



ARTS OF TOLERANCE

Under the umbrella of the Boniuk Institute, Arts of Tolerance [39] was launched in 2018 to promote tolerance, our shared humanity, and understanding through the arts. Over two years, we hosted 34 programs and reached an audience of 17,000.



850

ARTISTS FEATURED,
INCLUDING GRAMMY
AWARD WINNERS

500K

ADDITIONAL
INDIVIDUALS
REACHED THROUGH
MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS

honors & recognition

Boniuk Institute was named a partner by the Charter for Compassion, and highlighted as a rare model of interfaith cooperation by the Interfaith Youth Core. Our work has been featured in *The Atlantic*, *National Geographic*, *World Architect*, *Saudi Aramco World*, and other venues. The Institute and its leadership have garnered various honors [40] over the past 5 years, including:

- Houston Mayor Turner declared 2018 as "The Year of Tolerance"
- Dr. Milton Boniuk was the 2016 Recipient of the National Humanitarian Award by the Jhalsa Salana
- Jim and Molly Crownover were named the 2018 Friends of Fondren Honorees



PANDEMIC PIVOT



OUR WORK IS WORLDWIDE

With the pandemic, we now deliver most of our work digitally, engaging people from 6 continents.



300%

INCREASE IN TEACHER
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
ENROLLMENT AT 5% OF
THE COST

700%

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF
COUNTRIES FROM WHICH
TEACHERS ARE TRAINED

2950%

INCREASE IN HITS ON
WEB CONTENT

Endnotes

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- [3] Global and European data: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2019/May/28th-crime-commission-to-address-crime-motivated-by-intolerance-or-discrimination.html>;
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- [12] <https://boniuk.rice.edu/educational-opportunities>
- [13] <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1158253.pdf>
- [14] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15210960.2017.1335039>;
https://www.fcis.org/uploaded/Data_Reports/Teaching_-_Learning_in_the_Age_of_Trump.pdf;
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- [16] <https://www.chickensoup.com/boniuk-foundation/>
- [17] <https://boniuk.rice.edu/positive-parenting>
- [18] <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/524376/pdf>
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- [20] <http://studyreligion.org/why/study.html>
- [21] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxWfQCVrMs0&feature=youtu.be>; <https://www.cercl.rice.edu/whats-the-thesis>
- [22] <https://bmli.rice.edu/cultural-excursions>
- [23] <https://issuu.com/thresher/docs/160113thresh>
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- [26] <https://www.prrri.org/research/american-religious-landscape-christian-religiously-unaffiliated/>
- [27] <https://www.ifyc.org/resources/emerging-interfaith-trends-report>
- [28] <https://tanenbaum.org/publications/2013-survey/>
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- [30] <https://www.justice.gov/crs>
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- [32] <http://www.fortbendstar.com/sheriff-brings-communities-together-for-diversity-training/>
- [33] http://religionsforpeaceaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Steiner_G20_Interfaith_Forum_2018_Argentina_Report.pdf; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMJVvKdXljo>;
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- [34] <https://unausa.org/unausa-hosts-50-state-un75-consultations/>;
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- [35] <https://asiasociety.org/texas/former-uk-first-lady-leads-dialogue-women%E2%80%99s-education>
- [36] <https://news.rice.edu/2016/04/28/rices-boniuk-institute-welcomes-state-department-officials/>
- [37] <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/office-of-international-religious-freedom/>
- [38] https://www.houstontx.gov/mayor/transitionreports/public_safety.pdf;
<http://www.houstontx.gov/welcoming/>;
<https://www.houstontx.gov/diversitymonth/index.html>; <https://www.houstontx.gov/diversitymonth/socialmedia.html>; <https://www.facebook.com/randy.czarlinsky/videos/2908995819214173/>
- [39] <https://artsoftolerance.org/>
- [40] See <https://boniuk.rice.edu/awards-honors> for a full list of awards.
- [41] Back cover image courtesy of Mabry Campbell.



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