

# COMMUNITIES OVERCOMING EXTREMISM

The After Charlottesville Project



Nationally, there has been a dramatic rise in extremism, intolerance and political violence since the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville during August of 2017. Communities need the latest strategies to effectively handle these threats. **Communities Overcoming Extremism: The After Charlottesville Project**, a year-long national capacity-building initiative, is empowering leaders with the information, alliances and resources necessary to prevail against extremism.

## The Project

A diverse group of partners, organizational representatives, policymakers and influencers convened to focus on building a national network of leaders to collaborate and provide local communities with tools to overcome extremism, promote reconciliation and advance community respect and healing.

## Key Strategies

- Identify, establish and strengthen relationships with key community influencers and groups.
- Bring increased attention to community issues of extremism and efforts to combat it.
- Ensure that community members, leaders (business, non-profit, and elected) and law enforcement are equipped to deal with issues of extremism.



## 2018's Fall Summit: The Public Sector

The Project held a Public Sector Summit at Washington University in St. Louis on November 28-30, 2018, bringing together 150 community leaders from across the country, including mayors, prosecutors, law enforcement, faith leaders, school officials, legislators and leaders from the nonprofit and business sectors. Participants tackled difficult topics in breakout sessions and shared ideas for best practices in confronting hate during wisdom circles. Through thoughtful discussion, public sector leaders advanced their skills and strengthened their commitment to overcoming the challenges that extremism poses for our democracy and for local communities.

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## Summit Highlights

**Samar Ali, former White House Fellow and former political advisor to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security,** announced her One Thousand Voices Project, focused on creating a corps of Muslim-American ambassadors who will proactively cultivate relationships and highlight stories untold.

**DOJ Counsel for Domestic Terrorism Tom Brzozowski** called for a federal statute on domestic terrorism.

**Former Mayor of Cleveland Jane Campbell** highlighted the international "compassion charter" that has led over 400 cities to promote compassion instead of divisiveness.

**Georgetown law professor and former federal prosecutor Mary McCord** discussed Georgetown's innovative, successful lawsuit in Charlottesville preventing violent paramilitary groups from entering the city again.

**U.S. Conference of Mayors president Stephen Benjamin** announced the new Center for Inclusive and Compassionate Cities Initiative, which will establish resources for mayors to address the rise in hate-driven violence and public bigotry.

## Next Steps

A second summit will be held in 2019 when private sector leaders will address ways in which they can help their local communities overcome extremism and promote America's foundational principles of justice and equality. The summit will showcase efforts of entrepreneurs and corporations to combat hate, extremism and bigotry in order to promote healing and overcome extremism. The Project will conclude with the release of a Communities Overcoming Extremism podcast and white paper report, which will codify the summit learnings. After the culmination of the project, there will be recommended action items and resources for communities to unite, combat hate, heal from extremism and safeguard our democracy.

## Leaders in attendance at the fall summit included:

**Steve Benjamin,**  
Mayor, Columbia S.C., and  
President, U.S. Conference of Mayors

**Jesse Arreguin,**  
Mayor, Berkeley, California

**Jorge Elorza,**  
Mayor, Providence, Rhode Island

**Andy Berke,**  
Mayor, Chattanooga, Tennessee

**Jane Campbell,**  
Former Mayor, Cleveland, Ohio

**Khizr Khan,**  
Gold Star parent

**Peter Wehner,**  
New York Times Columnist

**Mary McCord,**  
former Justice  
Department official

**John Danforth,**  
former U.S. Senator

**Ali Noorani,**  
President,  
National Immigration Forum

**Samar Ali,**  
Founder, One Thousand Voices

**Stephanie Morales,**  
Commonwealth Attorney,  
Portsmouth, Virginia

...and many, many others



## Donor Recognition:

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