

# **The Christa McAuliffe Space Education Center 1990–2005 Fifteen Year Anniversary Multicurriculum Space Education for Utah**

## **Desired Goals and Outcomes: Intolerance**

This year we present a simulation exploring issues of discrimination based on culture, skin color, and class. Beyond exploration, however, this simulation leads to confrontation—the often uncomfortable, but almost always productive, realizations by early adolescents of their personal biases, methods of choosing friends, and ways of confronting important social issues. The process of learning through simulations forces players to question and to act.

Adolescents want to be in control and to make choices; simulations offer that control. They want to be part of a group; simulations demand interaction. They want to be listened to and have their ideas considered; simulations evolve from the ideas of the players. These simulations challenge young people to examine themselves, their friends, and their community in order to shape their own future.

## **Simulation Philosophy**

This simulation is based on a belief in the inherent value and dignity of all people as individuals. Within this belief is the recognition of the benefits to society arising from this respectful inclusion.

## **Simulation Objectives**

1. To confront personal bias
2. To recognize bias in others
3. To recognize systemic discrimination
4. To actively challenge discrimination
5. To work proactively toward respectful inclusion.

Our sons and daughters come home with questions that don't have answers in textbooks or the encyclopedia. They have questions about adult attitudes and actions toward older people, visible minorities, or persons who are physically challenged. They may wonder how adults feel about affirmative action policies of employment, immigration laws, and poverty. Adolescents see the world around them and wonder how adults have made such a mess of things. Young people are questioning their own attitudes and their self-concept is developing. They are trying to find their place in society. In the classroom we watch students struggle with their respect for your opinion and their need to form their own. We hope this curriculum and simulation will give you an opportunity to share your experience and wisdom with your students as they face what we believe are the most important issues of their lives.

Discrimination begins with hate and fear, and is perpetuated by a person filled with self-hate. When we hate ourselves, it is easy to hate others. When we love ourselves, this healthy love extends to all those around us. Positive self-esteem is the basis for positive action on behalf of others. Adolescence was described by Erikson (1950) as a period during which the young person tries to establish a sense of personal identity and attempts to avoid both identity confusion and role diffusion. At this critical time of identity formation, personal bias can either be set for life or be questioned. That is why anti-bias education for adolescents must begin with a close look at one's self, one's personal culture, and one's personal biases. This curriculum and simulation will be a voyage of discovery. At the end of which the young people find out who they are and why they are important.

There are several things you can do to enrich this field trip for your students. You will see the tie to your space science and social studies curriculum. The following information will assist you in integrating these ideas into your classroom routine. If you have any questions please call us at 801-

785-8713.