

# A BUSINESS PLAN with spirit

**2019-2020**

Version: March 2019



Newark Center for Meditative Culture

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# 1.0 Executive Summary

The goal of Newark Center for Meditative Culture (NCMC) is to develop integrated and broad applications to bring mindfulness and meditation in their many forms and life practices to the community. We envision a center for individuals, families, and communities to turn to for help in healing, prevention, reconnection, and transformation for the sake of self, family, society, and our environment.

Our approach to cultivating our meditation community and providing teachings is holistic and socially engaged rather than that of a more standard style of many meditation centers where engagement is more specific. This does not mean, however, that we don't feel the need to also develop an evolved meditation community that requires space in a closed compassionate circle.

We have only just recently begun to fundraise. Prior to this point, we have carefully managed our finances through a break-even style of bookkeeping — what comes in goes out, restricting funds only when there was a need to plan ahead. We were able to do it in this way, as we have very little overhead.

To take our goals to the next level though, we need to have a home base (rather than ad hoc venue rentals) where we can offer more weekly programming and a hub for our community to gather.

We are excited to now have a commitment for a rental lease of rooms in a landmark building in a central downtown location near Military Park, Newark, NJ. What we need immediately is the funding for *at least* 1-1/2 years of the lease, approximately \$10,800.

This is our First Priority ASK.

## 2.0 Our Organization

### 2.1 Overview

Newark Center for Meditative Culture is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization serving Newark, NJ, the Greater Newark Area, and beyond.

### 2.2 Statements

#### **Our Mission**

NCMC is intended to be a safe place where like-minded people can gather in order to practice the fundamental meditation methods of tranquility, insight, healing, and loving-kindness and to become engaged together in conscientious, compassionate, and contemplative activities as a group and in the local community.

#### **Our Vision**

To be an inclusive community of practice, study, and social engagement that provides a refuge for all people who seek meditation and spiritual development and a purposeful lifestyle.

#### **Our Practice**

Our foundation is based on the secular, universal principles and practices of Buddhist-based psychology/philosophy, applied through both traditional and contemporary means, along with ancestral, yogic, Taoist, Sufi, and other wisdom teachings and disciplines. We encompass a range of practices along with the much required secular teaching, especially mindful stress relief and healing.

## 2.3 Our History

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### **2012-2016 Developing as a Community Initiative**

For the first formative years we served as a gradually developing community initiative. In 2012, we had once a month groups, building in 2013 to twice a month and in 2014 to weekly. In 2015 we added seasonal day-long retreats. Throughout this time we also partnered with community organizations to present meditation and bring awareness of it to local residents.

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### **2017 Establishing a Non-Profit Organization**

Beginning in early 2017 we started the process of becoming a 501c3, finalized in April of that year.

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### **2018 Adapting to Formalization and Stabilizing**

Continuing with our weekly meditation group and seasonal retreats we now needed begin creating processes and developing policies and guidelines.

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### **2019 A Year to Expand**

Now, we hope to expand our community reach and commitment through procuring a rental space as a home base to offer more programs and availability of services.

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## 2.4 Business Objectives

### **The Here and Now Goals**

#### Our Roots are Our Foundation

Funding for a space for at least a two-year lease in order to develop a community that has a continual place to meet is critical. Being able to purchase needed supplies, services, and equipment is important to keep the flow of resources going for people to stay connected. Developing a library will ground our community in knowledge.

#### Our People are Our Gold

Establishing a community of practice of Friends of NCMC who are committedly behind our purpose is a clear need. We want to be able to compensate our precious teachers reasonably. Finding people to provide professional services such as grantwriting, public relations, and social media will keep us stable. Developing study programs will ensure that students who choose have an advancement or teaching track.

### **What's Possible in the Near Future**

We picture a center where visiting teachers have a place to stay with us to teach, a working vegetarian kitchen to teach mindful cooking and eating, a children's room for mindful activities especially while parents practice, and continuing to develop environmentally sound practices.

### **Blue Sky Goals**

We can envision someday having a sustainable green center that might include advanced study and research, still rooted in our rich local meditative community. A large, divinely-designed, cross-culturally comprehended contemplation hall, open to all and a destination to many.

## 3.0 Our People

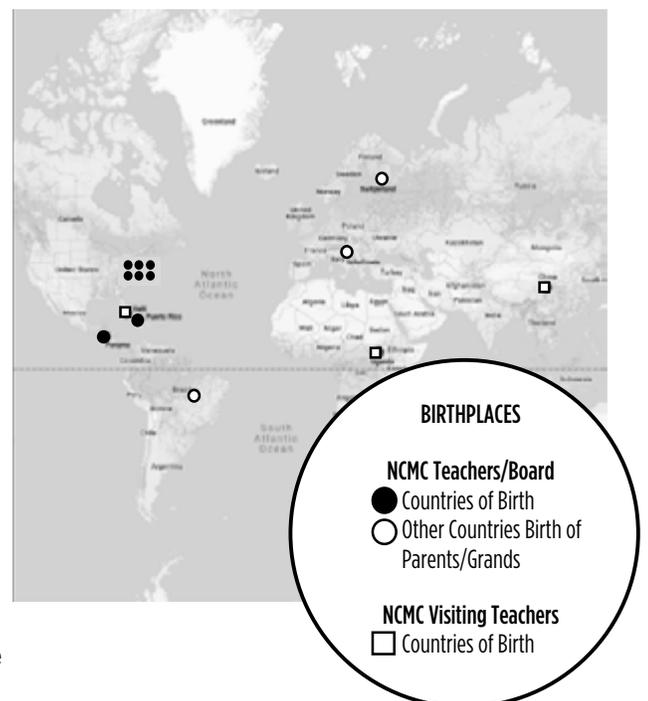
### Our Leadership

Currently we have a board of directors consisting of eight people, three born, raised, and living in Newark, two who have lived and worked in Newark, one who lives locally, and two who live at far distance but had been until recently local. The board includes the Spiritual Director, Chairperson, Co-founders, Treasurer, Secretary, and three other board members. In the near future we will need to address the issue of retaining Directors.

### Our Teachers and Instructors

Our main teachers and instructors are also on the board. We currently have one visiting monastic teacher and two visiting lay teachers. It is a diverse group of teachers, in a way replicating our community. There are individuals whose birthplaces range from China, Haiti, Panama, Puerto Rico, Uganda, and naturally the U.S., including a few of whose parents and/or grandparents were born in Brazil, Serbia, and Switzerland.

Our teachers include insight teachers, yoga and tai-chi/qi-gong instructors, stress relief instructors, and chanting and drum circle leaders. NCMC's three Visiting Teachers are of the Theravadan, Chan, and Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Our Spiritual Director brings in Ancestral, Shamanic, and Medicine meditation along with his 30 year practice of meditation. Currently, the teachers have a combined meditation practice of over 150 years!



**Our Students**

Our students are mostly beginners at meditation and come with a variety of meditation practices that they have tried, often through online guided meditations.

**Our Volunteers and Champions**

Outside of our board, we have simply a few consistent and loyal volunteers and some patient long-term supporters who understand the benefits of what we are doing and are committed to our longevity in the community. More support can be resolved when we obtain our rental space to gather.

**Our Believers**

The community of supporters who don't necessarily show up at our programs, but believe in our cause and support our work through social media, advice, and exposure.

## 4.0 Our Culture

It is important to understand that we are not simply a meditation center, but rather, a center for meditative culture.

Often in our day-to-day lives our awareness is consumed by the task of maintaining our private and social faces. Much of the data we receive from our environment, from other humans and our own emotional and intuitive signals go ignored.

One of the precious benefits of maintaining a meditation practice is the cultivation of a more encompassing awareness. As awareness expands, so does our ability to be present for ourselves, others, and the subtle signals of nature and humanity. This then allows us to respond to the world from a place of awareness as opposed to habit.

When meditation practitioners gather together in a soul group, the result is the creation of a charged space. This now sacred space is infused with the collective breath of compassion and service, peace and love. The shared experience within this sacred space signals the presence of meditative culture.

Upon leaving the collective each person takes with them a portion of the collective charge to share with all they encounter upon their way, sowing the seeds of meditative culture in their daily travels.

*Meditative culture does not spread by coercion or marketing. It's contagious. It expands organically in response to the people's desire for change.*

## 5.0 Our Programs

### 5.1 Diversity and Inclusiveness

We offer both general programs and targeted programs for specific affinity groups of people and surrounding issues. For example, our People of Color retreats especially are intended to provide an affinity group for individuals who daily confront the effects of oppression and racism, and who therefore may initially choose to avoid mixed programs.

All of our programs are offered as donation-based, fee-based, or free to the participant. We base this system on the practice of *dana* or generosity, which is inherent to many spiritual traditions. Your donations will allow us to continue to provide life enhancing programs to the entire community regardless of their present economic circumstances.

### 5.2 Programs to Date

Beginning in 2012 through today, NCMC has presented close to 300 life changing, health promoting, and self-empowering programs within the context of the socially engaged, multi-cultural, and diverse population of the Greater Newark Area:

- 16 Meditation Day Retreats (including 4 POC )
- 10 First Sunday Art and Meditation Workshops
- 200+ Meditation Workshops (including bi-lingual)
- 2 Ten-Week Basic Meditation Courses
- 26 Dharma Movie/Meditation Sessions
- 2 Online Meditation Medicine Courses
- 16 Tai-Chi/Qi-Gong Classes
- 2 Open Mind Film Festivals
- 12 Nature Walks and Hikes
- 1 Deep Ecology Training Workshop
- Publishing one meditation and one dharma book.

### 5.3 Programs We Hope to Provide

- more weekly and monthly group meditations and study groups
- monthly meditation and creative journaling
- a training program for student leaders for groups
- opportunities for our students to deepen their practice at longer residential retreats
- opportunities for our students to advance to teachers
- corporate workshops, school workshops, college workshops
- self-care workshops in-house and for other organizations.

## 6.0 Population and Trends

### 6.1 The Market for Mindfulness and Meditation

There are at least 283,000<sup>1</sup> people living in Newark NJ and combined with the contiguous cities that make up the Greater Newark Area there are substantially more. In Newark the population consists of black/African American people at over 50%, Latino/Hispanic at over 35%, and white at around 25%<sup>2</sup>. There are smaller percentage of other races.

There is a high interest in meditation but with the unpredictability of many people’s lives in the area it is slow to develop a committed community:

- a) mainly because of our not having a home base to hold more programs on different days of the week.
- b) partly because there may be a need to create neighborhood groups in different wards.

There is a vital need and earnest requests for affinity group programs such as for women and people of color.

There are marginalized people especially those who speak english as a second language or not at all, who we’d like to reach. The impact of structural discrimination and feelings of isolation can increase stress levels in this population among others.

There is evidence from our programs that demonstrates a desire of families wanting to practice mindfulness and meditation together and we hope to address this need even more.

RACE & HISPANIC ORIGIN	%
Black or African American alone	50.1
White alone	25.3
American Indian & Alaska Native alone	.6
Asian alone	1.7
American Indian & Alaska Native alone	.6
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	0.0
Two or More Races	2.7
Hispanic or Latino	36.4
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	10.7

POPULATION BY RACE	#
Black or African American	141,740
White	71,516
Some Other Race	55,408
Two or More Races	7,560
Asian	4,938
American Indian & Alaska Native	1,566
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	75

1. Source: Data via US Census (2017 ACS 5-Year Survey): Table B03002

2. Source: <https://factfinder.census.gov/>  
The discrepancy in counts to percents is due to the census allowance for individuals to choose multiple races or origins.

## 6.2 Forces and Trends

The interest and trend in yoga in the Greater Newark Area is higher than that of meditation, so we do always offer moving meditations in our programs including yoga, tai-chi, and qi-gong as these practices lead to discipline, mindfulness, and focus. However, we do not intend to become competitive with yoga instructors but instead to invite them to teach and partner with us. Of note, many yoga practitioners often want to advance in sitting meditation and we will be ready to provide instruction and guidance.

Understanding our community needs for healing, we have expanded our teaching of tai-chi and qi-gong as a healing science that also brings mental calm. This has manifested through some of our teachers long-standing backgrounds in these arts.

There are also lone, talented teachers of unique meditation practices instructing in the area who are ready to teach with us under our curriculum as we become ready to partner with them.

There is especially interest in mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR). We hope to be able to provide interested students with grants to train in teaching MBSR.

The force to focus on family mindfulness is becoming clear as we are asked to teach at programs that target families or are geared towards families. We also find that parents often want to bring their children to our programs.

## 6.3 Potential Redundancy

In the city, yoga instructors are being produced seemingly prolificly. They are also bringing light meditation practice into their classes.

We will distinguish ourselves by building a reputation as experts in meditation and mindfulness through our breadth of study and practice, along with our holistic approach to developing a meditative culture.

## 7.0 Outreach Plan

### 7.1 Community Characteristics

The majority of our students and supporters live in or around Newark. The general age range is approximately 25 to 60. Level of education ranges from high school to masters degrees and PhDs. Many work in the school system, for non-profits, in healthcare, and the arts, but also in a wide-range of employment. The majority who attend are African American, followed by Hispanic/Latino, and then white — parallel with the demographics of the city and surrounding area. Their belief systems are wide-ranging and often multi-spiritual/multi-disciplined. Most Newarkers like to patronize locally and indulge in the comforts that Newark provides them so they will want a meditation community that is theirs.

### 7.2 Advertising and Promotion Plan

Our community uses a variety of means, especially technology to engage with us so it's imperative that we keep up with the demands:

- Volunteers: Gain more volunteers to support our marketing.
- Marketing to Supporters: we keep our current supporters informed through social media, online event outlets, and weekly emails.
- Print materials: distribution of business cards and postcards, seasonal program schedules.
- Target different student types: Possible promotions for corporate workshops, school workshops, college workshops.
- Public Relations: This is an important aspect that we have not yet approached as it needs dedicated energy from the right individual.

## 7.3 Retention Plan

- Volunteer Interest: We will continue to offer our students various means to contribute and engage to keep the momentum and their interest alive and further their practice of generosity.
- Donation-based, Fee-based, and Free Programs: This allows for all varieties of budget needs of our community.
- Personal Feedback: We get feedback on our programs from our students and partners through personal dialogue that is then brought back to the board members for further discussion. Students also like to make suggestions to us by email or social media.
- Surveys: We use a simple survey after retreats for students to fill out so that we can find out how we might improve our programs. It also lets them see that their opinions and needs are important to us.

## 8.0 Processes and Evaluation

### 8.1 The Flow

- Service Providers We are slowly adding professionals to our team. Our first important step was contracting with a local accountant.
- Facilities Our new rental space will allow for all of our supplies to have storage in one convenient location in Newark for all our team to access.
- Volunteers We plan to take on only as much programming as we can manage.

### 8.2 The Processes

- Project Teams so that tasks are defined.
- Budget Checklists to make sure that programs stay on target.
- Retreat Kits so that volunteers can easily find documents and guidelines they might need.
- Teacher Guidelines so that our teachers and instructors are clear about their responsibilities.
- Constant Assessments is key. When there are requests or plans for our services that we feel we can't meet appropriately, we carefully consider taking on a project or potentially declining.
- Policy Development to use as internal and external management.

### 8.3 The Contingency Plan

Our contingency plan is simple. If we are unable to find funding for our rental space, we would continue to offer programming at various rental spaces and work cooperatively with community organizations and non-profits, until we find the funding. This however would keep our service to the community at a lower level that doesn't fit the need. We need the funding.

## 9.0 Financial Information

### 9.1 2018 Income Statement

(Prepared by Coombs CPA, PC, Newark NJ)

#### **Newark Center for Meditative Culture**

For the Year Ending December 31, 2018

##### **Income**

Service Revenue	\$6,377
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##### **Total Income**

<u>\$6,377</u>
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##### **Expenses**

Salaries/Contractor Expense	\$1,192
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Retreat Expense	\$920
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Supplies Expense	\$200
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Bank Fees (Check Orders)	\$195
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Advertising / Marketing Expense	\$178
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Gift Expense	\$130
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Entertainment Expense	\$50
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Shipping Expense	\$30
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Bank Fees	\$25
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##### **Total Expense**

<u>\$2,921</u>
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##### **Net Income**

<u>\$3,456</u>
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## 9.2 Break Even Analysis

### One-Year Budget Proposal for 2019-2020

(Prepared by NCMC Finance and Fundraising Committees)

#### 2019 Rental Space (budget needed only with rental space)

Rental Space (2 years)	\$14,400
General liability insurance (1 yr)	660
20 meditation mats/cushion sets (organic cotton/buckwheat fill)	1,500
10 meditation mats	450
10 jute non-toxic yoga mats	560
24 lap towels	240
3 meditation benches	150
Moving expenses	300
Painting/Floors	400
Minor furnishings	300
Retreat supplies	400
Water filter system	300
Fire safe box	50
First aid kit	50
Outdoor sign	100
Incidentals	500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$20,360</b>

#### General Needs (budget w/ or w/o rental space)

Bookkeeper (annual fee)	\$ 830
Accountant (annual filing/consult)	500
Quickbook Pro	185
Website hosting	60
Yearly domain name renewal	20
Post office box (yearly)	60
Tablet for purchases/admin	300
Printing/copying	500
Incidentals	500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,955</b>

#### Student/Teacher Advancement (budget w/ or w/o rental space)

MBSR Fundamentals Teacher Training online: 2 students	\$1,200
Residential Weekend Retreats: 2 students	500
Residential Week-long Retreats: 2 students	800
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>

#### NCMC Teacher Support / Free Programs (budget w/ or w/o rental space)

Downtown Winter course	\$ 300
Park Summer course	300
Park Tai-Chi Spring/Fall courses	300
Ironbound Weekly Group	600
Miscellaneous Teachers	600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,100</b>

#### Library (budget needed only with rental space)

3 Tablets	\$ 300
Ebooks	200
Books	300
Magazine Subscription	200
Audio Teachings	100
Tablet accessories	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,200</b>

#### Large Program Outside Venue Costs (budget w/ or w/o rental space)

Space Rental 3x	\$ 555
Event liability insurance 3x	315
Food and Supplies 3x	300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,170</b>

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#### Total Proposed Budget

Rental Space and Supplies	\$20,360
General Office Needs	2,955
Student/Teacher Advancement	2,500
Teacher Support/ Free Programs	2,100
Library	1,200
Venue Costs/Large Programs	1,170
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$30,285</b>

# 10.0 The Ask

## Our Immediate Needs and Wants for 2019

The focus of our initial plan is to raise the funding needed to develop a strong organizational infrastructure. Our most important funding requirement to do so is for the rental space, so that we can develop our programs without the pressure of worrying about rent.

### First Priority

a) Rental Space (2 years)	\$14,400
b) General Liability Insurance (1 year)	660
c) Furnishings and Space Preparation	2,600
d) Accounting Services/Software	1,515
e) Incidentals	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$19,675</b>

### Second Priority

a) Student and Teacher Advancement	\$2,500
b) NCMC Teacher Support/Free Programs	2,100
c) Additional Meditation Supplies/eTablet	1,700
d) Large Program Retreat Costs	1,170
e) Printing Promotions/Copying Handouts	500
f) Minor Furnishings/Incidentals	600
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8570</b>

### Third Priority

a) Office Supplies/Website/PO Box	\$240
b) Retreat Supplies	400
c) Library	1,200
d) Incidentals	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,040</b>

**Grand Total** **\$30,285**

Can you help us reach our First Priority ASK?  
Especially needed is our goal of \$10,800 for at least  
1-1/2 years rent.

## 11.0 APPENDIX

### 11.1 Members of the Board

#### **Board Members**

**Ib'nallah S. Kazi** *Spiritual Director*

**Marcie Barth** *Chairperson & Co-founder*

**Cornelia Santschi** *Co-founder*

**Andrea Lee** *Founding Treasurer*

**Ihsaan R. Muhammad** *Founding Secretary*

**Kamilah Crawley** *Founding Board Member*

**Jennifer Becher** *Board Member*

**J. Javier Cruz** *Board Member*

The Bio-notes of the Board Members can be found on the **Leadership Page** at <http://newarkmeditation.org/leadership/> on our website at [www.newarkmeditation.org](http://www.newarkmeditation.org).

## 11.2 Documents

### IRS Determination Letter

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE P. O. BOX 2508 CINCINNATI, OH 45201	DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
Date: JUN 07 2017	Employer Identification Number: 32-3510718
NEWARK CENTER FOR MULTICULTIVE CULTURES 1 FEDERAL SQUARE RD BOX 182 NEWARK, NJ 07102-0000	INN: 26053519001087 Contact Person: CUSTOMER SERVICE ID# 31551 Contact Telephone Number: (877) 829-8500 Accounting Period Ending: December 31 Public Charity Status: 509(a)(2) Form 990/990-E/990-N Required: Yes Effective Date of Exemption: April 11, 2017 Contribution Deductibility: Yes Addendum Applies: No
Dear Applicant:	
We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.	
Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.	
If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-E/990-N, your records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-E) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.	
If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.	
For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to <a href="http://www.irs.gov/charities">www.irs.gov/charities</a> . Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.	
Letter 947	

## 11.3 Partnerships in Community Engagement

NCMC is committed to social engagement and compassionate activism along with educating the community about meditation and mindfulness and their overall mental, health, and well-being benefits.

We have collaborated with or facilitated meditation classes and programs for several non-profit organizations over the years including: Barat Foundation - Greater Newark Tennis & Education - Hikeolution - Ironbound Community Corporation - Newark LGBTQ Center - Newark Museum - Newark Yoga Movement - NJPAC - Rabbit Hole Farm - Sis & Bro Foundation.

In the educational sector, we have provided our services to: Rutgers Law School - Louise A. Spencer Community School - North Star Academy High School - Technology High School.

We have also engaged in area compassionate activism through participation in walks/marches and activities such as: Million March NYC - Buddhist Global Relief NYC & NJ Walks to Feed the Hungry - 300.org People's Climate March - Clean Energy Walk Phila. (w/NJ group) - Buddhist Council Meditate NYC & Peace Lantern Festival.

NCMC has also worked closely with generous venue providers over the years including: Index Art Center - City Without Walls Gallery - Seed Gallery - Military Park Partnership - Ironbound Community Corporation.

We also worked under the generous auspices of Rutgers Law Clinic as their client in order to complete the process of becoming a non-profit organization.

## 11.4 Student Stories

Can we take a little more of your valuable time to relate some student stories to help you understand the need for NCMC? Please note that these stories are paraphrased from memory.

### STORY 1

**One young lone meditator** came to us once and scuffled shyly into the art center where we were holding our meditation session. He said “I can’t believe I’m in here. I never thought I’d be in a place like this.” He also said he had imagined how nice it would be to meditate outdoors in a park — and his dream came true! We sit in the park in the summer!

*= Exposure, safe place, non-judgement.*

### STORY 2:

**At one of our People of Color Retreats**, one student described how wonderful it was to “meditate with people who look like me” as she was used to having to go to meditation centers that were mainly populated by white folk.

*= Diversity, like-minded, like-color, multi-color, comfort.*

### STORY 3:

**A Newark activist pops in** and sits with us only when she is sometimes available on the one day a week we have a group. Her comment though, “I love knowing that you are here doing this every week even though I most often can’t make it.”

*= The more group sessions we can hold, the more opportunities for people to show up.*

#### STORY 4:

**Three seasoned public school staff members** in Newark have come regularly and felt the positive results of continual practice. They've asked us mature questions about how to relieve their stress as they watch their students in difficulty and are immersed themselves in co-worker conflicts. One found results in walking meditation, another in sitting meditation, and another more in the continual probing that her new mindfulness brings.

*= De-stressing techniques to help through work-related stress.*

#### STORY 5

**A young sensitive woman studying reiki** online to be a reiki master, having gone back and forth and back and forth through her childhood between here and Uruguay, lacks confidence in both her languages. She stated from the heart, "My passion is to become a meditation teacher."

*= Helping to build confidence and support potential meditation and mindfulness teachers.*

*We hope that these stories give you an idea of some of the reasons we think the development of a meditative culture in the Greater Newark Area is as vital and important a cause as we do.*

# CONTACTS

## Contact information

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Website: [www.newarkmeditation.org](http://www.newarkmeditation.org)

## Social Media

Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/NewarkCenterforMeditativeCulture](http://www.facebook.com/NewarkCenterforMeditativeCulture)

Twitter:

[https://twitter.com/ncmc\\_meditates](https://twitter.com/ncmc_meditates)

Instagram:

[www.instagram.com/newark.meditative.culture](http://www.instagram.com/newark.meditative.culture)

## Make a Donation

To make a donation please go to the **Donate Page** at <http://newarkmeditation.org/donate/> on our website at [www.newarkmeditation.org](http://www.newarkmeditation.org).

Thank you for your consideration.