**Ram Bhagat Bio**

Dr. Ram Bhagat is a longtime educator, activist, and creative force. Ram Bhagat has been teaching and transforming communities for 30 years. Ram taught chemistry, environmental science, and human anatomy for Richmond Public Schools. The award winning science teacher developed an innovative **Arts Integration** curriculum to stimulate creative problem solving and critical thinking. Bhagat incorporated drumming, dance, and drama (3D) into his science classes to teach chemical bonding, scientific method, and cardiac circulation.

 Ram retired from Open High School in 2014, where he chaired the Science department, having earned numerous teaching awards. In his last teaching position, he served as Science department chair for Ballou Senior High School in Washington, D.C., where he adapted the**Changing Education Through the Arts**approach of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

 Currently, Ram is committed to healing trauma in classrooms, communities, and consciousness. He is an international conflict resolution trainer for the Richmond Peace Education Center (RPEC) and the visionary behind the Richmond Youth Peace Project (RYPP), a dynamic program that is promoting a culture of nonviolence to the city’s youth, through innovative, youth-led peacemaking initiatives. He also serves as board president for The Conciliation Project, which uses active and challenging dramatic works to promote open and honest dialogue about racial healing, social justice, and the intersections of oppression in order to guide communities towards conciliation.
 Ram Bhagat was an inauguaral member of the International Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) training for trainers in Burundi, East Africa, held August 2011. This transformative program facilitates healing from trauma, particularly trauma caused by violence, war, and genocide. Under Richmond Peace Education Center auspices, Ram and other skilled facilitators have helped many trauma-affected community members begin to heal from traumatic experiences.

 In the late 1990s, Ram co-founded **Drums No Guns**, a world percussion ensemble that inspires people of all backgrounds to challenge gun violence. “The drum lifts us,” he has said.  “The drum connects us; the drum is a powerful force … I use the drum to unite people of all ages, of all races.”

 His deep commitment to healing the traumatic effects of gun violence, and to the social emotional health of African American male adolescents, is rooted in the tragic gun death of his younger brother. In his recent **TED** talk, Ram quoted the great educator Paulo Freire, who stated, *“The community must be uplifted by the victims of trauma, the oppressed, who must not become perpetrators, but who, through a process of self-healing, uplift the community.”*

 Dr. Bhagat believes when we lose touch with the natural rhythms of our bodies and our world, we also lose the ability to sustain healthy communities. He contends, “violence is an extreme case of a community out of balance, a form of **social arrhythmia**, where disconnection, mistrust and alienation prevail.

 His unique approach to cultural awareness and resilience is **Healing Communities with Rhythm**, based on the art and science of yoga. Dr. Bhagat has been studying yoga with Dr. Janeshwar Upadyay since 1975. He completed the **Integral Yoga** teacher certification program in 2001 and developed a yoga curriculum for high school students. Dr. Bhagat is working on his certification to become a **STAR** (Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience) trainer at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding. He is actively involved in addressing racial trauma in the Black community, using **Emotional Emancipation Circles**.

 Through his 30 years of teaching, creative initiatives, and countless community collaborations, Dr. Ram Bhagat has impacted countless lives.

He is an educator, arts innovator, peacemaker, drummer, and visionary.