Julia Dowling in Sanski Most, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Consultant, Karuna Center for Peacebuilding
Volunteer International Outreach and Projects Coordinator, The Center for Peacebuilding/Centar za Izgradnu Mira (CIM)

From February through August, 2012 I will be the *International Outreach and Projects Coordinator* on a full-time volunteer basis with the Center for Peacebuiding (Centar za Izgradnu Mira) in Sanski Most, Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is made possible because I am a consultant with the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, an NGO in Amherst, MA that has worked closely with the Center for Peacebuildihg in the Past.

Center for Peacebuilding's mission is to rebuild trust and foster reconciliation among the people of Bosnia—Croats, Serbs, Bosniaks, and others—as well as support peace processes in other countries that have suffered from violent conflict. Founded in 2004 by peacebuilders Vahidin Omanovic and Mevludin Rahmanovic, CIM is located in Sanski Most – the former front lines of the conflict in Northwest Bosnia and Herzegovina. CIM plays a critical role in Sanski Most, the surrounding area, and throughout BiH by providing a safe space for constructive interethnic and religious dialogue. Our activities promote human rights and intercultural cooperation. We also train individuals in practical conflict resolution techniques, equipping them with skills to respond to conflict, including potentially violent situations, through creative and nonviolent means.

My main tasks are project design, development, and proposal writing, communications and partnership development, and coordinating and supervising other volunteers' projects. I hope to achieve the following objectives during my seven months with the Center for Peacebuilding:

- Increase email subscribers to two hundred by August
- Publish minimum of three articles on CIM's staff and projects
- Send one email to subscribers every two months
- Produce bi-annual newsletter by August
- Apply to one or two grants per month to support specific projects and core funding (including US Embassy, the Open Society Foundation in Sarajevo)
- Become conversational in Bosnian language by June and working proficient by August
- Teach weekly English classes until June, privately tutor promising/interested students
- Design and facilitate five of my own "practice" dialogues and conflict resolution/peace education workshops for CIM staff and volunteers
- Increase CIM's international and regional standing through four partnerships /collaborations on specific projects or joining relevant networks
- Increase facebook "fans" of CIM's facebook page by ten new supporters each month

The broader goal of my work here is twofold, benefitting both the organization and myself. I hope to give the organization greater short-term and long-term financial stability through project and core funding from foundations. At the same time, I want to increase awareness about CIM's work and gain a larger base of individual supporters who are dedicated to our mission and are willing to support our

work in the coming years. Through reaching out to individuals in related networks, connecting with other peacebuilding organizations in the region and globally, and writing about our projects in media outlets, I can raise CIM's public profile.

Personally, I see my work at CIM as another opportunity to gain firsthand experience and knowledge in grassroots peacebuilding. Through observing conflict resolution workshops and other peace-related projects (both in English and Bosnian), I will become more familiar and eventually comfortable in designing and implementing my own. Additionally, I will learn much from the "on the ground" challenges faced by small organizations in post-conflict settings, for example with government-level corruption, and how to work well despite these everyday realities. Finally, I hope to have a safe space in which to practice my own program skills – from facilitating group dialogue, to engaging trauma victims in conversation, to designing effective projects that make a difference to those who are most affected.