

Kelly Carter Merrill

Gray Areas Consulting, LLC | GrayAreas.org | GrayAreasConsult@gmail.com

About Me

Kelly Carter Merrill is a facilitator, speaker, educator, and coach, who works with individuals, leadership and work teams (nonprofits, colleges/universities, and businesses). She specializes in facilitating difficult conversations about community building, diversity and inclusion (DEI), self-discovery, and leadership. She is a professor at the University of Richmond in non-profit studies and at Randolph-Macon College in communication studies.



Professional Experience (30 years, since 1993)

Principal at Gray Areas Consulting (2017-present) facilitator, speaker, educator, trainer, coach.
Professor of communications, leadership, and/or education at University of Richmond (2017 to present), Randolph-Macon College (2012-present), University of Hawai'i (2007-2012), Loyola University Chicago (2003-2017), Northwestern University (2001-2005), and Penn State (1994)
College administrator at Randolph-Macon College (academic center), Loyola University Chicago (preparing future faculty program), Northwestern University (student orientation/transitions), Penn State University (residence life)

Consulting Experience (19 years, since 2004)

Facilitation for clients like: Initiatives of Change-USA, White Ally Toolkit (Dialogue Company), Lewis Ginter Urban Gardeners Program, Church Hill Association, Ben Franklin Circles, Richmond Hill discernment circles.

Leadership consulting for clients like: Circles-Ashland, Downtown Ashland Association

Trainings for clients like: J Sargeant Reynolds Community College administration and faculty, Germanna Community College administration and faculty, Medill School of Journalism faculty at Northwestern University

Invited guest speaker at: variety of college classrooms, RVA-Tech, PFLAG Richmond, Hanover Dems, ACLU-VA, Human Rights Campaign press conference, Unitarian Universalist Community Church (Glen Allen, VA), Virginia Diversity Network, Downtown Ashland Association, Toward an Inclusive Peace (Caux, Switzerland), Graduate Management Admissions Council, Kapi'olani Community College faculty, Academic Advising Center staff at University of Chicago, Human Resources staff at Hewitt Associate

Services

Facilitate conversations about: strategic planning direction, virtuous living, neighborhood gentrification, "Black Minds Matter", equity initiatives, naming and healing historical harms, Mama Bears retreat, preparing entering college freshmen for college success

Workshops titled: "Triggering Event Cycle," "Navigating Difficult Conversations," "Avoiding Conflict Without Avoiding Conflict," "What is DEI?," "Polarity Management," "White Ally Toolkit," "Developing Intercultural Sensitivity"

Speaking engagements: "When the Spirit Calls You to School Board Meetings?," "Trustbuilding as an Activist," "What's Going on in Hanover?" (transgender policy), "How to Change the World," "Leadership and Activism," "On Becoming an Activist," "What is Leadership?"

Coaching strategies: "open honest questions" discernment, "living in the tragic gap" between how things are and how they could be, strengths assessment and personal development strategy

Author

- 10 academic peer reviewed journal articles and book chapters, 2 survey instruments (GPI & SEDI)
- Blog @ GrayAreas.org
- Book (forthcoming memoir): *Death is All About Me: How Being Near the Dying Brought Me Closer to the Living*

Education

- PhD from Loyola University Chicago, higher education administration
- MEd from Penn State University, counselor education, student development
- BA from Virginia Tech, studio art & communications

Special Qualifications

Center for Mind Body Medicine (certification training in progress); Community Trustbuilding Fellow (facilitator training); Qualified administrator for the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI); Qualified administrator of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI); Conflict Mediator Certification