

# Dialogue



## Internalize Oneness

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### Quotation

"Telling the truth about the past helps cause justice in the present.

Achieving justice in the present helps us tell the truth about the past."

—James W. Loewen  
Teacher/Author

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Central

Houston Community College System seeks to provide equal educational opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

## Director's Column

### *Giving up is not an option*

Each day we are faced with the horrors of racism from the media coming to us in such private spaces as our homes, work places, and in the quietness of our cars while driving from here to there. I once heard a man say, "I would give up if someone would tell me where to go." I think of this often but no one has yet told me where the giving up place is. When I think about all the hurts people are still feeling, I say to myself, "Giving up is not an option."

I have to remind myself of the Native American mother with two sons and the pain she must be feeling to have the police called on her sons on a university campus for no other reason than they were quiet. I feel the police suspected them because they were quiet while **BROWN**. I guess that beats sitting while **BLACK** such as the case of the two men in Starbucks, running while **BLACK** or driving while **BLACK**.

The media story that really hit home for me was the Southwest Airlines staff demanding that a white mother prove her maternity of

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## Dialogue on the plantation

By Laura Gallier

The Center for the Healing of Racism took a busload of folks, from teens to seniors, to visit three plantations along the Mississippi, in Louisiana. On the way, the Center set the tone by airing a sobering film called *Traces of the Trade*, about the role of the Northern states in the Atlantic slave trade.

At the St. Joseph plantation, the enslaved workers were mentioned only briefly, and then, primarily in response to questions and in the form of statistics. Slave shacks could be seen in the distance but were not a part of the tour.

The Laura Plantation prides

itself on "presenting the stories of enslaved people." They gave credit to the skilled enslaved architects who designed the "big house." But the tour was primarily about the big house and the wealth and soap opera style dysfunction of the plantation owners.

To tell the story of slavery, curators at our third stop, the Whitney Plantation, carefully studied audio recordings of people who were interviewed by the WPA during the Depression after spending their childhoods enslaved on plantations such as this. At every point along the tour, the lives and labors of the

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## Internalize Oneness

### Letters to Cherry and the Center

Dear Cherry,

I can't thank you enough for the gift of your passion, your wisdom, and your immense energy. We truly appreciated your message, which will prompt further discussion and action by our group. Please, extend our thanks to Laura, too. Our group was blessed to have you enter our lives today.

Appreciatively,

Anne Papakonstantinou, Ed.D.  
Clinical Professor of Mathematics,  
Wiess School of Natural Sciences  
Director, Rice University School  
Mathematics Project

Dear Cherry,

You have had such a profound impact on my life and I love you very much.

Diana Turney

St. Agnes Academy

Ms. Cherry,

On behalf of the students and teachers at River Oaks Elementary, I would like to thank you for taking the time to come and present your workshop to our fifth graders! The message of your presentation is so incredibly important and you made a divisive conversation positive and relatable for our students. They loved tasting all the bread, too! Thank you, also

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## Dialogue

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Visit the Center for the  
Healing of Racism

**FACEBOOK** page for  
updates on events, pertinent  
articles and resources.

### MISSION STATEMENT

*To facilitate the healing  
of racism through  
education and dialogue  
in a safe and supportive  
environment, in order to  
empower individuals and  
transform communities.*

Have you renewed your  
membership for 2018? If  
not, please do so. The  
work must go on!

Has your address changed?  
Notify us so our correspon-  
dence can be delivered!

# Director's Column

## *Giving up is not an option, but having hope is*

Continued from page 1

her multiracial son. She didn't seem to realize that children have parents that are both black and white. This story hit home with me because I remembered a conversation with the father of my godchildren. His children are also multiethnic.

They may look like the child on the airline. I told my god children's father to always carry pictures of his children with him in case he would have to prove the children are his.

He should be in all of the pictures participating in all sorts of activities with his children. I asked him what could happen while you were out shopping with the kids and your little girl became angry over the toy you would not allow her to have? If she threw a temper tantrum, drawing the attention of others, would someone call the police on you? Would you have to come up with proof that the child really belonged to you?

We watched for some years as many media outlets tried to convince people in the USA that we were in a post-racial America.

What are we going to call America now after reading headlines such as, "Wealthy white Manhattan parents angrily rant against plan to bring more black kids to their schools"?

I wonder how many of those parents would be the first to say racism no longer exists.

### **Do parents now have to prove biracial children are theirs?**



I guess we shouldn't leave out the lawyer who was caught on camera berating restaurant employees for speaking Spanish and threatening to call immigration authorities. Should we name this story, "Not Speaking English While **BROWN**"?

Maybe if I google the Giving up Place, I can find my way there.

Then it happens—that flash of hope. Starbucks closed 8,000 of its coffee establishments to give employees diversity training. Even a little hope is better than none at all. Yes, a few hours of

training won't solve this nation's racial problem, but it is certainly a start. Perhaps that initiative will get other CEOs moving, prompting them to begin to do the same thing for the people who run and serve their institutions.

I dare to remember the words of Jessie Jackson "Keep Hope Alive," I realize how much I want to keep hope alive, and I know how much help I need from my allies.

Until I find that Giving up Place, I will continue to provide healing places for people damaged by racism.





# Ally Award Luncheon

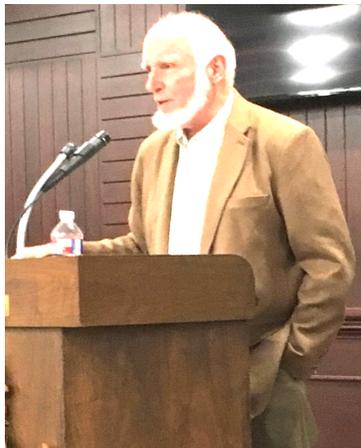
## Annual Juneteenth event dedicated to young people

For 24 years, the Center for the Healing of Racism has recognized and honored those on the frontlines in the ongoing battle against racism in the United States of America. Allies, they are, in this ongoing battle.

This year, on Saturday, June 16, the Center awarded its 24th Annual Juneteenth Ally Award to James W. Loewen, Tahirih Justice Center and Lisa Falkenberg. Ben and Sarah Becker received the Center's Individual Initiative Award.

Loewen, a sociologist, historian, and author of the national bestseller *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your High School History Textbook Got Wrong*, was the primary recipient of the award. He has dedicated much of his life to examining the many distortions found in American history textbooks.

As a college junior in 1963, Loewen spent a semester in Mississippi and experienced a different culture that led to his



*Loewen can tell many stories that are both funny and sad*

questioning what he had been taught about U.S. history.

Loewen first taught in Mississippi at Tougaloo College, a historically black college, which was founded after the Civil War. After Tougaloo College, Loewen taught about racism for 20 years at the University of Vermont, where he is professor emeritus of sociology.

His interest in racism in the United States led Loewen to also write *Sundown Towns: A Hidden*

*Dimension of American Racism*, which was released in 2005. The book documents the histories of sundown towns, which are towns where African Americans, Jews and other minority groups were forced or strongly encouraged to leave town prior to sundown in order to avoid racist violence that was threatened and perpetrated by the towns' white populations.

The Tahirih Justice Center is a national non-profit organization that has served more than 25,000 courageous individuals fleeing violence since 1997. It is inspired by a heroine of Persian history who shockingly removed her traditional veil in an assemblage of men where she spoke about rejecting old patterns of society.

In 1852, she was executed for her adoption of the Baha'i Faith and activities focusing on the emancipation of women.

The Justice Center has been the most successful organization of its kind, representing women and girls seeking asylum from gender-based violence.

Its 99 percent success rate in achieving asylum for its many clients has included presenting cases before the United States Supreme Court.

The organization is increasingly active and is currently assisting asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border during the current crisis.

Lisa Falkenberg, as a columnist for the Houston Chronicle, won the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for her columns about grand jury abuses that led to a wrongful conviction and also uncovered other egregious problems in the legal and immigration systems – a legal system that dis-proportionally incarcerates and punishes people of color.

Ben and Sarah Becker were honored with the Center's Individual Initiative Award for their grassroots leadership of a movement to keep open schools populated by people of color. The Houston Independent School District (HISD) targeted the schools for closure, but Ben and Sarah are working tirelessly for education equity in HISD for all students.

The Beckers, HISD parents who launched HISD Parent Advocates to help parents stay informed about the district, write a blog and have an active Facebook site. There, they recap board meetings and provide their own commentary.

The event was dedicated to young people, giving them a voice. Children and grandchildren of Center members participated in the program by presenting the awards. The

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## Reflecting on Dialogue on the Plantation

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Continuation of the enslavement of African Americans through convict leasing.

Nilah Pierce, age 14: "The trip was a great experience for adolescents because it tells the real story behind slavery. The

reflection discussions were my favorite part of the trip. It was an opportunity to hear everyone's perspective about the past, including their thoughts on the present. It was a real eye opener for me."

I'm no adolescent, but I couldn't say it better myself.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**NEXT DIALOGUE ON THE PLANTATION TRIP**

**MARCH 30-31, 2019**

## INTERNALIZE ONENESS

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**SUBMISSIONS**

Newsletter submissions are due the first week of the month before publication. Articles are accepted via e-mail and may be edited for brevity or clarity. Send submissions to the Center's e-mail address.

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**DIALOGUE: RACISM SERIES**

The Dialogue: Racism series is held in a supportive and honest setting. Information is provided at each session, followed by an opportunity for voluntary sharing. Facilitators say participants leave with a new understanding of racism, what they can do about it, and a sense of community with others of different backgrounds and life experiences.

**Letters to Cherry and the Center**

**Continued from Page 1**

for the donation of your book to our library. I know it will be used!  
You have an open invitation to River Oaks Elementary any time!

All the best,  
**Liz Goodman**

Yesterday Mrs. (Laura) Gallier came to show us about bread. She used it as a metaphor to show us that just like the bread, people are different but should be treated the same. She brought bread from places like Russia, Ethiopia, Austria, England, and Lebanon. My favorite bread was called challah. It is from the Jewish faith. But when they had to flee, they didn't have the time to let the dough rise. So they made a flat bread called matzo, which tasted like a cracker. The croissant was delicious. — **LA, 2nd grade**

Yesterday we went to an Opening the Bread Basket program. Ms. Gallier brought the bread basket. She brought a blue corn tortilla, challah, and injera. She brought other breads to show that we're all different and we're all beautiful. She brought the bread to show a similarity because breads are different in shapes, sizes, and colors. The challah tasted sweet. The injera and blue corn tortilla tasted a little spicy. I enjoyed this bread because we tasted bread from all different countries. They all tasted different. — **CH, 2nd grade**

**Ally Award honors those dedicated to fighting racism**

**Continued from Page 5**

group included, Astrid Yeager, Max Philippe, Jordan Pierce and Andrés Miguel Barkhouse-Geyer. Corinne Rose Harris, a fourth-grade student, presented the history of Juneteenth.

The audience was entertained with music by Marcy Jowasky (Sweet Momma Cotten) and a dance performance by the Guangdong Association of Texas Art Performing Troupe. The dancers, Cherry Pan, Limei Han, Peggy Liang and Tracy Nong performed to Chinese Yunnan Music. Currently, the committee Chairman is Cherry Pan and the Vice chairman is Limei Han.

**CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM**

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