

Dialogue



Center for the Healing of Racism Jan - June 2022  Internalize Oneness

Internalize Oneness

Send us your email address!

To save on postal costs, we no longer routinely mail the newsletter to members. Please send us your email addresses to receive the newsletter. Send addresses to cfhr1@juno.com

What to Watch

The Oprah Winfrey-produced documentary, *The Color of Care*, is available on demand on the Smithsonian Channel until Nov. 1, 2022.

How to reach us

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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

Feeling highly discouraged about violence from ongoing effects of institutional racism

For the past 33 years, I have worked to advance racial harmony and make this country safe for all who live here. I can honestly say that I have never felt more discouraged than I do today. I ask myself how is it possible that an 18-year-old, a teenager barely out of high school, is so filled with hate that he could take a semi-automatic rifle to a distant community to kill as many Black people as possible simply because they are Black?

I'm afraid a big part of the answer lies in the ongoing effects of institutional racism and the



Cherry Steinwender

Continued on page 2

Lifting the knee of whiteness

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Lifting the Knee of Whiteness:

A White Male's Contribution to Justice

Commemorating the second anniversary of George Floyd's murder

Hosted by the Center for the Healing of Racism (CFHR)

Wednesday, May 25, 2022

Presented by Chuck Egerton, Ph.D.

By MICHELLE SANCHEZ and CHUCK EGERTON

Chuck Egerton is a lecturer in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of North Carolina Greensboro. He and Cherry Steinwender have been friends and colleagues in the struggle for racial justice for more than 25 years. He often cites her as one of his most significant mentors, and the groundbreaking contributions of the CFHR and Dialogue Racism as pivotal to his work.

This was the first face-to-face meeting held by the CFHR since the pandemic began two years ago. More than 50 people attended in the Unitarian Church fellowship hall with piano player Ginger Anderson

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Interviews

As in previous years, Cherry was interviewed on radio, TV, newspapers, and magazines via Zoom.

Some of these features are:

* The Dutch magazine *de Kanttekening*, by editor Ewout Klei, interviewed from Holland.

* *Cityline*, a television broadcast in Tacoma, WA, about the People's Gathering event.

* *Houston Chronicle*, by journalist Robert Downen

* Center for Global Justice, by author Cliff DuRand from his home in Mexico.

* KPFT Radio Host Duane Bradley interviewed Chuck Egerton and Cherry on *Open Journal* about the anniversary of the death of George Floyd.

* Cherry provided changemaker insight to a Grassroots Partnership Coordinator for the documentary, *The Color of Care*, a film about how people of color disproportionately suffer from substandard healthcare. *The Color of Care* was collaboratively produced by The Smithsonian and Oprah Winfrey's Harpo Studios.

* Cherry was interviewed on KPFT Radio by Wally James about the racist-motivated shooting in Buffalo, New York.

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 2022? 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

Feeling discouraged over institutional racism

Continued from page 1

centuries-old, systematic depreciation of African American people in our society. A study done by the University at Buffalo in 2021 found that, in the past 30 years: unemployment in Buffalo's Black community was still in double digits, 3 percent of Black residents live below the poverty line, average household

income had increased only slightly since 1990 despite intense inflation, and that Buffalo's Black residents live in "poor health conditions, and many die prematurely because of it."

This frustration was clearly expressed by a resident of East Buffalo who was interviewed by a New York Times reporter after the mass shooting. "We want to

be protected and treated like we matter," she said, "without it taking a white supremacist shooting up our community."

The Center for the Healing of Racism stands in solidarity with the families in Buffalo who have lost so much and so many to hate.

Cherry Steinwender
Executive Director, CFHR

Workshops and in-person events

Chad Kalland and Cherry Steinwender conducted two workshops for the Luke Church, an African American church, in Humble, TX, and Kingwood Christian Church, a European Church, in Kingwood, TX. The two churches formed a partnership to have dialogues around racism. The invitation to conduct the workshops was given by Professor John J. Theis, the Director of Civic Engagement at Lonestar Kingwood College.

Cherry facilitated *Opening the Breadbasket* at St Paul's United Methodist Church's after school program.

Cherry and team (Laura Gallier, Salena Braye-Bulls, and Sha Falcon) facilitated *Opening the Breadbasket at Dogan Elementary School for five hundred plus students*.

Twenty Center members attended a play at Stages about the Civil rights struggle in the '60s in Houston, followed by a dialogue about the play at the

home of Joyce Steensrud.

Celebration of Arab History Heritage Month with the showing at the Center's office of the film, *Reel Bad Arabs*.

Celebration of Jewish Heritage Month with in-office showing of the film, *The Longest Hatred*.

Celebration of Asian /Pacific Heritage Month with the Center's in-office showing of the film, *Chinese Exclusion Act*.

We had a very special event remembering George Floyd at the First Unitarian Universal Church titled, *Lifting the Knee of Whiteness: A White Male's Contribution to Justice*, and presented by Chuck Egerton, Ph.D. from North Carolina.

Cherry was a featured speaker and facilitated a breakout room session at the Annual Change Happens Youth Summit.

Lunch & Learn Workshops
hosted by Laura Gallier

Laura Gallier organized and hosted several workshops after we started meeting again in-person this year. They were:

Reparations, with Brandon Mack from Black Lives Matter.

Racism in Mental Health, with Paola Guzman.

Blues in Houston and Beyond, with Rod Evans.

Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, with Christy Swimmer McLemore and Jodi Voice Yellowfish.

Unequal Treatment, with Daniel Anguilu, was held in the Center's office.

Social Media

Our intern, Michelle Sanchez, from the University of Houston Downtown Campus, adopted our presence on social media as the focus for her internship. She

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Let's review

Center working hard to make a better world

The first six months of 2022 have been a busy and productive time for the Center for the Healing of Racism. We have not slowed down after working from home and producing workshops via Zoom. We returned to the office on January 3, 2022. Here are some of the events we held virtually and in physical spaces during the first six months:

- * The Center's Black History Month 2022 event was facilitated by Stephen Cherry and Cherry Steinwender and held by Zoom.
- * Attended a Gratitude Social event for the work we did in partnership with the YMCA.
- * Participated in a Zoom panel hosted by Houston Community College on the history of Sunnyside and Third Ward.
- * School of the Woods Middle School students were educated on Zoom using the film produced by the Center, *Opening the Breadbasket*.
- * Cherry was invited to speak at Houston Community College Instructional Day on Zoom.
- * We hosted monthly *Waking News* Zoom workshops on the last Friday of each month. We met every month except January. **NOTE: *Waking News* will be discontinued until further notice.**
- * Change Happens Youth Summit was held at the University of Houston's Main Campus. We were able to speak with 30 young people about racism.
- * Alaya Ministries (host of the Good Girls Mentoring Program) held a Zoom program focused on PTSD in young girls, and Cherry

was a featured speaker.

- * An event for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was held on Zoom in partnership with Sprinkles Cupcakes. Five of its staff took part in a workshop as readers.
- * The annual *A Way Forward* Conference was held in partnership with Houston Community College Central Campus in monthly segments beginning in October, 2021 and ending in April of 2022. In October, we started with the kickoff by Tim Wise. The November *A Way Forward* workshop facilitators were Michael Ayers and Ruth Dunn from Houston Community College. We took off in December and continued in January, hearing from Jeff Reese of the Houston Peace and Justice Center about racism in law enforcement. No workshops were held in February and March as well. In April, speakers for *A Way Forward* included Phillip Tussing (Economics Professor at HCC), Alfreda Norman, (Senior Vice President of the Federal Reserve of Dallas), Dr. Donna Davis (Diversity Equity & Inclusion Officer at HCC), Curtis M. Davis, R.A., (esteemed architect and urban planner) and Sophie Haci (Chair of the Economics Department at HCC). We concluded with the hope to return in person October 15, 2022.
- * Cherry was invited to speak at The Black History event at the Unitarian Fellowship Hall. The event was initially to be held in person but, as with so many other events, it was held on Zoom due to COVID-19.
- * A Gun Violence Prevention Conference webinar was attended by several Center members.
- * The workshop, *A Candid Conversation about Systemic Racism*, was presented by Cherry on Zoom.

Workshops and events conducted in person

Continued from Page 2

served as the producer and director of our TikTok page.

Yes, Cherry is now on TikTok! Each Tuesday, Sanchez filmed, edited, and published a new video. So far, the Center's TikTok has more

than 3,000 followers and has gone viral four times. The Center's most popular video has more than 24,000 views. Though she has graduated, she plans to continue her work with the Center's social media

presence.

- * Our Facebook Page, hosted by Jackie Newberry, continues to bring in new people to our work and additional people are learning about the Center.

* Thanks to flyers and our website, more than 700 people registered to attend our events.

* Anne Geyer handles EventBrite to let all of Houston know about upcoming events.

Developing leaders

Center partners with university, People's Gathering

In March, the Center for the Healing of Racism partnered with the People's Gathering and Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington.

Working together virtually during the all-day workshop, we trained about 50 facilitators from Washington in the

methods of the Center to facilitate the leading of small group discussions. The small groups were conducted in virtual breakout rooms, and we were assisted by Robbie Samuels, a professional Zoom technical producer. This event was so successful (as demonstrated by

comments and feedback from participants) that the People's Gathering has asked us to create a new event, which is scheduled for July in Tacoma. This will combine the People's Gathering Workshop and golf!

Melannie Cunningham, from Pacific Lutheran University, and

Christie Harrison, our longtime Center facilitator, have joined Cherry and a few others here to develop this event for the first time. It will include discussions of healing from racism with a day on the golf course. You will hear all about it in the next newsletter.

Lifting the knee of whiteness

Continued from Page 1

providing music. Michelle Sanchez, CFHR intern, introduced the speaker.

It should be noted that this meeting was held under the cloud of two recent tragedies.

It was the day after we first received news about the mass killing of 19 children and two teachers at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas.

The white supremacist massacre of 12 people, 10 of whom were African Americans, in Buffalo, New York, took place just 10 days earlier. Our hearts go out to those lost and to their families.

The talk explored the theme of how whiteness, as a violent ideology and social construct, kills, murders and lynches Black people and other people of color.

A clear distinction was made between white (light skinned) people and the social conditioning of being "whited" by the poisonous ideology of whiteness.

The metaphor of the policeman's knee on George Floyd's neck was expanded to imagine that knee as the knee of white

ideology and white supremacy — as the collective knee of whiteness on all the Black bodies of America. For 9:29 minutes George Floyd was suffocated in a public lynching. It was a public execution that weaponized both personal and institutionalized racism.

This notorious cycle raises the question — how do we continue to heal the incongruence between who we want to be and who we actually are as a country?

The question was asked, how is my knee as a whited person adding to the collective weight of whiteness, crushing the neck of Black people in America?

The concept was conveyed that none of us was born white, that whiteness was instilled into us through a racialization process of being "whited" (Thandeka, *Learning to Be White*).

This being true, that we were not born white, that the soul has no race, gender or class, we have

the possibility of exiting the false ideology and identity of whiteness and to embrace our true human identity as those created in the image of the Creator.

If we can recognize the layers of our own identity that aggravate the violence of race — layers that have been subsumed unconsciously through centuries of subtle conditioning — this is a step toward shedding the heavy layers that no longer serve us or our community. We must have the courage to question our identity and recognize our attachment to it.

How is our attachment to race, gender, class, etc., contributing to violence? There is an inherent ease and dignity beyond the exclusivity of these layers. Choosing to believe in our shared humanity is a step toward freedom from the bondage of our identities. Whiteness is a lie, we can embrace the authenticity of our true selves, own up and atone for our failures and for the oppression and death that our infatuation with whiteness has caused, and join the oneness of humanity.

Egerton spoke of the recurring pattern found in racial

justice movements — undeniable momentum sparked by tragedy, followed by an inertia of hesitation and ambivalence to keep moving forward. George Floyd's publicly broadcasted lynching spurred protests, uncomfortable dialogue and solidarity of purpose. Sadly, we also witnessed the movement, like many others, dwindle into the passivity of hashtags, photo ops, and theoretical fantasies.

This notorious cycle raises the question — how do we continue to heal the incongruence between who we want to be and who we actually are as a country? Some degree of recognition that our actions are out of alignment with our ideals is required for justice to keep unfolding. We must be willing to question our own perceived comforts on a daily basis, without the need for a public lynching to remind us of our moral responsibility. Through self-compassion, we can find the courage to continue to do so.

After the talk, a discussion was facilitated by Steinwender. Those assembled lit candles and sang, "This little light of mine", led by Dr. Jolie Rocke, director of music.

29TH ANNUAL
JUNETEENTH ALLY AWARD LUNCHEON
NOON - SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2022

St. Paul's United Methodist Church (Fondren Hall)
5501 Main St., Houston, TX 77004
Barbecue lunch will be served

H O N O R E E S

The Society of Justice & Equality for the People of Sugar Land

(S.O.J.E.S.) For fulfilling the promise to honor the individuals impacted by convict leasing and for educating the community about contributions of African-Americans in Fort Bend County.



Eldrewey Stearns

For foundational work leading sit-ins and demonstrations to desegregate Houston, Texas.



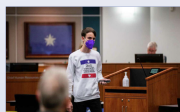
American Indian Center of Houston

For enhancing cultural awareness of the Native American Community in greater Houston and surrounding areas.



The Seven Lakes High School chapter of Voters of Tomorrow

For its work on the distribution of banned books to students in Katy ISD.



S P O N S O R S H I P L E V E L S

Please see if your company will match your donation through a matching-gift program.

PARTNER \$1,500

PARTNER PACKAGE: 14 tickets for admission with reserved tables. One representative gives 2-minute speech at event. One representative appears onstage with Executive Director for picture with recipients. Group picture with Executive Director. Public recognition in remarks. Logo or name on event slide show. Logo or name on Center website sponsor page for one year.

ALLY \$500

ALLY PACKAGE: 7 tickets for admission with reserved table. Logo or name on event slide show. Logo or name on Center website sponsor page for one year.

ACTIVIST \$75 (\$80 AT THE DOOR - LIMITED SEATING)
CHALLENGER (STUDENT) \$50 - LIMITED SEATING



TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED ONLINE AT:

<http://www.centerhealingracism.org>

Sprinkles

Participating with others

During the first half of the year, the Center participated in several events to spread the word about our work and encourage other organizations to join with us. Here are some highlights of our participation:

* Houston Young Lawyers Association meeting.

* Community Conversation with Steve Klineberg, PhD, Kinder Institute.

* Justice Non-Profit Roundtable

* Laura Gallier and Cherry Steinwender visited the American Indian Center, which has long known about the CFHR and has promoted our programs.

* Cherry was invited to speak at the First Unitarian Universalist Church the last three Sundays in January; part of the funds collected was given to the Center.

* Kendra Scott jewelry stores invited the Center to set up a booth at three of their highest earning stores to introduce their customers to the Center.

* Board member Lynden Marshall met with Cherry to make a video for BHP Energy Company to be used at its annual meeting.

* Cherry attended the Diversity Awards Ceremony hosted by

Houston Community College (HCC) at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

* Christine Harrison and Cherry were invited to attend a breakfast event to learn about the state of HCC.

* Cherry attended a members-only in-person social event at the Holocaust Museum Houston.

Internships at the Center

The month of December was a busy one as our intern, Melissa Lewis, graduated with a master's degree in social work from the University of Houston. She was with the Center for a year and a half working by Zoom. Congratulations, Melissa!

* Michelle Sanchez from the University of Houston Downtown Campus completed 120 hours with the Center.

* Andrea Robinson, an intern from St. Thomas University, also completed 30 hours with the Center.

* Salena Braye-Bulls from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is working as an intern for the Center during this summer.

INTERNALIZE ONENESS

Send us your email address!

To reduce mailing costs, the newsletter is no longer routinely printed and mailed. Send email addresses to cfhr1@juno.com or to cfhr1@yahoo.com



For great BBQ and entertainment, join us
Saturday, June 18 for the 29th annual
celebration of our Juneteenth
Ally Award Fundraiser Luncheon

This is the second year
Juneteenth is a national holiday!

HouWeAre



Jaundrea Clay
HouWeAre editor
HouWeAre@chron.com

Sacajawea and Pocahontas were sex-trafficking victims.

Let that really sink in, as it did for me when Jodi Voice Yellowfish explained how the ongoing legacies of sexual exploitation, violence and other atrocities against Indigenous women and peoples are casually tucked into America's glorified origin stories.

I spoke with Voice — who is Muscogee Creek, Oglala Lakota, and Cherokee and chair of the [Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women-TX Rematriate based in Dallas](#) — ahead of a [MMIW dialogue hosted by the Houston-based Center for the Healing of Racism](#) held on March 28. Her churn of countless stories of Indigenous women who were kidnapped, assaulted and/or killed builds into a whirlpool of frustration with a system that is not only broken, but overlooks the unique complexities and challenges of this human rights crisis wrought upon Native families and victims. MMIW-TX is part of a larger movement that really gained traction among Canada's First Nations and made its way into Native communities in the U.S., as more and more Indigenous groups became more vocal about the fact that their women were disappearing at astonishing rates — and [that statistics and data on these disappearances were not being tracked and expose gaping disparities](#).

"Native people started activating themselves and started to say, 'Hey, there's a discrepancy. Our women are being forgotten. Justice is not being served,'" Voice says.

Voice recalls the case "she couldn't shake" that finally nudged her into activism — that of Savanna Greywind, a 22-year-old member of the Spirit Lake Nation in North Dakota who was brutally murdered and dumped in a river in 2017 when she was 8 months pregnant; her baby also had been cut out of her. Greywind's death led Congress to pass the Savanna Act in 2020, which requires both reservation and non-reservation law enforcement bodies to strengthen training protocols and coordination to address cases of missing and murdered Native women.

Communities of color in particular are acutely aware of the seeming oversight and lack of impetus when their women and children go missing; for Indigenous communities, the disparity is truly disturbing and extraordinarily personal.

Last year, I interviewed Nikki Barbre McDonald, the director of the [American Indian Center that opened in Houston just before pandemic shutdowns struck](#). Though the interview centered on how the nascent center was faring, its importance to the Indigenous communities in the region and her dreams of its legacy and endurance, her thoughts often trailed to [the plight of human trafficking, particularly egregious in Houston](#), that too often

snared Native women, girls, boys and two-spirit people.

"I'm so very passionate about raising awareness about human trafficking here," the director said then, adding apologies for her distractions. "It's always so heavy on my spirit, as a Native woman. No one seems to care; and it's right in our backyard. It's neighbors, friends, children, our collective people."

"You know, it makes me angry. It hurts."

That's a familiar grievance for Voice, who launched MMIW-TX Rematriate in 2018 after a case fell in her lap; because

of her work in the community and her sister's history of work among domestic violence survivors, they were asked to help find someone's family member who had disappeared. As part of the search, Voice held a vigil and a community call-out to name Native loved ones who were missing and/or murdered; the number of names evoked and people grieved was astonishing — and went back generations.

"(The names) just kept coming; it felt endless," Voice says. "Some people were finding out stories that had been kept secret for generations. Name after name — all a part of this cycle of subjugation, abuse and violence on Native bodies."

"(MMIW) had always been a problem, we just didn't have a name for it," she adds.

MMIW-Tx Rematriate's mission is manyfold; the organization is run by a handful of people who serve as a resource to help distressed families navigate the law enforcement system and the "exhausting" work of educating officers about not only the crisis in the moment but the layered, ongoing legacies of colonial and gender-based violence that foster an epidemic in which Native women are, Voice asserts, "not vulnerable, but targeted."

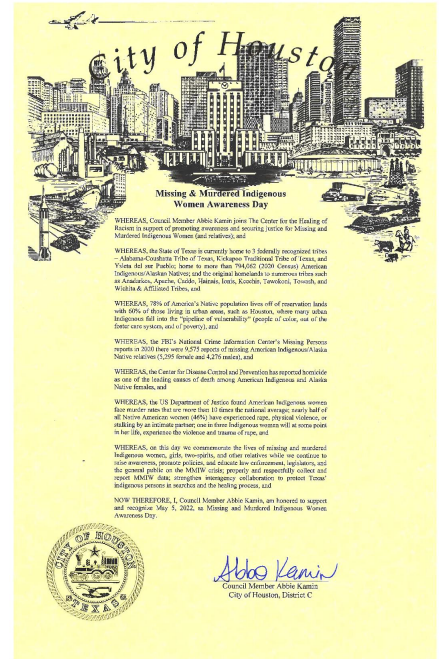
They educate about how Amber Alerts work, help print out flyers, craft social media posts and communicate with media outlets. The organization also serves as a liaison between states' police forces and federal agents and "a community that has had no reason to trust either," while helping tribal law enforcement when the sticky issue of jurisdiction extends beyond their land and thin resources.

Voice recounts successes and tragedies, cases when prayers were answered and others when it was just too late. But most important, Voice says, is her work to empower her community and create a safe space for advocacy and anger — and for hope and healing.

"It's not just about solving a crisis; it's the blood memory that spans time, this wound of erasure and disposability. We exist; we are here and we are human. We can't keep accepting violence."

Do you know of a story that needs to be told? [Share it with us here.](#)

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/newsletters/houweare/>



Letter to Cherry Steinwender from 8-year-old Sofie

09/03/22

Dear Cherry,

It's Sofie, Linda Pillings' granddaughter. I just wanted to say Thank you for the book you signed for me. I brought it into school and my teacher read it to my class.

Mr Anderson, My teacher, asked me to pass on a message he said your book is really good. Today at the Primary 4 assembly it was my teacher doing the assembly and at the end my teacher did a book recommendation and the book he recommended was the book that you wrote. He said to the year group leader that he thinks we should get one for the class library.

Love From Sofie Pillings (age 8)

Sofie reads *Bread is a Simple Food* along with her brother, Douglas



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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.

Remember When?



Center members visited Whitney Plantation in Louisiana on several tours