

Center for the Healing of Racism

Internalize Oneness

JULY 2023



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Two longtime friends reconnecting

Cherry Steinwender attended April's White Privilege Conference (WPC), titled, *Down With the Silos*, *Up With Alliances: The Black and Asian Divide*, presented by Latosha Cox of Minneapolis, Minn., and Lori Saginaw of Ann Arbor, Mich.

The workshop afforded Cherry the opportunity to catch up with her old friend, Lori, who was kind enough to tell us a little about her background and provide a short history of the relationship between Cherry and herself.

"I'm a third generation Japanese American who is committed to antiracist work and co-liberation. My recent focus is undoing the learning of anti-blackness among Japanese Americans. I've lived most of my life in majority white communities, a huge factor in obscuring my Asian identity and challenging me to find and grow relationships with other people of color. The White Privilege Conference has filled those needs and more.

"Cherry and I first met and bonded at the WPC five years ago and she played a large role in getting me to keep going in this work. We connected again this year at the WPC and will continue to seek each other out and work together. Along with other extraordinary individuals, I have found that our different generations, races, ethnicities, locations, professions, and origin stories are exactly the spice that deepens and enriches our connection while doing this collective work. I must give thanks."



Lori Saginaw, left, who reconnected with Cherry Steinwender at this year's White Privilege Conference, is currently focusing on undoing the learning of anti-blackness among Japanese Americans

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https://www.centerhealingracism.org/

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Message From the Executive Director

By CHERRY STEINWENDER

I heard someone say that you need three groups of people in your life:

- 1. People you have known almost all of your life that you can sit and talk about the good old days with, even if those days were not so good, and they will understand.
- **2.** Young people that can give you a different way of seeing life and give hope for the future.
- **3.** People that are the same age as you who understand the present and how it was shaped by the past.

I can honestly say my work with the Center has allowed me to keep my life filled with people of all three groups and I am forever grateful for that. However, I added a fourth group that I feel is the most valuable.

4. People that do not look like you, love like you, pray like you or dress like you. Surround yourself with as many of them as you can.

I look deep into the faces of people attending our workshops and find great joy when I see a truly *diverse* room.

The work of educating, healing and empowering has been my calling, my life's work. I say thanks to all of the thousands of people worldwide that have allowed me to fulfill my mission.

This year has not been any different from other years when it comes to producing workshops, other than the COVID pandemic years. We continue to host workshops that seek to tell the





Cherry Steinwender

stories of many groups of people through the use of video, as well as through the words of members of the specific groups.

Our work took a new turn at the beginning of the year by being able to work in a school for five months from January 6 until April 27. We were there every Monday at Cristo Rey Jesuit College Prep, except holidays and spring break, working with 150 ninth grade students in six classes. A group of six Center members formed three teams. Each Monday throughout the semester, a team of two worked with two of the classes from 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. The facilitators were myself, Patricia Gil, Marilyn D. Jones, Christine Harrison, Michelle Sanchez and Brandon Mack.

We were happy that six of the students went on the Plantation Trip in Louisiana to see the history of this country come alive. We also took 15 students on the Cultural Trip to see parts of Houston that many people have not seen. We visited many of the locations where I purchase the bread for *Opening the Breadbasket*.

This issue reviews the first six months of 2023 and will give you a chance to revisit the workshops by seeing the many flyers created to

promote the workshops and sent out by Constant Contact. I still believe what has been said for decades: one picture is worth a thousand words.

We started the year in January with an event to celebrate Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. then reflected on the Holocaust with a talk by Rabbi Shaul Osadchey.

We celebrated Black History Month in February and conducted our hallmark program, *Dialogue Racism*, facilitated by myself and **Laura Gallier**.

The Center received an official letter from the government of Japan offering to send a representative to attend *Dialogue Racism* that was held over two Saturdays. Due to COVID they could not send someone from Japan to attend, so Midori Hasegawa, long-time teacher/educator who is currently studying for her Ph.D. in Education at the University of Pittsburgh attended. After two weeks of conducting *Dialogue Racism*, we held a Zoom conversation with other Japanese government representatives.

Third grade students at Poe Elementary School tasted breads from around the world when I presented the *Opening the Breadbasket* workshop.

I was invited to be part of *Brown Bodies*, *Bold Stories*, a cultural celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Month hosted by the non-profit Daya.

I cannot end this column without calling attention to the two radio interviews I did for KUHF with Michael J. Hagerty on NPR Love and KPFT radio with Dwayne Bradley.

Mission Statement

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

Workshops and Presentations

In celebration of May's designation as Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, we presented a screening of the Emmy-nominated film, *A Village Called Versailles*, about a community of Vietnamese people living in New Orleans, LA. as part of the Lunch & Learn hosted by Laura Gallier.

Workshop Flyers, Pages 4-5

To celebrate Arab American Heritage Month in April, Tala Hasbini gave a wonderful talk about her life in the U.S. and life before she came to the states.

Also in April, Ethan Michelle Ganz provided an intimate discussion on the journeys of trans and non-binary folks in cultures around the globe called "We Have Always Been Here." The room was full as he wowed us with his sincere, honest and heart-felt presentation. The workshop was part of the Lunch & Learn hosted by Laura Gallier.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to build One America in the 21st century by connecting people through education and dialogue in a diverse world.

Core Beliefs

The human race is essentially one and racism is a learned behavior that can be unlearned.

We made some noise for George Floyd

This year on May 25, the third anniversary of the murder of George Floyd, the Center hosted a program to honor and memorialize Mr. Floyd's sacrifice and that of his family. This was, to me, one of the best programs the Center has ever hosted.

I was so jazzed by it all that Cherry asked me to write a little piece about it for those of you who were unable to be there. I willingly said YES.

The participation that night was so amazing. The room was decorated like a little bistro, with silver tablecloths and vases of flowers with a marigold-colored flower standing higher than all the rest. This was done to honor the colors of George Floyd's birth month of October.

After Cherry's welcome, we began with a performance by Mike Ingram that included some wonderful drum music and an invitation for all present to call our ancestors to be present at the event. People were encouraged to speak/whisper/shout the names of their ancestors and others who have passed to ask for their blessing and presence. It was beautiful.

Longtime Center volunteer, Oretta Cade, presented a beautiful poem she wrote especially for this event. Then, one of our featured presenters was Isabella Zavala, a student at Cristo Rey Jesuit College Prep of Houston. She led off by saying she was nervous to speak in public, but that was hard to believe, because as soon as she began sharing her poetry/spoken word pieces, her voice grew strong and loud and she moved us all with her insightful words.

Later, when the rest of the audience was encouraged to come forward and speak, she was willing to come up again and present another of her original pieces. They were both inspiring and wonderful!

After Isabella, Akua Fayette Hunter, a local artist who visits the Center frequently, stood up to speak and share her art. She asked audience members to make a mark or design of some kind on a large piece of empty canvas. She later created a fluid picture using all the various marks and words that were placed there.

She showed us some of her previous work and we all contributed to the canvas before we left that night. I can't wait to see what it looks like in the end. Cherry came back to the podium and presented a powerful poem that she had written especially for this program. It was spoken from the perspective of George Floyd's late mother, who George cried out for as he was dying. Her poem left us all in humble silence. But the program wasn't over yet! Now it was time for audience members to have an opportunity to stand up and speak about their feelings regarding George Floyd and what all of this meant to them. Several people did so with powerful effect.

Finally, Alisa and Alejandro Magallon, a married couple who are... wait for it... OPERA singers... came to the front of the room and sang a beautiful duet from an opera about a magical land far away. It was in Italian, but the meaning was so clear and their voices were incredible.

If you were not able to be there in person, I am so sorry. It was a remarkable night, and it reminded me what makes me keep coming back to the Center again and again. There is no other place like it.

By MARCY JOLOSKY Center volunteer and staff member

Workshops and Presentations — Flyers

THE CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM REMEMBERS

INTERNATIONAL

HOLOCAUST

REMEMBRANCE





Remembrance Day, or the International Day in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, commemorates the victims of the Holocaust. One third of the Jewish people - along with countless members of other minorities - were murdered by Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1945. The Holocaust was Nazi Germany's genocidal attempt to leilminate the entire Jewish population.

OUR GUEST SPEAKER: Rabbi Shaul Oladchey has led a distinguished career as a religious lexible, edu/fillor, and associal activist. In the public Rabbi Chadchey has brought spiritual depth to the Lewish If ed it his congregated withe challenging them to film reamingular and removative ways to correct their test to the water word. As an intelfable leader, Rabbi Clascifore, has been a boid spolessmen for the legitimate piace of Jewish values in the markeblase of these and an inspirational guida in the receiption of the residence of the receiption of the residence of the receiption of t



6 - 8 p.m. FRIDAY

JANUARY 27 2023

3412 CRAWFORD ST. | HOUSTON, TX 77004 Parking in HCC Lot 9 - Holman at Crawford St donations encouraged HERE. REGISTER WITH QR code:





THE CENTER FOR THE HEALING OF RACISM CELEBRATES BLACK **HISTORY** MONTH



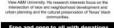
TOPIC: STUDENT-LED RESISTANCE TO VOTER SUPPRESSION: THEN AND NOW

6 - 8 p.m. MONDAY (via Zoom)

FEBRUARY 27, 2

ack by popular demand, Prairie-View A&M professor Ron Goodwin, Ph.D., will share the history of voter suppression HBCU campuses and efforts by students to resist. He draws on the lessons of history to provide context for current forts to restrict across to demonracy and end-inclined listing for shutents of one of the father disponse will follow the

> presentation. Together we can imagine a path for Ron Goodwin is an Associate Professor of History at Prairie View ASM University. He research interests focus on the









04.24.23 | 6PM



TALA HASBINI

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

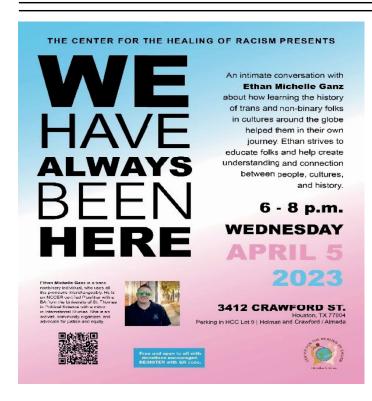


Tala Hasbini is a first-generation immigrant from Lebanon, with Muslim origins. She's the Director for Education and Assessment at the UT Houston School of Dentistry. She's a student in the Higher Education Leadership and Policy Studies PhD program at the University of Houston. She enjoys sharing insight about her culture and celebrating her identity as Arab American.

CENTERHEALINGRACISM.ORG



Workshops and Presentations — Flyers





directed by Aaron Brown

May 26 - June 17



Special Events:

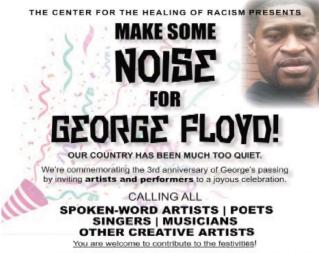
Post-Show Dialogue: Racism June 11 after the matinee performance

Zoom Racism Workshop June 22 at 6:30PM

"A glorious, scary reminder of the unmasked power of theater to rattle, roil and shake us wide awake. - The New York Times

Tickets at 4thwalltheatreco.com

The Center partnered with 4th Wall to present a dialogue after the showing of the play Fairview on Sunday June 11, 2023. Many of the audience stayed to take part in exploring their own feeling around such an uncomfortable play. For the people that attended the play on other days we held a dialogue by Zoom on the evening of Thursday June 22. The dialogue was facilitated by Christine Harrison and Cherry Steinwender.





6 - 7:30 p.m. | THURSDAY

3412 CRAWFORD ST.





We not only remembered George Floyd in May but Flora Farago gave a presentation to aid parents in talking about Racism with children. Flora's talk was followed by Qui Qarre, a Spoken Word Artist from Kenya, Africa reading from her personal work. This workshop was a part of Lunch & Learn by Laura Gallier.











2 - 4 p.m. | SATURDAY

MAY 6, 2023 3412 CRAWFORD ST.







Juneteenth — 30 years and going strong

St. Thomas University was the site of our 30th annual Juneteenth celebration. This marks the third year since Juneteenth was designated a federal holiday, and I can sum up the event in a few words: WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL, ENTERTAINING, EDUCATIONAL.

The room was filled with good, warm and loving people!

The acceptance speeches of the recipients of the $30^{\hbox{th}}$ annual Ally Award did not disappoint.

Each recipient spoke about the work they are involved in helping to make life better for all of us. The 20 people representing several states who attended from the Ismaili Civic Center let us know they are doing volunteer work all over the country.

I first met some of the volunteers with the Ismaili Civic Center five years ago when a group of university students from across the country visited Houston to assist in work being done in Freedman's Town. I met them again in January of this year when they returned to aid in cleaning up and restoring the location where people who were enslaved in this country once lived.

The people below really captured the meaning of freedom for all:

Emcee

Larry Payne

Call to Our Ancestors

Mike Ingram, Drums

Juneteenth History

AnDrea Roberts (with harmonica accompaniment from Michael Ingram)

Amid all of the exciting things happening, Melanie Mouzoon entered



The 2023 Juneteenth Celebration was summed up in the words, Wonderful, Beautiful, Entertaining and Educational

the room behind a wheel chair as she rolled Barbara Hacker (co-founder of the Center and first co-director) into the celebration.

So many people already knew her because she was one of the people that worked by my side for more than 15 years facilitating *Dialogue:Racism*. I introduced her as I always do as the "most clear thinking white woman I knew." I handed her the microphone and after saying a few words, the room roared with a standing ovation. It was an emotional moment and it was hard for me to speak after such a precious time.

To our partners below, thank you so much for helping with making our 30th celebration one of the best: Sprinkles Cupcakes The Women's Home Dominican Sisters Rutherford BH Yates Museum, Inc. Empower CDC Lifelong Learning & Coaching and Consulting Joyce Steenrud Sandy Boyd

By CHERRY STEINWENDER
Executive Director

A poem: In America — By Isabella Zavala



In America By Isabella S. Zavala

"This land is your land and this land is my land From California to the New York Island From the Redwood forest to the Gulf Stream waters

This land was made for you and me" At least that was the intended purpose,

But instead we ended up with a hot mess of a circus It seems fine on the surface

The government says this land was just one big purchase

But instead it was stolen

from natives beat so much their skin swollen

This land is your land and this land is my land

Built and kept beautiful by slave hands

Which is probably why it still stands

Yet when an officer shouts countless demands

At an innocent black man

What happened to the original plan?!

This land is your land and this land is my land Oh but no

This land is not in fact yours

Although you were born here

Because you are of Latin descent Not all will intend

To accept you on this land

"As I went walking that ribbon of highway

I saw above me that endless skyway

Saw below me that golden valley

This land was made for you and me"

Yet in New York City that's not what we see

Instead we see a man attack an elderly Asian woman

with

such violent degree

In the supposed land of the free

How could this be?!

What's America got in it for me?

I roamed and rambled and I've followed my footsteps

To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts

All around me a voice was sounding

This land was made for you and me

Yet being a Muslim here is not safe

For you are seen as a threat

For the hijab set on your neck

You'll be viewed as a terrorist wanting to cause a wreck

Because apparently a piece of

Fabric is just as drastic as a bomb

Because they think it'll bring us back to Vietnam

When the sun comes shining

As I was strolling

And the wheatfields waving

The dust clouds rolling

A voice was chanting

As the fog was lifting

This land was made for you and me

To go to school

Because if not otherwise you're a fool

And if you do

Duck down!

Shoot

Silence

It's all that is heard around this ongoing violence

Americans grow more tireless

Our government remains silent

So we stand together defiant

Is our government really reliant?

If this keeps up we won't remain compliant

This poem was written and recited by Isabella S. Zavalla a high school student at Cristo Rey Jesuit College Prep during the Center's program honoring George Floyd.

Feedback to the Center

I hope you're floating on a cloud and relaxing right now. What a wonderful Juneteenth event. Everyone noticed how the crowd grew from last year. The silent auction was fun (thanks to Sonya and Kelly—she had some neato items). Most of all for me, I am so grateful for the opportunity to see Barbara Hacker (a founder of the Center) and to thank her personally. I appreciated the personal introductions Cherry gave to the speakers, especially my dear friend RoShawn.

— Laura

I am a graduate of the 2023 Dialogue: Racism course. When I first

heard about The Center for the Healing of Racism I was taken aback. I did not know this place existed and I am so happy to be a part of it now.

In my experience, the Dialogue: Racism course was a reminder to me that there is more work to be done; that I must recognize my own privilege, continue to do the work of unlearning racial conditioning and extend grace while educating others.

At the beginning of the course, we set our intention, our "why are we here" and my response was similar to most: To help the people around me to recognize their racial conditioning. Not only have I been able to do this by

using the tools Mrs. Cherry taught us, but I have been able to hold space for myself to recognize where I am utilizing and benefiting from racial conditioning and taking steps to do the work of unlearning.

— Jet Guadalupe

Hello, Mrs. Cherry. I just really want to tell you that I had a wonderful experience going to the plantations and getting more educated about African American enslavement and Louisiana Creoles. Thank you so much for letting me go on your trip.

— Angel Heath (student at Cristo Rey Jesuit College Prep)

Sonnet for Martin Luther King Day

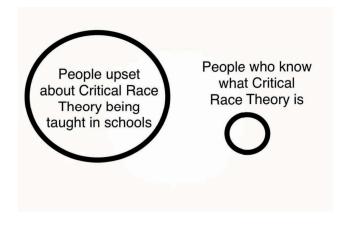
Birmingham 1963: What Did We Know?

That we who are heirs to the ancestors cause must continue to fight their long fights?

That we who praised their vigilant voices would have to remain vigilant with the vigor they bequeathed, even more than we expected?

Half blinded by their success, we thought we had arrived, ready to claim freedom's prize with open access to all they had hoped we would gain and the seen and the unknown; the price they paid in pounding hot streets and lunch counters; the bruising water hoses backed by dogs, the *legalized* brutes, well trained to sniff and recognize their prey, black bodies and the innocent black children.

By LUCIE FULTZ



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