



Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism



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Working to Affirm Dignity.

Please support our efforts.

“I needed to change in a way in which I was more open-minded. As a sophomore when I started the program, I was not open-minded whatsoever and the program changed that. Now, one of my goals as I start each day in the morning is to be the most open-minded person I can possibly be.”

– Steve Menges
CWD Program Graduate

“I have personally been through a dialogue circle and I believe that it is a powerful activity which gives a true understanding of the impact of racism. The CWD program gives us the tools to meet the challenges that racism presents in the institutions we are all a part of and ways to help the community eliminate racism and the negative effects it has on all of us.”

–Daniel Lowengard
Superintendent, Syracuse City School District

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Preferred Phone: _____
Email: _____

To make the Dialogue Circles succeed, it is important to make them racially and ethnically diverse. It is therefore necessary for us to know your race and ethnicity. Please provide the following:

Ethnic, Racial, and/or Cultural Background: _____

Age: _____ Gender: _____

I am available for a Daytime Evening Dialogue Circle (Check One)

Please fill out this form and return to:

InterFaith Works—Community Wide Dialogue
3049 East Genesee Street Syracuse, NY 13224

Or register via:

Email: cwdl@interfaithworkscny.org
Website: www.interfaithworkscny.org



About Us

In 1997 InterFaith Works' Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism (CWD) was launched to address one of the most complex problems facing our community. More than a decade later, CWD is the longest running dialogue on ending racism in the United States. Still working to end racism and repair the social, economic and emotional wounds caused by past and present racism, CWD continues to provide opportunities for honest conversations about race and racism in a format that allows participants to learn from the experiences of others. CWD engages and joins with community leaders, organizations, and individuals to develop practical recommendations and strategies for addressing institutional racism, improving race relations, and bringing about racial equity.

Racism stands in the way of making Central New York better. It affects everything - the business climate, who gets what jobs, the safety and beauty of our neighborhoods, who goes to jail for the same crime, and who graduates from high school and college just to name a few examples. Despite the progress that has been made, CWD knows that more work must be done to create a future where every individual is respected and valued equally.

Through CWD, people build trust across the artificial barriers that racism creates, and increase understanding about the causes of racism.

Our Work

CWD offers dialogues for adults, teens and children. A typical dialogue circle meets over a period of a month or more, with trained facilitators to guide the process. The dialogues address:

- Institutional racism, privilege and their current manifestations
- What it means to be an ally to someone different from yourself

Participants make personal commitments to ending racism and to support group actions for racial equity.

CWD responds to racial equity issues with specialized dialogues, such as high school completion, or to address racial incidents within an institution. CWD also brings together American-born people with refugees to break down stereotypes and build neighborhoods.

School Exchange Program

We believe that early, positive experiences with people who are different from oneself set a lifetime course for increasing understanding and embracing diversity. This belief led to CWD's first school exchanges, between a city and suburban high school, and between a city and rural grammar school in 2002. Since that time, 17 schools in Onondaga and Madison Counties have been involved in the exchanges, which seek to break down stereotypes that children and teens hold about each other. CWD's school-based programs have proven effective in building friendships and alliances, opening hearts and minds, and fostering racial equity.

Our Scope & Reach



- CWD has enabled over 7,000 community residents to connect and develop understanding.
- Nearly 400 dialogue circles have taken place since 1997; CWD has organized dialogue circles in locations ranging from churches to corporate headquarters and from colleges to community centers.
- Since 2002, CWD has organized the Duck Race to End Racism which has raised nearly \$350,000 to support CWD's programs. Thousands of people join CWD for this free family festival to celebrate what a world without racism would be like.



How You Can Help

Join a Dialogue Circle

Fill out an application or register online at www.interfaithworkscny.org. We will place you in a Dialogue Circle at a time and place that is convenient for you.

Start a Circle in Your Congregation, School or Place of Work

We will pair congregations and organizations with others to ensure multi-cultural groups, or we can help you organize one within your organization. We will train Dialogue Leaders and provide materials.

Provide Space for a Dialogue Circle

Dialogue Circles are held all over the community. Please let us know if your organization, congregation, school or business can provide a private space to fit 8 to 12 people around a table or in a circle.

