Date : 8/9/2017 5:54:55 PM
From : "Hilary Chiz"
To : "Gerry Leonard"
Cc : "Racial Justice Coalition"
Subject : CORRECTION!

The August 22 presentation on Fighting HB 142: In the Courts and In the Streets, sponsored by both Campaign for Southern Equality and the ACLU, will be held 6-7:30 at the UCC Congregationalist Church on Oak Street.

NOT at the UU on Edwin Place.

We hope to see everyone there.

On Aug 9, 2017, at 3:56 PM, Gerry Leonard <gleonard@ywcaofasheville.org> wrote:

Dear RJC Members,

Please find minutes from last Friday's RJC Meeting. Our next meeting will take place on Friday, September 8, 2017, 1 - 2:30 pm in the YWCA Board Room.

In solidarity,
Gerry

Racial Justice Coalition Meeting
August 4, 2017, 1 - 2:30 pm
YWCA of Asheville, Board Room

Racial Justice Coalition's Mission Statement
The Racial Justice Coalition (RJC) includes representatives of organizations in Asheville-Buncombe County dedicated to racial justice. The RJC comes together in commitment to racial equity and to advocate for the rights of people of color.

Racial Justice Coalition Values: We stand for racial justice and believe that implicit bias and issues around structural racism should be addressed in a number of ways:			
Training We believe that everyone in our law enforcement and community leadership needs ongoing training to address implicit bias and structural racism as an indispensable step to increasing justice.	Community Policing We believe that it is the responsibility of law enforcement to build authentic, supportive relationships with the community they serve.	Transparency We believe that the community has the right to timely and accurate information about arrest data and use of force incidents.	Responsiveness We believe it is the responsibility of law enforcement to make clear, accessible, open processes for addressing the complaints of the community members.
Balanced Law Enforcement • We believe that criminalization of alcohol and drug related incidents have resulted in excessive policing in communities of color and should be assessed. • We uphold national proven practices, and believe that Asheville Police Department and the Buncombe County Sheriff's Office policies and procedures should be informed by research and with representative cross-community input.			

In attendance: Deborah Miles, Allison Alcena (Center for Diversity Education), Tyrone Greenlee, Cecelia Rawlins, Lucia Daughtery, Beth Maczka, Kate Pett, Gerry Leonard

- **Introductions & Updates:** 15 minutes
  - Children First/CIS– Currently seeking applications for AmeriCorps positions - if you know of anyone interested, please refer them to http://childrenfirstcisbc.org/programs/project-power/
  - Christians for a United Community – Held Phase 1 of a racial justice training (the first of three trainings) for two separate congregations - St. Marks Evangelical Lutheran Church and WNC Baptist Fellowship Chruch of Asheville. There has been a lot of interest in these trainings. Members will meet again on August 19th & are open to the public. Location: 240 Haywood Street.

- Registration is open for the Fall Session of Building Bridges that will run from Tuesday, Sep 12 through Tuesday, November 14, 7 - 9 pm. If you or someone you know is interested in attending, visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/preview?eid=36370737856
- CSE & WNC Chapter of the ACLU are co-hosting "Fighting HB 142: From the Courts to the Streets" event on Tuesday, August 22, 6 - 7:30 pm, at the Unitarian Fellowship, 42 Edwin Place, Asheville. The ACLU of NC's Legal Director Chris Brook will provide updates about their new federal lawsuit challenging HB 142, the anti-LGBTQ law that replaced HB 2. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara of the Campaign for Southern Equality will host a community conversation about how to push for LGBTQ protections and equality at the local level in our current landscape.
- YWCA of Asheville is partnering with YWCAs in North Carolina around a Statewide Advocacy Initiative. Beth sent out a online survey to gather community input on what issues are most pressing in NC specifically around the unjust treatment & criminalization of people of color. Hard copies of the survey are also available - including in Spanish.
- YWCA of Asheville is hosting a film-screening & discussion of the documentary "13th" on Thursday, August 10, 1 - 3 pm in the Multipurpose Room. Gerry will facilitate the discussion after the film. Event is open to the public.
- As part of the Americans Who Tell the Truth exhibit, an opening event will take place on September 29th at the YMI Cultural center, that will include 45 different portrait sponsors. In conjunction with AWTT exhibit, Bree Newsome will be speaking at A-B Tech.
- On September 14th, there will be an event at UNCA, where a Sociologist will speak to the construct of "whiteness" and will be an opportunity for white allies to better understand the sociologically impact of "whiteness."

- **Review the RJC Story:** 5 minutes
  - Lucia ran through the previously created RJC story to where we are now.
  - A revision to the "before the beginning" section to include the groups listed: CUC, NAACP, Center for Diversity Education, ABIPA, Eagle Market Street CDC, ABCRC, and the YWCA.
  - Here is the link to the RJC Story in its entirety.
- **Visioning: Where are we now?** 55 minutes
  - Lucia & Kate led the group through a "Visioning" exercise that took the RJC Story in its current inception, to create a platform to help guide our work moving forward. We focused on three bucket areas & sought to find a common thread that we can target as issue the RJC could make an impact.
  - **What's better?**
    - Revised use-of-force policies have been put in place. Officers have been trained– with expectation that they are using the training.
    - There has been a level of clout & leverage with APD & City-ongoing communication with RJC & City officials.
    - APD officers have body cameras now.
    - All APD officers have been trained in deescalation.
    - Creation of Crisis Communications Lead Team – headed up by Gerry that allows RJC to be more nimble & reactive to community needs & issues as they were to arise.
    - Diverse and valuable mixture of representatives in the RJC – members bring wisdom where we each are able to share & learn, while leaning on the various resource & community connections we bring to the table.
    - Chief Hooper has shown a commitment to racial justice training & other policy revisions.
    - The work of the RJC is being modeled in other community efforts (see: YWCA & the NC Cohort Statewide Initiative)
    - From a community standpoint, there seems to be a greater willingness to talk about structural & systemic racism.
  - **Whats the same?**
    - Never were able to create a relationship with the Latinx Community.
    - Mission-vision misalignment? Is the RJC's vision focused solely on police-community relations whereas our Mission reads a broader scope of racial justice.
    - Culture of APD is & remains the same - within the manifestation of institutional racism in law enforcement. There have been ups-&-downs during the Chief's tenure.
  - **What's worse?**
    - There has been a decrease in trust within impacted communities & communities of color with law enforcement.
    - Decreased interaction with RJC & the Buncombe County's Sheriff's Office
    - Rising deaths of people in Communities of Color through the national lens.
    - Uptick in drug usage in POC communities. What is the correlation with opiate-use in middle class white communities?
    - Community perception of Chief has seemingly gotten worse.
    - Barriers still exist & have gotten worse. From a local Asheville vantage point - we are seeing a culmination of unjust systems & inequities from housing, gun laws, gentrification, affordability & child care.
  - **Which of these issues could the RJC make an impact?**
    - Advocacy around policing – especially with Buncombe County Sheriff's Office
    - How do follow-up with the implementation & accountability of officers? (when protocol is not followed by officers – RJC's response, strategy & clarity to improve from that outcome)
    - RJC to help center the voices of people of directly impacted by these issues.
      - Some ideas of ways that could look, included: caucuses, RJC allyship, shared experience training, storytelling/narratives but being intentional that we are doing it in a way that isn't exploitative & we are not creating a space for white people to feel they can speak for/represent POCs.
- **Information Sharing**: 5 minutes

- Deborah shared that UNC-A is in the planning stages of an event to host Michelle Alexander (author of *The New Jim Crow*) on Thursday, January 18th - tentatively at Lipinsky Auditorium but may be moved to the Sherrill Center.
    - Brainstorming around different ideas & ways that the events - and events leading up to & after MA's speaking event - could look.
    - What groups could be involved?
    - Possible grant that would help fund book groups of *The New Jim Crow*
    - Is there an opportunity to work with incarcerated individuals?

Next RJC Meeting: Friday, September 8, 1 - 2:30 pm (*please note that this falls on the second Friday of the month to avoid Labor Day)

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YWCA IS ON A MISSION

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