

The Alliance

The Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony is dedicated to promoting unity, justice, equal opportunity, ethnic awareness, cross-cultural understanding, and appreciation for diversity

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Diversity, Unity, and Justice Are at the Heart of ACEH

A 501c3 organization

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Take a look at U.S. School-to-Prison Pipeline Sunday, April 23, at Maple Avenue Ministries

In March, ACEH co-hosted a showing of "13th," a film about the link between slavery and the U.S. prison system, which has evolved into one that often starts with the relationship between young people and their schools. As a follow-up, the next ACEH public meeting will be **Sunday, April 23, at 5 p.m. at Maple Avenue Ministries (427 Maple Ave, Holland).** The topic is: **"The School-to-Prison Pipeline: Where Does It Start? What Can Help End It?"** Everyone is welcome.

There will be a short film clip, followed by panelists who will describe their role in area schools and institutions and the particular issues they see at each level of education. Questions from the audience and dialogue with the panelists will follow.

They are: **Lindsay Cherry**, a teacher at West Ottawa's Harbor Lights Middle School, who also runs an after-school program for at-risk students; **Andrea Mehall**, director of Holland Early College High School, and **C. J. Mehall**, of the College of Education affiliate faculty at Grand Valley State University.

The "school-to-prison pipeline" has been called "a disturbing national trend wherein children are funneled out of public schools and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Many of these children have learning disabilities or histories of poverty, abuse or neglect, and would benefit from additional



educational and counseling services. Instead, they are isolated, punished and pushed out."

Zero tolerance policies, out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, the use of police in schools, and other methods of discipline that mirror law enforcement have increased the contacts between students and the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems.

Latino and black students—especially boys—are disproportionately affected, which is later reflected in rates of incarceration.



May 23 - Frauenthal Center, Muskegon

It's time to sign up for this year's Summit: *Moving Toward Justice*

Registration is open at www.ethnicdiversity.org to sign up for the Summit on Race and Inclusion 2017 organized by the Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance with the assistance of many partners and sponsors, as well as collaborating groups, including **ACEH**.

The event will be **Tuesday, May 23, from 8:30 am to 3 pm at the Frauenthal Center in Muskegon** (425 W. Western Ave, #200). Cost is \$60, which includes the keynote presentations, morning and afternoon sector-specific breakouts, and lunch. The Summit, which began in 2001, "examines the effects of racial disparities, while offering strategies for their elimination."

Keynote speakers are Dr. Phil Goff, national expert on policing and race, co-founder of the Center for Policing Equity, and Franklin A. Thomas Professorship in Policing Equity at City University of New York, and Dr. Charles H.F. Davis III, national expert on strategies for achievement for students of color; he is director of Higher Education Research and Initiatives at the University of Pennsylvania Center for the Study of Race & Equity in Education and has conducted research on the intersections of race, gender, and education, including achievement strategies for K-12 students of color.

Sector-specific breakouts will hear from individuals in business, community, faith, health, education, economic equity, and government and public policy. They are: Business: Kenyatta Lumumba London Brame, Cascade Engineering; Community: Gloria Cousar, Neighborhood Associates Corporation; Faith: Ron White, PICO National Network; Health: Wayne Boatwright, Meridian Health; Education: Dr. Davis; Economic Equity: Heather C. McGhee, Demos; Government and Public Policy: Dr. Goff.

ACEH and Holland Community Have Lost Two Special People

We send our sympathy to the families and many friends of these two strong supporters of ACEH.

--**Roscoe (Rock) Colingsworth** died March 11 at age 77 following a cardiac arrest several days before. He was passionate about human rights, ecology, and international student exchange as a way to build a better world; he helped many local organizations and mentored at Kids' Hope, and Escape Ministries. At several ACEH potlucks at First United Methodist Church, where he was an active member, Rock was quick to volunteer as the dishwasher—the last in February at our Heart2Heart Community Celebration. At his memorial service, dozens of family members and friends wore rainbow ties to honor Rock's support for LGBTQ people. He is survived by his wife, **Julia**, his large extended family, and several international students.

--**Marcia DeWild**, 76, died March 9 after a long battle with cancer. Justice and freedom were causes close to her heart. She was known for her advocacy for people with special needs and often accompanied a group to ACEH events, was a generous supporter of ACEH and Justice for Our Neighbors, and had a very wide variety of friends and interests. Her Grand Rapids Press obituary (March 14), written by her son, summed up her amazing life and personality, and her many careers, and "went viral."

Alliance Co-Hosts Showing of "13th"



A full house attended the ACEH/Center for Diversity and Inclusion meeting at Hope College March 10, to view the acclaimed documentary "13th," about the link between slavery and today's prison system. Panelists (l. to r.) are attorney Abe Gonzales, Holland Christian teacher Rebekah Schipper, Pastor Denise Kingdom Grier of Maple Avenue Ministries, and Prof. Duane T. Loynes, Sr. of Western Seminary. The article below includes their recommendations of books about racism, its history in the U.S., and ways to combat it.

"If I know more, I can do more. I can't just sit on the sidelines any longer."

Following the showing of "13th" (see above), a listener asked about resources that would help people, especially white people, learn more about the history and present state of racism in the U.S., actions to combat it, and how to be an anti-racist ally. ACEH president C.J. Kingdom Grier encouraged the audience to commit to do some research on their own, as they would if they wanted to know about any other issue; to join groups like ACEH; to become more aware of what happens locally. He asked panelists to suggest books, and these were named:

Birth of a White Nation: The Invention of White People and Its Relevance Today. by Jacqueline Battalora, a lawyer, professor of sociology and criminal justice, and former Chicago police officer who has been engaged in anti-racist training for years. Explores the moment in time when "white people" as a distinct group were invented through legislation and laws and how this served the interests of the elite, which has compromised the humanity of those so labeled.
<http://sbpra.com/JacquelineBattalora>

Uprooting Racism. by Paul Kivel, social justice activist, anti-racism educator, a leader in innovative violence prevention for over 40 years. Offers framework for understanding institutional racism; provides practical suggestions, tools, examples, advice on how white people can work as allies for racial justice. Looks at affirmative action, immigration, health care; includes specific groups such as Muslims, people with mixed heritage, Native Americans, Jews, recent immigrants, Asian Americans, and Latinos.

Pondering Privilege: Toward a Deeper Understanding of Whiteness, Race and Faith. by Jody Hernando. Race can be a difficult subject for many white people to navigate; some have no idea where to begin; others, seeing themselves as colorblind, see no need to think about the issue. The topic "grows even more difficult in the Christian church, where Sunday mornings are often more racially divided than united. Discussion and reflection question; ideal for personal or group use.

Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America. by Ibram X. Kendi. National Book Award winner. Comprehensive history of anti-black racism. Focuses on five major players in U.S. history--Cotton Mather, Thomas Jefferson, William Lloyd Garrison, W.E.B. Du Bois, Angela Davis--and highlights debates between assimilationists and segregationists and between racists and antiracists. "Racist thinking did not arise from ignorance or hatred; racist ideas were created and popularized...to defend policies and to rationalize racial inequities in everything from wealth to health."

Between the World and Me. by Ta-Nehisi Coates. "A profound work that pivots from questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son. "Americans have built an empire on the idea of 'race,' a falsehood that damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black women and men...How can we honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from the burden?" In a letter to his son, Coates shares his awakening to the truth about his place in the world through a series of experiences. This book has won many awards.

Also recommended: The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness. by Michelle Alexander; **Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption.** by Bryan Stevenson; **Writing My Wrongs: Life, Death, and Redemption in an American Prison.** by Shaka Senghor; **A People's History of the United States.** by Howard Zinn

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Together from Worlds Apart*

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**ACEH Needs Your Support to Help Us Reach
Into the Community with Programs, Advocacy,
Support, Publications, and Social Gatherings**

Please consider joining with the many individuals and groups committed to justice, appreciation for diversity, and making West Michigan a place where all are welcomed and respected. Dues are:

Individual: \$20.00 one year; \$35.00 two years;
Family: \$30.00 one year; \$50.00 two years
Nonprofit: \$40.00 one year
Business: \$75 one year

In lieu of, or in addition to, paying dues, you may make a pledge of service to ACEH. Checks or service pledges should be made out to ACEH and sent to Treasurer Al Minert, c/o ACEH, at P. O. Box 3007, Holland, MI 49422-3007.

To pay by credit card, please log onto our secure website at <http://www.harmonyalliance.org/join.html>, click on "Join Us" and use the Pay Pal system. You may also join at any ACEH event. If you are not sure if your membership is current, please contact database manager Herb Weller at hpweller@comcast.net or 396-2201.