



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CARE Coalition Launches West Virginia's First Racial Justice Conference

The Mountain State Racial Justice Summit will be held on November 30 and December 1, 2018

CHARLESTON, WV, November 15, 2018 - Call to Action for Racial Equality (CARE Coalition) launches West Virginia's first racial justice conference, the Mountain State Racial Justice Summit, on November 30 and December 1, 2018 at BridgeValley Community & Technical College, South Charleston campus. Our theme this year is "Rekindle Power. Generate Light. Build Futures."

Local and national community organizers and leaders in criminal justice reform, restorative justice, health, economic, and racial justice will converge to facilitate workshops, dialogue and discussion groups, and strategy sessions on Friday evening and Saturday. Topics will range from mass incarceration in WV, food security in black communities, and drug court programs--to co-operative business, the needs of immigrant communities in WV, and art as a form of resistance--to anti-racist and anti-fascist organizing in Appalachia and white allyship--to surviving as millennials of color in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Anyone interested in fighting institutional racism and actively imagining liberation for all West Virginians is invited to attend. We will celebrate and support youth organizing initiatives, build strategies and alliances to affect policy change, and vote on a public policy platform.

The conference will kick-off on Friday, November 30 with an opening keynote address by Affrilachian (Black Appalachian) working-class activist Ash-Lee Woodard Henderson. Henderson is the Co-Executive Director of the Highlander Research & Education Center in New Market, TN, and has organized Appalachians around issues of mountaintop removal and environmental racism. She is an active participant in the Movement for Black Lives and is on the governance council of the Southern Movement Assembly.

The conference will conclude on Saturday, December 1 with a closing keynote address by Troy Williams, founder of the San Quentin Prison Report (SQPR), a video and award-winning radio production program. Williams is currently working as the program coordinator for the R.I.S.E. scholars (Restorative, Integrated, and Self-Educated) at Chabot College and was recently awarded a Soros Justice Fellowship where he is working to create a national multimedia platform and community engagement program that will help formerly incarcerated people document their experiences and engage the public. Williams' keynote address is included in conference registration and is also ticketed separately. Open to the public, the event will take place at West Virginia State University's Ferrell Hall Auditorium. Doors will open at 6:00 PM and the event will start at 7:30 PM.

Conference sponsors include the Appalachian Transition Fellowship, Covenant House / Dr. Rainbow, FIRSTHAND Co-operative, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, Rise Up WV, STAY Project, WV Center on Budget and Policy, and the WV Citizen Action Education Fund.



CALL TO ACTION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

Sponsorships are still needed to cover gas cards, meals, and childcare; to contribute to lodging and travel stipends for workshop facilitators; and to fund mini-grants for regional racial justice projects. Learn more and donate at <http://carecoalitionwv.org/news/msrjs2018sponsorship/>.

“The 2018 Mountain State Racial Justice Summit is all about working to make West Virginia a place where ‘all kinds are truly welcome.’ We hope to expand the hearts and minds of everyone planning to attend,” said Gabrielle Chapman, the Executive Director of Call to Action for Racial Equality.

Get tickets online at <http://msrjs2018.eventbrite.com/>. The workshop and event schedule will be announced on our website: <http://carecoalitionwv.org/event/msrjs2018/>. Follow us on Facebook @carecoalitionwv for updates.

Call to Action for Racial Equality (CARE Coalition)

Call to Action for Racial Equality is a statewide racial justice leader, dismantling oppressive structures plaguing communities of color across West Virginia. CARE builds power that combats systemic racism in West Virginia through community organizing, youth leadership development, and policy change.

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