

Newsletter

January 2018

MICHIGAN
ROUNDTABLE
FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



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From the desk of the CEO

Journey to our self through the other



While organizing on the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Reservation in Mt. Pleasant some ten years ago I was deeply moved learning of the tribe's journey from the Eastern United States as part of a prophesy to go where the rice grew on the water (Lake Michigan). I

learned of the horrors perpetrated upon the Native American people's culminating in their being subjected to the horrors of the boarding school movement, with one of the 500 schools located in Mt. Pleasant, which didn't close until 1934. By then the genocide had severely depleted the number of Native Americans and left them disconnected from their culture with generational trauma to pass on to their loved ones. It is troubling to learn that the Native American people didn't receive the freedom to practice their religion until 1978. I also learned of the value placed on remaining connected to their ancestors, recalling an elder encouraging people to go to their heart where their ancestors waited to speak.

My time among our fellow Michiganders in Mt.

Pleasant led me to become interested in learning about my grandparents and over the holidays I finally traveled overseas to their homeland in SE Slovenia, where their ancestors traveled from Germany in 1340 and lived for some 600 years until Hitler forced their departure, with some repatriated, others placed in work camps and still others later found in mass graves. My grandfather immigrated to the U.S. in 1902 and my grandmother in 1905, settling in Northern Minnesota where they joined their fellow Slovenians in performing the demanding work of Iron Ore mining. Coming from a homogeneous Catholic community they were deeply troubled by the anti-Catholicism they encountered at the turn of the century and well into the 1960s.

Mistreatment of the other because of immigration status, country of origin, racial identity or religious difference is unfortunately part of our national identity and unexamined leads us to perpetrate harm upon our neighbors or co-workers. We are partnering with CBS TV/CW50 on a four-part series

looking at the history of racism beginning with Roundtable colleagues and elders Fay and Kay Givens speaking of the Native American history on this continent and continuing with Roundtable Co-Directors of programs Stacey Stevens and Yusef Shakur who will be discussing the history of racism perpetrated upon black people on the Street Beat show to air on Saturday, February 10th at 8:30am on CW50 Detroit (WKBD). It will be posted on the [CW50Detroit.com website](http://CW50Detroit.com) the following Monday. We are also being called upon with increased frequency to speak to organizations about the history of racism in Southeast Michigan, utilizing our "We Don't Want Them" exhibit on Housing Segregation. Please give Dez Squire a call at (313) 870-1500 if you would like more information.

As this newsletter is being sent to you, 800,000 of our neighbors also known as Dreamers face a very uncertain future as the Dream Act (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) may very well not be acted upon by Congress. On January 17th I was invited to offer remarks at a rally in support of the Dream Act by our colleagues in the Latino community. Included in my remarks was the following core statement issued by the Roundtable Public Policy Committee in support of passage of the Dream Act this past September.

"The Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion believes the time is now to let Congress know that Michiganders support legislation to allow Dreamers to stay in the US and work towards American citizenship."

Thanks for your support of our work, allowing us to stand with those mistreated because of their differences. We place a high value on understanding history, which releases us from ignorance and the perpetration of micro-aggressions and unconscious bias. We encourage you to join us at an upcoming community event where we bring people together to understand each other, becoming allied in the work for inclusion and racial justice.

Steve Spreitzer
President & CEO

Thank You... Answering the Call for Support

The Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion would like to thank the 120 donors who made financial gifts during the holiday season, starting on Giving Tuesday through the end of 2017 to support this valuable work. We are proud to report that we raised over \$10,000 and these funds will be used to support our vital programming which includes Youth Leadership, Race2Equity, First Friday Forums and Organizational Development Programming.

The need for the programs and services provided by the Michigan Roundtable is in greater demand than ever before. The Journey to unity and inclusion takes work. Let's continue this Journey together into 2018 and in years to come.

Making the places we work and live become places where all people are welcome and treated fairly.

www.miroundtable.org

CW50 Partners with Michigan Roundtable



Photo courtesy of CW50

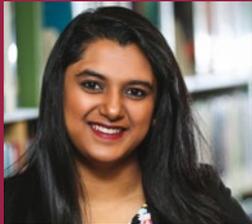
Because of the importance of diversity issues, [CW50 Detroit](#) has partnered with the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion to grow awareness and improve relationships within our diverse communities. The first of a four-part series aired on this past October's Street Beat, with host Amyre Makupson looking at issues facing Native Americans in Michigan with Dr. Kay McGowan, a Mississippi Choctaw/ Cherokee Native, and also an Anthropologist, Professor of Native American Studies Eastern Michigan University, and her twin sister Fay Givens, the Director of American Indian Services in Lincoln Park. Then, President and CEO, Steve Spreitzer provided insight into what can be done to improve racial injustice. The next episode will air Saturday, February 10th at 8:30am

Welcome New Staff

We are excited to announce we recently hired Fiana Arbab from University of Michigan Dearborn to facilitate our Statewide Racial Equity Coalition Youth Fellows. We are excited to have another youthful voice join our staff as we work to keep our vision of opportunity for all alive in Michigan.

Why MRDI:

The Michigan Roundtable of Diversity and Inclusion has had an incredible history in the last 75+ years. I was immediately attracted to the organization for its rich and long history in the social justice and interfaith community. However, in the last decade especially, the MRDI has transformed the nature of conversations around structural racism and community centered resolutions for racial inequity in the state. Through structured youth internship and fellowship programs, localized storytelling for healing and understanding, statewide racial equity coalitions, individual community organization partnerships, and targeted diversity and sensitivity training, the MRDI has sewn itself into the fabric of the beautifully diverse communities it works with. Prior to accepting my position with the MRDI, I asked my friends and colleagues for their thoughts. It was incredible to see that everyone either knew or had heard about the work of the Roundtable. Not a single person had negative thoughts or feelings to share, and almost everyone had a personal impact story about an experience they had with the MRDI. I confidently join the MRDI team knowing that I have the support of my immediate team and of the communities I will be organizing with. We are collectively engaged in racial justice work with the intention of letting passion guide and transformative change follow, and I am so humbled and excited for the opportunity to be a part of it all.



Fiana Arbab

Board Spotlight Right Management Receives ALM Vanguard Leader Rating



John Bourbeau
Executive Vice President

We are proud to share with you in our new section of spotlighting work of our board and members, that member John Bourbeau and Right Management has received the ALM Vanguard Leader rating in Talent and Workforce Consulting. ALM Intelligence is a leading resource for assessing top HR consulting firms and has named Right Management a 2017 ALM Vanguard Leader in Talent & Workforce Consulting. Many organizations recognize they cannot effectively build or execute a comprehensive talent strategy to effectively address the challenges of today's dynamic and complex business environment. At Right Management they understand what it takes to design and deliver effective talent management programs and bring a breadth and depth of consulting capabilities to their clients that drive successful results - time after time.

Co-Director of Programs Yusef Shakur delivers Keynote Address at Farmington Hills MLK Day 2018 Event

"Martin Luther King Jr. was continuing the legacy of his father and grandfather and was shaped by the Black radical tradition of his community, so there is no separating Martin Luther King Jr. from Black people!"

-Yusef Shakur



Image courtesy of Farmington Hills

Community Leaders celebrated at the 70th Annual Humanitarian Tribute

This past November we celebrated our 70th Annual Humanitarian Tribute honoring Dr. Yahya M. Basha; Founder and President, Basha Diagnostics; John C. Carter; Managing Director, Region Manager, Michigan Middle Market, Commercial Banking, J.P. Morgan Chase; Dr. Glenda D. Price; Past President, Detroit Public Schools Foundation; New Detroit, Inc., Shirley R. Stancato, President & CEO. "We are incredibly proud of the important work that our honorees are doing within our community", said Steve Spreitzer. "The demand for the programs and services of the Michigan Roundtable and our partners is ever growing and urgent, we are grateful to be part of such dedicated members of the community". A special thank you goes to our presenting sponsors, Adient and Bridgewater Interiors as well as our leaders for changes sponsors, Basha Open MRI and Lear Corporation.

Save the Date for the 71st Annual Humanitarian Tribute on November 8, 2018.



Photos by Patti Roberts

MARCH 2

Topic
Black and White: What's all the fuss about? (A comedic look on race)

APRIL 6

Topic
50 years after Martin Luther King assassination

MAY 5

Topic
Black Muslims in Detroit. In partnership with Muslim anti-racism collaborative

Monthly community conversations on the intersection of race in Metro Detroit with subtopics such as health, wealth, music, education, neighborhoods, religion and many more. The Friday Forums rotate to different locations in Detroit and suburbs and are moderated by an expert host.



RACIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE

“Healing Our Communities & Empowering Our People.”

The Michigan Roundtable Statewide Racial Equity Coalition Upper Peninsula Hub will be hosting their first ever racial justice conference. The conference is taking place in the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community April 14 -15, 2018.

This conference will offer workshops, presentations, and coalition building on racial justice. We are working in collaboration with the following organizations: Red Circle Consulting, Native Justice Coalition, Northern Michigan University – Center for Native American Studies, Michigan Technological University, Showing Up For Racial Justice – Keweenaw Chapter, and the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community. Organizers believe in creating a safe and supportive space for Anishinaabe people, all people of color, and allies who support our work. Native American people have often and historically been left out of discussions on racial justice in the US. This conference seeks to change this narrative. We seek to center Anishinaabe and all Native American people in racial justice.

December 2017 Forum *by Fatima Bhatti*

“Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy, and mutual valuing”. We the interns at Michigan Roundtable are well aware of this fact, and on December 1st, we organized and hosted our own community dialogue in Hamtramck. Learning of the thought-provoking history of the city and knowing of it's diversity, we decided to make this the center of conversation at the event. Titled “Future, Present and Past: The Many faces of Hamtramck”, the forum brought together locals and visitors, young and old, and people of different faiths to hone in on this topic. We choose a panel of educated and dynamic individuals who facilitated one of the best community discussions thus far. These panelists were; Shaffwan Ahmed, a community organizer, Rumyah Rafique, A student at Wayne State, and Jaman Jordan, a local historian. All panelists added to the conversation with their personal insights and experiences. Hosted at the Planet Ant theater, a non-profit professional, the forum went through a series of panel discussion to small group discussions along with a dinner provided to the guests. Catering was provided by Reshmi Sweets and Cafe and Yemen Cafe, both local Hamtramck restaurants. Each guest left the event with a takeaway that showcased the facts and stats on immigration in the US. Overall making the forum a success for the Roundtable.



January 2018 Forum *by Yusef Shakur*

January 5th of 2018 the weather temperatures were below zero all day, so as we prepared for our monthly First Friday Forum we seriously considered cancelling. We called our community partner Rosedale Park Baptist Church, and shared with them our consideration of cancelling the event because of the harsh weather conditions. After a few minutes on the phone we agreed to play it by ear, and that we would fellowship with the few that probably would attend and just shut everything down early. But to our surprise we ended up having a packed house! The topic of conversation was “Diversity & Inclusion: What Does That Look Like in Detroit?” brought people out, and it is the lack of diversity and inclusion that spoke loudly from the packed house. Detroit is a City that is 85% Black, but 85% of the resources have been concentrated in Midtown, Downtown and New Center Area! The language of a “One Detroit” from the Mayor’s office is a fairytale! As we have been informed by the people who attended our monthly First Friday Forums, and especially on January 5th they have consistently conveyed to us “They are two Detroit’s; one white and the other black still separate and unequal!” Many of the citizens of Detroit who attend our monthly First Friday Forums see them as an opportunity to share their stories, to no longer be invisible and go unheard. A staple of our monthly dialogue session is to have an honest and transparent conversation about race by creating an environment that is conducive to having a healthy dialogue. The conversations are heated at times because the people are passionate, and on January 5th that heat kept us all warm as we did the necessary work of deconstructing our thinking as it relates to race and power. Growth comes out of transformation, and we would like to think that our monthly First Friday Forums are a vehicle to helping people transform themselves and their thinking.



DETROIT DESIGN 2067

Detroit Design 2067 will be a week-long youth immersion program held at the Detroit Historical Museum during Spring Break 2018 (April 2 - 7, 2018 with an orientation date on March 31). It will offer 12 Detroit area high school juniors and seniors an opportunity to examine the history of July 1967, its impact on our city/region, and ways that we can identify key solutions that allow us to move forward together. Those that successfully complete this program will also receive a \$350 scholarship.

Detroit-area high school juniors and seniors are encouraged to apply by filling out the downloadable application on our website at www.detroit1967.org, including answering three short essay questions. Submit the completed form by email to kalishad@detroithistorical.org or by fax at 313.833.5342 on or before 4 pm on February 23, 2018.

Photos by Dammon Riddick Fundamental Media

Save The Dates

Healing Stories on Mass Incarceration
February 24, 2018 | Marygrove College

65th Annual YJLC: "Starting From Our Roots"
March 24, 2018 | MLK High School

UP Racial Justice Conference
April 14 - 15, 2018 | Upper Peninsula Michigan

Champions of Inclusion Breakfast
May 4, 2018 | DTE Energy

28th Annual Holy Strokes Golf Classic
July 30, 2018 | Pine Lake Country Club

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*Background image October 2017
panel at First Friday Forum
Photo by Dammon Riddick
Fundamental Media*

Serving as a catalyst for change, we develop, organize, and empower individuals and communities to advance equity and opportunity for all.



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