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PRESS RELEASE

THE GLASTONBURY MLK COMMUNITY INITIATIVE AND THE CT ROUNDTABLE ON CLIMATE AND JOBS INVITE YOU TO ATTEND A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION!

The Glastonbury Martin Luther King Community Initiative (GMLKCI) and the CT Roundtable on Climate and Jobs will host a Community Conversation on Monday, April 8, 2019, at the Glastonbury Riverfront Community Center. There will be a free reception at 6:30 p.m. The Conversation will be from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. This Community Conversation is entitled "Climate Change: Exploring the Intersection of Racial, Economic and Environmental Justice."

The keynote speaker and moderator will be John Humphries, the Executive Director of the Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs. Mr. Humphries has more than two decades of experience in nonprofit management, community organizing, and advocacy, and he has served as organizer for the Roundtable since its establishment in 2012. His organizing experience encompasses local, state, regional and national campaigns. With training in water resources engineering and economics, his early professional career was in international irrigation management. Mr. Humphries represents the Roundtable on the Governor's Council on Climate Change.

The presenters include Larry Williams, Jr., with the Sierra Club Labor Program, Shubhada Kambli, Hartford's Sustainability Coordinator, and Orlando Velazco, the Director of the Office of Health Equity, in the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

Larry Williams Jr. is the Labor Coordinator for Sierra Club's Labor and Economic Justice program. Mr. Williams is President Emeritus and founder of Progressive Workers Union (PWU). PWU is a union for non-profit employees that recently signed a transformative landmark five-year contract with the Sierra Club, America's largest environmental organization. Mr. Williams is also Founder of UnionBase.org, the first secure social networking and education platform for unions and union workers. UnionBase is regarded as the leading platform for a new generation of union workers.

Shubhada Kambli is Sustainability Coordinator for the City of Hartford. For the past ten years, Ms. Kambli has led results-driven climate change and neighborhood revitalization programs at the local, state federal levels. Ms. Shubhada is a CT native, and has built multiple successful, data-driven environmental and educational initiatives in New England, the Midwest, and the Southern United States. Educated at Wesleyan, Tufts, and Harvard, Ms. Shubhada has advanced academic training in environmental health, design, and policy.

Orlando Velazco is the Director of the Office of Health Equity (OHE) at the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH). As the OHE Director, his responsibilities include measuring health equity impact, language access planning and implementation, and advancing awareness and understanding of health equity via training and technical assistance to DPH's employees, its partners, and local health and social service agencies. Mr. Velazco worked as a Community Organizer and then a Community Researcher for 10 years in the field of HIV/AIDS and substance abuse CT, PA and GA. Mr. Velazco served as an epidemiologist for the City of Hartford from 2012 through early 2018.

As noted by Alison Hawkes and Paul Epstein in their January 20, 2013 article "Was MLK an environmentalist?", MLK's statements on the environment "are not a detailed program, but rather hints and glimpses - significant ones nonetheless. Although the ecological and cosmological themes in his work were never fully developed, King's vision was ahead of its time in linking cosmology, social justice, and ecological consciousness." As MLK said "justice is indivisible," because ultimately, "we are tied together."

As Kendra Pierre-Louis wrote in an April 2018 New York Times article, while "Dr. King died before the modern environmental movement, a growing body of research around pollution and health shows that his belief about segregation hurting everyone extends to the environment as well. Many American cities that are more racially divided have higher levels of pollution than less segregated cities. As a result, both whites and minorities who live in less integrated communities are exposed to higher levels of pollution than those who live in more integrated areas.

Our goal is for our presenters to provide both a starting point and a resource for what we hope will be an inspiring, lively, informative, thought-provoking, and interactive conversation.

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization, formed in 2001, to increase knowledge about, and understanding of, the philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We believe that bringing people together to inspire commitment to social justice and to discuss openly and honestly important issues relating to social justice will help build a more inclusive, informed, and tolerant community.

We invite organizations which advocate for social justice issues to have tables where participants will have the opportunity to learn about the mission and work of the various groups and to explore volunteer opportunities.

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative is supported by the Town of Glastonbury. This is a free event. Please bring nonperishable unexpired food items for the Glastonbury Food Pantry. For additional information, please contact Leslie Ohta, 202-538-1161, leslieohta@gmail.com or www.glastonburymlkci.org.

