

## Press Release

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative (GMLKCI) presents: A Community Conversation: Affordable Housing: Myths, Benefits and Solutions.

This virtual conversation will be held on Monday, May 10, 2021, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. via a Zoom Webinar. The event is jointly sponsored by the Open Communities Alliance (OCA) and TALK (Truth in Action with Love and Kindness, Inc.).

Connecticut is one of the most racially and economically segregated states in the union. A substantial body of evidence shows that residential segregation undermines the well-being of individuals, communities and American society as a whole and that everyone benefits from the greater tolerance, fair-mindedness, openness and opportunities that result from racial and economic diversity.

This webinar is the second in a series of three conversations on affordable housing. The first, on March 15, was sponsored by TALK, and focused on the Fair Share model for apportioning the region's affordable housing need among the towns in the region based on their affordable housing resources and financial capacity. The featured speakers were Open Communities Alliance's Erin Boggs and Sam Giffin, and Connecticut General Assembly House Majority Leader Jason Rojas. The third conversation, on June 1, will be a collaboration between TALK, Open Communities Alliance, Glastonbury Housing Authority, and Glastonbury's Commission on Racial Justice and Equity. It will focus on Glastonbury's affordable and subsidized housing resources, including how people access.

The following individuals will participate in this May 10<sup>th</sup> Community Conversation:

Erin Boggs, Executive Director of OCA. Ms. Boggs, a resident of Glastonbury, has worked on issues of equity, particularly in the context of housing, for almost 20 years. Ms. Boggs is a graduate of Wesleyan University and Georgetown University School of Law. Ms. Boggs served as Deputy Director of the CT Fair Housing Center, where she focused on opportunity and race, and worked for the CT American Civil Liberties Union and the Harrison Institute for Public Law at Georgetown University Law School and at the Center for National Policy. In addition, Ms. Boggs was a fair housing advisor for Sustainable Community Initiative grants in the CT region. Ms. Boggs has contributed to a number of publications addressing zoning, opportunity, equity, and affirmatively furthering fair housing, and to the Connecticut Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, Ms. Boggs is the founder and Executive Director of OCA.

Sam Giffin, OCA Policy and Data Analyst. Mr. Giffin received a BA degree in public policy analysis from UNC - Chapel Hill and a MA degree in city planning from UC Berkeley, where he focused on affordable housing, community development, and analytical research methods. As a grad student, Mr. Giffin conducted research on San Francisco's largest public housing redevelopment initiative. He also served as a teaching assistant in courses on planning research methods and global economic history. Prior to grad school he worked in homelessness services in San Francisco and before that managed several farmers' markets in Washington, D.C.

Taniqua Huguley, OCA Outreach Director. Ms. Huguley joined the organization after completing a Fulbright Fellowship focusing on girls in the criminal justice system in Trinidad and Tobago. A native of New York City, Taniqua also has deep roots in Connecticut as the result of her time as an undergraduate, graduate student, and employee at Trinity College, where she completed a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a Master of Arts in Public Policy. While studying at Trinity, Taniqua advised students, advanced multicultural recruitment initiatives, and participated in alumni relations. While working as a TRINsition Fellow in Trinity's Office of the Dean of Students, Taniqua launched the Bantam Network to assist first-year students with their social and academic transition to college. For the last five years she has coordinated and promoted events for the

networking company Small Business Night Out. Her experience also includes campaign organizing and work with the New York City Housing Authority.

Martha Galvez, the executive director of the Housing Solutions Lab at New York University's Furman Center. Officially launching in June 2021, the Lab helps small and mid-sized cities plan, launch, and evaluate effective and equitable housing policies. Her expertise is in housing and homelessness policy, with a focus on interventions aimed at improving housing stability and choice for low-income families. She has experience in mixed-methods research and has designed and managed studies involving complex administrative, survey, and qualitative data. Before joining the Lab, Martha was a principal research associate at the Urban Institute. She has held research and policy positions in several state and local organizations, including the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, the West Coast Poverty Center at the University of Washington, the Seattle Housing Authority, the New York City Department of Small Business Services, and the New York City Citizens Housing and Planning Council. Martha earned a bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University, and master's and doctoral degrees from New York University.

The mission of the Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative (GMLKCI) is to increase knowledge about, and understanding of, the philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to provide leadership and active engagement to build a more inclusive community. We believe that bringing people together to discuss openly and honestly important issues relating to social justice will help build a more inclusive and tolerant community. As Dr. King noted "...whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly..." and "...the quality of a community is determined by how members of the community relate to one another."

The Open Communities Alliance (OCA) is a Connecticut-based civil rights organization that promotes access to opportunity through education, organizing, advocacy, research, and partnerships. OCA works to build an urban-suburban interracial coalition and aims to confront CT's long history of segregation. OCA has initiated legal advocacy in CT, challenging zoning that eliminates the possibility of creating affordable housing in towns. OCA believes that towns need to overhaul their zoning in order to meet the regional need for affordable housing.

TALK (Truth in Action with Love and Kindness, Inc.) is a nonpartisan organization, formed to provide educational opportunities to the citizens of the area, and to promote dialog about social, environmental, and political issues. TALK'S goal is to fight injustice and protect basic rights for all people through truth, compassion and nonviolence, by fostering dialog between opposing viewpoints, while working to improve the lives of our fellow citizens.

The goal of the GMLKCI Community Conversations program is to engage citizens of Glastonbury and surrounding towns in discussions on social justice issues. We believe – especially in today's climate – that we must identify common ground between and among citizens rather than continuing to exploit differences. In this way, we can foster meaningful relationships and dialogue and forge a better community.

This is a free event open to all. This will be a virtual conversation utilizing Zoom Webinar. You do not need a Zoom account in order to join our Conversation from a phone, desktop or tablet device. There will be a chat room function which will allow you to pose general questions and questions to individual panelists throughout the Conversation. For additional information, please call 860-810-2368.

To register please log onto this website's Home Page or Upcoming Events and click on "Register."