



May 2022

### Community conversation on critical race theory

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative will present "A Community Conversation: Critical Race Theory - The culture war over America's racial reckoning and its place in public education" on May 9.

The Zoom webinar will be held from 7-8:30 p.m. and will be moderated and facilitated by Dean Alfred Carter, an educator, sociologist, and humanist. Panelists will include Professor John Brittain, consultant Paquita Jarman-Smith and journalist Mark Pazniokas.

Brittain has an interest in the intersection between housing and school segregation, and the policies that contribute to structural poverty in low-income and neighborhoods of color. Britain will discuss how Critical Race Theory is a framework developed by legal scholars in the 1970s and 1980s to examine and understand race in America. It looks at how racism is embedded in present-day laws and society because of structures that were put in place throughout U.S. history.

Brittain may discuss the positions of critics of CRT such as whether Critical Race Theory is factually incorrect and ignores important historical facts, such as the abolitionist movement among white Christians in the pre-Civil War period, and ignores the ideological underpinnings of CRT which insinuates that America was founded on racism alone and therefore all institutions have been tainted by it.

Jarman-Smith is a consultant at the state Education Resource Center and is an adjunct instructor of special education and interventions at Central Connecticut State University. Last summer, SERC published a position

statement on Critical Race Theory and Education, sharing the agency's perspective given their role in equity and education. Ms. Jarman-Smith will contribute to the discussion around CRT and education, and the importance of adding the African-American, Black, Puerto Rican and Latino studies to the public school curriculum.

Mark Pazniokas is a co-founder of the CT Mirror, an online news site owned by the Connecticut News Project, where he has been the Capitol Bureau Chief since September 2009. Pazniokas will discuss his research about CRT much of which has been published in an article titled "Critical race theory roils school board race in Guilford, a town long open to a study of slavery," in the CT Mirror. Pazniokas will discuss how critical race theory was used in the 2021 municipal races, especially Guilford, and how it might be employed in 2022.

The goal of the GMLKCI Community Conversations program is to engage residents of Glastonbury and surrounding towns in conversations about social justice issues. The group believes – especially in today's climate – that "we must identify common ground between and among citizens rather than continue 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. To register, go to GMLKCI's webpage at [www.glastonburymkci.org](http://www.glastonburymkci.org) and click on "Register." Or visit URL: <https://tinyurl.com/4x8v3v7z> to register. For additional information, please contact Leslie Ohta at 202-538-1161 or at [leslieohta@gmail.com](mailto:leslieohta@gmail.com), or visit [www.glastonburymkci.org](http://www.glastonburymkci.org). **GL**