

GLASTONBURY MLK
COMMUNITY
INITIATIVE

presents an in-person

MLK Birthday Celebration

January 15, 2023

Smith Middle School

Health Disparities: the Racial, Economic, Cultural and Social Causes

***“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice
in health care is the most shocking and
inhumane.” MLK, March 25, 1966***

The 2023 MLK Holiday Celebration is generously supported by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the Glastonbury Community Fund, sponsored by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and the South Church Mission Committee.

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is the community foundation for the 29-town Greater Hartford region and is dedicated to improving the quality of life for area residents.

www.glastonburymlkci.org



Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization, that was formed in 2001. GMLKCI's mission 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 an inclusive community. We believe that bringing people together to discuss openly and honestly social justice issues 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 goal of this MLK Birthday Celebration is to inform and inspire Glastonbury residents to become actively involved in social justice issues by discussing in an open and congenial manner issues which may divide us or bind us together as individuals, families and a community.

All of the social justice issues discussed during this Celebration and during our Community Conversations, held throughout the year, are addressed in light of Dr. King's principles.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Musical Performance

Glastonbury High School Concert Choir

Dr. Ethan Nash, Director

Welcome and Introduction

David O'Connor —GMLKCI

Film

“Summers of Freedom: the Story of Martin Luther King, Jr. in Connecticut”

Social Justice Essay and Invocation

Richard Allen — GMLKCI

Speakers

Dr. David Williams, Harvard University

Chair, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Professor, African/African American Studies & Sociology

Dr. Tekisha Dwan Everette, Executive Vice

President, Trust for American's Health

Musical Performance

Glastonbury High School Concert Choir

Dr. Ethan Nash, Director

Closing Remarks and Appreciation

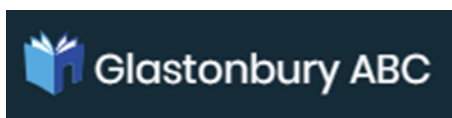
David O'Connor —GMLKCI

Reception and Advocacy Organizations - SMS Cafeteria

Welcome to today's program. Your presence here is encouragement for the work we do as members of the Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative. This project was accomplished with a handful of committed community members. But the work does not end tonight. Activities are planned for your participation throughout the year—please check our website for updates on the events (www.glastonburymlkci.org).

All of our programs are free. We are dependent on you for financial support. All donations are tax deductible. Thank you for supporting our efforts through your participation in making Glastonbury a more engaging place to live and visit.

Special thanks to student volunteers from the **Glastonbury ABC House** and the **Glastonbury High School Key Club**.



Social Justice

Reverend Richard Allen

Social Justice is a term that describes a community's passion for providing all people with access to the basics of life. This would include civil rights, education, health care, respect, employment, on and on. When we notice that individuals or groups in a given society lack access to these basics, we have identified a need for social justice. This is an ancient concept. It is embraced by all religious traditions and some non-religious traditions. Sacred stories are laced with accounts of people who lacked access to land for growing food; to health care for the healing of physical and mental illness; to seats of power in administrative settings; and to respect for simply being the person God made them to be.

Throughout history, prophetic voices have called our attention to the need for social justice. The Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. was one such prophetic voice. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's strategy of non-violence, Dr. King raised our consciousness to our neighbors' lack of access to equal rights, to decent wages, to investment opportunities, to education, to a table in a restaurant, to a room in a hotel, to basic human dignity. Dr. King's call to social justice rings loudly in our minds and hearts. When he declared, "I have a dream . . ." he was raising up a vision of what life is like when social justice prevails, when all people have access to those basics of life.

We see that justice is a societal issue. When a society acts consciously or unconsciously to deny access to basic human rights, social justice is what is required, the transformation of societal barriers. The 19th and 20th Centuries are full of examples of actions taken for the sake of social justice. From the ending of slavery to the right of women to vote to the right of gay people to marry, social justice has made our American society a more humane place to live and to raise children. We have a long way to go. One need only open one's eyes to see neighbors who lack access to the basics of life.

The Hebrew prophet, Micah, raised the question, "What does God require?" The answer: "To love kindness, to do justice, and to walk humbly with one's God." To live into that pronouncement is to do social justice.

Dr. Tekisha Dwan Everette

Dr. Tekisha Dwan Everete is Principal and Founder, TDE Consulting Group and Executive Vice President, Trust For America's Health. Her passion for social justice was fueled by her personal experiences and influences as a child. As a youth, she experienced delays in diagnosing asthma, and faced challenges accessing and navigating the health care system. These experiences gave Everette first-hand knowledge of the importance of health and health care access. This, combined with her admiration for social justice trailblazers such as Thurgood Marshall, Barbara Jordan, and Sandra Day O'Connor, inspired Everette to dedicate her life's work toward eradicating health care inequities through advocacy and policy.

Dr. Everette has built a successful career in public policy, particularly health care policy, and advocacy in the non-profit, state, and private sectors. Before launching TDE Consulting, she served as the Managing Director of Federal Government Affairs with the American Diabetes Association, where she provided strategic leadership on policy and advocacy initiatives with the White House, several federal agencies, and Congress, which led to important victories for people with and at risk for diabetes. Prior to this, Everette worked as a government relations consultant with Drinker, Biddle, and Reath, LLC, where she represented the interests of several nonprofit health care organizations on issues such as health reform, Medicare, Medicaid, and federal appropriations. Everette has also worked for the Service Employees International Union, RESI, the State of Maryland, and the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. As EVP for Trust For America's Health, she works in partnership with TFAH's President and CEO to chart and implement the organization's strategic direction and priorities, provides counsel on current and emerging policy issues, and engages with key organizations, policymakers, and other partners to advance policy priorities to improve public health and promote equity.

Dr. Everette has earned a PhD in Sociology from American University with a concentration in race, gender, and social justice as it relates to social policy. She received her MPA degree from the Center of Public Administration and Policy at Virginia Tech and holds two BA degrees in Political Science and Interdisciplinary Studies from the same institution. Everette is an alumna of the Masters Series for Distinguished Leaders and the National Urban Fellows America's Leaders of Change program. She is a lifetime member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the Association of Black Sociologists.

Dr. David R. Williams

Dr. David R. Williams began his academic career as an Assistant Professor of Sociology and Public Health at Yale University. After being promoted at Yale, he joined the faculty of the University of Michigan. Currently, he is the Norman Professor of Public Health and chair of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health. He is also a Professor of African and African American Studies and Sociology at Harvard. He received his PhD in Sociology from the University of Michigan and a Master of Public Health degree from Loma Linda University.

Dr. Williams is an internationally recognized authority on social influences on health. He has been invited to keynote scientific conferences in Europe, Africa, Australia, the Middle East, South America, the Caribbean and across the U.S. The author of more than 500 scientific papers, his research has enhanced our understanding of the ways in which race, socioeconomic status, stress, racism, health behavior and religious involvement can affect physical and mental health. The Everyday Discrimination Scale that he developed is the most widely used measure of discrimination in health studies.

Dr. Williams has been involved in the development of health policy at the national level in the U.S. He has served on Federal advisory committees and testified at Congressional Briefings. He has also played a visible leadership role in raising awareness levels of the problem of health inequities and identifying interventions to address them. This includes his service as the staff director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Commission to Build a Healthier America and as a key scientific advisor to the award-winning PBS film series, *Unnatural Causes: Is inequality Making Us Sick?*

Dr. Williams has received numerous honors and awards. He was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2001, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2007 and the National Academy of Sciences in 2019. He was ranked as the Most Cited Black Scholar in the Social Sciences, worldwide, in 2008. In 2014, Thomson Reuters ranked him as one of the World's Most Influential Scientific Minds. He or his research has been featured by some of the nation's top print and television news organizations and in his TED Talk, which has over 1.8 million views and has been translated into 22 languages.

Glastonbury High School Concert Choir



The **GHS Concert Choir** is a highly selective, auditioned group that meets during the school day. They primarily perform music from the standard choral repertoire, representing a variety of time periods, with recent works including Eric Whitacre's *A Boy and a Girl*, Heinrich Schutz's *Psalm 100*, Morten Lauridsen's *O Magnum Mysterium* and *The Heavens are Telling*, from Haydn's *The Creation*. In recent years they have also performed major works such as Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Beethoven's *Hallelujah* from *Mount of Olives* and Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*. The group's members are selected by auditions held each January. The GHS Choirs perform frequently in the community, such as at the town's Veteran's Day and Memorial Day celebrations, with annual appearances for the Rotary Club, at the Riverfront Community Center and at local retirement homes.

Dr. Ethan Nash has been the Director of Choirs at Glastonbury High School since 2007. He received his D.M.A. in Choral Conducting from the Hartt School. Dr. Nash is also the Artistic Director of the West Hartford Women's Chorale, a songleader at Temple Sinai in Newington and a member of CONCORA. He is the author of the earthsongs choral music publication *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire*. At Glastonbury High School, he conducts three curricular choirs, the Chorus, Treble Choir and Concert Choir as well as the Madrigals and the extracurricular Gent's Choir.

Glastonbury High School Concert Choir

* Soloists

Soprano I

Annie Boyd

Belle Christensen

Hana ElMaghraby

Skylar Fiske

Gracie Holman

Luca Miner

Alto I

Bella Brown

Charlotte Gillman-Boggs

Claire Hadley

Harper Keen

Katelyn Lacroix

Jamie Schwartz

Lauren Staskiewicz

Soprano II

Lynn Boyaji

Bridget Davis

Lily Mraz

Anika Pinto

Phoebe Russotto

Sydney Waltz

Camille Weiss

Alto II

Grace Combs

Cal Fucci

Caroline Keen

Brooke Liebler

Kaylynne Pham

Shruti Sendhilkumar

Ava Vazquez

Tenor I

Ryan Bernhart

Ian Duncan *

Jackson Korman

Bass I

Arthur Cao

Jagan Lakshmipathy *

Caleb Lee

Tenor II

Tom Fahey

Henry Masin

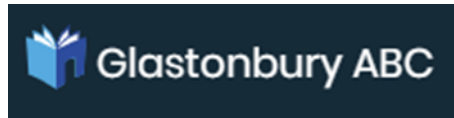
Bass II

Jonathan Owens

Jude Owens

Nihar Shetty

Will Zeppieri



The mission of Glastonbury A Better Chance (ABC) is to offer young minority men of demonstrated ability, good character and need, the opportunity to obtain an excellent education in the town of Glastonbury.

Jeremiah Hernandez

Brian Ramos

Nana Yeboah

Founded in 1974, Glastonbury ABC is one of 22 community programs nationally, and it is among the oldest. It has been home to over 80 scholars. Hailing from New York, Boston and other cities up and down the east coast, these young men have been afforded the opportunity for a better education than they otherwise would have been able to receive. We accomplish our mission by providing our students with a home, adult supervision, and academic support. We encourage them to be fully involved in the local community and to engage in service and cultural activities. We aspire to prepare our students not only for college but for a future as engaged and effective leaders in society.

<https://www.glastonburyabc.org/>

Email us at: glastonburyabc@cox.net



Mission

Key Club is an international, student-led organization that provides its members with opportunities to provide service, build character and develop leadership.

Core Values

Leadership » Leadership is grounded in humility and service to others. A true leader listens, recognizes, and empowers.

Character building » Character is built by everyday acts of kindness, integrity and teamwork to grow stronger relationships and communities.

Caring » Compassion for others is a cornerstone of the Key Club experience, inspiring action and service to one's community.

Inclusiveness » We welcome people of all backgrounds and ethnicities to join in serving and making a positive difference in our world.

Many thanks to today's student volunteers:

Sochima Anaedo

Reilly Cotter

Keira Draghi

Trevor Hoffman

Mahathi Karthik

Alex Kosior

Max Miller

Jakshi Nandam

Valeria Periche

Jill Williams

“Summers of Freedom: the Story of Martin Luther King, Jr. in Connecticut”

In the summers of 1944 and 1947, Martin Luther King, Jr. worked in the Simsbury, Connecticut tobacco fields as part of a group of Morehouse College students. It was his first experience outside the racially segregated South. He wrote letters home and later spoke about his time in Simsbury. In 2010, under the guidance of Social Studies Supervisor Richard Curtiss and the Simsbury Free Library, 15 Simsbury High School students conducted research at the Simsbury Free Library, Simsbury Historical Society, and other sources. They reviewed correspondence and other documents and conducted interviews with people who lived in Simsbury or knew about the Morehouse students' experience. The goal of the Simsbury students was to learn what King did while in Connecticut and what effect (if any) it had on him. The result of that project is the film **“Summers of Freedom: the Story of Martin Luther King, Jr. in Connecticut”**.

Simsbury students later formed a committee to raise funds for a MLK in CT Memorial, which was dedicated in 2021 on the grounds of the Simsbury Free Library.

The Glastonbury Martin Luther King Community Initiative would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Town of Simsbury, Simsbury High School students, their faculty advisor, the Simsbury Free Library, and the Simsbury Historical Society for their work on the **“Summers of Freedom: the Story of Martin Luther King, Jr. in Connecticut”** film.

Thanks also to the Simsbury Free Library, the Simsbury Historical Society and the 'MLK in Connecticut Committee' for continuing to make the video available to the public through their websites.

<https://simsburyhistory.org/martin-luther-king-jr/>

“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.”

Martin Luther King Jr. made the above statement at the second convention of the Medical Committee for Human Rights in Chicago on March 25, 1966. Prior to the convention, he had also stated that:

“We are concerned about the constant use of federal funds to support this most notorious expression of segregation [and] I see no alternative to direct action and creative nonviolence to raise the conscience of the nation.”

Dr. King stated that direct action was needed to make everyone aware of the segregated and inferior medical care provided to African-Americans. He also stated that action against Chicago hospital discrimination was needed because of the evidence of unequal treatment and because the African-American infant mortality rate in at least one area of Chicago was as bad as Mississippi’s rate.

Dr. John L.S. Holloman Jr., chairman of the Medical Committee for Human Rights, pointed out that “There is scarcely a hospital North or South that does not overtly or covertly discriminate” against African-Americans. Dr. King and other speakers accused the American Medical Association of a “conspiracy of inaction” in civil rights and called for lawsuits to force doctors and hospitals to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. An official of the US Department of Health Education and Welfare said that his agency was acting to end federal funding of hospitals found to have practiced discrimination. Dr. Holloman said that his organization would assist in federal suits against hospitals providing discriminatory services.

(The above summary was based on AP and NPI news articles from 1966.)

It is now almost 57 years later. While there have been improvements, can we truly say that there are not disparities in health care based on racial, economic, cultural, or social factors?

The Town of Glastonbury Human Relations Commission is available to assist any resident who, because of race, color, age, sex, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or intellectual, mental or physical disability, has been discriminated against in a manner prohibited by the laws of the State of Connecticut or the Town of Glastonbury. For additional information visit the Town's website or contact the Commission through the Human Resources Department, (860) 652-7501.



GMLKCI directors and volunteers are critical to our work

Sylvia Gafford Alexander	Richard Allen
Amo-Mensah Amofa	Ellen Carter
Ronobir Deb	Noah Gatua
Robyn Guimont	Jeremiah Hernandez
Sridhar Kadaba	Lydie Kepseu
Darwin Kovacs	David O'Connor
Manisha Srivastava	Quan Tue Tran

**Please complete the program evaluation survey .
Your opinions are important .**



Thank you for joining us for today's program. Your attendance encourages the work we do as members of the Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative to make Glastonbury a more inclusive place to live and visit.

While all of our programs are free, we are dependent on you for financial support. The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative is a 501(c)(3) corporation and all donations are tax deductible. **Please consider supporting our efforts with a financial contribution.** You can send your tax deductible contributions to:

**GMLKCI Treasurer
62 Chimneysweep Hill Road
Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033**

Also please consider supporting the Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative through the Amazon Smiles program.

Visit smile.amazon.com. Select **Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative** to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to GMLKCI.

You can also support GMLKCI by using the DONATE button on our web site—www.glastonburymlkci.org

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative would like to thank our Sponsors, who make this work possible



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