

## PRESS RELEASE

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative  
Community Conversation on Social Justice Issues  
January 15, 2017  
1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Riverfront Community Center

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative will host its first Community Conversation for 2017 on Sunday January 15, at the Riverfront Community Center from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization that was formed in 2001. Each year since then, we have sponsored a Celebration on Martin Luther, Jr., Day and three Community Conversations.

GMLKCI works to increase knowledge and understanding of the philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King and to provide leadership and active engagement to build an inclusive community. Very simply, we think that getting people together to discuss issues that are important will result in a better community for all of our citizens. Dr. King said "...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." We think that meaningful relationships are a foundation on which to build a stronger community.

In 2015, the MLK Community Conversations addressed topics such as "Racial Inequities in the Juvenile Justice System;" "Implicit Bias and How it Impacts our Community;" and "School Diversity in Glastonbury and Greater Hartford." In 2016, Community Conversations hosted programs titled "Can We House Glastonbury's Future?" and "Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things: How Glastonbury Residents Have Reached Across Racial, Ethnic, Religious, Economic and Gender Boundaries and Made a Difference."

Focusing on Martin Luther King, Jr., words that "[o]ur lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter," the first Community Conversation in 2017 will host the Looking In Theater cast which will perform skits dealing with a few of the current social justice issues which might be of interest to Glastonbury residents. Issues may include transgender bathrooms, LGBTI discrimination, Syrian refugees, police profiling, the responsibility to vote, the legalization of marijuana, undocumented residents, and ethnic, violence, religious, gender, and racial stereotypes. The aim of the program is to encourage people to discuss openly and honestly social justice issues which impact them individually and as a community.

The Looking In Theatre is composed of high school students attending the Greater Hartford Magnet School of the Arts, under the direction of Jonathan Gillman, a Harvard-educated playwright and director. The Looking In Theatre group travels throughout Connecticut performing for middle and high school students, youth groups, churches, conferences, parents, and professional organizations, and for adolescents and adults in residential programs.

The program will be moderated and facilitated by Jonathan Gillman and by Dean Alfred Carter, an educator, sociologist, and humanist, who will lead a conversation with the students and the audience with respect to the messages the students seek to convey in their productions and the importance of those messages in the quest for social justice.

For additional information, please contact Leslie Ohta at 202-538-1161 or [leslieohta@gmail.com](mailto:leslieohta@gmail.com) or [www.glastonburymlkci.org](http://www.glastonburymlkci.org). For more information about Looking In Theatre or to book a performance, please call Jonathan Gillman at 860-680-5269 or e-mail him at [lookingin@crec.org](mailto:lookingin@crec.org).