Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation

How Liberal Education Can Advance Racial Healing and Transformation
The W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Deepening Commitment to Racial Equity
Designing the Transformation
Driving Campus Diversity One Decision at a Time
Racial Healing in 2016
AAC&U’s partnership with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation enterprise is a call to action, a call to step up and lead for equity by creating a paradigm shift in the thinking of Americans around race.

—Lynn Pasquerella
From 1818 R Street NW

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Erasing the Problem of the Color Line: A Collaborative Vision for the Future

In his groundbreaking work *The Souls of Black Folk*, sociologist and historian W. E. B. Du Bois asserted that “the world problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line—the question of the relation of the advanced races of men who happen to be white to the great majority of the undeveloped or half-developed nations of mankind who happen to be yellow, brown or black...” For Du Bois, this relation was characterized in terms of white domination and exploitation that denied more than half of the world’s population the rights of full citizenship and status as human beings, informing what he referred to as the double consciousness of being African American. In attempting to describe this phenomenon, Du Bois wrote, “One ever feels his ‘twoness’—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.”

In 1885, Du Bois’s own dogged strength led him to pursue a college education at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. His journey from the small community of Great Barrington in western Massachusetts to the Jim Crow south opened Du Bois’s eyes to the racial terror, marginalization, and disenfranchisement inflicted on southern blacks, serving as a catalyst for his lifelong commitment to racial and social justice. After graduating from Fisk, Du Bois went on to earn a second bachelor’s degree and master’s degree from Harvard, studied at the University of Berlin on a post-master’s fellowship, and was the first African American to earn a PhD from Harvard. Throughout his career in academia, Du Bois championed the transformative power of a liberal education as essential to the ideal of educating for democracy. Indeed, he was convinced that colleges and universities have a duty to play a leadership role in redressing inequities by leading change as teachers, researchers, activists, and public intellectuals.

Du Bois was at the forefront, critiquing entrenched notions of a racial hierarchy in scholarly journals, through his leadership in cofounding the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and in writing for popular culture and literary magazines, whose reach extended beyond the inner circle of the intellectual elite. On more than one occasion, Du Bois employed utopian fiction in the form of short stories to reaffirm the absurdity of white supremacy. Thus, both “The Comet” and “A.D. 2150, 1950” offer glimpses into a world in which a belief in the hierarchy of human value has been jettisoned. In the latter, a first-person narrative about an African American man who awakens from the dead after two hundred years, the color line has vanished within a fully integrated, pacifist, post-racial community. Though the resurrection of Du Bois’s character lasts for only a day, he dies again with “a certain quiet content.”
Unfortunately, Du Bois’s vision has yet to be realized, and the problem of the color line has persisted well into the twenty-first century. AAC&U’s partnership with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation enterprise is an urgent call to action, taking up a Du Boisian charge to make explicit the connections between the work of higher education in promoting racial and social justice and the lives of those in surrounding communities and across the country. We could not be more proud or excited to have the opportunity to collaborate with a foundation that has demonstrated a deep and abiding commitment to challenging societal norms and to overcoming structural barriers grounded in both hidden biases and overt acts of racism. The Kellogg Foundation’s support for children, families, and communities as they strengthen and create conditions that propel vulnerable children to achieve success as individuals and as contributors to the larger community and society is in perfect alignment with AAC&U’s mission of promoting liberal education and inclusive excellence in service to a thriving democracy, in which the full promise of American higher education can truly be fulfilled for all.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation and AAC&U each have long-standing histories of nationwide collaboration to address complex issues of race and difference. Under its America Healing initiative, the Kellogg Foundation has fostered extensive networks and alliances reaching more than two hundred million people that encompass civil rights organizations representing an expansive range of identity groups. AAC&U’s leadership in promoting racial and social justice includes working with President Clinton’s Initiative on Race to create a Campus Week of Dialogue at six hundred colleges across the country and partnering with the Department of Education in 2012 to enhance civic learning at all institutions of higher education as a means of strengthening democracy.

The articles in this issue of *Liberal Education* represent a sense of hope and optimism about the future. They also signal a vow to accept responsibility for shaping a better world through the facilitation of an honest sharing of personal and collective narratives that will offer a framework for curricular development, community engagement, and the creation of action plans to meet the demands of the equity imperative in the academy and beyond. We are profoundly grateful to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for their support and look forward to the meaningful journey upon which we are embarking together.—LYNN PASQUERELLA
In July, AAC&U became a partner in the W. K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise, a large-scale effort to uproot the belief in a hierarchy of human value that has so deformed our national life since the founding. Drawing on practices developed by truth and reconciliation commissions to resolve intractable conflicts around the world, the TRHT process will promote racial healing and seek to eradicate structural bias in communities across the United States. This special issue of Liberal Education is intended to introduce the TRHT enterprise, tracing its broad outlines and beginning to sketch out the role of higher education in it.

As a kind of prelude to the Featured Topic section, we include letters from the two former governors who serve as honorary co-chairs of the enterprise, Deval Patrick of Massachusetts and William Winter of Mississippi. These letters are followed by the lead article, in which Gail Christopher, senior advisor and vice president for TRHT at the Kellogg Foundation, reminds us how powerful the nexus of education, activism, and social justice has proven in the past, calls on students and educators to join the diverse coalition now forming to meet the exigencies of our own historical moment, and outlines the principles guiding the TRHT enterprise.

In her article, AAC&U President Lynn Pasquerella focuses more specifically on how the issues at the heart of TRHT are playing out on campuses—and being misrepresented in the media. The way for colleges and universities to rise to the challenges posed by a new generation of student activism, she suggests, is by fulfilling their mission to educate for democracy. Moreover, she argues that because a liberal education provides training in the art of listening and the exercise of moral imagination, even as it liberates the mind, it can play a vital role in racial healing.

FROM THE EDITOR

As most readers of Liberal Education know already, AAC&U has a long history of working on issues of race and equity, a history rooted in the association’s mission to make liberal education and inclusive excellence the foundation for institutional purpose and educational practice. The work of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation may be less familiar, however. And so, to round out the Featured Topic section, La June Montgomery Tabron, the Kellogg Foundation’s president and CEO, reviews its deepening commitment to racial equity.

The initial step in TRHT was to determine how the enterprise could be structured most effectively to achieve the twin goals of healing the ravages left by centuries of racism and transforming the socioeconomic institutions that sustain belief in a hierarchy of human value. To this end, five design teams were formed, each charged with conducting a searching examination of a particular area of focus and developing an action plan that will lead to transformation in that area. The Designing the Transformation section below carries brief reports from the teams.

The Perspectives section highlights the work of two other TRHT partners: the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, whose practical applications of the research on implicit bias hold such promise for—and beyond—the academy, and the Quad Caucus of Minority Legislators, whose collaboration on public policy solutions serves as a model for counteracting structural racism. Finally, the two brief essays in the My View section call attention to ways in which the belief in racial hierarchy continues to enable and help perpetuate forms of economic exploitation and even direct colonial oppression.

AAC&U gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation for this issue of Liberal Education and for the related symposium, “Student Activism and Liberal Education: Faculty Engagement in Turbulent Times,” which will be held in conjunction with the association’s annual meeting in January. On a more personal note, I want thank Mike Wenger, a consultant to the Kellogg Foundation, for his assistance in planning this issue and for helping us ensure that it conveys the spirit and promise of this terrifically ambitious and urgently needed enterprise.

—DAVID TRITELLI

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In Memoriam: Norman Adler

AAC&U notes with deep sadness the death on September 11, 2016, of Norman Adler, University Professor of Psychology and special assistant to the vice president for academic affairs at Yeshiva University. He was dean of Yeshiva College from 1995 to 2004. At Northwestern University, he was professor of psychology and vice provost for research and graduate education from 1993 to 1995. At the University of Pennsylvania, he was associate dean of the college in the School of Arts and Sciences from 1989 to 1993, and professor of psychology in psychiatry in the School of Medicine from 1988 to 1993. The University of Pennsylvania’s Biological Basis of Behavior Program, which he founded in 1978 and served as chair until 1989, has since 2007 hosted the annual Norman Adler Lecture in his honor.

At the time of his death, Adler was a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of Liberal Education and a senior fellow at AAC&U. For several years, he served as convener and discussion leader of “Pedagogy and the ‘Big Questions’: Dealing with Religious Commitments in the Classroom,” a regular breakfast session of the AAC&U annual meeting.

A beloved educator and a tireless champion of liberal education, Norman Adler will be sorely missed.

Georgia Becomes the 13th “LEAP State”

Following several years of preparatory work, during which the members of a statewide steering committee developed an agenda for student success, Georgia has formally joined the twelve other states participating in AAC&U’s national LEAP States initiative. LEAP Georgia is a partnership of the University System of Georgia and a recently formed LEAP State Georgia Consortium comprising more than twenty colleges, community colleges, and universities across the state of Georgia. The steering committee, which includes at least one faculty member and one administrator from each institution, will provide oversight for the statewide effort.

The LEAP States initiative is part of AAC&U’s broader signature initiative, Liberal Education and America’s Promise. More information about the LEAP States initiative and LEAP Georgia is available online at www.aacu.org/leap/states.

Upcoming Meetings

- January 25–28, 2017
  Annual Meeting: Building Public Trust in the Promise of Liberal Education and Inclusive Excellence
  San Francisco, California
- February 23–25, 2017
  General Education and Assessment: Design Thinking for Student Learning
  Phoenix, Arizona
- March 16–18, 2017
  Diversity, Learning, and Student Success
  Jacksonville, Florida

New Faculty Project Focuses on Guided Learning Pathways

With grant support from the Teagle Foundation, AAC&U has launched Purposeful Pathways: Faculty Planning for Curricular Coherence, a new planning project that will lay the foundation for ambitious faculty-led curricular change. Campus teams from four AAC&U member institutions—Community College of Philadelphia; University of Houston–Downtown; University of Nevada, Las Vegas; and Winston-Salem State University—are currently developing action plans to create more coherent and intentional curricula in order to promote the completion of degree programs and the achievement of learning outcomes that are essential to life, work, and citizenship. More information about the project is available online at www.aacu.org/pathways.

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www.aacu.org
Race and racism have been part of America from the start. And yet, conscious of, and challenged by, the ideals of the founders, America has achieved extraordinary progress toward racial equity. Today, black and brown people can live, work, go to school, eat, play, and marry in ways that would have been unthinkable when I was born, just sixty years ago. Indeed, the election and reelection of President Barack Obama, our first African American president, was widely viewed as heralding America’s readiness for racial reconciliation.

It turns out that being ready to reconcile and actually reconciling are two different things.

Data and experience show that white families are more respected by law enforcement, have better schools for their children, and have higher paying jobs, safer neighborhoods, easier access to healthcare, and fewer environmental hazards in their communities. By contrast, people of color experience more crime and have higher unemployment, lower wages, lower performing schools, less access to healthcare, and deteriorating housing in their communities. From Baltimore and Charleston to Ferguson and other locations across the country, the great racial divide in our nation persists. Compounding these challenges, both whites and people of color are frustrated, often with little hope for the future.

Nobody believes that race explains everything wrong in everybody’s life. But racism is at the root of many of the issues we face today, and it accounts for the lack of interest in, or success of, some of the solutions. Racism lowers our economic output, limits opportunities for success, and, worst of all, pits citizen against citizen. Both conscious and unconscious assumptions about the relative competence, responsibility, and worth of other people still haunt us, creating destructive tensions and mistrust. In some communities, the slightest provocation has turned into a deadly police shooting; in others, citizens felt justified in attacking police officers just doing their job. And yet, we are challenged by too many to choose which senseless and inexcusable killing to condemn. We can do better than this because, as a nation, we are better than this. But we need to act. We need more than a conversation, more than expressions of anguish and frustration, and more surely than indifference. We need a transformation and a plan to achieve it.

That’s the objective of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise. It aims to replace any notion of a hierarchy of human value with the capacity for all of us to see each other as brothers and sisters who collectively want a better world for ourselves and our children. The TRHT enterprise envisions a nation where every life matters, where equal opportunities are available for all to reach their full potential. And TRHT is committed to implementing this vision pragmatically—street by street, block by block, city by city.

Special thanks to the Association of American Colleges and Universities for joining TRHT as one of our more than one hundred partners, and for providing us this unique opportunity both to articulate the depth of the problems our nation faces and to explore the hope and healing that TRHT can bring. The stakes are high. We want environments where we and future generations can enjoy opportunities for healthy, productive lives. Education plays a tremendous role in their trajectory, making AAC&U a natural partner in ensuring that racism won’t be a barrier to anyone.

Boldly addressing racism is an ambitious challenge for America. But ours has been a history of surmounting challenges that seemed impossible. It’s time we did so again.
I have always believed that the way to greater racial equity in this country runs right through the schoolhouse door. In too many cases, children of color are robbed of their full potential and well-being by an educational system that does not value them equally and that hides embarrassing truths about our past. If we can build an educational system that confronts these truths and provides equal opportunities to all children, irrespective of skin color, religion, or ethnic origin, we will be on the path to equity and justice for all and to the healing that we all so desperately need.

I have seen in my own state of Mississippi how unequal educational opportunity hurts all of us, by dividing us and by weakening our productivity in an increasingly competitive economic environment. And I have seen how equalizing educational opportunity benefits all of us—helping to increase our economic productivity and stability and to heal the wounds of the past. I have tried over the years to articulate this message to all who would listen—and to many who didn’t want to listen. As governor, later as a member of President Bill Clinton’s Advisory Board on Race, and now through the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation at my alma mater, the University of Mississippi, I have seen how the truth of this message has resonated with people all over the country and from all walks of life.

That is why I am so proud to be involved with, and to serve as an honorary co-chair for, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise. The foundation’s focus on creating the conditions for all children to have an equal opportunity to thrive reflects what I believe to be the key to our future economic strength and moral integrity. And the underlying mission of the TRHT enterprise, to eliminate the false belief in a hierarchy of human value based on superficial physical characteristics such as skin color and facial features, is absolutely crucial to creating such a future—a future of which we all can be proud.

The generosity of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) in devoting this issue of its journal to the TRHT effort is a huge step toward that future and is in keeping with AAC&U’s commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity. Not only is AAC&U a valuable TRHT partner, it also was a valuable partner during my time on President Clinton’s Advisory Board on Race, leading the way on one of the Advisory Board’s key initiatives—a campus week of dialogue on race in which, thanks in great part to AAC&U’s efforts, more than six hundred college campuses participated and thousands of students were exposed to perspectives they had not previously understood.

With this issue of Liberal Education, AAC&U is opening the door for the TRHT message, that we must learn to see ourselves in each other, to be heard by the most important and valuable audience—our future leaders and their teachers. The information and insights presented in the various articles will encourage and inspire students, faculty, and administrators to become engaged in meaningful ways in this vital effort. This will speed the journey to our destination, a society in which we cherish the differences that make each individual unique and embrace the many ways in which we are all alike and that bind us together in our common humanity.

With support from partners like AAC&U, we will succeed, we will all be better for it, and our children and grandchildren and those yet unborn will reap the greatest rewards.

WILLIAM F. WINTER served as governor of Mississippi from 1980 to 1984.
The Time for Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Is Now

A few months after Michael Brown was slain by a white police officer, a young African American woman from Ferguson, Missouri, spoke to civil rights leaders about the pain and suffering her community endured from the discriminatory practices emanating from the police and the courts. Bringing tears to the eyes of some attendees at that Washington, DC, meeting, she recalled the marches, sit-ins, and demonstrations led and organized by the city’s youth. She declared, “We are prepared to die because we have nothing to lose.”

Our nation has experienced a prolonged period marked by abusive police and civilian actions that have taken the lives of people of color and, at times, unleashed an equally revolting backlash against law enforcement officers. Young people around the country, such as this courageous woman, are spurring a drive for change, emerging as strident catalysts for an activism that is aimed squarely at the hierarchy of human value and the legacy of racism in America.

Throughout our nation’s history, young activists, college students, and higher education institutions have played prominent roles in the struggle for racial equity. Students and colleges and universities were the backbone of the civil rights movement, as whites joined with blacks to protest the remnants of the Jim Crow era and pave the way to the end of legalized public discrimination. Young people such as the Cherokee activist Rebecca Adamson helped fuel the American Indian Movement that resulted in the 1975 Indian Education and Self-Determination Act. A young Cesar Chavez urged Mexican Americans to register and vote, and was a leading advocate for workers’ rights.

Young people, students, educators, and others from diverse backgrounds will have opportunities to join the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise, which is honing strategies to help communities embrace racial healing and to uproot the belief, conscious and unconscious, in a hierarchy of human value and the structural inequities it sustains.

History tells us that this can be a powerful alliance.

Activism and education
In February 1960, four African American students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University sat at the Woolworth’s lunch counter in Greensboro, North
Keeping barriers between people of color and education supports the hierarchy of human value

Carolina, and demanded to be served in that “whites only” space. Over the next six months, more students returned to the lunch counter, and eventually similar demonstrations spread across the South. During an eighteen-month period, more than seventy thousand people participated in protests, and more than three thousand were arrested. Then, in 1964, when the Civil Rights Act was passed by Congress, their dedication was rewarded: the new law banned discrimination in public places.

In an Atlantic article about these and other civil-rights era protests, Melinda Anderson notes that, “From its inception, the 1960s civil-rights movement was fueled by youth leaders and student activists.” As she points out, “In many cases college students were the ones leading marches, voter-registration drives, and social-justice actions. Yet in lesser known, equally defining moments, younger students of color were spearheading efforts to tackle inequalities and systemic factors that worked against them.” As an example, Anderson cites a 1963 protest during which 250,000 students in Chicago boycotted their segregated, overcrowded, and under-resourced schools. A year later, more than 450,000 black and Puerto Rican students protested conditions at segregated public schools in New York City.1

Colleges and universities themselves played a key role in the civil rights movement, giving students a foundation from which to launch their activism and the training they needed to become leaders. To be sure, academic institutions are creating the next generation of critical thinkers and strategic leaders, while grounding young adults in an expanding and inclusive narrative about historical and contemporary realities. The morals and values of generations of people of color and whites have been shaped on college campuses, where students find themselves and espouse their convictions. As Martin Luther King Jr. famously said, “The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.”

During Reconstruction, African American religious leaders and white philanthropists established schools across the South where freed slaves could be educated. But it was federal legislation that accelerated the establishment of historically black colleges and universities, or HBCUs. In the early 1890s, a law was enacted giving states that received federal higher education funding a choice: educate black students, or establish schools they can attend. Many states chose to establish HBCUs, rather than allow blacks in their white higher education institutions.

In an American RadioWorks documentary on the history of HBCUs, producer Samara Freemark reports, “Throughout the first half of the 20th century, black colleges thrived. They attracted top black students—the best and the brightest. Howard, Morehouse, Spelman, Tuskegee—these schools and others like them trained the lion’s share of the nation’s black doctors, lawyers, dentists, teachers and other professionals.” One of the heroes of that era was Julius Rosenwald, a part owner of Sears, Roebuck, and Company who donated millions of dollars to create more than 5,300 schools in the South and Southeast that educated black children. He had befriended Booker T. Washington, who urged him to support the education of black children. Rosenwald’s charity also provided fellowships that assisted black artists, writers, and intellectuals, such as Langston Hughes and Marian Anderson.

Still, progress was slow in coming; keeping barriers between people of color and education supports the hierarchy of human value.

In an interview about his recent book, Higher Education and the Civil Rights Movement: White Supremacy, Black Southerners, and College Campuses, Peter Wallenstein discusses the slow and reluctant integration of college campuses across the South. In contrast to the small handful of infamous cases marked by violent resistance are what Wallenstein describes as “the dozens of moments at other schools, where the first black enrollment took place in grudging silence, as did various other breakthroughs on the way to full inclusion in the institutional life of the place.”

Racial healing

Today, a new coalition—comprising millennials and older adults, philanthropy and higher education—is poised to become a critical component of the TRHT enterprise as it sets sail on the arduous journey to heal and transform America. The goal of TRHT is to put racism behind us. Our nation can no longer embrace it consciously or unconsciously. We do not want it to continue shaping our narratives or our communities, our economy or our democracy.

Promisingly, recent polling data demonstrate a palpable desire for a positive change in our society regarding racism. A polling analysis
conducted by the Kellogg Foundation in conjunction the Northeastern University School of Journalism found that a majority of whites now acknowledge that racism still exists and that it creates structural biases, as in the criminal justice system. Furthermore, a majority of Americans believe that more needs to be done to eliminate racism. In a poll conducted last year, 53 percent of whites said that more changes are needed to give blacks equal rights with whites, up from just 39 percent a year earlier. These findings underscore that now is the time for the TRHT enterprise.

We are prioritizing expansive and inclusive, community-based healing activities and policy designs that can change collective community narratives and broaden the understanding that Americans have of their diverse experiences. We are partnering with more than a hundred national and local organizations to hold public events focused on the consequences of racial inequity and to create more equitable opportunities. Together, civic, religious, philanthropic, corporate, civil rights, and government leaders will create ways to hold local communities and the nation as a whole accountable and monitor progress.

For too long, racial bias has been part of the American fabric. The United States has made strides in addressing racism, as when slavery was abolished, during the era of Reconstruction, through the civil rights movement, and with the election and reelection of Barack Obama as the first African American president. But these represent brief episodes in our nation’s long history.

Through statutes and rulings ranging from the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 to Brown v. Board of Education and the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, Congress and the courts have sought to end public discrimination, while purportedly providing equal opportunities. But the scope and reach of government are severely limited. Laws and court rulings have not changed hearts, minds, and souls. They have not brought racial healing to communities, nor have they jettisoned the belief in a hierarchy of human value that discriminates based on superficial physical characteristics such as skin color, facial features, and hair texture or on the basis of tribal status. Thus, racism still affects children, families, and communities. This includes the colonial dynamics that have robbed American Indians, Alaska Natives, and peoples of the US territories of their land, usurped their sovereignty, destroyed languages, and destroyed families by removing generations of children to boarding schools and forcing children into transracial adoption. In 2016, most of the children born in the United States are children of color. They deserve to grow up in a country that has truly overcome that historic taxonomy of human value, the belief in a hierarchy of worth that would relegate them to a lesser place in society and deny them opportunities for realizing their full potential. Racial healing activities help generate the public will among individuals and communities to unite and work together to create more equitable opportunities and life outcomes for all. Much work remains to be done in order to uproot the legacy of racial hierarchy and ensure that all children have the nurturing and resources they need.

Residential segregation must be addressed and reversed, because it often concentrates poverty, under-resourced schools, and many other factors that negatively affect child development. Safety and crime control are of paramount importance, too, given the associated trauma and adversity to which too many young children of color are exposed. Moreover, the epidemic of racialized mass incarceration is leaving indelible scars in economic and family structures for far too many children today. But none of these issues can be effectively addressed without linking them to the systemic and historical dynamics of racial hierarchy and the denial of human value.

Vivian Malone, one of the first African Americans to attend the University of Alabama, enters Foster Auditorium to register for classes, 1963.
This will be one of the objectives of the TRHT enterprise.

The Kellogg Foundation has given TRHT a strong base from which to move forward. Over the last nine years, the nation’s sixth largest private foundation invested more than $200 million in organizations that are working to heal racial divides and eradicate structural bias in their communities. These racial-equity and racial-healing investments and grants have generated insight into the mechanisms of unconscious bias and demonstrated both the power of narrative to shape perceptions and the efficacy of healing-circle methodologies in building trust and relationships, while also helping alleviate internalized racial anxiety, adversity, and stress.

The tools and mechanisms developed through these experiences can now be leveraged to design an appropriate racial healing process for the nation. The TRHT approach to racial healing is inclusive. By focusing on our humanity, the approach engages many diverse communities: Native American, Latino, Asian American, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, African American, Arab American, and white. The racial healing process is engaging all these groups within local communities across the nation and developing the capacity to embrace individual and collective humanity. Healing experiences will not emphasize victims or perpetrators, but will be designed as a way to change deeply held beliefs and to address their larger consequences.

Across the world, truth and reconciliation commissions are well known, having been implemented more than forty times. But TRHT is focusing less on reconciliation and much more on healing and transformation. To reconcile connotes the restoration of friendly relations—“reuniting” or “bringing together again” after conflict. But the United States needs transformation. The collective national consciousness was formed by belief in racial hierarchy, a belief that has dominated the educational, economic, social, and legal discourse for centuries. TRHT will seek to build the collective commitment and long-term determination needed to embrace a new national narrative, one rooted in belief in the equal humanity of all Americans.

Guiding principles

Drawing from other efforts to foster change and healing in communities and nations around the world, we developed the following seven principles to guide our effort.

1. There must be an accurate recounting of history, both local and national. In words often attributed to the late conservative commentator William F. Buckley Jr., “History is the polemics of the victor.” Consistent with this observation, our history has been written largely by the dominant groups in our society and in our communities in order to serve their particular interests. Negative or embarrassing events, particularly those involving the oppression of non-dominant groups, have too often been suppressed or conveniently forgotten in the retelling of history. Thus, a common prerequisite to an effective and enduring effort to achieve racial equity and healing is full and accurate knowledge of the role racism has played in the evolution of communities. Residents must be aware of this history in order to confront it and understand its relevance to contemporary community issues.

In this process, an atmosphere of forgiveness must be cultivated, and people of all racial, ethnic, and ancestral backgrounds must be encouraged to tell their stories without fear of recrimination, but with a sense that justice will be served. Stories help reveal the common humanity of both the oppressed and the oppressors, and they provide a solid foundation on which to proceed toward justice and healing. Moreover, there must be a recognition that a community’s history occurs in the context of the broader history of the nation. Thus, there must be an ongoing effort to insist that our institutions—especially our schools, the media, and the business and faith communities—help the broader public see a more accurate and complete picture of our national history.

2. A clear and compelling vision, accompanied by a set of ambitious but achievable goals, both long term and short term, must be developed, and progress must be regularly assessed.

For true racial healing to occur and endure, we must have a clear and compelling vision of where we want our journey to lead us and, in specific terms, what success will look like. Along the way, there must be measurable and achievable goals. As each goal is achieved, momentum for success will build. Because all wrongs cannot be corrected at once, there should be an effort to focus
on what people can, in figurative terms, achieve given their own constraints in navigating their daily lives. Achievement of each goal will represent a milestone, pushing the process forward and inspiring more people to join the journey.

Dismantling structural racism and healing our divisions will be a lengthy and often frustrating process. Racist policies that are deeply embedded in our institutions will not be easily altered, and racial wounds that have been festering for centuries will not be excised overnight. But even though progress often can be slow and painful, each step along the way will help build a more stable and enduring foundation for the next step.

Over the last ten years, the Kellogg Foundation’s investments in communities have demonstrated that today’s advanced technology enables innovative approaches to measuring progress, such as deploying web-based individual and institutional assessments of biased attitudes and practices. Web-based implicit association and bias tests are being widely used by public, private, and nonprofit organizations and by consumers directly. The Intercultural Development Inventory, a well-researched and validated assessment tool, is an example of a technology tool or measurement resource for tracking individual as well as organizational growth and change. Since healing work is grounded in efforts to build relationships and expand connections, the research tools for network mapping are being used to document tangible changes within communities.

For instance, the Kellogg Foundation was a funder and active partner in the Peer Action Learning Network, a collaborative effort led by the Council of Michigan Foundations that assisted organizations in developing and refining their intercultural competencies. One tool used was the Intercultural Development Inventory. Through various online and face-to-face exercises, individual, group, and organizational orientations were identified as denial, polarization (defense or reversal), minimization, acceptance, adaptation, or cultural disengagement. With this information, organizations can better move forward to effect change within their diverse teams and multicultural contexts.

Today, meaningful changes in the nature and strength of networks and cross-racial relationships are being tracked and measured. Activists can achieve, document, and disseminate immediate legislative or litigation victories. As we have seen in recent years, people can provide video documentation and leverage social media to both reveal and quantify actions.

Often, racial and ethnic divisions are due to unintended slights and insults that arise out of ignorance or fears of different cultures and perspectives or from implicit bias.
We must come to understand that substantial and enduring progress toward racial equity and healing benefits all of us.

Electronic databases, powerful search engines, and new polling technologies can now be used to monitor public narratives and discourse as well as attitudes and behaviors in real time.

3. The process must be expansive and inclusive in all respects, and there must be a deep and unyielding commitment to (a) understanding the different cultures, experiences, and perspectives that coexist in a community; (b) recognizing and acknowledging the interdependence of the variety of approaches to seeking enduring racial equity; (c) reaching out to nontraditional allies in order to broaden support for meaningful change; and (d) giving every participant an opportunity to tell his or her story in a respectful and supportive setting. Especially as immigration and birth rates, among other contributing factors, are dramatically changing the demographics of the nation and of our communities, we must work at including all the diverse populations of a community and understanding the different cultures, experiences, and perspectives that are a growing part of so many communities. Often, racial and ethnic divisions are due to unintended slights and insults that arise out of ignorance or fears of different cultures and perspectives or from levels of implicit bias that are a product of our history and that plague virtually every person in our society. An essential element of achieving racial and ethnic equity is a better understanding of these differences.

Although the entire community need not be involved, the involvement of a broad cross-section of the community is essential to obtain the engagement and support of a critical mass of the public and to effect meaningful and enduring change. This means engaging all the key institutions—including schools, colleges and universities, business and labor, the media, faith communities, government, and law enforcement. Furthermore, there must be definable and significant roles for the leaders of each of these institutions so that they will feel a sense of ownership of both the process and the vision.

Government support can be extremely helpful in engaging the community; however, it is vitally important that decision making not be constrained by political considerations. Grassroots organizations must be active partners in all activities, because of the wisdom and passion they possess. They must be constantly vigilant to ensure that institutional leaders do not seek to derail the process when the journey hits the inevitable potholes in the road. Because resources usually are scarce, partnerships can help sustain activities. Such partnerships must, however, be built on mutual self-interest, and it is important to recognize and address differing organizational cultures and power dynamics within the community.

4. The process of healing requires the building of trust and must be viewed as a “win-win” process. Often, people equate justice with revenge and punishment. While this is understandable—especially in view of particularly egregious past oppressions—divisive rhetoric, blaming, and adversarial proceedings such as lawsuits are not likely to produce an atmosphere that is conducive to constructive change, healing, and transformation. Ultimately, we all share a common fate. We must come to understand that substantial and enduring progress toward racial equity and healing benefits all of us. Therefore, a more productive process, one in which everyone feels acknowledged, is to give everyone, both the oppressed and the oppressors, an opportunity to tell their stories and share the various emotions—anger, rage, pain, fear, frustration—that have animated their behavior. The only requirement is that everyone must tell his or her story with deep integrity and listen with respect to the stories of others.

Here, also, an analysis of the costs of racism to the entire community and the benefits of eradicating it can help create a more positive atmosphere and deepen our understanding that our destinies are tied together. This process is essential to building a deep level of trust, which, in turn, is essential to working effectively for change. Being intentional and up front about one’s goals and why they are important helps establish one’s integrity and, thus, is a crucial element of building trust.

5. There must be a commitment to some form of reparative or restorative justice and to policies that can effectively foster systemic change. Just as an atmosphere of revenge and punishment would not be conducive to healing, neither would empty rhetoric without action to ameliorate the consequences of past wrongs suffice. Those in a position to act must be willing, even anxious, to be held accountable, to promote meaningful and systemic change in order to overcome the pain that often is...
associated with past wrongs, and to work to establish an atmosphere of mutual trust.

Elected officials at every level of government, from the municipal level to the federal level, must be prepared to explore options, enact policies, and adequately fund activities that will help bridge racial divisions and narrow disparities in educational achievement, economic security, the administration of justice, and access to affordable and quality housing and health care.

6. A thoughtful and comprehensive communications strategy must be designed to keep the entire community informed, even those who are neither involved in, nor supportive of, the process. Openness and transparency are essential to give people confidence that they are receiving an accurate picture of the process. These qualities also help build trust in the process. Even opponents can eventually be engaged if they see that the process is open and that blame and shame are eschewed in favor of recognizing the potential for a “win-win” outcome. Major events, like town hall meetings, and smaller events, like joint worship services, along with an aggressive media campaign, school programs, and blogs that give all residents a chance to express their views in an atmosphere of safety are among the ways to keep the community informed and to build support for public policies and other actions to combat institutional practices that have racist ramifications.

7. There must be a broadly understood way of dealing with the tensions that inevitably will arise. This need not be complicated, but it is necessary to build trust and to keep the process from being sidetracked by the tensions of the moment. Here again, a complete understanding of our shared fate is critical. In this context, tensions can be turned into “aha” moments of in-depth learning and significant progress that can strengthen trust among participants in the process. It may be difficult, in the face of frequent crises, to stay strategically focused on key goals. Yet, if organizations prepare in advance to take advantage of so-called “teachable moments,” crises can serve as valuable opportunities for learning and for advancing key goals.

What’s clear is that America must finish the unfinished business of racism. We cannot just acknowledge recent tragedies or merely use them to raise awareness of the problem; we must heal the root cause of the problem. Americans can come together and change our attitudes and beliefs. We can hold each other accountable and begin the hard work of racial healing in our homes, schools, media, neighborhoods, and places of worship. The healing process must include all races and all social and economic classes. There must be a solemn commitment to this work; to unifying our nation; to rejecting racism; to finding strength, not resentment, in our differences. Our children and our collective future are at stake.

The TRHT enterprise provides America with an opportunity to become a world leader in racial healing. There’s an urgency to address this issue today. Changing demographics demand that something be done: most children in the near future will be kids of color, and too many will live in poverty. This creates an imperative for the nation to change the future now. We cannot wait another hundred years.

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NOTES
2. Martin Luther King, Jr., from The Maroon Tiger, Morehouse University, January-February, 1947.
REWIRITING THE DOMINANT NARRATIVE

How Liberal Education Can Advance Racial Healing and Transformation

LYNN PASQUERELLA

NOT SO LONG AGO, institutes for new college and university presidents focused on offering advice regarding how to prioritize and handle sticky matters in a full inbox, enumerating tips on fundraising, and outlining tactics for working effectively with boards, especially when they include “rogue trustees.” These days the primary focus is often on how to ensure that your institution doesn’t end up as next year’s case study. This is understandable given the seemingly endless stream of stories in the media over the past few years addressing campus culture, freedom of expression, and whether liberalism is killing liberal education. The recent discourse around higher education has been dominated by accusations of rampant political correctness, student coddling, and groupthink in the midst of protests demanding that college and university administrators be held accountable for participation in, and the perpetuation of, racist, classist, sexist, and heteronormative structures of oppression.

College presidents today are attempting to navigate a perilous course among the sometimes competing demands of different constituencies. They must demonstrate their commitments to shared governance, transparency, and collaboration by listening to all campus voices; address their board members’ concerns about financial and reputational risks for their institutions as a matter of fiduciary responsibility; and respond to alumni who are rethinking their bequests and annual giving as a matter of principle in response to what they regard as capitulation to social justice warriors and left-wing ideological repression. Such alumni insist that all of this acquiescence is at the expense of academic rigor and the real-world preparation they endured, and now relish.

Like columnist George Will, this group views today’s college students as the “snowflake generation” who “melt at the mere mention of even a potential abrasion of their sensibilities.” Will began popularizing the expression “student snowflakes” upon entering the newly formed club of the disinvited—those whose invitations to speak on college campuses were rescinded, or who themselves withdrew, out of concern for their safety and that of others. The first invited speaker at an annual banquet of the club, Mr. Will has railed vociferously against what he perceives as demands for freedom from speech, rather than freedom of speech. These student escapades are done in the name of diversity, he quips, “But of course only diversity that is consistent with the students’ capacious sense of the intolerable.”

So how are we to decide what rises to the level of the intolerable on college campuses equally committed to the free exchange of ideas and to safeguarding an environment against hostility? Moreover, who should determine the appropriate response to such transgressions? These issues are becoming increasingly complex, even when arising in spaces devoted to careful and robust analysis and discourse. For instance, how should a college
A liberal education advances the art of listening as a catalyst for moral imagination

As a philosopher who has taught courses on race, gender, and the law for more than two decades, I have engaged hundreds of students, colleagues, and community members in debates concerning issues that include the renaming of campus buildings, the removal of monuments and flags that both symbolize and pay tribute to the legacies of slavery, the permissibility of accepting funding from controversial donors, and the legitimacy of email messages regarding Halloween costumes and chalkings in support of political candidates. These debates, interesting in and of themselves, nevertheless take on particular significance for me as the president of an association whose mission is to make liberal education and inclusive excellence the foundation for institutional purpose and educational practice.

Liberal education, moral imagination, and the art of listening

The very notion of a liberal education was founded on the premise that to be effective in the pursuit of truth, one’s mind must be “liberated” from the habits of routinized thinking. A liberal education invites a diversity of perspectives and provides students with the skills necessary to examine their own assumptions and those of others; to propose, construct, and evaluate arguments; to anticipate and respond to objections; and to articulate with precision, coherence, and clarity a defense of their views, orally and in writing, to those who need convincing.

Yet, a liberal education plays another role, as well: it advances the art of listening as a catalyst for moral imagination. Anna Devere Smith, founder and director of Harvard’s Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue, uses documentary theater to demonstrate this capacity while confronting some of the most pressing social issues of the day. In her linguistic ethnography and one-woman show “Talk to Me: Listening Between the Lines,” Smith places herself in “other people’s words” in the way that one might place oneself in another’s shoes. Her objective has been to “reignite our collective imagination about what it’s like to be the ‘other person’” and to “show the empathetic soul of American identities whose words wait and create change.” In a riff on John Cage’s notion that “we only hear what we listen for,” Smith insists that, “If there is any hope for us, it lies in relearning to tell the truth and hear it, in reclaiming ourselves as a listening space.”

I can still remember the exact moment at which the importance of the practice of listening came to life for me through my own undergraduate experience. It was a sunny, September day, and as light streamed through the windows of our second-floor seminar room overlooking the campus green, I waited with great anticipation for the start of a comparative religion class being offered by my favorite professor and two colleagues from different institutions. The new course was designed to explore in tandem the philosophies of Frederick Douglass, St. Augustine, and the Bhagavad Gita.

Soon after my professor walked through the door, however, my excitement turned to dread as he issued an edict that struck fear in the heart of every student. No one, he said, would be allowed to take notes in the class. Looking out at a cohort of puzzled faces, our teacher explained
that he wanted to give us a glimpse of what it was like for enslaved African Americans, who were prevented from learning to read or write, to be forced to recollect and recount their experiences through oral traditions. By the end of the class, through the exercise of moral imagination, I came to understand what it means to have one's imagination reignited about the other person.

I also discovered something equally valuable that semester, namely that the conclusions we draw regarding whether arguments, demands, and assertions are rational and warranted depends, in part, on whose stories are being told and who is doing the speaking. Today, when protestors in the Black Lives Matter Movement on college campuses and in the streets in cities and towns across the nation carry signs and shout through megaphones, “Tell me what democracy looks like. This is what democracy looks like,” they are enjoining us to engage in critical listening and moral imagination with respect to their lived experiences as told in their own voices.

The words that echo are contesting the dominant progress narrative, which positions the election of the first self-identified African American president as evidence in support of the rhetoric that we are living in a post-racial era. The story the protesters want heard constitutes a counternarrative containing an indictment against a democracy in which the terms “black” and “citizen” are incompatible. It is a chronicle that highlights author Toni Morrison’s dictum that “Americanness definitionally means whiteness” and foregrounds the sentiments behind the words of the protagonist in Ralph Ellison’s Invisible Man, who confesses, “I denounce and defend. . . . I condemn and affirm, say no and say yes, say yes and say no. I denounce because though implicated and partially responsible, I have been hurt to the point of abysmal pain, hurt to the point of invisibility. And I defend because in spite of it all I find love.”

None of our students arrive on our campuses devoid of past experiences, pain, and suffering that inform their worldviews. The academy is no longer a pastoral retreat reserved for those who can afford to embark on study within an enclave that has traditionally functioned as a willful disconnect from the practical matters of everyday life. The world outside the gates of academia is brought home to our students with the click of an app or the swipe of a smart phone, and it is a world filled with images and happenings that inevitably incite distress and despair that intrude on detached critical reflection.

In response and reaction to a parade of traumatic events, the communities that come together in acts of healing are often homogeneous, and the identity politics at play have themselves been the subject of criticism for their reifying and essentializing contingencies of birth in ways that further divide us. I am convinced, nonetheless, that these expressions and performances of identity have the ability to transcend their potential alienating effects and in-group connotations, functioning to promote a broader cultural understanding. Yet, this is possible only if we engage in the difficult task of listening critically to one another, waiting
Our overriding objective is to engage communities in racial healing by destabilizing the persistent structures of racism, including those in higher education.

A liberal education provides students with the skills necessary to discern that the ways in which messages that are conveyed and interpreted on college and university campuses—whether contained in cartoons, posted on the Internet, shouted in protest chants, or embedded in calls for civility—themselves constitute political acts worthy of interrogation. But a liberal education does much more; it offers engagement with the capabilities needed for reconciliation, especially fostering the disposition necessary to imagine that some of one’s most fundamentally held beliefs might actually be mistaken.

The role of higher education in Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation

The Association of American Colleges and Universities’ partnership with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation enterprise is a call to action, a call to step up and lead for equity by creating a paradigm shift in the thinking of Americans around race. Through a consideration of the question of what America will look like once our belief in a hierarchy of human value has been jettisoned, our overriding objective is to engage communities in racial healing by destabilizing the persistent structures of racism, including those in higher education.

AAC&U and the Kellogg Foundation know that colleges and universities can and must play a unique role in contesting the status quo by ensuring that our communities are not only aware of the historical context of exclusionary practices at all levels of education, but also fully comprehend the impact of these practices. Now is the time for all colleges and universities to promote values initiatives on their individual campuses and to stand together with one another and with the extramural communities most directly affected by racial inequity. Redressing past and present injustices mandates aligning our expertise as teachers, scholars, researchers, and artists in order to rewrite the dominant narrative that consigns to the lower shelves of history the contributions of marginalized groups that have shaped American society and culture in profound, albeit often unacknowledged, ways.

Faculty must be at the center of this work, integrating the curricular and cocurricular, and identifying short- and long-term strategies. In addition, administrators must ensure that the type of humanities practice required by this effort is genuinely valued and not undermined by institutional practices that prioritize publications in peer-reviewed journals above all else. Systems of reward for faculty, including the awarding of tenure and promotion, must take seriously service that involves the mentoring of students through advising, community-based learning, and participatory action planning within marginalized communities. In the process, we must reclaim our own narrative about the transformative power of liberal education as a tool for social progress and why it matters more than ever.

Far from snowflakes melting into oblivion when things heat up, this generation of students is engaged in a new era of justice-seeking activities. They want to make a difference in the world through a reinvigorated collectivity, and if we fail to help them connect their education to broader societal issues in ways that inspire them to lead change in a society still challenged by profound inequities, we abnegate our responsibilities to promote engaged citizenship, cultural empathy,
pluralism, and diversity as the foundation for our nation’s historic mission of educating for democracy.

Despite the gravity and breadth of the real issues facing us, much of what the media highlights these days is full of red herrings. The headlines broadcast a new lexicon of words and phrases emerging over the past half-decade that includes “safe spaces,” “trigger warnings,” “microaggressions,” and “cultural appropriation,” with calls for “civility” and accusations of “divisiveness” posited as attempts to chill speech. The press reports on the handiwork of roving strangers, with targeted agendas, who troll websites and offer resources on how to construct sets of nonnegotiable demands and solicit electronic votes of no confidence, as actions on one campus communicated through YouTube, Reddit, Instagram, and Facebook instantaneously spark protest activity in solidarity with those at colleges and universities across the nation. Add to the mix the fact that commentary in anonymous online forums, at times, blurs the line between profound offense and genuine threats of harm, and one gains new perspective on the reasons certain presidents on the front pages of newspapers and magazines might feel the need to build much-ridiculed “escape doors” and barricade fences.

Instead of focusing on the sensationalist extreme and passing it off as the norm, the mainstream press should start drawing attention to the most serious issues in higher education. They should expose the realities that underlie the growing economic segregation in higher education; the burgeoning attainment and achievement gaps; and the inequities in college readiness, access to resource-rich institutions, and spending per student. They should showcase the lack of social and cultural capital possessed by students of color and first-generation college students that challenges their graduation and completion. They should investigate the rates at which students of color are removed from the classroom for disciplinary problems, suspended from school, subject to over-surveillance, and incarcerated. And they should examine how each of these phenomena contributes to the equity divide that threatens to further undermine America’s promise.

At the end of James Baldwin’s stirring collection of essays *The Fire Next Time*, he writes these words of optimism and hope to his nephew: “Everything now, we must assume, is in our hands; we have no right to assume otherwise. If we—and now I mean the relatively conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks, who must, like lovers, insist on, or create, the consciousness of the others—do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world.”

Jesmyn Ward’s new edited volume of essays on race, redemption, and reconciliation, *The Fire This Time*, pays tribute to Baldwin, illustrating the extent to which the past is interwoven with the present and revealing that Baldwin’s words are more relevant in American life today than ever. Indeed, as bold now as they were when he wrote them in 1962, Baldwin’s words reflect the motivation behind AAC&U’s partnership with the Kellogg Foundation on Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation. Together, we seek to jettison the structures and systems that have been erected upon the egregious foundational belief in a racial hierarchy; together we can forge lasting change.

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2. Ibid.
The ongoing importance of racial healing is rooted in a recognition of America’s fundamental flaw.

Learning facilities and libraries and to help recruit better teachers.

As time went on, however, Kellogg Foundation leaders recognized that an escalating number of poor children lived in urban settings, that many were minorities, and that the foundation needed to make major adjustments in staffing and programming in order to meet their needs. As a result, the foundation began expanding its programming to include a focus on both rural and urban settings and began contemplating the concept of who was disadvantaged.

Still, the foundation’s focus has always been on helping all children thrive. How has that equated with the substantial work on racial equity over the decades?

In seeking to help vulnerable children—those in the greatest poverty, a disproportionate number of whom were children of color—the foundation came to recognize racism as one of the chief reasons these children were in poverty. On this basis alone, deepening the foundation’s efforts on racial equity made perfect sense. Today, racial equity is a key point of emphasis and a driving force in all areas of grantmaking at the foundation.

Key initiatives
Twenty-two years before the White House launched the My Brother’s Keeper initiative to address obstacles faced by young men of color, the Kellogg Foundation recognized their limited opportunities for success. In 1992, the foundation launched its broad African American Men and Boys Initiative, investing $15 million in thirty-two projects. As part of the initiative, which included funding for organizations that worked with youths on reducing crime, violence, and drugs in their communities, the foundation funded the National Task Force on African
American Men and Boys. The task force publicly raised the alarm about the challenges faced by this demographic and issued recommendations aimed at reviving families and communities that had long been neglected in urban areas of the country. The task force’s report has been heralded as a blueprint for how to provide opportunities to minority youths.1

The initiative was also significant because it altered how the foundation engaged with its grantees. Whereas, previously, grants were conferred largely on universities, medical centers, and other mainstream institutions, the African American Men and Boys Initiative ushered in a new era in which the foundation empowers community and civic organizations, bringing resources much closer to the people and communities in need of help. Suddenly, storefront non-profits, faith-based organizations, and other nontraditional grantees were working together with established institutions to solve community problems. These unions stimulated and challenged the grantees, and they led to the development of a new partnership model for having an impact on communities and children.

Since the early 1990s, the Kellogg Foundation has also funded Rites of Passage programs in urban areas. These programs empower minority youths by exposing them to role models and through the discovery and discussion of history, culture, and the political forces surrounding them. The program sites establish partnerships with public secondary schools to develop gender-specific programs. One of the leading programs is led by Brotherhood/Sister Sol, a Harlem-based nonprofit organization. In New York City, almost half of all black men are unemployed; yet, 95 percent of Brotherhood/Sister Sol alumni—all of whom are African American or Latino—are either working full time or enrolled in college.

Through the Community Voices program, the foundation leveraged lessons from earlier work and other programming in order to develop multifaceted systemic models for addressing pressing issues related to the health of young men of color, especially the formerly incarcerated who struggle to adjust to family and community after spending time in prison. In the late 1990s, safety-net programs in public health departments, hospitals, and community clinics strained to provide care for the growing number of uninsured. Community Voices coalitions in thirteen communities worked with residents to find solutions and implemented cutting-edge system adaptations to expand healthcare for those who needed it most.

In 1995, to help enroll more Native Americans in college, the foundation launched the Native American Higher Education Initiative, creating partnerships with thirty tribal colleges and more than seventy-five mainstream higher education institutions as well as national and community organizations. The goal was to provide greater access to higher education for Native Americans, while also integrating tribal cultural values into rigorous academic curricula. Similarly, the foundation improved educational opportunities for Hispanics through its ENLACE (Engaging Latino Communities in Education) program, which was launched in 1997. Through the program, higher learning institutions in seven states partnered with K-12 schools and community organizations to form support groups for Latino students.

Over the years, the foundation had largely funded institutions and community organizations that address economic and social conditions that limit opportunities for vulnerable children to thrive. But left out of the equation was scrutiny of the impact of public policy in such areas as health, criminal justice, housing, and employment. The foundation changed that formula when, in 2005, it funded the work of the Dellums Commission. Led by former Congressman Ron Dellums, this commission of influential scholars, public officials, and civic leaders from around the country issued a comprehensive report on public policies that were having a negative impact on young men and boys of color.2

The commission noted, for instance, that prison incarceration rates shot up in the 1980s, when youth offenders were increasingly diverted to adult criminal systems and municipalities abandoned rehabilitation and treatment for drug users in favor of interdiction and criminal sanctions. The commission also noted that school dropout rates grew with the implementation of “zero tolerance” policies in schools, and the commissioners found a decline in the number of young men of color enrolled in postsecondary education. The commission’s recommendations for changing course led almost immediately to a series of direct actions that addressed the wayward policies.

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A defining moment

Nine years ago came a defining moment for the Kellogg Foundation. In 2007, talk of a “post-racial” society was spreading in the United States, yet many communities were actually mired in strife related to racism. Six African American boys were sentenced to life in prison for an assault on a white student in Jena, Louisiana—a sentence widely viewed as racially motivated. Moreover, the US census had revealed stark educational disparities: 91 percent of white adults had high school degrees, as compared to 83 percent of blacks and 60 percent of Hispanics. The FBI reported 7,624 hate crime incidents that year; 52 percent of the victims were targeted because of the color of their skin.

In considering this environment, as well as reports from grantees on the ground in communities across the country, the foundation’s board of trustees saw troubled waters ahead, especially for vulnerable children. In this highly charged and racialized environment, and at a time when discrimination and injustice were so apparent, how could the nation ensure opportunities for all children to thrive? In fact, the time was approaching when the majority of children in the United States would be children of color, further underlining the need to address the barriers to education, employment, health, and housing created by structural racism.

The board of trustees took a bold step. In 1930, Will Keith Kellogg wrote the articles of association for his foundation, defining the mission as “promotion of the health, education, and welfare . . . principally of children and youth . . . without regard to sex, race, creed, or nationality.” Some seventy-seven years later, the board reaffirmed those principles, declaring in September 2007 that the foundation would be “an effective antiracist organization that promotes racial equity.” This language unequivocally positioned the foundation as an advocate and facilitator of racial equity in communities across the country. With this very public statement, the foundation as an advocate and facilitator of racial equity in communities across the country. With this very public statement, the foundation continued its founder’s path, establishing a framework for healing racial divides in local communities and focusing on the conscious and unconscious bias that limits opportunities for children, especially children of color.

More directly, the trustees unleashed the foundation to develop comprehensive programmatic approaches to addressing racism, including trying to heal perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes. Taking on challenges that have escaped resolution for centuries, the trustees tasked foundation leaders with engaging communities in the difficult work of countering the full scope of racism—the anxieties, fears, and long-held mythologies and misbeliefs that have triggered racial violence and tension in American society.

The impact was swift in coming. By 2011, the percentage of WKKF grantees that served minorities had jumped from 20 percent to 88 percent. In addition, the foundation developed a walk-the-talk mentality, building up its own credibility and becoming an even better partner for its community-based grantees. Over the past decade, the foundation’s leadership has changed dramatically. Currently, 53 percent of the executives are people of color, as compared to just 18 percent ten years ago. The trustees have gone from 44 percent people of color ten years ago to 56 percent in 2015. Today, the foundation’s chief executive officer and president is African American, and the board chair is Hispanic.

Racial healing

In 2010, the foundation launched America Healing, a five-year initiative designed to expose structural inequities in communities, redress them, and then help communities heal racial wounds. The strategy was to lift up racial healing so communities could move toward racial equity, while also dismantling the structures that limit opportunities for vulnerable children.

The ongoing importance of racial healing is rooted in a recognition of America’s fundamental flaw, namely, the foundational belief in a hierarchy of human value that places whites at the top and people of color at the bottom of the social and economic ladder. Our nation was built on this fallacy, and the majority has clung to it, even though it sharply contradicts the notion of equality that we are supposed to embrace. The foundation continues the work of countering this fallacy of racial hierarchy by funding innovative research and by working with communities and grantees to disprove stereotypes and create opportunities that will allow children to enjoy a better future.

Through the America Healing initiative, the foundation supported the Little Black Pearl Art and Design Academy, which gives urban students in Chicago a community-based arts and entrepreneurship option within traditional
education. It also sponsored pioneering research on the effects unconscious bias has on people of color as well as research on what motivates the behavior of police officers toward people of color. The initiative provided support for the Advancement Project’s work with the US Departments of Education and Justice to shape new guidelines for school discipline in order to reduce the disproportionate number of black and Latino children suspended from public schools. In 2013, together with the Altarum Institute, the foundation released *The Business Case for Racial Equity*, a study that quantifies the cost of racism in the United States and outlines the financial benefits of ending racial bias.

In 2014, the America Healing initiative released the results of a national survey focused on the Latino experience in the United States. The survey found that Latinos, ranging from new immigrants to longtime US citizens, are keenly aware of discrimination and inequities, but they remain optimistic about their future—particularly with respect to such factors as economic conditions, personal health status, and the quality of public education for their children.

Further, the America Healing initiative organized and provided funds to the leaders of civil rights organizations representing various races and ethnicities. Representatives of these “anchor” organizations—including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Council of La Raza, the Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum, the National Urban League, Race Forward, and the National Congress of American Indians—met quarterly to strategize about how to dismantle structural racism in America. While some of the anchor organizations had been seen as competitors, both for attention and fundraising, they began working together more frequently. A defining moment came when the anchors issued a joint statement condemning a 2012 attack on a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, that killed six people and wounded four others.

In 2014, the Kellogg Foundation participated in President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper initiative, which formed a powerful coalition to create broader opportunities for young men and boys of color. That summer, the foundation provided timely funding to organizations working to repair community relations with law enforcement and to facilitate racial healing after the tragic shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. The foundation was one of the initial

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- Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- W. Haywood Burns Institute
- The Center for Justice & Peacebuilding (Eastern Mennonite University)
- Center for Policing Equity
- Center for Social Inclusion
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
- College Unbound
- Color of Change
- Coming to the Table
- Common Cause
- Community Action Partnership
- Council for a Strong America
- Council of State Governments
- Council on Social Work Education
- Demos
- DiversityData.org Project
- Farmworker Justice
- First Alaskans Institute
- Futuro Media Group
- Government Alliance on Race and Equity
- Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society
- Health Equity Initiative
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life
- Initiatives of Change, USA
- International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies
- International City/County Management Association
- Jack and Jill of America
- Jobs With Justice
- Kellogg Fellows Leadership Alliance
- Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity
- Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance
- Little Black Pearl Art and Design Center
- Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
- MACRO Ventures
- Maine Wabanaki-State Child Welfare Truth & Reconciliation Commission
partners in the Executive Alliance, a group of more than forty funders, issuing a powerful statement that urged peaceful demonstrations after a grand jury decided not to indict the Ferguson police officer who had shot Brown.

So much more can be accomplished through collaborations that bring together the intellectual power and resources of foundations, communities, government, nonprofits, and corporations in efforts to dismantle racism. The Kellogg Foundation does not seek to pulverize or to blame, but rather to envision a more holistic and inclusive future.

The next journey for the foundation is the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise. Through TRHT, the foundation will engage local communities in racial healing and seek to end inequities linked to historical and contemporary beliefs in racial hierarchy. Working with major corporations, as well as civic and community organizations, TRHT will bridge embedded divides and generate the will, capacities, and resources required to achieve greater equity in our communities.

With both large and small investments, the Kellogg Foundation has helped communities move forward toward racial equity. Indeed, the results of the work over the decades, while often unheralded, have changed, and are continuing to help transform the role that race plays in American society, and ensure a future where all children thrive.

To respond to this article, e-mail liberala@aacu.org, with the author's name on the subject line.

NOTES
3. See, for example, the work of Phillip Goff and others of the Center for Policing Equity at the University of California–Los Angeles and the work of Sharon Davies and others of the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at the Ohio State University.
Planning the Transformation

JETTISONING BELIEF in a hierarchy of human value—a belief that has been well established in America for four centuries—will require a multipronged, strategic effort to heal the racial wounds of the past and to transform our socioeconomic institutions. These two goals are intimately connected, because belief in racial hierarchy translates into values and principles that influence public, personal, and corporate practices and, thereby, perpetuate biases and inequities based on race and ethnicity.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise is designed to help communities across the United States embrace racial healing and uproot the conscious and unconscious belief in a hierarchy of human value that limits equal access to quality education, fulfilling employment, safe neighborhoods, and quality health care. The importance of addressing this belief should not be underestimated: unless the central belief that fuels racial and ethnic inequities is challenged and changed, progress cannot be sustained over time.

The Kellogg Foundation believes the stage is set for this pioneering enterprise. Repeated police and civilian killings of unarmed people of color; well-documented disparities within our educational, economic, health, and justice systems; an increasingly intolerant and divisive national discourse on immigration policy—these and related developments have created an environment in which race and ethnicity are used to fuel anxiety and fear. Transformation, not reconciliation

The TRHT enterprise is based on a review of best practices and lessons learned from truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) that have been instrumental in resolving deeply rooted conflicts around the world. By uncovering human rights violations and tragedies, and by engaging populations in a healing process, these commissions have succeeded in restoring dignity and respect and, in many instances, paving the way for societal transformation—a prevailing objective of the TRHT enterprise.

The Kellogg Foundation and its partners are using the TRC model, adapted to account for the distinctive history and conditions of the United States, to guide a comprehensive national effort to resolve the consequences of centuries of racism and structural inequity.

It’s critical that this US adaptation emphasize transformation, rather than reconciliation. The international model for bringing a country back together through reconciliation is not appropriate in the United States, where racism and the belief in a hierarchy of human value are integral to the nation’s foundational governance structures. Thus, the TRHT enterprise must be designed to transform this belief and to transform the societal structures that are supporting racism.

Thoughful and collaborative planning is essential if we are to establish a vision of what our society will look like after the belief in a hierarchy of human value has been replaced by the belief in a shared common humanity. First, we must examine how the current belief is embedded in our society, both culturally and structurally, and how it manifests in virtually every institution. Then, we must plan effective actions to uproot it permanently.

Five design teams

The initial step in the design of TRHT was to develop a deeper understanding of how to structure the enterprise. We asked ourselves, “How did the eighteenth-century idea of a hierarchy of human value become embedded and sustained as a foundational belief in the United States?”

One answer is that it became embedded in our national story. So, we know that we need to work on changing dominant cultural narratives—narratives most often told from a white, male dominant perspective. We also know that to create lasting change, we will need to promote racial healing and relationship building within and among diverse communities. Taken together, narrative change and racial healing strategies can also inform public policy in areas where racism is embedded and sustained.

With these objectives in mind, we established five design teams to guide the development of the TRHT enterprise:

• The Narrative Change Design Team is examining how to create a more complete and accurate narrative that will help people understand how racial hierarchy has been embedded in
our society from the beginning. The team is committed to utilizing all available vehicles to ensure that a more complete and accurate narrative emerges.

- **The Racial Healing and Relationship Building Design Team** is focusing on ways all of us can heal from the wounds of the past and build mutually respectful relationships across racial and ethnic lines, relationships that honor and value each person’s humanity. The team is also exploring ways to inform public policies so that they better reflect our common humanity.

- **The Separation Design Team** is examining and finding ways to address segregation, colonization, and concentrated poverty in neighborhoods.

- **The Law Design Team** is reviewing discriminatory civil, criminal, and public policies and recommending solutions that will produce a more just application of the law.

- **The Economy Design Team** is studying structured inequality and barriers to economic opportunities, and it is developing solutions that will create a more equitable society.

The figure below depicts the design team structure and the issues on which each team will focus.

The design teams are composed of representatives from a wide range of organizations that have agreed to partner in designing the TRHT enterprise. The tasks for each team are to envision what a transformed society will look like in each of its focus areas; to study the current racial realities in its respective areas; to examine what led to our current situation; to identify key audiences and stakeholders; and to recommend an action plan for achieving the necessary transformation over the next five to ten years.

In December 2016, the work of the design teams will be shared at a TRHT summit that will be held in Carlsbad, California. The summit will bring together over a hundred TRHT partner organizations—with a collective reach of over two hundred million people—along with Kellogg Foundation grantees and other thought leaders, to develop a well-aligned multiyear, multisector implementation strategy. The work of the design teams will be discussed and utilized as the basis for the development of related resources, toolkits, and guidance to participants so they can begin implementing TRHT within their communities and organizations.

The brief articles that follow in this section provide greater detail about the areas of focus currently being explored by the five design teams. Collectively, while not at this time official policy or views of the foundation, they provide a comprehensive look at how our society would change if policies and institutions were no longer affected by the hierarchy of human value.

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Narrative Change

People are defined over time by the unique stories told about them by family, friends, teachers, and even those they barely know or may view through a derogatory demographic lens. Stories are constantly told about each of us, ascribing to us a place in the world through perceptions and personal encounters. Just as important are the stories we tell about ourselves, manifesting our own self-worth as we attempt to carve out our place in society.

Collectively, these stories forge the prevailing narrative about an individual, the living map that travels with each of us throughout our daily activities, whether at work, school, or play. When a law enforcement officer pulls someone over for a “routine” traffic stop, for instance, the narrative he or she consciously or unconsciously believes about the driver largely determines whether a gun is drawn or the greeting is a friendly smile. Thus, as our nation is learning, narratives can have profound implications during an encounter with police—or during a job interview, or at the hospital emergency room, or during countless other social interactions.

Narratives also have the potential to accentuate and perpetuate existing social biases and to make people more or less empathic and generous. Thus, “narrative change” is a critical component of the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise. TRHT is seeking to change the conditions for the development of stories, both real and imagined, so that all diverse groups will be exposed to full and accurate representations of themselves and be able to articulate their truths.

False narratives

Throughout our nation’s history, a hierarchy of human value—based on physical appearances, ascribed intellectual characteristics, ancestry, and other such factors—has created a ranking of racial groups that can be recognized as modern-day racism. This hierarchy continues to inform the narratives we tell ourselves as Americans. Research from organizations like Race Forward, the Kellogg Foundation, the Hollywood Diversity Report, and the National Hispanic Media Coalition shows that Americans are rarely exposed to full, complete, and unvarnished truths about the lives of people of color. Instead, we are often distracted by stereotypes and mischaracterizations.

The slur “illegal alien” has been used in the news media to describe undocumented immigrants, despite the deleterious impact the term has had on law-abiding people, most of whom have come to this country seeking a better life for themselves and their families. The term “illegal alien” has complicated the immigration reform debate, casting immigrants as undesirables, when, in most cases throughout our nation’s history and still today, nothing could be further from the truth.

The narrative about Native Americans is too often relegated to the footnotes of the story told about the United States. The history taught in schools across the country begins with the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492, a false narrative that serves as the basis for US policies and practices that marginalize the contributions, rights, and histories of native peoples from Connecticut to Alaska and everywhere between. A more complete and fully truthful account would cast that “discovery” as a European invasion of the Americas that began shortly after Columbus came across the “New World” in 1492.

Similarly, a more complete and truthful narrative about early American history would not simply highlight the perseverance of “settlers” as they searched for homes and land. Instead, it would also emphasize the plight and resistance of native peoples as European colonizers sought to snatch their farmlands in order to generate crops for themselves and for the growing populations of Europe. Otherwise, without the proper narrative context, the true significance of bitter conflicts over land—Little Big Horn, Sitka, Wounded Knee—is left unrecognized. How can elected officials, ordinary citizens, and our children be expected to understand, respect, and help protect the cultures of native peoples when their stories are so distorted and hard to find?

The nation also has adopted a false narrative about Asian Americans, an ethnically diverse demographic group composed of those with ancestral origins in as many as forty-eight countries, including China, Japan, Korea, and India. Weaving together misleading information about this groups’ relatively high income levels,
superior academic achievement, low crime rates, and high family stability, the “model minority” narrative is used to make comparisons with other demographic groups—notably African Americans and Hispanics—and to refute calls for social justice. In addition to discounting cultural differences, the “model minority” narrative neither accounts for nor even recognizes the distinct political histories of these Asian American communities—the exploitation of Chinese immigrants during the construction of the transcontinental railroad (1863–1867), for example, or the incarceration and forced relocation of between 110,000 and 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. And it ignores the role of US immigration policy, which favors highly educated and highly skilled applicants from Asian countries.

The model minority narrative presents itself as complimentary and is used as a rationale for limiting the role of government in reducing discrimination, whether through enforcement or policy development. In fact, this narrative marginalizes the painful history endured by many Asian Americans, while also purporting that they are immune to the challenges faced by other people of color. Asian Americans have higher unemployment and poverty rates relative to whites, as well as their own share of immigration issues. For Asian American communities, the fact that few narratives link Asian Americans to government services has grave public policy implications.

The narrative associated with affirmative action and the African American community is marked by misconceptions of unqualified people seeking unearned advantage, and accordingly it tends to stir up passion, frustration, and distrust. In fact, affirmative action programs were designed by President Kennedy in 1961 as a method of redressing the discrimination that had persisted in spite of civil rights laws and constitutional guarantees. Legal challenges to race-conscious programs have continued to work their way through the court system ever since, angering people right, left, and center along the political spectrum and sparking debates across the nation.

For example, in 2008, Abigail Fisher, a white woman, sued the University of Texas, claiming that she had been denied admission on the basis of her race. The case, Fisher v. University of Texas, was ultimately decided in 2016 by the US Supreme Court, which held that the university’s race-conscious admissions program was, in fact, constitutional. Yet, despite that final outcome, the damage had been done: press coverage of the case had seeded further doubt about affirmative action and the qualifications of African Americans and other college students of color.

These kinds of narratives tend to play on an infinite loop in our minds, engaging our biology...
and often predisposing us to respond in certain ways to given scenarios. Breakthroughs in the mind sciences, especially those related to neuroplasticity, have furthered our understanding of how changes in behavior, environment, neural processes, thinking, and emotions can lead to changes in neural pathways and synapses in the brain. Narratives, or stories, gird the broader schemas and implicit theories that organize our socialization and our responses to the world. They affect how we view the world, how we behave in response to sensory perceptions, and how we interpret ambiguous stimuli.

Technology and empowerment

Today, the United States and the world stand at the crossroads of truth, sharing, and technology. The availability of new tools and media for engagement empower us to communicate in new ways and to tell new, more authentic stories that honor the full complexity of our history. The Narrative Change Design Team sees in this a unique opportunity to harness the power of stories to help forge a more equitable future.

Traditional information sharing and storytelling through a one-to-one exchange of data between a sender and a receiver are increasingly rare. Today, information is shared and stories are told through a wide variety of old and new media according to four primary patterns of exchange: one to one, one to many, many to many, and many to one. Among adults in the United States, 90 percent own a cell phone (64 percent own a smartphone), 32 percent own an e-reader, and 42 percent own a tablet. It’s no surprise that Facebook has nearly two billion active users per month, that Instagram has a hundred million users, or that Google processes an average of more than forty thousand search queries every second.

Technological innovation has provided the foundation for impactful storytelling and for sharing information in ways that can fuel movements like the Arab Spring; the Ferguson, Missouri, protests; Occupy Wall Street; and the recent failed coup in Turkey. Philip Howard, an associate professor of communication at the University of Washington, conducted an analysis of more than three million tweets, gigabytes of YouTube content, and thousands of blog posts—a cascading chronicle of messages about freedom and democracy across North Africa and the Middle East. He found that those forms of social media were critical in elevating political uprisings globally. Along with the seemingly never-ending stream of cell phone videos depicting law enforcement officers brutalizing the US citizens they are duty-bound to protect, these examples illustrate the impact mobile platforms, social media, and even more traditional outlets can have by seeding stories and by informing, engaging, and impelling people to action rooted in the perceived narrative.

The time is now, and our vision simple: we must be empowered to discover our common humanity, to achieve “narrative justice” by retelling the whole of our collective story—including necessary and uncomfortable truths. Such a narrative is restorative because it recognizes the pain and suffering of racism and the resistance and resilience of its targets to overcome its effects over the years, and it is transformative because true stories function as active, broad, and inclusive funnels to new narratives. The TRHT vision foresees people of all races, ethnicities, faiths, cultures, and socioeconomic statuses coming together to shape narratives about the past, present, and future—accurate stories that honor the full complexity of our humanity as the nation forges a more equitable future.

NOTES
Racial Healing and Relationship Building

In the eighteenth century, the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus established four taxonomic “varieties” of the human species in his book Systema Naturae, describing each variety by “culture and place.” The Americanus was “stubborn” and the Europeanus “inventive,” while the Asiaticus was “haughty” and the Africanus “crafty, sly, careless.” He later added a fifth variety, Monstrosus.

Classifications like these led to a hierarchy of human value that, over the centuries, has been expressed in policies, attitudes, and laws—from slavery to segregation, racism, racial inequity, and prejudice—that have left people emotionally wounded. Even well before Linnaeus, indigenous peoples in the “New World” were disrespected and dehumanized when their lands were colonized and confiscated by Old World invaders.

Imagine a day in the future when we have abandoned this belief in a hierarchy of human value—and healed the accompanying pain—in favor of a commitment to equity and the value of all. To realize such a future, we will need to acknowledge our wounds, affirm the sacredness of all, establish just policies, and move forward on a path of justice, dignity, and humanity. Fortunately, here in the United States, we have a pathway forward: the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise, which was launched in January 2016 by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

One of five TRHT design teams working to jettison the belief in a hierarchy of human value, the Racial Healing and Relationship Building Design Team seeks to harness the transformative power of authentic relationships in order to promote emotional healing in diverse communities. As part of TRHT, healing sessions will play a significant role in the transformation of communities and our nation. This healing work is based on three major principles: truth telling, racial healing, and transformation.

Truth telling

Healing sessions held at Kellogg Foundation conferences have helped participants build relationships through honest dialogue. LaShawn Routé Chatmon, executive director of the National Equity Project, says that, at a healing session she attended, “You could feel some of the pretense wash away, and people began an honest exploration or reflection of themselves.” Chatmon was paired with a white woman who spoke about abuse she had faced. “In my story,” Chatmon recalls, “I talked not so much about the negatives of oppression, but how proud I was to be an African American woman and where I thought that came from for me.”

Using a similar process in her work to improve educational outcomes for children, she says the healing sessions affirmed her belief that “everyone has a story and that there’s healing power in listening. . . . We have to release emotion,” she says, “before we can think clearly and strategically about how we’re going to take action.”

Racial Healing

If we build trust based on shared experiences, we will generate the energy, will, and creativity to heal our hearts and find lasting, creative solutions for racial injustice. In Chicago, Monica Haslip established the Little Black Pearl Art and Design Academy. This innovative high school program for at-risk youth, most of whom are of color, helps students thrive in a spirit of racial healing. Little Black Pearl combines an educational model that is based on love, value, and
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According to Haslip, “The community is in the building all the time, so students see more opportunities and possibilities.”

During the summer of 2016, in New Orleans, the Ashé Cultural Arts Center hosted its annual Maafa Ceremony, a “remembrance and healing ceremony” that encourages acknowledgement, bonding, and commitment. Maafa is a Kiswahili word that means “horrific tragedy” and refers to the transatlantic slave trade. In a procession that wove through New Orleans, stopping at the Tomb of the Unknown Slave, about five hundred participants offered homage, songs, and blessings for wisdom and courage, remembering ancestors and slaves. Carol Bebelle, cofounder and executive director of the Ashé Cultural Arts Center, says that they “started this center believing that the power of culture and the ability to be working with and for the community would be productive.”

In 2004, the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation at the University of Mississippi helped form the Philadelphia Coalition, a multiracial group in Philadelphia, Mississippi, that organized a fortieth anniversary commemoration of the 1964 murder by the Ku Klux Klan of three civil rights workers in Neshoba County. The coalition also played a significant role in the passage of a bill mandating that the history of the civil rights movement be taught in the state’s public schools. Today, its Welcome Table program brings together diverse groups for storytelling and relationship building, both of which are prerequisites for promoting structural change and realizing racial healing.

Transformation

Alaska’s indigenous people experienced the traumas of colonization and assimilation, as government policies led to the forcible removal of children from their homes and cultural roots. These children were sent to boarding schools in an effort to ensure that they adopted “white culture.” In 2016, the First Alaskans Institute convened its 33rd Elders and Youth Conference, drawing as many as 1,500 participants to facilitate intergenerational dialogue. “Because of the hurt and shame and the viral nature of unhealed oppression, people don’t talk about it and may even perpetuate it,” says Liz Medicine Crow, president and chief executive officer of the institute. Storytelling, she says, “allows us to go deeper with our hearts and minds, which creates space to transform and to be transformed.”

One action stemming from the dialogue process is the creation of an initiative to reform the Alaska child welfare system. The goal is to reduce the disproportionate number of native children in state custody. The initiative promotes tribal self-determination, based on the idea that “Alaska Native culture keeps Alaska Native children safe.”

Like the First Alaskans Institute, the National Compadres Network is deeply committed to intergenerational dialogue and the sharing of community traditions, culture, and spiritual values. Based in San Jose, California, the network supports Latino males in their families and in the community. One of its initiatives connects African Americans, Latinos, and people of the First Nations. Jerry Tello, director of the National Compadres Network and its lead healing trainer, says the initiative’s first event was powerful.

Participants gathered in circles, and the women spoke first. “They said that they needed men to step up and do what was needed to nurture healthy and strong young men and women.” Next, he says, “The men were invited to dialogue about the lessons we had learned in our own lives that have helped us develop and grow and also to recognize the wounded lessons that we did not want to pass on to the next generation.” Finally, on the second day of the gathering, the elders were asked to “support and listen to the young men, with the goal of creating a
connection between the generations through mutual sharing and dialogue."

When police shot four Mexican men in East Salinas, California, in November 2014, the National Compadres Network had a local network in place to respond. The result was the first city-wide training for community members and top-level city staffers to raise awareness of the need for fair and inclusive treatment and to transform municipal programs and services through racial equity, healing, and understanding.

Moving Forward
Nationwide, countless other groups are working to promote dialogue, racial healing, and transformation. The Washington, DC–based group Asian Americans Advancing Justice supported Arizona’s Latino community in opposing the state’s 2010 anti-immigrant law. In Dearborn, Michigan, the Arab American National Museum serves as a space where community members, Arab and non-Arab alike, can convene to celebrate Metro Detroit’s ethnic and racial heritage through music, arts, and digital storytelling as well as to talk about immigration, anti-black racism, and Arab American racial identity.

In Richmond, Virginia, once the site of the nation’s largest interstate slave market and the capital of the Confederacy, the process of creating a new narrative for the community began in 1993, when Hope in the Cities, a program of Initiatives of Change—a worldwide movement of people of diverse cultures and backgrounds committed to the transformation of society through changes in human motives and behavior, starting with their own—led the first walk through the city’s racial history. In 2007, Virginia became the first state to offer a formal apology for slavery, and, a month later, about five thousand people celebrated the unveiling of a Reconciliation statue on Richmond’s historic slave trail.

Last year, as the city commemorated the sesquicentennial of the end of the Civil War and the beginning of Emancipation, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, once known for its support of school segregation, noted that “instead of fracturing along familiar fault lines of race and mistrust,” the commemoration had built a relationship among disparate groups “that enlightens rather than antagonizes.” And the same newspaper editorialized last year that it was time for a truth and reconciliation commission. “Accounting has not occurred,” the editorial notes; “the half remains untold.”

Toward a single classification: Humanity
Communities from California to Virginia are engaged deeply in the process of truth telling, racial healing, and transformation, helping the nation move toward a common perception of
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human value. When we have achieved this transformation, all people will be seen through the lens of our common humanity, and we will see ourselves in one another. We will feel safe and secure in who we are, and we will be proud of our culture. We will be able to look within ourselves to find our identity, and we will recognize and value the differences inherent in all of us, while celebrating the common threads that bind us all together. Our respect for each other as human beings will be integrated as a value in America’s structures and institutions, and it will enable us to interact with one another in a spirit of mutual respect and love.

We will all live in communities and attend schools where our cultures and our contributions to society are honored. Our libraries will be stocked with history books that are about our people and that were written by our people. Our museums will reflect the rich heritage and stories of every group, told from the perspective of each group. We will no longer carry the pain, fear, and shame of history, for we will have discovered how to look at our past with courage and honesty. In responding to those who do us harm, our society will reflect a focus on restorative rather than punitive justice. When we have achieved this vision, we will truly have achieved transformation.

NOTES
5. Jerry Tello, interview by Rob Corcoran (national director, Initiatives of Change).

Separation

ALBERT EINSTEIN once said, “Imagination is more important than knowledge.” But for people who regularly confront frustrating bureaucrats or engage indecisive government bodies, imagining may feel a bit indulgent. The members of the Separation Design Team of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise understand the limitations of government and of institutions, as well as the often snail’s pace of change. Yet by applying imagination, values, and experience, the team is envisioning an American society where racial separation is no longer the norm.

To flesh out its vision, the team is imagining what it would look like for schools, neighborhoods, public libraries, parks, and recreational spaces to be “diverse,” yes, but also—and more importantly—for them to enable new forms of community. What would a community look like if people brought to it their full selves—their cultures, histories, worship traditions, languages, genders, sexual orientations, ways of knowing, points of view—if all were empowered to make contributions to it, and if all enjoyed equal status and felt a sense of belonging within it? This is not just a matter of increasing access or reducing segregation; we must be equally concerned with how people feel in public settings. Indeed, how people feel, how they are treated, and the opportunities they have to fully express their authentic selves may determine whether they can flourish in their communities.

Racial separation

The Separation Design Team is principally concerned with racial separation, a condition so embedded in our nation’s landscape that it is commonly deemed intractable. The separation of the races manifested in our public schools, our neighborhoods, and our workplaces is rooted in racism, in the belief in a hierarchy of human value. This separation—the product of a tangled mix of laws, policies, practices, and habits that developed over centuries—does more than merely separate whites from blacks, native peoples, Latinos, Asian Americans, and other racial, ethnic, and religious groups. By concentrating poverty in neighborhoods of
color, separation itself drives and deepens racial inequalities in wealth, income, political power, and well-being, and it results in unequal access to resources like healthy food, safe recreational spaces, employment that pays a living wage, and fair financial services.

Research strongly suggests that racial isolation feeds on itself by reinforcing prejudice, bias, and stereotypes that are both unconscious and conscious. Racial separation shrinks circles of human concern and narrows conceptions of community by limiting opportunities for interaction among different groups, for empathy, for seeing ourselves in one another, and for co-creating strategies to end racism and build a more connected, healthy, just, and equitable society.

Since 2000, the number of people in the United States who live in concentrated poverty has nearly doubled, from 7.2 million in 2000 to 13.8 million in 2013. In large part because of past and current discrimination, concentrated poverty is linked with race. One in four African Americans and one in six Latino Americans live in high-poverty neighborhoods, compared to one in thirteen whites.

Simply bringing together people from varied racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds is hardly an adequate solution to the problem of separation.

The embedded belief in a hierarchy of human value confers status upon whites, who generally possess more power and privilege in society than do people of color. And thus, as the design team crafts its vision of a society without racial separation, the nation’s history and its contemporary practice of colonization are overriding concerns. The term “colonization” may seem at first like an exaggeration, but imagine colonization as a continuum. In its most extreme forms, it is manifest in the slaughter, dispossession, and attempted destruction of native peoples and cultures. Colonization is also manifest in slavery and in the exploitation of resources and labor, as in the US territory of Puerto Rico.

The same need to control and suppress that which is different from, or threatening to, the dominant culture is manifest in contemporary forms of exclusion and in attempts to contain, control, suppress, or alter the cultures of historically marginalized groups. This includes, for example, teachers instructing Latino students not to speak Spanish, police officers disproportionately pulling over African American drivers for alleged traffic violations, and school curricula failing to incorporate contributions or perspectives of people of color.

TRHT’s underlying premise is that people are the key forces in a democratic society, and they make decisions and take actions based on their most deeply held beliefs. The slow pace of change within public institutions is, to a large degree, a mirror of the beliefs and attitudes held by those in power and the constituents who elected them. The five TRHT design teams are developing strategies that address both the individual transformations and the structural changes, short and long term, required to sustain progress. This comprehensive, dual focus was largely missing from previous civil rights and racial progress efforts.

Clearly, if just the belief in a hierarchy of human value were abandoned, communities would still be left with its fruits—segregated and disinvested neighborhoods and schools, prisons and jails overflowing with young men of color, ever-increasing income inequality. If the social structures created by the belief in a hierarchy of human value are not also eradicated, then another generation of children will be exposed to racism. This belief and these structures must be dismantled in tandem.

The Separation Design Team is principally concerned with racial separation, a condition so embedded in our nation’s landscape that it is commonly deemed intractable

Imagining an integrated and decolonized society

As the Separation Design Team began to envision a society that had abandoned the belief in a hierarchy of human value, it raised several questions: Where would people live? What types of choices would they have about where to send their children to school? How would the aspiration to reduce racial separation be balanced with the need to enable members of all groups to retain their cultural and personal integrity, to experience a sense of belonging, and to enter public settings—schools, colleges, neighborhoods, social spaces—where they perceive opportunities or where they simply wish to be?

Of course, some people of color are comfortable in their culturally defined neighborhoods or schools. They may not want to live or attend school in white-dominated or racially diverse settings where they may feel uncomfortable.
DESIGNING THE TRANSFORMATION

How would an ideal society ensure that such people are not denied vital opportunities?

The Harvard sociologist Robert Putnam distinguishes between “bridging” and “bonding” capital. Bonding capital is derived from social ties that link people with others who are similar to them in terms of an important dimension such as nationality or cultural group. Bridging capital, on the other hand, is more difficult to develop. It is derived from social ties that link people together with others across an identifiable split in society, such as class, educational level, or race. In the type of society envisioned by the design team, people would have ample opportunity to develop both kinds of capital via an array of experiences. People who work and live in culturally diverse settings would move deliberately toward equity, in part by examining their own biases; engaging in authentic, truthful conversations with fellow community members; and actively dismantling rules, policies, and practices that sustain inequality.

Realizing the vision of a truly integrated and decolonized society will require person-to-person processes of racial healing and transformation, along with a simultaneous reexamination and transformation of laws, policies, practices, and habits. There are many inspiring examples of progress. Teachers, school principals, community organizers, and planners are creating and nurturing healthy, equitable, and diverse institutions and living spaces where people from different backgrounds can live and learn together. There are magnet schools; mixed-income, racially diverse, equity-conscious neighborhoods; libraries that function as centers for community building; and organizations that bring immigrants and refugees together with people born in the United States in order to create more welcoming, connected communities.

As it explores historical patterns and events that have fueled racial separation and colonization, the Separation Design Team will identify leverage points for transformation. It will also propose concrete action to reduce racial separation, change hearts and minds, and move our nation toward healing and transformation. The essential criterion will be whether these leverage points and action steps can help us build a racism-free, equitable, healthy, and connected society.

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For centuries, the widespread belief in a hierarchy of human value has fueled the misguided notion that people are either superior or inferior based on the color of their skin. Throughout our nation’s history, this racial bias has manifested in many destructive ways. The structural racism that lurks silently in laws, institutions, and policies has brought harm to families and communities, as the unequal treatment of children and adults of color decidedly affects their health, education, housing, and employment, while limiting their opportunities for success.

One pillar supporting this legacy of racism has been the legal framework forged when the union formed in 1776. Alfred and Ruth Blumrosen, using primary sources and original documents, show that the colonies didn’t unite for freedom. In Slave Nation, they argue that when, in 1772, the High Court in London freed fifteen thousand slaves in England, slaveholders in the colonies feared the emancipation of their own slaves and advocated for independence in order to protect their right to continue the human bondage. Racism has been deeply embedded into our legal system since the United States Constitution pronounced that slaves would be counted as only three-fifths of their actual numbers, essentially setting the value of their humanity as less than that of whites.

This underscores a fundamental flaw in our society: the belief in a hierarchy of human value was central to the very conception of the United States. The only way for this fallacy to endure through the ages is with a morally corrupt legal system leading the way, one that has made a hallmark of the use of force to sustain the caste system. Thus, racism is more deeply entrenched in the legal system than in any other of our institutions. As Gail Christopher of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation puts it, “You couldn’t keep people down without making it illegal for them to be up.” Moreover, history is littered with examples of how the tainted legal system bled into not only criminal justice and policing, but also civil law, governance, and public policy.

Racism’s legal legacy
Beginning in the colonial period, Native Americans were methodically forced from their ancestral lands in the East to what became Indian Country west of the Mississippi River—a practice that was formally codified in 1830, when President Andrew Jackson signed into law the Indian Removal Act. After the Civil War, Jim Crow laws were established in cities and states that enforced racial segregation and resulted in unequal access to public services such as education. For decades, scattered throughout the country were “Sundown Towns”—cities, towns, and even neighborhoods within whose boundaries white residents declared that blacks and those of other races were not allowed after dark. The discriminatory restrictions were enforced by threats, violence, and local ordinances.

In contemporary times, whites and people of color have similar rates of illegal drug use, but people of color are incarcerated at higher rates than whites for similar crimes. Racial profiling is so widespread that “DWB,” which stands for “driving while black,” has entered the language. Punishment rather than rehabilitation is the driving force behind policies to achieve “law and order,” code words for the social control of people of color. Video recordings of the police shootings of Walter Scott, Lequan McDonald, and other unarmed black men, along with the deaths in police custody of young blacks like Freddie Gray and Sandra Bland, have broadly raised awareness that having dark skin remains a significant barrier to equal treatment under the law.

Martin Luther King Jr. looks on as President Lyndon Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act, 1964
Clearly, the legal system plays a prominent role in perpetuating racism. In White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race, Ian Haney López demonstrates how the law has utilized racial hierarchy throughout our history. He notes, for example, that in 1790 the US Congress limited naturalization to white persons only, establishing a racial criterion for citizenship that was applied until 1952. And today, there is a racialization of the immigration debate, as Congress remains deeply divided over how to reform immigration policy.

For its part, the US Supreme Court has swayed inconsistently through the decades, by turns supporting and obstructing efforts to achieve racial equity. The landmark decision that opened the way to school desegregation, Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954), was preceded by Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857), the landmark decision that decreed that a slave was his master’s property and that African Americans were not citizens, and by Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), which upheld the constitutionality of “separate but equal.” In 2013, the Supreme Court dealt a severe blow to civic participation by minorities with a ruling that struck down key portions of the Voting Rights Act. In Give Us the Ballot, Ari Berman describes the strong opposition to the Voting Rights Act that has grown since its enactment in 1965. “The revolution of 1965 spawned an equally committed group of counterrevolutionaries,” he writes, noting that these forces have controlled a majority on the Supreme Court in recent years. And even when a Supreme Court decision is positive, as in Brown v. Board of Education, subsequent laws can dilute the impact. In fact, the language of the Brown decision itself, which called on states to desegregate “with all deliberate speed,” enabled a vague interpretation of the timeline for implementation. Throughout the country, school funding remains unequal today, with those schools serving black, Latino, Asian American, and Native American children often drawing fewer resources.

Still, at times, the nation has shown the will and courage to address racism. President Reagan issued a formal apology and signed the Civil Liberties Act in 1988, a measure that provided compensation to more than a hundred thousand Japanese Americans, or their family members, who had been incarcerated in internment camps during World War II. Last year, city officials in Goshen, Indiana, sought to heal the wounds of the past by issuing an apology and asserting that the city no longer supports the transgressions that had made Goshen infamous as a “Sundown Town.” In the 1960s, the civil rights movement led to the enactment of a series of laws banning public discrimination. African Americans were no longer barred from certain restaurants, some schools were integrated, and fair housing laws created more living options. In August 2016, the US Department of Justice announced plans to phase out the use of private prisons, concluding they are less safe and less successful at rehabilitating prisoners. This policy change will eliminate an incentive to incarcerate people in order to sustain or increase profit.
Notwithstanding such positive developments, however, the nation still has not fully addressed the root cause of the racism ravaging communities of color: the widespread belief, both conscious and unconscious, in a racial hierarchy of value.

**A new vision for our legal system**

As part of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise, the Law Design Team is exploring ways to eradicate racism from the nation’s legal system—including the criminal justice system, the civil justice system, the policies and practices that drive both systems, and the laws and regulations that govern every aspect of our nation. What will our legal system look like after its role as a vehicle for fostering racism is acknowledged, and after it has been transformed to ensure that it promotes racial equity and protects the rights of everyone?

The Law Design Team is focused on envisioning a legal system that does not inspire fear in people but, instead, is embraced as a system designed to keep us all safe, regardless of our skin color. The creation of such a system, and the adoption of new policies and practices to enact such a vision, will take us a long way toward building a society that cherishes our common humanity. Following are several key elements of the Law Design Team’s vision:

- The diversity of the law enforcement community should reflect the diversity of the population as a whole, particularly within communities of color. Bringing a full range of perspectives to bear in difficult situations would contribute to more equitable outcomes.
- Community members should believe that they can resolve issues informally or through conflict resolution, rather than depending exclusively on the courts. Residents would then feel that they are a part of the legal system, rather than clients of it.
- More equitable standards should define the use of the terms “legal” and “illegal” in regard to immigrants.
- A violent and dangerous criminal should be differentiated from someone engaged in bartering or trading on the streets for economic survival. (Eric Garner was selling loose cigarettes when he was accosted and killed by police officers in New York.)
- Understanding unconscious bias should be a key goal of the training provided to all law enforcement officials. While some of these officials may hold racist beliefs, their actions are likely byproducts of a society rampant with mistrust and misconceptions related to race.
- Law schools should make the history of racism in the United States, and especially racism in all aspects of the legal system, a key subject area, and institutions that accredit lawyers should take attitudes on race into consideration as part of the certification process. Moreover, law school should be made more affordable, and barriers to entry should be reduced.

Under this new vision for our legal system, legislative proposals would undergo an equity impact assessment similar to existing environmental impact assessments. There would be a greater recognition of the role that mental illness plays in criminal behavior. There would be no private, for-profit prisons or other predatory institutions that incentivize incarceration. All citizens would view our legal system as delivering justice, rather than punishment. More money would be spent on counselors in schools than on police officers. We would have sensible gun control laws, and all states would uniformly define hate crimes. All people would have access to free legal representation in civil matters, and access to high-quality legal representation in criminal matters would not be based on ability to pay. Economic status would not determine how long someone stays in jail.

This new legal system envisioned by the Law Design Team would lead to greater stability in communities and families, significantly narrow economic inequality, substantially diminish negative racial stereotypes, and create the conditions that would enable us to live in a more harmonious and mutually respectful environment.

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The Economy

The phrase “steady improvement” best describes the economic health of our nation in the seven years since the end of the Great Recession. Unemployment is down, new jobs are being created, and household wages are rising. However, a closer look at economic indicators shows that families and communities of color did not just fall behind during the recovery; they have not recovered from the recession at all.

The authors of a recent analysis published jointly by the Corporation for Enterprise Development and the Institute for Policy Studies found that if current federal wealth-building policies remain in place, it will take African American families 228 years to amass the same amount of wealth that white families have today, and it will take Latino families 84 years to reach the same benchmark.1 The authors also found that by 2043, when households of color are projected to account for more than half the US population, the wealth divide between white households and African American and Latino households will have doubled, from about $500,000 in 2013 to $1 million.2 Their report details how these household wealth disparities may play out over the coming decades. If current trends continue, the authors conclude, the entire economy will suffer: “By the time people of color become the majority, the racial wealth divide will not just be a racial and social justice issue impacting a particular group of people—it will be the single greatest economic issue facing our country.”3

The Economy Design Team
The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has been a leader in addressing persistent outcome gaps in communities of color, most recently through its Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise. By focusing on historical and contemporary policies that have created persistent barriers to success, healing old wounds, and working to create opportunities for all, TRHT seeks to move the nation beyond simple conversations about race and ethnicity in order to confront the complex root causes of racism. To spur such a movement, the foundation will work with select communities to conduct racial healing activities that address the unique issues facing each community and cultivate a shared vision for the success of all citizens. The foundation will support community-based efforts that inform public policies and practices to sustain and expand positive outcomes for children and families.

As part of this broader effort, the Economy Design Team is focused on informing practices and policies to contribute toward building a stronger economy for all communities. The team is composed of subject matter experts and thought leaders who are dedicated to creating a thriving economy in which the nation’s diverse people and communities will have equal and fair access to resources and opportunities, as well as influence on systems and policies that affect them.

What would the American economy look like if the belief in a hierarchy in human value were to be replaced by the truth of who we are as human beings, as a nation of people who deserve equal opportunity and treatment? The design team is developing clear answers to this question:

- The American economy would be stronger and would reflect the needs of all citizens, there would be full participation in all sectors of the economy, and we would be better able to achieve peace and justice.
- The quality of our neighborhoods, schools, jobs, health, and other community institutions would no longer be determined by our zip codes or ethnicities.
- Everyone would have access to quality, well-paying jobs and to the essential tools and resources hard-working families need in order to move up the career ladder and earn family-sustaining wages—e.g., employee training, family-friendly workplaces, and career advancement opportunities.
- People would not be perceived as less worthy, less able, less qualified, or less deserving of opportunities—in education, employment, immigration status, health care, the food system, and other components of the economy—because of their race or ethnicity; there would be equity in the selection of people for positions in all tiers of authority, decision making, and influence.
- Public policymakers would fully understand their role in preventing and responding to inequity, would be equipped to address issues of race and equity, would be more explicit...
about how structural racism occurs, and would recognize the importance and value of creating inclusive communities.

This vision of an American economy that works for everyone would reflect the results of uprooting the belief in a racial hierarchy of human value that has been embedded in, and sustained by, the economy. For centuries, this belief has been used to empower some and disenfranchise others. People of color in the United States have been denied equal access to resources and opportunities not by default, but by design. The US economy is built on a foundation that is structurally unequal and imposes systemic barriers to economic opportunity for many communities of color. This began with the cruel and unjust treatment of thousands of Native Americans who were forcibly removed from their lands. It continued with slavery, an institution that fostered the idea of African Americans as personal property and as exploited laborers with no democratic rights. Communities of color continue to be hindered by the structure of the economic system and by unfair policies. This discrimination is rooted in, and contributes to the perpetuation of, the belief that the victims, based on their race and ethnicity, are of lesser value than other human beings.

Agricultural workers exemplify the victims of racial hierarchy. In the South, slavery was followed by the exploitative sharecropping and tenant farming systems that deprived African Americans of fair compensation for their work and opportunities for economic betterment. During the 1930s, as part of the New Deal, federal legislation established a minimum wage, overtime pay, child labor restrictions, and collective bargaining rights. But agricultural workers—mostly African Americans—were excluded from these protections. Today, farmworkers (on larger farms) are covered by the federal minimum wage, but they continue to be excluded from many labor laws that protect most other workers, making their jobs less attractive to anyone with other options.

Today, the majority of farmworkers are Mexican immigrants. Due to our broken immigration system, these farmworkers lack authorized immigration status—for which they are often demonized—and most are too fearful of deportation to challenge unfair or illegal working conditions.

Sharecropper near Lake Dick, Arkansas, 1938
Confronted by these obstacles, it is not surprising that many farmworkers suffer wage theft, work in unhealthy or dangerous conditions, and live in substandard housing.

The Economy Design Team envisions an economy that eliminates all traces of racial and ethnic discrimination. Ensuring the economic security of families and communities of color is in the best interest of our nation.

Closing the wealth gap for families and communities of color

The TRHT enterprise is designed to cultivate racial equity and healing, alongside community and civic engagement, in order to remove barriers to success and improve outcomes for all children and families. TRHT supports the principle that all children should be raised in economically secure families—that is, families with incomes that are at least above 200 percent of the federal poverty level. The success of this enterprise will depend on our nation’s ability to close the persistent gaps faced by families and communities of color.

The connection between wealth and well-being is undeniable: lack of wealth, or access to wealth, translates to poorer outcomes in health, education, and employment. Even over generations, families without access to wealth are highly unlikely to escape economic instability and insecurity. Accordingly, the Kellogg Foundation supports efforts to provide families with access to the resources necessary to obtain well-paying jobs, develop smart financial habits, and save for their future. To close gaps in income and wealth that have endured for generations, the Economy Design Team believes future investments should be focused on community-based solutions that address key wealth-building issues faced by low-income families and families of color. When parents have opportunities to obtain quality jobs, earn family-supporting wages, advance in their careers, and access the resources they need to stay out of debt and save money, they can better support their families and help ensure their children can succeed in school and life.

Real lives, real economic transformation

The Economy Design Team recognizes the need for expanding opportunities for business ownership by low-income parents so they can boost their earnings and create long-term wealth for their families. The Opportunity Fund of Northern California, which is supported by the Kellogg Foundation and committed to building the capacity of entrepreneurs of color, exemplifies such efforts. As California’s largest nonprofit microlender, the Opportunity Fund offers a unique blend of products and services that help residents of underserved communities who do not qualify for traditional bank loans improve the economic stability of their businesses. According to the Small Business Administration, about half of all small businesses survive five years or longer. Yet, clients of Opportunity Fund have a performance rate of 90 percent; on average, borrowers’ success translates to a 20 percent or more increase in take-home income.
Melchor Landin embodies this success. Moving to the United States from Mexico in the 1950s, Landin sought to create a better life for his family. Despite steady work as a baker in a grocery store, however, he and his family lived paycheck to paycheck. Wanting to gain more from his hard work and experience, he decided to start Mexico Bakery in San Jose. When Landin was ready to grow the business, the Opportunity Fund stepped in to provide the funding that his own bank had declined to provide. With access to capital, he went on to own and run successful bakeries in three locations in San Jose and to hire twenty employees. Today, the next generation of Landins is running the family business. “We knocked on so many doors, and we were so close to giving up,” said Jose D. Landin, Melchor’s son and the treasurer of Mexico Bakery. “Another fellow business owner directed us to Opportunity Fund. After the first meeting, we felt a reassurance that this was the place that would support our American dream.”

**Propelling families forward**

Building an inclusive and equitable economy is essential if the United States is to overcome the long-term impacts of the Great Recession and to dismantle the historical legacy of structural racism that perpetuates gaps in economic outcomes. Doing so will require good public policy and innovative programs that solidify what we in the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors know to be effective in closing these gaps for families and communities of color. But there is no silver bullet. What is required is a national commitment to an interconnected set of solutions that will boost income, savings, and wealth accumulation for low- and middle-income families of color today—and which, in turn, will benefit their children and their children’s children for generations to come.

When families of color are able to succeed, we all succeed. Our country’s future is riding on us—and waiting for us to build an economy that works for everyone.

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**NOTES**

2. Ibid., 5.
3. Ibid., 11.
5. The Opportunity Fund participates in Entrepreneur-Tracker, an annual borrower survey created by the Aspen Institute’s FIELD program. The survey is administered to a sample of the Opportunity Fund’s borrowers one to two years after they receive their loans; it asks them questions about their businesses, including whether they are still in operation. More than 90 percent of these respondents consistently report that they are still in business.
6. Jose D. Landin, interview by Ken Sain (senior vice president, Widmeyer Communications).
There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self.—Ernest Hemingway

After last year's record-breaking student activism, many college administrators welcomed the arrival of summer with a sigh of relief. Through marches, rallies, sit-ins, and even food strikes, student protestors had pressed their campuses throughout the year to address a host of concerns. Their protests touched sensitive topics, like race and ethnicity, and exposed their campuses' lack of practice tackling such issues head-on. Students of color described the "microaggressions" and cultural insensitivities of their peers, objected to the multiple ways in which their campus environments honored past oppressors, and revealed the embarrassingly small number of African Americans and Latinos among their faculties, staffs, and student bodies. Summer promised a chance for administrators to reflect on what the students had said, to develop action plans, to catch their breath.

But then summer 2016 brought unfathomable acts of human violence. First came the deadliest mass shooting in the nation's history, the slaughter of forty-nine men and women at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando—a murderous rampage that intentionally targeted the LGBTQ community. Next came the heartbreaking killings of two African American men by police officers in Baton Rouge (Alton Sterling) and St. Paul (Philando Castile), adding more names to what seemed to be an ever-growing list of victims and more taped evidence that race may play a role in such incidents. Then came the murder of five police officers in Dallas by a deranged veteran, and another three officers in Baton Rouge by a former marine—both shooters senselessly bent on vengeance.

The heated political discourse surrounding the contest for the US presidency contributed even more grist to the tense mood of the nation. Political promises to "build a wall," to institute mass deportations of undocumented immigrants, and to ban Muslims from entering the country altogether resonated with a wide swath of American voters who desire to return to an earlier time, a time that felt safer. Unlike the students who just months before had marched and chanted for change, many of these Americans saw the solution to our problems in less diversity, not more. The race for the presidency had thus dragged into the open the depths of the citizenry's disagreements. Divisions ran straight down the fault lines of race, ethnicity, nationalism, and religion—all places we have been before.

Colleges and universities are bracing themselves for what lies ahead, understanding that much of the debate over these controversies will occur on our campuses. And rightly so. Higher education institutions can be critical sites for building understanding of the drivers of fear-based, anti-diversity thinking. But this is not inevitable. To be effective, colleges and universities must begin with a clear-eyed look at themselves, and then put into place mechanisms of change that are responsive to students' criticisms. Diversity and inclusion must begin at home.

How implicit bias research can help us create diverse and inclusive campuses

As we search for ways to work with our students to diversify our campuses and to help them grow into the leaders our diversifying nation will need them to be, we must resist the temptation...
One Decision at a Time
to underestimate the dimensions of the challenge we face. It is not simply a matter of overcoming the beliefs of a small pool of folks who are resistant to change. Decades of brain science teach us that the challenges are much bigger than that. Far greater than the threat posed by individuals who see little profit in diversity is that posed by the much larger pool of pro-diversity folks who do not understand how powerful, easily triggered implicit biases can impede our diversity efforts.

Left unaddressed, implicit biases can influence countless judgments and choices made on our campuses daily—all day, every day. The cumulative result is an unintentional reproduction of the status quo and patterns of decision making that profoundly constrain the diversity and inclusiveness of our institutions.

Because decisions are made one by one over time—in carrels, offices, committee rooms, faculty lounges, and buildings spread across our campuses—they can seem less consequential than they actually are. (Surely one hire, or one admissions decision, can’t be that important?) As long as individuals remain unaware of their own implicit biases, the effects of implicit bias itself will go unconsidered, and harmful associations connected with race, gender, age, and so on will continue to go undisrupted.

**What is implicit bias?**

Before exploring how implicit biases may be shaping the composition of our student bodies, faculties, and senior leadership teams, and how they may be contributing to the slights and microaggressions underrepresented minority and women activists have brought out into the open, it may be helpful to define our terms.

Implicit biases are easily triggered evaluative beliefs or stereotypes that can influence our understanding of others and our behaviors toward them without our full awareness. They are related to, but distinct from, explicit or overt expressions of bias. The key distinction is that the operation of implicit bias is largely hidden from our consciousness. Indeed, research shows that most of us are profoundly unaware of how often deeply embedded automatic associations linked to race, sex, age, and other identity markers affect our perceptions of others and our actions concerning them. Worse, these easily triggered associations can even contradict firmly held egalitarian commitments to be fair to others irrespective of our differences.

Unlike explicit biases, which today we tend to believe are confined to a relatively small group of bigoted individuals, brain science has shown that implicit biases are pervasive. Although research
shows that people tend to associate favorable qualities with their own “in-groups,” it is also quite possible to internalize negative biases toward one’s own group, particularly if it has been stigmatized by the broader culture.4

The online Implicit Association Test (IAT) is the most popular method for identifying one’s own implicit attitudes.3 This timed-response sorting test measures how strongly or weakly two concepts are associated with each other in our brains (such as “black” with “good” versus “black” with “bad,” or “white” with “good” versus “white” with “bad,” or “women” with “family” versus “women” with “leadership”). When concepts are strongly associated in our minds, the sorting process is quicker and more reliable. The opposite is true for weakly associated concepts. The majority of test takers pair black faces with negative terms faster than they pair black faces with positive terms. High percentages pair women’s faces with words like “family” and “nurture” faster than with words related to jobs, leadership, and ambition.

**What can be done about implicit biases?**
People sometimes despair when they first learn about implicit bias. (If implicit bias is an automatic cognitive process that operates without our permission or even awareness, what can we do about it?) Happily, recent research suggests that just as implicit associations are learned, they can gradually be unlearned, freeing us to act in alignment with our intentions to treat others fairly.6 In particular, intergroup contact and mindfulness exercises have shown promise for altering implicit biases.7 To be effective, however, interventions to counter the harmful effects of implicit bias require a genuine and steadfast commitment to build and embrace diversity. Contact across lines of difference can only occur if diversity already exists to enable it.

**Why address implicit bias in higher education?**
In classroom settings, negative implicit biases can be detrimental to student well-being. Research shows that implicit biases can influence educators’ perceptions of, and interactions with, their students, for example. Educators have been shown to evaluate the behavior and promise of students of color more negatively than they do those of white students. This tendency is pervasive, appears to start at an early age,5 and it is present both in K–12 systems and in higher education settings.9

In the workplace, “confirmation bias” has been shown to compound the harmful impacts of implicit bias. In one recent study, law firm partners received a writing sample supposedly written by a junior lawyer that contained deliberate errors. Half of the partners received the sample with a cover letter indicating that the author was African American, while the other half received the identical sample with a letter indicating the author was white. The partners were asked to rate the quality of the writing sample and to note any errors. The results were jaw-dropping. The quality of the writing sample from the “white lawyer” was rated significantly higher than that of the sample from the “black lawyer.” In addition, the partners who thought they were reading a sample written by a black lawyer found more of the errors. In short, the readers saw what they expected to see (implicit bias: greater competency, white; lesser competency, black) and found evidence to validate what they expected to see as well (confirmation bias: fewer errors, white; more errors, black).10

Studies like this raise the troubling concern that college admissions decisions might be tainted by implicit biases. Researchers Katherine Milkman, Modupe Akinola, and Dolly Chugh studied how professors respond to email inquiries expressing interest in their programs. They sent emails to professors at 259 universities from a fictitious student asking to meet with them in order to discuss mentorship and entry into graduate school. Apart from details indicating the student’s gender and race, the emails were identical. The study revealed that, in every academic field save the fine arts, the professors responded significantly more often and more positively to white males than to either women or minority students.11

Research raises similar concerns with respect to faculty diversity efforts. Building on the troubling results of the well-known “resume studies,”12 Geoffrey Beattie, Doron Cohen, and Laura McGuire examined whether implicit bias affects which candidates are selected for university positions. Readers were given identical curricula vitae for white and non-white candidates and asked to assess the candidates’ suitability for a given position. In general, readers with higher IAT implicit bias test scores showing a pro-white preference gave more favorable ratings to white candidates than to non-white candidates.13

In response to this and similar research, many universities have begun to offer or mandate
implicit bias training for members of faculty search committees. That is a good and important start. But there are several additional areas of concern. For example, are those charged with making admissions decisions aware of implicit bias and its potential to affect their assessment of the relative merits of the applications they read? Do faculty understand how implicit bias might unconsciously affect their assessment of the quality of a student’s work, their willingness or ability to write a strong letter of recommendation for a female protégé versus a male protégé, or their evaluation of a presentation by a potential colleague from an underrepresented minority group?

**Combating the influence of implicit biases**

As the creators of the Implicit Association Test repeatedly stress, the first step in addressing the effects of implicit biases is simply to be aware that they exist. We all must be aware of the potential blind spots in our judgment, and then take steps to consider how our actions affect others.

Over the past decade, to grow this awareness and to bring research findings on implicit biases to the attention of those who need to know about them—including students, faculty, staff, and senior leaders in higher education—the W.K. Kellogg Foundation has funded the work of the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at the Ohio State University. Through its annual publication, *State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review*, Kirwan reviews emerging brain science research in an easy-to-understand format and makes a summary publically available online (see [www.kirwaninstitute.osu.edu](http://www.kirwaninstitute.osu.edu)). This publication is shared with partners worldwide in order to ensure that efforts to reduce the impact of implicit bias are based on the most up-to-date research.

The staff of the Kirwan Institute also facilitates interactive trainings that provide an in-depth understanding of the science behind implicit bias and help participants apply implicit bias research findings in their work and daily lives. Within the academy, the Kirwan Institute’s implicit bias engagements focus on student diversity at all levels—from admissions and classroom interactions to university culture as a whole. Through this work with undergraduate and graduate students, colleges, departments, and faculties, the Kirwan Institute seeks to drive campus diversity progress one decision at a time.

**Conclusion**

As the new school year begins, colleges and universities are renewing their engagement with student leaders and focusing on how best to diversify their campuses and reduce the feelings of isolation that can impede learning. Efforts to deepen understanding of implicit bias can make an important contribution to this process. With a greater understanding of the pervasive tendency of the human brain to link qualities like academic competency and value (or their lack) to particular racial or ethnic groups or to a particular gender, we can arm ourselves to resist the anti-diversity forces and perhaps even dislodge the hierarchical systems that have marred our nation’s past and that continue to challenge us today.

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__NOTES__


5. For more information on the Implicit Association Test or to participate online, access Project Implicit at [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit). Skeptics might question the wisdom of addressing unconscious bias, when more overt or explicit forms of bias so plainly continue to challenge our society. Isn’t explicit bias the more serious culprit? Didn’t Omar Mateen kill those forty-nine innocents at that
nightclub precisely because they were gay, lesbian, or their allies? He did, and naturally we must be alert to, and prepared to face down, explicit bias whenever and wherever it occurs. But the challenge is not “either/or”; it is “both/and.”


Race relations are rapidly regressing, and a perfect storm is brewing that could set back decades of progress. The 2016 presidential election was the first since the US Supreme Court struck down a key provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Legislation reinstating the protections derived from that provision has not advanced in Congress.

Incidents of police brutality, mostly directed against unarmed people of color, are becoming all too common across the country. Yet, instead of using their bully pulpits to bring the country together after such tragedies, some have used these incidents to divide Americans with dangerous “us versus them” demagoguery not seen since the McCarthy era. Regardless of whether “them” refers to women, African Americans, Hispanic immigrants, people with disabilities, environmentalists, or longtime European allies, this hateful rhetoric has reopened old wounds and inflicted new injuries on groups that are now subject to senseless pain and humiliation.

As an attendee at both national political party conventions this summer, I was particularly alarmed at how some of that divisive rhetoric was out in the open. For decades, this country has made significant progress. Sadly, explicit bias is no longer suppressed and is, once again, accepted in certain sectors of “polite society.” After landmark Supreme Court cases and laws passed in the 1950s and 1960s broke down so many barriers to equality, we are slowly chipping away at the progress that cost so much in blood, sweat, and tears. That the open embrace of such vile attitudes against people of color is happening in the year 2016 is alarming, and it is indicative of wider trends in American society that need to be addressed. This is why the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s work is so timely.

The Quad Caucus

The foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise is engaging stakeholders across the country in order to transform racial attitudes at all levels. One of these successful ventures was a collaboration with the National Conference of State Legislatures. Through an award from the Kellogg Foundation, the conference created the Quad Caucus as a way of convening state legislators who were members of the National Asian Pacific American, Native American, Black, and Hispanic Caucuses. The purpose was to focus on the adverse effects of structural inequities on children and families of color with the aim of producing recommendations for best-practice models and structural change.

Beginning in 2012, each organization sent a delegation of ten state legislators to ten meetings over a four-year period. Each meeting took place in a different part of the country, with workshops in four key areas of inequity: health, education, juvenile justice, and family economic security. The meetings included site visits that allowed legislators to see how inequities manifested in each region and to witness community-based solutions at work. By creating cross-racial forums to discuss structural racism and create cross-community solutions, Quad Caucus legislators positioned themselves to collectively advance a vision for policy paths that will lead to more equitable outcomes for all children and families.

Kenneth Romero is executive director of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators.
of Now
The meetings began in New Orleans, where the Quad Caucus engaged in healing circles and began discussing such basic concepts as unconscious bias and structural racism. Participating legislators also learned about the “state of affairs” for each racial group and visited the lower ninth ward, where they heard from community members about the slow pace of rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina. The second meeting was held in Chicago, where legislators continued learning about concepts and demographic shifts and the implications of these on income distribution. In Albuquerque, New Mexico, they learned about intervention strategies in the educational pipeline, academic benefits of school diversity, and efforts at better integration. They visited the National Hispanic Cultural Center and learned about parent involvement in childhood education. Legislators were now empowered with the knowledge of how racism is reflected in public policies that directly affect communities of color. The next step would be to provide them with the necessary tools to form a racial equity agenda.

Through subsequent meetings, which took place in Honolulu, Atlanta, and Jackson, legislators learned how communities of color are disproportionately affected when it comes to their health, economic security, and the juvenile justice system. In Jackson, Mississippi, the Quad Caucus delved into how our justice systems are designed to fail people of color and how this leads to their criminalization. Legislators also discussed the deplorable state of juvenile detention practices, which often fail to rehabilitate youth, and they visited the Rankin County Juvenile Detention Center.

Finally, at meetings held in Seattle, Minneapolis, and Miami, legislators worked on developing deeper connections with each other and expanded their multiracial networks. Quad members also received comprehensive media training that enabled them to communicate more effectively about how racism has influenced public policies. Through their participation in the Quad Caucus, state legislators were able to share multiple ways to address inequities. For example, one Hispanic Caucus member reached out to a Black Caucus member from Louisiana to talk about the challenges and inequities in the post-Katrina rebuilding process so that she could apply those lessons in her efforts to support her community in the wake of Hurricane Sandy.

By the time the Quad Caucus met in San Francisco in 2015, the vision of the initiative had been realized through the formation of a cadre of legislative ambassadors who could promote racial equity as well as garner the attention of other state-level colleagues, community-based organizations, and the very constituents they represent. Now, every legislator was able to speak about the issues facing other communities of color, not just their own. Moreover, they could articulate how these issues were connected to the struggles of others and why it was important for all legislators to address these issues, regardless of their own race.

**Broadening the conversation**

So where do we go from here? How do we continue to work together for healing and equity? With the support of the Kellogg Foundation, the Quad Caucus is organizing its next meeting for this year. Our shared goal is to continue the conversation with participating legislators. However, recent events and the overall climate regarding race relations in our country call for a further broadening of the conversation.

It is now more evident than ever that landmark civil rights cases and the bold legislation that began with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did not completely erase racial attitudes. Racism is still with us and still pervades public policy. We see it in recent attempts to limit voting rights through voter ID legislation and early voting limits. We see it in the re-segregation of education and in laws with disenfranchising effects on communities of color. We also see it in the way our justice system imposes harsher penalties on people of color.

Policies can be changed through legislation, but racist attitudes cannot be legislated away. This is why the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation enterprise is so essential. The time for such a transformation is now. With the open attacks against Hispanics, Muslims, people with disabilities, women, and others this political season, we are reminded of the urgent need to address racial tensions before they spiral out of control. The resurfacing of hate speech as an acceptable form of political campaigning in 2016 should serve as a wakeup call.

The Quad Caucus has sought to help legislators develop cross-cultural methods to eliminate institutional barriers, promote racial healing, and ensure that future policies are fair and equitable. Yet, in order to achieve these objectives, people
of color cannot be the only ones at the table. This conversation has to include everyone, regardless of color.

Engaging colleges and universities as partners in this effort could definitely be a game changer. College students are at a ripe stage where TRHT efforts can be highly effective. Whether it is through academic courses that focus on race relations, or student organizations that promote healing circles, or research conducted by professors and students, younger generations—the leaders of tomorrow—need to be able to overcome their individual and collective biases so that all Americans can thrive in what will soon become a minority-majority nation.

Recent events have made it clear that racial healing is essential if we are to thrive as a nation. The TRHT enterprise hopes to create opportunities for communities to come together to face this challenge. However, they cannot do it by themselves. Everyone must recognize the importance of these issues and how they affect them and their communities. Only then will we heal; only then will we truly transform.

To respond to this article, e-mail liberaled@aacu.org, with the author’s name on the subject line.
Food Justice: Combating Racism in the Agricultural System

BRUCE GOLDSTEIN AND JESSICA FELIX-ROMERO

The living and working conditions of most farmworkers—the people who labor on America’s farms and ranches to produce food—are inadequate. Wages are low; fringe benefits are rare; agriculture is among the most dangerous jobs in the country; the health status of farmworkers and their family members is disproportionately poor; decent housing is in short supply; infrastructure in many farmworker communities is inadequate; many labor and occupational safety laws exclude farmworkers; most public benefits programs exclude many farmworker families due to immigration status; and many social services for which they are eligible do not reach farmworkers.

The agricultural system we have today is steeped in the legacy of plantation culture and settler colonialism. The massive agricultural system in the South was built on the backs of slaves from Africa and their children. After the Civil War, sharecropping and other mechanisms developed to continue exploitation of African Americans in the fields and deprive them of political power.

When Congress enacted the minimum wage, collective bargaining rights, and other labor-protective legislation during the 1930s, agricultural employers were exempted, and farmworkers—mostly African Americans—were excluded. (Some protections were provided to farmworkers during the 1960s and 1980s.)

As agriculture developed in California, people of color—from Mexico, the Philippines, Japan, and China—were hired and subjected to discriminatory treatment under the law and to terrible working conditions.

In his bestselling 1939 exposé, Factories in the Field, Carey McWilliams contended that the Great Depression’s “Dustbowl,” which threw thousands of white farmers off their land, would lead to better conditions for California’s exploited farmworkers. He predicted a decline in the political and economic power of agribusiness because the “Okies,” “Arkies,” and “Texicans” who migrated to California were white American citizens, “not another minority alien racial group.” McWilliams’s view that the “race problem” had been “largely eliminated” proved premature, however. Three years later, as the United States entered World War II, Congress authorized the hiring of large numbers of Mexican guest workers on temporary work permits. The Bracero Program, intended to meet a temporary wartime emergency, did not end until 1964.

As World War II began, a special program was established so that Florida’s sugarcane plantations could employ guest workers from Jamaica. That program, as rife with abuses as the Bracero program, evolved into the current H-2A guest worker program.

Today, there are about 2.5 million farmworkers, not including about 2 million family members, working in the United States. The large majority of farmworkers are members of ethnic minorities. The majority of farmworkers are Mexican American, but there are many Puerto Rican residents employed in agriculture on the mainland, and there are farmworkers who are African American, Native American, Caribbean American, and Asian American. The majority of farmworkers are foreign born, and most of the foreign born lack authorized immigration status.

Agriculture is an economic system that is profit-based and extractive, toward both the land and the people working the fields. Those at the top get their profits—supermarkets, other retailers, 

BRUCE GOLDSTEIN is president and founding director, and JESSICA FELIX-ROMERO is director of communications, both at Farmworker Justice.
transports, chemical companies—while the grower squeezes profit from the farmworkers.

Workers in agriculture have been systematically disempowered. At the behest of agribusiness, government policy has filled the farm labor force with vulnerable people of color, including slaves, guest workers, and immigrants—undocumented and documented alike—who are viewed as undeserving of the protections afforded native-born white workers. Our labor laws have deprived this vulnerable workforce of protections that are applicable to others, subjecting them to harsh and often dangerous conditions. The drive for profit contributes to the perpetuation of four hundred years of oppressive practices based upon racial privilege.

There have been moments of progress, and university students have often been at the forefront of organized efforts to support farmworker justice. During the 1960s and 1970s, university campuses were sources of support for the organizing drives of the United Farm Workers that led to collective bargaining agreements for tens of thousands of farmworkers and to the 1975 California state law granting farmworkers the right to join a union and bargain collectively. Students supported the Campbell’s Soup boycott led by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee during the 1980s, which resulted in collective bargaining agreements for Midwestern farmworkers at farms supplying several major food processors.

Today, there are many student-driven organizations supporting the farmworker movement, such as the North Carolina–based Student Action with Farmworkers. Students have successfully engaged with their administrators and dining service providers, such as the Bon Appétit Management Company, and in public campaigns by farmworker organizations to address issues in the food supply chain. Along with direct activism, higher education faculty support the food justice movement through scholarly work that integrates the study of agriculture, land, and labor through race, class, and gender perspectives.

There are several projects that seek to improve conditions for farmworkers by reforming business practices in the food industry. In 2011, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers entered into agreement with local tomato growers and several big-name buyers, including McDonald’s and Burger King, that paid farmworkers roughly a penny more for every pound of fruit they harvested and succeeded in raising wages. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation was an early funder of this effort. In 2013, the Equitable Food Initiative began implementing a certification system for wages and working conditions, pesticide safety, and food safety that involves retailers, growers, and farmworkers.

There is still much to be done to empower farmworkers to improve their living and working conditions, and one of the challenges remains addressing attitudes regarding race that have perpetuated injustices in the fields.

NOTES
2. Ibid., 324.
Why Decolonization?

TERRY CROSS

Most people do not think of the United States as a colonial power, and so they might wonder why decolonization is included as a vital component of the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise. Decolonization is usually thought of as getting rid of colonization, or freeing one sovereign nation from the control and rule of another. Colonialism is a multidimensional process that involves the economic, cultural, legal, and ideological domination of one people over another. It is an extreme form of exclusion that, by definition, denies the existence, reality, and legitimacy of the colonized population.

In the contemporary US context, these concepts apply to the situation of some 567 American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, Indigenous Hawaiians seeking federal recognition as the Sovereign Kingdom of Hawaii, and all sixteen US territories. In the case of American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, and that of the US territories, each has an Indigenous government that retains sovereign status—that is, the right to self-government. Yet in each case, that sovereignty is limited by the colonial power. For federally recognized tribes, the government-to-government relationship is constitutionally established. However, colonialism has far greater reach than its impact on sovereignty. Colonialism imposes control on the very hearts, minds, and spirits of the colonized. The cultures, languages, religions, natural resources, and lifeways of Indigenous peoples have been, and continue to be, suppressed; in some cases, they have been extinguished, and in others exploited for the benefit of the dominant population.

The framework of colonialism is found today in a system of laws that serves the interests of the dominant population at the expense of Indigenous populations. For example, despite having their own laws, law enforcement agencies, and courts, American Indian tribes cannot prosecute a non-Indian for crimes (including child abuse) committed on tribal lands. Similarly, territories that are home to large military installations cannot prosecute US military personnel for crimes against their people. Control of food and water provides another stark example. The Alaska Native Village of Nanwalek looks out over the richest halibut fishery in the world—its traditional fishing ground—yet tribal members cannot commercially fish there, and even subsistence fishing is highly regulated.

Postcolonialism is another concept that is sometimes used to describe these circumstances. Postcolonialism refers to the socioeconomic, cultural, and legal legacy of colonialism. This legacy appears in various forms, such as cultural genocide, forced assimilation, historic trauma and grief, and the suppression of the colonial story to the point of denying or rendering Indigenous culture invisible. However, the term “postcolonialism” implies that colonialism has ended. In the United States, colonialism is still alive and functioning, though it is seldom referred to as such. Today, the manifestations of colonialism include health and social disparities that are ignored or accepted as normal. Unemployment on Indian reservations can range between 50 and 80 percent, for example, and youth suicide for males is nearly eight times the national average. Such problems would never be tolerated in mainstream communities. This living legacy sends a message to the colonized that their value is less than that of the dominant population.

The TRHT enterprise seeks to jettison the false paradigm of a race-based hierarchy of human value. This includes the false hierarchy established by colonialism. Today, Indigenous peoples in the United States are rejecting colonial lies. It is not okay to take lands that do not belong to you; it is wrong to exploit the natural resources of others; it is immoral to commit cultural genocide;
and it is an atrocity to take children for the purposes of control and assimilation, even under the pretense of rescue. TRHT seeks to shed light on these persistent practices and to support decolonization wherever the value of Indigenous peoples, cultures, and governments is denied, and whenever people are deprived of the full right and expression of human dignity.

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—LYNN PASQUERELLA, PRESIDENT
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Building Public Trust in the Promise of Liberal Education and Inclusive Excellence

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