

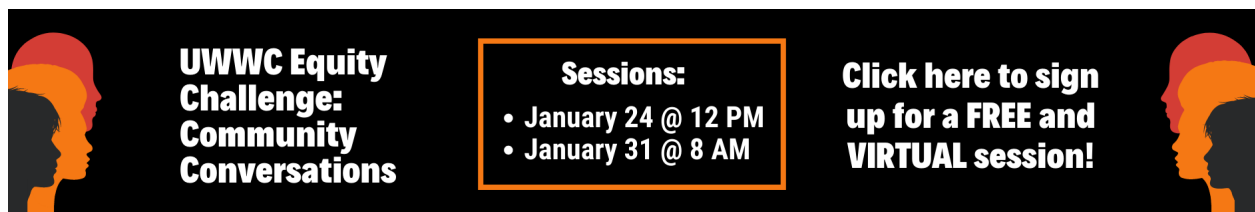
DAY 11: Decolonization and Reparations

“It is imperative to think of the task of decolonizing knowledge production as inseparable from every other aspect of our lives. It must be applied to the smallest and most hidden details of life, including but not limited to decolonizing romantic relationships (stop seeing beauty only in whiteness, blue eyes, and blond hair); decolonizing social connections (stop believing that there is more value in socially connecting and networking with powerful people who often happen to be Westerners); decolonizing the workplace (stop believing that expertise, management and power are embodied in Western individuals); decolonize our hobbies and activities (don’t do things or enjoy activities promoted and imposed on us by the West such as going to the beach or wasting one’s life watching TV or Netflix); decolonize travel destinations (shatter the illusion that nowhere is more worth seeing than Europe, or that traveling around Europe equals ‘seeing’ the world). We need to seek and discover new destinations, peoples, and cultures to travel to and learn about and from.” – Louis Yako, Iraqi-American anthropologist, writer, poet and journalist

While it can be considered a point of progress that the U.S. named [Deb Haaland](#) as the first Native American to serve in the role of Secretary of the Interior, and some gains are being made in returning land to native people ([one of several examples here](#)), much work remains. The topics of land justice and reparations also arise with/for descendants of enslaved people.

Land justice is the idea that people and communities that have been historically oppressed have a right to land and territory. A growing number of national, regional, and local groups are calling for reparations in the form of transferring land and resources to BIPOC communities and projects as part of a strategy to account for centuries of extracted wealth and exploitation.

Reparations—a system of redress for egregious injustices—are not foreign to the United States. [Native Americans](#) have received land and billions of dollars for various benefits and programs for being forcibly exiled from their native lands. For Japanese Americans, \$1.5 billion was paid to those who were interned during [World War II](#).



UWWC Equity Challenge: Community Conversations

Sessions:

- January 24 @ 12 PM
- January 31 @ 8 AM

Click here to sign up for a FREE and VIRTUAL session!

Share your reflections on today’s topic on social media using the hashtag [#unitedforequity](#) or [#uwwcequitychallenge](#) and tag [@uwwashtenaw](#).

While individuals today are not “responsible” for historical acts, we are all responsible for understanding the truths of our history, being honest about the ongoing legacies of that history, and continuing to support all people toward better futures.

[Take 5-10 minutes to really take in this infographic](#) depicting the history and specific economic impacts of slavery when thinking about some of the calls for reparations in a place like the U.S.

Listen:

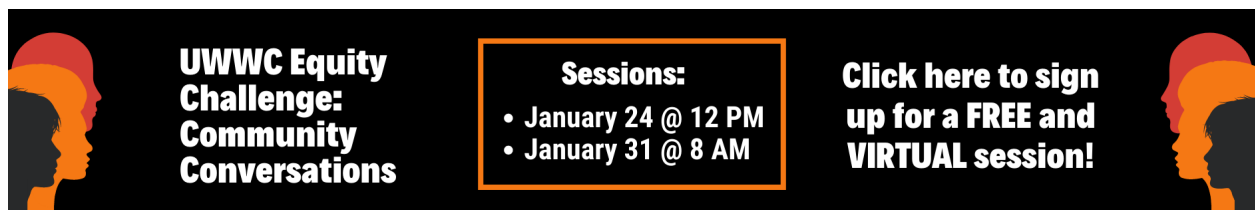
- [Listen to Reparations: The Big Payback](#), a podcast hosted by social justice filmmakers Erika Alexander, a black woman, and Whitney Dow, a white man. They use their unique storytelling skills and experiences to explore the argument for and against reparations for Black Americans.
- Listen to how [two Michigan tribes made land purchases in an effort to return land back into the hands of Native Americans](#).

Read:

- Read this piece about the history of [Zug Island in Detroit, which once housed an enormous mound](#) where generation after generation of Indigenous tribes in the region buried their dead.
- Read this list from the Indigenous Environmental Network of its [Indigenous Principles of Just Transition](#).
- Read [the Introduction on pages 4-6](#) of the newest edition of the Reparations Guide from Coming To The Table.

Watch:

- Decolonization is a word that is often met with resistance. Too often discussions about decolonization lead to unnecessary fear or hostility. [Watch this TED talk by Kevin Lamoureux as he shares a beginner’s guide for decolonization](#).
- Watch [Mumu Fresh, a Grammy-nominated Afro Indigenous singer, emcee and songwriter, as she discusses how she uses her platform to uplift both Black and Native American lives](#).



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Act:

- Visit the [Native Land Map](#) to see the native ancestral lands where you live, work, and travel (not applicable to all parts of the world).
- If you identify as white or are part of a white-led organization, find at least one new way that you and your household, or your organization, will engage in a form of reparations.
- Journal, Reflect and Share:
 - What feelings come up for you as you consult these resources and solutions related to land justice and reparations?
 - What would daily, monthly, or yearly reparative action – at personal, community, or broader scales – look like for you?



**Discrimination?
Injustice?
Racial Inequities?**

YES.

**Click here to learn more
and join the
21-Day Equity
Challenge: 2023 Edition**

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