

Environmental Health Watch  
CWRU Social Justice Institute  
Rid-All Green Partnership  
*present*



RACE, FOOD, & JUSTICE CONFERENCE

# Analyzing the Urban Food Movement through a Social Justice Lens

April 19-20, 2018

RACE, FOOD, & JUSTICE CONFERENCE

# Analyzing the Urban Food Movement through a Social Justice Lens

## Welcome to the 2018 Race, Food, & Justice Conference!

We are excited to spend two evenings together engaging with policy makers, organizations, universities, and community residents in an ongoing dialog addressing race and racism, one of the social determinants of health and a root cause of health disparities that continue to manifest within our communities. By engaging multiple sectors of our society, we are expanding the grassroots base promoting environmental justice. This conference is our opportunity to lift up and shine a light on the issues, planting seeds that will create more equitable solutions, policy change and collaborative programming.

Now, more than ever, we need to identify ways to disrupt "business as usual" and harness the power of community as we explore issues of climate justice, sustainability, gentrification, models for transformation and more. We hope you will lift your voices during our time together – we want to hear your stories, your ideas and your solutions.

Thank you for being here with us!

*Presented by*



*Funding provided by*



# Conference Agenda

## THURSDAY, APRIL 19

Strosacker Auditorium, 2180 Adelbert Road

5–6 pm      **Refreshments and Networking**  
Hovorka Atrium

6–9 pm      **Performance**  
FreshLo, Featuring Dayshawn Keaton and DJ-Red-I

### **Welcome and Acknowledgments**

Dr. Marilyn Sanders Mobley  
Office for Inclusion, Diversity and Equal Opportunity  
Case Western Reserve University

### **Keynote Speakers**

Senator Sandra Williams  
*Introductions and Moderator*

Allyson Carpenter  
Former Washington, D.C. Elected Official and Community Organizer  
*People Over Profit: A New Bottom Line*

Keymah Durden, III  
Rid-All Green Partnership, Urban Agriculture Regional Training Center  
*Local Leadership, Global Impact: Implementing New Models to Transform Communities*

### **Panel Discussion | Q&A**

Sophia Buggs, Buggs Farm

# Conference Agenda

## FRIDAY, APRIL 20

Ford Auditorium, Allen Memorial Medical Library, 11000 Euclid Avenue

5–6 pm      **Refreshments and Networking**

6–9 pm      **Presentation**

Lena Boswell  
Artist and Activist

### **Welcome and Acknowledgments**

Dr. Timothy S. Black  
Social Justice Institute

### **Keynote Speakers**

Dr. Monica M. White  
University of Wisconsin–Madison  
*Black Farmers, Agricultural Cooperatives and  
Building Sustainable Cities*

### **Malik Yakini**

The Detroit Black Community Food Security Network  
*Fostering a Racially Just Food System*

### **Panel Discussion | Q&A**

# Conference Presenters



**MONICA WHITE, PhD**, is assistant professor of Environmental Justice at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research investigates communities of color and grassroots organizations engaged in the development of sustainable, community food systems as a strategy to respond to issues of hunger and food inaccessibility. Her recent publications include "A Pig and a Garden: Fannie Lou Hamer and the Freedom Farms

Cooperative," in *Food and Foodways: Explorations in the History and Culture of Human Nourishment*. Her first book, *Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance and the Black Freedom Movement*, is under contract with University of North Carolina Press, and is scheduled to be released in Fall 2018.

*Freedom Farmers* revises the historical narrative of African American resistance and breaks new ground by including the work, roles, and contributions of southern Black farmers and the organizations they formed. The book traces the origins of Black farmers' organizations to the late 1800s, emphasizing their activities during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Whereas much of the existing scholarship views agriculture as a site of oppression and exploitation of Black people, *Freedom Farmers* reveals agriculture also as a site of resistance by concentrating on the work of Black farm operators and laborers who fought for the right to participate in the food system as producers and to earn a living wage in the face of racially, socially, and politically repressive conditions. Moreover, it provides an historical foundation that will add meaning and context for current conversations regarding the resurgence of agriculture in the context of food justice/sovereignty movements in urban spaces like Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, New York City, and Cleveland.

In addition to her academic work, White is the past president of the Board of Directors of the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network (DBCFSN), and she serves on the advisory boards of SAAFON (Southeast African American Farmers Organic Network) and the Black Oaks Center for Sustainable and Renewable Living. Active in the food justice movement for a decade, her work in the classroom and community embodies the theoretical framework of collective agency and community resilience and the use of community-based food systems and agriculture as a strategy of community development. As a result of her scholarship and community work, White has received several grants including a multi-year, multi-million dollar USDA research grant to study food insecurity in Michigan. She also has received several awards, including the 2013 Olsen Award for distinguished service to the practice of Sociology from the

# Conference Presenters

Michigan Sociological Association and the Michigan Campus Compact Faculty/Staff Community Service-Learning Award. She was appointed to the Food Justice Task Force sponsored by the Institute for Agricultural Trade Policy (IATP), writes a quarterly column for the *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development* entitled, "Freedom's Seeds: Reflections of Food, Race, and Community Development," and has presented her work at many national and international community organizations, colleges and universities.



**MALIK KENYATTA YAKINI** is co-founder and executive director of the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network (DBCFSN). DBCFSN operates D-Town Farm, a seven-acre farm in Detroit that grows more than 30 different fruits, vegetables and herbs. The organization is also spearheading the opening of the Detroit Food Commons and the Detroit People's Food Co-op in Detroit's North End. Yakini views the

"good food revolution" as part of the larger movement for freedom, justice and equity. He has an intense interest in contributing to the development of an international food sovereignty movement that embraces Black communities in the Americas, the Caribbean and Africa.

Along with DBCFSN, he spearheaded efforts to establish the Detroit Food Policy Council, which he also chaired. Yakini was a member of the Michigan Food Policy Council and serves on the steering committee of Undoing Racism in the Detroit Food System. From 1990 to 2011, he was executive director of Nsoroma Institute Public School Academy, one of Detroit's leading African-centered schools. Yakini was honored as Administrator of the Year by the Michigan Association of Public School Academies in 2006, and he served on the board of directors of Timbuktu Academy of Science and Technology from 2004 to 2011. Yakini is dedicated to working towards identifying and alleviating the impact of racism and white privilege on the food system, and contributing to the development of an international food sovereignty movement. He has presented at numerous national conferences on food justice and implementing community food security practices. Yakini is also featured in the book *Blacks Living Green* and the movie *Urban Roots*.

# Conference Presenters



**ALLYSON CARPENTER** is a Harry S. Truman Scholar and graduate of Howard University with degrees in political science and community development. At age 18, she was elected to serve as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in the District of Columbia, making her the youngest elected official in the history of the nation's capital. After serving as a commissioner, Carpenter studied government and foreign

policy at the University of Oxford as a Luard Morse Scholar. Upon her return to Howard, she was elected as the Student Government Association President. She proudly served on the National Organizing Committee of the Women's March on Washington, coordinating the march's logistics and helping with the policy platform. Carpenter has been profiled by MSNBC as a rising star in politics and featured in *The Root's 25 under 25: Young Futurist* list. She hosts a digital series for BET, called *What's At Stake*, which highlights social justice and political issues in the black community.



**KEYMAH DURDEN, III**, has an eclectic background. Although he is trained in avionics-mechanical engineering and construction, Durden's passion for sustainable living and environmental protection has taken him around the world. It has allowed him to get involved in several international programs and activities. In Ghana, West Africa, he was involved with the African Hebrew Development Agency (AHDA)

in their Fresh Well Water Initiative and Healthy Lifestyles Program. In Israel, he helped plan an International Sustainability Summit and was involved with the Dimona Community Agricultural Project. He is also a former co-owner of the internationally renowned Soul Vegetarian Restaurant and has been a practicing vegan for over 20 years. Durden is a graduate from Cuyahoga Community College's post-graduate program in Environmental Health and Safety. One of his major focus areas was storm water management. Along with other students, Durden designed and implemented an actual storm water management program for one of Cleveland's local townships. But his specialty is public relations, urban agriculture, and deconstruction activities. Durden's goal and vision are simple: "creating access to holistic, nutritional food for the development of the communities around the world." To this end, he is eternally dedicated.

## Conference Presenters



**SOPHIA L. BUGGS** aka Lady Buggs, is the proprietor of Lady Buggs Farm, a 1.3 acre urban farm located on the South side of Youngstown, Ohio. She is reclaiming the sacred roots of farming through sustainable spiritual living. Her gifts are specialty crop farming, wildcrafting and fermenting traditional foods. Her mission is to restore and revamp her community while creating a loving urban homestead with her daughter,

Passion. Sophia shares her urban wellness and farming information through cooking classes, gardening classes, spiritual consultations and farmers' markets.

## Conference Facilitators



**STATE SENATOR SANDRA WILLIAMS**, who represents Ohio's 21st Senate District, is currently serving her first term in the Ohio Senate. She is a native of Cleveland and attended Cleveland Public Schools. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Cleveland State University in Political Science with a minor in Criminal Justice, a Master's in Criminal Justice Administration from Tiffin University, and Executive Master's in

Business Administration from Cleveland State University. Senator Williams also serves as the Vice Chairwoman of the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party and associate professor at Cleveland State University. Senator Williams has spent more than two decades in public service—as a corrections officer, probation and parole officer, mediator for the State of Ohio, legislative aide, and State Representative. She also served our country as a member of the United States Army Reserve and was honorably discharged in 1995.

During her time in the General Assembly, she has made strong efforts on improving access to economic development opportunities, such as improving contracting for women and minority contractors. She has also worked to expand job training opportunities for Ohioans entering the workforce or transitioning into new fields.



# Conference Facilitators

She has also championed initiatives that revised criminal sentencing and re-entry laws that removed significant barriers to employment, providing a second chance for ex-offenders to allow them to become productive citizens. She spearheaded the passage of Ohio's Lupus Education and Awareness Program, and also led the charge to restructure the Cleveland Municipal School District.

As the former President of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus (OLBC), she focused on initiatives such as promoting quality education in the African American community, voting rights, decreasing inequalities in health care, increasing opportunities for minority business enterprises, and improving racial disparities in the criminal justice system. As part of OLBC's commitment to higher education, she created the OLBC scholarship fund which provides scholarships to Ohio students.



**TIMOTHY S. BLACK, PhD**, is the interim director of the Social Justice Institute, an associate professor of sociology and the second faculty member hired through the Social Justice Institute. His scholarly work examines the intersections between larger social structures and personal lives from which he advances a medium of sociological storytelling to illustrate how social structures are lived. He is the author of *When a Heart Turns Rock Solid: The Lives of Three Puerto Rican Brothers On and Off the Streets*, named a best book of 2009 by *The Washington Post*. More recently, he is the co-author, with Mary Patrice Erdmans, of the award-winning book, *On Becoming a Teen Mom: Life Before Pregnancy* (2015).

He is currently completing a book on low-income fathers, and is engaged in a 3-year study of citizen reentry in Cleveland based on relationships with around 80 men who were locked up in an alternative incarceration facility. Dr. Black teaches courses on urban sociology, race and mass incarceration, and qualitative research methods.

# Conference Organizers

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH WATCH (EHW)

Our mission is to create healthy homes and sustainable communities by identifying and removing hazards, engaging people, and advancing equitable environmental solutions.



EHW's core values – sustainability, collaboration, expertise, leadership, integrity, community and justice – are the foundation for programmatic efforts. EHW is Ohio's longest standing environmental justice organization. Started in the early 1980s in response to the ever-changing and prevalent health hazards in homes in Northeast Ohio and Cleveland. We provide education, advocacy, and direct service to families while also working alongside local, county, and state policy and decision makers to address critical health concerns and develop policies to best serve children and families. Since its incorporation, EHW has engaged and convened concerned citizens and representatives regarding important and evolving environmental justice issues. We have partnered with numerous academic researchers throughout our history to further understand environmental needs and develop new approaches to evolving environmental challenges.

EHW's programs cover two interrelated areas with an overarching focus on environmental justice and health equity. The first Healthy Housing, in which we work with homeowners, tenants, landlords, housing professionals and public officials to increase the affordability of housing by lowering utility costs and improving durability, to make homes safer and healthier by reducing hazards and improving indoor air quality, and to reduce greenhouse gases and other adverse environmental health impacts of housing. The second is Sustainable Communities, which encompasses neighborhood organizing and supporting resident lead initiatives and leadership for environmental justice and health equity by addressing root causes and advocating for systematic change.

We believe in promoting regenerative environments and communities by supporting continuous enhancement of health, justice, and prosperity, while maintaining respect for the natural, social, cultural, and historic value of place.

[ehw.org](http://ehw.org)

[kim.foreman@ehw.org](mailto:kim.foreman@ehw.org)

216.961.4646

# Conference Organizers

## SOCIAL JUSTICE INSTITUTE OF CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY (SJI)

Through education, collaboration, and engagement, the SJI strives to forge productive relationships across boundaries on campus and into the broader community. The Institute exists because of a belief that the university community should be leaders in advancing an inclusive and just society that raises awareness of social injustice; enhances moral courage; promotes critical thinking about power, privilege, and equity; and encourages action and equitable solutions.



SJI is pleased to be collaborating for the fifth time with Rid-All Green Partnership and EHW on an event that facilitates rich dialogue and analysis of the interlocking topics of the environment, economic well-being, and equity. As environmental justice scholar Robert D. Bullard has made clear: not all communities are created equal. We know that some groups, particularly poor people and people of color, contend with dirty air and water, pollutants, incinerators, lack of healthy food options and access to land, among other things. These examples of injustice have thwarted people's ability to feed their bodies (literally), minds, talents, and lives. As we come together again, let us be inspired to imagine and enact a more just society.

[case.edu/socialjustice](http://case.edu/socialjustice) | [socialjustice@case.edu](mailto:socialjustice@case.edu)  
216.368.7568

## RID-ALL GREEN PARTNERSHIP

The Rid-All Green Partnership is the dream of Damien Forshe, Keymah Durden, and Randy McShepard, three childhood friends who grew up in Cleveland's Lee-Miles neighborhood.



**We educate adults.** We are a Regional Outreach Training Center of the Milwaukee-based Growing Power, Inc. network, founded by Will Allen. We provide hands-on training, on-the-ground workshops, outreach, and technical assistance through the development of Community Food Systems that help people grow, process, market and distribute food in a sustainable manner.

# Conference Organizers

**We educate youth.** Our Youth Educational Programming falls under our *Green n' the Ghetto* banner and is designed to educate and entertain the community about environmental sustainability. Our Brink City comic book series has been an instrumental tool in reaching urban youth.

**We build community.** We partner with collaborators on environmental stewardship and train others to reclaim fallow urban fields and convert them into productive plots that generate healthy local food. Our long-term strategy is to use urban agriculture to educate the next generation of Clevelanders to not only learn to grow and eat fresh foods, but to also operate and grow their own businesses in the food industry, creating opportunities ranging from selling fresh produce and fish to food distribution, full-fledged processing and the packaging of fresh food products.

greenghetto.org | info@ridall.org  
216.990.8191

## Special Thanks To:

Tim S. Black

Justine Lindemann

Keymah Durden, III

Wyndi Moore

Kim Foreman

Gillian Prater-Lee

Faye Gary

Shaii White

Allison George

Rhonda Y. Williams

Hunter Scott

Our Conference Volunteers

Lisa Kollins

# Action Steps

1. Continue the conversation in your personal and professional circles pertaining to race, food and justice.
2. Follow and support the Rid-All Green Partnership, Social Justice Institute and Environmental Health Watch.
3. Continue to examine how you might work different and your role as a change agent.
4. Track and advocate for public policies that can support the movement.
5. Collaborate and organize with other food justice champions.
6. Buy local!

*"Justice from love, and love from justice"*

– Bishop Carlos Belo, 1996 Nobel Prize Winner

*"Hunger is not an issue of charity. It is an issue of justice."*

– Jacques Diouf, Food and Agricultural Organization  
Director-General

*"Food insecurity in the U.S. is not the result of a shortage of food or of resources; it is the result of poverty and of policies that fail to prioritize the needs of low-income Americans."*

– International Human Rights Clinic

*"The wonderful thing about food is you get three votes a day. Every one of them has the potential to change the world."*

– Michael Pollan, Author

*"Not everything we face can be changed, but nothing can be changed unless we face it."*

– James Baldwin, Author







Eat Real Food For Life!  
*Photograph by Lena Boswell*