

National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities

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Residents from Cleveland's Slavic Village neighborhood (above) organized around nuisance groundhogs, setting a foundation for a connected, resilient, supportive community.

[Cleveland community strengthened through racially inclusive network building](#)

Growing up in Cleveland, Ohio, Sharena Zayed always felt her neighbors in the North Broadway neighborhood had to “look up to someone, look for something, wait for something” rather than feeling a sense of ownership in their community. A former nursing assistant, Sharena began attending Citizens to Bring Back North Broadway out of a sense that her neighborhood was being left behind as the more visible and well-known areas of Cleveland's Slavic Village began to attract re-investment.



For many who call it home, Cleveland's Slavic Village is a diverse, resilient community with a rich history and deep, untapped potential. To most outsiders, the community is recognized primarily for its place at the epicenter of America's foreclosure crisis. Like other disinvested communities, its empty lots and abandoned storefronts are often seen as "a great opportunity" for developers, good and bad.

Shortly after Sharena began attending community network meetings, she met Earl Pike, the executive director at University Settlement, a local social service agency. The two quickly began to collaborate. Sharena now works as the organization's North Broadway Network Weaver, helping neighborhood residents see the leadership potential in themselves and the possibilities for their community.

[Learn more about Sharena and Earl's work in Slavic Village—and how they built community by relocating groundhogs.](#)

What Inspires Us



[Reflections on the Journey to Everyday Antiracism: Equipping Yourself for the Long Haul](#)

By Mark Joseph

The Supreme Court's recent slew of rulings rolling back vital equity mechanisms such as affirmative action, LGBTQ equal rights protections, and student loan forgiveness make two things abundantly clear.

First, we are experiencing a retrenchment of human and civil rights on a scale we've not seen in decades. Second, this retrenchment portends a devastatingly long period ahead of organizing, advocacy and systems change to regain full momentum toward a more equitable society.

Many writers and commentators are providing valuable analysis of the moment and translating the rage and despair that many of us feel into clear statements of insight and determination. I call your attention, for example, to the statements by Kimberlé Crenshaw, law professor at Columbia University and UCLA, and Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation.

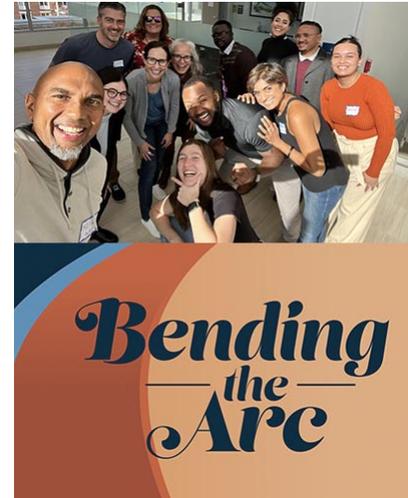
What does this mean on a practical level for each of us? What are the specific implications for our individual antiracist journeys? What steps should we each take tomorrow? The next day?

[Read Mark's suggestions for bringing these practices into your anti-racist journey.](#)

What We're Listening To

[Bending the Arc podcast spotlights National Initiative on Mixed Income Communities \(NIMC\)](#)

In this episode, hosted by doctoral fellow Colette Ngana, we turn the spotlight on us. Guests include NIMC founding director and professor Mark Joseph, associate director Debbie Wilber, and SGG Insight CEO Salin Geevarghese, a long-time NIMC collaborator. The discussion provides listeners a behind-the-scenes look into NIMC's origins, mission, values, and research around mixed-income housing, antiracism, and community development. [Listen to episode 15.](#)

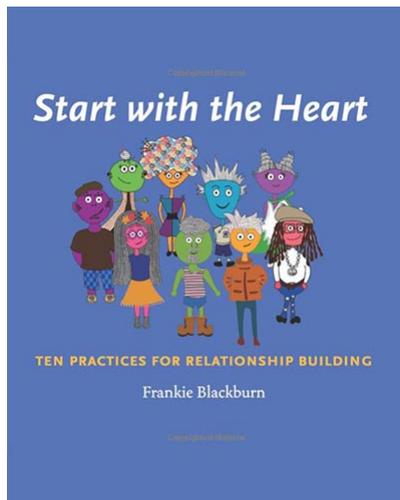


[Redlining Cleveland](#)

Our center director Mark Joseph facilitated a panel discussion at the [Council of Large Public Housing Authorities](#) conference with Sanjay Rajagopalan, MD, chief of cardiovascular medicine at University Hospitals and professor at Case Western Reserve School of Medicine; Joseph Black, vice chairman of the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority Board of Commissioners and program manager of racial equity and racial justice initiatives at the Cleveland Foundation; Kristin S. Warzocha, president and CEO of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank; and Joshua Edmond, CEO of Digital C.

[Listen to their conversation](#) about the impact of redlining in Cleveland.

What We're Reading



[Start with the Heart: Ten Practices for Relationship Building](#)

If you are inspired by the Slavic Village story above and want to learn more about network building and practical tips for building new relationships and strengthening existing ones, *Start with the Heart* is a practical guide to building genuine multicultural relationships and community networks to increase belonging, mutual support, and shared action, where you live and work.

- Are you searching for new friends, ones who bring out the best in you?
- Are you challenged by getting to know people who are different than you
- Do you need to do a better job connecting with people at work?
- Does your job require you to build diverse and trusting relationships in the community?

Many people acknowledge how difficult it has become to make friends or to forge new relationships of any kind, but especially those which can open our minds and hearts to new perspectives and experiences.

Frankie Blackburn, a longtime community organizer in neighborhoods, apartment complexes and local schools, interviewed over 50 diverse colleagues (including our own Mark Joseph), each of whom brings direct experience building relationships across race and class in a wide range of settings, both personal and professional.

Out of these in-depth conversations and 40 years of her own personal practice, she developed 10 specific practices to support both the cultivation of new relationships and the nurturing of lasting relationships. She believes networks of diverse and trusting relationships are the only way to thrive personally and transform our world collectively.



[Learn more and purchase a copy.](#)

Job Opportunities

Earl Pike, highlighted in our lead story, will be retiring. University Settlement is looking for a [new executive director](#), as well as other positions listed on their [website](#).

Our colleagues at The Community Builders are looking for a few new team members. [Visit The Community Builders career site](#) and search for positions in Cleveland.

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