



October 2017

Dear Panelist,

Thank you so much for participating in the community panel on October 12, 2017. We wanted to share with you some of the amazing feedback we received. Knowing that all of you are not users of the Alliance for Interracial Dignity Facebook group, this is a printout of the conversation that happened in the days after the panel. We hope you can see the impact you made on the audience, and we know the ripple effect continues.

If you are a Facebook user, please join our conversation by visiting

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AllianceforInterracialDignity/>

And clicking request to Join Group. We accept all requests asap.

Thank you again. With your continued generosity, we hope to continue to make this an annual event.

Sincerely,

The Alliance for Interracial Dignity Coordinating Council

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# (LISTEN)

## Living in 63119 stories and perspectives from black neighbors

Thurs., Oct. 12, 7 pm, Steger 6th Grade Center



**Farrell Allen Carfield**

Admin · October 12 at 10:27pm · Rock Hill

So many truths shared tonight! What a generous gift. I can't thank our panel here because many of them are not in this Facebook group. But let's show we were listening! If you all post one thing you learned in the comments, I will get this thread printed for each of them. Thank you Willa Washington, Teron Sutherlin, [Kelvin Cunningham](#), Ed Suber, Debra Donner, [Kita Quinn](#), Regina Gray, and Aisha Gray.





**Seth Logan** All of the panelists were great, but Teron was especially effective at using humor and earnesty in equal parts to drive the point home. Thanks to each of them for putting their feelings and thoughts on the line to inform us.

Like · Reply · 4 · October 12 at 10:32pm



**Farrell Allen Carfield** Affordability is an urgent issue if we want to retain the racial diversity we have and invite more people in. We need to look at a ward system for better neighborhood representation. Also, I'm gonna get to work avoiding U Gas in Rock Hill. And, paraphrasing from Teron, "We need your accountability, your availability, and true caring. Get ten toes on the ground and stand beside someone."

Like · Reply · 9 · October 12 at 10:37pm · Edited



**Robin Frisella** Can you share a bit about the U Gas situation?

Like · Reply · October 13 at 8:18am



**Elyssa Joy** Perhaps not surprisingly, those are top in my notes as well Farrell!

Like · Reply · October 13 at 8:21am



**Farrell Allen Carfield** Black patrons have been told, "you people have to come inside and pay." Exceptions are sometimes made if they have on their church clothes. Disgusting.

Like · Reply · 3 · October 13 at 8:43am



**Elyssa Joy** ^^^^^"Black patrons" including the Mayor of Rock Hill!!!!

Like · Reply · October 13 at 8:57am



**Jamie Young** "Because you are stealing our gas". ^^^^^

Like · Reply · October 13 at 9:31am



**Sharon Morrow** What???

Like · Reply · October 13 at 10:53am



Write a reply...





**Elisa Crouch Tomich** I can't remember who brought it up, but the fact that the seats on our city council are all at-large , and effectively exclude black representation, is something I'm now aware of and want changed.

Like · Reply · 11 · October 12 at 10:53pm



**Adelaide Eveleigh Lancaster** This was so contentious last go around. Some voted in purported to be in favor of changing this. We will see.

Like · Reply · 1 · October 13 at 1:09am



**Christine Keller** I believe this was Willa, and I'm glad she brought it up.

Like · Reply · 2 · October 13 at 7:50am



**Elyssa Joy** This is something I've been working on, and I have a presentation that is in a draft form good enough to share with you, but not good enough for public consumption yet. Let's dialogue further when we get a chance to meet up sometime.

Like · Reply · 4 · October 13 at 9:32am



**Elyssa Joy** Adelaide Eveleigh Lancaster Numbers aren't there yet. Next election critical.

Like · Reply · 3 · October 13 at 9:58am



**David D Buck** Elyssa Joy Have you spoken to good friend, David Kimball, on the ward system opportunity? He is a political science professor and has done research on the subject. Plus, he is the smartest person in the room.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 10:50am



**Elyssa Joy** Don't worry Dave. People much smarter than me are at the helm. Rest assured the right people are talking.

Like · Reply · 1 · October 13 at 10:51am



**Elisa Crouch Tomich** Elyssa Joy Would love to see the presentation, and catch up on this.



**Adelaide Eveleigh Lancaster** Ditto!

Like · Reply · October 13 at 12:24pm





**Noelle Becker** I appreciated the honest nature of their answers. We could have gone much longer! I also appreciated the diversity of age and gender!!

One thing I'd take away...is we shouldn't shy away from being direct when asking for diverse input for our school through parent lead equity and PTO groups.

Like · Reply · 7 · October 12 at 11:09pm



**Liz Anne** I will never stop at that U Gas again after hearing Debra's story!

What Teron said about empathy vs sympathy was vital. More white folks need to look at systemic racism not just as a race issue that affects Black communities, but as a social issue th... [See More](#)

Like · Reply · 12 · October 13 at 6:07am



**Seth Logan** It was also abundantly clear that the black community in Webster feels disproportionately policed. As a resident of Blackburn North ("South Webster"), I can't recall the last time I saw a police officer on my street.

Meanwhile, when I was enjoying the curated walking tour of historic North Webster, I saw four different police cars patrolling on a Sunday afternoon.

Like · Reply · 2 · October 13 at 7:34am



**Farrell Allen Carfield** Question: Do you feel more likely to be stopped by the Webster Groves police than white residents? WHOLE PANEL nods and says yes. Then, Kelvin's story about having an officer pull a gun on him due to mistaken identity. Instead of an apology, the officer said, "Go home and stay out of trouble."

Like · Reply · 1 · October 13 at 9:42am



**Elyssa Joy** Farrell Allen Carfield And then his response--which I think were his internal thoughts at the time not something he verbalized to the police. "Why do I have to go home? I have things to do. And I wasn't causing trouble in the first place!"

Like · Reply · October 13 at 9:49am



**Farrell Allen Carfield** 🌟 Yes. Rocked my world. We pretend these are things that happen somewhere else.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 9:52am



**Elyssa Joy** 🌟 No more. No. More.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 9:52am



**Christine Keller** Please send my thanks! I appreciated their candor and heard an urgency in their voices. I was moved by Aysha's metaphor to describe the struggle to show up and self-advocate, "When there's a boot on my neck . . . the owner of that boot should move his foot!" She had more to say, and I wish we could have had enough time to hear her.

Like · Reply · 4 · October 13 at 7:52am



**Dee Ryan** I have missed so many things that I wanted to attend this busy busy week! I really hope this is something that is repeated.

Like · Reply · 5 · October 13 at 7:55am



**Sara Harris Hull** Ditto!

Like · Reply · October 13 at 10:32am



**Farrell Allen Carfield** 🌟 I hope we can repeat too!

Like · Reply · 3 · October 13 at 10:40am



**Ron Zager** Maybe make it an annual tradition?

Like · Reply · October 13 at 10:50am



**Mel Johnson** Yes, so much going on these days, it's hard to make it to everything I'd like. Thank you, **Farrell**, for this thread.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 12:53pm



**Natalie Hulse Teague** Thank you to the speakers, and organizers! So many important points, I echo above comments. In particular, discussion about high tax rate has caused me to look at the issue in an entirely different light.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 8:25am



**Judy Dante** Really bummed to have missed this. Did anyone record it?

Like · Reply · October 13 at 8:29am



**Elyssa Joy** 🌟 We did check into that, but unfortunately the logistics of the panel/mics etc. did not make that a possibility.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 8:32am



**Elyssa Joy** So much was said that moved me, and the panelists' gift to us of their unflinching vulnerability as they spoke their truths was one of the bravest things I've seen in a long time. One thing that really stood out to me was when Teron was responding to the question asked about the recent nazi symbols seen at the High School--and their implied connection to white power (though I didn't hear those words directly in the question). His answer was simply, "It's scary." As he paused, I saw all the strength of him, I saw his obviously commanding intelligence, and I heard those two simple words: "It's scary." Our community needs to stand up loud and in great numbers to combat those among us who are indeed promoting white power with these ugly symbols. It's not okay, and if we don't feel his fear along with him, we are not paying attention.

Like · Reply · 5 · October 13 at 8:30am



**Elyssa Joy** Another one: the gentrification and property tear downs going on in our Historically Black Community of North Webster. A panelist shared that many of the homes are being sold for 25,000 range, and then redeveloped with "mcMansions" that then sell for... [See More](#)

Like · Reply · 2 · October 13 at 8:37am



**Seth Logan** Yeah, that was just awful. No concern for the significant history of the community, just concern for cheap real estate to develop and profit from.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 8:43am



**David D Buck** The panelists were extraordinary and a revelation. In addition to the great comments posted above, what I heard and remember most the day after: Versus protests, we need new elected officials and new effective policies. Versus protests, whites need to reach out and walk in blacks' shoes and make a connection and build a relationship of understanding. City government structures based on wards is proven to garner greater support and effectiveness for black neighborhoods. Racism, unfortunately, is alive and well in 63119 and we cannot afford to look the other way. We must stand up and take action. Finally, as Willa shared, if nothing is done or changed in the area of affordable housing, property taxes, etc., in 5 years, Webster will not have a black population. This is a nationwide phenomena going on, where whites are moving into historic black neighborhoods and buying up houses and increasing prices that blacks can longer afford and are moving out. We cannot and should not let this happen.



**Farrell Allen Carfield** So true about our crash course to an all white area. But I heard the comment about protests as ALONG WITH protests, we need... and AFTER protests we need... I heard panelists say they were "all for" disrupting, but that can't be all.

Like · Reply · 4 · October 13 at 8:47am



**Elyssa Joy** You make it sound like the panelists didn't support protests. Don't revise what was said.



**David D Buck** Elyssa Joy I would appreciate it if you would not accuse me of revising what was said. I believe it is possible for two people to hear the same statements and take away two very different meanings or interpretations. I respect you and I respect your take aways as it relates to protests. All I am saying is that what I heard last night is that two woman panelists specifically addressed protests. One acknowledged they were disruptive but I did not believe she was a supporter of them. The second women was definitely not for protests, as she is the one who aksed that the white audience do something for her, which was to reach out to connect with individuals in the blaack community. Now, you may still disagree with me, which is fine. Just do not accuse me of revising what was said. Thank you.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 9:17am



**Elyssa Joy** 🌟 That's a dangerous game to play in the current realm of "my interpretation is what is going to be news" that we are living in.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 9:18am



**Barb Markway** All of the speakers were so honest and I appreciated their willingness to share. Aisha's comments especially stuck with me- the boot analogy someone already mentioned- and how white people cannot ask POC to explain everything to them. It's our job to learn what we can.

Like · Reply · 🍊 3 · October 13 at 9:19am



**Farrell Allen Carfield** 🌟 Quotes from my notes: "You can't disrupt nicely. Speaking hasn't changed things. When will it stop? People are losing their lives." "I'm all for disrupting, getting attention. And I'd love for that passion to move into elected office so you can get in a place to change policy."

Like · Reply · 🍊 7 · October 13 at 9:27am



**David D Buck** Thanks for sharing this clarification. I stand corrected. Elyssa, I did revise what was said. I'm sorry and made a mistake. You are right. I am wrong. You are true. I am false. You win. I lose. Let's please move on now.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 9:50am






**David D Buck** May I simply say that listening to our great panelists last night made me recall Atticus Finch's profound simple wisdoms as he was talking to his daughter, Scout, on the front porch in the beloved book and film, "To Kill A Mockingbird": "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." Last night was a vital glimmer of hope in helping us whites better understand our black brothers and sisters from their point of view by listening, learning and envisioning what it is like to climb into their skin and walk around in it every day. And if we do not act now to fix the problems they face, Webster Groves will likely be without a black community within 5 years. If we are truly one human race of equals, it is time we show it and live it.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · October 13 at 2:10pm



**Elyssa Joy**  **David D Buck** I want to bring this full circle for you Dave, and better explain why I am firm in my stance that we cannot revise: Mississippi just banned To Kill a Mockingbird in some districts. Alabama just banned it in all state schools. Access to art and literature is being revised now, too, when the ideas within make the white people uncomfortable. I am sorry that the protests and the discussions of protests have made you uncomfortable, but that discussion was not what this night was really about. It was a night designed to listen, and I want to be careful to protect what was said. I don't mean any personal disrespect, though from your response I fear that is what you felt. You are not false, and you have not lost anything. I'm asking us to be careful of our words and the truth. I also ask for the same check on myself. We're all on a journey to understand.





**David D Buck Elyssa Joy** Thank you, as always, for your insightful perspectives and opinions. We are indeed all on a journey of understanding and I will heed your request to be careful of my words and the the truth. But please know that, to me, there is a big difference between sharing what I think I heard and INTENTIONALLY revising the truth. Concerning protests, in my life, I have protested or marched for civil rights with my parents, against the Vietnam War, gun safety, etc. I have joined a few of the recent St. Louis protests because I believe in and support the cause of equal justice for all people. At the same time, I believe in The Serenity Prayer: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. It's the wisdom part that has me stumped sometimes as it relates to whether I think protests can truly change things. I also believe that we are all one and need to work together to bridge the divide to find the middle ground we can all live with and create a win-win solution. Then, again, I also believe that there is good and evil in the world, where there is no middle ground and there is only one solution: good triumphs over evil. Finally, you may be interested in this: I heard on NPR radio a segment where the guest said that the state of Missouri has the best and is the model for other states in the juvenile justice system. For example, juveniles were once basically kept in prison-like structures with razor barbed wire around it. Now juveniles lives in group home structures with excellent results. If Missouri can change, improve and be the model of the US in juvenile justice, maybe there is hope that Missouri can be the model for a law enforcement & justice system that works for all.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 1 hr



**Jo Hanson Doll** David D Buck very well said.



**Wendy Sarno** I was profoundly moved by the panel last night. So impressed and grateful for each of them to be so willing to speak out openly and honestly about the experience of being black in Webster Groves, the rich history of North Webster community as well as the racial profiling and discrimination we all know goes on here. I was especially impressed by the young people, Aisha and Tarron and Ed. I came away with a deep sense of sadness and overwhelm about the insidious racial biases still so alive and well among us in 63119 that cause daily pain in their lives. And I am taking to heart Debra's challenge to us to get outside our comfort zone and meet, engage with, talk to, get to know a person of another race. My intention for this weekend is to do just this. Thank you so much for arranging the evening. We need more like this.



**David D Buck** Wendy, I do not believe I have had the privilege of meeting you. I just wanted to say thank you for sharing your perspectives following last week's panel discussion. In particular, I am with you in encouraging all of us to take to heart and act on Debra's challenge. Nurturing and building such a new relationship with a people of another race can be a revelation. Without boring you, 20 years ago my wife, Barb, and I first met a black, single, older (than me), gay, drug using, great baritone singing voice, in an abusive relationship, and homeless man from New Orleans named Alton. Barb got him a job at her gift store and Alton lived with our family in Webster for 9 months. It has been a long and interesting journey and he now lives in his own apartment, works in downtown hotels as a head waiter, and we help him manage his moment. Importantly, we have learned up close and personal over the longer term the plight of blacks in America. As such, to me, Debra's challenge was the most important of the night. Good luck!



**Laura Guthrie Eads** I'm so sad that I missed this event. It sounds like it was really powerful. Thanks for sharing some of your experience.

Like · Reply · October 13 at 4:51pm