



AAC&U Strategic Initiative

TRUTH, RACIAL HEALING & TRANSFORMATION (TRHT) CAMPUS CENTERS

*Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders to Advance
Justice and Build Equitable Communities*

*Supported by Newman's Own Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation,
and The Papa John's Foundation*

TRUTH, RACIAL HEALING & TRANSFORMATION

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE ANDREWS UNIVERSITY TRHT
CAMPUS INITIATIVE

TRHT OVERVIEW

- AAC&U is partnering with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) enterprise **to help communities embrace racial healing and uproot conscious and unconscious beliefs in the hierarchy of human value.**
- The TRHT enterprise prioritizes inclusive, community-based healing activities and policy designs that seek to change collective community narratives and broaden the understanding that Americans have of their diverse experiences.



TRHT OVERVIEW - FRAMEWORK PILLARS

- **Narrative Change** - examining how to create and distribute new complex and complete narratives in entertainment, journalism, digital and social media, school curricula, museums, monuments and parks and in the way we communicate that can influence people's perspectives, perceptions and behaviors about and toward one another so that we can work more effectively and productively toward community-based change.
- **Racial Healing and Relationship Building** - focusing on ways for all of us to heal from the wounds of the past, to build mutually respectful relationships across racial and ethnic lines that honor and value each person's humanity, and to build trusting intergenerational and diverse community relationships that better reflect our common humanity
- **Separation** - examining and finding ways to address segregation, colonization and concentrated poverty in neighborhoods to ultimately ensure equitable access to health, education and jobs.
- **Law** - reviewing discriminatory civil and criminal laws and the public policies that come from them and recommending solutions that will produce a just application of the law.
- **Economy** - studying structured inequality and barriers to economic opportunities and recommending approaches that can create an equitable society.



TRHT CAMPUS CENTERS

- AAC&U is partnering with higher education institutions to develop Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) Campus Centers to prepare the next generation of strategic leaders and thinkers to break down racial hierarchies and dismantle the belief in the hierarchy of human value.
- The TRHT Campus Centers have developed and are implementing visionary action plans with the aim of moving the needle on the transformative goal of erasing structural barriers to equal treatment and opportunity on campuses, in our communities, and for our nation around the pillars of the TRHT Framework.
- The first ten campuses included: Austin Community College (TX), Brown University (RI), Duke University (NC), Hamline University (MN), Millsaps College (MS), Rutgers University (NJ), Spelman College (GA), The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina (SC), University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (HI), University of Maryland Baltimore County (MD).
- **AAC&U will announce that Andrews University has been selected as one of twelve newly selected TRHT Campus Centers at their Annual Meeting from January 22nd-25th.**

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

- OUR PLAN FOCUSED ON THE TWO TRHT PILLARS OF NARRATIVE CHANGE & RACIAL HEALING & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
- WE ARE THE ONLY CAMPUS THUS FAR TO EXAMINE HOW THE TRHT PILLARS COULD INFORM THIS DIALOGUE ON A CHRISTIAN CAMPUS.

Andrews University: TRHT Campus Center Action Plan

Vision

Reclaiming our spiritual narrative to foster truth telling, healing, and global transformation

Goals

Locating non-dominant narratives within the Christian (Adventist) story that dismantle the belief in a hierarchy of human value. (Narrative Change)

Examine ways in which American Christianity has promoted dominant narratives both domestically and internationally that have contributed to racism. (Narrative Change)

Acknowledge and highlight how racism has severed our ability to connect spiritually and to promote healing through the sharing of and critical reflection upon our personal narratives. (Racial Healing & Relationship Building)

Restore the narrative about the value of all human life and re-connect with our Creator, ourselves and each other within our campus, local, and global communities (Narrative Change)

Identify ways in which our denomination & institution has perpetuated systemic racism (Narrative Change)

ACTION STEPS

- THE TIMELINES ON SOME OF THESE MAY NEED TO BE ADJUSTED.
- COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDE LAKE UNION & SPECTRUM HEALTH LAKELAND THUS FAR - WORKING TO GROW THIS GROUP AND GET MATCHING FUNDING.

Action Steps

Buy in from partners (community & denomination to gain access and address expected resistance. (Michael, FA19)

Work with Center for Adventist Research as well as the Office for Research to develop a plan for examining the artifacts. (Christon Jan. 2020)

Work with the Undergraduate Honors program and student research grants to explore giving funding to students who want to include this work in their thesis. (Christon, Jan. 2020)

Explore graduate student sponsorship through faculty grants to pursue this work. (Christon, Jan. 2020)

Gain grant award. (FA19-SP20)

Train campus and community members to facilitate Rx healing circles. (Michael, Carol, Steve, FA19-SP20)

Work with Communications & Digital Media faculty and students to develop a video capturing our journey through narrative change. (Steve, SP20)

Work with the Horn Archaeological Museum and the Center for Adventist Research to develop a plan to curate artifacts for the multi-media traveling exhibit. (Charity, SP20)

OUTCOMES, EVALUATION, ENGAGEMENT, ETC.

- WE SEE THIS AS MORE THAN JUST A SHORT-TERM INITIATIVE, BUT RATHER A NEW WAY OF ENGAGING WITH ONE ANOTHER THAT WE HOPE TO SUSTAIN LONG-TERM.
- FUNDING, TIME/SCHEDULING, AND CAMPUS/COMMUNITY/DENOMINATIONAL BUY-IN WILL BE KEY TO DETERMINING HOW FAR THIS GOES.

Intended Outcomes

- 1) Critically examine artifacts of American Christianity and document dominant narratives.
- 2) Critically examine denominational and institutional artifacts and document perpetuated systemic racism.
- 3) Develop an interactive, multi-media traveling exhibit to give voice to non-dominant voices within Adventist history to dismantle the belief in a hierarchy of human value.
- 4) Adopt the Rx Healing Circle model within the AU campus and community.
- 5) Alignment between campus, local & global engagements and the TRHT framework.
- 6) Development of video to capture the restoration of the narrative of the value of all human life and reconnection with our Creator, ourselves and each other within our campus, local and global communities.

Communication

- Campus- starting with non-dominant voices
- Denominational- local, national, & global

Evaluation Strategy

- 1) Pre- & post testing connected with the healing circles.
- 2) Mixed methods survey of traveling exhibit (including collection of stories from participants)
- 3) Video evaluation: assessing the impact of the video

Engagement Plan

- 1) Existing Community Engagement Council to engage community partners
- 2) Great SW Michigan Strategic Leadership Council to engage partners
- 3) Leveraging President's, & Provost's Offices and Theological Seminary to engage campus & denomination
- 4) Regular reporting via relevant media channels to campus, community & denomination.
- 5) Regular updates in the above groups during their general email

Sustainability

- Funding from the TRHT Grant
- Matching funds from denomination
- Fundraising from foundations and community partners

Barriers to Accomplishment

- 1) Resistance and gaining access to artifacts. (Buy-in from top administrators, Center for Adventist Research)
- 2) Human resources and funding to actionize traveling exhibit and video
- 3) Training to scale the Rx Healing Circle model campus and community wide
- 4) Time and scheduling

RACIAL HEALING CIRCLES DEFINED

- "A racial healing circle is not just a conversation and is more than just a 'safe space.' It is an experience that engages the heart and requires the heart to be open and expansive. It re-affirms the humanity in all of us. It is a commitment to acknowledging that unconscious bias lives in **all** of us, and it is the spiritual work of affirming and loving ourselves." - Dr. Gail Christopher.
- "Racial Healing circles are designed to focus on stories that affirm our common humanity - **rather than on solving a problem**. They are designed to go much deeper into the heart space by encouraging people to tell their stories, to listen deeply to the stories of others, find common ground and enable us to see our common humanity to help us to see ourselves in the perceived other. When this occurs, we build the **trust** that is necessary for **courageous dialogue**, and the **transformation** of hearts and minds that shows up in what we say and do." - American Library Association.



"STORY CIRCLES" - THE TOUCHSTONES

- Be 100% present, extending and presuming welcome.
- Listen Deeply.
- [Sharing is] Always by invitation.
- No fixing.
- Suspend judgment.
- Identify assumptions.
- Speak your truth.
- Respect Silence
- Maintain Confidentiality
- When things get difficult, turn to wonder.

Adapted from Estrus Tucker, The Center for Courage and Renewal