

2024 Global Intercultural Circle Retreat

Theme: Working towards Mutual Understanding, Social Justice and Equity in the Intercultural Relations of the Southern Tier of New York State

Global Intercultural Dynamics. Every region of the U.S has historical cultural influences and more recent cultural influences that contribute to the intercultural dynamics in that region. We will explore some of the unique historical and contemporary forces which shape the cultural undercurrents of the Southern Tier of New York State. This region is characterized by rolling hills surrounding the valleys of the Susquehanna and Chenango Rivers. The area was the location of the Sullivan Campaign during the American Revolution destroying villages of the Cayuga and the Seneca native Americans. It is also the location of many stops on the Underground Railroad, factory industrialization in the 19th century which attracted waves of European immigrants, the original home of IBM, and Binghamton University, one of four research centers in the SUNY System. In particular Binghamton University is committed to building a diverse workforce and a welcoming and equitable campus climate for a highly diverse student body and staff.

We hope with this retreat to help ground us in this place and become further acquainted with some of the peoples who have come to call this space their home. Among the places, spaces and cultural traditions which we hope to learn about are:

- Harriet Tubman Center for Freedom and Equity at Binghamton University
- Several stops on the Freedom Trail in Binghamton (commemorating the Underground Railroad and African American contributions to US history and culture in Binghamton)
- U Diversity Educational Institute with whom we will collaborate for a UNESCO story circles workshop
- Vines Community Headquarters and Urban Farm
- Driving tour to view historical landmarks and neighborhoods of immigration and industrialization
- Owego's groundbreaking women in history and women entrepreneurs today
- Play reading of *The Fertile River* by African American and Binghamton born Vincent Terrell Durham with James Michalec, Director of the Face It! Theater Company. The play's topic is the African American experience of the Eugenics Movement
- Knapp Winery (Cayuga Lake):
- Harriet Tubman Home in Auburn
- Women's Rights National Historic Park, Seneca Falls

A unifying theme that transcends the retreat sessions is the intersectionality between gender and race and the positionality among white people and people of color. This theme is notably present in the lives of the many African American women we will be meeting during the week.

Readings: Selection of readings connected to the cultural explorations we anticipate:

- *The 1619 Project*
https://pulitzercenter.org/sites/default/files/full_issue_of_the_1619_project.pdf There is also a book version of this text available through Amazon.
- The Harriet Tubman Center For Freedom and Equity website
<https://www.binghamton.edu/centers/harriet-tubman/index.html>
- Anne Bailey, *The Weeping Time: Memory and the Largest Slave Auction in American History*, Cambridge University Press, 2017. 206 pages.
- Vincent Terrell Durham, *The Fertile River*. PDF has been placed in the Retreat 2024 Google Drive
- Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*. Vintage Press, 2010. 793 pages.
- Robin Diangelo, *White Fragility: Why It's So hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. Boston, Beacon Press, 2018. 159 pages.
- Kendall, Francis E. "Understanding White Privilege" 2002. A PDF file posted on the American University website. 10 pages.
- Vines Community Gardens website <https://vinesgardens.org/>
- Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Binghamton University website
<https://www.binghamton.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/index.html>
- Harriett Tubman home <https://www.harriettubmanhome.com/>
- Women's Rights National Historic Park <https://www.nps.gov/wori/index.htm>
- Susquehanna Street, Binghamton
<https://www.wbng.com/2024/02/06/history-behind-binghamtons-1st-black-church/>

Journal Narrative: Prepare an intercultural narrative following the prompt provided in the agenda for Sunday night. This narrative should take you no longer than ten minutes to tell and discuss with the full group.

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7:30 - 9:00 Exploring how Positionality impacts Global Intercultural Relationships

The suggested prompt for this year's narrative retreat is the following:

- Describe an experience where you have engaged with a woman or women of color, and have become aware of your positionality and their positionality and struggle for equity. How did that experience impact you?