

## **Crucial Conversations – June 7, 2020 @ 7:00 PM**

Opening Prayer: Elder Eugene Lewis

Introduction: Dr. Columbus Candies

Ground Rules:

2 minutes each

Wear Mask at the Microphone

Be solution oriented

We are here because of the years of injustice in the black community

Come together to bring meaningful change to AAA

Opening Comments:

Peter Fackenthall

- a. 3<sup>rd</sup> year
- b. Thank you for everyone that has brought us together
- c. Change is necessary in the state, world, AAA
- d. Need to embrace the change
- e. Meetings with Krystalynn Martin, David Kabanje, Gesele Thomas, bd member
- f. More conversations will happen across the state, country, union

Krystalynn

- a. 2<sup>nd</sup> year VP for Spiritual Life, senior Bible, before this at Rio Lindo Academy, and Santa Rosa Church
- b. Honored to be a part of conversation
- c. Having conversations like this is the will of God, the heart of God
- d. Micah 6:8 – That's Christianity
- e. Humbled and look forward to the change
- f. This is a marathon not a sprint
- g. This topic is very precious to her heart

David Kabanje

1. Difficult conversation
2. As with anything worthwhile, needed empathy,
3. And as a black man, his life matters, when he has children, their lives will matter
4. Racism is a heart issue
5. The only one who can battle it is Christ
6. He is the chaplain, works with many students

7. All are welcomed, loved and cherished

Open Mic

Letter from Bettye Blakeney from Mt. Tahoma

1. Please listen to these young people

Peter: Apologized for lack of communication, lack of follow through and lack of love for the hurts and issues that have been brought up.

Steps toward Reconciliation

Peter Fackenthall

1. From here to a Focus Group dealing with racial equity with in the school, churches and conference
  - a. Will run alongside regional churches in collaboration with the school and stakeholders.
  - b. Krystalynn:
    - i. The idea is to be collaborative with community, school, families, stakeholders and former students, etc
    - ii. Has to be something that is not only coming from Academy, but is a joint relational effort together with the community
    - iii. This group will implement an action plan and move forward from words/statements to action and change.

Sheri Crooker – Washington Conference – at mic

- a. She didn't understand white privilege until she educated herself
- b. Easy to not interact if you are privileged
- c. We are all called to serve

Syl Nelson – Kent Church – at mic

- a. Parent – Maya and Sylford
- b. Personally, been in church school all his life
- c. Born and raised Adventist
- d. Racism has been from other Adventists and peers
  - i. Subtle, sense of discomfort
  - ii. He must project harder that he is easy going and not aggressive
- e. People assume he is an angry black man
- f. Police officers have harassed him at times
- g. Most people do not realize they project subtle racism
- h. Adventist education – the feeling is we are ALLOWED to attend YOUR school
  - i. This is what needs to change

Betty - Online

- a. Listen to the young people and acknowledge their concerns
- b. Apologize
- c. Be willing to have a conversation that the students are a part of.
- d. We need healing and change.

Noelle Hoori – Kent SDA - at mic

- a. Should have not taken this long to have this conversation
- b. She is well known in the conference
- c. Has been an advocate
- d. Has been asked “why don’t you just leave” at elementary school levels
- e. Never had any issues at Gem State as a student
- f. She is a social worker
- g. She outlined how to change policy and procedure
- h. Nepotism is rampant
- i. She was not offered the same privilege of the nepotism as other spouses
- j. It only takes one person to make the change
- k. Council needs to be made up of many individuals that are stakeholders, not just teachers
- l. She is angry and fed up

Krystalynn – Response to Noelle – Thank you

- a. As we take our action steps, Krystalynn invited Noelle to be a part of that action

Sanders Robinson – Online Questions

1. When students return to Auburn, will there be education about these conversations so that all black students will be safe. Will students be able to wear clothing to support movements?

Krystalynn –

- a. More need for diversity training for staff AND students
- b. Most complaints so far from surveys have been students toward students, so there is training of all needed

Peter –

- a. Make it formal
- b. Use current curriculum on racial diversity and make it better

David -

- a. Black History Month – can change curriculum but if the culture doesn't change, it won't matter
  - a. Competency and culture must change.
  - b. Head and heart knowledge
  - c. The staff needs to be trained to see the effects of racism and be accountable for sustaining these procedures.

Clothing

- a. Not making policy tonight

Marcus Williams – online

- a. What support do you have for students that face racism?

Peter –

- a. Only informal, needs to be made policy and procedure
- b. Past policies have not been appropriate

Krystalynn

- a. Informal invitations to come tell a staff of incidents. As we can see, this is not enough.
- b. Possible Action Plan – A way of reporting that is safe - maybe an App electronic way to make a complaint for a myriad of issues?
  - i. Make the complaint
  - ii. And then followed up on and dealt with
  - iii. Let person who made complaint know

Craig Mattson – at mic – Washington Conference

- a. Request to recognize and apologize
  - a. For the feeling that students of color are “Allowed” to go to our schools
- b. Not the first time he has heard this.
- c. There is a formal apology
- d. This should not be our America and this should not be in our schools
- e. We can change the sails “We can't change how the wind blows, but we can change the direction of the sails.” We want to change the sails in a new direction at AAA.

Gillian Russell – online question

What will be done to help educate parents because students learn this behavior at home?

- a. You have the oppressed and oppressor
  - i. We need to talk about things

- ii. Educate students and ourselves

Sheri Crooker – at mic

- a. Working from the inside out
- b. Wants to apologize for any harm
- c. I am committed to learn more
- d. Students of color have to code switch in classroom
  - i. They liked online better than actual school
  - ii. Question to ask when we come back: What did you miss and what did you not?

Columbus - Moderator

- a. Embrace all cultures
- b. Immerse yourself in learning different cultures

So many things that we can do

Noelle Hoori – at mic

- a. What is the plan for addressing discrimination against students?
- b. We need to talk – White superiority that is where the crux of the matter is
  - i. Creating a more diverse staff
  - ii. We have to deal with white privilege
  - iii. It takes all of us to change the culture

Peter

- a. Apologized for anything that may have happened to Unique

Krystalynn

- a. Would like Zero tolerance for racism

David

- a. Policy on race is crucial, we have policy on everything else
- b. School should not reflect society
- c. We need to take ownership
- d. Everyone needs to be held accountable

Mimi Bruce – Kent Church – Washington Conference

- a. Has two children
- b. Saddened about these types of discussions because we lost our peculiarity
- c. We have adopted society's guidelines and have lost our peculiarity.

- d. That is why we are still here as a church
- e. Didn't experience racism until she came to the US
- f. Her boys
  - i. She has taught them how to be black in our country
  - ii. She has fear for her sons
  - iii. Celebrate all cultures so that we can become that peculiar people

Dr. Meade Online Question From: Emerald City Church

- 1. Does the school have an ombudsman person? He suggests we need one
- 2. Does the school have a written complaint policy?
- 3. What is the makeup of your **faculty and school board?** Minority vs. white
- 4. Do minority students have adequate support at the school? Financial, education, other support
- 5. **Every student who wants to come, should be able to attend AAA.**

Krystalynn Response:

- Agrees that we need an ombudsman and will put it in the action steps to go to the Focus Group
- We must do better

(At next Crucial Conversation, have this data ready to share)

Syl Nelson – From Kent SDA Church

- a. Guide us – Racism is a tool of the enemy
  - i. Not a political issue
  - ii. Salvation issue
  - iii. Satan hates all of us
  - iv. **Satan uses every means to destroy us!**

Bethel – Student - 2012 – 2013 - Online Question

- a. Need of holding others accountable when there is racism

Allana Thomas – AAA Student class of 2020 – at mic

- a. She had great experience
- b. Does not want to negate others experience
- c. Glad we are having this conversation
- d. School needs to address student body when instances arise
- e. Students talk,
- f. Then need to know that staff hear them and are dealing with these issues

Krystalynn – She affirms Allana

Jesse Ferguson – Academy Church – at mic

- a. Hard for students to speak up
- b. He was not nice as a teen
- c. Need for the mentorship program at AAA to continue and grow
  - a. Give opportunities to talk to students

Dennis Robinson – Online – From Mt. Tahoma

- a. Will there be diversity training for staff?
- b. Liason for students of color

Krystalynn Respond:

- Yes, we have started already and will continue over the summer and into next year
- Agree that we need a liason

Andrew Carrington – online – From Mt. Tahoma

- a. How do students of color feel that Auburn is their school?

Peter Respond:

- We will be discussing this and brainstorming about this.

Elder Eugene Lewis – at mic

- a. Action Group
  - i. Many people of color on the committee

Shavonne Samuels Online Question – Mt. Tahoma church

- a. How are students who exhibit racism disciplined?

Jack Barrow - Renton SDA Church

- a. This conversation on racism needs to be discussed in all of our schools

Bill Roberts - Washington Conference - at mic

- a. Root of Adventism – The power of our movement is that we want to go to heaven
- b. Racism divides us – like gasoline and water
- c. Whites are missing the point
  - i. Not necessarily accusing us, but asking for empathy

Online person

- a. Daughters will not attend if things do not change

Cassie Smith – Online comment

- a. Daughter sent to AAA to experience diversity

Online person

- a. Teaching about culture is important

Joy Sendagala

- a. Apologies have not been sitting right with her

Dennis Robinson

- a. Stop pretending you are color blind – examine yourselves

Krystalynn Response:

- Agree - as a staff we have started this training and will continue. Color and diversity is beautiful and must be celebrated.

Jan Reinking at the mic

- a. Agreed with Pastor Bill
- b. Must preach Jesus

David Reponse:

- a. Good Samaritan analogy
- b. Because we internalize the life of Christ, we must

Online – Javonne Brown

- a. Mental Trauma Counselling– will we offer that for student

Online Comment – Saddened by students lost because of racism.

Krystalynn Respond: We hear you and join you in that sadness.

Krystalynn: Steps towards Action & Change

1. Focus Group - in process of forming and will start to meet soon
2. Diversity Training – Thursday, June 4 and continuing
3. Diversity in Worship
4. 0 Tolerance Policy for racism
5. Admin VP for Diversity and Inclusion - needs to be a person of color



6. When there is a news story of racism, violence or death of a person of color, remember students of color may be having a hard day - give extra space for completing assignments, etc.

Some ideas from the Surveys so far:

1. Clear expectations of what is expected in student behavior and discipline
2. Hold racists accountable
3. Diversity Training, and revisit
4. Diverse Staff
5. Safe place for students of color to report incidents
6. Black Liaison
7. Research history of Persons of Color, not just during MLK Day
8. Listen without judging

Pastor Willie Iwankiw – Kent Church

- a. He works hard to get their church kids
- b. Saddened when students do not have a good experience when transitioning from public to Adventist Schools

Dr Candies: Thank you for coming out. Thank you to the Academy for opening the conversation. We will be continuing this dialogue and action steps. This is just the first of many steps together. We look forward to what God will continue to do.

Closing Prayer - Pastor Randy Maxwell