



National Prevention Town Hall

SOLIDARITY ACROSS MOVEMENTS

*Disrupting Systems of
Violence Against Black
Women & Gender
Expansive Individuals*

SEPTEMBER
13-14

1-4:30pm Eastern
10am-1:30pm Pacific

This virtual event is free and open to all. [Register today!](#)

Description

Solidarity Across Movements

Disrupting Systems of Violence Against Black Women & Gender Expansive Individuals

This National Prevention Town Hall will uplift innovative prevention approaches in the Northeast region of the United States that build solidarity across movements to disrupt systems of violence that disproportionately harm Black women and gender expansive individuals. This two-day event will explore ways to support Black survivors as leaders in our movement and build meaningful partnerships with Black-led movements and organizations. Presenters will engage participants in conversations around critical issues impacting Black women, youth, and gender expansive individuals including reproductive justice and housing as a basic human need and right.

Join advocates, activists and organizers in reproductive justice and gender based violence spaces, those impacted by violence, and others interested in transformative approaches to prevention that center racial equity. Together, we will explore how to advance collective liberation with Black women and gender expansive individuals at the center.

Audience

Advocates, activists and organizers in reproductive justice and gender based violence spaces, those impacted by violence, and others interested in transformative approaches to prevention that center racial equity.

Strategy

Storytelling that centers the voices, experiences, and leadership of Black women and nonbinary individuals.

[Register today!](#)



Speakers & Session Schedule

Featuring **Monaye Johnson**, Town Hall Event Weaver



DAY ONE

Session 1: Supporting Black Survivors as Leaders in Our Movement

Featuring **Ayana Wallace** of Ujima Inc.; **Dr. Jean Clarke-Mitchell, PhD, LICSW** of the Massachusetts Women of Color Network; **Alana C. Brown** of The Safe Sisters Circle; and **Kay Coghill** of me too. International

Session 2: Meaningful Partnerships with Black-Led Movements and Organizations

Featuring **Kalyn Fahie** of Ujima Inc.



DAY TWO

Session 3: Intersections between Violence Prevention and Reproductive Justice

Featuring **Lucy Rios** of the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence; **Ditra Edwards** of SISTA Fire; **Megan Simmons, MPA/JD** of MRS Consulting, LLC; and **Ponny White** of Girls for Gender Equity

Session 4: Housing as a Basic Human Need and Right

Featuring **Kristi Matthews-Jones** of the DC Girls' Coalition; **Cierra Hart** of the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence; and **Fatima Bah** of Calvary Women's Services



Speaker Bios

Event Weaver



Monaye Johnson (she/her/hers)

Monaye (she/her/hers) is a cultural worker, community organizer, abortion doula, and reproductive justice practitioner.

Event Moderator



Lavon Morris-Grant (she/her/hers)

Lavon joined NRCDV as the Director of Community Engagement in 2021. Working in close collaboration with the Vice-President of Strategic Partnerships and Systems Change, Vice President of Programs, Prevention and Social Change, the Director of Policy and the Director of Housing and Economic Justice, she is a bridge to people with lived experience in communities most impacted by housing insecurity to guide and inform the work of NRCDV's housing capacity center and across all initiatives. Lavon has been a social justice advocate for over 25 years, where she founded and was the Executive Director of MACOSH Healing Network in 2013 - 2021. It is the first culturally specific, holistic African American non-profit, domestic violence organization providing resources through the Arts in the State of Georgia. She is a gifted international and keynote speaker and dedicated political activist on vital social and psychological issues including; homelessness, domestic violence, sexual assault, mental illness, trauma recovery, suicide prevention and gun control.

Session 1 Speaker Bios



**"Protecting
Black women is
Black
Liberation."**

Moderator - Ayana Wallace Vieux, MS (she/her/hers)

is the Training and Technical Assistance Manager with Ujima, Inc.: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community. Mrs. Wallace Vieux's career began as a client case coordinator providing direct services and support to victim-survivors who sought emergency shelter. Mrs. Wallace Vieux has been instrumental in the national implementation of the Lethality Assessment Program—Maryland Model (LAP) and has served as the lead trainer for the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, the state coalition. Mrs. Wallace Vieux has worked for over a decade in the domestic violence field providing both direct service to survivors and technical assistance to advocates, law enforcement, community-based partners, and faith communities. Mrs. Wallace Vieux has extensively studied the theory and implications of privilege, oppression, and intersectionality and strives to highlight the experiences the marginalized and/or underrepresented.



Panelist - Alana C. Brown (she/her/hers)

Alana C. Brown is an award-winning attorney who has been fighting injustice for black women survivors of domestic and sexual violence for the last ten years. Her expertise in the law has helped create a pathway for black women survivors of domestic and sexual violence to receive free legal aid services to help facilitate their healing journey. In 2018 to further this mission, Ms. Brown started The Safe Sisters Circle to provide culturally specific, trauma informed, and holistic services for black women survivors of sexual and domestic violence living primarily in Washington DC's Wards 7 and 8. Ms. Brown currently serves as its Founder and Executive Director. Most recently, Ms. Brown was selected as a "2022 Washingtonian of the Year" by Washingtonian Magazine, a distinction held by community "heroes" in the Washington DC community for her work and its impact with Black women survivors in Washington DC as the Founder and Executive director of The Safe Sisters Circle. In 2022, Ms. Brown received the National Bar Association's Top 40 Under 40 Advocates Award for her work with The Safe Sisters Circle. its influence on the Washington, DC legal community and her fearless advocacy for her clients.

Session 1 Speaker Bios



"Be open to know that which is important to others."

Panelist – Dr. Jean Clarke-Mitchell, PhD, MSW, LICSW (she/her/hers)

Dr. Jean is a board member of the MAWOCN and Co-chair of the Training and Technical Assistant Circle. She was the Clinical Director of the Elizabeth Freeman Center, a domestic and sexual violence services organization, for 12 years. Before that position, she served as a clinical supervisor, a shelter director, a counselor/advocate, and a Hotline volunteer. Dr. Jean has lived experience as a survivor of IPV and a Black woman negotiating spaces managed by the dominant culture in the DV/SA movements. She considers herself to be an effective survivor-leader. Additionally, Dr. Jean is a multicultural, multiethnic practicing Psychotherapist whose work is focused on addressing the psychological traumas, often caused by IPV and evidenced throughout the family system utilizing trauma informed-care. She understands the integral role that identity—whether race, culture, gender, spirituality, sexuality, or another—plays in therapeutic relationships, and uses that knowledge to create therapeutic environments and relationships that foster safety, trust, motivation, resilience, and healing. Dr. Jean is an Assistant Professor of social work at Lesley University and has taught social work and psychology courses at Cambridge College; Lady of the Elms College; Smith College; and Westfield State University. Dr. Jean's scholarly work includes investigating issues of domestic violence in the family as it concerns the effects on children and adolescents exposed to IPV. Dr. Jean holds BA degrees from UMASS-Lowell, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA), and an MSW and a Ph.D. from Smith College School of Social Work. Dr. Jean serves on the board of Trustees of MCLA. Her passion for the enhancement of women and girls around the world has led to her involvement in the Rights of Passage and Empowerment Program (ROPE) to mentor female students locally and globally to their fullest potential.



"come celebrate with me that everyday something has tried to kill me and has failed." - Lucille Clifton

Panelist – Kay Coghill (they/them/their)

Kay Coghill, Ph.D. Candidate, whose research focuses on online gender-based violence, is a multi-talented scholar, educator, and advocate. With an M.A. in Organizational Communications and a B.A. in Linguistics and Creative Writing, she delves into the intersections of media, feminism, and social justice. Her impactful peer-reviewed articles explore themes such as Black feminism, digital media, and marginalized voices. A sought-after speaker, she has presented at prestigious conferences like NWSA and ASA. As the Digital Director at me too. International, she leverages her expertise for survivor justice and gender-based violence. With a passion for education, Kay designs courses in literature, gender studies, and communication. Her dedication to fostering inclusive communities is evident through her co-founding of GLOW and board membership at Neighborhood Access and Richmond Reproductive Freedom Project.



Session 2 Speaker Bios



Kalyn Fahie (she/her/hers)

Kalyn Fahie is a survivor of domestic violence and sexual assault and an advocate who works towards ending domestic and sexual violence. Kalyn founded the nonprofit organization, Sisters Acquiring Financial Empowerment (SAFE) in April 2006. Kalyn is a sought-after national speaker for local, state, and national conferences. Kalyn presented with a panel of experts regarding “U.S. Advocacy and Community Engagement for Survivors” at the 2nd Annual World Conference of Women’s Shelters. In October 2013 she was featured in an article on domestic violence written by the White House in Essence Magazine. Kalyn Fahie and Sisters Acquiring Financial Empowerment (SAFE) have received multiple honors and awards including the 2009 National Network to End Domestic Violence’s (NNEDV) “Spirit of Advocacy Award.” Currently, Kalyn Fahie is the Training and Technical Assistance Manager for Ujima Inc., The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community. Kalyn is currently writing her memoir which is scheduled to be released in 2024.

Session 3 Speaker Bios



Megan Simmons, MPA/JD (she/her/hers)

MRS Consulting LLC was founded and is led by Megan R. Simmons, MPA/JD. She formerly served as a Federal Agent and was tasked with investigating reports of sexual assault for the Naval Criminal Investigative Service in the Middle East as well as the United States. She later married her education to her experience by contributing to policy that materially impacted the lives of women and the execution of investigations into allegations of sexual misconduct within higher education. Ms. Simmons' aforementioned involvement in government, law, and policy was the catalyst for her career in legal compliance, corporate consulting, and equity advocacy.

Session 3 Speaker Bios



Ditra Edwards (she/her/hers)

Ditra Edwards is the Co-founder and Director of SISTA FIRE. She is a Black woman born and raised in Providence, Rhode Island, with over 20 years of experience working on racial and economic justice issues. Throughout her career, she has carried the thread (and accent!) of her upbringing in Rhode Island and has woven it with lessons she learned everywhere, from Boston to Washington, DC, and beyond. Her work's theme is making connections between people, their values and vision, and the change they want to bring about. Because of this, she believes in a people-centered approach to changing structural conditions and building community power. In 2015, Ditra's heart brought her back to Rhode Island to be closer to her family. In 2017 she won the Rhode Island Foundation Innovation Fellowship to start SISTA FIRE. Before returning to RI full-time, Ditra was the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Program Director for The Praxis Project, a Washington DC-based nonprofit organization helping communities use media and policy advocacy to advance health justice. Ditra led fundraising efforts, strategy development, and special initiatives design and implementation during her tenure. In addition to her work with SISTA FIRE RI, Ditra supports grassroots organizations, alliances, and movement support organizations through strategy development, capacity building, training, and technical assistance.



Lucy Rios (she/her/hers)

Lucy has dedicated the last two decades to supporting survivors of domestic violence and their families in Rhode Island through several capacities at the RICADV, including as interim executive director, deputy director and leading the prevention and communications teams. Her commitment to catalyzing change and building a world without violence through community building and prevention work has been instrumental in Rhode Island. The creation of the RICADV's Ten Men initiative, now entering its 10th year gathering and supporting men as aspiring allies in violence prevention, is just a glimpse of the innovative and meaningful work Lucy has led since joining the RICADV in 2003. Lucy's leadership and commitment to social justice is also visible in the community work she's involved in. Lucy is a founding board member of the Segue Institute for Learning Charter School, served on the Racial and Environmental Justice Committee of the City of Providence, and is a member of SISTA FIRE, an organization that seeks to build the collective power of women and nonbinary folks of color in RI for social, economic and political transformation.

Session 3 Speaker Bios



Ponny White (she/her/hers)

Ponny White (she/her) is a West African, Liberian refugee, reproductive justice advocate and a storyteller. Her passion for social equity has allowed her the opportunity to work with notable organizations like Planned Parenthood, Advocates for Youth, Girls for Gender Equity, School Readiness Consulting, Minnesota Young Women's Initiative and others. Ponny's reproductive advocacy efforts predominantly centers and uplifts the experiences of children and youth. Children and youth are demographics that disproportionately experience reproductive injustices and lack bodily autonomy in this world, yet are predominantly left out of reproductive advocacy conversations. Using her advocacy knowledge—her professional experience as an early childhood policy consultant, her personal experience as a survivor of CSA (child sexual abuse), and her love for storytelling—Ponny strives to create spaces that affirm the voices of young people, and challenges community and system leaders to radically value the expertise of children and young people in this work. Ponny is a big picture thinker whose activist praxis is love. She plans on spending the next 5 years solidifying herself as a multimedia storyteller who brings authentic advocacy stories to life.

"Young people have always been the catalyst to every civil movement and I believe that reproductive justice efforts have to start with youth engagement."

Session 4 Speaker Bios



Fatima Bah (she/her/hers)

Fatima Bah is the Chief Program Officer at Calvary Women's Services, providing oversight for case managers, workforce development programs, mental health services, addiction recovery meetings, and educational programming. Fatima has more than 20 years of experience in the social/human services arena. Fatima started her career in human services once she completed her education at North Carolina Central University. While living in North Carolina, she served in a variety of roles, including as Residential Director for youth group homes, Community Support Supervisor for individuals and families in the Durham and Wake County areas, and working with Wake County Government to support their 4-H Youth Program to promote positive change and mentoring to inner city youth. Prior to joining Calvary Women's Services, Fatima worked at So Others Might Eat (SOME) for seven years, where her roles included Program Manager for a mental health day program where she implemented new program structures and improved outcomes for participants. In addition, Fatima currently serves as an active board member for Metropolitan Memorial National United Methodist Church, serving homeless individuals through her work with the housing ministry.

"You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him." Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Session 4 Speaker Bios



Kristi Matthews-Jones (she/her/hers)

Kristi Matthews-Jones currently serves as the Director of the DC Girls' Coalition, which works to support young girls of color, transgender girls of color and gender non-conforming people of color to advocate and organize for issues impacting them. The organization also provides trainings and healing spaces for youth of color. She previously worked at the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless for almost 15 years as their Grassroot Advocacy Coordinator. At WLCH she worked with people who are experiencing poverty in various ways to advocate for services, resources, and on dismantling of systematic oppression. Kristi has also served as a talk therapist Intern for MSA Child & Adolescent Center. Her role during this internship was providing individual and group counseling to youth who were experiencing severe depression, anxiety, trauma, stress, and suicidal thoughts and attempts. She served as a Lead Instructor for Black Swan Academy, an after-school program that works with black and brown youth in discovering pride, power and purpose within themselves and their community. In this position Kristi created lesson plans, workshops, and several other activities for youth. She previously worked at the Fair Budget Coalition as their Grassroots Advocacy Coordinator. Kristi moved to DC from Greensboro, North Carolina in 2006. In Greensboro she studied at Guilford College earning two degrees in Community Justice and Psychology. While at Guilford she served as the service coordinator for Glenhaven Multicultural After-School Tutorial program (GMAT) as well as participated in several other campus activities including the anti-racism trainer work. She was also a Bonner Scholar and completed four years of intense community service including running two free summer camps for children from GMAT. Kristi and her college friend started a training organization called DUET, which focuses on providing training, strategic support, and organizational support to groups wanting to dismantle oppression, strategic planning, community healing, and organizing workshops. She also holds two master of science degrees from Walden University in Social Psychology and Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Kristi has won several awards for her work and dedication to the community over the last 19 years. She is dedicated to supporting communities of color fight for social justice and the dismantling of all systems of oppression.

Session 4 Speaker Bios



"I have a duty to fight for housing and economic justice. I will continue my advocacy and efforts to meet the needs of ALL communities. Each day I fight to end housing discrimination, oppression and violence for ALL survivors. Activism, advocacy and empowerment isn't a job or task- it's my calling!"

Cierra Hart (she/her/hers)

Cierra is a fierce survivor advocate with unique perspectives who has been advocating for survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual violence for almost two decades. Cierra Hart is the Director of Housing and Economic Justice for the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence (NJCEDV). Cierra is also a consultant for the National Network to End Domestic Violence's Housing Consortium. Cierra provides advocacy, training, technical assistance, public awareness, and support for advocates and survivors. Cierra has been involved in various federal, state, and local housing and economic justice advocacy and policy initiatives to help survivors heal, restore, and renew their lives. Cierra's community activism is focused on identifying and breaking down barriers that keep people from surviving and thriving in society. Cierra's work has been recognized locally, statewide, and nationally. Cierra has been instrumental in expanding survivors' access to housing statewide. Cierra has worked with many communities in the areas of homelessness prevention, emergency and transitional housing, domestic violence program development, community development, eviction prevention, and rental assistance programs. Cierra was instrumental in creating a statewide hotel aggregator program in March of 2020 to house survivors and children fleeing from domestic violence during the global pandemic. Cierra has received many awards. Most recently, Cierra received the Excellence Award in 2018 from the New Jersey Association on Correction and was most recently the recipient of the 2021 Excellence Award for Victims' Justice from the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General. Cierra most recently won the Gloucester County NAACP's Irene Hill Smith Civil Rights Award for the work that she continues to do to for survivors—specifically the positive impact she has had on survivors from marginalized communities.