COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Join us on Zoom to engage in a conversation about Environmental Justice

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2023 AT NOON

The link between climate change, health and poverty by Cheryl Holder

Carmera Thomas-Wilhite
Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Todd Pride
Legacy Land & Water Partners

Register: ChesCoCF.org/explore/Food-for-Thought
THANKS TO OUR THOUGHT LEADERS

**Todd Pride**
Legacy Land & Water Partners
[https://www.legacylandwater.org/](https://www.legacylandwater.org/)

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**SCHEDULE**

- 12 | Welcome
- 12:05 | Thought Leaders Overview & Discussion
- 12:45 | Breakout Rooms or Full Group
- 1:00 | Depart
  - TED Talk individually
THANKS TO OUR PROMO PARTNERS
GROUND RULES

- Please be respectful to all.
- Some may never have dealt with these topics before while others may have lived through traumatic experiences.
- Please mute yourself + turn off your video during the video streaming.
- Feel free to eat your lunch while viewing the video.
- Please unmute yourself + turn on your video immediately after the video streaming to encourage open dialogue.
- Raise your hand or use the chat room to make a comment or pose a question.
- Tackle problems, not people.
- Discuss the undiscussable.
Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

The environmental justice movement was started by individuals, primarily people of color, who sought to address the inequity of environmental protection in their communities.

Climate gentrification refers to the ways that climate impacts may contribute to changes in community characteristics and potential displacement of vulnerable residents.
VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Some communities of color living in risk-prone areas face cumulative exposure to multiple pollutants.

Adaptation plans that consider these communities and improve access to healthcare help address social inequities.

OLDER ADULTS

Older adults are vulnerable to extreme events that cause power outages or require evacuation.

Checking on elderly neighbors and proper emergency communication can save lives.

CHILDREN

Children have higher risk of heat stroke and illness than adults.

Adults can lessen risk by monitoring exertion and hydration.

LOW INCOME COMMUNITIES

Low income families are at risk of physical and mental illnesses during flooding and in crowded shelter conditions.

Comprehensive disaster management can improve resiliency for people with limited resources.

Environmental Racism Is Nothing New

Race is the most significant predictor of a person living near contaminated air, water, or soil.

56% of the population near toxic waste sites are people of color.

People of color:
- Have seen 95% of their claims against polluters denied by the EPA.
- Have 38% higher nitrogen-dioxide exposure.

Are 2x more likely to live without potable water and modern sanitation.

Environmental Justice (EJ) Areas defined as: Communities where 20% of residents live below the federal poverty line &/or 30% are non-white minorities
The World Health Organization estimates that climate change will cause an additional **250,000 deaths/year between 2030 and 2050.**

**Low-income communities are more likely to be exposed** to climate change threats (flooding, storms, and droughts) due to inadequate housing and infrastructure.

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**CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS**

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https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/race-and-climate-change/
Top 10 Most Challenging Places to Live With Asthma in 2022:

1. Detroit, MI
2. Cleveland, OH
3. Allentown, PA
4. Lakeland, FL
5. Fresno, CA
6. Charleston, SC
7. Harrisburg, PA
8. Poughkeepsie, NY
9. Philadelphia, PA
10. Baltimore, MD


IMPACT ON BLACK NEIGHBORHOODS

The U.S. faces a **26% increase in flood risk** within the next 30 years.

**Black communities will be disproportionately impacted** as flooding risks grow in the coming decades.

The annual cost of flooding across the U.S. will hit $40 billion annually by 2050, compared with $32 billion currently, and predominantly Black communities will be the worst hit.

Neighborhoods created by historic discriminatory “redlining” housing policies tend to have lower than average vegetation cover and are at greater risk of extreme heat.

“Forever Chemicals”

Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a large group of human-made chemicals that have been used in hundreds of industry & consumer products worldwide since the 1950s. More than 9,000 PFAS have been identified. PFAS are contained in:

• Cleaning products
• Water-resistant fabrics, such as rain jackets, umbrellas and tents
• Grease-resistant paper
• Nonstick cookware
• Personal care products (shampoo, dental floss, nail polish, eye makeup)
• Stain-resistant coatings used on carpets, upholstery, and other fabrics

For 70+ years, chemical companies have known that the highly fluorinated PFAS build up in our blood (bio-accumulation in bodies)

U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) outlines health effects associated with PFAS exposure: cancer, liver damage, decreased fertility, and increased risk of asthma & thyroid disease.

In the first seven weeks of 2023, there were more than 30 incidents recorded by the Coalition to Prevent Chemical Disasters: ~ one every 1.5 days.

The 10 states with the most accidents from 2004 to 2020

- Texas
- Louisiana
- California
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Ohio
- Arkansas
- Florida
- Kansas
- Pennsylvania

188 incidents in 2022
177 incidents in 2021


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ACCIDENTAL CHEMICAL SPILLS

“What happened in East Palestine, Ohio is a regular occurrence for communities living adjacent to chemical plants. They live in daily fear of an accident.”

Feb 2023 Train Derailment in East Palestine, Ohio
- Hazardous spills → environmental & chemical concerns
- People & animals → head pain, coughs, rashes
- Contaminated air + ground + groundwater + rainwater + 1M gallons of water to fight flames
- Where to put the hazardous waste?
- Lack of trust between residents & officials:
  “the area is safe to return to” + “it will take years to really know the impact”

The US averages 1 chemical accident every 2 days
- Accidental releases are from train derailments, truck crashes, pipeline ruptures, industrial plant leaks and spills
- @200 million people are at regular risk of being exposed to chemical accidents

https://www.npr.org/2023/03/03/1160481769/east-palestine-derailment-toxic-waste-cleanup
• When faced with the **Depression-era housing crisis**, in **1933** FDR’s federal **New Deal** increased American’s availability to housing mortgages & housing stock.

• The **New Deal Housing Program Enforced Segregation:**
  
  Beginning in 1934, the newly established FHA (Federal Housing Administration):
  
  o refused to insure mortgages for homes for Black families
  o refused to insure mortgages in white neighborhoods that were too close to Black ones
  o subsidized builders who were mass producing subdivisions for whites only
    ▪ people of color were left out of mortgage lending
    ▪ white people flooded the new suburban communities
    ▪ people of color were pushed into urban housing project rentals

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Levittown NY 1953. A house sublet by William Cotter & his family was plastered with signs to try to prevent eviction. The Cotters were the first black family to move in & were denied renewing their lease or buying their home. The family sued citing racial discrimination. **And lost.** The courts upheld the landlord’s right to rent to whom he pleased.

[https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america](https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america)

We need to make the outdoors more inclusive.

Shifting how we define the “natural environment” allows us to rethink how people of color engage with natural spaces and in the environmental movement.

We need to “preserve open spaces and places that can engage and connect people with the outdoors, including culturally significant environments”.

https://www.legacylandwater.org/mission

“Black Faces, White Spaces” by Carolyn Finney
https://www.euronews.com/green/2020/10/05/environmental-racism-has-ripped-black-people-away-from-nature
Legacy Land & Water Partners aims to preserve the remaining open spaces of Underground Railroad trail areas and, in doing so, preserve and protect the “veins of freedom in the land of our country’s Democracy.”

These open spaces provide motivation to appreciate freedom and preserve our democracy’s critical natural resource lands and biodiverse wildlife habitats that still exist as the historical theater of the battles for individual liberties by diverse allies.

https://www.legacylandwater.org/underground-railroad-sacred-grounds
• Better understand the communities you serve
• Explore ways to incorporate environmental justice into your work
• Listen and attend to community needs and priorities
• Partner with federal, state, local, Tribal, and community entities to plan, protect, respond, and adapt
• Tell your elected officials that you care about environmental justice

https://aspe.hhs.gov/reports/ej-human-services
https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/environmental-justice
From sending a message to your elected officials to signing a petition standing up for clean water, check out all the ways you can take action for the Bay!

https://www.cbf.org/action-center/tools-and-resources.html

Additional advocacy tools -- https://www.cbf.org/action-center/tools-and-resources.html
**DISCUSSION**

Moderated in full group & breakouts
Breakouts: 30-second self-intro

**Brief Intros**
- Who are you? What brought you to today’s Community Conversation?
- What did you want to learn? What have you learned?

**Discussion Questions**
- Where do you see environmental justice intersecting with other issues, such as housing, education, health care, etc.?
- How have you seen systemic biases and discrimination contribute to environmental injustice?
- What can we do in our own neighborhood to create a more equitable and sustainable future for our communities, with economic, environmental and social justice?

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The link between climate change, health and poverty

By Cheryl Holder

The health impacts of climate change are already here, says physician Cheryl Holder.

Unseasonably hot temperatures, disease-carrying mosquitoes and climate gentrification threaten the poor and vulnerable with existing health conditions; while wealthier people move to healthier ground.

In an impassioned talk, Holder proposes impactful ways to protect people from climate related health challenges -- and calls on doctors, politicians and others to build a care system that incorporates economic, environmental and social justice.
ZOOM IN AT NOON – SPREAD THE WORD

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS
Join us on Zoom to engage in a conversation about healthcare.
TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023 AT NOON

Register: ChesCoCF.org/Explore/Food-for-Thought

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS
Join us on Zoom to engage in a conversation about Juneteenth.
TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2023 AT NOON

JUNETEENTH
FREEDOM DAY

Register: ChesCoCF.org/explore/Food-for-Thought

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