

SYSTEMIC RACISM: A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

We invite you to participate in a conversation about systemic racism. Our objective is not to preach, pressure, or persuade, but rather to provide an opportunity for members of our community to listen and learn from one another. Our extraordinary presenters will share their personal stories about their experiences, followed by an opportunity for questions and comments.



Debbie Esparza
CEO, YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix



Mittneen Williams, MD
Anesthesiologist (retired)



Hon. Roxanne K. Song Ong
Presiding Judge, Phoenix
Municipal Court (retired)



Diana "Dede" Yazzie Devine
CEO, Native American Connections



The Rev. Canon John E. Kitagawa,
D.Min. Episcopal Pastor (retired)

ABOUT OUR SPEAKERS:

Debbie Esparza, CEO, YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix

- Debbie has a diverse leadership perspective with experience in banking, consulting, entrepreneurship, academia, and more than 25 years in non-profit executive leadership.
- Debbie's personal commitment to YWCA's mission to eliminate racism and empower women began over 20 years ago as a donor, volunteer, and national board member.
- Debbie is compelled to get up and do the work of the YWCA until injustice is rooted out, until institutions are transformed, until the world sees women, girls, and people of color the way she does: Equal. Powerful. Unstoppable.
- Debbie is currently active with The Latina Giving Circle.
- Serves on the boards of Valley Leadership and the North American Same-Sex Partner Dance Association.
- In her spare time, Debbie enjoys competitive ballroom dancing. She and her dance partner are trailblazers in gender-neutral dancing and lead switching.

Mittneen Williams, MD, Anesthesiologist (retired)

- Dr. Mittneen Williams had a life-long dream of being a physician. Unlike most physicians she trained with, she had no family legacy of physicians. She just knew that a career in medicine required one to be brilliant.
- After teaching Microbiology at a medical school in Canada she figured out that she was brilliant enough to pursue her dream and become a physician. This was made possible in part when the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation offered financial assistance to underserved minorities. After graduating from Indiana University Medical School in 1977 Dr. Williams practiced emergency medicine at Carle Clinic in Urbana Illinois and was an affiliate faculty member at the University of Illinois.
- Dr. Williams completed a Fellowship in Pediatric Cardiology at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia and a Residency in Anesthesia at Maricopa County Medical Center. Over her career she has provided anesthesia care at numerous hospitals in Maricopa County.
- In retirement Dr. Williams spends her time as volunteer for Habitat for Humanity and the Botanical Gardens, and gardening at a church to help raise fresh vegetables that are donated to food distribution centers that help families in need.

Hon. Roxanne K. Song Ong, Presiding Judge, Phoenix Municipal Court (retired)

- Judge Song Ong is Arizona's first Asian American woman lawyer, first Asian American woman judge, and first woman and minority to become chief judge of Phoenix municipal court.
- A Phoenix native Judge Song Ong began her career practicing in the areas of criminal prosecution, defense, and immigration law.
- Began her judicial career in 1986 on the Scottsdale City Court.
- In 1991 became a judge for the Phoenix Municipal Court and in 2000 became the Assistant Presiding Judge.
- In 2005 she was appointed as the Chief Presiding Judge of Phoenix, the fifth largest city in the United States, running one of the busiest courts in the country until her retirement from the court in late 2014.

- Judge Song Ong's term was marked by advances in the management of DUI cases and the introduction of specialty courts to address cases involving populations with significant financial, psychological, behavioral, physical and related challenges. Phoenix's Veterans Court, Homeless Court, Mental Health Court, and Domestic Violence Court have become models for other courts in the state and country.
- Judge Song Ong continues to serve as Judge Pro Tem for other jurisdictions while teaching and speaking on topics of judicial, legal and civics education, access to justice, and diversity and cultural competency.

Diana "Dede" Yazzie Divine, CEO, Native American Connections

Diana "Dede" Yazzie Devine - Native American Connections President/CEO since 1979

- Ms. Devine has an MBA from Arizona State University and is a state licensed substance use counselor.
- Ms. Devine has been widely recognized for her achievements and service through awards including the ASU WP Carey School of Business Hall of Fame, Valley Leadership's Woman of the Year, YWCA's Business Leader Award, Arizona's Centennial Legacy Project – Arizona's 48 Most Intriguing Women, Phoenix Business Journal's 25 Most Admired CEOs, Phoenix Community Alliance Center City Starr Award, and the Arizona Interfaith Movement Golden Rule Award.
- Ms. Devine has served on many boards including Native Home Capital and ASU Lodestar Center for Philanthropy & Nonprofit Innovation, as President of St. Mary's High School Board and as Robert Wood Johnson Foundation National Mentor for Developing Leadership.

Native American Connections provides comprehensive behavioral health and integrated medical services, affordable housing, and community based economic development opportunities. NAC developed, owns, and operates over 1,000 units of affordable housing for working families and permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals along the light-rail in Central Phoenix. NAC is a leader in multi-family housing and LEED Platinum Certified building.

The Rev. Canon John E. Kitagawa, D.Min. Episcopal Pastor (retired)

- The Rev. Canon John E. Kitagawa is a retired Episcopal priest, last serving as Rector of St Philip's Episcopal Church, Tucson, AZ.
- Rev. Kitagawa currently serves on the Episcopal Church Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism and Reconciliation, and the Episcopal Church Presiding Officers' Advisory Group on Becoming the Beloved Community Implementation.
- Rev. Kitagawa is the Past President and a current Board member of Habitat for Humanity Tucson, also serving as regular construction volunteer. He also has served with many groups locally, nationally, and internationally.