

GLOBAL CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS FIND THEIR COLLECTIVE VOICE

September 8, 2020 at 4:00pm Hawaii

Speaker Biographies



Melina ABDULLAH

Co-founder, Black Lives Matter Los Angeles, and Professor, Pan-African Studies, California State University, Los Angeles, CA, USA @DocMellyMel

Melina Abdullah is a recognized expert on race, gender, class, and social movements. She was among the original group of organizers that convened to form Black Lives Matter and continues to serve as a Los Angeles chapter leader. In addition, she is professor of Pan-African studies at California State University, Los Angeles and co-host and co-producer of the weekly radio program *Beautiful Struggle* which airs on KPFK, part of the Pacifica radio network. Dr. Abdullah is the author of numerous articles and book chapters, with subjects ranging from coalition-building to womanist mothering. She has contributed to popular media outlets, including *The Los Angeles Times*, *Los Angeles Sentinel*, and BK Nation and has appeared on MSNBC, CNN, ABC, PBS, BET, and Al-Jazeera. She has also been featured in the films *Waking the Sleeping Giant*, *13th*, *When Justice Isn't Just*, and *Justice or Else* and in the television series *Two Sides*. Dr. Abdullah serves on a number of boards for, among others, the Black Community, Clergy and Labor Alliance, California Faculty Association-Los Angeles, Los Angeles Community Action Network, and the National Association for Ethnic Studies. She is the recipient of many awards, including most recently the 2018 Community Service Award from National Council for Black Studies. Dr. Abdullah earned her PhD in political science from the University of Southern California and her BA in African American studies from Howard University.



Cheryl AXLEBY

Co-Chair, Change the Record; and Co-Chair and CEO, Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement South Australia, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, Melbourne, Australia @NATSILS_

Cheryl Axleby has served as chief executive officer of Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Inc. since 2012. She is also co-chair of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services and the Change the Record Coalition. A proud Narungga woman with family ties across South Australia (SA), Ms. Axleby has 25 years of experience working within the law and justice portfolio and currently holds positions as board member of Seeds of Affinity and Reconciliation SA, active member of the Justice Re-investment SA Working Group, and member of the SA Coalition for Social Justice. She previously held positions as chairperson of the Women's Legal Service of South Australia, alternate deputy chairperson of the then ATSIC Patpa Warra Yunti Regional Council, member of the Correctional Services Advisory Board to the Minister, and board member of Dame Roma Mitchell. Ms. Axleby's vision is for every Australian to be 'pro-active' not 're-active' to the issues impacting the quality of life for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people.



Siana BANGURA

Producer, 1500 & Counting, Writer, and Community Organizer, Black Lives Matter UK, London, United Kingdom @sianaarrgh

Siana Bangura is a writer, producer, performer and community organizer hailing from South East London. She is founder and former editor of the Black British Feminist platform, No Fly on the WALL; author of the poetry collection, *Elephant*; and producer of *1500 & Counting*, a documentary film investigating deaths in custody and police brutality in the United Kingdom. Ms. Bangura works and campaigns on issues of race, class, and gender and their intersections and is currently working on projects focusing on climate change, the arms trade, and state violence. Ms. Bangura is also a workshop facilitator, public speaking trainer and social commentator. She has worked with organizations including Groundwork UK; institutions and universities including Oxford and Cambridge; and companies such as Great Men UK, as a consultant, facilitator, and advisor, often focusing on working with marginalized groups, young people, Black women, and people of color. Ms. Bangura is an international public speaker, performing and presenting papers and presentations across the world, including in Germany, Portugal, Finland and Brazil. She has delivered two TEDx talks – at the University of St. Andrews in 2017 and at the final TEDxEuston Salon in 2019 – and in 2019, co-curated TEDxYouth@Brum conference at Birmingham’s Hippodrome. Ms. Bangura has been recognized by MOBO, *The Bookseller*, VICE, *Dazed*, *Elle*, *NU People Magazine*, *Hustle and Heels*, *The Voice*, *True Africa*, *Buzzfeed*, and the BBC, among others. She was nominated for the 2016 *Nu People x Hustle and Heels* Inspire Award and holds a history degree from the University of Cambridge.



Adam GREEN

Associate Professor of American History, Department of History, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, USA @UChicagoHistory

Adam Green is associate professor of American history at the University of Chicago. He teaches and researches a variety of fields, including twentieth century U.S. history, African American history, urban history, cultural studies, and social movements. He has written and co-edited two books: *Selling the Race: Culture and Community in Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (Univ. of Chicago Press: 2006) and *Time Longer than Rope: Studies in African American Activism, 1850-1950*, co-edited with Charles Payne (New York University Press: 2003). Professor Green’s current book research deals with the history of the black struggle for happiness, and he is developing several articles and projects dealing with segregation, police torture, and post-1970 culture and society in Black Chicago. He received his BA from The University of Chicago and his PhD from Yale University.



DeRay MCKESSON

Civil Rights Activist, Podcast Host “Pod Save the People,” and Author, On the Other Side of Freedom: The Case for Hope, Baltimore, Maryland, USA @deray

DeRay Mckesson is a civil rights activist focused primarily on issues of innovation, equity and justice. As a leading voice in the Black Lives Matter Movement and a co-founder of Campaign Zero, Mr. Mckesson has worked to connect individuals with knowledge and tools, and provide citizens and policy makers with commonsense policies that ensure equity. He has been praised by United States President Barack Obama for his work as a community organizer, has advised officials at all levels of government and internationally, and continues to provide capacity to activists, organizers, and influencers to make an impact. Spurred by the death of Mike Brown and the subsequent protests in Ferguson, Missouri, and beyond, Mr. Mckesson has become a key player in the work to confront the systems and structures that have led to mass incarceration and police killings of black and other minority populations. He is also the host of the award-winning weekly podcast

Pod Save The People – which creates space for conversation about the most important issues of the week related to justice, equity and identity. Mr. Mckesson frequently appears on national media outlets including *The Daily Show*, *The Colbert Report*, *NPR*, *MSNBC*, *CNN*, among many others. He is a board member of Rock The Vote, was named one of the World’s Greatest Leaders by *Fortune Magazine* in 2015, and one of the 30 Most Influential People On The Internet by *Time Magazine* in 2016. Born and raised in Baltimore, he graduated from Bowdoin College and holds honorary doctorates from The New School and the Maryland Institute College of Art.



Saadia MOSBAH

President, M'nemty, Tunis, Tunisia @Mnemty

Saadia Mosbah is president of M'nemty, a non-profit organization committed to the progressive and peaceful eradication of all forms of discrimination, segregation and exclusion, through education and cultural exchanges. Spurred by her experience with racial discrimination while working as a flight attendant and cabin manager for Tunisair, Ms. Mosbah co-founded M'nemty in 2013 after two previous attempts to establish the organization before the Tunisian Revolution in 2011. A native of the Bab Souika district in Tunisia, as president of M'nemty, Ms. Mosbah is actively engaged in the fight against racial injustice and in 2015, sought to ignite a national debate by campaigning on issues of race and discrimination in Tunisia. Her efforts included asking the Tunisian government to acknowledge that slavery is a crime against humanity, that the 2014 Constitution was imprecise on the rights of minorities and the definition of discrimination, and that black Tunisians are poorly represented in government and in the Tunisian legislative assembly. As a result, an anti-racism law was adopted on October 9, 2018 and January 23 was proclaimed National Slavery and Human Trafficking Abolition Day.

Moderator:



Lenneal J. HENDERSON

Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Public and International Affairs, The University of Baltimore, Baltimore, Maryland; and Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Virginia State University, Claremont, Virginia USA @publicaffairsub

Lenneal Henderson is an emeritus distinguished professor of public and international affairs and the assistant dean of public and international affairs at the University of Baltimore. He is also the dean of the college of humanities and social sciences and an eminent scholar at the Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia. In addition, Professor Henderson is currently a Fellow of the International City/County Management Association in Washington, DC. Professor Henderson was formerly a visiting faculty member in the Department of Government at the College of William and Mary; head and professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; senior faculty member at the Federal Executive Institute; professor in the School of Business and Public Administration at Howard University; director of ethnic studies at the University of San Francisco. He has worked in the U.S. Department of Energy, the Social Security Administration and the U.S. Department of State. Professor Henderson was also chair of the Mayor’s Budget Commission for the District of Columbia and a board member of the National Civic League. He has chaired the boards of the Greater Baltimore Urban League and the Maryland Humanities Council and is currently on the boards of Virginia Humanities and LifeNet Health, Inc. Professor Henderson also has written and performed one-man plays about Thurgood Marshall, A. Philip Randolph, Howard Thurman, Robert Weaver and W.E.B. DuBois throughout the nation, often as fundraising activities. He was a Kellogg National Fellow and a Ford Foundation, National Research Council Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Professor Henderson is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration. He received his AB, MA and PhD from the University of California, Berkeley.