



February 2021 CWI Newsletter <https://womensclearinghouse.org>

Invitation to CWI Zoom Meeting, Tuesday, February 23, 2021 (12:00-1:30 PM EST)

“Wise Aging – Living with Joy, Resilience, and Spirit”

Tuesday, February 23, 2021

12:00-1:30 pm via Zoom

Registration Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEvdOivpiliE9LImRm0GXDs0VuPbbIJAZt8>

Wise Aging: Living with Joy, Resilience, and Spirit www.jewishspirituality.org (based on the book Wise Aging by Cowan and Thal.) Wise aging is a senior program that considers mindfulness and contemplative practices such as meditation, text study, journaling and gentle movement as key tools.

This CWI meeting is organized and led by **Harriett Stonehill**, past CWI Co-President, mega skills trainer of trainers, professor at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), author, and an experienced Wise Aging facilitator. She has arranged for the following trained Wise Aging Facilitators who are active nationally and internationally to lead us in various interactive activities in this CWI meeting.

Evi Beck, is a retired professor of Women’s Studies at University of Maryland, author and long-time Circle Dance teacher who conducts programs across the country and world. She will lead us virtually in some dances.

Harriette Kinberg, is a retired Federal Government Manager who worked at FEMA and a Wise Aging Facilitator in DC, Maryland and Virginia. She will provide an overview of the Wise Aging program and describe what happens during a typical Wise Aging group session using power point materials.

Francie Schwartz, retired from the Union of Reform Judaism, where she worked as the Adult Jewish Learning Coordinator and still loves to teach all things Jewish to our community. She is now a Wise Aging Facilitator at Temple Micah in DC. She will focus on using meditation.

The majority of participants in the Wise Aging Programs are women so the focus has mainly been on their needs as they grow older.

This session will be interactive with a discussion after the presentations. Attendees will be able to join and focus on various strategies. Please have a pen and blank paper handy.

Questions may be addressed to Harriett Stonehill at (202) 232-8173. Invite your friends to join us.

Zoom Meeting Summary, January 26, 2021 - 12:00-1:30 PM EST, “Successful Collaboration in Feminist Women’s Organizations: How Much Is Racism at Play?”

The raw video recording of this meeting is available on <https://youtu.be/xhyMYMWBBeQU> We encourage you to view it to get more of the richness of this meeting than we were able to capture in the following summary. The first 10 minutes of the presentation, including the introduction by meeting organizers Holly Joseph, Dr. Alotta Taylor, and Christian Nunes, president of NOW, were not recorded due to technical difficulties. We thank the presenters, organizers, participants, and witnesses to the discussion. We also apologize to those 200+ additional people who were unsuccessful in attending this zoom meeting which was limited to 100. CWI Treasurer and Montgomery County Maryland NOW's Holly Joseph introduced the program that she and Dr. Alotta Taylor, CWI's Vice-President for Diversity, organized. The presenters then introduced themselves.



Christian F. Nunes, MBA, MS, LCSW, in August 2020, became the president of the [National Organization for Women](#) (NOW), the largest grassroots feminist organization in the country. Christian is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Consultant, and a Woman-Minority Business Owner. She received her BSW degree from Northern Arizona University, Master of Science from Columbia University, and Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. An active community organizer, she has spoken at events such as the March for Black Women in 2018. Along with her activism for mental health, she also has over 20 years of experience advocating for children’s and women’s issues. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Consultant, and Woman-Minority Business Owner. In 2006, she founded a behavioral health and consulting practice where

she assisted social service and behavioral health companies and provided direct mental health services to individuals and families.



Thu Nguyen, serves [OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates](#) National as its Director. A graduate from Rice University with degrees in Chemistry and Sociology, Thu found her way into the nonprofit sector through organizing Asian American students on campus and bridging partnerships between student groups and local Houston community organizations. Previously she freelanced for non-profits and Asian-owned start-ups to do community outreach and marketing. As Director, Thu oversees storytelling, relationships, and operations for OCA. She brings a unique understanding of grassroots organizing and design to her work at the national level where she focuses on the intersection of advocacy with small businesses. She works 5-9 in hospitality, cosmetology, and

zine-making (usually a noncommercial online publication). You can find her exploring how to spacemake via thudawin.org.



Sheila Coates is a sixth generation Virginian activist on behalf of African American women and families for more than four decades. In 1985 she founded [Black Women United for Action](#) (BWUFA), a community service volunteer organization which she still serves as president. BWUFA has grown from 14 Northern Virginia members to an international organization with ties in Africa, Canada and Europe. Her many accomplishments as the leader of BWUFA include the development of the annual observance of the Slave Memorial Wreath Laying Ceremony at Mount Vernon. The annual ceremony, developed many years ago, which includes both local guests and travelers from other countries. Ms. Coates has successfully advocated for the

appointment of an African American woman to the Board of George Mason University (a first in that institution's history). She has testified numerous times on behalf of African American families before official committees and commissions and has been invited to the White House under two administrations to speak on public policy issues and family preservation. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Stan Lee Foundation, devoted to promoting literacy, diversity, culture and the arts. Ms. Coates has received four gubernatorial appointments, including the Virginia Commission on Women, the George Mason University Board, and the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association Advisory Board.

First Question posed to panelists: What are the factors affecting success and barriers to organizations, especially women's and intergenerational organizations?

Christian Nunes: Barriers – 1) rigidity in reasons for joining (and staying with a movement) 2) stuck on grievances with the movement (it must be perfect instead of focusing on what it does in line with values?) 3) leadership takes power and runs or holds on to it for as long as possible 4) perspective changes of important issues or which are the key issues that need focus 5) exclusion occurs when instead of embracing difference and diversity in membership and embracing its power, the movement or organization becomes more representative of one person's or a small group's perspective 6) lack of succession planning and teaching successor leaders 7) difficulty meshing waves and generations of feminism.

Successes- 1) rich history, brilliance, and vitality which cause the waves to share similar themes. 2) Commonality found within NOW exemplifies how age gap between herself and a NOW founder can be bridged.

Thu Nguyen: Barriers – A lack of culture of succession planning including organizational knowledge and standard procedures.

Sheila Coates: Barriers- lack of visibility and diversity, for example, Black women were not included in the greater women's movement, and did not have a seat at the table. "It saddened us that we still have to have different ethnic groups fighting for the same fair chance."

Successes- Commonalities can be recognized by honoring unique perspectives. "Through education we will learn how to better improve the status of women across the board" (housing inequity, economics, healthcare). We need to be able to talk about inequities: "If we don't talk about it, we won't know about it." Coates gave an example of BWUFA partnering with a very conservative group ([Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union](#)) for the past 30 years and seeing growth for both organizations as a result. Finding pockets of need, meeting the need, and replicating the process elsewhere.

Second Question to panelists: Can you cite examples of including women and minorities in organizations? What steps were taken?

Christian Nunes: NOW currently has Partnership with [Black Women's Blueprint](#) to have - [First 100 Days of A Feminist Agenda Listening Series](#) to hear first hand narratives & experiences of women's issues and perspectives. This is open to the public. "We are being very intentional about uplifting the experiences of women of color and to ensure we are hearing, listening, not trying to tell the story for them. It's important that we don't try to define the story, but rather listen and let individuals define their own story. NOW plans to place the results of the First 100 Days into a policy manual they will then submit to the Biden-Harris administration."

Thu Nguyen: "We have been pushing the Biden-Harris administration to include representation of Asian Americans in cabinet secretary positions, in order to fulfill the promise of bringing together our country with diversity and inclusion, by having his appointments reflect that. In March we are taking initiative to be conveners of a week long summit partnering with Center for APA Women in Kapaa to put on a Multicultural Women's summit with the Boys And Girls Club of America, the Native American Women's Association. Topics will include COVID, Empowerment, <work-home-family->space-in-context-of-working-from-home (in times of COVID), including all ages and discussing how we can support each other. Providing the space to have these conversations is a really important step for inclusion."

Sheila Coates: The evolution of women on local education boards to increased representation in Virginia of women on boards of State supported Universities. Recognize and encourage diverse talent around you to share their expertise on a greater scale, such as with local government.

Third Question to panelists: As women we tend to embrace diversity because we understand that different opinions, different backgrounds, and perspectives enriches the environment and products, so we'd like for you panelists to share with us how do you as an individual or even as an organization encourage inclusion, a positive environment, and discourage a negative environment?

Christian Nunes: Encourage people to be authentic, themselves. Ensure there is representation. #representationmatters. Remember how it feels to be the only person of color in a room, being spoken over, whitesplained, mansplained. Put yourself in people's shoes. Know the importance of why inclusion is needed for safety and people to feel safe. Perfection does not exist but we need to continue to try, and not take things personally. Approach things with a "we" perspective, not "I" perspective.

Thu Nguyen: Even if you feel like you have imposter syndrome, embrace the space you are in, you were invited or are here for a reason. Nguyen is excited about how stereotypes can be reclaimed to change the narrative and that this can be a difficult conversation intergenerationally. The concept of a brave space, where you "bring yourself to a conversation aware you may hear something quite different from what you feel or believe and realize it as that person's truth and talk it out."

Sheila Coates: Notice people's strengths and quality, not pick them due to connections, degrees, or as tokens. Remember that everyone has their own specialness, even if it is different from one's own.

Fourth and Fifth Questions to panelists: What do you see more to be done? After the firsts have been achieved, how do you measure success or know that you're working to achieve it?

Christian Nunes: “The Social justice movement - if one group is suffering there is always to work to do, we can not work in a siloed movement. We can not stop working. We can not assume we are in a siloed movement, even if ERA is passed. As long as people are still oppressed there is still work to be done. As long as the root causes remain that contribute to suffering of women, there is work to be done. Some are built within the framework of the US and we have a lot of work to do in that sense. Rebuild the institution and structure of America. White privilege, racism, etc. 100s of years. oppression resolved, then see how/if that is do-able - Can we do that if income is in 6% of American's hands? We can continue to make progress not to stop until we see what we want.

We are seeing favor for things that are more in favor of the people right now so there is hope. Madam Vice President and she is a woman of color. This is due to organizing and not taking no for an answer. Continue with that attitude, work hard, together, in solidarity in movements. Continue to have support and get behind all groups, let them lead, and follow in the.”

Q: Measure success/improvements by being more collaborative? Do we set goals/measure? How?

A: Be more collaborative. We can't be siloed. Measure how we see improvements of systems of oppression. Gender wage gap closing based on color for example.

Thu Nguyen: “Digital Divide, literacy and access to connectivity, how our world is changing and basic needs in the world is changing to include tech. Institutional change and cultural change. Culturally change in past 4 years. Change policy and people simultaneously. We can advocate for women around us to get involved, like our small businesses on the ground and how they interact with the people involved. Push friends and family around us to keep in mind the culture of change. Become positive and inclusive in all environments. Success measure: Not the same 5 people to represent X community at an event. When there is more visibility and more people included to represent.”

Sheila Coates: “Kudos to you, CWI. This is the way, the start. Will we have learned anything new when we hang up from today? It had to take mindsets to put this event together. We learn from each other through education and from hearing. What can we do? We can talk to someone else and if you see something that isn't right, speak. Ex. Forbes article of top 50 women and all were white. If you don't have diversity you may not notice they **were all white. Diverse women are included in women. There is no way we would have achieved in Black Women United if we had not spoken up. We shared information that we thought was not right and inclusive.**”

Connie Cordovilla, co-President, CWI, President NOW VA : "Silence is agreement so you must never be silent."

Sheila Coates: We are complacent when we don't.

Economics alone will not allow for you to say what you really feel and maintain a job. : We're stronger in commonality than in difference.

Holly Joseph: Pointed out the President's calling out "white supremacy" in his inauguration speech, and during the swearing in of civil servants saying they would be "fired on the spot" if not respectful of one another.

DC Area and National Feminist Events and Resources

Please send your upcoming feminist events to post in CWI newsletters to president@womensclearinghouse.org . LIKE and FOLLOW us on CWI's Facebook

www.facebook.com/womensclearinghouse and Twitter www.twitter.com/CWINews pages! Also SUBSCRIBE and LIKE our video sponsor & provider. <https://www.youtube.com/user/Hanburycross>. Times are Eastern. Paid-up CWI members will receive additional forwarded email messages on additional feminist meetings and activities.

Maryland Women's History Podcast Releases Second Season

Ballot & Beyond is produced by Preservation Maryland.

Ballot & Beyond is a multi-media public history exhibit and podcast highlighting the work of remarkable Maryland women with a focus on the state's suffragists and activists. More than 55 episodes are available now for streaming and reading on: ballotandbeyond.org.

Tune in to episodes of Ms. magazine podcasts, On the issues with Michele Goodwin on [Apple Podcasts](#) + [Spotify](#).

Events:

Tue. Feb. 16, 7 PM Maryland NOW Council Virtual Meeting [RSVP](#)

Tue. Feb. 16, 8-9 PM. The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together- A Discussion between Heather McGhee and Elizabeth Warren on the costs of racism for everyone. [Webinar Registration](#) – Zoom

Sunday, Feb. 21, 1-3PM Talking About Abortion in Challenging Places. Maryland NOW Special Event. RSVP to [:30@marylandnow.org](mailto:30@marylandnow.org).

Tue. Feb. 23 A Salute to Maryland Black Women Legislators 6-7:30 PM. Maryland Women's Heritage Center. [Register](#)
Tickets \$15

Tue. Feb. 23, 12 noon to 1:30. Clearinghouse on Women's Issues zoom meeting. Wise-Aging: Living with Joy, Resilience, and Spirit. See P 1.

Wed. Feb. 24. 11AM. NOW's 2021 Racial Justice Summit. Online Webinar. [Register](#)

Wed. Feb. 24, 2021 7PM Reclaiming the Purim Narrative: A Feminist Celebration Event. National Council of Jewish Women. [RSVP](#).

Thursday, Feb. 25, 2021 "Healing from Centuries of Oppression: Our Work is Not Yet Done, A Holistic Approach to Equitable Healthcare". National Organization for Women. [Register](#) <https://now.org/first-100-days-the-feminist-agenda/>.

*CWI's newsletter is endowed in loving memory of our previous longtime editor, Roslyn Kaiser
Meeting summary by Sherry Klein and the meeting presenters. Newsletter edited by Sue Klein*

CWI BOARD OF DIRECTORS, JULY 2018 – JUNE 2021

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Clearinghouse on Women’s Issues Membership Form

<https://womensclearinghouse.org/>

The CWI membership year is: **July 1-June 30**. Multi-year and Gift memberships are encouraged and discounted! Please fill in beginning and end years (e.g. 2020-2023 for a 3-yr membership). Members will receive CWI newsletters and meeting announcements as well as other feminist news and event notifications. Membership dues and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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One-year	\$25	\$40	\$15/yr.	\$20/yr.
Two-year	\$45	\$70	Gift Membership (insert information in individual or organization membership)	
Three-year	\$65	\$100		

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- Mail form & check to Connie Cordovilla, Membership Chair, CWI, 7439 Patterson Rd., Falls Church, VA 22043-1332; or
- Pay through PayPal, by selecting the desired membership option on our website’s membership page <https://womensclearinghouse.org/membership/> & please send this form by mail to the above address or email it to MembershipChair@womensclearinghouse.org; or
- Bring a check, payable to CWI, and this completed form to a CWI meeting. (Form Revised: 10/13/20)