

Upcoming Programs from the Jewish Community Relations Council

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Jewish Federation is planning a series of community-wide programs about racism. We are starting this spring by encouraging individuals and groups to read *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson. All participant groups will receive a book club kit, and everyone will be invited to attend several pertinent and thought-provoking programs (initially at least, all on Zoom).

The goal is to have as many folks participate as possible -- at whatever level anyone chooses. Groups and individuals may read the book and stop there, or use the supplementary materials that will be provided for deeper discussions of the issues the book raises. Folks may attend the complementary programs regardless of whether they've read the book.

The focus of this ongoing programming is to shine a light on the deep-seated and structural racism, specifically against black people, being perpetrated in communities across Connecticut and the nation.

Genocide is part of our history, and stories of escape, survival, determination and assimilation, like those in Wilkerson's book, are passed down through generations. We can listen with empathy, react from a place of knowledge, and mourn together for lost branches of our family trees. We can be helpers and supporters to our black community members and neighbors.

The goals of the program are to:

1. Provide a safe space to read about, discuss, and process racial inequity
2. Learn to recognize our own biases on an individual level and racial inequity on a societal level
3. Learn about the broad spectrum of privilege and how society benefits certain groups over others
4. Learn about anti-racism, an active and conscious effort to work against systemic racism
5. Discuss the work that we can do as individuals and as a community to dismantle these systemic structures of racism

An exciting calendar of programming for everyone to attend is being developed.

Interested participants should reach out to Alana Butler, JCRC Director, at abutler@jewishhartford.org or Susan Stoppelman, 860.649.0252.