

Unraveling Whiteness Course Facilitators BIOS:

Kara Bender (she /her) is a systems thinker, organizer, skillful and playful facilitator, participant-centered educator, and is energized by cultivating intentional community and creative conversations as ways to grow our collective imaginations. With roots on the east coast, she now lives at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, in St Louis MO, on Osage, Illini, Chickamaga Cherokee, and loway land. Deeply committed to naming her stake and responsibility as a white cis-gendered woman in ending oppressive systems, she has committed over 15 years to learning with and from anti-racist communities of color and anti-racist white folx. Her biggest influences have come from working as an affordable housing organizer, co-directing a legislative advocacy program, being an anti-racism facilitator and consultant, and participating in creative projects like the Carnival de Resistance, that bridged art, activism, and faith to engage communities in conversations about environmental justice. Kara is actively curating curriculum in online and retreat settings for white folx going deeper on their anti-racism journeys as well supporting multi-racial organizations in innovative and equity focused systems re-design.



Laura Horwitz (she/her) Laura Horwitz is a catalyst for learning, change and giving. She has more than 17 years of experience in community organizing, training and capacity building, program design and evaluation. She currently serves as the Senior Manager of Planning and Partnerships at Generate Health, an organization focused on closing racial disparities in infant mortality in St. Louis, and maintains an independent training and consulting practice through which she supports organizations and individuals committed to racial equity. After the Ferguson uprising, Laura co-founded and served for four years as the Executive Director of [We Stories](#), which engages white families in changing the conversation about and building momentum toward racial equity. In that time the organization went from being a volunteer effort with no budget led by 2 passionate founders to a sustainable and strong nonprofit organization with a committed donor base, passionate participants, and proven impact on the lives of nearly 1000 local families. Laura has been instrumental in forming STL mutual aid and its financial solidarity network in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and is a board member for St. Louis County Library, and the chair of the City of Clayton's Equity Commission. Laura's commitment to justice work is rooted in her Jewish identity and a passion ignited in college to more deeply understand our country's multiracial history and the formation of whiteness.

