



A Path Appears

Transforming Lives: Prison and School Reform

All are welcome

*The CA-NV Conference United Methodist Women
invite you to a zoom presentation with*

Dr. Karen Gedney, MD

Retired Prison Dr., Mentor, Author

Matt Ochs, High School Teacher

Hannah Branch, Co-Founder

Washoe County School District Students for Change

Aliza Davis, Founder

Reno High School Black Student Union

Marine Heath, Helen Pacheco, Amy Nguyen, Vanessa Medina

Organizers, Washoe County School District Diversify Our Narrative

Saturday, March 20th, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Registration information is below



Dr. Karen Gedney is an internal medicine specialist who spent thirty years behind bars as a prison physician. She was designated as one of the best in the business by the American Correctional Association and won a 'Heroes for Humanity Award' for her work in HIV in the correctional system. She left the prison in 2016 and has chosen to use her time as an author, speaker and mentor to advocate for prison reform. She currently is the medical director for the Ridge House in Reno which offers transitional housing and wrap around medical and psychological services for individuals involved in the criminal justice system.



Matt Ochs is a native Nevadan and was born and raised in Reno. Currently he teaches Advanced Placement US History at Reno High School where he is also the head boys basketball coach. Mr. Ochs is a Nationally Board Certified Teacher and was a top 5 finalist for the 2019 Nevada State Teacher of the Year. Mr. Ochs is nearing the end of a doctoral program at the University of Nevada. His dissertation will focus on the use of academic vocabulary in the classroom. Mr. Ochs' wife, Lindsay, is a Neo-Natal intensive care nurse and their son Micah is a second grader.

Washoe County School District (WCSD) Students for Change is a youth-founded, youth-led educational justice organization based in Reno, Nevada. They work to empower student voice and activism to promote the inclusion of Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and LGBT+ people in textbooks, curriculum, and educational policy. Since their founding during the summer of 2020, WCSD Students for Change have successfully promoted an equity resolution and action plan committing their district to a comprehensive antiracist reevaluation of hiring, curriculum, and school policy. Resolved to build a safer and more opportune district and state for the students who follow them, WCSD Students for Change continue to fight for antiracist learning as a necessary mechanism for dismantling systemic oppression and white supremacy in schools. You can learn more about them or join the fight at wcsd4change.org or follow them @wcsd4change on Instagram and Twitter.

Reno High School's Black Student Union is a student-led organization founded in the summer of 2020, by president Aliza Davis. Reno High's BSU incorporates students of all grades, ethnicities, and interests. The organization has also found support from many faculty members at Reno High School. The organization centers around group discussion, community building, and mentorship for other students. The mission behind the Black Student Union is to uplift and empower the black community while educating everyone about the struggles, hardship, and beauty of being black in America.

Washoe County School District Diversify Our Narrative is part of a national grassroots organization composed of high school/college students throughout the United States of America pushing for equitable, long-lasting reform within our school districts (public, charter, and private). Our mission is to fight to be anti-racist and encourage a productive dialogue on race and identity among our student bodies through the inclusion of racially diverse, anti-racist texts in our schools and to work towards racial justice, educational equity, and community power.

About this topic:

United Methodist Women report:

- 31% of children and youth experiencing school-based arrests and law enforcement referrals are African American though they make up only 15% of total school enrollment.
- African American boys are three times more likely to be suspended than white boys.
- African American girls are six times more likely to be suspended than white girls.

From the Children's Defense Fund report 'The State of America's Children 2020 Factsheet'

- In CA (NV), 90 (85) percent of Black, 81 (78) percent of Hispanic and 55 (61) percent of white 8th grade public school students were not proficient in reading in 2019.
 - In CA (NV), 73 (68) percent of Black, 80 (80) percent of Hispanic and 87 (84) percent of white students graduated from high school on time during 2016-2017.
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Registration: If you plan to participate, please [click here](#) to register and you will be emailed the link to join the zoom meeting.

Registration Deadline: Friday, March 19th