

# REPARATIONS...

***THE TIME IS NOW!***



Prepared by the

Coming To The Table (CTTT) Reparations Working Group

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This publication is a work in progress. If you have questions or suggestions for additional reparative actions and/or resources related to reparations, racism or white privilege, please contact the CTTT Reparations Working Group at [www.comingtothetable.org/contact](http://www.comingtothetable.org/contact).

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## Introduction

Now more than ever, people of the United States are opening their minds and hearts to the historical harm that slavery and its legacy has caused African Americans and this nation. Historians and economists have compiled incontrovertible evidence of the intentional nature of race-based slavery and segregation along with the tremendous financial benefits that accrued to European Americans. At the same time, sociologists and psychologists have better understood the lasting damage slavery inflicted, and that its legacy continues to impose, on African Americans.

The topic of reparations in the United States is not new. For over 550 years, there have been ongoing discussions and documentation of demands made to provide restitution to those harmed by the intergenerational wounds of slavery and its legacy in the United States (Winbush, 2009).

In the new millennium, the case and call for reparations has become stronger. Ta-Nehesi Coates's 2014 essay in *The Atlantic* attracted mainstream attention and promoted a national discussion on reparations that was furthered by Edward Baptist in his book *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (2016). Richard Rothstein, in *The Color of Law: The Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (2017), explodes the commonly held myth of de facto segregation—the result of many individual decisions—and demonstrates that segregation was instead de jure—based on racially explicit federal, state, and local government policies—and thus obligates a remedy to a violation of the Constitution. At the same time, scholars such as Lawrie Balfour have shown how reparations done properly can “repair” and improve our democracy.

Coming to the Table is uniquely suited to address the issue of reparations in the United States. Its vision, mission, approach, and values are aligned with the initiative. Its slogan, “Taking America Beyond the Legacy of Enslavement (TABLE),” implies such action. Deeply rooted in history and communities across the color line, Coming to the Table is bringing people together for both communion and collaboration in racial healing and building a better future.

In 2014, Coming to the Table recognized it had a role to play in the movement and convened a conference call with interested members to discuss “Reparations.” During the call, European and African American members of CTTT shared ideas and made plans to establish a CTTT Reparations Working Group. The Working Group's purpose was to develop a document that would inspire and provide guidance for European Americans desiring to initiate personal, community, societal and national reparations. Over a period of three years, the Reparations Working Group solicited and received comments. Input was received from both African American and European American CTTT members in December 2014 and January 2015, at the

2016 CTTT National Gathering during two breakout sessions, and most recently, in the June-July 2017 CTTT Newsletter in response to a solicitation.

This resulting guide to possible reparations for slavery and its legacies was created to inspire European Americans to act. However, we suggest that before acting, European Americans should take their cues from African Americans as to when and how to approach and implement reparations. African Americans may wish to engage in some of these activities so as to ensure that trust, healing, and true reparations of the harms are achieved. The guide includes both short-term and long-term actions for individuals as well as communities and society as a whole. The recommendations are inspired by the spirit and principle of abundance—that there is enough for everyone.

The Reparations Working Group would like to acknowledge that there are many groups currently working on reparations. A list of some of these groups and some of the books that detail the history of the reparations movement are included at the end of this document under a section entitled “Some Reparations Resources and Sources.” We also offer some resources (books, articles, and websites) on racism and the history of racism and on white privilege for your use in developing your reparations plans.

#### **What Do We Mean by Reparations?**

Coming to the Table (CTTT) defines reparations as the taking of affirmative steps to repair the historic injustices done to African Americans during slavery, Jim Crow and later. Those responsible for instituting, carrying out or benefitting from the injustices -- the United States government, businesses, institutions and white Americans -- should be the ones engaged in the reparative actions, which can take many forms including monetary payments, apology and others, such as those included in this guide.

When the average American hears “reparations,” they may think of some form of compensatory payment to individuals who are descendants of people who were enslaved. However, CTTT believes that the generational harm that has been done to African Americans extends more than a century beyond the end of slavery. It is important that reparations involve white Americans understanding and acknowledging the nature and extent of the harm that has been committed to African Americans and making a commitment to never repeat the injustices again and to repair the harms that still exist today, which could include making monetary recompense. Without that understanding and agreement as to the true nature of the harm and the parties responsible, there is no atonement. There is no apology. There is no forgiveness. There is no healing. And healing of our nation’s racial wounds is the ultimate goal of CTTT’s work.

The following is an agreement that can be accepted by those using this guide or working to support reparations:

“I recognize, acknowledge and understand the terrible and long-standing injustices done to African Americans in this country during slavery, Jim Crow and beyond. I, as a white American, accept that I and my ancestors have reaped the benefits that accrued to me as a result of these injustices toward African Americans. Because it is not possible for my ancestors to remedy any injustice today, I take responsibility for repairing the harms that still exist on their behalf and on mine.”

# I. Personal Reparations

The following are reparations that you can make personally.

## A. Acknowledging (facing, uncovering) our History

1. Conduct personal historical research that connects you to US slavery by collecting family genealogical data, family stories, and other information, etc., using [Our Black Ancestry](#), [Ancestry.com](#), and other websites and historical societies, libraries, and local, state and national archives.
2. Acknowledge to yourself, your family and others the injustice, pain and suffering of generations of African American people and the racial prejudice perpetrated directly and indirectly by your ancestors.
3. Acknowledge the spiritual and emotional pain and denial you have lived with as a result of your personal and family historical connection to slavery to yourself and others and its legacy for yourself and others.
4. Own your personal transgressions that perpetuate racism and work to correct them.
5. Educate yourself and others in your family and community about the true history and global context of the brutal nature and impact of American slavery and racism on African Americans in the past and present. A good start is this [list of books provided by The Huffington Post](#).
6. Recognize and educate yourselves and others about the amoral and destructive system of white supremacy and privilege in the US.
7. Recognize that systemic racism and legacies of slavery are still operating in our culture today.

**Felicia Furman, filmmaker, has a history of enslavement on both sides of her family. In 2001, she chronicled the story of her family's centuries-long relationship with the people her ancestors enslaved in the PBS documentary, *Shared History*.**

...Ultimately, I became horrified that slavery was such a big part of who we are as Americans, that enslaving people enriched so many families, including mine, and created the infrastructure of the United States. My family's 200+ year affiliation with these African American families is indeed unique, so, I decided to make the film to document it. The film required that I do a lot of historical and genealogical research, just to understand where the families came from. I wanted to correctly tell our stories....as I did the interviews, the historical harms became apparent. Continued on page 18.

## B. Making Connections

1. Search out and establish meaningful connections and friendships across racial lines.
2. Be sure to connect with and involve people of all ages and across racial lines in formulating and implementing plans for reparations.
3. Search out linked descendants (African Americans and European Americans linked through slavery) and establish connections and friendships when possible. See the [CTTT Linked Descendants Working Group](#).
4. Help others who suffer from the historical pain of slavery to acknowledge and face their own family legacy.
5. Reach out to others who you discover are investigating their family connection to slavery.
6. Join [Coming to the Table](#) and work with us to repair the harms of slavery and its legacies. Join a [local CTTT affiliate group](#) or establish one in your community.
7. Join and donate to organizations like Coming to the Table, the [NAACP](#), SURJ (Showing up for Racial Justice), Black Lives Matter, etc. that are working to correct inequalities via legal and educational efforts.
8. Participate in public race dialogues in order to make connections across racial lines.
9. Research and acknowledge current and past attempts at reparations in your local community.
10. Seek inspiration for reparations work through other sources of ideas, such as the NAACP, the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA), the Urban League and the National American Reparations Commission, Artist Natasha Marin's Reparations initiative and website <http://www.reparations.me/> and Lotte Lieb Dula's website [www.Reparations4Slavery.com](http://www.Reparations4Slavery.com).

**Fred Small is a Unitarian Universalist minister and climate justice activist living in Cambridge, Massachusetts.**

...the fact that my ancestors include enslavers connects me personally to this abhorrent institution. I have benefited materially, culturally, and emotionally. I have benefited from the theft of the labor and liberty of human beings. And that's deeply painful....The feelings of shame are still there, at a gut level. However, I feel more than shame, I feel responsibility. I feel a special obligation to make amends to the extent that I can. And that feels good. That feels healing....My wife and I have given funds to help the son of a dear friend of my wife's go to college. Continued on page 18.

## C. Healing Wounds

1. Encourage mental health providers in your community to recognize the stresses and mental health issues that some African Americans have experienced due to the legacies of slavery and to help African Americans reduce the adverse impacts of these stresses on their lives.
2. Identify and accept your personal responsibility for righting historical wrongs.
3. Be willing to discuss difficult racial matters in your community. Watch this [TED Talk](#) for guidance on how to do this.
4. Monitor, clarify and analyze words and phrases of good intention, such as “white ally,” to ensure they best describe right relationship and appropriate meaning.
5. Listen deeply to African American perspectives on racism, reparations and reforms.
6. Engage with others in the practice of racial reconciliation and healing in communities like [Coming to the Table](#). Participate in CTTT’s local affiliate groups, conference calls, and National Gatherings. Check out [Coming to the Table’s resource page](#) on its website for guidance on reconciliation and healing practices.
7. Write about, and possibly publish, your connection to slavery or your family’s specific racial crimes and acts of oppression.
8. Educate and immerse yourself in the variety and breadth of African American experiences (culture, art, organizations, publications, history, etc.), particularly the historical harms of slavery in order to understand how the past continues to inform the present.
9. Read authors like [Ta-Nehisi Coates](#) and [Randall Robinson](#) to better understand the issues of national reparations. Coates’ articles can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

**Briayna Cuffie is a strategist, political advocate, and civil servant specializing in international relations from Annapolis, MD.**

Poverty in the black community is different from poverty in the white community. Jim Crow, then redlining and predatory lending practices over many generations have prevented many black families, including mine, from passing down familial wealth in the in the form of property, housing, and of course, the opportunity to start at zero, instead of in the negative, financially....There is a saying that as a person of color, you have to work twice as hard to get half as far – and that has definitely been my experience. It’s even more complicated for poor people of color, in ways a middle-class white person might not consider....I think it [reparations for slavery] is an important idea, and a great one. While governmental reparations seem out of reach now, I think if individual reparations caught on, the Federal government would eventually have to look at its priorities and be willing to take the lead from its citizens. Tremendous harm has been done to the African American community; giving people a leg up so that they can contribute to society in a more complete and useful way is what is needed at both the individual and societal level – not just for African Americans but for indigenous populations as well. Continued on page 19.

10. Take responsibility for healing yourself of the guilt and shame of your connection to slavery through workshops on healing ([EMU STAR training](#)), meditation and guided reflection.

## **D. Taking Action**

1. Support and participate in events, such as the [Slave Dwelling Project](#), that preserve and publicize different aspects of the realities of the life of the enslaved.
2. Speak out and support initiatives, programs and laws that correct racial injustices (i.e. affirmative action).
3. Help create a media relations committee at Coming to the Table (European American and African American) to publicize CTTT's existence and comment on the issues of the day.
4. Document personal stories and experiences of racial discrimination and share in appropriate supportive communities.
5. Recruit new members for CTTT and establish a CTTT local/regional affiliate in your area. Encourage your local affiliate to connect with other local groups seeking to acknowledge and heal wounds from racism that is rooted in the United States' history of slavery.
6. Share family genealogical data, stories, and other information, etc. on [Our Black Ancestry](#), [Ancestry.com](#), Facebook Genealogy groups, and other websites as well as with historical societies, libraries and local, state and national archives.
7. Encourage descendants of enslavers and slave traders to join CTTT.
8. Acknowledge and take action to level the "playing field" in personal and professional situations.
9. When you hear or see racism, speak up using whatever tactics work best for you from direct confrontations to humor. Make clear that you do not share racist views. Turn the event into a teaching moment for others who may be present. Seek training on how best to do this.
10. Find ways to "give back" to the African American community through public service (i.e. volunteering for after-school programs, one-on-one homework support, African American events and festivals, etc.)



11. In your personal or professional life, fight for full rights and privileges of equal citizenship for African Americans.

12. Offer personal or family foundation college scholarships, or make contributions to a community foundation that supports African American scholarships, or a national scholarship program like the [United Negro College Fund](#). Here is a [story](#) of one of our CTTT members, Phoebe Kilby, who connected with an African American cousin, Betty Kilby Baldwin, and her family and set up a [scholarship fund at the POISE Foundation](#) in Pittsburgh that benefits Betty's family.



13. Work with educators individually and/or school boards and state boards of education to reform curricula that will:

- recognize that slavery was the foundation of our country's achievements and wealth,
- be less Eurocentric and include African history

14. For teachers, teach beyond specific African American heroes and "firsts" and include the full spectrum of the impact of African Americans on history, literature and poetry etc. in your high school and university classes; host those who write and speak on the impact of slavery and its aftermath on current conditions and concerns of African Americans.

15. Encourage families, but European Americans especially, to donate historical materials about their families' connection to slavery to local, state and national libraries, historical societies and archives.

16. Advocate for the hiring of African Americans in your personal and professional life.

17. Organize a Juneteenth Festival in your local area.

18. Patronize African-American owned businesses and support non-profits led by African Americans and/or benefitting African Americans, e.g. Coming to the Table.

19. Support African Americans for public office and for leadership positions in other governmental and non-governmental positions.

20. Seek out African American doctors and medical professionals, attorneys, accountants, and sales and service professionals.

21. Work with your local community to reform how police officers act in the line of duty with the African American community, e.g. civilian review boards.

22. Support and participate in organizations promoting racial justice such as Coming to the Table, [Black Lives Matter](#), SURJ (Showing up for Racial Justice) and others.
23. Encourage local government entities to make records related to slavery and its legacy available to the public online.
24. Work for the renaming/removing or reinterpreting of Confederate monuments and markers in local communities.

## II. Community and Societal Reparations

The following section describes reparations that can effect change in US communities and society as a whole. We believe that reparations can and should be made at the national, state, and local community levels. They may be carried out by chief executives (the President, governors, mayors, etc.), by legislatures (Congress, state legislatures, and local councils and commissions, etc.), by administrators (government officials), by non-profits and business groups and/or by local community groups, for example. Depending on their powers and means, those supporting reparations may carry out these reparations directly, through legislation and policies, through the allocation of funding, and through advocacy. The suggested reparations listed below are presented as our Coming to the Table members phrased them. We encourage you to take the strongest action you can based on these suggestions.

**Danita Rountree Green, M.A., TLSC (R. Satiafa) is an author, playwright and trauma healing facilitator, conducting workshops addressing various forms of community trauma and race related issues in Richmond, VA.**

I believe we need to look at reparations exactly as the word implies: to repair something that is broken. And I believe that repairing starts on a very personal level and ends at the national policy level. At the personal level, I think that we need to be very mindful of our thinking, on why we need to repair something we feel we did not break ourselves. For instance, when white people talk about slavery, I hear this all the time, "Well, I wasn't there, that was something my ancestor did." I feel this line of thinking is not germane; an entire people has been held back for 400 years. At the national level, I feel strongly that the U. S. Government needs to step up and repair African Americans in all the areas we've been intentionally held back - through education, through economic means, and housing. Continued on page 19.

### A. Acknowledging our History

1. Seek a national apology from the U.S. government regarding the brutal institution of African American slavery and its continuing impact on African Americans:
  - a. Seek a national acknowledgement that African American slavery was first and foremost an economic system, based on racism, to gain wealth for a small group of Europeans from the free labor of African Americans.
  - b. Seek national acknowledgement that even after emancipation, racism and unfair laws, practices and attitudes negatively impacted the education and economic stability of African Americans and continue to do so in the present.
  - c. Support local, state, national and international efforts for Truth and Reconciliation Commissions acknowledging the history and legacies of slavery in the U.S. (Example: [The Kellogg Foundation's new initiative, the Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation project.](#))
  - d. Seek apology from countries in Europe that participated in importing African slaves to the Americas during colonization.
2. Establish a national government sponsored Day of Healing to honor those Africans whose lives were sacrificed to slavery in the founding and building of this country. Let

this be a day when the wounds of racial prejudice that have divided us are acknowledged and we rededicate ourselves to healing those wounds.

3. Revise the curricula of US and World history classes to accept the impact of slavery on the US and of the role slavery played in the development, even survival, of the United States and other countries, including slavery's role in the industrial revolution and in the development of banking/finance as well as the contributions of people of color to the Americas and Europe. Advocate for the adoption of history curricula such as that developed by the Reach Center (see Bibliography) and others. Make the curricula less Eurocentric.
4. Encourage the National Park Service, the National Register of Historic Places, the National Trust and State Historical Societies and State Historic Preservation Officers to proactively identify, preserve and make available to the public historic sites that will tell the *entire* history of the country (i.e. the Fort Monroe, VA Contraband Camp) through historic preservation and interpretative programs such as establishing markers, roadside plaques, museums, monuments and publications documenting historic events related to slavery and achievements of African Americans
5. Actively pursue with broad public input regarding the renaming, relocation, removal, reinterpretation, and/or contextualization of Confederate monuments throughout the U.S.
6. Work with local governments to digitize, publish on line or otherwise make more accessible public documents that would assist in historical and ancestral research, such as wills, court cases, and slave bills of sale.
7. Support greater media exposure of the stories of African Americans, their struggles and triumphs through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, [PBS](#), [National Public Radio](#) [Story Corps](#), and other media outlets.
8. Create a national society/commission to locate, honor, memorialize and support the preservation of the marked and unmarked graves in slave cemeteries in honor of the lives of people buried there with appropriate public and private memorials.
9. Ask lineage societies like the [General Society of Mayflower Descendants](#) and [Daughters of the American Revolution](#) to address the issue of reparations.
10. Collaborate with and support organizations devoted to African American history.

## **B. Making Connections**

1. Establish Coming to the Table local affiliate groups in communities throughout the US.

2. Create collaborations between Coming to the Table and such organizations as SURJ, Everyday Democracy, and White Privilege Conference to promote a better understanding of our common humanity and break down barriers that divide us.
3. Encourage European Americans to listen authentically to African Americans' ideas about societal reparations and develop a joint recommendation regarding what reparations might be pursued together on the societal level.
4. Be sure to connect with and involve people of all ages in formulating and implementing plans for reparations.
5. Connect with and support institutions and organizations devoted to research and public programs on African American history.

### **C. Healing Wounds**

1. Acknowledge the psychological impacts of slavery and its legacies.
  - a) Encourage mental health providers to recognize the stresses and mental health issues that some African Americans have experienced due to the legacies of slavery and to help African Americans reduce the adverse impacts of these stresses on their lives.
  - b) Update the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM- 5), which is the standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals in the United States as appropriate after thorough research of the psychological impacts of the legacies of slavery that may affect some African Americans.
  - c) Expose the fallacy of white supremacy and superiority that was based on the power of life and death that enslavers and traders held over the human beings they called slaves and treated as chattel. Explore how that fallacy continues to impact thinking and behavior.
2. Increase understanding by all of the impact of the legacies of slavery and systemic racism on African Americans.
3. Create national efforts to organize the national discussion on race.
4. Provide support to writers, filmmakers and other artists to address the subject of racial justice, healing, and reconciliation.
5. Support academic research on conflict resolution, dialogue and reconciliation.

## D. Taking Action

### *Section 1: Acknowledgement-related ideas*

1. Support [HR40](#) in the U.S. Congress to compile existing and new studies/surveys for repairing the harms of slavery. (The number of the bill, 40, was chosen to symbolize the forty acres and a mule that the United States initially promised freed slaves.) The bill focuses on recognizing the consequences of enslaving African Americans for generations. Specifically, the bill:
  - a. Acknowledges the fundamental injustice and inhumanity of slavery;
  - b. Establishes a commission to study slavery and the racial and economic discrimination against African American individuals once they were freed;
  - c. Studies the impact of the residual forces on today's living African Americans;
  - d. Instructs the commission to make recommendations to Congress on appropriate remedies to redress the harm experienced by living African Americans.
2. Lobby for and support legislation for a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
3. Promote wider access to museums, lectures and cultural events that represent African American culture and concerns by enhanced publicity and marketing and by creating programs that ensure free admission to school children.
4. Encourage students attending colleges that participated in slavery to document and publish the history of their schools' connection to slavery. Work with administrations to create a plan for providing reparations to the people whose ancestors were enslaved at the school.
5. Include the story of slavery and African American experience in all museum exhibits about the history and culture of the US.
6. Continue and increase support for the [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#) in Washington, DC.
7. Re-create local community "Green Books" to promote African American owned businesses. The original Green Book was a listing of services and places friendly to African Americans and was used to travel more safely during the Jim Crow era. See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Negro\\_Motorist\\_Green\\_Book](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Negro_Motorist_Green_Book)

### *Section 2: Education related ideas*

1. Support national, state and local efforts to revise how the history of slavery, segregation and civil rights is taught in U.S. school systems.
2. Provide access to quality education for all African Americans at the pre-school, elementary and secondary levels so as to prepare them well for successful lives.
3. As part of a national reparations program, provide scholarships for African American students for education and job training.
4. Ensure that all students can afford to attend public universities and have the financial support they need to succeed.
5. Promote the re-establishment of national funding for the [Upward Bound](#) college support programs for low income students of all races.
6. Forgive student loans for all low and middle income African Americans, including loans taken out by parents of students.
7. Create a national program that encourages European Americans who are descended from enslavers to create scholarship funds for descendants of the people who were enslaved on their plantations and other property.
8. Continue the [Pell Grants](#) program and annually increase the grant amount.
9. Establish mentorship [programs](#) for African American students to enable them to thrive in new professional and vocational environments.
10. Advocate for tuition-free college education for all African Americans.

### ***Section 3: Economic related ideas***

1. Create a mechanism for “reclaiming” land that was misappropriated by legal maneuvers to deprive African Americans of their inheritance/ownership. (Implementation of this reparative action could conflict with efforts of Native Americans to reclaim land taken from them and so must be approached with sensitivity and fairness.)
2. Create more opportunities for jobs and businesses for African Americans. Should reparations efforts create job and business opportunities, support African Americans and their businesses and non-profits in taking advantage of those opportunities.
3. Support the [Southern Reparations Loan Fund](#) (SRLF), a project of the Southern Grassroots Economies Project (SGEP). SGEP makes business loans to cooperatively owned businesses anchored in the most marginalized Southern communities. They

- focus their lending toward start-ups and expansions of democratically governed enterprises that meet the needs and elevate the quality of life of African Americans, immigrants, and poor whites.
4. Promote the establishment of a decent living minimum wage/minimum income for all.
  5. Create a reparations philanthropic fund under the umbrella of a large national community foundation that will use skillful media and publicity to encourage gifts and bequests. Seed the fund with prearranged commitments of funding. Invite high profile European American descendants of slaveholders to make contributions, and high profile African American descendants of slaves, especially those with philanthropic expertise, to serve on an advisory board for grant-making.
  6. Issue cash reparations to adult descendants of those who were enslaved. For those recipients in the lower third of income and wealth, provide for debt forgiveness so that reparations are not taken to repay debts.
  7. Develop an educational program on money management to be offered to recipients of reparations, especially if cash is part of the program. (The purpose of this education is to enhance the possibility that recipients can realize an improved financial situation throughout their lifetime because knowledge increases the odds of achieving defined financial goals.)
  8. Provide opportunities for all people to thrive economically through good money management, job training and training in entrepreneurship.
  9. Create a government or non-profit program to provide one-time mortgage down payment assistance to enable African Americans to purchase a home at a low interest rate. Provide education, home loans and other G.I. bill-like programs to descendants of enslaved people.
  10. Increase funding for Federal programs dedicated to the eradication of poverty.
  11. Promote the provision of a federal income tax credit for descendants of persons enslaved in the U.S. and consider other forms of tax abatement.
  12. Hold corporations accountable for their profits accrued through association with slavery and its aftermath and push them to develop ways to provide reparations.

#### ***Section 4: Justice related ideas***

1. Transform the legal and criminal justice system to end mass incarceration.



2. Establish a system for “[restorative justice](#),” especially in schools to help dismantle the [school-to-prison pipeline](#), also known as the “womb-to-prison pipeline.”
3. Address systemic problems of injustice for African Americans in housing, education, employment, health care and the legal system.
4. Seek the repeal of the death penalty throughout the country since African Americans, people of color and the poor are more likely to be executed. Equalize sentencing rules that currently target African Americans.
5. Ensure that formerly incarcerated individuals are eligible for reparations.
6. Research organizations that provide assistance to families of incarcerated persons and support those efforts through donations and volunteer work. If organizations focused specifically on providing assistance to families of the incarcerated do not exist in your community, research other community organizations, including churches and other faith-based organizations, that serve members of the community whose families have been affected by mass incarceration and might welcome your support.
7. Seek reinstatement of the full voting rights protection under the [Voting Rights Act](#) to protect African Americans, poor Americans and formerly incarcerated individuals from voting disenfranchisement.
8. Promote greatly increased U.S. aid to African countries from which people were stolen and enslaved.
9. Push for legislation that will repeal the law that bans felons from returning to live with their families and children in subsidized and public housing.
10. Support food justice. Empower African Americans in obtaining food security through such efforts as education in sustainable agriculture, support for commercial sustainable agriculture operations, and establishment of sustainable community and home gardens.
11. Provide access to quality health care for all, with particular attention to eliminating inadequate health care and disproportionately poor health outcomes for African Americans. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., in a speech to the Medical Committee for Human Rights in 1966, said “Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.”
12. Promote structural changes to hold police departments accountable to the community and to end the following:

- a. Automatic assumptions of the guilt of African Americans
- b. Provocative actions by the police
- c. Practices that unfairly single out African Americans for harassment, harsh treatment, lethal force and arrest.

13. Strengthen police training. Include the following:

- a. Training and tactics that emphasize de-escalation and peaceful resolution of conflict without force or with the least amount of force necessary.
- b. Training on the legacies of slavery and the traumas related to oppression, discrimination and injustice.
- c. Training on working with compassion and understanding in poor communities where many feel without hope.
- d. Training in skillful and compassionate treatment of people with mental illness.
- e. Understanding of the impacts of systemic racism on African Americans.

14. Seek laws to provide reparations to survivors of law enforcement brutality and torture and to their families. A 2015 law passed in [Chicago](#) provides an example.

## Reparations Stories Continued

**Felicia Furman from page 4:** For instance, many of the descendants hadn't gone to high school, let alone college....So, I decided to take an inheritance I had just received and set up a family scholarship fund for the descendants of the enslaved people at Woodlands [in South Carolina]....Ultimately, there is no act that can atone for what my family did to their families....[Regarding advising people who wish to make reparations but cannot locate the descendants of the people they enslaved] I would make reparations to the community that sustained harm, to community medical facilities, local day care centers, after-school or church programs – organizations that benefit African American youth in that rural community. Supporting youth is critical....Part of getting it right is to use your family records, whether they're in your own possession or in archives to get as much information as you can about who was on the plantation. It's important to find the names of the enslaved people so that descendants of the enslaved can find their ancestors. Then look at reparations. I think you want to have as much information as possible about your family's enslavement history so that your reparations plan is intentional and significant....Making reparations is central to creating a society based on equality. Without reparations and an official apology, we will make no headway in achieving a world where a black child's dreams are just as achievable as a white child's. Source: LLD Reparations 4 Slavery.

**Fred Small from page 5:** My wife's friend is a highly educated African American woman, a successful professional who makes good money, but she is a single mom, and they have very little in savings or net worth. I believe the fact that they have significantly fewer financial resources than we do is absolutely a consequence of slavery and institutional racism. We've never talked about this gift in the context of reparations, by the way; only in the context of need on their part and ability on our part. The primary motivation on our part is relationship, friendship. I've been working with the Litchfield Historical Society [Connecticut], inviting them to document the history of enslavement, including that perpetrated by my ancestors, in the Litchfield Historical Museum. Also, to create a memorial for enslaved residents of Litchfield. I'm also hoping to help establish an internship at the Litchfield Historical Society to research the history of enslavement so that we can identify as many names as possible to memorialize on the grounds of the church....The point is to get beyond guilt, to act, to make amends. I think the most important thing that white people can do around race is to step out of the spotlight, to listen. At the same time, it's appropriate and helpful for us to acknowledge our own woundedness around race - which is very different from the woundedness people of color experience, but it's still real. Anything that disconnects us from our own humanity is a wound. And racism does that to white people as well as to people of color. No one connected to their whole humanity would ever enslave another person. No one connected to their full humanity would ever abuse or oppress another person. We will never transform and surrender our racism without healing the woundedness that instilled that racism. I believe the first step to making amends is to begin down that path. Source: LLD Reparations 4 Slavery.

**Briayna Cuffie from page 6:** Think of the positive domino effect that could be created if even just a few people received reparations and could break out of poverty and could contribute in a more effective way to the betterment of society. For instance: more time to mentor, aid others in their families and lift them up – work towards ensuring the cycle of impoverishment ends with their generation. Two white women are helping me pay down my 6-figure education debt. That alone will be hugely helpful in leveraging my progress. Also, I think in-kind donations of goods and services is critical to the black community. Beyond monetary reparations, I've really appreciated people's willingness to dive into the omitted sections of history books, to piece together the true past whether it be their family's history of enslavement or better understanding the states' and federal government's roles....Hearing white people say, "You know what? I want to put my money where my mouth is, now that I understand" has a true healing effect. As a person of color, many of us feel like we are running on a treadmill, but not really getting anywhere. It's encouraging to hear white people saying, "Here's what I can do. Here's the resource I can provide to leverage your progress." Even tiny steps – like white people acknowledging and talking about institutional racism –incremental change in thinking gets us one step further. You need to know that the value of our labor – the sweat of African-Americans – is the basis of your wealth, the reason your families have prospered. Dive into your family history, learn the truth, and encourage others to do the same. You acknowledge your wealth – monetary and other accessible resources—and utilize it on a daily basis, why not acknowledge where it came from and show gratitude? What was coerced out of the generations of ancestors that came before me, can't even be compared to an interest-free loan or in-kind donation. What can you do to recognize this injustice? Reparations can be made in many ways. That journey starts with acknowledgement. Source: LLD Reparations 4 Slavery.

**Danita Rountree Green from page 10:** I look at this whole national narrative around reparations like this: we have a system in this country that's broken, that doesn't treat its citizens fairly. Now, I've never broken anything in my life that I didn't have to invest money in to repair, have you? This is not a repair that will simply benefit African Americans, it's going to benefit America itself. We've all made a joint investment in the United States; everyone should benefit equally from that investment, should be able to experience the full privilege of what it means to be a human being in this country....Here in Richmond, a bill, HJ 655, came through the Martin Luther King Jr. Commission of the Virginia General Assembly in commemoration and acknowledgement of African Americans who were lynched here in Virginia prior to 1950. We're putting up markers all over the state to acknowledge that this happened. It's part of the apology that the State of Virginia has given for this painful period in our country's history. Another example: Farmville was a city in Prince Edward County that in 1959 decided it would rather close public schools than integrate them. Many of the white kids that had been going to public school in Prince Edward County got a government subsidy to go to private schools that were segregated. Many public schools were then closed, leaving African Americans without schools for six years. Ken Woodley was editor of a newspaper in Farmville. He started his own campaign to help change government policy in that area to provide scholarships for African American children so they could go to good schools too. Two thousand scholarships were given out. That is an example of a truly reparational act taking place at the county and city level in Farmville. Yes. It can be done. The name of Ken Woodley's forthcoming book is "The Road to

Healing, a Civil Rights Reparation Story in Prince Edward County.” I think the hardest part for white people is dealing with the fear of change, the fear of ‘the other,’ of breaking rank from their family. It's hard to do this with our families, our friends, our religious leaders. If white people follow their own consciences, though, if they take a stand and do what they feel and know is right, they do the whole country a service. They will help turn the tide so we as a country can reach our full potential together, where all people in this country can thrive.

Source: LLD Reparations 4 Slavery.

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Black Lives Matter <http://blacklivesmatter.com/> has a website called Backing Black Business that aims to list every business in the country owned by a Black American (see: <https://www.backingblackbusiness.com/>). For more information, see: <http://fusion.net/story/377476/black-lives-matter-backing-black-business/>.



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Fellowship of Reconciliation Truth & Reparations <https://www.forreparations.org/>. They ask people to take a pledge in support of reparations <https://www.forreparations.org/take-the-pledge/>.

House Resolution 40 - Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act. <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr40> and <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/40/text>. In January of 1989, Congressmen John Conyers first introduced the bill H.R. 40, Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act. He re-introduced HR 40 every Congress until he resigned in 2017. Democratic Texas Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, the bill’s new sponsor, introduced it in 2019. On June 19, 2019, the House Judiciary subcommittee held a hearing on slavery reparations. You can watch the hearings and read the transcript here: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?461767-1/house-judiciary-subcommittee-examines-case-slavery-reparations>.

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The Movement for Black Lives <https://policy.m4bl.org/platform/> has a six part platform, one of which addresses reparations: <https://policy.m4bl.org/reparations/>. In July 2019, they released a Reparations Now Toolkit: <https://policy.m4bl.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Reparations-Now-Toolkit-FINAL.pdf>.

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<https://ibw21.org/reparations/naarc-applauds-interest-in-reparations-by-2020-presidential-contenders/>). NAARC Rolls Out Preliminary 10 Point Reparations Plan:

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The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N’COBRA) is “the premiere mass-based coalition of organizations and individuals organized for the sole purpose of obtaining reparations for African descendants in the United States” (see: <http://www.ncobraonline.org/>).

Reparations Map (co-created by Soul Fire Farm in Grafton, NY) is an amazing tool and has been very helpful to organizing with food and farming groups locally toward land-based reparations (see: <http://www.soulfirefarm.org/support/reparations/>).

Resource Generation is a “multiracial membership community of young people (18-35) with wealth and/or class privilege committed to the equitable distribution of wealth, land, and power” (see: <https://resourcegeneration.org/>).

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Showing Up For Racial Justice. <http://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/>. SURJ describes itself as “a national network of groups and individuals organizing white people for racial justice.

Through community organizing, mobilizing and education, SURJ moves white people to act as part of a multiracial majority for justice with passion and accountability.” The Baltimore, MD, Washington DC, and Western Massachusetts Chapters of SURJ are working on reparations in their respective chapters. (see: <https://www.facebook.com/SURJBaltimore/>,

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Massachusetts Chapter has made a really helpful chart about giving (see:

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Southern Reparations Loan Fund (SRLF), a “project of the Southern Grassroots Economies Project (SGEP). SGEP makes business loans to cooperatively owned businesses anchored in the most marginalized Southern communities. They focus their lending toward start-ups and expansions of democratically governed enterprises that meet the needs and elevate the quality of life of African Americans, immigrants, and poor whites” (see:

<https://southernreparations.org/>).

The Truth Telling Project “implements and sustains grassroots, community-centered truth-telling processes to amplify our voices about structural violence. We share stories, facilitate healing, support activists on the ground, educate, and seek justice” (see: <http://www.thetruthtellingproject.org/>).

Uhuru Solidarity Movement: White Reparations to African People. “Our principles of unity are: 1. We are Under the Leadership of the African People’s Socialist Party! 2. We Stand in Solidarity with African Self-Determination! 3. We Organize in the White Community for Reparations to African people” (see: <https://uhurusolidarity.org/usm-principles-of-unity/>).

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## **Some Resources on Racism and the History of Racism**

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