



Indaba is the vision of Merrie Harrison and Denise Keyes Page.

Indaba is a community wide gathering of residents and stake holders of the greater Madison community who want to answer the question ***“But What can I do?”*** about racism. Learning together and teaching one another to live in alignment, as an intimate supportive community, is the essence of Indaba. Our goal is to cultivate personal responsibility to affect change. It may be change of heart, it may be change of practice or policy. What matters is change. We open with a program open to all and then meet 7 times to explore the question. The program ends in a retreat to share our journey, identity that which we might want to do individually or collectively to address systemic racism and to celebrate. We do have an incentive budget to support next steps. There is an application below. Participants are limited to twenty-five.

### **Merrie Harrison**

Merrie has been concerned about fairness and equality among people for as long as she can remember. Her interest in race and racism began in college when she became aware of the gross inequities in education between children of color and white children. Her personal experiences of working in many different Public Schools in New Haven, living in the suburbs and raising two bi-racial sons have given her the opportunity to witness the vast disparities firsthand.

Since retiring in 2014, she has dedicated herself to the endless quest for understanding related to the history and impact of racism. She has participated in many workshops, read countless books and articles and has been active in organizations focused on fighting racism. She is primarily interested in rooting out racism in herself and helping others do the same in order to establish a strong foundation on which to build lasting change in our communities and institutions. As a certified Narrative 4 facilitator, she has discovered storytelling as a way to utilize her natural abilities as a facilitator to encourage introspection as well as a deeper understanding and empathy for others. She brings all of that experience, passion and self-reflection to the Indaba Project!

### **Denise Keyes Page –**

Denise Keyes Page, is a writer, speaker and facilitator in the field of social justice, diversity and inclusion and dismantling racism. In 1997 she founded DreamCatchers, a Training and Consulting Firm and with her nationally recognized team, provided workplace training for corporate, nonprofit, academic, civic, community, healthcare, judicial and law enforcement environments. She and her staff are heralded for skillfully orchestrating a safe, non-judgmental space for the deep work. A comfortable, safe space is maintained to support work that can be uncomfortable. Companies and individuals have the hard conversations, challenge recognized norms, and move to changed behavior.

When introduced to the art of storytelling she saw the synergy between it and her method of leading workshops. As cries for social justice, racial equity and examination of traditionally held practices grew louder, Denise was moved to blend her long-time commitment to social justice with her newly discovered passion for storytelling. Her years of expertise guiding results driven workshops combined with her natural talent for storytelling lead participants from heart to head to hand.

A Connecticut native, many of her stories stem from her experience of being a multi-generational African American New Englander. Denise believes that sharing and listening to the stories of others has the capacity to normalize the inevitable challenges of life and deepen understanding of others. She believes as she paraphrases here . . . “In order to serve the people, you have to respect the people; in order to respect the people, you have to know the people; in order to know the people, you have to be open to the discomfort of learning their stories,” and she adds “as well as your own.”



## Dates

### Indaba Opening Event

**Friday, March 17, 2023 – 7pm – 8:30pm**

“Ubuntu Storytellers” Opening Concert

- Free event open to public
- Concert is performed by black and brown storytellers sharing stories of living in the skin they’re in beyond victim and saint (for more info [www.ubuntustorytellers.com](http://www.ubuntustorytellers.com))
- Attendance is required for participation in the Indaba Follow-up Full Series of Sessions.

### Indaba Follow-up Full Series of Sessions

**Saturday, March 18, 2023 – 9:30 am - 3:30 pm**

Opening Retreat - held at Mercy by the Sea – lunch included

- This retreat provides an opportunity to introduce ourselves, share our personal goals and expectations of Indaba experience and begin to form an inviting community of learning and growth,
- During this retreat, we will unpack the stories that we heard together and begin to deconstruct our own stories and experiences around racism, identity and justice.

**Tuesdays: 5:45 pm – 8:30 pm**

**March 21 & 28, April 4, 11 & 18**

Weekly Gatherings

- Tuesdays, 5:45 pm – 6:15 Dinner (provided by Indaba)
- During these sessions we will continue to deepen our empathy and self-awareness
- We will hear from guests who are on similar journeys, watch film excerpts, share readings as we continue to excavate our own personal stories and examine our perspectives on racism and allyship.

**Saturday, April 22 – 9:30 am - 3:30 pm**

Closing Retreat - held at Mercy by the Sea – lunch included

- Recap Collective and Individual Journey
- Story Share
- Identify Next Steps for Project
- Celebration

**\*All gatherings are in person unless Covid conditions require virtual gatherings.**

**This program is offered at no cost to participants!**

**For an application, please email  
Denise Page and Merrie Harrison at  
[IndabaWorkshop@gmail.com](mailto:IndabaWorkshop@gmail.com)**