



## Join us for a Community Conversation on Racial Equity and Homelessness

December 5, 2016

6:00 - 8:30 pm

Urban Grace Church  
902 Market Street  
Tacoma, WA 98402

### Program Speakers Include:

Emcee: Carol Mitchell, Metro Parks and TV Tacoma  
Jeff Olivet and Marc Dones, Center for Social Innovation  
Carmen White, City of Tacoma  
Jaques Colon, Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department  
Dexter Gordon, University of Puget Sound  
Spoken Word Performances by Lucas Smiraldo and Cathy Nguyen

Light refreshments and an opportunity for more dialogue and conversation following the program

For tickets, please RSVP at: <https://SPARCTacomapiercecounty.eventbrite.com>

The Center for Social Innovation has invited Pierce County, the City of Tacoma, and community stakeholders to participate as part of a ten-city cohort in a national research and training project to better understand the nexus between race and homelessness, and to develop tools and approaches that will result in more equitable outcomes for all people experiencing homelessness.

The project, called **SPARC: Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities**, combines qualitative and quantitative research, training, and community dialog to promote awareness, education, and action. Join us for an evening of learning and conversation to kick-off Tacoma/Pierce County's journey with SPARC.

Learn more at <http://center4si.com/sparc/>

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## Addressing Racial Inequity

Racial inequality persists in the United States despite significant attention to this issue over recent decades. Racism has not declined, but has instead become less overt<sup>1</sup>. People of color are disproportionately represented in the homeless population. Blacks or African Americans are more likely to become homeless than people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. Although Blacks comprise 13% of the US population and 26% of those living in poverty, they account for more than 40% of the sheltered population.<sup>2,3</sup> This suggests that poverty rates alone do not explain the over-representation of Blacks in the homeless population. Furthermore, Black men remain homeless longer than White or Hispanic men.<sup>4,5</sup>

### Changing the Conversation and Sparking Action

Addressing racial inequity in homelessness means changing the conversation in the United States around the root causes of housing instability, risk for homelessness, and barriers to exiting homelessness for people of color. SPARC (Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities) is committed to understanding these root causes and galvanizing change.

As we initiate action nationally, it is critical to engage policy makers, service providers, and people experiencing homelessness to understand how racism intersects with homelessness. To change the conversation, we are launching a process of research and action.

## About C4

The Center for Social Innovation (C4) promotes best practices that improve the lives of marginalized and vulnerable people. C4 focuses on complex public health problems such as homelessness, trauma, mental illness and addiction. Using state-of-the-art research, training, and technology, C4 helps individuals, agencies, and communities deepen the impact of their work.



1 Bonilla-Silva, E. (2006). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

2 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *Current Population Survey*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office. U.S. Census Bureau.

3 Carter III, G.R. (2011). *From exclusion to destitution: Race, affordable housing, and homelessness*. *Cityscape*, 33-70.

4 Ibid.

5 Molina-Jackson, E. (2007). *Negotiating homelessness through the saliency of family ties: The personal networking practices of Latino and African American men*. *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, 16(4), 268-320.