



TEN NEWSLETTER

Bimonthly Newsletter of the
Transformative Education Network
at Montclair State University



COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH

One of the very first theories that residents study when they become TEN students is the theory of Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) (Yosso, 2005). This concept shifts the lens that asserts what type of knowledge, whose ways of knowing, and what skills or abilities are deemed valuable in schools and for success in the world.

When working as a classroom teacher, it is important to look at students, families, and communities through an asset-based lens. Too often, children of color are viewed through the lens of a deficit-model focusing on what they don't have, can't do, or don't know. In her seminal article about CCW (you can find it [here](#)), Dr. Tara Yosso explains that educators often use deficit thinking toward students and families of color by positioning them as "... at fault for poor academic performance because: a) students enter school without the normative cultural knowledge and skills; and b) parents neither value nor support their child's education." Using a [Critical Race Theory](#) approach, Yosso disputes these assumptions, pointing out that the education system in this country has only valued the cultural capital associated with the white middle- and upper-class. As this group has the most power and privilege, their cultural capital is deemed valuable and normative while the capitals of other groups are not privileged. It had become the work of teachers and schools to help BIPOC students fill the "gaps" instead of working to understand and enhance the many strengths of these communities. CCW asserts that students of color have a deep wealth of knowledge that should be capitalized on, valued, and built upon. Yosso has named 6 forms of capital that communities of color possess:

- **Aspirational capital:** the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future
- **Linguistic capital:** the intellectual and social skills obtained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style
- **Familial capital:** cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community, history, memory and cultural intuition
- **Social capital:** networks of people and community resources
- **Navigational capital:** skills of maneuvering through social institutions
- **Resistant capital:** knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality

At TEN, we believe that connecting to our students' cultural wealth requires both studying theory and getting to know the community and local organizers. Ten students begin their orientation by reading Yosso's article and then learn about Community Cultural Wealth by spending time in the city and actively engaging with people. They practice noticing diverse capital by learning from and working with service providing and activist organizations already hard at work in their schools' communities. We hope you take time this summer to participate with the great wealth present in your community and beyond!

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SPOTLIGHT ON...

Faathia Kalam & John Kelly



UPCOMING EVENTS



June 27 via Zoom
MSU NER Summer Conference
Re-Imagining Advocacy for Equity
in Public Schools
• 8:30 am-12:00 pm EST

NTP alumnus John Kelly teaches American History at Weequahic High School. Faathia Kalam is one of his students. She is in the 11th grade.

Why do you think antiracist/social justice topics need to be discussed in the classroom?

FK: You need to teach young children to have empathy because social justice is not only about being morally higher than other people; it's about being empathetic towards other people, relating and seeing their struggles.

JK: I teach American History to students who are mostly Black, Hispanic and South Asian. By focusing on antiracism and social justice I'm able to center stories of their unique cultures and highlight the important role they have played in shaping America while exposing the power hierarchy and injustice.

Faathia, what type of teachers do you need?

I want teachers with easygoing personalities who really want to connect with students. My best teachers have a willingness to help me understand and comprehend the work, who make me feel comfortable enough in the class environment to ask questions.

What do you think are some of the strengths of your community?

FK: It's more community-based than individualistic. In my previous school, it was always competition, competition, competition. Here you learn to think about your community instead of just yourself.

JK: I feel very grateful that I got to do my student teaching at Weequahic and that they've asked me to stay on because it's an incredible community with a long and rich history. It has been great to be able to learn from the incredible teachers here, especially my cooperating teacher, Mr. George White.

John, how do you put what you've learned about community cultural wealth into practice in the classroom?

I get to know my students as individuals. I'm always paying attention, crafting lessons thinking of specific students and what I anticipate they might bring to that conversation. Then I build my lesson around that, and it just makes the education so much more relevant and interesting.

Faathia, the program that Mr. Kelly is in focuses on antiracism and social justice. What evidence of that could you see in what and how he taught?

Before this year, I'd only been taught history from the textbook. Mr. Kelly taught me about textbook bias, and that they're often written only from the winner's perspective, so you don't really get that civilian nuance. Mr. Kelly's teaching helped me understand everything that went on during those historical moments from multiple perspectives.

What is one change you'd like to see in public education?

FK: Higher pay for teachers! The amount of people going into public education is declining, right? So if you have no teachers willing to teach and work so hard and live paycheck to paycheck, how are you gonna raise the future generations?

JK: I would like to see teachers and students supported, not just with statements, but with funding.

What is one book that changed your life?

JK: Anne Frank's The Diary of a Young Girl. It just really just kind of sunk into my bones and changed my worldview at a time when I was quite young and my worldview was pretty malleable.

FK: A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini because of the cultural significance it had for me. It's very heartbreaking, but you get an understanding of what's happening outside of your little bubble.



TEN HONORS

The TEN Honors initiative was created in order to recognize TEN alumni and partner district teachers who are advancing racial and social justice within their classrooms. This year's honoree is Peter De La Cruz. An alumnus of the Newark Teacher Project, Peter now teaches Social Studies at University High School in Newark.



As evidence of his commitment to social justice education, Peter submitted student presentations from a unit he created called "The Ableism Project." In this unit, Peter engaged 10th-grade students in understanding the history and impact of ableism in society and schools, taking an intersectional approach to uncover the ways in which society has been structured to oppress people with disabilities. As one student wrote, "Ableism, like racism and sexism, labels entire groups of people as 'less than'." Peter also had his students learn about important social justice activists who had disabilities, such as Fannie Lou Hamer and Harriet Tubman.

As the recipient of the TEN Honors award, Peter received a Newark small-business gift card, as well as a plaque recognizing his achievement. Congratulations Peter!

ANTIRACIST & SOCIAL JUSTICE RESOURCES: SUMMER EDITION

Books:

- [An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States](#) by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz
- [Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds](#) by adrienne maree brown
- [Lies My Teacher Told Me](#) by James Loewen
- [My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Mending of Our Bodies and Hearts](#) by Resmaa Menakem
- [The Making of Asian America](#) by Erika Lee
- [Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?](#) by Beverly Daniel Tatum
- Wirecutter: [14 Antiracist Books for Kids and Teens Recommended by BIPOC Teachers and Librarians](#)
- [All Boys aren't Blue](#) by George M. Johnson

Films:

- [America to Me](#) (Entire series available free on MSU's digital commons)
- [Crip Camp](#)
- [Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools](#)
- [Race: The Power of Illusion](#) (PBS)
- [Pariah](#)



Podcasts:

- [How to Survive the End of the World](#)
- [Abolitionist Teaching Network](#)
- [Revisionist History: Miss Buchanans Period of Adjustment](#)

Organizations:

- [Girl Trek](#)
- [Institute for Teachers of Color Committed to Racial Justice](#)
- [National Equity Project](#)
- [Rethinking Schools](#)
- [Teaching Tolerance](#)
- [Welcoming Schools](#)
- [Zinn Education Project](#)





Congrats

2022 NTP GRADUATES!

DID YOU KNOW?

Sixteen 2022 TEN graduates have accepted teaching positions at 10 public schools throughout Newark.

Check out where they'll be next year on this map!

