



2022 CONNECTIONS CONFERENCE

**SUTTON HIGH SCHOOL
MARCH 18, 2022**



2022 KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Ousmane K. Power-Greene



An Associate Professor in the history department and program director of Africana Studies at Clark University. He completed his B.A. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an M.Ed., M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, as well as an MFA in fiction from Columbia University. Ousmane's first book, *Against Wind and Tide: The African American Struggle against the Colonization Movement* by NYU Press in 2014, examines black Americans efforts to agitate for equal rights and in opposition to the American Colonization Society's. Also, he is co-editor with Ronald A. Johnson of a collection of essays titled, *In Search of Liberty: Nineteenth Century African American Internationalism* was published in July 2021 by the University of Georgia Press. His first novel, *The Confessions of Matthew Strong*, will be published by Random House in September 2022.

A sought after scholar, Dr. Power-Greene has been invited to present his work on panels and given lectures in universities in Germany, France, England, Ghana, and China. His reviews and essays have been published in the *American Historical Review*, *Journal of American History*, *Journal of Southern History*, among others. Dr. Power-Greene has also been featured on numerous podcasts and radio programs. Notably, he was interviewed for story on *All Things Considered*, featured on *CSPAN Book TV*, and invited to appear on NPR's history podcast *Throughline*. In July 2020, Dr. Power-Greene was a featured guest on the ABC radio in Australia on the show, "This Week in History."

Dr. Power-Greene's impact on racial equity at Clark University has been felt since he arrived in 2007. He helped organize the Africana Studies concentration, served on the President commission on Race, the undergraduate academic board where he helped create the university's diversity and inclusion requirement. In 2014, he joined with two other colleagues to create the Center for the Race, Gender, and Area Studies, which opened its doors in 2016. In 2015, he was asked by the provost to serve as the in-term Chief Officer of Diversity and Inclusion. In addition to his work with Clark University, Ousmane serves on several boards, most notably *Self-Evident Media*, a digital humanities resource that will encourage educators and students to think critically about the role of race and institutional racism throughout United States history.

WELCOME TO SUTTON HIGH SCHOOL!

Welcome to Connections Conference 2022!

First and foremost, we sincerely thank you for devoting your time to coming to our school and finding interest in Connections. Although last year's conference was incredible in more ways than one, we are very excited to have everyone back and in-person for this year's conference. There is an amazing lineup of presenters this year, all excited to share their remarkably passionate and educational lessons with you.

As a student body of Sutton High School, we cannot begin to express how crucial it is that you are here with us today. At points, it is possible to find yourself worrying that you may be alone in your efforts to make a positive impact in your community. But it is profoundly comforting to see the resounding 40+ schools that are joining us for ConCon 2022. This proves that not only are we not alone, but that there are many of us! The most important thing to remember today is that we are all in this together. Listening to each other's experiences, supporting those who are disadvantaged by systematic oppression or prejudice, and sharing what you've learned with your own community will bring us one step closer to our goal. We hope that this conference will help you in coming closer to reaching said goals within your own community; and we hope that you use this opportunity to meet new people, make a few friends, and establish some valuable connections.

Have a great conference, and see you back for ConCon 2023!

Jackson Hersom [Class of 2023] & The Sutton High School Connections Team



Agenda

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| 7:45 - 8:30 | Arrival |
| 8:30 - 9:15 | Welcome & Keynote |
| 9:30- 10:30 | Workshop Session #1 |
| 10:40 - 11:40 | Workshop Session #2 |
| 11:40 - 12:30 | Lunch |
| 12:35 - 1:05 | Making Connections |
| 1:10 - 1:30 | Closing |

Building Connection & Empathy with Narrative 4

Ashley Pinciario, N4 Northeast Regional Manager and Allison Lerman-Gluck, N4 Advisor & Lead Trainer

Narrative 4 is a global nonprofit organization focused on building connection and empathy across barriers. Driven by artists, shaped by educators, and led by students, Narrative 4 uses the power of storytelling and the arts to equip young people to become powerful forces of change. In this workshop, we will sample our core methodology, the story exchange. We will practice deep listening and story-telling, with workshop attendees participating in a mini object exchange while also reflecting on what it means to bring empathy and connection to the classroom. **[Room 229]**

Building Inclusive Spaces: Take Action to Include Others

Kerry Weir, SUNY Old Westbury

If we want to live in an inclusive world, then we must do the work to ensure that our spaces are welcoming to all. In this workshop, participants will discuss how ableism functions in the world and challenge assumptions about people with visible and invisible disabilities. Through a series of activities and dialogue, participants will critique their own schools and communities by developing an inclusive checklist. Participants will leave the workshop with a series of practical action steps so they can begin to build a more inclusive learning community immediately. **[Room 220]**

Celebrating Our Diverse Traditions

Kameron Thomas, Primah Muwanga, Keilah Noel, Paola Muwanga, and Priscilla Oluokun, Ashland High School

The Cultural Student Union at Ashland high school will lead a session that will focus on the celebratory traditions of different cultures around the world. We hope to cover the festive features of African and South Asian cultures. The workshop will include: interactive segments where the audience can experience, view, and listen to aspects of these cultures. Interactive segments include henna, traditional attire, and cultural beliefs. **[Room 224]**

Countering Silence: Courageous Communication Against What's Keeping Us Quiet

Fitzgerald Pucci, Brookfields Fight Fear

This fireball workshop aims to equip students with the lenses and tools to develop their own practice of deepening their social awareness, and walk students together through the act of speaking against injustice. We will take a look into the relationship between power and silence, examining the codependence between abuse of power and silence. We'll take a look together at the "Big Quiet" and the "Little Quiet", the ways people are influenced towards quiet from the social infrastructure they are a part of, and the ways we police our own words and behaviors. We'll look into the psychological circumstances behind silence to better understand how to change the circumstance. Finally, we will take a hands-on creative approach in the workshop to formulate how we go from unaware and silent to empowered and capable of action. **[Room 266]**

DEI And Sports: Athletes And Coaches Agree, It Is A Must

Tara Cole, South Hadley High School

Diversity, equity and inclusion is a hot topic; we all know that. It seems like it is being talked about everywhere you turn - but, how often do you hear DEI mentioned in connection with sports; well, besides Title IX? This workshop is going to look at the intersectionality of identities and how they relate to privilege and discrimination within the world of sport. We will dive into this topic through: interactive activities, videos, group discussions and private reflections. **[Room 221]**

East Vs West: Racial Tensions Within Schools

Susan Nugent, Megan McGrath, Isha Agarwal, Kubura Issah, Grace Chai, and Megan Lin, Acton Boxborough Regional High School

In our school, people of color, mostly Black and Brown students, tend to gather in a location called east commons, whereas the White students gather in west commons. As a result of stereotypes, east commons has taken on a negative connotation, nicknamed "the hood of the school" or "the ghetto wing." The divide in where students hang out is symbolic of a deep racial divide present within our community, which carries over into classrooms and education. In this presentation, we will talk about the racial tensions that emerge within every nook and cranny of our schools, and ways to create safe spaces for people of color and engage in discussions on race. **[Room 225]**

Environmental Justice: Working Towards A Sustainable Planet For Everybody

Jill Chadwick

Environmental Justice is becoming an increasingly common phrase in modern media and politics, especially as environmental activism becomes more mainstream. This workshop aims to provide an introduction to the concept, as well as some historic and current applications of environmental justice. Participants can expect to leave with a better understanding of how environmental issues intersect with social ones and the tools and ideas to help bring environmental justice to their own communities. **[Room 226]**

Food Desert Phenomenon: How Does Economic And Social Status Affect Access To Food?

Pratham Patel and Kevin Driscoll, Innovation Academy Charter School

Food deserts are an important and relatively unknown societal issue. This problem heavily impacts many people who have food or diet restrictions. A difficulty many people deal with is not having access to affordable, healthy, and diet-specific food options. Food deserts are a large problem within under-resourced communities in the United States. A food desert is a lack of access to affordable and healthy food. Our goal is to shine light on this disparity within our communities. It is important to create access to necessary goods for all within our society. Participants will use social science, research, and systems thinking tools to explore the reasons why they happen, how to continue educating people about them, and how to resolve the issue. **[Room 208]**

Hate Crimes Prevention In MA

Dr. Kerry Akashian, DESE

The workshop explores current initiatives in place that address the prevention of hate crimes in MA. Educators will explore the efforts that districts have made to prevent or to be responsive of hate crimes that have occurred in their districts and communities. Educators will leave with an understanding of hate crimes prevention efforts in MA and resources available. While the content is primarily targeted at educators I think that high school students with an interest in hate crimes prevention could learn from the session. **[Room 262]**

Let's Talk About It & Break The Stigma: Menstrual Products Accessibility,

Affordability, & Sustainability In The U.S.

Kerry Matthews, Innovation Academy Charter School

1 in 2.5 people who identify as female have experienced period shaming at some point in their life. Let's talk about it and raise awareness together. My workshop is centered around the idea of menstrual inequality, specifically in the United States. I will be covering a wide range of topics regarding this central idea of menstrual inequality, such as period shame, product advertisements, costs, harmful chemicals in products, environmental impact, and more sustainable options. I will also be talking about my work to help gain justice for period poverty in not only my school, but the community around me. I'll have a discussion with the group about what others can do to help, with the hopes of encouraging the viewers to take on a leadership role in helping to eradicate this issue in society. **[Room 115]**

LGBTQ+ 101 & Allyship

Narong Sokhom & youthleaders, BAGLY, Inc.

Want to learn more about the LGBTQIA+ community and being an ally? BAGLY will bring youth speakers to share their own experiences around navigating life as an LGBTQIA+ young person. The hope of this session is to give you tools on how to be a supportive ally to queer and trans people. Whether you are already a seasoned ally or someone who has a desire to become one, there is always extra room to learn, build and grow! In this workshop, we will briefly go over terms and definitions around gender and sexuality, host a Q&A panel with young people from BAGLY, and discuss ways on how to show up for LGBTQIA+ people. **[Room 260]**

Pride or Prejudice? Black Lives Matter and the Struggle Against Confederate

Monuments

Ousmane Power-Greene, Clark University

Do monuments and mascots perpetuate racism? Is the movement to take down the confederate battle flag and confederate monuments a significant step toward eradicating racism from American society? The conflict between demonstrators and counter-demonstrates in Charlottesville, New Orleans, and Charleston, South Carolina has riled the public into a frenzy, while students have less visibly pressed high school, college, and university officials to change their mascots. In fact, as this workshop will show, the contest over monuments, murals, and mascots has been one central facet of the #blacklivesmatter movement. Through an investigation of these debates, students will learn about the long fight to erect or take down statues, paint murals, and memorialize figures who some consider heroes, and others, villains. **[Room 250]**

Puerto Ricans: Second Class American Citizens?

Sofia Hernández de Ramos, Sutton High School

What is it like to be An American Citizen? Only a person who is born with this privilege can share their experiences about being an American Citizen. But what is it like to be a second class American citizen? Many Puerto Ricans have had this sentiment for years. Although Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States, just like Massachusetts is, Puerto Ricans that live on the island don't feel that they are treated the same as other residents in the states. This workshop will present and explore some of the historical myths and misconceptions about Puerto Rico and its relationship with the USA. This is an interactive workshop with Spanish music [NO dancing skills are required] and some delicious authentic Puerto Rican snacks! **[Room 270]**

Queer Trivia

Jess Motyl-Szary 2019 Mx. Bisexual Rhode Island and Bret Jacob 2019 Mr. Gay Rhode Island

Let's play trivia! This workshop will test your knowledge of the LGBTQIA+ community through a fun, team-based trivia game. The trivia questions will cover everything from terminology to queer history. The winning team gets bragging rights for the rest of the conference [and candy]! **[Room 268]**

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