



New York Collective of Radical Educators

Inquiry to Action Groups (ItAGs) 2019

The New York Collective of Radical Educators is pleased to offer an opportunity for teachers to build community and develop as activists. Educators will participate in Inquiry to Action Groups linking social justice issues with classroom practice. Small groups will meet weekly (for a total of six, two-hour sessions plus a kick-off and a possible closing sharing) between January and March to share experiences, respond to readings, exchange ideas, and develop action plans.

** NYCoRE strives to make ItAGs affordable with a registration fee of \$35. If you are unable to pay the full fee, there are limited scholarship funds available. Please email jonathan@brooklynfreeschool.org for more details. **

1. Digital Storytelling with Teachers | Educators of Color

Digital Storytelling with Teachers | Educators of Color is an intentional in-person and online *racial affinity space* **for** educators of color (eoc) and **by** eoc. In the spirit of community building, participants in this ItAG will be able to participate in person and/or in a digital community space. We will utilize creative writing and storytelling exercises | processes to reflect on our ourselves and our teacher identities—particularly at the intersections of identity, education, teaching, students, trauma, mental health, wellness, and self-care. This ItAG will explore the essential questions: *How do our lived experiences shape and inform ourselves, our teaching and our relationship with and to students? How do creative writing and digital storytelling spaces impact teachers | educators of color?*



Please note:

- This ItAG is open only to people of color.
- We stylize *teacher | educator* because we recognize that not everyone is a classroom teacher. For us *educator* encompasses individuals that work in educational spaces | contexts in varying roles | capacities.
- We welcome people of all writing abilities and writing comfort levels. In particular we welcome individuals that do not identify as writers but are interested in writing (i.e. individually, collaboratively and in community).
- This ItAG will utilize digital technologies to interact. Comfort with use of technology is encouraged, however not required. Support with use of these technologies will be included.
- This ItAG is a pilot study of a dissertation research project aimed to continue growing and supporting the educator of color community. As such, questions about ItAG participants experiences in this community will be explored before, throughout and after the ItAG process. Please contact José Alfredo at info@josealfredomenjivar.com for more information.

Facilitators: **José Alfredo Menjivar** (*he/him/his*) is a writer, teacher educator, activist, and doctoral candidate at the Graduate Center, CUNY. He has a M.A.T. degree in Literature and a M.A. in Urban Education. When he's not teaching or doing PhD stuff, he's either: managing NYCoRE EoC's listserv, co-curating their @nycoreeoc Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts, Instagram-ing his home cooking skills and food pics at @maizyraices, posting writing at @josealfredowrites or on www.josealfredomenjivar.com. Most likely though he's home, cuddling with his cats and writing on his laptop. (Fun fact: this is José Alfredo's 5th ItAG as a facilitator, and 4th eoc-centered ItAG.) **Maria D Rivas** is an educator and administrator in the Bronx. She loves to write and tries to carve out time to present her work as much as possible. She's always looking for ways to expose her students to the rest of the world via travel, the arts as well as through an Ethnic Studies/critical lens. She enjoys traveling and reading.

Location: CUNY Graduate Center, 365 5th Ave (Manhattan)

Dates: Thursdays 6pm Graduate Center, CUNY and/or Sundays 12pm Digital. Kick Off on 1/25; Closing on 3/22 or 3/23

2. NYCORE-Creates!

NYCORE-Create! is an affinity space for NYC artists/creatives/educators within NYCORE rooted in collaboration, social justice, and imagination.

We invite you to help shape the NYCORE-Creates! space by participating in a series of discussions and activities around art and social practice. These series of discussions and activities will have the potential for creating a culminating event by planning collectively and applying for open calls/grants.

The intentions for NYCORE-Creates! are:

- To uplift voices of artists of color, queer artists, youth artists, and anti-racist arts educators
- To create a space that fosters connections and community among the members
- To provide healing spaces for its members
- To create space of artistic inquiry in which we question, intentionally investigate, and share our practice and passion as creatives
- To organize a culminating event that engages NYC radical educators and youth in arts for social justice while providing networking opportunities

Facilitators: **Elizabeth Velazquez** creates mixed media/sculptural works, installation and rituals. Elizabeth is also a founding member of SEQAA. She is a visual arts educator at a small dual-language public school in Brooklyn. **Caryn Davidson** has been teaching art for over 14 years in NYC public schools, as a founder and developer of three small schools. She has been part of collaborative racial justice efforts in all school communities that she has been a part of, including the high school she attended herself. She is evolving and expanding her commitment to teaching art for social justice through anti-racist pedagogical practice. She is also a spiritual and political artist who contributes visual designs to activist organizing, including the Black Lives Matter At Schools week of action educators group and national movement.

Location: TBA

Dates: Thursdays, 6-8pm. Kick Off on 1/25; sessions following on 1/31, 2/7, 2/14, 2/28, 3/7, & 3/14; Closing on 3/22 or 3/23

3. Toward a Freedom School: Permission to Be Radical

This ItAG will provide a space for us to envision a Freedom School Day that challenges how racial capitalism is integral to New York City public schools. Each week, we will discuss and build on the ideas of Cedric J. Robinson as well as historical and contemporary models for Freedom Schools. By doing this work, we give ourselves permission to breathe our own freedom.

We hope this ItAG culminates in an action that lifts up what we learn from our time together around Freedom schools, perhaps even a Freedom School Day, but we are excited to co-ideate an action that feels right with the participants who sign up. We also know that the work we are doing is about more than just a single event — this is a movement. We are building something new; we are healing through co-creating liberatory educational spaces.

This ItAG is a continuation of the Radical Imaginations ItAG from 2017. We will build on the work we started in that ItAG, and we welcome all to join regardless of previous involvement. We especially encourage BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and our young people to participate.

Objectives:

- Conceptualize Freedom Schools through an understanding of Cedric Robinson racial capitalism and historical examples of freedom schools
- Use collaborative ideation to envision an action inspired by Freedom Schools

Facilitators: **Pam Segura** is an Afro-Latinx ELA and Advisory teacher at World View High School in the Bronx. She is in her third year of teaching and is committed to building on the life-giving momentum for radical re-imagining of education in her classroom, school, and other communities. She enjoys running, singing, and playing her guitars to Lupita and Paolo (her cat friends). **Jenn Leyva** teaches for revolution, liberation, and justice. She is a femme Latina and the 7th grade science teacher at East Side Community High School in the Lower East Side. She has taught in charter schools in Brooklyn and international schools in Seoul, South Korea. She is always on the lookout for pan planchado y café con leche.

Location: CUNY Graduate Center, 365 5th Ave (Manhattan)

Dates: Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30pm. Kick Off on 1/25; sessions following on 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 2/27, 3/6, & 3/13; Closing on 3/22 or 3/23

4. This is what an antiracist school would look like. How do we get there?

In a perfect world, an anti-racist framework would be at the heart of our school policies and practices. But our world--and our schools--are far from perfect. So how do we hold ourselves accountable to modeling and implementing anti-racism while navigating the imperfections of our educational systems? In this itag, which is inspired by Ibram X. Kendi's "Antiracism and America" series with *The Guardian*, we will explore concrete actions we can take to address this question. This itag will be an opportunity for a multiracial group of educators to engage in deep discussion, role-playing, story-telling, and problem-solving in a setting that prioritizes building community and trusting relationships.

Facilitators: **Ashia Troiano** is a former high school Social Studies teacher and curriculum writer. She currently tutors NYC public school students and works in the nonprofit world, managing fundraising and communications for The New Press. **Rosie Frascella** is a high school Humanities teacher and Restorative Justice coordinator at the International High School at Prospect Heights.

Location: TBA

Dates: Tuesdays, 6-8pm. Kick Off on 1/25; sessions following on 2/5, 2/12, 2/26, 3/5, & 3/12; Closing on 3/22 or 3/23

ItAG Kick Off Meeting: A general kick-off meeting for all ItAG participants will be held **Friday, January 25, 5:30–7:30pm** at CUNY Graduate Center @ 365 5th Ave. Room 5414. Dinner provided. (Call Jonathan @ 734.377.7063 if you have trouble finding the location). **Registration:** The registration fee is \$30. Multiple teachers from the same school can register together for the same ItAG for a reduced rate of \$25 each. This will cover the cost of materials and support NYCoRE's ongoing work. If you are unable to pay the full fee, there are limited scholarship funds available. Please email jonathan@brooklynfreeschool.org for more details. To register, visit www.nycore.org. Questions? Email natalia@nycore.org or jonathan@brooklynfreeschool.org. **Registration closes on Wednesday, January 23.**