

Racial Equity Dialogue Panelists

Sept 29 – Racism in the Justice and Re-Entry Systems

Judge Lora C. Cabbage

Job Title and Agency:

Superior Court Judge

Bio:

I am Superior Court Judge Lora C. Cabbage and I am running for the NC Court of Appeals -seat 5. One reason I became involved in the judicial system is to help ensure equal justice and equal access to justice. Homelessness exists in our communities across the State in large numbers and not only in the adult community but also in our youth/minor communities. As a judge I believe homelessness is an access to justice issue. Many in the homeless community are criminalized for being poor and they end up having an encounter with the judicial system rather than to get their basic needs met. Our society has to do better and as a judge I recognize these dynamics in some of the cases I see. Thankfully we have some programs in place to help with health care access and food insecurity for the homeless community at this point. I am hoping that the legislative branch will give more funding to the judicial branch so that we can bring more programs to offer rather than giving criminal records. I have been in North Carolina for over 25 years and have been a community servant for the same amount of time. It is truly my honor to serve our communities. I believe we all play a part and there is a part for us all to play!

Rev. Marvin R. Alexander, MDiv, MRT, QP

What is your job title, and agency?

I am the Founder and Executive Director of the Mephibosheth Project Inc. (MPI) Community Mentoring Program.

What are your areas of expertise and how are you able to use those to end homelessness/DV?

We serve as the primary Reentry agency for Wayne County. We are a recognized affiliate of NC DPS Adult Corrections and Juvenile Justice. We serve as the primary mentoring program for the Goldsboro Police Dept. and Wayne County Sheriff's Office.

As part of our 12 week program, we perform homelessness assessments to determine if there is an immediate need, as well as determining if there is an opportunity to connect our clients with other available housing resources. Through the assistance of some of our various partners, to include Goldsboro Salvation Army and other local agencies, we are able to either get an individual placed into the men's shelter, or if necessary and funding is available facilitate a 1 to 2 week stay at one of the local hotels as an emergency measure.

We provide an entry level Financial Management Training as a means of helping our clients to better understand what some of their other housing options may be, based upon their current financial means. Included in this training is a budgeting portion for the purpose of equipping our clients with a better understanding of how to effectively utilize their monetary resources on a monthly basis.

In addition I am a certified Moral Reconciliation Therapy Facilitator. I am also credentialed as an ACPE Pastoral Counseling Practitioner, under supervision. This allows us the opportunity to provide our clients with free Pastoral Counseling and Crisis Management Counseling. Through one to one, and group counseling our clients are presented with skills that will aid them in the areas of minimizing their immediate stressors and be in a better position to develop a plan for moving forward.

What is your vision for ending homelessness/DV or ending racism? Why is it important to you?

Understanding the correlation of mass incarceration, as related to homelessness and racism serves a huge driving factor in our visions. Studies have shown that both racism and homelessness play a huge role in the disproportionate numbers of people of color serving out periods of incarceration, as well as probation and/or parole. In order to see changes within our systems of discrimination found within our society it will take the collective efforts of a variety of organizations.

We have been diligently working with various members of our North Carolina elected officials for the purpose of obtaining usage of 2 vacant buildings located on the old Cherry Hospital campus. We have been informed that our request has been approved, however the approval has been written in the current NC State Budget that is still awaiting to be passed by Governor Cooper and our legislators. Gaining access to those buildings would allow us the opportunity to maintain an actual campus for our mentoring program, and simultaneously provide housing for 18 individuals in their quest for a 2nd Chance within our society. Such a program would bring a much needed resource to Wayne County, and continue our efforts to do our part to reduce the rate of crime and poverty within our community

What is your connection to North Carolina?

Being born and raised within Cabarrus County, and now residing in Wayne County, North Carolina is truly my home. Upon the completion of my service in the United States Air Force I felt the call to return back to North Carolina. I have been fortunate to have obtained two Associate of Applied Science degrees from Wayne community college, in Human Services and Substance Abuse Counseling. In addition I have also obtained a BA in Religious Studies, with a minor in Psychology from NC Wesleyan Colleges and a Master of Divinity degree from Campbell university. I am currently in the process of obtaining full accreditation within North Carolina as a Fee Based Practicing Pastoral Counselor.

Being a true North Carolinian I feel it is my duty to do my part to assist Justice Involved Individuals, in their efforts of becoming more productive members of our great state. MPI is able to play a small role in positive change within North Carolina through our mentoring of both the adult corrections and juvenile justice populations. I remain humbled and honored to be able to give back to my home state.

Dr. Deniece Cole

What is your job title, and agency?

I am the CEO, of Spiritual Destiny Int'l, Ministries, Inc. My Nonprofit is a Faith Based Agency.

What are your areas of expertise and how are you able to use those to end homelessness/DV?

I assist in Crisis Christian Counseling for Homeless Veterans & Civilians. I hold a A.A.S. in Criminal Justice, a B.S. in Biblical Studies, Christian Counseling, & Psychology, a Master's in Christian Counseling, Biblical Studies, & Psychology, and a Doctorate in Christian Counseling & Psychology. I am also a Veteran of the United States Marine Corps

SDIM, Inc., assesses the needs of the client by Counseling with them about their current Crisis, which allows SDIM, Inc. to identify the appropriate resources & Agencies to refer the client to. We often assist thru following up with the Client to determine the next steps.

What is your vision for ending homelessness/DV or ending racism? Why is it important to you?

My vision for ending homelessness & racism, is to create a process & environment where the Human Individuals are served based on their Human needs & not their Race or Culture. We must see each other as Human & not Skin color or race or culture. We are all Human Beings, not subhuman due to our skin color. As we progress towards this issue I hope to see less homelessness & more success in housing sustainability & job growth towards an independent progressive Human being that received the help they needed to come out of homelessness & thrive. That is my vision.

This is important to me, because Human Beings, People are hurting & suffering needlessly. We have to strive to do better towards our fellow man.

What is your connection to North Carolina?

I am a Native North Carolinian, born & bred. I'm proud of my home state in spite of the hard work we have ahead of us.

Tambra Chamberlain

Tambra Chamberlain has an extensive career in Human Services that spans over 30 years. For the past 15 years, Tambra Chamberlain has worked for Moore County Schools as a Licensed School Social Worker and currently the Lead Homeless Liaison for the Moore County School District. Tambra Chamberlain is also serving on the Board of Directors for the National Association for the Education of Homeless Youth and Children (NAEHYC) and Leads the Youth Committee for Region 7 of the NC BOS COC. Mrs. Chamberlain seeks to educate and mobilize communities, and advocate on behalf of families and youth experiencing homelessness in rural areas. Tambra Chamberlain serves on Racial and Gender Identity Equity Committees to educate others and create meaningful dialogues to end racist and oppressive behavior towards others.