

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Rev. Larry Golemon, Ph.D.

Phone: (202) 832-2675

E-Mail: lgolemon@washtheocon.org

Washington Theological Consortium to Host ‘The Journey of a Former White Supremacist’ Event, a Story About the Power of Dialogue, Friendship and Change

November 3 program at American University is part of the Consortium’s Tachmindji lecture series on interfaith dialogue and peacebuilding.

[Washington, October 21, 2019] – The Washington Theological Consortium announces a special program, “The Journey of a Former White Supremacist: The Power of Community to Effect Change,” its 19th annual Tachmindji lecture for interfaith dialogue and peacemaking.

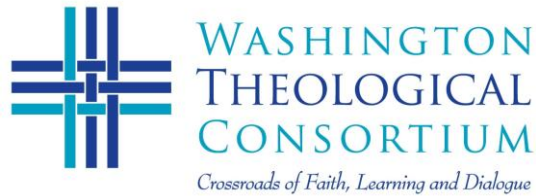
The event will take place Sunday, November 3, from 4 to 7 p.m. at American University School of International Service in Washington, D.C.

As Americans face the rise of militant white supremacy and the legacy of white privilege, encounters of love and friendship may be the most powerful forces for change. This story of three friends who met in college illustrates the incredible change that can take place, even for a deeply connected, former youth leader in the white supremacy movement. The program includes a conversation with panelists, open discussion, and a reception.

The panel will feature R. David Black, Allison Gornik and Matthew Stevenson. The three young recent college graduates, including a former white supremacist leader (Black), will share their dramatic story of friendship and change. Black, Gornik and Stevenson were the subjects of the recent book by Eli Saslow, *Rising Out of Hatred: The Awakening of a Former White Nationalist*.

The conversation will be moderated by Dr. Marc Gopin, Director of the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University.

“This is a remarkable story of how friendship and truth-telling turn around a life once committed to white supremacy,” noted Rev. Larry Golemon, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Consortium and an ordained Presbyterian minister. “It’s moving beyond words.”



The panelists noted about their story:

"The fact that I was friends with them was contradictory to my worldview," said R. David Black. "And that friendship was a lot more uncomfortable than what I had been simply grilled on my ideology."

"Everyone has different points of access, but the important thing is that we all engage," added Allison Gornik. "Silence is a choice."

"You can respect a person as a human being, even if you don't agree with their views," stated Matthew Stevenson. "You can still treat them with human dignity, because within every person is a spark of the Creator."

The event is open to the public; registration required by October 28. The press is encouraged to attend by making arrangements with Dr. Golemon, at (202) 832-2675 or lgolemon@washtheocon.org.

Registration and further event details can be found at washtheocon.org/community. Downloadable press materials are available here.

This event is made possible by a generous endowment from Diane Tachmindji for the promotion of interfaith dialogue and peacebuilding.

About the Washington Theological Consortium

The Washington Theological Consortium is a community of theological schools and partners from diverse traditions that pursue ecumenical dialogue, interfaith understanding, and educational collaboration to better equip clergy and laity for the ministry of the Church in a diverse society.

For more information, please contact Rev. Larry Golemon, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Washington Theological Consortium, at (202) 832-2675 or lgolemon@washtheocon.org.