



## Mission Statement

Media Island International is a cultural, educational and networking center, whose focus is to support women of color in their leadership while working with other like-minded individuals and groups who do conscious social justice activism. MII also chooses to support education, organizing and movement building, as well as independent progressive investigative journalism.



# MEDIA ISLAND INTERNATIONAL

## Seasonal Newsletter



## To Our Community,

We are very encouraged to continue our work here at the cultural center during these very unpredictable and challenging times. This newsletter, our community radio station, and being able to give virtual workshops, meetings and connecting with our community has kept us very busy. Thank you.

We are also reminded that even though the killing of Breonna Taylor happened before George Floyd, we are still fighting for her justice. This also brings up the fact that Black women's abuses and deaths are not given as much media coverage and attention as Black men. Some of us Black woman activists are working to make sure their names are not forgotten. Here are a few more for you all, sense we only seem to hear one or two at the most when this topic is brought up. Ralkina Jones, Malissa Williams, Alberta Spruill, Maya Hall, Toyin Salau, Gynnya McMillen, and Deborah Danner. Say Her Name

Let's take this opportunity to grow, learn and end racism, sexism and oppression. Featured in this news letter, **"On Fires and Indigenous Land Stewardship"** - written by a local native indigenous community member and partner, **"White People are a guest in the house of Hip Hip"** and **"Never A Pull Moment"**.

Be good to yourself, Peace

Commentary by Shawna Hawk M.A.  
African American Woman activist.  
Radio station host and Dj AKA (Lady Hawk)





The Women Of Color In Leadership Movement

## "Why is This Important"

We feel that the work around racial, gender and all forms of social justice is important so that we all have the opportunities to live the lives we aspire to. In this information age we hope to be one of the many voices that add to critical thinking and work toward equality for all.



## "KOWA" Community Radio Station News

For folks who don't know, we are a community low powered community radio station that does 24/7 public affairs who focus is social justice.

We air shows such as Hard knock Radio, News Views and Hip Hop, is their tag line, Black Agenda Radio, Rising up with Sonali, Letters and Politics, and much more. Tune in at 106.5 fm and you can live stream at kowalp.org.

MEDIA ISLAND INTERNATIONAL  
www.mediaislandinternational.org

**From The City of Olympia:** Olympia Parks, Arts & Recreation is continuing to find creative ways to meet the needs of the community. This summer, we were able to run 14 different camps a week, while serving upwards of 250 families each week. Our staff worked very hard to create a great summer for the campers and we are so grateful and proud of the service we were able to provide during the COVID pandemic.

We have a new School Day Olywahoo program that is full day childcare at Pioneer and Hansen Elementary (grades K-8). We also have virtual and in person classes, along with outdoor programs. Scholarships and additional information about these programs are available at <http://www.olympiawa.gov/experienceit>

Free lunch and breakfast for students provided by the Olympia School District:

Curb side grab-n-go lunches and breakfast will be available for pickup Monday through Friday when school is in session. The USDA has given a waiver to provide students 18 years of age or younger breakfast and lunch at no charge. No questions asked. If a student(s) is not able to pick up their meal a parent/guardian can pick up the meal(s) for them. All that is required is for the parent/guardian to sign for the meals. Curb side pickup is from 11:30am-1pm, locations include all elementary and middle schools. <https://osd.nutrislice.com/menu>

From Luke Burns, City of Olympia Committee on Diversity and Equity Co-chair & Recreational Program Specialist.

## "What's happening" News from The Women of Color in Leadership Movement



We were grateful to have been able to bring to our community several guest speakers, one of whom was Tim Wise (an antiracist activist) right before Covid 19 really hit hard.

Tim Wise came to our event on February 26th, 2020 at the Washington Center and The Evergreen State College. Mr. Wise was able to come and do a workshop at Evergreen and a lecture with Q&A afterwards at the Washington Center. We had planned and fundraised for a whole year prior.

We were able to have two amazing events and an opportunity to do the work of helping with the education around racism in our community.



# Featured Artist/creators

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## MUNECA

An artist, a poet, a zinester,  
a novice photographer  
and much more.

Link to their website,  
[munecaartist.wixsite.com](http://munecaartist.wixsite.com)



tune into the full lecture at the washington center on Media Island International Youtube channel. Due to Covid 19 we are not holding our support group meetings for now, but we are active and planning for the future. Our meetings are held on the second Saturday of the month from 11:00 to 1:00pm. When the virus is under control we will resume, take care and be safe.

## "How You Can Support US"

You can support us in a couple of ways, one direct way to send funding to our PayPal at [shawna@mediaisland.org](mailto:shawna@mediaisland.org). You can also go to our website at <https://media-island.networkforgood.com/> go to the drop down and either choose The Women of Color In leadership Movement. Media Island International. Or KOWA 106.5 for the radio station, or all three. You can become a sustaining supporter, which means a monthly donation. If Medua Island International got 28 people to donate \$50 a month that would cover our monthly cost of \$1,400.00. This would cover our operational cost, as well as the radio station cost. We are a 501c3 nonprofit, so for those who need it you can get a tax write off for helping us out. Thank you in advance for helping this Black woman run organization.

## "Community Corner"

### On Fires and Indigenous Land Stewardship

The west coast is on mega-fire, the unprecedented type of super destructive fire that no one has ever seen. Yet no one is really surprised, we've been watching these fires get more destructive with every passing year. And while yes, over 100 years of complete fire suppression have left the forests dangerously overgrown and global warming has turned them into multimillion acre tinderboxes, mass media overlooks a very important detail. These fires are a direct result of having removed Indigenous peoples from the land, and the continuation of present colonial law that outlaws Indigenous stewardship.

Settler colonial society has slowly been coming to terms with the fact that Indigenous peoples are an interwoven part of the landscape. The sustainable, regenerative relationships between Indigenous peoples, Fire use by Indigenous peoples is very diverse. It varies from simple acts, to transforming entire ecosystems. The number of unique cultural ecosystems created by Indigenous peoples from coast to coast through fire and intention is great and severely unacknowledged. Some examples include the ancient chestnut forests that once encompassed most of the landscape east of the Mississippi River, the great Ponderosa forests that were once vast grasslands with clumps of towering giant trees and abundant game, and the endangered camas prairies of the Pacific Northwest.



The web of life is severely damaged by the absence of Indigenous peoples' stewardship, no different than the absence of fire, the draining of wetlands, or the eradication of the wolf and beaver.

Unfortunately, it is very rare to see the Forest Service willing to work towards restoring Indigenous people to the land. Rather, the practice has been to continue the mythology of hunter gatherer societies that were primitive and always in a constant state of survival within "the wilderness". These practices by the settler colonial state can no longer sustain; this is obvious to see with the alarming amount of damage now being experienced.

Land and nature are not things to be conquered and tamed, they are something to be cherished, to be cared for, relatives with whom we can build thriving interdependent relationships. Indigenous communities hold these relationships; established over thousands of years through a world view that does not look at relationships through the lens of property, ownership, and resources. As colonial land management shifts to find better practices, it is important that they do not simply look for Indigenous ecological knowledge as something to be stolen and utilized. It's time for everybody, from government agencies to individuals, to center and empower Indigenous communities in all ways relating to land stewardship.

Itsa Shash, BS, Indipino Apache-Mexica  
#LandBack

## "White people are a guest in the house of hip hop"

Back in 2013, east coast hip-hop veteran Lord Jamar drew both ire and praise for his now ubiquitous declaration that "white people are a guest in the house of hip hop". Now, the assertion itself really shouldn't be controversial; it's pretty much objectively true that white (and really all non-Black) people taking part in hip-hop music and culture are doing so as "guests" in something with a distinctly and inarguably Black origin and history. But when looking at the Brand Nubian emcee's statement and the general public

response to it, especially alongside other less frequently discussed and referenced Lord Jamar statements, a larger picture starts to become apparent.

Often-discussed and often-debated are Lord Jamar's comments on white rappers; hardly ever acknowledged, however, are Lord Jamar's comments on Black women—both in and out of hip-hop. Lord Jamar has previously not only made his general distaste for female rappers clear, but has even gone so far as to insist that single Black mothers are doomed to raise "irrational" children due to said mothers being inherently "irrational" themselves. He declared he is an "alpha male" who will simply not align himself with female rappers. Lord Jamar's statements on Black women are clearly abhorrent and deserved to be publicly dismantled, and yet, far more frequently it was his utterly innocuous commentary on white rappers that engendered so much more public discourse. Essentially, while Lord Jamar is being inaccurately accused of excluding white people from hip-hop (who have no historical connection to the roots of the genre), he is in fact actively contributing to the exclusion of Black women from hip-hop (who are intimately connected to the genre and culture from the point of its very inception). The former point gets dissected ad nauseum, the latter is almost immediately forgotten.

Lord Jamar is correct in saying that white people are guests in the house of hip-hop; he seems unwilling however, to extend even guest status to Black women, despite them building the damn house. This obvious hypocrisy is certainly not limited to Lord Jamar, and if anything he just serves as a case study: the focus on Lord Jamar's statements on white rappers versus the lack of focus on his statements on Black women is emblematic of a much broader trend in hip-hop. Comical amounts of time have been spent discussing white people's place in hip-hop, and the general consensus is that (despite what Post Malone will tell you) white people do not face some kind of unique challenge in the rap world, as the purchasing power of a white consumer-base is more than happy to venerate white mediocrity at every turn. Guests or not, white rappers are constantly disproportionately rewarded for their contributions. Meanwhile,



Black women, who are unambiguously not guests in the proverbial house of rap, constantly find themselves subject to both barriers to entry and threats to their safety scarcely placed in front of any of their male peers.

There are more overt forms of this exclusion, in which men with massive industry power will actively refuse to use that power to help Black women or even actively use it against them (a notable example being Rick Ross claiming he doesn't sign women to his Maybach Music label, believing that he won't be able to resist sleeping with them if he does) but this exclusion also persists due to far more insidious factors that are scarcely limited to any one powerful person. Widespread misogynoir is inherently exclusionary just by its very existence; when CeeLo Green says that "it isn't rape if the victim is unconscious", when Talib Kweli spends days harassing a Black woman on twitter, when T.I. proudly proclaims that he polices his own daughter's sex life, and when countless men (and some women) defend and make excuses for these men, this creates an overwhelming culture of fear and danger; it reminds Black women that even in the home that they have built, they often remain unprotected. These trends are pervasive enough that even Megan Thee Stallion -one of the rap's biggest, most successful talents, and most visible talents- can be literally shot by a male peer, only for people to not only defend the assaulter and justify the shooter, but to have the gall to turn her abuse into a punchline, making numerous memes and jokes at her expense (and really at the expense of Black women in hip-hop as a whole). Black women are so often denied entry into hip-hop (either directly, as with Rick Ross, or indirectly, as with the more general overall misogynoir perpetuated by men at all levels of the industry), but even when Black women do find their way in, and even when Black women "make it" in hip-hop, there is still an ever-present danger for their safety and wellbeing that no man.

(and certainly no white man) ever needs to fear facing. If, for instance, DaBaby was shot instead of Megan Thee Stallion, you can bet the whole internet wouldn't be bending over backwards trying to find ways in which it was actually DaBaby's fault for getting shot.

Not everyone is as overt with their misogynoir as Lord Jamar, but they often don't need to be in order to have a similar effect on Black women's sense of safety and comfort both in hip-hop and in general. Lord Jamar slandering single Black mothers, Rick Ross denying women from his label, and countless anonymous twitter trolls making memes about Megan Thee Stallion's abuse, are all facets of the same destructive beast of





misogynoir, and this is the beast that so often puts Black women at a distinct disadvantage and position of unsafety, both in hip-hop and in society at large. So instead of engaging in conversation after conversation about Lord Jamar and how welcome white people are in the house of hip-hop, maybe we should spend that time and that energy on actively working to make Black women feel safe and secure in their own damn house that they built.

*Signed, a guest in the house of hip-hop.*

*Cosigned by one of its builders.*

**NEVER A DULL MOMENT** in the Pacific Northwest these days. Seattle's East Precinct lit up over the summer as protestors clashed with cops downtown. The Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone (CHAZ, later CHOP) took over the area for just under a month before mayor Jenny Durkan's order to clear the blocks on July 1st. Protests have continued in the area even after CHOP's demise, and many business owners in the area refuse to reopen.

Seattle's cop shops ain't in great shape either. The city's plan to restructure its law enforcement spending is one of the most ambitious on the block. The current proposal asks for cuts to the Seattle Police Department of over 100 police positions and the creation of a Public Safety Department. While welcomed by many activist organizations, Seattle officers are jumpingship to surrounding jurisdictions, and SPD Chief Carmen Best resigned over frustration that she and her department were not being considered. The response to Best's resignation has been mixed, with many people of color citing her as an inspirational figure in the department having been the first Black woman to hold the position.

Fireworks are still flying in Seattle politics while the country burns at the larger level. It can be overwhelming, but an important lesson emerges here, one that has deep roots in Black American thought.

Electoralism is the Golden Calf of the United States. Even progressives look at voting as the main, if not the only, avenue to change. It can be an important tool, but while we wait for election day, our communities need help now.

CHOP was born out of eroding trust in the federal government. It would not have been born 10 or 20 years ago. People are finding solace in their local and regional communities as COVID shreds through the country.

Your local organizations need you now. Your Black-owned businesses need you now. Your nonprofits dedicated to building Women of Color in leadership roles need you now.

Get busy child.

**This piece was done by George Collins, one of KOWA radio station programmers, as well as a freelance journalist and reporter.**



# Thank you and recognitions

We would like to thank the community members who supported us during our events and during our fundraiser's, whether that be with financial support, their volunteerism, or assistance with buying much needed supplies for operations and operational cost. A special thank you to Alden Davis of Underhill Plants, for his very supportive fundraiser. This helped us to get half the funding we needed to build our plant nursery at the cultural center. Also another thank you to Orca Books CO-OP, they also did a fundraiser which helped us get the other half of the funding, so we are able to get this project done! The City of Olympia, Committee on Diversity and Equity. Also thank you to Olympia Community Solar and in acknowledgement of our participation in the Humingbird community solar project. Due to this solar project we received a generous donation toward our roof replacement from Charles Frischer. Thank you so much!

All the individuals, you know who you are, thank you!

