# WeRISE NEWSLETTER

## Join our Board

We have board member openings and would love to have our community members or volunteers consider joining our team. We specifically have an opening for Treasurer and are looking for a candidate with legal experience who is passionate about transforming our community through racial justice. If you have interest in joining our board in another capacity, we would also love to hear from you! If you have questions regarding becoming a board member, email us at **weriseforgw@gmail.com** or stop by our booth at Fourth Friday on May 22nd to talk to two board members in person!

## Meza Wine Shop Fundraiser

48 N State St, Westerville

Meza Wine Shop is hosting their charcuterie board fundraiser again this year to help raise money for WeRISE's mission to transform our community through racial justice. Each package includes wine and a charcuterie box for two. Meza is donating $25 from every order to WeRISE. You can enjoy two bottles of wine and a charcuterie board for $85 or a bigger charcuterie board for $75 with no wine. Order here by **May 27th** for pick up or local delivery. If you order for delivery, please remember to leave a cooler on your porch for the charcuterie as Meza is not responsible for spoiled food.

## Building Community

Westerville Queer Collective (WQC)

**Farmer's Market –** Saturday May 16 from 9am-12pm at COhatch & North High Brewing (240 S State Street)

**Food Pantry –** Donate to or use the food pantry organized by WQC located inside Java Central in Uptown Westerville.

**Finding Support -** Visit the WQC Resource Guide or call the Trevor Project hotline +18887346193 if you need help.

## Jeni's Fundraiser

3998 Gramercy St, Easton Town Center

Join WeRISE at the Easton Town Center Jeni's on **June 1st between 4pm-7pm** for our first summer social fundraiser. Bring your family and friends in with you to make it a party! WeRISE paired two delicious flavors for our guests to enjoy; try our **Rich Harmony** which is Brambleberry Crisp and Salted Peanut Butter with Chocolate Flecks!

## WeREAD

*Calling In* by Loretta Ross

Although WeREAD 2026 has officially concluded, the impact of the program continues to resonate throughout our community. This year, we selected *Calling In: How to Start Making Change with Those You'd Rather Cancel* by Loretta Ross to help address divisive rhetoric and demonstrate the power of collaborative action. In *Calling In*, Ms. Ross uses her lived experience to illustrate how useful it is to draw others into collaborations, resulting in real, societal change, as opposed to excluding them from the conversation because they do not agree with us on all issues. She recommends carefully using common language to call people in and explains how to do it. Throughout the program, 69 participants engaged in community conversations and a moderated interview with the author. These lively discussions allowed us to hone our skills in determining when and how to "call people in." We left those conversations with a lot to consider, and many of us had follow-on conversations, which extended the program's impact even further.

We would like to extend special thanks to Lee Rutherford, a former WeRISE board member, for her outstanding interview with Loretta Ross. Their discussion covered Ms. Ross' personal journey, the development of a "calling in" culture, and the vital role of self-care, love, and joy in social justice work.

We ended the program with the optimistic view that by recognizing the humanity in those we disagree with, we can build the coalitions necessary to improve our society.

Loretta Ross is hosting a conversation centered around Imperfect Activism on May 27 from 7-9pm EST. The cost is $5 to join. Scan the QR code in the newsletter email to see how to register for the conversation.

### WeLEARN

Code Switch Podcast, *The Minefields of Parenting and Race*

After the joy of celebrating mothers this month and looking ahead to Father's Day, we wanted to take a moment to highlight the importance of recognizing the impacts of race on parenting.

This recent episode of the NPR Code Switch podcast was rerun in honor of Mother's Day. The episode focuses on dilemmas that parents face regarding race, such as school selection and opportunities for children to learn about their cultures. Experts weigh in on answers to the parents' questions, frequently asking the parents to consider additional questions that could clarify the context and lead to solutions.

### Upcoming: Juneteenth Weekend

By Christa Dickey

Juneteenth is more than a recognition of one historic moment, it is a reminder of the ongoing aspiration of equality and justice for all. The upcoming 250th anniversary of America serves as a poignant reminder that the promise of liberty in 1776 did not extend to everyone immediately. It would be another 89 years before the final proclamation of freedom reached all enslaved people in Galveston, Texas.

Juneteenth serves to honor the culture and contributions of Black Americans throughout our nation's history. Since 2022, WeRISE for Greater Westerville has organized a local Juneteenth Celebration in Westerville. It has served as a platform to uplift Black voices, talents and businesses and as a gathering space focused on reflection and listening. The celebration has helped to strengthen Westerville's commitment to a community rooted in progress and belonging.

The City of Westerville, through its Community Partners grant program, is proud to provide support to WeRISE for Greater Westerville, which aids in funding the yearly Juneteenth Celebration along with vital community education initiatives.

I urge our residents to explore the history of our country and start meaningful dialogues with their neighbors regarding their unique backgrounds and perspectives. While Juneteenth highlights the significant progress still required to realize our collective goals for a stronger community, it simultaneously serves as a joyous occasion to honor freedom, agency and excellence.