

# CONNECTUS

Connecting suburban and urban neighbors in Fairfield County and beyond

## BRIDGEPORT HAS A DREAM Building Bridges Across Fairfield County



**MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2021**

Streaming online at 2 p.m.

**WWW.CONNECTUSCT.ORG/MLK**

Recorded at The Klein Memorial Auditorium in Bridgeport, CT

### Message from Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



There are certain technical words in every academic discipline which soon become stereotypes and even clichés. Every academic discipline has its technical nomenclature. You who are in the field of psychology have given us a great word. It is the word 'maladjusted'. This word is probably used more than any other word in psychology. It is a good word; certainly it is good that in dealing with what the word implies you are declaring that destructive maladjustment should be destroyed. You are saying that all must seek the well-adjusted life in order to avoid neurotic and schizophrenic personalities.

But on the other hand, I am sure that we will recognize that there are some things in our society, some things in our world, to which we should never be adjusted. There are some things concerning which we must always be maladjusted if we are to be people of good will. We must never adjust ourselves to racial discrimination and racial segregation. We must never adjust ourselves to religious bigotry. We must never adjust ourselves to economic conditions that take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few. We must never adjust ourselves to the madness of militarism, and the self-defeating effects of physical violence. — *Excerpt from Dr. King's statement to the American Psychological Association 1967 Convention, entitled "The Role of the Behavioral Scientist in the Civil Rights Movement"*

### Message from Connect-Us Founder and Executive Director, Pam Lewis



"Bridgeport Has A Dream" is our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebration. Young people are singing, dancing, rapping, stepping, and writing poetry, sharing with Dr. King their dreams for the world, their country, their community, or perhaps why they don't have dreams. Our cast of 63 performers come from all over Fairfield County, with the young people of Bridgeport leading the way. We embrace the opportunity to show Fairfield County what we can achieve when we are playing and performing as one ensemble. Our show is a metaphor for King's dream of one day joining

together as Americans, working together to move our country forward. Actually, it is not a metaphor – it is King's dream manifested on stage right before our eyes. The day has yet to arrive in our country where every kid, no matter where they come from, has a fair shot at "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." I believe we are still heading that way, but we need places like Connect-Us – and so many other organizations – on the ground, in the trenches, working to make that happen for our young people. That is plenty of motivation for me, and that is the dream for Connect-Us. We are ever more inspired to be performing this show at The Klein Memorial Auditorium where Dr. King spoke in 1961 and 1964. Thousands of local residents came out for his talks and joined the fight for civil rights. Four days after his assassination in 1968, The Klein housed an overcrowded memorial service in his honor.

Thank you for joining us today!

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## PERFORMERS:

Tyron

Christian

Elana

Karl

KEYS

*with the Talmadge Hill Church Choir*

Jose

Frances

Carolyn

Conservatory of Dance

U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal

Jady

Fiona

Emmanuel

New Creation Step Team

Rachel

Kaylyn

GeNetix

Pam

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**WHY CONNECT-US?** Economic poverty has a profound impact on how young people develop as healthy, productive human beings and citizens. Connect-Us afterschool programs are a powerful context for providing inner city youth with experiences and creating environments that ignite their intellectual and social-emotional development.

**WHAT IS CONNECT-US?** Connect-Us youth programs are designed to complement formal education with afterschool growth opportunities that expand the vistas of youth living in Bridgeport, CT. Connect-Us programs accept all students irrespective of their academic accomplishments and capabilities and provide a variety of enrichment experiences.

## CONNECT-US PROGRAMS

**Youth Leadership Team:** The Connect-Us Youth Leadership Team is designed for young people 15 to 25 years old who are interested in becoming civic leaders in their community. Young people who participate in this program volunteer and take responsibility for producing successful community-based events, learn public speaking, community organizing, how to lead a meeting, how to express themselves, and how to have a productive discussion when not everyone agrees with their opinion.

**C-U Onstage!:** C-U Onstage! is a talent show where young people ages 5 to 25 take total responsibility for producing the show, from inviting their friends and family, to leading the audience in appreciating and supporting every young person who gets on stage. This program is designed as a place for young people to network with each other, create new performances together, and learn how to be punctual, dependable and part of an ensemble.

**Connect-Us Academy:** Connect-Us Academy is for young people 16 to 21 years old who want to cultivate skills and learn to work in a professional business setting. For 14 weeks, students attend weekly workshops after school at companies throughout Fairfield County. The program prepares youth to enter the workforce, pursue educational opportunities and for everyone involved to better participate in and navigate our increasingly complex world.

## CONNECT-US STAFF

**Executive Director:** Pam Lewis

**Director of Finance & Operations:** Pam Hafer

**Program Production Assistants:** Karl Gregory and Emmanuel Vereen

## CONTACT

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