



INTERFAITH COMMUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE (ICD)

RACISM AND SYSTEMIC BIAS

*George Floyd's death at the hands of police in May 2020, galvanized an intense concern about **Racism and Systemic Bias** – how it is manifested in our community, what is currently being done about it, and what we, as individuals and groups, can do to advance equity. To illuminate these issues and engage with others in working toward their resolution, ICD embarked upon a series of educational workshops that were open to all who wished to participate.*

Workshop 3 explores [*Systemic Racism in Health and Housing*](#) (January 31, 2021). **Michelle Krocker, MUEP**, Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance reviews the history of “redlining”, a practice created by federal policies in the 1930s that restricted access by “non-whites” to certain designated areas. While such practices are now illegal, the legacy of the racially segregated neighborhood patterns established through these policies remains to this day and continues to affect access to educational and career opportunities that ultimately reduce accumulation of wealth and upward mobility in African American populations.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, Executive Director of the American Public Health Association (APHA), cites data on the higher morbidity rates suffered by minority populations. Dr. Benjamin notes that your zip code dictates many factors, referred to as the social determinants of health, responsible for the root causes of health inequities. These include access to healthy environments in schools and housing, good jobs and transportation, nutritious foods, safety, and green space. Dr. Benjamin advocates using zoning in a positive way, investing resources toward maintaining neighborhoods, building communities, and encouraging long term healthy relationships.