



*Original design by Brittany Beyus*

## July 4th Oration: The Struggle for Justice Continues

July 4, 2020 - 11am via Zoom

Underground Railroad Education Center

***Learn the Past, Be the Present, Create the Future®***

Partially funded by the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area  
[www.hudsonrivervalley.com](http://www.hudsonrivervalley.com)



## **What to the Slave is Your Fourth of July?**

*In 1852 Frederick Douglass challenged the rhetoric of America with the conditions of Africans in America at that time. Thought provoking questions about democracy and civic engagement are as relevant today as they were in 1852 when Douglass asked his audience, "What to the Slave is Your Fourth of July?"*

## **The Struggle for Justice Continues**



Gretchen Sorin, PhD

Gretchen Sorin, featured speaker for the 11th annual July 4th Oration, will offer commentary on the contemporary relevance of July 4th in light of Douglass's challenges presented to his audience in 1852.

**Gretchen Sorin** is Director and Distinguished Professor of the Cooperstown Graduate Program, one of the nation's leading programs in Museum Studies.

She earned her MA at Cooperstown Graduate Program and her PhD in History at University at Albany, SUNY. After working as museum director, educator, and consultant to over 200 museums over 30 years, she returned to lead CGP. Her most recent publication is *Driving While Black: African American Travel and the Road to Civil Rights*. She is collaborating with filmmaker Ric Burns to create a documentary based on this book.



Jonathan Jones,

Jonathan Jones, featured reader for the 11th annual July 4th Oration, will offer an interpretive reading of excerpts from Frederick Douglass's 1852 speech.

**Jonathan Jones** is Commissioner for Recreation, Youth and Workforce for the City of Albany. Experienced public servant with a demonstrated history of creating policy, programs and opportunities to empower people, he is a strong community and social services professional with an MS in Educational Administration & Policy Studies from the State University of New York at Albany.

## Program Schedule

**Welcome** Paul and Mary Liz Stewart, UREC Co-founders

**Volunteer Recognition** Mary Liz Stewart, UREC Co-founder & Executive Dir.

**Derek Healey** - a graduate of SUNY Albany's Anthropology Program, Derek focused on Sociocultural Anthropology specializing in overcoming the cultural norms that perpetuate social inequality and oppression. Derek has been instrumental in developing a collections management system for UREC's enormous collections of artifacts.



**Willie Terry** - is Roaming Labor Correspondent with radio station WOOC out of Sanctuary for Independent Media in Troy and he maintains a long-standing relationship with local unions through Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Willie is a dedicated volunteer with UREC, a long standing member of the LibertyCon planning committee, and an organizer of the UREC Reads program.



**The Struggle for Justice Continues** - Guest reader Jonathan Jones will be followed by guest speaker Gretchen Sorin - Introductions by Robert Ward and David Hochfelder, respectively. Q&A will follow using the chat feature on [Zoom](#).

**Litany of Remembrance** Paul Stewart, UREC Co-founder

Join with us in honoring the courage and fortitude of those who escaped their enslavement, those whose lives ended in bondage, and those who dedicated their lives to the pursuit of justice in more recent times. Let us remember their names, their voices and their stories. Let us join together to honor them and be inspired by their courage and fortitude. (Selected readers will share the passages. We ask everyone to join the reader in responding with 'People of courage, people of hope, seekers of justice'.)

For **Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Stephen & Harriet Myers, Sarah Parker Remond, Jermain Loguen, William Still and many others** who led the movement known as the Underground Railroad and who fought for the abolition of enslavement in the United States. We remember you as one of the ...

(ALL) People of courage, people of hope, seekers of justice

For **Rev. William Barber, Rev. Liz Theoharis and the other leaders of the Poor People's Campaign** who lead the fight against injustice, inequity, discrimination, racism and bigotry, we remember you as representatives of the ...

(ALL) People of courage, people of hope, seekers of justice

For **Shaheed Vassell, Stephen Clark, Breonna Taylor, and others** who have been shot by police believing that they had weapons when they had none, and for **Michael Brown, Freddie Grey, Tamir Rice, Philando Castillo, Tanisha Anderson, Sandra Bland, Dantay Ivy, Edson Thevenin, George Floyd and others** who have needlessly died in police custody, we remember you as ...

(ALL) People of courage, people of hope, seekers of justice

For people who were seeking their freedom from enslavement and passed through Albany such as **Benjamin Wilson, Eliza Wilson, Elizabeth Barnes, Isaac Hinson, Harriet Taylor and many others**, we remember you as one of the...

(ALL) People of courage, People of hope, seekers of justice

For **those refugees who have been separated from their children; for those who came seeking asylum** but are being deported; for **those crossing the border** looking for freedom but finding themselves subjected to arrest and detention, we remember you as...

(ALL) People of courage, people of hope, seekers of justice

May these people who are remembered here speak to us in the present. May we be mindful of and responsive to their call to us to continue to work together for the liberty and justice promised to all in our nation's founding document. May we take on the mantle of civic responsibility and meaningfully participate in our communities as we engage the past with the present and look to the future with justice as our standard.

**Lift Every Voice and Sing** - performed by Toussaint Santicola Jones, Albany High School Class of 2020 graduate



**Closing remarks** - offered by Paul and Mary Liz Stewart

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***The legacy of the institution of slavery weighs us down as a nation, but, together, we can rise up and shake off the weight by carrying on the enduring legacy of our abolitionist forebears.***

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Contributors include Brea Barthel, Robert Ward, David Hochfelder, AnnMarie Hess, Annette Johnson, and John Koethen

Join with them in showing your support for UREC with a donation today -  
online at [undergroundrailroadhistory.org/donate/](https://undergroundrailroadhistory.org/donate/)  
or via postal mail to UREC, 194 Livingston Ave, Albany NY 12210

*Thank you for joining in the 11th annual July 4th Oration.  
Hope to see you again in 2021.*

[www.UndergroundRailroadHistory.org](http://www.UndergroundRailroadHistory.org)

