

StirFry Seminars & Consulting

February 2009

A Dream Come True

Moments before President Barack Hussein Obama's inauguration, so many feelings were swirling inside of me. So many memories that came up: President John F. Kennedy's Camelot and the Berlin Wall, Martin Luther King's Dream and Selma march, and Robert F. Kennedy's journey around the country, calling for an end to poverty and inequality as he sought to pick up the mantle of his brother. As I look back, I see that a price was paid for each of these men's dreams. And alongside their untimely deaths a toll weighed on the hearts of so many like myself, whose hopes and dreams for a better world were shattered time and time again. As each one fell, I couldn't help thinking that sometimes history has a way of repeating itself until we finally learn what we need to learn—an abrupt reminder to value each day and person and for all of us to do our part to make this a better world, because tomorrow is promised to no one. The Buddhists were right: Value each day as if it were a lifetime.

Throughout the day of Obama's inauguration and into the night, so many images, so many stories emerged and planted themselves into my memory and heart. Millions stood out in the freezing cold for hours. From every corner of this country people came to witness and to be a part of this historic moment. Folks talked about how there were 'no strangers' amongst the millions who attended the inauguration. Each person they met embraced them, talked with them as if they were old friends. People gave each other rides, shared food, and told stories of how and why they participated in Obama's quest for the presidency.

A young African American boy in high school shared that maybe now people wouldn't look at him and see a robber or murderer, but would see instead a teacher, a lawyer, and possibly the next president of the United States. Others talked about how this new president gave them hope for the first time, a sense that they could play a part in creating the direction and healing of this country. And still others wept, because they never thought they would live to see a black president in their lifetimes. They never thought that so many whites and young people would join together with them to fulfill the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr.

It was all truly magical, and this time the dream could not be stolen; it was, for many of us, a dream come true. A black man was the 44th president of the United States. Someone said, perhaps most succinctly, that finally we had someone who understood us because he grew up poor and from a broken family. He lived in other countries and experienced the beauty and value of other cultures and religions. And even after law school when he could have chosen any prestigious law firm, he chose to work in the streets of Chicago as a community organizer for the poor and later rising to become a Senator from his home state, Illinois. To many on this day, he was a president for all of us because he rose up amongst us as a champion for the poor and a warrior for social justice.

And so, on this rare occasion of a new biracial president, perhaps it would be good to pause for a moment--to remember and to give thanks to what it has taken for all of us to get to this moment. Pete Seeger was right. This land is your land and this land is my land. This land belongs to you and me. And on this cold morning in January 2009, all I can say is, America never looked so beautiful.

Lee Mun Wah

We asked members of the StirFry community what this Inauguration means to them, their families and friends. The response was overwhelming! We've posted the responses on our website at www.stirfryseminars.com/inauguration.

We invite you to add your voice to the others there as well and we will post it to our website.

Unlearning Racism

February 20-22, 2009

Friday 2pm - 9pm • Saturday 8am - 6pm • Sunday 8am-2pm

Quan Yin Training Center • 2311 8th Street, Berkeley, CA

Facilitated by Lee Mun Wah

This is one of our most popular workshops. It provides a forum for participants to discover conscious and unconscious ways in which racism has affected their lives. This workshop is experientially based and designed to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of our differences.

Through the use of films, role plays and a variety of diversity exercises, participants will learn to

- Understand the effects of personal history, on behavior and attitude of individuals
- Listen to and explore personal experiences and perspectives from participants of diverse ethnicities
- Understand how differences in race can affect relationships, communication and behavior
- Observe facilitation of racial conflicts and misunderstandings
- Compassionately listen to, validate and acknowledge the emotional impact of racism on an individual, group and community

Find Us now on Facebook!

Search Facebook for Stirfry Seminars or Lee Mun Wah and join our community of world citizens who care about diversity

StirFry Calendar

February 2, 2009 Mountain View, CA	Creating Community in a Diverse School Environment Not Open to the Public
February 10, 2009 Myrtle Beach, SC	Cultural Competency for Leaders Intro APPA Conference/Open to the Public
February 11-12, 2009 Davidson, NC	Diversity Conversations in the Classroom Not Open to the Public
February 17-18, 2009 Eugene, OR	Film Showing/Discussion & Becoming a Culturally Competent Workplace Open to the Public
February 20-22, 2009* Berkeley, CA	Unlearning Racism Open to the Public
February 25, 2009 Long Beach, CA	If these Halls Could Talk™ & Cultural Competency for Leaders CABE Conference/Open to the Public
March 3, 2009 Redwood City, CA	Unlearning Racism Not Open to the Public
March 5, 2009 Las Vegas, NV	Cultural Competency for Leaders Intro International Mentoring Association Conference/Open to the Public
March 7, 2009 Appleton, WI	Walking Across the Room Keynote & Cultural Competency for Educators Multicultural Education Conference/Open to the Public
March 10-11, 2009 Salem, OR	Cultural Competency for Leaders Not Open to the Public
March 16-17, 2009 Atlanta, GA	A Courageous Conversation about Race at Work Linkage, Inc. Conference/Open to the Public
March 20, 2009 San Francisco, CA	Color of Fear Free Film Showing & Discussion GraceCathedral/Open to the Public

* Held at the Quan Yin Training Center, 2311 8th Street, Berkeley, CA

For more information, registration and links to conference workshops, visit <http://www.stirfryseminars.com/events>

Contact Us: 510.204.8840 Trainings, Films & Diversity Products, ext. 101 www.stirfryseminars.com