

Tanya Denckla Cobb:

Is this working? That works. Cool. All right, thank you all. We are on the last leg. Lap of an amazing day together. This section is really -- we are trying to do something a little bit different at UVa with a symposium for those who know academic circle, a symposium is very academic. It's talking about things that are going to lead to papers. We wanted to talk about things would lead to action. So, we are going to ask you and we would love for you to, if you are alone at a table or just a few of you, to join another so you can have a full discussion. We will ask and invite speakers to come into an inner circle and we are going to have conversation around -- where is our question? Around what would move the needle. We will ask you at your tables a question around what would move the needle locally in Charlottesville towards food sovereignty and what idea would have the greatest impact and also be achievable. Greatest impact and also achievable. In the speaker circle, we will ask the speaker something different which is what would move the needle for the field as a whole? What ideas would have the greatest impact and be achievable. I will invite Kristina who has been synthesizing ideas to share what we have gotten so far.

Kristina Weaver:

Thanks, Tanya. We have that visiting room where the people put up several great ideas for action, looking at the local university, local community, state, national, and even global spheres. Looking at environmental health, social, political, and economic change. I want to recap what I noticed in transcribing them and we will be circulating the notes from all the sessions within a few weeks. There were several ideas and most were in the social, political and economic spheres. Food is really political. This work is really activism. There were very specific ideas like at the national level, increasing SNAP benefits. At the local level, a suggestion that those of us who are from here will recognize that the University in this city purchased can get groceries and give it back to the community that might have lost commerce through things like Vinegar Hill, the decimation of Vinegar Hill and giving it back for community use. There was a political idea to boycott Wendy's and there were overarching ideas of just real key principals like we need to take leadership from and believe people of color and redistribute land, and we need to rethink capitalism. From the very micro to the very large. What we want to do now is just capture this one last chance to glean ideas from the folks who are still here in the room, knowing that at the University, we do have a multidisciplinary task force of people trying to work from within the system to push for change overtime and that we also have many, many change agents and leaders here in the room and who have been part of the symposium and pushing in the community and the University. We are going to take all of these ideas and really take them seriously. Try to push them forward. I think we have maybe about five minutes for people to just work at your tables and the hope is that each of you will contribute at least one actionable idea for local change, either refining some of what you have heard and contributing something new. Talk about it amongst yourself. We will ask you to designate one person to do a 30-second report back of the top ideas that you generate and we will move into the closing of the symposium with the circle of our speakers.

Tanya Denckla Cobb:

Thanks. I think we can probably do -- we will see how you're doing, but you might need 10 minutes to come up. Each of you, if you could, put an idea first. I would like you to take a few minutes to silently on your own think of an idea that would be actionable and move the needle locally toward food justice and if we can make it forward towards food sovereignty, that would be amazing. As a table, discuss your ideas and think of maybe the one thing we want to hold out and focus on. I will talk with this circle here. We will talk privately about moving the needle as a field.
Good? Okay. Thank you.

Small group discussion

Tanya Denckla-Cobb

Can you hear me? Thank you all so much. I hope you had an enjoyable interesting conversation at your table. We would love to hear a 30-second recap of some of the most promising ideas or idea from each table and then we are going to move into the conclusion and a chance for us all to listen on the conversation among the speakers about what are the ideas that would really create change in our country. So, who would like to start with the first report back? I can put you on the spot?

Participant 1: I'm not good at this stuff, but I was selected, so -- one of the ideas that we talked about, there is several of us that are part of the Charlottesville Food Justice Network and we work both at an ideas level around broader issues of food justice and also at a programmatic level together and where a lot of us are having a real land crunch in Charlottesville. This came up in several of the sessions I attended. Talking about the tenuousness of urban agriculture. The program that I work with at the International Rescue Committee is experiencing that. And one of the ideas we had was to put pressure on the city and invite opportunities to identify and long-term land access for continuing the urban agriculture programs that are already happening in Charlottesville. One other idea that came up because we are at UVA today and we keep circling back to this is talking to the University of Virginia provide a livable wage for all employees.

Participant 2: I am going to talk about my idea. And try to describe the other ideas with my table members. First of all, one of the things I have been thinking about all day from the panels is that it would be great if the University of Virginia could engage in a comprehensive study of the history and present status of segregated rural America. And then create in a very inclusive way specific public policy options and recommendation with the integrating of rural America as outcome. We had to be bold and the other things the table talked about were some sort of effort in truth in reconciliation in America. With regards to genocide, the legacy of slavery, and our apartheid. History at the present. We were also talking about -- Real history. Teaching real history in schools across America.

Tanya: Okay. So, this table actually got three ideas they got to present. I appreciate it and love it. Each idea was great. If you were able to synthesize into one idea, that

would be amazing. We will collect the rest of the ideas as well. We don't want anything to get thrown out. Thank you. Who is going to do it? Be bold.

Participant 3: I will.

Tanya: Good. Go ahead.

Participant 3: Oh, my gosh. We talked about a number of different ideas and everyone mentioned at the beginning at the convenience store and a lot more information one need to do both. The longer-term economic building people up and give them opportunities and ways that that might happen in the community. Bringing in the city and a new president and how that's one of pillars is connecting to the community. How that might intersect.

Tanya: Great. Thanks.

Participant 4: We had a lot of conversation tried to put it down to an idea. Really a lot of the conversation comes with looking at our history as people and then place that we live in. Educating ourselves and being kind to one another and realizing that everyone is kind of -- not everyone, but a lot of us are missing our history. One of the things is learning what we can and helping others have that knowledge and to share that and kind of re-assimilate ourselves and learn more. Another is to just go out into our community and meet the people who are growing the food and meet the entrepreneurs and empower them by supporting them. It's that easy. Contributing minor time as a volunteer. That's it.

Participant 5: I think it's important to seek out demands of community members and groups that are already doing that. That's something that I would like to learn more about. Working with people on the ground who are doing good work. Of course, also acknowledging the traditional homeland territories they are doing work on.

Participant 6: So, Tanya, since this takes time for me, they are short. A lot of these come from an example from a reference that is engrappled in New York. So, looking at it again, we talked about the land ownership and the need for landownership. The opportunities and cooperatives and specifically also the whole fire based on mapping that is related on reparations. Sort of a private market and various ways to do it. Specifically, as a historian who loves reading, I think the power of visual history is really important. Identifying things that have happened in the past that everyone needs to know about. So, part of that history theme we were talking about. A lot of visual as a huge element of that and they are great photo archives that are out there. So, going to those.

Tanya: Okay. Thanks. If you have questions, we will have time if you have questions of each other about what this means. What does that idea really mean? We will have time for that.

Participant 7: Our conversation was incorporated in the need for education and that is being manifest in the African American community around the power of farm cooperative and the notion of reeducating around economic freedom and development. That was something we heard earlier in several sessions an also reeducation of white people in terms of their own understanding of history. That needs to be addressed. We are going to move forward together.

Tanya: That's the last group. Before we go to this, are there questions that people have of each other as far as what did that mean or what would that look like or how can we do that? Yeah? Sorry.

Participant 8: From the American agriculture movement 40 years ago and working with black farmers as part of that movement, many of those farmers at that time were greatly dependent upon tobacco to be able to survive and that segment of agriculture was in turn greatly dependent upon the tobacco companies using leverage as a political process in order to be able to keep the price fair for those farmers. And now since the tobacco market has failed, largely, it leaves that group in greater stress than many others and having to figure out how to do something else in order to survive in a climate where banking is more difficult and even the institutions their local communities. The different groups are always access for black farmers. What do we do now in order to be able to address the issues like that? We do have reasonable equality in the rural community.

Tanya: My understanding is that I wish Ebony were here because she knows so much about this and in Virginia, the very strong African American farmers are tobacco growers.

They are going to be very much impacted by what you are talking about. The loss of those markets. Questions of each other? Expansion on ideas? Anyone? Yes?

Participant 9: To the last panel. Can you guys hear me?

So, you were talking earlier about giving loan money from the USDA for farming and it's maybe a change of gears, but I also believe that farming is a direct route to liberation of ourselves and of our communities. I wondered just your perspective and opinion on borrowing money and going into doubt with the US government in order to sustain those dreams. And of course, I battle with this and think about it all the time myself.

Renard Turner: Having experienced what I experienced, I would say don't. It comes with a lot of hidden stuff. The biggest problem for farmers of color is if you are successful in acquiring the loan, will you be successful in acquiring the customer? Those two go together. Because the government may feel pressured by statistics, they may come up with a face they can place to continue to say they are doing their job and they will sacrifice you to make themselves look good. I know when things good, they straight up lied. Even though I had the paperwork to prove they straight up lied, it didn't make a difference. They said that's nice and even though that' letterhead from our office with the late time stamp on it, it doesn't matter. I would say don't. I hope that farmers

would be able to help I advocate forming banks that small farmers would come together and make banking collectives. That's what we need to do. We need to finance ourselves and take the government out of this as much as we possibly can. They are not the solution even though they present themselves as such. It has to be a grass roots movement devoid of a lot of political you know what. We need to create banks and find some seed money and we have to grow that money out so we can finance each other.

Participant 9: Cool. Thank you.

Tanya: I'm thinking that we will move to inside that this group generated during our conversation. Maybe do you want to kick us off?

>> Sure. Two suggestions that I said that can be asked, what can be done immediately? One of the suggestions is -- you have a new president of this University stand and make a stand and a statement regarding the transgressions of this the University. Also, how does the University move forward in terms of what food justice is all about. He has to stand up to represent the University and that statement. Secondly, it's for the workers who work here. It's imperative that they get free tuition an obligation that this University can do so that the workers who are majority people of color have some sort of incentive invested in this institution. I'm pretty sure that the University can afford tuition for the workers network. Free tuition.

Lupe Gonzalo (translated by Yaissy Solis):

One of the ideas that we were sharing with the group here is precisely what was mentioned before. Speaking conversations and learning from groups that are most affected and learning from their solutions and their experiences.

The people who are living day in and day out, the exploitation of living out the injustice will be the best to know what the solutions are. The University shouldn't draw up solutions that they think are best poised to help these communities, especially communities of color and they should seek out conversations talk directly with the people on the ground who already have done this thinking and come up with the solutions.

Another idea is giving more space in conversations like this to people of color and communities most affected so that they can share the solutions and their ideas. It isn't up to the group of people who are here to think about that, but there is no way to do it unless you hear directly from those individuals.

Some of you may have heard about our work as the Coalition of Immokolee Workers in Florida. We have been fighting for over 25 years to eliminate abusive conditions a generation of poverty in our own community and throughout agriculture. We have found a really powerful solution. We have created it called the fair food program which places a responsibility on the corporate buyers of produce to work together with us and up to date we have won 14 victories with the world's largest corporations. They are ending human rights abuses.

We have only been able to achieve that by wringing to and the only way to expand the protection we have won here in the United States is to continue

So, I think that's our task. Continuing to work together. I think bringing in people like the folks here up in this inner circle, these are the right people to be taking the lead

from and learning from and inviting people who don't have a degree and aren't academic, but that are affected by the issues. That's an important thing to do. One thing would assign ally and a consumer is the Wendy's boycott that you may have heard from and it's on the wall, that's a way to support food justice and low waged workers. Boycott Wendy's that is a farm worker-led campaign. That will help to expand protections we have already won.

David Rico: Can I hop in for a second? I want to point out that as this lady, Lupe is speaking, the screen said speaking in a foreign language that means this symposium is not designed to handle Spanish. Do you know what that means? Do you know how many expect the food system to speak Spanish in this country? I guarantee workers are in this kitchen below us probably speak Spanish and this as radical as this is, we are not even outfitted to understand the experts. The experts and what Lupe was saying. The experts are the farmers. They for the dishwashers and chefs and the people who are moving the food. You want to talk about food justice in a contemporary sense, let them talk about what they go. Let them talk about what they experience. What it feels like to be looked down upon. What it feels like to be master of something and disregarded in academic spaces to be spoken over. This is something concrete. We should have more Spanish speakers here. Right now. We should have food workers from the university in this room. Right now. We should have people who prepare the food for all of you to eat on a daily basis right now. We should let them say, what's your issue? What's your issue? What are you struggling through?

I guess while I have the mic, my second point is that we talked about a living wage. A living wage is talked a lot about people with salaries. A lot of people with salaries discuss what a living wage is. I am going to do the thing we don't do. I will talk money and how much I make. Two years ago, I was making \$7.25 and now through hard work I'm at \$15 an hour. I might make it up if I'm an excellent line cook and may hit 20. This is a living wage. This is not a thriving wage. If I wasn't getting paid, I couldn't come to the conference. I couldn't afford to miss work. This is a wage that any time I get sick, it sets me back. I had a car problem and I couldn't afford to do things for two months. Let's stop talking about a living wage talk about a thriving wage. Just living sucks. I just lived before. You work 50 or 60 hours, you do that two weeks in a row and you get \$400 in the mail. That's a fee that you can only understand after you have done it month after month after month and I made it. I'm making my way up, but I'm not a master. There is a lot of people who just because of the color of their skin or where they are from or whether they have papers. Whether they speak English or whether they have a record won't even be given privileges I have been given. Those are things we need to think about. How we make our masters thrive.

Hillel Echo-Hawk: To piggy back off of what you said, I have a full-time job as well as the catering company I mentioned before. Just to be able to come to these things. The people that I work with, I work in a predominantly Spanish-speaking kitchen. I am the minority. I love it. It's amazing. I learn so much. But David is right. We need more Spanish-speaking people. I look around this room right now. We need more diversity in this room and this conference. It's great that this conference is a thing, but there needs

to be more brown faces and black faces. That's a real thing. It happens at every conference that I go to. It's 90% white faces. Which is cool and all, but it's still a problem because where is that community outreach that is being talked about, but is not happening. A problem I don't remember what in our group, I talked about and I suggested that the University can have a garden that was curated by one of the tribes here. They had a curriculum designed by the tribes. And taking care with the students and had that history of the land and was blessed from elders and had that connection with the University and with the land here. And I also mentioned that the University can have more direct connection with outreach to tribes to bring in students to have free or cheap tuition. I know one of the reasons I went to community college was because I couldn't afford to go to a University because it's so outrageous. Universities and colleges don't go to reservations

They don't go to pine ridge. They just don't and so there are no resources or reservation or on small tribes. So, if this university could have more outreach, I don't know how much outreach there is already, but if it's like other Universities it's probably not yeah.

>> Thank you so much.

>> Thank you

Malik Yakini: So, universities have tremendous amounts of resources, both cash, intellectual resources and facilities and there needs to be a real thoughtful effort about how to make those resources available to people of color who are doing work in the food system and there needs to be a way to hold the university accountable by the people of color who should receiving the resources. For me.

Tanya: Okay. Did we all -- Renard, did you give -- did you kick us off? You kicked us off. He answered a question.

Renard Turner: There is a lot to be said, but one of the things that -- the comment made about it appeared on the screen that she was speaking a foreign language and the thought occurred to me and I don't have the answer to this, but I will give it some thought, the United States is not that old. When did English become the official language is really the language of the colonial oppressor who stole and robbed and enslaved and yet we are using that as the media. Maybe we should speak a language that is more user-friendly to everyone. In terms of social change, we need to think about using another language that might be more universally acceptable instead of a language of oppression. Because language shapes the thoughts and thinking Englishman's thoughts. Because England is this big, but it colonized so much of the world. Speaking English is a vestige of colonialization and oppression. Maybe we need a universal language that is less to people of color.

Tanya Denckla Cobb: All right, so where we are at, people, is an amazing day. I don't know if your head is as full as mine. My head is extremely full of potential and the challenges that have been articulated by an amazing array of speakers today for whom we are deeply grateful for your time and thought you have brought to the table here.

My little note said we are going to be sending a survey out in the next hopefully if all goes well, within the next two weeks.

This will share the ideas that have come out as well as asking for your feedback on the symposium itself. This is really a first. It's a great first step. It should not be the last step by any means. We have a long way to go here. I'm proud to be sitting elbow to elbow with everyone in this room as a first step. I thank you all for being here and being part of the moving of this university forward.

So, survey number one. We will be synthesizing the events of the symposium on our website. We had video and we had photographs taken. We will -- there will be things coming up on the website for people who want to see that I heard requests for transcripts. We will be trying to see if we can get a transcript of our key note that we can put out. Then next, I want to call your attention to, there is an annual report of the task force that is responsible for putting on this symposium. UVA task force contributed significantly to it. Annual report and we will send out a link with that in our e-mail to you all. And then, I have to -- it's a list, but I feel like to give respect to the people who have respected to fund this and bought into the vision for this. As I like to take 30 seconds to run through the list of funders.

The University of Virginia Bicentennial with funding provided by alumni, board of trustees.

The UVA Office for Sustainability and UVA Committee on Sustainability.

The President's Commission on Slavery and University.

The UVA Office and Institution for Environmental Negotiation.

The UVA School of Architecture.

Virginia Humanities.

UVA School of Nursing.

Virginia Indian Programs.

Charlottesville Food Justice Network.

Amos Photography.

Kelly Braun's Turkey Farm Feast.

Morgan Programs and Carter Orchard.

Thanks to all of them.

If you could, I would love to put up a photo of Lisa Reader is -- our hearts have been heavy with the passing of Lisa Reader, who was such an active part of this movement. She would have been today. She passed unexpectedly in the night earlier this week. We really are -- we want to honor her memory. She was a champion finish food equity and local agriculture for over a dozen years. She was also a passionate chef and colleague and good friend to many of us. We do draw inspiration from her joyful and kind and such a generous spirit. Lisa, we know you are here. We really do. Thank you for all you have given us. So, with that, those are our next steps and with that, what I would like to do is offer a closing that may be new to you, but I think it would be a fun way to close and leave us all with something to think about. If it's a closing by question, we would like to -- the only rule of this game is that nobody is allowed to answer a question or make a comment or a statement. If you want to comment or make a

statement, it has to be in the form of a question. Malik, you will get the final question. You didn't know that yet, but you will get the final question to close us out. And I will be the fast mike passer. Who wants to start? Who has a question to start? That was a question that you are left with from today. A question that is perplexing you and a question that you want to think about. Okay.

- >> So, is University of Virginia going to do anything meaningful based on this?
- >> I have a question about management of trash. They told us that it is a question. What do they do? They said they threw the trash over the wall where the students were. There had somebody something beyond that that happened. I don't know enough. I want to know more.
- >> Why don't we have fair food chapter for workers here in our University?
- >> Our conversation about the living wage ever include contract workers?
- >> How are we going to buy Renard's food
- >> Because of Charlottesville, when the next wave of racism and supremacy rises up, who here is willing to take physical action and protect vulnerable communities with their body?
- >> I'll start with a comment. With that answer to the question. Yes. How do you get more white males like me who are 22 to feel the way I feel right now after these past 36 hours and actually push forward and do something?
- >> How do you feel?
- >> What will UVa do to increase the awareness of the students with the greater need of the Charlottesville community?
- >> How can we get this administration to cut loose meaningful funds to make all of happen?
- >> When will we get to meet again while tasting Malik's collard
- >> [speaking foreign language] Is everyone going to boycott Wendy's?
- >> How can we make Charlottesville known for undoing racism?
- >> How is the community going to support traditional
- >> What does it mean human?

- >> Thank you all, thank you all