



## LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON RACE & EQUITY

03.10.20

Dear GARE Membership Network,

It is with deep sadness that we write to share that the **Annual GARE Membership Meeting is cancelled this year due to COVID-19**. We, GARE staff, in collaboration with the Host Committee, have come to the difficult decision that while this gathering is our favorite time of the year where we all get to connect, build, and reinvigorate ourselves to continue this challenging work, we must also acknowledge the impact of the virus on those who are most vulnerable in our communities, and do our part in preventing, slowing, and limiting its reach.

**Regarding refunds and logistical considerations**, GARE will issue automatic refunds for all ticket purchases. This includes PNW track general admission and all Pre-meetings. If you purchased a ticket to the membership meeting, you will receive a refund notification from Eventbrite within the next 5-7 business days, and a deposit of the purchase price reflected in your account shortly after. If you do not receive either of these notifications, please reach out to us at [GARE@raceforward.org](mailto:GARE@raceforward.org). If you purchased a room under the GARE block at the Hyatt Regency Portland, please cancel your reservation. Rooms can be cancelled by calling 971-222-1234 or online by accessing the email confirmation received when the reservation was made. In the body of the confirmation email, there will be options to modify reservation, add reservation, or cancel reservation. Select the cancel reservation option and complete the cancellation process.

Cancelling the event is in direct alignment with our values and commitment to racial equity and community health. GARE is dedicated to the safety and well-being of all our members and colleagues—especially those who are immuno-compromised, elderly, disabled, or otherwise vulnerable. While we know that anyone can contract the virus, we also know that the impacts on communities of color could be severe. People of color are disproportionately likely to be in low-paying or hourly-wage jobs that make us unable to provide care or interrupt work. We are also more likely to have limited access to affordable healthcare, childcare, and transportation. People of color are more likely to face unsanitary conditions inside prisons, jails, and detention centers. Long-time funding disparities in communities of color have led to hospital closures; shortages of frontline doctors and nurses; higher incidences of chronic conditions, such as hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease; housing overcrowding; and lack of quality elder care. Feel free to [read more here](#).

This year's theme was "Confronting Today's Reality: Restoration, Learning and Action". While we recognize the missed opportunity in being unable to convene and strategize together in April, we are committed to enriching the rest of this year's programming. As we continue to design and implement programming and benefits for 2020, we will approach it by asking: how will we RESTORE and affirm our belief that institutional and structural racism can be dismantled if we are explicit about naming race as a predictor of how well we do in United States society? How will we continue to LEARN how the work of institutional culture change (normalize, organize, and operationalize) serves as an essential capacity



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model for our work to advance racial equity? And, how will we ACT to strategically and with conviction identify opportunities for leveraging our collective power as a movement?

We in GARE, as staff and members, compose a web of a network and are movement builders. While we are deeply disappointed to not connect in person with each of you in April, we are committed to advancing our movement through the strength and power of the network as we continue to restore, learn and act together in 2020.

With much gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon Goodwin".

Gordon Goodwin, GARE Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Nelson".

Julie Nelson, GARE Founding Director