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par-newhaven is a forum for progressive groups in the Greater New Haven Area where actions and ideas may be publicized so that others are aware of peace, health, justice, energy, environmental and other issues for the common good.

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SHOWING UP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

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by Jennifer Griffith, SURJ

In the mid-century struggle for civil rights, white anti-racist activist Anne Braden worked in alliance with African American leaders and later expressed that “the battle is and always has been a battle for the hearts and mind of white people in this country. The fight against racism is not something we’re called on to help people of color with. We need to become involved as if our lives depended on it because, in truth, they do.” In the past two years, we have collectively witnessed painful reminders that we do not live in a post-racial society. Today, as we experience a resurgence in activism against racism on a structural and individual level, white people are called to join these critical efforts again.

Alicia Garza, co-founder of the Black Lives Matter movement, asserts: “We need you defecting from

White supremacy and changing the narrative of White supremacy by breaking White silence.”

With this call to action in mind, **Showing Up for Racial Justice** (SURJ), “a national network of groups and individuals organizing White people for racial justice,” will be holding its first planning meeting for the New Haven-area affiliate. This meeting will bring together local organizers, activists, educators, and concerned people who want to get involved in a larger community with racial justice as its primary goal. SURJ prioritizes ongoing relationships with local and national People of Color (PoC) activist groups focusing on police brutality, workers’ rights, and other racial justice issues. To maintain accountability, stay informed, and plan aligning efforts, the first meeting will identify current and potential connections within the local activist community. While promoting accountability, SURJ also strives to “call in, not call out” and to offer support to people at different experience levels.

In addition to the New Haven-area group, CT SURJ will also have a Hartford-based group, which is currently planning a film screening and a door-knocking campaign in the fall. For more information about SURJ in general, go to

<http://www.showingupforracialjustice.org>.

For questions about the upcoming meeting and the New Haven-area affiliate, contact Jennifer Griffiths, jennifergriffiths68@gmail.com. For Hartford-area inquiries contact Cathy Rion Starr, crionstarr@uuma.org.

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Activism

