

Dr Rema _ Final

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SPEAKERS

Dr. Rema, Dr. Thomas, Dr. Fowles

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- D** Dr. Fowles 00:00
Are you tired of bland, Eurocentric fashion accessories? Do you want to feel seen when you step out?
- D** Dr. Thomas 00:05
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- D** Dr. Fowles 00:39
That's hueysson.com
- D** Dr. Thomas 00:44
Black Social Capital This is Black Social Capital Today's guest is Dr. Rema Reynolds. She goes by Dr. Rema, Dr. Rema is a former K through 12, public school teacher, counselor and administrator. She currently organizes parents to improve students achievement and

teaches educational leadership to aspiring school administrators. Dr. Rema research examines issues of Black parent engagement and the roles educators and students play in creating social change through community development. Dr. Rema consults for a number of school districts across the country teaching educators how to make how to take deliberate action to increase equity and access for all students. She has also taught and presented at conferences throughout the United States and in over 20 other countries. In addition to keeping it real in every space, which we're looking forward to today, Dr. Rema is known for her love for the people and her desire to actualize the collective power of the people. Knowledge is power. Power is freedom. And Dr. Rema wants us all to get free. Welcome, Dr. Rema.

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Dr. Rema 02:13

Thank you so much for having me, I sound bomb on that. I feel like I gotta live up to all that now. It's out here recorded so

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Dr. Fowles 02:28

I just gotta tell people, I'm excited for this interview, just because, you know, in meeting you for the very first time, and the thing that I remember the most, is that you did keep it real in every space. And I think that when I first met you, we were working with some young men, some young Black men at a workshop over the course of a couple of days, just doing some leadership development, right. And it was an amazing experience. But one of the things that I remember Was that you were the you were one of the first people that did keep it real. But also was very academic. Right? You gave them facts. You gave them figures. You gave them numbers, you gave them some of your story. And I was just like, Can I be like plus you looked bomb that day like the suit? She had the pantsuit going on, I was like, I'm wanna be like that, let me find me a pants suit so I can be bomb like that. And I'm just excited that you're here today. I know that our conversational gonna be dope. And, yeah, let's jump into it.

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Dr. Rema 03:39

Thank you so much for having me. This is awesome.

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Dr. Thomas 03:44

So we're gonna get started with the intellectual capital segment. This is a discussion of a Black scholars' research or academic journey or current events in the professional world. And today we're going to hear about your research. So the first question for today is what

is the topic of your research and how did you become interested in that topic?

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Dr. Rema 04:08

So I really still fashion myself a practitioner, right even though I'm a scholar of so I still research- I a research communities that are near and dear to my heart, but they also align with the roles that you discussed in my intro, right? So I have been a counselor, a teacher and a principal and somehow all of my buckets coincide with that right so my first research interest in really my heart is there is on Black parents and Black community engagement. So just so you know, though, all my research is Black, everything, All Black, everything, Blackity, Black, Black, Black, Black, Black, Black, Black. Right!. I just kind of feel like if we're not researching us, then who is right and so on. I'm going to make sure that our stories get told to challenge the dominant narratives and to make sure that we lift up our brilliance just like you all are doing on this podcast. And so I, I, I study Black folks, I study Black parents, across class, across race, across ability across religion, and sexual orientation. And so, you know, thinking about the intersectionality, of Blackness with all these other factors of our identity, and how that how that really translates into their engagement in schools, right? How do they engage? Why do they engage? How do they get disinvited, how do they get marginalized? And mainly, I look at Black parents across class so Black middle class parents, we always think that once we've you know, made it over from the hood to the good right that we have a better educational situation. Which is certainly not true if you look at all of the metrics by which you would measure success in our schools we're losing it doesn't matter where we go we're we're always the ones that are still being marginalized and oppressed. And so I think the fallacy of the American Dream gets challenged every time I write about Black middle class parents, right like you thought you made it. And here we are still right. The we're disproportionately suspended disproportionately don't have access to gate gifted and talented education AP courses, disproportionately not accessing college, right? And so what what happens when we go into these middle class white spaces? And how do we get treated and how do our children get treated is one of my main research objectives. The second piece is around leadership. And again, I'm looking at Black leaders and what they do and don't do it for our communities. I also have started this whole new research That is probably gonna get me in trouble. I haven't written it yet. I just been thinking about it but it's gonna get me in trouble. Um, because

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Dr. Fowles 07:08

Good trouble. Good trouble.



Dr. Rema 07:08

yeah, yeah, it's always necessary trouble right? Like, I'm always gonna say what what it is and you know we could argue about it after I said it but I'm gonna put it out there. And what I'm seeing is you know, I moved to Black Detroit which is so bomb. I just love Detroit so much. It is it is Blackity Black, Black Black right, you can walk into a restaurant is all us. It's just gorgeous, right? And so I've been able to talk with aspiring leaders and current principals. So- in there- I wanted to say first that these are the hardest working educators I've ever met in my whole entire life, particularly during this pandemic. They've done things that no other educator has done in my I mean, I it's not like my opinion. I know this to be fact I teach in courses And these folks come from all the tri states and tell me what they're doing during the pandemic is nothing Detroit, Detroit is dusting them in terms of keeping up with their parents going to do house visits teaching every day during this pandemic, like being online with their students every single day with lesson plans. I mean, they're, they're outstanding, but the the effects of white supremacy and internalized racism. I MEAN! just the anti Blackness that Black folks have. That's what is tragic to me and hurts my heart. Like they don't even know how bomb they are as educators and they certainly don't know how terrific and brilliant and gorgeous and beautiful the communities they serve are and can be right even what the potential of a Blackness is and how beautiful that is. So, a lot of my work around anti-Blackness has been around how Black folks have ingested and then matriculated anti-Blackness. And then the third one, which is the newest one is student voice. So, during this pandemic, I've been working with a group of students who are learning transformative leadership, culturally responsive leadership, social justice leadership theories and in literally have taken when I say it's voracious their appetite for this compared to us adults who have to unlearn a whole bunch of stuff. They're just like, oh, for real, this is what's happening. When I tell him about the school to prison pipeline, they can recite it back to me. The next day, I talked to them. The next month, I talked to them the next year I talked to them, they're like, okay, but remember when we said this, and how and how much money they're spending on prison compared to how much they're spending in Detroit on students like they're like, on it, right? And those student voice folks, those students have said, you know, before before the second pandemic, the racial uprising, they had already said to their principal, in in April, we're not going back to any policing in our schools. So you can hang that up. Whatever you thought was gonna happen when we get back I'm not sure what it's gonna look like but wasn't was not going to happen is suspensions, detentions tardies they had already said we're not going through the metal detectors this ain't no TSA so my my my they are so bomb. So my third and most exciting piece has been the student voice and I'm writing two grants to get that funded because I want them to just blow up. Detroit brilliance right? They're just the Detroit's finest and they're leading the world. And in my again, this is before the pushback, right? The police brutality they were already like, yeah, you can hang that we see the whole lineage of this, this policing, and how we're over policed and dehumanized,

and we're not going to take it. So those are my three buckets currently. I don't know what's gonna happen next week, you know? Right now, that's what I'm studying. Um, we'll see what happens though.

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Dr. Thomas 10:53

So I mean, I think that just speaks so much to culturally relevant pedagogy, right? You're teaching the students exactly what they need to know to understand the world on, you know, just on a higher level, and they are soaking it up, and they are able to apply it to their own situation.

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Dr. Rema 11:12

But I'm also trying to triangulate this thing, right? So I'm teaching the teachers, the leaders, the students, and I also run these free parent engagement seminars every single week, and I'm teaching the same content. This is this is this is the hidden curriculum. This is how we get dehumanized. This is how we get oppressed. This is how they're suppressing us. And now what is the move? What's the action? Right? what's the what's the response to dismantle this thing? I talk about white supremacy with no qualms right. I break it down what that looks like. It's not the guy with the pitchfork and the tiki torches or the, the whole regalia. The robe is not that is everyday life, right? It's what you eat, sleep, breathe, wherever you go to consume something. capitalism, white supremacy are bedfellows. And so you undergirding white supremacy even in your consumer choices. And so be wise, are you going straight to Satan's layer at Walmart? Or are you going to make a choice to go to your Black owned business down the street like this, we're talking about this. I'm trying to triangulate every single when I say I'm trying to change the world, I'm out here. So I'm trying to get everyone who has a move in schools, anyone who has a stake, anyone who has some engagement in schools to learn these same practices that are harmful for us, and then to figure out how to disrupt the educational practice that we're experiencing.

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Dr. Fowles 12:35

Whoo. We Just started. We just started and ya'll ain't even ready.

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Dr. Thomas 12:41

That was question one

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Dr. Fowles 12:43


Ya'll not ready for this interview. So question. So you hopped in. And you say that you're doing this research, but you're a practitioner at heart, you talking about all the things that you're doing, right. The next question is I what are some some fruits From what you've been doing, like you've been teaching these classes tell us some success stories in terms of like, switching your mindsets, maybe individuals have you had some success and some systems right because this this this thing takes a while right? Tell us some things that have been going good


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Dr. Rema 13:19


So you know I'm not really I'm not good at like incremental change right. I'm a critical race theorists and I don't believe critical race theory talks about you know, the change needs to be immediate and right now and these will overhaul like, I feel like we need to smash the whole situation and start over but Okay, we're not going to do that. What what we're not going to do is baby step this thing. Nobody. Nobody on boarded me or gave me an orientation into racism. By kindergarten. I knew what that looked like. Right? And so nobody likes slow walked me. So we're not slow walking to change either. So I am pretty impatient. I used to praying for patience. I just gave up on that. I actually don't even want it. So I stopped praying for that. I pray for other things. But not not patience. So, I immediately recognized my own role in undergirding white supremacy through education, what theories I was choosing to to teach what examples I was using for my own practice of being the opresser, right, like I, I recognized very quickly that I'm actually reifying and propagating and perpetuating this and so, okay, if that's true, I'm in the ivory tower, which is the place where it all goes down, right? All the white supremacy gets reconstructed and reproduced and rolled on out and so let me disrupt this thing. So in my department, I was one of five diversity hires, right like it was three Black women and An Indian woman who came within two years of me being hired. Great. So let's, let's see what's popping then. If we all up in here are we about to do? So I've tried to make, you know, connections with them to do some things jointly. But even then I don't really have time to slow down. Our department looks diverse now it's got to be for real for real diverse. And so one of the things I started was this partnership with Detroit, where I'm doing this aspiring leaders and master Leaders Program. So I'm training new leaders and I'm also using the the seasoned veteraned wise leaders to coach those new teachers, new leaders who are coming in, and the new leaders who are coming in are coming into our program. So I'm giving them all of it right like, this is what racism looks like anti racism look like. This is what bias looks like in school. This is what, what anti-Blackness is like, like I'm giving them all these things before they even enter it into our program. And so then when they go into the finance, class leader and finance class, they're looking at it through that lens, that equity lens through a critical lens, like okay, so who's not here? What are we not seeing who we not figuring out

how to make decisions for. In our budgeting, how does equity show up? what's fair is not equal. And so who am I giving attention to in my, my budgeting, I want them to come in with that critical lens into these classrooms. But the other thing about that is then my colleagues are being pushed, right? Because if these students come with this whole critical lens and you ain't read non of the stuff they read... And I'm already seeing it! I'm already seeing it. So this was the first group of people who came in or a nice little strong cohort came in, they took a class, with one of my colleagues, next thing I know, he's asking me about how equity should be. Did you even know the word sir? I didn't know you knew the word sir. But now you know equity now, you know? What are these talking about unfairness and bias and testing? What?! So these these folks are now really changing how our people teach. And that's what I want, right? Like, I want us to change- I want us to be the place where people say "Listen, if you want to learn how to be a socially just educator. If you want to learn how to be equity focused in your leadership. If you want to learn about anti racism and anti Blackness and white supremacy, you need to go to Eastern Michigan University because that's the only place they're teaching it. That's the only place where it's required courses that you have to take. It's the only place where it's embedded in every single courses you have to take." That's my goal. So it's kind of like you know, the overlay for the underlay, right like I'm, I did this work, they're really glad about this partnership with Detroit, but I'm now changing what we teach and how we teach. The other thing I did with those seasoned veteran teachers I mean principles we created aid and equity and justice certificate program. That rolled out this summer. Child, when I say all the stars are aligning and everything, because we rolled it out this summer, the first two sessions were full. Hey, man, then this uh, the rebellions hit. If people were like, wait, so they look it up equity and justice. They look and "Hello right over here!"

 Dr. Fowles 18:26
Guess who pops up? Mm hmm.

 Dr. Rema 18:28
Well, it's the only one in the country! You got to come through here! So there's six modules

 Dr. Fowles 18:34
Come see me!

 Dr. Rema 18:35
Come see about us! Come see about this! So they there's a racially responsive leadership

module. There's a cultural response to leadership, a social justice, a servant leadership. There's there's three others are missing. But basically, you're you're learning how to affect social change in our schools like I I say this all the time, the only way to change the world is to change schools because everyone has to come through there. Everyone has to come to them. So we, they we reproduce society right now on an industrial antiquated model, right? But if we wanted to change that if we want to change what we're seeing in our, our society in our world, we have to change what we teach and how we teach it in our schools and how we lead in our schools. And so that that certificate came through. I mean, they I'm on four sessions each time, every time we we offer the certificates of six weeks, we have to add more sections to it. We got people on the waiting list, we got people from LA from Berlin, I mean, they just come in, like, please teach us Yes, come get this, all this all this. And so the fruits of my labor. I think, you know, I just it's unexpected ways that I'm able to affect change, and I'm really grateful for it. But my main thing is that these students have come and said, You know what? We're not wearing uniforms and we put on hoodies when we go to class. I got all this other stuff, but those students said what is good? What is going be? Yeah, that's what I like the most.

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Dr. Fowles 20:12

And we're here for it and we're here. Cuz, you know, some people will tell you that if you wear a suit, it'll be better. But we ain't down for those respectability politics

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Dr. Rema 20:21

Lies. Lies anyway. Those are lies

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Dr. Fowles 20:24

So yeah. So look. I got so many more questions I could ask right now. But before we even dive into any more theory, any more actions I want to know. Like, how did you come to be the person that you are right? Like we gotta roll of story back a little bit? Because right now, you the professor's professor, and you telling us how it is. But how did how did you go about learning the things that you learned? Tell us tell us about your educational journey and your process to get to where you are right now.

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Dr. Rema 21:00

Wow. So remember I said there was no onboarding even when I was in kindergarten? I meant that like so I grew up in a small small town in Michigan called Sturgis. In Sturgis, my brother and I were the two Black kids at the school. So the first day of kindergarten, my

stepfather walked us to, to school and he gave us directions right? We were latchkey kids. So you know, we had a key my brother, my big brother had the key under his shirt and my my stepfather was telling us you know, make sure you you don't answer the phone right like you You got to let it ring once and then I'll hang up and then I'll call back then you'll know it's me. Don't answer the door under any circumstances. Everybody who needs to be there got a key you know, I guess though, look both ways before you cross the street hold hands. And if somebody calls you a nigger, you try it. You beat them up. And if somebody spits on you try to kill them. I was like, Okay, well, yeah. He said Have a good day and I went on to kindergarden right.

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Dr. Thomas 22:02

Alright

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Dr. Rema 22:03

Kindergarden was amazing. I had to teach a called- her name it was Miss Cooley. She had long hair like Cher. She just read the whole morning all she did was read. I thought this is fantastic. We I love books by the time I was a kindergartener, I could read and I just loved that class and I thought this kindergarden is the best we had a snack we had a nap it was just best man out there recess. I feel so good about myself I thought you know what i can get on the merry go round right now if I stand up right now and throw around the circle I'm gonna pass out or throw up or both and so I can't go on the merry go round but I thought this is a good day. I could probably go on the merry go round. Down the merry go round and that dude was like whipping the merry go round like whipping it, whipping it. And I said, Oh no, I gotta get off. I said please let me off please. And guy across the the merry go round said it The nigger wants to get off. Oh, let's go time, right because I already got my instructions. So I went over and he was standing up on the, the, the bars, you know, you sit on the bars would you sit up on the bars? He was sitting up on the bars and I just pushed him. We're going to ask I even had this happen because I was going so fast. I don't even know how I got over there. But he flew. And he thudded and rolled. Right and everyone on the playground kind of stopped. And they all looked at me like I was kind of some kind of savage and really, I was kind of surprised, right? Because Yeah, blood and grass and dirt. You know, I didn't know all that was gonna happen. Who knows a kindergarden with velocity is nobody.

D

Dr. Thomas 23:45

You rocked his world.

Beat him down. I didn't even know. So the principal calls me in and she says, um, you know, you're, you're in trouble. You're a brute. She called me all kinds of names you brutalized him. You're a bully and all these words she was giving me and I was like, that's fine, right? Because I had permission. So I wasn't really sweating until she said, I'm gonna call your mother. Wait a minute. Let's not involve her. Let's not get her involved. I could do something here I could sweep what you need me to do like I let me do my time here. I don't really need to call her because my mother was one of those no nonsense, you don't get a woopin. You you you mess up the school you get a woopin. That's, it's a wrap. And so when she said she's gonna call my mom, I immediately got nervous. My mother came off her job because she was one "I'm going to my job. You go into yours. Don't make me come off my job." She came off her job. I can hear the heels clicking in the horn. I was like, oh am- she don't kill me. So she can't it's the first day I'm already getting a call. This is just ridiculous. So she comes in and she sat down and she just looked at me the whole time. She didn't even look at the principal. She looked at me the whole time. I said oh, she's really plotting on how to take me out. She just kept looking at the principal's calling me all kinds of names, saying, you know that she'd never seen anyone then like brutalize someone like that. And, you know, basically, I was a savage. So my mom was like, fine, you're still looking at me. And then she she said, I mean, she's gonna be suspended. And my mom looked up and looked at the principal at that time, she said, um, what's going to happen to that boy? Ah, and the principal said, What do you mean? I mean, his parents had to come him. He had contusions, he was bruised. He was battered. What do you mean? Nothing's gonna happen. We're, I mean, I'm lucky that the parent isn't gonna, you know, make a stink about this. And my mother said, "Well, if he's not being suspended, she's not either, because I think you said that she he called her a nigger. So he needs the same punishment if not more than what she's getting. And so since you won't do that, you're basically letting my daughter be susceptible. And so if you won't protect her humanity, She will and she's gonna have to fight again because you won't do your job. And when she does Don't call me I'm not coming together. I'm not you're not going to be suspending her because you need to protect her humanity and you're not." I was like whoa, whoa, whoa and she said I'm gonna take her home cuz obviously she's upset- because I was in a ball of snot and tears right? Like I was doing all this right like I just knew I was gonna be dead so I'm crying and snotting and eyes red looking like Ned the wino. Oh, so she took me home. She said I'm just taking her home because she's upset This is not gonna be on her record. We walked out my mother got me McDonald's, which I could never have. She was one of those other mothers to where you know you have some juice you have to have half juice half water. You got to drink milk and water and no kool aid you know, she was one of those No, no Frosted Flakes, just flakes. Right. So that I got McDonald's is like a big deal. I was like, Whoa, I should Just beat up somebody everyday. (laughter) But now when I look back at that, that was my first introduction into what social

justice work looks like and what the fight looks like. My mother was a warrior in that moment, right and, and I was too I was fighting for my humanity, and she fought alongside with me. And afterwards, she healed me, right? Like I was able to lay her water bed, which I could never do. I got McDonald's. I was watching HBO because there was no cable. My mother was one of those two, you didn't have a TV in your room and, and so I was like this is- she healed me afterwards because she knew I had been through something traumatic and having to fight I don't know if you've ever been in a physical fight, but having to fight is traumatic. Anything can happen is dangerous. No one should have to do that. And every year until my 10th grade year, I fought at least one boy for calling me a nigger. At least one, it was only white boys that would do that. And so that fight for making sure that you see me as a full person and that you respect my personhood started in kindergarten. And I've not seen anything other than that, like, I read Malcolm X in eighth grade that was a life changer. Then after that everything I read was about Black liberation. The revolution. About Black is beautiful, right from the time I was in eighth grade. And so now I'm reading about how bomb Black people are. And so this this right here, this moment we're in. I'm like, finally, I've been waiting since kindergarten for ya'll to recognize that Black Lives Matter. Here I am all this time fighting. And I'm glad people are joining in. So I don't remember not thinking about these issues. I think that's how I was raised. Right and not necessarily that my mother meant to teach me those lessons, but she didn't have any other have a choice, but to teach me how to be a fighter. So this I mean, that's all my life. I thought, this is the fight and wherever I go, it's still the fight. Even when I get season tickets, it's the fight right now movie, fighting for the underdog. And education was the obvious choice to do that work because that's where all injustice lives. Did I answer your question?

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Dr. Thomas 29:26

Yes. So I actually want to go back really quickly, because you talked about how there were administrators in Detroit specifically who are doing the work for our kids, and doing it well. And I was just wondering if you might want to say some names give some people some shout outs.

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Dr. Rema 29:48

Yay. So the first group the pilot group of principals were documented Jeffrey Robinson who is at an Afrocentric School the first and now I think the only one in Detroit. And there is Donya Odom. Now Donya Odom is where those students go. Right so she was brave enough after the first year she's like, I got to make some changes. And she said, I want the students to inform the changes and so she she commandeered me and Dr. Clyde Barnett to come and talk to her student voice. I mean her students. We created a group called the

student, The Plug. They're The Plug. And then that work that she's doing right. No more punitive measurements in her in her school, no punitive practices. You know getting rid of the police on her campus. She's been brave enough after and this woman was called The Warden. Two years ago, that was her nickname and she actually was glad about it like yes, we this is the law and order school. This is high discipline. And now she's like, I can't believe I was just terrible. Right, but that was from learning critical leadership theories and learning what, you know how you know, your place in white supremacy and how you perpetuate it. She literally did a 180. And so she's a transformative leadership- a leader in so many ways. She also entered our doc program. And so again, I'm still trying to change my department like this is going to be the premier department. So she's, she's pushed into the doc program. And then the other doctor Deshiell Echols, she's, she's now the assistant superintendent in Pontiac schools. So they snagged her up because she's bomb. And so she left Detroit after 30 years, 28 years, and is now the assistant superintendent. She still engages with my program and so she's running one of those certificate program that equity and justice program. She's one of the facilitators for that. She's also TAing for me this semester. So she can take my classes over because I want her to the professorate because again, I need like minded colleagues as I'm trying to make sure again, triangulate, push out, push out exponentially change everybody, right and so who else there's Georgina Tait a sore roar. She's a principal at a five to eight school, I believe. And then there's Latoiya Webb Harris, who is at a K through five school. And LeTanya. LeTanya Dandridge is a principle for a, uh, oh, I cannot remember the the technique. So all all of her students are severely they have severe handicaps and disabilities and so you know, I forget it's OTH is the technical name for it. But for what they have in terms of their IEPs but they have cognitive- severe cognitive impairments and so she's her school is K through eight as well and so all those principals have continued to engage the program in its second year we all travel to New Orleans to the University and College and Educational. Wait, UCEA is what University College Educational Administration-- I don't know. So UCEA. You got to look up. It is one of the it's the it's the largest Leadership Conference Educational Leadership Conference in the in the world. We went in and presented our research to them because they're there now scholar researchers. They're writing a book together about their experiences in this program and how they changed their leadership practices based on their critical leadership lenses. And so they are they've also We're supposed to travel to AERA this year, before I got canceled because we had three proposals accepted to talk about what's happening in Detroit, with their leadership. And so they're, they're entering into scholarship they're doing we're co creating literature to change the world, right like it's- This is not a game and then the second iteration of aspiring leaders, these are all teachers, Dean's a curriculum and coaches, right. These are all people who are not in leadership and don't have a leadership credential. Those folks. There's three of them who are entering our doc program, in addition to getting their leadership credential, and they're also writing a book about their leadership experiences

and they've also just submitted their first proposal to UCEA and are working for their proposal on AERA. I really, you know, part of the Academy's problem is that we have folks who are teaching leadership, who have not been in schools for 20 years.

D Dr. Thomas 35:10
Mm hmm.

D Dr. Rema 35:11
Have not learned anything. They've not learned anything since they wrote their dissertation, right 20 years ago. And so these new leadership theories that are more inclusive and more critical and make you think about marginalized populations, they don't know that they don't know this literature, but they're sending out practitioners into these spaces to do educational harm. And so, ya know, we need people who actually know the work live the work and then can research the work to to one be in the professor, and two to add to the literature, right, because most of the literature is, is is created by people who have a lot of head knowledge and don't have any practitioner. It's not there's no praxis work being done, and so on. I'm trying to change the whole game. And these folks have, have joined me, Mia Rollack, Simone Brown and Dikea Taylor Santiago, who's a Soror as well. They're all-

D Dr. Fowles 36:15
- You keep saying Soror. We gotta. We gotta get the shout outs out.

D Dr. Rema 36:20
I am a Delta. And I belong. I belong to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated in the Detroit alumnae chapter, which is the largest chapter in the world. So we are here we are here. Yeah. So anyway, yeah. So some of my best friends are Zetas my mentee, whose bomb her name is Taylor Maclary. She is a Zeta.

D Dr. Thomas 36:44
She said I saw the Finer Womanhood and I just couldn't walk by

D Dr. Rema 36:48
I'm in good company, because I mean, there are some good Zetas out here. Like Dr. Jaqui

being one



Dr. Thomas 36:55

Why thank you. I'm hoping that you can tell our listeners our professional lesson you've learned, right because Dr. Rema wasn't always Dr. Rema, right. Dr. Rema wasn't always the professor's professor, right? So is there a story you can share with our listeners about a professional lesson you learned or maybe a time you took some good advice? And also, if someone's looking to become a teacher, what is what is something you would tell them?



Dr. Rema 37:29

Mm hmm. So a teacher a K 12 or a teacher in the academy?



Dr. Thomas 37:33

In K 12.



Dr. Rema 37:34

Okay. So the first thing, the first question, the lesson that I learned, you know, I'm not very religious, but I have studied the Bible a lot. And I've studied other religions too, but I'm just not necessarily a churchy person. And you know, my morals are sometimes questionable. So. So (laughter)... all right. So I think about the Bible a lot. And Romans 8:28 is a verse that I've memorized and I go to often, which is all things work for your good because you love Him and you are called to His purpose right? And so, because I love God and I'm called to His purpose, everything works for me every single thing things that I think are really terrible is going to go all bad is a big mistake, actually is working in my favor. And so I was I was- my first administrative position. I was supposed to have this job right like it was written for me it was they could have just put my name in the description, right? Nobody applied for because they all knew that they were talking about me, right like, this is my job. So, at the 11th hour, and I do mean that for real for like a day before it was closing, there was another applicant. I wasn't sweating him. But you know, nepotism is a real situation.



Dr. Thomas 39:13

Mm hmm.

D Dr. Fowles 39:15
Well!

D Dr. Rema 39:15
And so he was the nephew of a district employee. He was the son of a district employee, the cousin to a teacher, this the brother of another teacher, and the nephew of a principal. And so he had a lot of connections that I just wouldn't have, right? Like, I was an outsider, literally, to get that job that in that district, I had to tell them that I was- I knew somebody because it was that big of a deal that the cronyism and nepotism, the white male patriarchy was so real that you had to say that you knew somebody in the district in order to get the job.

D Dr. Thomas 39:57
Wow.

D Dr. Rema 39:57
And so I got that job. And I probably should have known how that works, right? But I still was, like, shocked that he got this position over me. Like everybody was coming to tell me like I'm so sorry that happened right like afterwards it was like, you know putting a hand on my shoulder like that was terrible. I'm sorry, right like there was I don't know what to say. And he came and said sorry. He came is that you know, I'm sorry I got this job I know it was yours. Can you can you train me on how

D Dr. Thomas 40:31
Woooo

D Dr. Rema 40:34
I'm looking at God like you see this. I'm supposed to be your whole daughter. What you doing? You're gonna let this man come up here and talk to me like this. Like you see what's happening to me that I'm being passed over and this is unfair, how you gonna let this happen to me? And I thought this is really unfair. About two weeks later. I got a call from a colleague at UCLA and They asked me to come work for them full time in their teacher education program. So I switched with the other counselor, he went full time I went part time, we changed our caseload. And I started full time at UCLA, which then

increased my my salary by \$40,000. Right, like, just made 40 stacks that quickly. But also then, once I got to UCLA, I was like Oh I can probably, just go ahead and get a PhD from here, right, like I might as well go ahead and on the school and so I, you know, apply for the program and got in and, you know, got my PhD while I was there, like, if I had taken that other position, if it had been given to me, right, which it was mine, I earned it. But if I had gotten that position, the trajectory of my life would have been different. I wouldn't be here as a professors professor, as you keep saying which I wouldn't be here, you know, questioning the systems that I was, you know, really supporting and promulgating and perpetuating like I wouldn't I wouldn't be here if I had taken that role and so what I thought was terrible which in hindsight is still was unfair. But certainly it was to my good, right and so just trust the process. If you are out here you have a heart for the people you have, you know, goodwill, as your intentions. Just trust the process and whatever you thought you should have had wasn't meant for you because something better and bigger is in store right? Like all things work for your good and so I'm glad that that little piece of junk got that job because he would have stopped my shine. If I had (laughter), I wouldn't be able to do what I'm doing today. If I were giving advice to a teacher today, I would say to question everything. You and I would tell them, you have a lot of unlearning to do, right? The Myth of meritocracy this idea that, you know, you need to punish children and that, you know, school-- your classroom needs to be orderly, which really means oppressive, right? That you have to have straight lines and, you know, behavior charts, which is for animals like I will tell them, they have to question everything that they thought was right and real in order to be an effective teacher for liberation. So I would tell them that you know, everything that you thought was true was wrong. You were in the matrix, you need to take the red pill.

D Dr. Fowles 43:52
I can always appreciate a movie reference.

D Dr. Thomas 43:55
film major.

D Dr. Rema 43:57
Ah, yeah. At my rival. Y'all just out here USC, Zeta, Sigma, y'all just. I mean-- Ay. It's all love It is all Black love. Black love because in the end that's all we got. This myth that you know, you made it on your own and, you know self made. Yeah need each other. We need each other. We need each other.

- D** Dr. Thomas 44:20
So I just finished Arlen Hamilton's book which I don't know if you know who she is, but she's a venture capitalist, Black queer venture capitalist. With a huge, hugely successful company called backstage. Huh? backstage?
- D** Dr. Fowles 44:39
Called Backstage Capital.
- D** Dr. Thomas 44:40
Yes, it's called Backstage Capital. Yes. So, the chapter that I connected with most was the one where she talked about how no one is self made. And that idea is just so disrespectful to people who to who need other people to make it right? It's just and that's not how anything works like you can be self made and somebody taught you how to read. There's no way to because it is just it is a myth.
- D** Dr. Rema 45:01
It is. Lies. And I think it does keep us back, right? We compete with one another, we see each other as the enemy or, you know, we think, you know, we believe in this scarcity that only one or two of us is going to get through.
- D** Dr. Thomas 45:20
Or there's one good way to be Black.
- D** Dr. Rema 45:28
All lies. All lies. From the pit of hell, from the pit of hell.
- D** Dr. Fowles 45:36
I totally agree. Do we have any other last last couple thoughts or questions that we want to wrap with Dr. Jaqui?
- D** Dr. Thomas 45:44
Yeah, I just have a quick question because I know listeners listen to you talk about the cert

the certificate, and I believe you called it an Equity and Justice certificate. Um, how can they How can they find it?

D

Dr. Rema 45:59

Okay, so If you if you google Leading for Equity and Justice, it is the first hit. There's the hit is for you to register. Right. And so when you get to the registration page is, you know, some kind of verbiage around what is what's offered. And then you can register in, in take the course. I really am trying to push that course because I want people to change their minds. Like there was a student in my class last semester who said that she was afraid like-- afterwards you got to do like a reflection of your learning and she said that one of the things she was afraid of when she came into the class was that she will be changed.

D

Dr. Thomas 46:44

Oh,

D

Dr. Rema 46:44

girl, what are you doing? Like this is that's what this whole you go to school to change, like, I don't understand, but you know what it is? It's, um, underneath that is, I don't want to be wrong. I don't want to have I don't want to find out that have been wrong.

D

Dr. Thomas 47:01

Mm hmm.

D

Dr. Rema 47:02

Which I think school does to us, right? We don't raise our hands if we have the wrong answer, or we don't have to raise our hands if we don't know for sure we have the right answer. In our teacher will say that, well, why did you raise your hand? Right? Um, you know, if you didn't know, right, like, this is where you're supposed to not know. And to get it all wrong, and to make all the mistakes and then to learn to be different, right? Like, why why are we so afraid to be wrong, you're wrong every day. I am every single day, several times a day. And so if you sign up for this little six week situation, and you learn all these critical theories, you learn how terrible the educational system has been for marginalized and oppressed groups. I'm assuming at the end of that thing, you're gonna be changed and all the people who have taken it and give feedback. The feedback is always the same. "I needed this. This was right on time. The right moment, I didn't know how terrible I had

been." Yes, for being terrible. And now knowing that you're that you weren't. Yes, yes. So now we can be different, right? Like, now we can be changed. And does that mean that we're right now? No, I feel like, I'm probably not gonna be right till I die, right. I'll be learning until the day I die it's something to learn and be better and improve on every day until I'm out of here.

D

Dr. Fowles 48:29

You mentioned brother Malcolm earlier. And folks that, you know, you read over and over and all of that. Do you have a favorite quote from another leader that spurs you as you continue on this mission?

D

Dr. Rema 48:45

A quote. James Baldwin. He said, to be conscious in America and be Black is the Be in a constant state of rage. And for me that rage fuels me right to know that this is happening to us in some of us don't even know what roles we play in the happening and some of us don't even know what is happening infuriates me right and so it fuels me that rage is a righteous rage is a it's a beautiful anger that gets me up every day to do this work. Knowing that education is the way the vehicle for all things, all things to stay the same all things change, all things to get better, things to get worse. And knowing that things are terrible and can be better, and that I've got both this knowledge and experience and all the credentials and all those good things accompanied with that rage. lets me know that. I'm On the right path, so I persist forward toward the mark.

D

Dr. Fowles 50:05

Man. Mike drop.

D

Dr. Thomas 50:09

Yep. Not not these expensive ones though. (laughter)

D

Dr. Rema 50:14

Not the fancy ones! I mean. Ya'll was like get them AirPods out of here. Yeah.

D

Dr. Fowles 50:24

Well, we really appreciate you being on the show today. Like I said, I think I was really

excited for, for this conversation. I always get a little something whenever we do talk, and we will, we need to talk more.

D Dr. Thomas 50:37

Thanks again, Dr. Rema for your time for all of that wisdom. I want to remind all of the listeners that her students are working on books that everyone should probably read as soon as they come out. So Dr. Rema you'll have to let us know when they get published and whose name to look under and I know it'll be a collective effort because That's when we do our best work. So those books are going to be dope. You said you're gonna be getting in some necessary trouble you start publishing stuff. Let us know about that too.

D Dr. Rema 51:11

You know what I love about you Dr. Jaqui I just met you? I already love you because every time you're like, give the credit to the people, right? You like, put everybody on. I love that. I love that. That's the only way we win. You win together. Thank you.

D Dr. Thomas 51:27

Yes, thank you, is a wrap. And for everybody for listening. We'll see you in two weeks.

D Dr. Fowles 51:34

Hope you enjoy today's show. Remember, the way we build social capital is to build self and build others. Make sure you got some notes on your tablet, computer or even using a pen and paper. Leave us a review & continue the conversation on social media @BlackSocialCap and share the show with someone you know. Until the next episode, stay motivated and rise together.

D Dr. Thomas 51:58

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