

MICHAEL EURE SHOW – Episode 46: Exploring Hispanic Heritage Month

INTRODUCTION: Hello, this is Michael Eure, and I'd like to invite you to the Michael Eure Show, featuring student hosts and very special guests talking about on a variety of very interesting topics. You can find us on the Eagle Stream YouTube channel.

JERRY GREENE: Hey, Michael, your mic's muted.

MICHAEL EURE: ... the proposed. We always do that. Thank you, Jerry. Good afternoon. Welcome to the Michael Eure Show. We have a very special show today. We have Faith Anthony Mejia. I'm gonna let her introduce herself. And then Melania. I'm gonna let her introduce herself in a minute. And then Jerry is always with us. And we're gonna do, talk about the topic where we're focusing on Hispanic Heritage Month. So, if everybody could quickly just give them your name and not much more, OK? And we can start with Jerry since he knows how to do it, and then Faith.

GREENE: My name is Jerry Greene, and it's my second year here at Wake Tech. I'm majoring in Cybersecurity, and I've been working alongside Mike Eure here as a student success coach outreach ambassador.

FAITH MEJIA: Hello, my name is Faith Anthony Mejia. I am a constant student – I don't know if I could say scholar yet – of Latin American history, specifically focusing on blackness in Latin America.

MELANIAAGUIRRE-RABON: Good afternoon. My name is Melania Aguirre-Rabon. I am the department head for Foreign Languages and Fine Arts at Wake Tech, and I'm looking forward to having this conversation today.

EURE: Thank you. And Sarah, if we can just go through the success college piece real quick, and then we'll do the slideshow, and then we'll start with questions. So, if you can kind of move us over. And yes, and this is I'm a student success coach, and this is our webpage. We don't need to click anything, but students, I just want you to be familiar. Scroll down a little bit, Sarah, and I, I just want you to always get to resources and stop there. This is how you can get to the library, the ILC tutoring. You can get to Career and Employment Resources. But most of the things that students need are right there. So, that's all I wanna share about that, and it is successcoach.waketech.edu, and you, you can hear that later.

All right, I'm finished with that one, and then we're ready for the slideshow real quick.

Thank you. Sarah's in the background doing all of this, and, you know, we ask her to do this, and we appreciate it. And then we're gonna get right into the meat of the show. Is there a problem with the slides? OK. Not those. The ones that Jerry sent you this morning. Those belong to Faith, those slides. And we, if it's a problem opening it, we can just start with the questions. Is there a problem? OK. Thank you.

The African American-Latino Mixer, we, the Michael Eure Show was pleased to sponsor this on campus in person the last, I think, Thursday of June. It was June the 30th, and we had it in the Conference Center on the Southern Wake Campus. So, we can flip to the next slide. And these are just some images of that, and we started off with Dr. Chris O'Riordan-Adjah, and he played the djembe drums. And so, that was our African welcome. And at the table in the back, you see several people, but the guy sitting in the front is Dr. Michael Beck, who is the dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at Wake Tech.

Next please. And this young lady, her name was Jennifer Genesis Escobar, I believe, but she is from Venezuela, and she played the violin and she was spectacular. So, next. And then this is Laura Bethea, and she has many hats, and I'm not gonna say all of them, but she works in Career and Employment Resources and she's our Title IX administrator. And she also works with equity and inclusion for Wake Tech and she, she greeted the, the audience virtually, thanks to Jerry Greene, our Cybersecurity student.

Next. And this is the Freddie Green Trio, and the musician farther back is, he was from Venezuela, and you're gonna hear him later. And there's Jerry way back in the back. Next. And Freddie Green, and, and you'll see him, like, this is the two guys that played, and they were from Venezuela. They were good. It was a lot of people there from Venezuela for some reason. Next. And these young ladies, they were dancing and showing us their dresses from their Latin American countries, and I think most of them were from South America countries.

Next. And this is Dr. Arwin Smallwood. You can see the back of his head, but he came to offer our students to transfer to A&T to major in history or political science because he's the chairman of history and political science at North Carolina A&T, which is the number one public HBCU within the United States. So, I think it's very important that we connect with them more.

Next. And then we had a dance, and I mean the students taught everybody else how to dance, and it was a nice little floor, and we enjoyed it. And that's it for my slides, and we're ready to get with the questioning for Faith. And Jerry, are you ready for the first?

GREENE: All right, Faith, can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

MEJIA: Yeah, absolutely. Two things first. First of all, the mixer looked amazing, and I'm a little jealous that I missed it. I love being able to see those collaborative moments. Second of all, I wanna say a special thank you to Sarah, who you do not see physically here, but thank you so much for all your hard work and being the magic hands behind the scenes.

A little bit about myself, my name is Faith Anthony Mejia, I shared before. I am a native of Charlotte, North Carolina. My particular heritage is African American, and I come from a family full of musicians. And so, my door to history was actually through music. For some people, it's an art visit. For some people, it's looking at their family history. For other people, it's food. My door was music, and I fell in love with music from the Latin American region. And so, that initially exposed me to getting really focused and zoning in on learning Spanish language and then later falling in love with Latin American history. And I was privileged enough to be able to get my master's degree from UNC-Charlotte and get specific studies with social constructs in Latin America with race, gender and citizenship. And that is a little bit about me.

GREENE: OK.

EURE: And because you have such a great presentation, we're only gonna ask one more question, and then we can go straight to your presentation.

MEJIA: Sounds good. Go with the flow.

GREENE: All right, Faith, what is the environment like studying information about the Latino community and its many intersections with Native Americans, Africans, Spanish and others.

MEJIA: Oh man. That crossover with African ancestry, Native American ancestry, Spanish ancestry, it's, it's an overwhelming study, and it's overwhelming in various ways. There are some positive sides, and there are some more anxiety-inducing sides of the study. But the positive side, I just love seeing how we are all connected at the end of the day, seeing how our cultures, how we all have different histories of oral history, the way that a lot of our culture revolves around music, dance and food, how we express our joy, how we advocate for ourselves throughout history, it all matches up in certain ways. And so, it's always beautiful to study that.

But then there are some overlaps that are also a little bit sad. We also share different traumas. We share experiences with very similar types of oppression. And so, there are times where I do have to take breaks in my own study. There are times where I have to check my own biases when I'm reading through. But studying those overlaps is definitely well worth it, and I think that, whatever your entryway is into the study, it's definitely worth your while. So, it's, it's been a fun journey so far.

EURE: OK. And Melania, at this point, do you have any comments of what you've heard so far?

AGUIRRE-RABON: I think just the celebration that we're all humans, you know, that we all share the same feelings and needs. It may be manifested in different ways, but, ultimately, we are all part of the same.

EURE: All right, Sarah, we're ready to move on to the side and let Faith go through her presentation. Thank you.

MEJIA: Thank you so much, Michael, and thanks again, Sarah. Thank you, Jerry, for those wonderful questions.

So, a little bit, again, about me and seeing how I have been in this constant evolving conversation with myself and others about Hispanic heritage. I'm gonna start off with my entry into the field, what fascinates me about it and then my personal theory and idea of what healthy and holistic celebration can look like in the future for Hispanic Heritage Month. Next slide, please. Awesome.

So, my first interaction with understanding fully what the African diaspora is and what it looks like actually occurred in the eighth grade for me. I have a very specific memory of being in a history classroom, and I decided to do a project on Peru. And so, when I pulled up the certain group that I was looking for, I saw that they look like me, and I felt a wave of emotions. I felt joy and excitement to dig in and meeting, you know, some more cousins in the Americas. And then I also felt a lot of hurt as well. Like, how could I not know that the diaspora is outside of the U.S. and the Gold Coast of Africa? I know that a lot of critique that we see nationwide when you study specifically Black history or any type of ethnic history, it's kind of like trans-Atlantic slave trade, pause, and then they maybe talk about, you know, Martin Luther King, pause, Obama and then you graduate. You know, so we already have huge gaps in understanding blackness and Black history. So, that was a huge realization for me at that period of time. And so, at that point, a switch kind of turned on, and I was, like, "OK, I need to know more. I need to learn

more. And I need to respect this culture as a person who is not of Latin American heritage.” I had to go about it in a very specific and respectful way.

So, I dedicated my undergraduate career to learning Spanish language, getting the linguistics down, understanding multicultural communication and how language plays with geography. And then, for my graduate career, I was able to study race theory in different spaces and talk about identity and social constructs. So, it’s been kind of a constant evolution, and I never really abandoned the earlier parts of my study. They always come back around, but there have definitely been ebbs and flows in my focus.

Next slide, please. This was the image that changed everything for me. So, eighth-grade Faith dug deep into Google when it wasn't really as strong as it was today, but we did our best. I was able to find this image, and this kind of made everything click for me for various reasons. You see here that it not only highlights the routes of the trade of enslaved people, but also highlights numbers. So, in the U.S., you see half a million, and as you continue south, you see almost 5 million in the West Indies, 5 million in Brazil and South America, places that we wouldn't really anticipate because it's not necessarily highlighted. So, this was kind of a door for me to understand the omnipresence of blackness in Latin America, both in history and today. And then also seeing that all these connections make sense. When I look at certain dishes that are national dishes, I see my heritage from Africa. When I listen to different genres of music like merengue, [indecipherable], salsa, we're in there. When I like art forms, dance forms and social structure, looking at storytelling and literature, it all kind of clicked for me due to seeing this image and, and wanting to dig deeper.

Next slide, please. So, yes, I, when I'm teaching, no matter if I'm teaching people who are adults gathering resources to teach others about Latin American history or I'm showing this to high schoolers or middle schoolers, I show these next slides. We can go back and forth between this slide and the next one. Understanding what being Latin American or what being Latinx looks like, everybody on these slides has Latin American heritage. They all have their own stories to tell, and if we kind of paint a small picture, how can we appreciate the beauty of all of what Latin American culture and history is?

Next slide, please. And then another one. Next slide, please. So, when I think about this and when I think about my own place in history and the diaspora, yeah, I was kind of able to figure out three main things for, for what celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month should look like and can look like in the future. And I'm open, of course, to feedback on this or additions to this that you guys who are listening might think of, but the first is recognition and understanding that Black heritage is aligned with Latin American history and vice versa. You can't talk about Latin American history without talking about Black

history and vice versa. The second would be reconciliation and having candid conversations about race and Latin America and leaning into regional and global anti-racist work. Whether this looks like starting something new or leaning into the advocacy that has been happening for decades and for centuries in these regions. And the last will be celebration, of course, and a holistic look of all that Latin American culture encompasses and figuring out what that looks like, whether it's seeing African influence, seeing Asian influence, talking about indigenous influence and making sure that it's an inclusive celebration.

That is it for kind of where my mind is with the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, in terms of my perspective and my areas of expertise. So, we can open up the next slide. That's just a Q&A slide and close that if you're comfortable with it. And I'm open to any questions.

EURE: Well, I have one. But when Dr. Smallwood came, we talked about the tri-racial identity of Native Americans, particularly in North Carolina and Virginia. And that is the first time that I really remember seeing that map that you did of the, the slaves coming to South America and then coming from South America to the Caribbean and then from the Caribbean to the United States. It was, this is just interesting. But what do you think about the Native American community? Do you think that they embrace this fact that they are mixed, that they are also probably Latin American, African American, Caucasian? All of us are cousins, but what do you think about that intersection?

MEJIA: I agree. Absolutely, we definitely are cousins. And while I cannot speak for that group, what I can say is that there is also a, a very common history of interactions between Native Americans and Afro-descendants throughout the Americas. I think that, if anything, it is a, not a far jump for there to be a shared understanding of not only shared history and heritage, but also shared genes. And so, I think that wrapping in the conversation of diversity and, like, celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month, we can't have that without including that group as well. And so, I think that we need to spend more time understanding those connections and highlighting those connections.

I think, for me, Dr. Arwin Smallwood is my hero in that respect and in the time that he has put into that. But I definitely think that, yes, it is something I need to be acknowledged more. I don't think it would be a far cry from what is already understood culturally, but it's up to us as outsiders to, to shed light on that, as I think it's already internally pretty well known.

EURE: Does anybody else have anything? Melania, do you have any comment about that? Or Jerry, do you have? I think you have some more questions. So, we got questions. We just need to ask them.

GREENE: Yeah, I have a, I have a follow-up question. What is your experience like designing curriculums and bringing your research into classrooms or sharing with the community and professional groups?

MEJIA: Oh man, the experience is definitely humbling. So, I think that building curriculum, in general, is something that I love to do. I love getting into the weeds of, like, what about this worksheet or what about this video and playing with time but being able to kind of step outside of it and say, "OK, not only is it important for me to understand what I'm teaching, but who I am as I teach it." So, being a person who is not of Latin American descent – I know my last name is deceiving, I married a Mejia, my husband is Peruvian, I'm an Anthony – I think that it's on one end for folks who also are not of Latin American descent. They can relate to me in a different way because I know what it's like to be an outsider and have to kind of, like, work my way in and understand and be humbled by the information that I find in approaching with respect and honor the people who are writing these resources and knowing when to step back.

So, building curriculum and also teaching it is such a great experience to know that I'm not alone out there, and people are excited to see, "OK, I don't really need to have this heritage to dig in," because you, you really don't. And, and on the other side of that, when I am having interactions with and teaching with folks who are of Latin American heritage, it's also wonderful to learn new things together. And I also love getting feedback as well. I think that it is so important to have these people in the room with me as I teach to hold me accountable and also teach me things that I don't even know as well.

So, it's humbling in that it's great to see where I came from when I'm teaching people who are new to the field. And it's also great to have people there to give me feedback and make sure I'm staying on track and accountable with what I'm teaching and making sure things are up to date and relevant, yeah.

EURE: All right. I'm gonna have some questions, and then Jerry has a couple others, I'm certain.

MEJIA: OK, sure.

EURE: I'm, I'm piggybacking back to the Native Americans because I have a lot of students that are Hispanic as well as African American and Caucasian and other races. But what I do have in conversation with my students that are Mexican is the fact that they really are Native Americans. And just because we took Texas and made it different, they're going back and forth across the border because those are, that's their cousins, that's their real grandmamas. So, I think that we really need to do a better job of looking at the geographic whole thing with all the groups. But because, when we think about Latin America, it's South America and Mexico and the United States, and I would say going all the way up to Alaska. What do you think about that? That's just my personal way of making sure that they know that, just because you put kittens in the oven and bake them, that does not make them biscuits.

MEJIA: Yeah, absolutely. No, one of my favorite resources is a site called Decolonial Atlas. And the Decolonial Atlas kind of breaks down, its mission is to show maps, when instructing, that don't really match the maps of today. Like understanding, OK, yes, we have North, South, Central America. We have Africa. But, like, taking the boundaries and, and rerouting them and saying, "OK, these are the groups that were here. This is how long they were there. This the language that they speak. This is how they refer to themselves. Here is how, you know, the language of the oppressor refers to that group," and like breaking that down. I think that that resource is definitely huge, and I think that opening our minds to, to those maps and those resources kind of helps us make those connections.

And it starts with asking a simple question. I sat down with one of my history classes with ninth-graders and was, like, "OK, so all of us don't have a ton of British heritage in the classroom, so why do we speak English?" Or, like, "Why is Spanish the main language in Latin America?" Or, "Why is Portuguese Brazil's main language?" And it's, it's like you understand that, OK, we speak this language in this space, but understanding how we got there is huge. And so, I think that asking those simple questions and tracking things back in a way that's like, you know, not in a condescending way to making sure people understand that series of events, and also paying attention to the visuals that we use and understanding that the boundaries we know today are a speck on the timeline of the Earth and how things have been is, is definitely a good combo for entering those conversations with those students in a way that feels approachable and not a way that feels demeaning. That's at least the approach that I've used.

EURE: OK, we're interrupting again to make sure the audience knows that, if you have questions or comments, you can ask them in chat. We are down to eight minutes before it's time to end, so it goes by really quick, but we might go a little bit longer because I

think you're a wonderful guest and we're gonna definitely have you back. Jerry, got some more questions for her?

GREENE: Yeah, I do. What are some trends you're observing with the current Latino youth?

MEJIA: Oh man. So, from my observation, I've noticed that there is a, I wouldn't say an increased pride in heritage, I'd say that there is a different platform of displaying pride. I think that we often, when we talk about generations of groups, we often fall into the, the path of saying, "Well, back then, you know, wasn't the same. They were silenced. They weren't advocates for themselves. But now we're doing it right." We have always been in these groups of color in the U.S. and abroad advocating for ourselves. It just looks different.

So, for this group in particular of youth, there is this, this internet generation of folks – I caught the tail end of it with my year of birth – but I think that they are more verbal about their connections to their culture, and there is an increased pride there. What I've seen online with, like, Instagram and YouTube videos and Tik Toks, I see a lot of videos of people coming from different nature. I'm sorry, coming from different cultures and being able to connect with one another, saying, "Hey, like I come from a family that has, like, a lot of cousins, and we eat these foods, and we do these dances, and this is how we celebrate our holidays." And somebody else from another region saying, "Oh my gosh, us too." So, having the internet at your fingertips and being able to make those connections is definitely a huge thing that I'm seeing and a lot of unification.

And then, in terms of advocacy, I'm seeing a lot more calling out of unhealthy stereotypes in the media. And I think that that's a really good rolling conversation to have, too. And so, I'm seeing a lot of pride. I'm seeing a lot of healthy critique. And then I'm seeing a lot of advocacy that spans in, in larger spaces because they have access to the internet and they have access to connecting with each other in ways that, I'm sure, would have been done with past generations but just didn't have the tools yet.

So, I'm very excited to see what my children will do and what other students that I've seen do in their future. And so, I'm quite optimistic for the future, for sure, for, for what culture is going to look like.

AGUIRRE-RABON: Faith, I did have a, a question for you. It has to deal with stereotypes you mentioned a moment ago. So, you know, when we're talking about Latin American and Spanish-speaking countries, there are over 21 of them. So, there's certainly, depending on the area of the U.S. that you live, you may be assimilated or

know more about certain cultures than others. So, how are practical ways for breaking down those barriers, barriers and stereotypes?

MEJIA: That's a good question. I think that, the deeper we get into the internet age, the less excuses we have. There are TV shows that are, that may say that they represent a certain group, and that's great. But I think that I would encourage people to dig deeper into who the producer is, who's at the table, who are the writers. So, if it is media, the way that you learn culture, I say that there are now increasing resources to TV shows and music and podcasts to dig into to get an understanding. If that is not your thing, I always suggest text, and again, looking at who is writing that text. And then also chat rooms online, going to a ministry or serving in a community where people don't look like you.

I think that there is no cheat code to, all of a sudden, having no bias. And I think it's just about taking the time to understand because, when you understand folks, you can then be more critical of the information that you're taking in and just be a better community member in general to not call people out but call people in and then continue that learning. So, I think that we have the resources. It's just a matter of doing a little bit more research and saying, "OK, who's creating these resources, and is health, is this a healthy space for me to, to learn about others?" Yeah, that's what I've utilized for myself, and it's a constant learning journey, for sure.

EURE: All right. And now, you getting ready to ask another, or make a comment, Melania?

AGUIRRE-RABON: I was just going to thank her, and go ahead, Michael, I know you had another question.

MEJIA: Thank you.

EURE: I was gonna say I, I'm gonna let the audience know that we will go over 10 minutes, so it will end at 12:40. But at 12:30, we're gonna play a little musical piece for you just so you can be a little entertained. You got any more questions, Jerry?

GREENE: Yes. Do you think the youth, do you think, do you think the trends of youth mirror older populations? And are attitudes dependent on locations and experiences with different populations within countries? And are they from one country to another?

MEJIA: That's a really good question. And yes, I think that there are definite, like, larger differences in trends in terms of region and the nation. And then you go to the micro

level, talking about personality type and location within family units. But I think that, like I said before, you know, older populations and past generations have always been advocates for themselves. It just looked different.

So, what I've noticed is that, and this also is something that mirrors my own culture, African American heritage, is that the generation before my own was all about getting in the door. Right? Whether that's being in front of classrooms, whether that's being on boards of directors, whether that's being in certain occupations that we didn't really have access to before. And this current generation is about having equality, respect and dignity when they're in those doors. So, I think that there's a lot more collaboration that could occur that would be beneficial because the mission is very much so the same. It's just getting into the details of what equality looks like and what fairness looks like for each person.

And so, I think that we're moving forward in a positive direction, for sure, in terms of, like, you know, populations in the U.S. And it's getting into the details now of, we talked about this before, what gender equality looks like, discussions of gender neutrality and what language should look like, discussions of equal pay, discussions of rights to health care. And so, we're in those doors now, thanks to the people who came before us. So, now that we're in there, like, OK, now we have the, the seat at the table to bring perspective, then to say, "OK, this is what our needs are. This is what our needs have always been, but now we have the platform to really discuss this." And so, it's very much so collaborative because we're standing on the shoulders of folks who came before us, but now it's an exciting time to where we can be more vocal and a little bit safer in that vocality, although it's, of course, not perfect and get some more stuff done.

EURE: All right. Any other questions, Jerry? Because this will be the last one before we take the break, OK?

GREENE: OK. What advice would you give to students? Sorry. What advice would you give to students who want to learn more by the topics you addressed today?

MEJIA: Oh man, I'd say lean into your coaches at Wake Tech or wherever you are. I would say figure out what your door is. My door was music. Figure out if it looks like taking a cooking class or a dance class, or if it looks like logging on to a different gaming server with Spanish speakers and seeing what that feels like and looks like. I say find your door into the study and then, once you're in there, you know, lean into what interests you.

And it's OK to be overwhelmed. It's OK to take breaks because it's a lot of [indecipherable] topics that we talk about, but it's definitely worth the walk. So, find your door, pace yourself and give yourself grace as you continue on in this study.

EURE: OK. And I want to make a couple of announcements right before the break, and the first one is to the audience. We're gonna do something that we don't often do. We're gonna put some links in the chat that you can get later, and so I'm gonna have Sarah put the Success Coach link in there. And then we're gonna, if it's OK with Faith, we can put her presentation in there, but you let us know. And then we're gonna also ask for the African American-Latino Mixer, for that particular show, to also be put in the chat.

So, you're gonna get a part of that now. She's getting ready to move us to the side and play one of the selections that two of the musicians did at the African American-Latino Mixer. And I do hope to work with Melania and the Spanish department and other departments to do something like this in real life and maybe get you back, Faith. But we talked about that at the mixer, that we'd like to do something bigger on the campus outside and have music and art and food. So, maybe the pandemic will subside, and we could do it in, in the spring.

All right. Is there a problem? There we go. Thank you, Sarah. We have Sarah do multiple things, but she does good. Thank you.

[Music playing]

EURE: OK. We're all excited. Now, we're ready to go back, Sarah. Thank you so much.

[Music playing]

EURE: If I realized he was that close, I would let him finish. But thank you all for hanging out with us a little bit longer, and I wanna ask Melania, do you have any comments from what you heard so far?

AGUIRRE-RABON: I think, like Faith has stated, having that open dialogue and be willing to listen and be willing to explore. I think one of the challenging things is to give yourself or give ourselves the permission to, it's OK to ask that question, and it's OK to engage in some things that sometimes we may not feel comfortable asking or partaking, like she mentioned, you know, a cooking class or a dance class. And it may be that, in your experience, dancing is not something that you have ever considered. So, I think being open, I think, helps. Also, being honest and learning who you are first and, like

she had said, it really resonated with me that it's hard to ask those questions when you don't have enough figured out who you are and who you identify with.

And I think often, you know, I'm always asked the question is like, "How can I learn more? How can I be more engaged? And, to me, it's always like Faith said, there's so many opportunities out there, you know, and it starts whatever your circle of, of influence or circle of friends are. And I know Wake Tech offers tons of opportunities for students to be engaged, but there are also in the chamber of, of any of the cities that we live in, you know, Raleigh or Cary or any other suburbs.

So, I think being willing to listen and be willing to explore, and that's where we are, you know, we're in a higher education situation where we're here to learn, we're here to grow, we're here to learn more about, not just ourselves, but others as well. So, I encourage everybody to continue studying, continue reaching and continue being engaged. And the, the journey never stops, you know. The journey continues. But also looking at history, I think, like Faith has said, we learn so much from history, and we learned what works and what didn't work, and it helps to acknowledge, you know, what, what happened in order to move forward in a positive direction.

EURE: And Jerry, do you have another? Well, first of all, we have some comments. So, let's see those comments, Sarah. This is from Christian Richard, Richter: "Love Faith." You wanna get that one, Jerry? You know Alyson well from the Museum of History.

GREENE: Yeah, Alyson says, "So informative. Thank you."

EURE: Cobra Royalty, you got that one, Jerry?

GREENE: He says, "Thank you for your perspective, Faith."

EURE: All right. Well, thank you for your comments, and we are winding down. We've got five more minutes, so, I guess, Jerry, you get to ask one more question.

GREENE: All right. This one's going to be a little bit of a handful, all right? Some of the questions made, how can people get in touch with you, contact phone, email or website?

MEJIA: Yeah, absolutely. So, and I will type this as well at the same time as I'm speaking, so let's see if I can do that. The best way to get in touch with me is faith.anthonymejia@gmail.com. I'm incredibly responsive there. As I kind of roll and develop resources, I'm learning now I need to listen to the advice of my mother and go

ahead and make a website. So, as soon as I have that up, I'll be able to share that. But until then, that is the best way to reach out to me.

If you have questions about resources or reading lists that I have and quite enjoy, I would absolutely love to be able to help people along with their journey.

EURE: And I'm thinking that we will probably be able to put that up, Faith, at the very end. And I also wanted to make sure that people knew that the Museum of History is getting ready to have the American Indian Heritage Festival. I don't know the exact date, but it is the same day of Raleigh's Christmas Parade usually, and I think it is the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

And also the Museum of History is the sponsor, and the Afro-American Heritage Commission as well, of the official statewide kickoff for Black History Month, which is the last Saturday of July, January. And I want to see if Sarah can put that link in the chat because the deadline for anybody that wants to perform or present is the 15th, which is Friday. So, you can just go ahead and submit your application. And the theme is "Black People, Green Planet" environmental justice. But your theme is always gonna be able to work his way in. I don't care what kind of music you play, what you sing. All the poetry we can work in. And there is a small honorarium for anyone that is selected. I just happen to be on that advisory board, as I mentioned, and so is my, my visitor. She is here. We're gonna be talking over lunch.

But thank you, Sarah. And that's it, yes. You want to scroll down, and then we just want y'all to see where it is and just keep on going. Where it says "Apply for the AACC," just click, and the application comes up, and you just hit "Submit." It's very simple, so I just want you all to be aware.

And if, Sarah, if you could put that in the chat or the show as well, that would be great. And Jerry, now you can ask your very last question.

GREENE: Actually, I don't believe I have a last question but ...

EURE: Well, good. From now ...

GREENE: But I'm happy, I'm happy to be here, part of the experience. The very good information you guys have given.

EURE: Well, thank you, Jerry. Thank you for all you do. And do you have any closing comments, Melania? And then we'll end with Faith.

AGUIRRE-RABON: Continue the journey. Continue being open. Continue to be willing to listen and also to be heard. I think it's important. And thank you, Michael, for the potential to be part of this important conversation and also to share this space, a safe space for us to chat and collaborate. So, of course, thank you, Faith and Jerry and also to Sarah for all the wonderful topics that we have covered today. So, thank you and have a great day.

EURE: We have a question in the chat. So, Cobra Royalty, you got that, Jerry, and can you answer that? Thank you.

GREENE: Cobra Royalty says, "Do you have any plans to write a book about today's topic, Faith?"

MEJIA: Oh man, the book writing. I would love for "author" to be below my name on bios, and I definitely plan to find some sort of way to get published work out there. One of my internal struggles has been focus. So, for me, I'm the type of person to read four books at the same time instead of just powering through one. And so, I think that I would love to, but once I have the ability to focus in on what I would like to share and what I would like to publish, I would definitely like to. If it's not a text, I'd like to create something more accessible, such as a lesson plan or a blog. So, work definitely is in the works and on the way.

EURE: Well, thank everyone for attending. We can wave goodbye, and we'll see you next time. We're gonna get you back, Faith. Jerry knows we're gonna get you back.

MEJIA: Awesome. Awesome. Thank you, Melania, Jerry, Sarah. Thank you, thank you.

EURE: And Alyson, "So wonderful to hear Faith and Melania. Mil gracias."

MEJIA: Spectacular.

EURE: You know [indecipherable].

MEJIA: Thank you, Alyson. Have a good day, everyone.

AGUIRRE-RABON: Mil gracias. Adios.

MEJIA: Adios. Adios.