

AMERICAN LEADERSHIP FORUM NATIONAL NEWSLETTER



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AMERICAN LEADERSHIP FORUM NATIONAL PRESENTS

WHY CAN'T WE FIX US?

HOW WE CAN DIAGNOSE, RETOOL AND REGENERATE SYSTEMS AND OUR PLANET.

WITH OTTO SCHARMER
AUTHOR OF *THEORY U*

FEB 20 **12 PM PT**
2 PM CT
3 PM ET




ALF National Presents: Otto Scharmer on February 20

Upcoming Event

Why Can't We Fix Us? How we can diagnose, retool, and regenerate systems and our planet.

Our operating system is outdated. We approach systemic social problems—poverty, the climate crisis, cyber security, healthcare inequities – with archaic and siloed strategies and expect different results. (the definition of insanity.) We can't do more of the same (even though we keep trying).

Step aside, iceberg model. Bring on the Systems Mirror.

MIT Lecturer, *Theory U* Author, and Founder of the Presencing Institute, **Otto Scharmer** will debut a new framework that requires us to tend to our social soil in order to grow healthy systems that are rooted in equity, empathy, and collaboration. Until we upgrade the soil, we will continue in a spin cycle of band-aiding broken systems.

Join us for a groundbreaking, inspired dialogue and Reality Meditation with Otto Scharmer, where we will courageously envision our role in bringing equitable and thriving systems to life.

About Otto Scharmer

Born and raised near Hamburg, Germany, Otto's early experiences on his family farm profoundly shaped his vision. From his father, a pioneer of regenerative farming, Otto learned the significance of the living quality of the soil in organic agriculture, which inspired his thinking about social fields as the grounding condition from which visible transformations emerge. Like a good farmer who cares for the soil, Otto believes responsible leaders must nurture the social field in which they operate. He emphasizes that shifting our economic operating systems from extractive to regenerative requires innovations in leadership support structures for shifting mindsets from ego to eco. Building that infrastructure is the purpose of the u-school for Transformation.

Learn more and register for this virtual ALF National event here: > bit.ly/alfn-feb20 •

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Suzanne St. John-Crane, Interim Executive Director

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- Sarah Greenman, Vice Chair
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- Judy Le
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- Juanita Saffold
- Suzanne St. John-Crane
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ALF National is on LinkedIn



Leadership Transition at ALF Tacoma/Pierce County

December 7, 2023

By **Beth Boggs, ALF Tacoma/Pierce County Executive Director**

With mixed emotions, I am writing to share the news that I will be stepping down from my role as Executive Director of the American Leadership Forum of Tacoma/Pierce County effective January 31, 2024.

After more than 15 years at ALF, I continue to be in awe of what this small but mighty organization has been able to accomplish. The decision to step away from my dream job is not one I made lightly. I joined ALF in 2008 as the organization's part-time Administrative Assistant after "retiring" from Russell Investments in 2002 to stay home with my kids in their early years. I became the Executive Director in August 2012.

Today, we have a local network of over 630 graduates, a robust and engaged volunteer corps of over 100 Senior Fellows who annually donate their time, head, and heart by serving on the board, or one of five focused committees, as a Class Fundraising Champion, or a Class Communication Agent. No other organization I know has engagement at this level from its membership. With a staff of two, ALF simply would not be the thriving and impactful organization it is without our volunteer graduate network.

Together, we have accomplished great things during my tenure as the Executive Director. Because of you, ALF has grown from being 30% self-funded to nearly 80% self-funded with increased Fellows and Senior Fellows giving to the organization. Senior Fellow opportunities to connect and engage annually have more than doubled. Our Fellows classes and facilitation team are more reflective of the population of Pierce County. The Fellows Program content and Wilderness Retreat have been completely redesigned, and redesigned again, to inspire, stretch, care for, and unify Fellows who are not only diverse but have divergent beliefs and backgrounds.

Now more than ever, ALF has board and committee leadership that has a strong, steadfast, and resolute commitment to the future of the organization and the critical need to strengthen leadership capacity in our community. In just the past two years, we have sharpened our focus internally, and in the Fellows and Senior Fellows network, to prioritize the development of skills to engage in dialogue with a spirit of curiosity and empathetic listening. To imagine and develop a community that is equitable and inclusive of all people. And, to know that slowing down and caring for one another, despite our differences, is precisely how we build strong, resilient, and connected communities,



organizations, and people.

It's been an absolute privilege to work with a board, staff, and volunteers to nurture an organization that is doing great work every day while also constantly learning how to do it better. As I step away, it's deeply gratifying to know that ALF is well-positioned for bigger and bolder work in the future.

I am excited to begin a new role as the Executive Director of the Tacoma Parks Foundation on March 1, 2024. The park system has rapidly evolved in recent years and is fueled by the energized, previously unimagined expansion, partnerships, purpose, and impact. The Foundation board and staff are eager to increase the reach of this work, and forge new paths, to make parks, programs, and recreation equitable and accessible to thousands of vulnerable children and families in Tacoma. I am inspired and excited to be part of this work.

Thank you for the opportunity to work in partnership with so many wonderful leaders these past 15 years. Thank you for your contributions to the organization, my personal growth, and the incredible expansion of the mission. This is your organization and I have been so honored to be a part of its journey. As a Senior Fellow, I hope to continue to partner with ALF as we strive to make Pierce County a stronger and more intentionally connected community. •

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEB 20 | ALF National Presents Otto Scharmer

Why Can't We Fix Us?

How we can diagnose, retool and regenerate systems and our planet. With Otto Scharmer, Author of Theory U.

MIT Lecturer, Theory U Author, and Founder of the Presencing Institute, Otto Scharmer will debut a new framework that requires us to tend to our social soil in order to grow healthy systems that are rooted in equity, empathy, and collaboration. Until we upgrade the soil, we will continue in a spin cycle of band-aiding broken systems.

Join us for a groundbreaking, inspired dialogue and Reality Meditation with Otto Scharmer, where we will courageously envision our role in bringing equitable and thriving systems to life.

Time: 12 PM PT / 2 PM CT / 3 PM ET

Location: Online / Virtual

Learn more & register:

› bit.ly/alfn-feb20

APR 30 - MAY 3 | ALF Alabama Learning Lab

ALF National, in partnership with the team at Empower Initiative, invites up to 30 ALF Senior Fellows from across all chapters to participate in the Alabama Learning Lab for four days in late April.

Who: ALF Senior Fellows from any chapter

Dates: April 30 – May 3, 2024

Location: Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery, Alabama

Cost: The cost per participant is \$2,500 (excluding airfare) and includes all Learning Lab activities, accommodations, local transportation (excludes travel to/from airport), and meals (excluding one open evening)

Learn more on Page 4 or visit:

› alfnational.org/alabama-learning-lab



Oct 25 Civic Bridge Building Event Recap

October 31, 2023

By Richard Ángel Vega, ALF Silicon Valley Marketing & Communications Director

We want to extend heartfelt thanks to all of the ALF Senior Fellows, Fellows, and friends from across the country who joined ALF National Executive Director and ALF Silicon Valley CEO Suzanne St. John-Crane on Wednesday, October 25 for ALF National Presents: Civic Bridge Building featuring Christy Vines and David Eisner!

It was an honor to support ALF National in hosting these two incredible leaders in the civic bridge-building space for a workshop and conversation on deep relationship-building and listening strategies. Thank you to Christy Vines, President and CEO of Ideos Institute, and David Eisner, former CEO of Convergence, for graciously sharing their wisdom and leadership!

And special thanks to ALF Founder Joseph Jaworski, Generon International CEO Susan Taylor, and all of the ALF National board members and ALF chapter executives in attendance!

About Christy Vines

Christy Vines is the President and CEO of Ideos Institute. She is best known for her unique perspective on faith, society, and culture, and her ability to help people bridge differences and connect more authentically. Christy is a published writer, speaker, and the executive producer of the 2022 documentary film, *Dialogue Lab: America*, a moving take on the current state of division and polarization in the U.S.

In 2015, Christy left the field of religious conflict and extremism to focus on the advancement of the burgeoning field of empathic intelligence and to find answers to the disconnections, biases, and misperceptions that often underlie conflict in the first place. She now leads the organization's research and its application to the fields of conflict transformation, social cohesion, communal resiliency, and servant leadership.

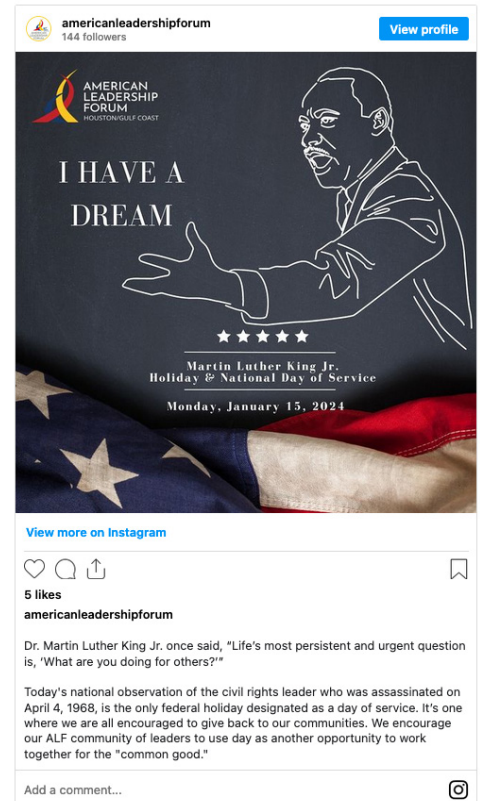
Christy is a published writer, speaker, and the executive producer of the 2022 documentary film, *Dialogue Lab: America*, a moving take on the current state of division and polarization in the U.S. She has appeared on podcasts like *How Do We Fix It* and *Bob Goff's Dream Big Podcast*, with articles and op-eds published in the *Washington Post*, *Christianity Today*, and *Capital Commentary*.

About David Eisner

David Eisner is a thought leader and former senior executive strengthening civic engagement, constituent management, policy-setting, and coalition action in the worlds of Business, Philanthropy, Government, and Nonprofits. Most recently, as CEO of Convergence, David oversaw the expansion of Convergence's role in the anti-polarization, bridgebuilding, and democracy-renewal movements.

As CEO of Convergence, David oversaw the expansion of Convergence's role in the anti-

ALF HOUSTON/GULF COAST ON INSTAGRAM



polarization, bridgebuilding, and democracy-renewal movements, building programs to inspire and equip leaders and institutions to learn and adopt the mindsets and skills enabling connection and collaboration across divides. This work included, among other things:

- Supporting groups of Congressmen to increase bipartisan planning, collaboration, and conflict management;
- Co-founding and co-leading the Collective Impact initiative, Bridging Movement Alignment Council;
- Building a coalition of support for the Building Civic Bridges Act

David has served as CEO of the Corp for National and Community Service in the George W. Bush Administration, Sr. Vice President for the America Online and Time Warner Foundations, CEO of the National Constitution Center under former President Clinton, founder of Network for Good, and board member of many organizations, including Independent Sector, National 4-H, Points of Light, Public Allies, One America Movement and more. •

Watch the full replay here:
bit.ly/oct25-replay



ALF ON LINKEDIN



Suzanne St. John-Crane (She/Her) • 1st
CEO at American Leadership Forum - Silicon Valley | Interim Exec. D...
4mo •

Grateful to [Ben McBride](#) for facilitating this profound journey. Every American should be required to visit these civil rights landmarks in Alabama. It's hard to remember, but it's dangerous to forget.

6,500 African-Americans were lynched in this country and millions were tortured and terrorized, after slavery "ended" and up until the 1950s. People are alive and well whose family members were murdered with indifference or support from law enforcement. This is NOT our distant past, and the ripple effects are ever present today.

Thankful to have ALFers [Mica Eades Mayo](#), [Chris Cheng](#) and [nory angel](#) on the journey too. 🙏
[#empowerinitiative](#) [#alfsv](#)



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RESERVE YOUR SPOT FOR THE ALF SENIOR FELLOW GROUP LEARNING EXCURSION TO BIRMINGHAM, SELMA, AND MONTGOMERY.

ALF NATIONAL | IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EMPOWER INITIATIVE

ALF EXPERIENCE ALABAMA LEARNING LAB

APRIL 30 - MAY 3, 2024



ALF National, in partnership with the team at **Empower Initiative**, invites up to 30 ALF Senior Fellows from across all chapters to participate in the Alabama Learning Lab for four days in late April.

This is a unique opportunity for an ALF-only cohort to visit Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery for an up-close look at America's history of racial othering — and how our violent past has settled into an undercurrent of implicit bias and injustice in the present day.

DETAILS

Who: ALF Senior Fellows from any chapter

Dates: April 30 – May 3, 2024

Location: Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery, Alabama

Cost: The cost per participant is \$2,500 (excluding airfare) and includes all Learning Lab activities, accommodations, local transportation (excludes travel to/from airport), and meals (excluding one open evening)

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Since only up to 30 slots are available, ALF National is holding a tentative allocation of seats for each chapter. However, we must confirm a full slate of 25 participants for the excursion to proceed, so reservations are ultimately first-come, first-served.

\$500 deposit is required to secure a reservation

ABOUT THE ALABAMA LEARNING LAB

Guided by an experienced team of curators and trainers, you'll walk the march routes, sit in spaces where defining moments took place, and listen for the cries of freedom and struggle that have endured over decades.

As a group, you'll bear witness to these experiences and translate the concept of belonging from inspiring theory to real-life practice.

For more information and to register:

➤ alfnational.org/alabama-learning-lab

Do you have an ALF story or event you would like to share with the ALF National Network?

Contact Richard Ángel Vega, ALF Silicon Valley Marketing & Communications Director:
➤ richard@alfsv.org.



Pictured, left to right: Sarah Greenman, Suzanne St. John-Crane, Nory Angel, Beth Boggs, Chrystal Joy, and Bonnie Ferreira

Gathering with a Bold Vision for the Common Good

December 8, 2023

By Suzanne St. John-Crane, ALF Silicon Valley CEO & ALF National Executive Director

On November 29 and 30, the American Leadership Forum National **Board of Directors** met in Tacoma, WA for its annual board retreat. We are thrilled to welcome to the fold new Board Members **Ronnie Bryant** (ALF Charlotte, NC), **Melody O’Neal** (ALF Waccamaw, SC) and **Juanita Saffold** (ALF Great Valley, CA).

The Board also elected a slate for officers for 2024. ALF Houston / Gulf Coast CEO **Nory Angel** will serve another year as Chair. ALF Oregon CEO **Sarah Greenman** has stepped into the Vice Chair role, and Mountain Valley, CA CEO **Bonnie Ferreira** will serve another term as Secretary.

An Evaluation and Impact Task Force was assembled to work on overhauling the Fellows program evaluation tool in order to match the revised ALF National Cornerstones which were adopted by the board in late 2022. In addition, Chapters will be collecting class and network collaboration and impact

stories annually to share back with the network, and with potential funders.

“The relationships built through the ALF Fellows program have a positive ripple effect in our communities that is impossible to deeply measure,” shares St. John-Crane. “We are going to be more intentional about collecting stories of Senior Fellows making a difference in their communities, thanks to the relationships they have built through ALF.”

A big thanks to longtime ALFN and ALF Tacoma / Pierce County Board Member **Lyle Quasim** and his wife Shelagh for hosting a dinner for the board at their home, where many members met for the first time in person.

“Our 2023 retreat helped our board gain clarity on the work at the center for moving the national organization forward and executing on a bold new vision,” ALF National Board Chair Nory Angel reflects. “The board

is energized and committed to building a national network that is positioned to create spaces for bridging across difference and preserving our democracy.”

ALF Silicon Valley CEO Suzanne St. John-Crane and VP of Operations Mark Tolley continue to press ahead with fundraising efforts to fully implement the ALF National strategic plan. St. John-Crane is leading the work to garner support from foundations across the country, and Tolley is managing Phase One of implementation: Launching ALF Connect, an online platform that will allow over 5,000 Senior Fellows from across the country to connect with each other for the first time in ALF’s history. ALF Connect is set to launch by March 2024. •