

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:00:02](#)):

Welcome to the Space of Justice. I'm your host, Michael A. Betts, II. My pronouns are he/him/his. And I'm joined today by senior leadership of Duke's Next Gen Living and Learning 2.0 committee, comprised of Vice Provost, Vice President of Student Affairs, Mary Pat McMahon; Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education, Gary Bennett; and lastly, Dean of Students, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, John Blackshear. This committee charged by the board of trustees and President Price with the mandate to answer the question, "How will we build a joyful and intentional four-year residential experience that promotes growth, meaningful inclusion, and health, and that is distinctly Duke?" These are the three people, with Linda Zhang who unfortunately could not join us today, are at the helm of solving this question.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:00:53](#)):

Before we get started can you all introduce yourselves a little bit and tell us a little about who you are and your relationship to Duke and Durham actually? And then some of your areas of interest, your pronouns, and maybe just for the audience's sake a fun fact about yourself that you find interesting. Mary Pat, can you start us off?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:01:10](#)):

Sure thing. So yeah, I'm Mary Pat McMahon. I use she pronouns. I am in my second year, academic year, at Duke as Vice President, Vice Provost of Student Affairs. I'm a Durham resident. I'm learning my way around Durham, but like my way around Duke, it has taken me a little bit extra because the pandemic has curtailed movements. And I'm sorry, I'm trying to remember the other pieces. I'm thinking about the fun fact part.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:01:37](#)):

Go jump on it. Go for it.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:01:39](#)):

Okay. I go through these phases of time where I really want everybody to pay attention to something that I find interesting. And I don't want to take everybody through that, through the various things... Poor John and Gary are part of this process on a regular basis. But I'm not going to do it. So let me think about that for a second. I just have to say that I started reading a book in college 22 years ago and I finished it in the pandemic. I'm very proud of myself. That's my fun fact.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:02:10](#)):

Congratulations! That's a big deal!

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:02:12](#)):

Thank you very much.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:02:15](#)):

Are we going to get the name of said book by chance?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:02:17](#)):

Yeah. It's Anna Karenina. My college friends and I had a virtual book club this summer where we had all taken the Russian novel and none of us... Actually one person I think had finished it. And we basically went back and finished the book and talked about it and we got more out of it than we would have at 22.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:02:32](#)):

For sure. For sure. Well, thank you so much for joining us today.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:02:35](#)):

Thanks for having us.

Gary Bennett ([00:02:37](#)):

Well, hi, I'm Gary Bennett, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. I'm also a professor at Duke. I have been at Duke as a professor for about 11 years. Before that I was at the Harvard School of Public Health. I study digital therapeutics, often in medically vulnerable populations. I'm a Duke alum and married to a Duke alum, so it's exciting and wonderful and totally unexpected to be back. It's particularly strange for me to be serving in this role. This is not something I ever imagined doing, but love doing it and love doing it even more with John and Mary Pat. I have two kids and I live in Raleigh. And so it's a different experience. My personal life's a little different than my work life in context, but I feel like I'm a Durham guy and love the place. And really excited to be doing the work that we're going to talk about today.

Gary Bennett ([00:03:38](#)):

My fun fact is that I now know more about Anna Karenina than anyone who hasn't read the book. I don't know what Mary Pat is talking about, where she said stopped talking about it all the time, because it's amazing the degree to which Anna Karenina relates to just about everything that we do at Duke. My fun fact is that really all I want to do in life and at some point I'm going to give it all up and be a backup singer. And all I want to do... And increasingly I think I may find a job as a backup singer to John Blackshear given [[crosstalk 00:04:13](#)] find myself standing behind him with a microphone in various parts of the world.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:04:18](#)):

So if not John Blackshear, who... Well, pre COVID. Who on tour were you trying to go be their backup singer?

Gary Bennett ([00:04:28](#)):

That's a great question... Honestly, it's Bruno Mars. And it's a little strange, but he's got a cool vibe for his backup singers. That's pretty cool. I like the way they dance around. I can't quite dance like his backup singer do, but I could try.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:04:40](#)):

I was about to say. If you saw all the 24K Magic videos, you could learn those steps.

Gary Bennett ([00:04:45](#)):

That's generally my look outside of work. So I think I can get there.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:04:50](#)):

I like it. I like it. And just so that we have it, what are your pronouns?

Gary Bennett ([00:04:54](#)):

He/him.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:04:56](#)):

Thank you for joining us today.

John Blackshear ([00:04:57](#)):

Hey. I'm John Blackshear. So I am a clinical psychologist by training and by practice, I guess. I do practice in the field some. A lot of folks know me for the work that I do in the forensic world. I am often hired as an expert witness for capital cases around the country and sometimes in other countries. So I've been here at Duke for quite a long time. I used to live in downtown Raleigh. I used to love the fact that I lived in one city and worked in the other. Gave me an opportunity to know both communities well, because I did spend a lot of time outside of campus in Duke and Durham during that time. And then of course spent of time in and around Raleigh. And for me having lived in a place like Atlanta, I don't see the two communities as that far apart as sometimes they are viewed.

John Blackshear ([00:05:53](#)):

So I look at the Triangle typically as a whole. But I really love Durham. My family and I were going to move here just so that my wife and I could be closer to the younger children during the day. And I had an opportunity to become a faculty in residence and change the game and just change everything about my understanding of Duke, my understanding of Durham, and it has been probably one of the most illuminating experiences of the 19 years that I've been here at the university.

John Blackshear ([00:06:23](#)):

A fun fact about me... So there are some things people know. That I'm a huge Prince fan.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:06:28](#)):

Love it.

John Blackshear ([00:06:28](#)):

That I'm a drummer. And that I'm pretty sure I had a local hit in Kunshan after singing karaoke with Gary and Mary Pat. I did a cover of Lou Rawls' You'll Never Find a Better [crosstalk 00:06:48].

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:06:47](#)):

Oh, lord have mercy.

John Blackshear ([00:06:49](#)):

It was wonderful. But I think a fun fact that a lot of people probably... Especially students have started noticing, the first years as they walked by where I'm working, is that I keep several pairs of headphones around and different means of experiencing music at really, really high quality, because I use music

several times a day to reorient me and settle me back down. And I love just about any type of music, but most students find it that I am a huge Ty Dolla Sign fan. So there you go.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:07:23](#)):

Okay. Okay. All right. I was not expecting that to be what you said.

John Blackshear ([00:07:29](#)):

Ty Dolla Sign is great. I don't care what nobody says.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:07:36](#)):

You opened with Prince, so that's why I was just like, "Where are we going?"

John Blackshear ([00:07:42](#)):

There you go. First the Ty Dolla Sign. There it is. I bet you have [inaudible 00:07:43] somewhere in the middle of all that.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:07:45](#)):

Oh, for sure. For sure. That'll be the name of your autobiography. "Prince to..."

John Blackshear ([00:07:51](#)):

[crosstalk 00:07:51] Done. That'd be a brilliant book.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:07:56](#)):

Well, thank you so much for joining us today. Very grateful to have all three of you here. Let's jump into some of the meat and potatoes. The best place for us to start is how you all came to this particular work. I think that oftentimes your work finds you because of your specific skill sets. And I know Gary, you alluded to, "I wasn't expecting to be doing this, but I'm very grateful to be doing this." So given that, how did you come to the work that you're doing with Next Gen Living and Learning? And then how do you feel that you are enacting change at Duke? And how or why is that work necessary? Gary, can you start us off?

Gary Bennett ([00:08:33](#)):

Sure. It's funny because this is... When I entered into this role I didn't know at the time that the board of trustees was beginning to take a look at this issue of Duke's living and learning experience. And I was surprised to be invited to co-chair a task force for the Duke board of trustees to look into the sort of next generation of our living and learning. I care about the issue deeply as a faculty member. I have long believed... And this is not an original thought, but it's been my personal experience that there's just something very special that happens in the interactions between faculty and students and particularly when those interactions happen in the areas in which students live. That's part of the magic of what happens in places like Duke.

Gary Bennett ([00:09:25](#)):

When I met my wife, she was an RA at Duke. And so I got to see through her experience just the impact that she had on the lives of her residents, many of whom are still friends of hers and ours. So even

though I wasn't an expert in the area and certainly hadn't studied the area, it really spoke to me. And in some ways for me, it's particularly exciting when you don't have a lot of knowledge in a space to do the work that we then embarked upon because I was able to be a student of the topic for a year. And so we put together a task force in the board of trustees, so multi-stakeholder task force of faculty and students and staff and alums and board members. And we spent a year doing a very deep dive both into Duke's residential experience, but also benchmarking Duke's experience against that of other institutions with a real emphasis on trying to understand how we compared against what we thought of as best performing living and learning arrangements elsewhere.

Gary Bennett ([00:10:23](#)):

And it was just absolutely fascinating. That task force was led by a really phenomenal trustee, Betsy Holden, former CEO and current McKinsey consultant. And so it was brilliant to watch her approach to these questions from her particular lens. And I brought the lens as a faculty member, as an administrator. And we just spent a year wrestling with, "What do we want Duke's experience to be? What is it now? Where are the gaps? How do we make changes that will help to improve the experience for all of our students? Make this a more equitable experience and also one that leads to... It's really consistent with the values that we have as a community?" And so then on the backend, as it is, in the backend you make a really big report and you make a series of recommendations.

Gary Bennett ([00:11:12](#)):

And then I've been in this position many times in my life, when you do a deep dive, you put together a series of recommendations, and you wonder whether there will be interest in the broader community among those who are decision makers in actually implementing these recommendations. As an alum, I feel very fortunate that we have the team that we currently have, because basically what we heard from our president provost was, "Let's move forward."

Gary Bennett ([00:11:43](#)):

And I'll stop my soliloquy here, but I will say that right around the time that we were finishing this report, we were also doing the search for the next Vice President, Vice Provost of Student Affairs. And it was just extraordinarily fortuitous that we were able to find someone like Mary Pat who comes with the kind of skills she has, but also just has the kind of relational skills and just the kind of spirit that she has. This is the nicest thing I'm going to say about her today. And so we're sitting here with the report and interviewing these folks and I'm imagining what it may be like if we get the chance to implement these things. And we're just really fortunate to have been able to convince her to move her family down to Durham to do this work.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:12:26](#)):

That's fantastic. Mary Pat, just for the record that was recorded. So if you just want to play that back and forth on loop.

Mary Pat McMahan ([00:12:32](#)):

The nice part?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:12:33](#)):

Yeah. That nice part.

Gary Bennett ([00:12:34](#)):

I may need that.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:12:37](#)):

Well, Mary Pat, can you follow up with that? You come in with a unique perspective. You're a year basically behind the strategic task force. The recommendation that they're putting forth, you're coming in and seeing what they've put together and you have to pick up the reins. What is that process for you?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:12:56](#)):

Yeah. There's all kinds of pieces that connect to this, where we're going here at Duke with the work that I've done in other places. There's a through-line for me, probably for about 10 or 15 years of work, in thinking about this question of how students live and how students learn, where they live, what's changing. For example, campus centers and libraries become much more interconnected as far as where people [inaudible 00:13:19] collaborate, connect over ideas, connect with faculty, follow up and... If I walk out of the Bryan Center right now, I really enjoy walking past all the benches and just seeing what everybody's doing. People doing calc. People are prepping for job interviews. There's group work happening. The pandemic's actually brought more of the campus center into a living and learning space.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:13:39](#)):

And I learned in different places that I've worked that the ways that students engage faculty and thought partners and ideas when they are comfortable in the space is so transformational. It's one thing to be in a formal classroom space where there's a lecture, there's a [inaudible 00:13:58] and people sit apart and take notes. It's another thing for there to be a flipped classroom where students are more engaged in materials, less in receivership and more in engagement of learning. And then if you move some of those conversations, you think about somebody comes out of an amazing discussion about... We're doing food insecurity symposium on Friday. So people come out thinking about questions about food insecurity and then to have that conversation in their own room or their own common space or place that feels like home, it's just different.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:14:25](#)):

And then if you can get faculty and others to be in those spaces where students just... The questions come up a different way. The framing of having it be a question that's, "I really want to know the answer and I really am not sure about where this is." That's more likely to pop up in a home environment than in a, "I'm supposed to get the answer 'right'" So taskforce raises a whole bunch of things and over time in different places I've worked, it really does come down to space and where one feels comfortable and whose space is it, who controls it. And then where the ideas go from there.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:15:02](#)):

That's wonderful. That's wonderful. John, how are you complicating these things as you're watching Gary and Mary Pat work through this? What is it doing for you as you're coming to this work as well?

John Blackshear ([00:15:15](#)):

First of all, it went without question that I was going to accept any role offered to me to participate in this work. I was involved when I was over in my previous job with the orientation of faculty when they joined us here at Duke. And one of the questions I would ask to do in that orientation is if they would

recall for the room a significant academic experience that they tie directly to them sitting in the room, being oriented toward the faculty at Duke. And without question they all went back to people who are phenomenal in their content area, but they also had different types of connections with them outside of the content area. Then those connections resulted in things like understanding the world differently, developing a sense of confidence to share their competence, if you will, as they matured into whichever directions they were moving in their lives. And so this audacity to be people responsible for the creation of knowledge.

John Blackshear ([00:16:38](#)):

And so we sit in this room and almost all of the time those connections went back to grade school. What was surprising for me but also confirming what we're doing here is the reason why those connections were able to happen is because you were around those instructors more often and it provided you more opportunities for contact that really laid foundations for these folks' futures in the room. So the thing that keeps coming up and I kept hearing Mary Pat say over and over, it was this word connect. Watching folks connect, looking at how they connect, who misses out on connection. Why does that happen? How do we encourage greater connection? How do we move barriers from students finding a greater community and connection here? And how do we also remove barriers for faculty to move and partner with the living space with a greater sense of ease, but also in a way that is rewarded and seen as a value proposition by the institution, such that that is considered a meaningful part of the portfolio that they are building?

John Blackshear ([00:17:54](#)):

Also moving into the dorm I thought I knew our students really well. I realized I knew them from the position that I was sitting in. I thought I understood their developmental needs. I thought I understood their desires and their hopes and how they connect and how they're missing connections. But it wasn't until I became proximate to them in this way, where I got to see them in my role as a faculty member, in my role as a dean or whatever the case may be. But bringing that role into the living space and having opportunities to discuss their developmental trajectories with the range of possibilities for finding intellectual home at an institution like Duke. And just offering even words of encouragement for folks to move in spaces that they don't see themselves reflected in normally, given who's populating certain disciplines.

John Blackshear ([00:18:59](#)):

And also being a home base. So I have engineering students who find the relationship as a home base, even though their academic pursuits moved them into this space. But as their faculty in residence when the big questions come, when I'm thinking about graduate school, when I'm thinking about what I want to do for research projects, when I'm thinking about love, when I think about all these things, they have this trusted intellectual partner. And I do want to tie that in, that the faculty in residence role is a intellectual partner and it's different than I would say an academic advisor or something like that. But a partnership that allows for a different type of relationship to form. And the more we're able to germinate from that seed and spread that... Because I think that it's beautiful in the first year, but oftentimes it's that second year where our students still need that home base and that guidance from intellectual partnership as they seek their academic home.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:20:09](#)):

Right. Well, and I'd imagine that in some ways... And you alluded to this. In some ways you're having to have conversations of cultural differences, especially if the intellectual partner doesn't come from spaces that are similar to that of the student or students that they are interacting with. Do you want to respond to that? Go for it.

John Blackshear ([00:20:30](#)):

This group of learners... And Duke is as one of these places. We have top 1% of all the learners in the known universe. But just to hear this generation talk about difference, their ability to understand difference and accept difference in many, many, many ways. But for many, this is the first time they're going to live so approximate to difference. And so it goes from being something that's accepted and understood to actually something that's in practice. And how do you anticipate what it's like for let's say a low-income first generation student of color coming to this space and living and learning here? And then how do you anticipate a relationship that might be put into place by even random roommate assignment of a student who is a fourth generation Duke student and their family? And some of the understood keys to success at Duke maybe by that kid who is a fourth generation Duke student, where just remembering the name of buildings can be incredibly complicated for that student who has only ever visited here doing a recruitment effort.

John Blackshear ([00:21:53](#)):

So anticipating that difference, but then helping students appreciate that there's a beauty in that difference. And there's some incredible value in that difference if you can actually get students engaged enough to share who they are. Neither of these people represent the totality of the communities that they come from. So they all represent something incredibly unique. And if you can get them to a place of connecting as two intellectual students who both belong here? No hyphenation. No adjective. You're both Duke students. And you can really build some incredibly dynamic relationships there where you raise the awareness and conscientiousness on both ends. Because let me do tell you, there is a lot of growth and a lot of complications that come from both sides.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:22:50](#)):

Right, right, right. Mary Pat I just saw your hand. Did you want to comment and follow up on that statement?

Mary Pat McMahan ([00:22:56](#)):

Yeah. I just want to draw the thread back to that idea of if you're in a shared home... So if your residential space is your home. And how you live and learn together and share your space, it kicks back to the just space piece, in the contrast with the formal classroom and formal learning and where that real human connection comes from.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:23:14](#)):

I'm getting a real good sense of just how meaningful this engagement is. And John made a statement just a second ago talking about the educational and growth element for all the people that are coming together. And I would imagine that in some ways you all are having to grapple with this impetus of things like anti-racism as a way to help navigate some of these territories that you're running into. So Mary Pat, since you're already open mic, how do you personally define the term anti-racism? How does Duke or more specifically your charge define it?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:23:52](#)):

I would say my definition of anti-racism personally and professionally are pretty close to each other, and it really is, "What are you actively doing to dismantle..."

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:24:04]

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:24:03](#)):

Systemic anti-black racism and structural systems that are... They put a hierarchy in place that prevent full inclusion for everybody's lived experiences in a residential community. That's my job, civic and community worlds that we live in outside of our jobs, right? So it goes straight to this, right? This is when we think about, I have now spent 25 years maybe around there at privileged white institutions that were all male up until the 1960s or '70s that were segregated, right? In Duke's case, built with an idea in mind of students. And Gary and I were just talking about, if I ever go back and do more study, what kind of study I'm going to do?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:24:43](#)):

And one of things I'm really interested in right now is probably farther ahead than you want to go. In this particular question, I'll just lay it out, which is we're about to come into a post pandemic sort of reckoning of what does a place like Duke teach? How do we teach it? Who's here and how do we sort of foster learning and excellence in the platforms that we have? When you think about after The Vietnam War and all of things that changed. The rights movement, all the things that changed in places like this. I won't take us through post World War Two and post World War One. And that it was a pain of higher ed, particularly elite higher like Duke's lack of places, Rutledge places, PWIs.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:25:21](#)):

They really kind of stick to a plan for decades, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:25:24](#)):

Right.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:25:24](#)):

And so we're actually talking about what does the post pandemic living and learning experience look like? And how do we ensure that some of the assumptions that we carry, more of the assumptions that we carry, which I have their roots in this privileged white all male of place?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:25:39](#)):

Right.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:25:40](#)):

How do we ensure that the orientation, first year residence halls, East Campus, West Campus, the career? How do we help people think about, "Networking for careers." There are a million different ways that the language that we use, the assumptions that are sort of driven. And I think one of our questions, Gary's and John's and mine, our roles, and then our teams is how do we understand where we're actually sort of tacitly reinforcing kind of elements of that sort of? Who's supposed to be here? And I'm air quoting my office, right?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:26:09](#)):

Who is this experienced designer for? And how do we make sure that we're really designing the next round of this experience for the students who are here and the students who are coming regarding not regardless? Not regardless and I think this is maybe something that happened and if asked us at the beginning of my career 20 years ago, it was sort of like to celebrate diversity, moving towards inclusion model, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:26:28](#)):

Right.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:26:28](#)):

And then as we get to an anti- racist space, what are we actually actively doing on a day-to-day basis, semester-to-semester, year-to-year to make sure this space is aware of itself, aware of the history and sort of taking steps to go beyond recognition of diverse experiences beyond sort of making it inclusive, really to making it equitable?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:26:49](#)):

That makes so much sense. Gary or John, do you want to follow up? Gary, go for it.

Gary Bennett ([00:26:53](#)):

I'll just build on what Mary Pat was saying that to note that, from my perspective, one of the greatest myths that's embraced by modern higher education is the notion that we are inclusive and that we're places that you know anything about the free exchange of ideas. To the extent that we have ever freely exchanged ideas, it's really only been a product of the last generation or two. Before that, there weren't a lot of people who were free to exchange those ideas and in the universities that we like to hold up as espousing these perspectives. So I have very little tolerance for the kind of institutional elitism that we often see in from many universities that argue that we really know how to do this work. We don't. Many of us leading these institutions grew up in times and in places that were far more homogenous than many of our students were raised in.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:27:56](#)):

Right.

Gary Bennett ([00:27:56](#)):

And grew up with sort of in social systems and with social experiences that did not prepare us for having these conversations.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:28:05](#)):

Right.

Gary Bennett ([00:28:06](#)):

And to say anything else, I think is really problematic. There are absolutely exceptions to this, but as a rule, I think it would be safer for us to presume that we know a lot less about this than we sometimes

claim. And so what excites me about this work is that we're all kind of learning. We have the potential to all kind of be learning together.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:28:27](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Gary Bennett ([00:28:27](#)):

And we're working with a group of students who have been raised very differently in cultures and climates in contexts that are very different than the ones in which we were raised. But who also many of our students were raised culturally different, but in environments that were similarly homogenous, right? I mean, it's a really complex set of situations that present themselves. And so I think universities like ours, what I'm excited about as a scholar and as a person who cares about anti-racism generally is that right now we are rebuilding, we're retooling, we're rearchitecting. When we're learning, we're learning alongside our students. We're not making presumptions that our former system was sufficient. We recognize that there are gaps and we're trying to build towards a model that will better support our students in the years to come. And that's I think about all you can ask from universities like ours.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:29:28](#)):

Thank you. John, did you want to add anything? I think Mary Pat and Gary have definitely given us a sure foundation, but I didn't know if there's anything you wanted to expand on.

John Blackshear ([00:29:37](#)):

I think that this moment provides us a really good opportunity to have a sustained focus on anti-racism. I came along during a period of time where diversity was like the benchmark of progress. And so it was more about making room for difference, and then moving over the last decade or so into this conversation of bias and inclusion. And my question had always been, but how are we transformed? How are we different by becoming our diversity? Not so much. So just giving diversity a corner to sit in, but does diversity fundamentally shift who we are and how we engage in the world in this type of education we provide? And then came around to the heavy work of anti-racism. And this one is different because it requires individuals to do their work.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:30:40](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

John Blackshear ([00:30:42](#)):

[inaudible 00:30:42]. There is no workshop that's going to make you anti-racist. There isn't a group who is that if you were born and raised in America at least to me, there is no group who doesn't need to do work on that. Me as a black man, I have to do anti-racism work to understand how being sort of born and raised in a society that has its foundations in racism and many of its institutions and just how the society operates, where race is such a key part. I am myself charged with doing the work to make sure that I am assuming an anti-racist posture in my movement, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:31:31](#)):

Right.

John Blackshear ([00:31:31](#)):

So it's not enough to be not racist, but instead anti-racist, and that's a very different position to be in because for so long, that movement was to try to not be racist.

John Blackshear ([00:31:45](#)):

But when you ask about it to be anti-racist, that's a very active position to take. And the other part of that is if we are acting from an anti-racist perspective, then all of the gradations of the isms get attention, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:32:02](#)):

Right.

John Blackshear ([00:32:02](#)):

So this is not just sort of one pocket that gets addressed because you can't be anti-racist to black people and be racist to Latino people, that just doesn't make sense, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:32:14](#)):

Right.

John Blackshear ([00:32:15](#)):

My approach as I've been thinking about it is number one to really, before I go and try to tell somebody how to do what I need to do the work. And then I'm encouraging folks who are saving the commitment, right? Students stay and they want to do this faculty. So they want to do the staff. So they're going to do this. So then how do we encourage each other to actively do the work of sort of deprogramming ourselves and then providing space for activity to engage in anti-racist efforts?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:32:45](#)):

Well, I mean, that's and like always John, you do a great job of setting us up for the kind of the next leap. And Gary actually want to come back to you specifically on this one, just because you were a part of that initial task force under Betsy Holden and I want to kind of get it this question specific to the Next Gen Living and Learning Committee, how are you all defining Just Space or Spatial Justice? I feel like in some ways your committee kind of came to that as a baseline conclusion that, "Hey, these are the recommendations we have to put forward. This is what Mary Pat was going to ultimately" like we said earlier, "pick up the reins to be involved with." So how were you all kind of defining that particular term?

Gary Bennett ([00:33:27](#)):

Yeah. So maybe I'll get us started and pass the mic to my colleagues here to finish because I actually wished that we'd use the language of Just Space in our initial set of deliberations. I think that the notion itself is powerful and it's not one that we confronted directly, but I think philosophically where we landed is certainly aligned with notions of Just Space. And I think fundamentally and it's just a riff a bit on where John was going. I think I've said many times, universities like ours were not prepared for the diversity that we now enjoy.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:33:59](#)):

Right.

Gary Bennett (00:33:59):

And we had systems and structures and practices and selection strategies that have reified the same kinds of inequities that we find in other parts of society. And part of the work of anti-racism is sort of tackling those, but even without using the language of anti-racism, I think the part of what our committee recognized was that students were having differential experiences and in their living and learning environment.

Michael A. Betts, II (00:34:25):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Gary Bennett (00:34:26):

And that we had some students who were more easily able to access community. We had differential levels and of satisfaction. We have differential power in the ability to leverage social networks for all manner of things, social engagement, professional engagements, internships, those kinds of things. And there is some assemblance of that, that is always true. It is always true that individuals and social systems will be able to engage in ways that prize certain sets of qualities, but it's a different thing for an institution to sanction those inequities in the creation and in the architecture of his residential experience.

Michael A. Betts, II (00:35:06):

Right.

Gary Bennett (00:35:06):

And so part of what I think where we landed was the idea that we really want all Duke students to have the chance to maximize their experience here and to develop a Duke identity, to come into community with their peers, to have a chance to find peers that are Dukies and to not allow the constraints of any particular experience that they walk in the door with, or that they find when they're immediately here to overly constrain their ability to navigate those kinds of social systems.

Gary Bennett (00:35:40):

We want Dukies to come here and find a love for the place and find one another and explore a bit. And for that not to be impacted immediately by any particular policies or practices that we might create. In fact, really what we think the goal of the institution should be to work towards building that community and building a joyful, helpful kind of experience, not one that reifies the kind of segmentation that is so pervasive in our society. And just on that last point, one of the things that's really different about this current generation of our Duke undergraduates is that they have lived and come of age in a world in which the ability to curate your own experiences and live in kind of a hypersegmented reality has just been very prevalent.

Gary Bennett (00:36:31):

And I say that with no valence attached to like it is what it is. And in many respects, it leads to... I think it's actually, added to students' ability to navigate the academic portions of their lives in really successful ways, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:36:45](#)):

Right.

Gary Bennett ([00:36:45](#)):

But we don't want it to come here and then imagine your job is to find the people who are just like you, who care about the things that you just you care about, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:36:54](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Gary Bennett ([00:36:54](#)):

The goal of the modern university with all the diversity that we now enjoy should be that you come and you find a place where you feel safe, but that you have the ability to engage with others and learn and explore and continue to develop in ways that enrich you and the people around you. And so I think that spiritually, that's sort of where we landed with our initial set of recommendations. We can talk about the specifics, but I think that's what we wanted to try to achieve with this work.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:37:20](#)):

John, where were you while this process was kind of being shaped and shook out? You mentioned earlier that you were eager to sign on. So where were you while this was happening and how were you helping to mold and shape this definition of Spatial Justice in this space?

John Blackshear ([00:37:36](#)):

I've been in these kinds of fortunate position. I was an Academic Dean and then I became the Senior Associate Dean for Strategic Planning and Arts and Sciences, which then placed me in a position to work more closely with Gary and his office.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:37:51](#)):

Gotcha. Okay.

John Blackshear ([00:37:52](#)):

And it was fascinating because I would go over and the folks over in Gary shop know that if I walked in and I caught him in there, we plan to sit there for about 10 minutes and we actually wound up sitting there for an hour and everybody's gone home and we were both sitting there and we're still going and we're still diving into it. And Gary and others were involved in the work, in the formal group. I consider myself a partner in the work in these exchanges that we were having. Those of us who've been really committed to providing spaces where students from varying backgrounds and then different stand perspectives to come together, right?

John Blackshear ([00:38:35](#)):

And actually be able to sit in those spaces, even though they may be uncomfortable, even though we may be talking about very difficult and complex things. I used to always remind the students that world changers have to sit in the room with people who they do not see eye to eye with to change the world. You just can't do it in a room full of people who were just like you because the world doesn't include

only you, right? So I was drawn to that work and I was fortunate enough that Gary made me a thought partner to the effort and then was able to come on more formally once I became Dean of Student.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:39:10](#)):

Mary Pat, I'm asking the historical context because I feel like understanding where we were coming from helps to understand the group's commitment and definition for the language of Spatial Justice Gary talked about. It wasn't language that you all were using, but you were meaningfully aligned within that space. So as you all are kind of moving forward, how are you using this now new set of words to help to tease out some of these discomforts that we know students are going to have to sit in? How are you helping to define Spatial Justice by the way it's arranged in showing up?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:39:50](#)):

Yeah. Part of the charge for Living & Learning 2.0, right? The group that John is chairing with Linda right now is this idea. And you read it at the beginning of my call. This idea of sort of what's distinctly Duke? How do we take what we need going forward and build something from here that is characteristic of the sort of best of Duke in the sense of who's here? How people are learning?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:40:10](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:40:10](#)):

This idea of sort of all the incredible minds and ambitions that are so collected in our student body at any given point in time, right? Sometimes it helps to have somebody who has not been here to help you out this question of Just Space, right? Because -

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:40:22](#)):

Right.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:40:23](#)):

... there are presets and having gone from one place to another, to another in the past six years or seven years, you get a little sense of sort of which things are movable challenges? Right?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:40:33](#)):

And which things are sort of built. I have a theory that a lot of sort of what we see in sort of student culture left unchecked is kind of carry over from who it goes back to what I was saying back before about who was the undergraduate experience initially built for back in whatever year you want to talk about? And oftentimes when there was a point where last students went to prep school, right? And came in to Duke, they were from families that were college going, from family they had probably maybe had sort of a pretty clear path or professional path after college. And they were carrying some of their sort of secondary experiences and in this rebuilding of college culture that goes on and you can see these different pieces of campus cultures that you can sit down and about 15 other schools and find some of the same elements of sort of like who's who? And how does it work?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:41:20](#)):

And what does housing look like? What do you know? All this stuff, but I think being new, you can sometimes see that as a function of the Housing Lottery System and which group, which gate opens first, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:41:34](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:41:34](#)):

And then who gets to open that gate first? If it'd be the selective living process. If it's how we block juniors and seniors in different spaces. How we think about sort of when first years on East really start understanding what their options are on West? Right? There's a million different ways that you can sequence the process of where you live. And I'm like... Well, I'm off mute. I'll just say that in the hierarchy of sort of how people learn going back to the same idea of how people are being in a space that you feel comfortable in and sort of feeling like, we know that in October, if not sooner, in a first year's experience here at Duke, people start thinking about, "Where am I going to live in my second year?" Right? And who am I going to live with?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:42:13](#)):

Right. Exactly.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:42:15](#)):

Who are My people? [inaudible 00:42:15]. And oftentimes that conversation comes up and starts to kind of entering somebody's kind of thinking process by as early as orientation or sooner, right? And I'll tell you that's a moveable thing, right? So everywhere I've been that has been true with this question of who are my people? Where's my community? It takes time to figure out who? But we could switch that part over to the logistics of how I transfer my AP credits and think about double majoring.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:42:41](#)):

Right.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:42:41](#)):

The logistical navigation of the undergraduate experiences, is it kind of a consuming focus for everybody.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:42:48](#)):

Right.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:42:48](#)):

And then you have to leave room for the human development and then some times the logistics can take over sort of a common currency. That's a long way of saying coming in and say which elements of this like which parts of our Duke process set it up so that we were maybe creating an environment where we were adding actually were creating [inaudible 00:43:04] we were adding anxiety, adding the sense of you have to then get through another hoop or set of hoops and be vetted somehow as sort of enough for your sophomore housing, right? And that I think has stood up before I got here is something we

wanted to address, but I think I came in with some tools and experiences relevant from other places that would help us do that.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:43:25](#)):

If we're going to talk about this space of creating a lot of anxiety in preparation for the sophomore year, I feel like we should step backwards for a second and kind of talk about the old system of selective living groups here at Duke. Can you tell us about that? What were the different attempts that Spatial Justice for students who were unaffiliated with, selective living groups? Can you kind of talk about that for listeners who are either A, new to Duke University or B, are just kind of you got a group of first years who are trying to figure out what's going to be the next step for them? So can you kind of remind us what that looked like?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:43:57](#)):

Yeah. Why don't I start and then Gary and John can sort of help because they've got a better sense of the history I think having lived it? In the mid '90s Duke president Cohen established the all first year campus on East. Then I've talked to alumni that remember when that was the women's campus, this woman who is now the VP at Wake is a Duke grad, Penny Rue, and her summer internship job was designing the first all student orientation as opposed to the women's orientation and the men's orientation, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:44:23](#)):

Right.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:44:23](#)):

So a lot of history back there. In the 2000s and the 2010s, there were attempts to sort of... There's been a selective living group sort of element in the West Campus undergraduate experience. I think since the East West first year [inaudible 00:44:37] experience was designed. The most recent iterations that I have seen or that I know of involve a sort of first wave of housing selection process for selecting limit groups ahead of an independent student finding a house or finding a place to live on West, right?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:44:53](#)):

So the SLGs that walked out of my office last January one night, then the landing of Brian Center was packed with people and all the doors on all the archways in all of West it's felt like, we're open there's music playing. And I realized it was sort of orientation night for all the SLGs to show first year what they had and kind of give people a chance to experience. Rush was starting, recruitment was starting for pre-chorus and SLGs non-Greek works. So then it became very clear and this is also true everywhere I've been that when that process kicks into gear, it is a consuming energy. If you're part of it or if you're not a part of it, but you're a member of the first of class, right? So who is going to be where? How are you going to figure it out?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:45:34](#)):

What we have to do? So that SLG process came first and then the housing process for anybody who was not part of didn't sort of, I guess, match or be accepted or how you want to phrase it, but land in an SLG. The students who did not either didn't try or tried it and were not ultimately brought into one of these SLGs would then find housing. And here's the part where there was a little flaw in the whatever housing

was left on West, right? And that was actually that tells me that there's a lack of design around, how do we make?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:46:05](#)):

And this is what we sort of started with on one of the presets for the Living & Learning group is we need to have it be that everybody's got a space and then you can sort of figure out where you want to maybe substratify yourself or find a community in addition to that. But that's the thing that we really kind of we issued a decision on that rather than ask Living & Learning group to do it because we wanted it to be that everybody has a living spot that they're... First year you're going to have a destination and your second year and it's not quite so up to being selected or not.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:46:35](#)):

John, it sound like you want to go.

John Blackshear ([00:46:37](#)):

And I just wanted this because Mary Pat laid it out that sort of. So the thing that's super exciting about this, right? And again, it's because I live here and I got to be pretty proximate to the students and watching their processes is that if I give you a snapshot of what a first year was like, you'd spin that first semester. Students are transitioning to college and learning how to do college. They have that first round of midterms and then the houses are having events, faculty and residents are having events. We do a lot of these things to sort of develop the identity of the living space of the neighborhood of the community. Get to know folks really kind of integrate through this into the collegiate experience. I just transitioned them in, letting them become expert on how to do college, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:47:24](#)):

Right.

John Blackshear ([00:47:25](#)):

And then they go home for the break and all of a sudden, we're all sitting around with three, four, where we've had 20, 30, 40, 50 people at an event, in the spring we've got five people, six people, three people, no one. And that would last until about spring break or shortly thereafter, once all of this selectivity had, had... Most of the students finished rushing and doing all those things and then really watching the group, because I kind of coalesce back together and try to find that community space again. But the thing that was so...

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [[00:48:04](#)]

John Blackshear ([00:48:03](#)):

Striking for those of us who hadn't lived with students and began living with students was the level of anxiety about where I'm going to live in the spring? I mean, in year two. Who's going to be my friends in year two? So students really saw that just began to operate with this level of anxiety about living space that was so unusual to me, because I didn't appreciate [...] to that level of anxiety was operating within the student body of the first-year students of this sense of, "If I don't get selected, I stand less of a chance to having a fulfilling, joyful Duke experience because I wasn't selected, too." And there was this perceived risk of getting sub optimal housing, not being able to be with people they know.

John Blackshear ([00:48:55](#)):

The fear of not being with the group that they were during the first year, right?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:49:01](#)):

Right.

John Blackshear ([00:49:02](#)):

This is the fear that unless you're connected to an organization, moving that has housing on the West campus, you stand the chance of being incredibly isolated and unable to form community during your second year.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:49:19](#)):

Right. And then I'm assuming that this anxiety, basically that's suboptimal housing, I'm not with my friends in year two, all those other things, that's effectively the end of my Duke career. I'm going two, three and four, I'm not going to probably gain that footing.

John Blackshear ([00:49:37](#)):

Correct. Absolutely. And that level of anxiety was always shocking, and not appreciating how the culture was set up. When I first got here, my mind, I was like, "Of course you could develop more friendships, [inaudible 00:49:51] but that's the understanding on the student's parts about how you had a window for setting your social community. You had a window for doing that, that occurred at the beginning of the spring of your first year.

John Blackshear ([00:50:06](#)):

If you miss out on that window, [inaudible 00:50:09] the opportunities for establishing community and connection are drastically reduced and it was really, really intense to see the level of anxiety for the students.

Gary Bennett ([00:50:22](#)):

Just to amplify this point he's making is, I don't blame our students at all. I don't think he is either. I'm just going to say that, what's striking to me is, that you don't get it to Duke because you leave a lot to chance. We select literally for people who are great at checking the boxes, right? Of doing everything we ask them to do. So uncertainty, chance, happenstance are just not values that we select for it.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:50:55](#)):

Right.

Gary Bennett ([00:50:56](#)):

And in fact, our system was largely set up, as John is saying, to even magnify some of the anxieties that come along with that level of uncertainty. And so students were doing what students know how to do, and they're trying to bring certainty to an extraordinarily uncertain process. The problem is when you start to believe that systems that were created and kind of cobbled together over time that are reinforcing values that are not really consistent with what we're espousing as an institution. When you start to believe that there's some function or intentionality behind the way that that system is

architected. Again, with no valence attached, but as Duke has become an institution that increasingly is occupied by students for whom these are really important traits, like making sure that I have a clear sense of what's going to happen next year.

Gary Bennett ([00:51:50](#)):

And I make sure I'm going to have the best opportunity to maximize my social inclusion and have the best opportunity to ensure that I'm surrounded by peers that will support me in the ways that I've expected. It just sort of our system hasn't really kept up with the students that we now have. And so now we have a great chance to really make some changes, I think, that will help to ease some of those anxieties for all members of our community.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:52:20](#)):

I think this is a brilliant opportunity to move forward. I am going to be honest with you, I think that one of the overwhelming general dispositions as an outsider looking in, is trying to understand how you all are going to overcome certain immovable pieces. And in Mary Pat, you talked about being able to decipher what is movable and what is immovable and I would imagine that you're in the process of creating a model of institutional anti-racist practice that can feel antithetical to the architecture, the literal space that the model utilizes. Thinking specifically of Duke's reputation as the plantation and buildings that are named for people like Braxton Craven, or the lack of a legally impactful agreement, or land acknowledgement for the indigenous peoples of Durham. How are you navigating this present legacy and physical space to create safe havens for marginalized students and teachable moments for others?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:53:15](#)):

Yeah, this is such a good question. I'll say that there's a lot that we have to go for in this direction, right? One of the things that the committee has been doing and sometimes as we talk about it, we're probably better right now at offering diagnostics on what is sort of flawed about what we have for our system, and start naming the things that need to get fixed. And we are sort of saying, and this is where we're headed and you're touching on this other piece, which I think just goes to the... As I've mentioned the human and residential education side of its first, which is how do we think about who you encounter? If I'm an incoming class of 2025 student and I'm coming into East campus, or I'm a rising sophomore class 24, second-year student, I'm coming into West next year, who are the humans that define the space in addition to whose space is this, right?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:54:08](#)):

Because I think the people that you meet and the guides that you get and the frame and the language and the common vocabulary and vernacular that we used to talk about our spaces are a big part of this question, right? Because wanted and we also know, and I've been working with the Black Student Alliance on this. I've been working with our student government leadership on this. And certainly the orientation team, Gary and John are all connected. All three of us are connected to Jordan Hale and his team on these pieces and facts, which is how do we set the tone to sort of understanding and I'll go back to those same before, which is an orientation program often looks the same place to place and what people cover and how you sort of go through, but this is what you're supposed to do.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:54:47](#)):

We really want to think about from the very beginning of somebody's encounter with our campus, that we are talking about living in the community where people bring all kinds of personal, social economic, racial, national or gender identity back, you name the piece of somebody's identity, ability that we are sort of starting at the very beginning in a conversation that understands that people are bringing all kinds of elements of themselves and the pieces into the space, not just say, we'll put everybody in this residence hall and wish them luck. Right? And I think there's been a real shift in higher ed or this is why I love my work, right? Its where are the opportunities to equip our amazing students with the ability to see each other, the ability to understand the structures and systems around them and their empowerment to do something about it.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:55:36](#)):

And then whereas the staff and faculty component that sort of works with them on that. And you were just starting to go back to something that I think both Gary and John had touched on, our students are mainly in the spaces and the presuppositions that we often have. When people talk about orientation, I love asking people about their experience with first-year orientation, wherever they went to college. And a lot of the time, if you look at the schedule in most places, the schedule is not that different than the orientation schedule in 1992, right? But the student body is very different in a place like Duke.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:56:05](#)):

And so what does that mean? Sort of what we have to think about. So we are working on that part right now and thinking about we're doing concurrent to their living and learning task force with the 2.0 group, we're doing a significant look at the residential life team, for example, and how do we make sure we have an educational and developmental model that is inclusive, that does think about identities, that thinks about sort of being as actively understanding of the experiences of students and equipping our students, not just to talk in the classroom with one another, but to talk in their residence. Again, back to this idea, it's their homes, right?

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:56:36](#)):

It's everybody's home, campus-based. And then sort of going forward part on West, it's not just about orientation. It's not just, "Hey, welcome. There's the laundry room, there's Page Hall. Good luck." Right? So the next round is bring her a little bit information once she left again. One of the things that's really emerging from living and learning group is understanding that second year, "Okay, I just took a critical race theory. I just took economic class. I'm on poverty. And now I want to talk about that, where's the faculty member of my living space? Where's my community? How do I take those ideas back to my residence hall with me?" So one of the elements of the living and learning group right now is start developing the faculty connection on West and additional proactive involves two spaces and supports to keep those conversations going outside the classroom and to have, where students wanted faculty involvement and mentorship.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:57:28](#)):

So it goes to your question, Michael, around sort of, how do we think about land acknowledgements? How do we think about sort of elements of our space? The architecture of it, but I guess I'm going to say we're starting with the human capital, right? Because we had a lot of design work to do for sure. And we have some framing and understanding of spaces, naming, obviously there's lots of that happening at Duke and there needs to be.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:57:50](#)):

Right.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:57:50](#)):

But we also need the people that Jane sophomore meets in her West campus to be ready to ask those tough questions with her and sort of mentoring that. So that's big part of the residential education team work that we're doing.

Mary Pat McMahon ([00:58:03](#)):

We're moving from sort of coverage and on-call and staffing. We have amazing educators in the residential life team, but we've had a structural emphasis on, "That's East campus, that's West campus, on West, the coverage plan, coverage being sort of pay attention what's happening, transactionally." Where they actually have the RC staff and many others have incredible educator skills, how do we coordinate those and emphasize? And how do I, how does John, how's Gary sort of really facilitate an environment where the educators in our residential community can have a meaningful role to shift our focus away from the logis... We need the logistics, but I think there's been an overemphasis sometimes on the logistics. So going forward, how do we deepen that sort of learning opportunity continuously over at first year and second, third, fourth year?

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:58:52](#)):

I'm really quite moved by that. I like that you are starting at the level of the human capital and are working your way out. And I know that there are a lot of conversations about some of things like building names and stuff like that. I know there's already some short lists that have been in conversation more directly. I'm also curious, if we're going to be bringing these people in, John had made a statement earlier about not just opening the space and having diversity sit in the corner, but making sure that the space felt inviting. It makes me think of the impact of art and themes of the space.

Michael A. Betts, II ([00:59:27](#)):

When I was thinking more specifically about this, I was thinking about people like Ernie Barnes who was a significant artist who lived in Durham during the height of our Harlem Renaissance kind of thing. So, it was about trying to make space with these art pieces, enticing, inviting, I'm also an artist. I can't help, but ask questions that are going to live inside of art in some way shaper form. What are things that you're thinking about that need to be in these rooms? That this room could have previously been defined by X group or club. How do we make this room now more defined by new people who are going to make new definitions for it?

John Blackshear ([01:00:10](#)):

I'd say the first year dorm, Pegram, that was the arts dorm for many, many years. And the thing that was always fascinating about that space was how incredible their community projects work. Things like how they decorated their common space, how they decorated their bench. Now, these students majored all over the place, right? They're major in software, everything, but they just indicated prior to getting kind of this interest in and love for the arts. And so they got to live together and it set a culture for that dorm that was really interesting and unique, right? I think that number one, for me, I was trying not to define too much about how exactly the space should be defined before I have an opportunity to speak to that, and to engage the people who live in it.

John Blackshear ([01:01:04](#)):

But a part of building that community is to really be about each of those classes in the space, doing things that sort of put their stamp on what that community identity is. Right? And one of the most incredible ways of doing that as you have stated is, how do you decorate a space? What pictures you bring in? Pictures I always find really meaningful in a space because they are the things that whoever hung them decided they want to visit on a regular basis for whatever reason and they want to be.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:01:43](#)):

Right.

John Blackshear ([01:01:45](#)):

And I also think that given groups an opportunity to do that, perhaps they will actually engage in a care for the space that's kind of different. So the spaces and just a utility, but more of a reflection of self, so they care for it differently.

John Blackshear ([01:02:01](#)):

The other thing that becomes really important for me in the living space on campus is for across the spectrum of all humanity engaged in it is seen and that goes from the people who clean the space. That goes with RAs and the RCs and the grad and the grad residents, as well as the faculty and other staff engaged in the space, so that students are keenly aware that the entire community makes the space like, Trinity is a beautiful dorm. It's marvelous, but what keeps Trinity a marvelous space is we have about seven or eight housekeeping staffs who are integral to everyone's experience to living it. Right? That they're part of the community, right? That in some way, we really expand engagement in the space to raise that awareness of as Mary Pat put it, the human capital that's involved in creating this enterprise called Duke. Giving our students creative license to design the space and to make the space meaningful and livable for themselves and give it an identity.

John Blackshear ([01:03:21](#)):

One that's not just a creature comfort kind of identity, but one that really speaks to what emerges as important.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:03:30](#)):

Right, exactly.

John Blackshear ([01:03:30](#)):

And what values emerge for this group. But that also will take some educating people on how to do that. They're 18, 19. I mean, they will have had a lot of experience on, if justice is a value for you, how do you create justice in the space that you live in? It's balance and being centered is a value for you. How do you create that in the space that you live? Care for fellow human beings is a value to you, how do you make your space? How do you create a space that emanates those values around you?

Gary Bennett ([01:04:08](#)):

I'm just noting that. I really like where John was going. I just want to connect it with what Mary Pat was saying before. I went to a historically black college, I went to Morehouse College for undergrad and so

we were surrounded by pictures of diverse people. They're certainly is an effect that it has in normalizing one's experience and normalizing representation in ways that I think can be very helpful.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:04:33](#)):

Right.

Gary Bennett ([01:04:34](#)):

The risk you run, I think in many respects is believing that's sufficient, right? And in fact, it's sort of necessary, but not sufficient. I love that you gave the Ernie Barnes reference because I have a couple of paintings from Ernie Barnes in my office.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:04:47](#)):

Exactly.

Gary Bennett ([01:04:47](#)):

People constantly ask who painted that? Who painted that? I'm thinking how like Ernie Barnes is a legend, right? Legend, and how a person who is from this area and how do we not know who this man who had remarkable life, who he is, right? We have a great opportunity at a place like Duke, because we're an educational institution to be able to both do the kind of surface level things and flooding the zone with images and representations from different groups. But also then connecting that with the educational piece that allows students to understand what it is that we're showing them, why it's there, and what it means? I think we've a lot we can do with that space.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:05:30](#)):

You did a really great job of threading the through line back to this human capital conversation. It means nothing for us to have representation visually if it is not connected to an ethic, if it's not connected to a moral imperative or to even the way which students can grapple with what that thing may be. Mary Pat, you talked a lot about the human capital element, much more defined. I would imagine as you're defining what this is going to look like, there's a broader reorganizing of residential education, housing operations, residential housekeeping, and residential facilities that is actually taking place in Housing and Residential Life. And I know that you all have touched on it, but can you talk about specifically how this fits into the reorganization of leadership teams in undergraduate education and student affairs?

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:06:26](#)):

The student affairs team broadly has a ton of new leadership, and we're anticipating a few more new leaders. Major person coming into this conversation will be Shruti Desai, who starts as associate vice president of Campus Life next month, following Zoila Airall, who was the head of Campus Life for many, many years here and the intersection with our centers, our identity and cultural centers, Mary Williams of Black Culture, CMA, Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity, Women's Center, International House, Muslim Life, Jewish Life. We have an amazing group that really thinks, and it goes back to this question that you've asked a few minutes ago, Michael, about sort of havens, right? This question sort of where do we have spaces that are supplemental spaces to the home concept? And then where do we actually sort of also bring this through ongoing through education development awareness of identity and justice questions within our home spaces on campus?

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:07:23](#)):

Like how do we do that? So we're in a big conversation right now about integrating the efforts of the Campus Life teams, including Greek Life, including student leadership development with this residential education team and the wellness shop. So the student affairs division has had high walls between the residential life space, the campus life space, the health and wellness space, Dean of students, and we're really bringing those walls down right now and helping to think about sort of core piece. And this is the proposition that I have is the core of residential life is a significantly more sort of intentionally inclusive space for students. That doesn't mean that we don't have cultural identity development centers, we certainly do and we'll continue to have those and have intersectional partnerships across those groups, but there's this element where it's not over there and then we do that.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:08:10](#)):

Right.

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:08:10](#)):

Here's where sort of majority students are maybe not as thoughtful about everybody around them, right? We really want to re-imagine those combinations going forward. So the residential education partnership to your question will be sort of deeply involved in the identity cultural centers work and with sort of thinking about hall by hall, floor by floor, quad by quad, on West, how do the students who live here sort of develop and define a sort of adjust space, or they go back to the top of the whole point of the podcast, right? The housing operations team, where you live, putting heads in beds, right? That's the core part of the operation. It's got to be done well, and that's the stand of residential life organization, but residential facilities, residential housekeeping, those teams are actually going to be more coordinated with other parts of student affairs that work in partnership with campus facilities.

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:09:06](#)):

We have unions in both the residential and dining shops. We shouldn't have multiple people, multiple organizations that don't necessarily talk to each other. What we're really talking about kind of the student experience space to space in a different way. One of the significant changes on the designs in leadership side is this the person who runs residential facilities, we've had somebody who's just focused on renovation projects, building projects, HVAC renewals. Gilbert Adams getting an upgrade.

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:09:39](#)):

That position has been in just residential life. We're moving that, so it's that whereas we think about flowers, Broadhead, Penn pavilion, different spaces that are in student affair, but not in a residential shop and the person who thinks about building and renovation and ongoing projects to keep our facility thoughtful. That positions moving out of residential life into a broader remit across dining and campus life spaces, so that's going to be an interesting... We're going to have some developmental folks in the residential education shop and hopefully a little bit more coordination within our teams and student affairs, both within our shop and then with other partners of the university. Because there's a lot of logistics behind, just the utilities, right, heating and lighting.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:10:24](#)):

Right, exactly.

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:10:25](#)):

The square footage of the residential footprint in Duke, that's a massive operational job, but then renovating it and little bit to your art question, I'm sorry to go on about this, but one of the big things, one of the first things I want to do is really think about sort of... And John gave for balance lighting, right?

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:10:42](#)):

So how we light spaces? How we invite people with lighting? The efficiency of our lighting, the sustainability of our footprint, but also just spaces, sort of we have these gothic, residential space. Some of them are been around for a while. How do we think about the spaces having some light and welcome and the environment that fosters that connection and study? Because visionally, we're in a moment of tremendous change, but the idea is that we'll have a collaborative team that works to foster this ongoing four year learning cycle that supports our students in their number one full-time pursuit, which is being students here at Duke.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:11:28](#)):

Before Gary or John jumps in, I do want to acknowledge that as an Afro-Indigenous man, myself, I appreciate lighting because it gives me the opportunity to be perceived as less threatening. I don't feel like I'm lurking in a corner when people can see me clearly and I'm able to deal with my own safety relative to other people's expectations of who I am. So, that's something that stays on my mind.

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:11:54](#)):

Yeah.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:11:54](#)):

John, Gary, did you want to elaborate or expand on... There's a lot of moving parts to this, and so I'm very eager to hear your perspectives.

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:12:04]

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:12:03](#)):

And so I'm very eager to hear your perspectives.

John Blackshear ([01:12:04](#)):

Since joining student affairs in August, the amount of optimizing teams, meaning, thinking about, how do we synchronize teams in order to get more heft from the brain trust that is there? How do you centralize vision? And Mary Pat has been just amazing for me coming in, working on her and giving me her vision. And then I've taken that and sort of translated that across the team. And so when you asked a question about how have teams sort of shifted... One of the things that we've just done has been to really begin, and this is not an event, right? It's a process, but how do you optimize your team in a way that it's correctly organized?

John Blackshear ([01:12:57](#)):

And then they have that uniformity of vision. Everyone has that same perspective of overarching the goal of what we're trying to deliver to our students here, right? You want a transformational, academic

and living experience, and your time to this place should allow you to come and exit with incredible growth and leave this place different, more whole than you arrived. And so it's been really wonderful to work with folks that I've known for a really long time, work with people that I'm just getting to know, but that uniformity of vision all guided by these high order values. And, and it's nice, it's wonderful to be able to have this kind of conversation, right?

John Blackshear ([01:13:49](#)):

And with leadership and understand that this level of leadership is in sync, and even the levels above this level are in sync. This is a very unique time at Duke and I hope that your listeners can appreciate that. Though it can seem like the boat is slow to turn because it's so big in the ocean and the ocean is so vast and it's hard to see, but that it is not lost on any of us, that we are all here together at a very unique time and space. And that we have incredible challenges ahead, but we also have a team that I think are prepared by experiences prior to coming together to meet those challenges.

Gary Bennett ([01:14:41](#)):

I'll just that John's so right about this. And, I spend these days, not a small amount of time talking to other faculty who have interests in going into academic administration. And it's not an obvious path for most of us who choose to be faculty members. And one of the questions they often ask is, can you use your voice? Do you have to sacrifice your voice when you become an administrator and just one riffing a bit on John's point about the current moment at Duke. And, what's amazing to me is that, of course you do to some degree, right? Like you [[crosstalk 01:15:21](#)] represents an institution and it wouldn't be responsible to say all the crazy things I said as a faculty member. But for the most part, I think you'll hear that from us today. We are who we are. We are the people we were before we stepped into these roles.

Gary Bennett ([01:15:37](#)):

And it's remarkable, as a person who's been here for a long time and who never imagined seeing people who look like we do in these roles. It's a wonderful moment to be able to, to leverage our collective backgrounds in a really authentic way in this work. The other thing... And so I say that not to pat ourselves on the back, but to actually give people both who aspire to this kind of work, but also people who are looking at us wondering whether they should be critical of us. We're bringing ourselves into this work. In some respects, these roles, and this work is too challenging. I think I can't imagine how you don't show up bringing your full self into this this kind of work. But we are allowed to do that today in a way that I think has not always been the case.

Gary Bennett ([01:16:28](#)):

And one of my foremost observations in this job has been that there is a tendency in academic organizations for academic organizations and academic communities to look at the people, look at the principals, look at the individuals who are sitting in the seats, usually at the highest levels and to really attend to them. Whereas, in most other organizations in the American economy, we put a priority on the teams. We notice the teams, we think about the teams. We talk about the importance of building teams. And academic organizations we miss the fact that there are hundreds and hundreds of people who care deeply about the mission of this place, who are engaged in the work and who are responsible for carrying the work forward, right?

Gary Bennett ([01:17:15](#)):

Like all we're doing is casting a vision and trying to build the teams that will do the hard work to make these kinds of changes possible. So I just want to amplify the point that both Mary Pat and John made and with the focus on team, it is absolutely critical to getting this work done. And I hope that in the years to come, our students and our community members will begin to recognize the really critical efforts that literally many hundreds of people play every day to making this place just a little bit better.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:17:45](#)):

I really appreciate this idea of the formation of the team, as the answer. There's the... Finished a podcast series, not too long ago with Dr. Cisco Ramos, who's one of the deans over at the graduate school. And he, in the end had made the statement and it's very much hard getting back to the old African proverb. If you want to go there fast, go alone. If you want to go there meaningfully, and with, all of the impetus and hospice that you're supposed to, to make significant change go together. So, I very much get that vibrance from you all, as we're navigating that there's this conversation of hiring of, of different persons in different spaces.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:18:32](#)):

And if I'm not wrong, there's an executive director of facility operations that you all are currently looking at bringing in. How do we ensure that this person, inside of the conversations that we've just talked about with reorganization of the leadership structures, how do we ensure that this person isn't just seen as a senior handy person? How do we do that intentional touch to ensure that this person is empowered to also be one of the people in that village that you're setting up meaningfully, for the students?

Mary Pat McMahan ([01:19:01](#)):

Hiring processes that we've been running with anything related to a leadership position that involves student life has involved students, right? So we're going to have students be a part of that process just as with the Dean of students search, with Shruthi's recent hire, we've got Mary Lou Williams center director search coming up next. [inaudible 01:19:22] having students be meaningfully involved in those processes really, really, really important. And then our leadership team that walls lower, bringing people into one other working conversations.

Mary Pat McMahan ([01:19:34](#)):

That's also what we've been doing on the cadence of how we meet as teams, how we connect with one another, how we apprise each other over our work. And that's been a fun thing to see unfold in the time that I've been here, as far as what's happening in residential housekeeping and how to [inaudible 00:07:051] keep everybody else apprised of what they're working on with their teams what's happening. And how do we think about the intersection between our departments and the strategic work.

Mary Pat McMahan ([01:20:02](#)):

So, that's going to be a big part of that. I think I know that systems that expand past any individual are very helpful and that we have our core values in student affairs. We've got five meaningful inclusion moving towards equity, right? Continuous growth and professional development. Strategic communications, it's not really value, but we've tried to think about how we communicate a lot more because so much of what we do is under understood by others, right? Professionalism and mutual respect right? Something about, sort of when we're on our jobs, how do we bring each other... You bring your whole person, as Gary said, and supporting that for one another health and wellness, right?

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:20:37](#)):

So, because we've got student health, CAPS, all those different pieces. So we try to make sure that those five elements of our work are lifted up that we consistently touch on them. So we'll be doing that with all of our new hires and our growth within our own teams. That part's been... There's so many talented people here I'm [inaudible 01:20:55] that there's so many people that are coming in everyday to make things happen at this university and support the vision that we're laying out and then iterating on it, working with us on it, meeting our students where they are, that part's been really fun.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:21:09](#)):

That's wonderful. That's wonderful. So just to kind of change gears just a little bit, we've focused a lot on identity and social elements in that way, but, I think that we have... Duke University has been graced to be able to have differently abled people in its spaces all the time. Mary Pat, you started talking about lighting as an example. I was thinking, okay, lighting for folks who may be legally blind is going to be something that is definitely a big motivator to want to show up at this university. What are ways that the next gen living and learning communities are making themselves more accessible for differently abled people.

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:21:49](#)):

That's got to be a piece of how we think about space. The committee is going to give us the recommendations around, where space renovation might be. Are we going to add anything? One, when I immediately start thinking about accessibility and spaces, I start thinking about hallways widths, counter heights, there's coding elements to create spaces to be more sort of accessible. But then there's also the sort of who's at the table, right? We've worked this year with the Disability Alliance student group and we are in the midst, pandemic paused us, but we have a dedicated space for the Duke Disability Alliance students in the Bryan center. That was something they'd been seeking for a while and we're making it happen, which is good. Our spaces are all on pause because of the pandemic.

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:22:33](#)):

[crosstalk 01:22:33] It's how do we make sure that we're not thinking later about these elements of... In that same question of who's here, who's experiencing the place? Lighting's a part of it, translation services is a part of it, captioning, how do we think about our poster designs as we think about? We had a really fascinating conversation with the living, learning big committee, the full committee in January, I think around signage.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:22:57](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:22:57](#)):

Right? And how much of Duke residential spaces, you have to know what they are, and the benches might tell you, but they may not. And so there's a lot of access... I can keep going on sort of ways that we think about this, you've got to be a part, and we don't want to just leave that with the living learning committee. Because I think that's a broader sort of... Needs to be at the front page for Duke all the time.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:23:20](#)):

John, did you want to jump in?

John Blackshear ([01:23:21](#)):

Yeah, one group that can easily, especially when we think about the living and learning space and disability or [inaudible 01:23:31] on neuro atypical students, individuals who will socialize differently, individuals who respond in different ways to different types of stimuli, whether it's that lighting you mentioned or noise levels or how for some neuro atypical students, they're not going to comfortable walking into a room full of people where they'll feel may be perhaps more comfortable in spaces in which they're invited or smaller spaces.

John Blackshear ([01:23:58](#)):

And are we attending to them in those spaces because if students are quiet are we actively scanning to be meaningfully interconnected? We do have folks in student affairs who are... There's an actual neuro atypical task force they're [inaudible 01:24:16] that's not proper name but they have been working for the last several years to bring greater awareness to this growing body of our students. And, I think they've had a meaningful impact on how we think about events even like LDOC or how we think about. Because we want those students to be able to have experiences, but we need to remove barriers from them not being able to enjoy all of the things we have to offer.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:24:48](#)):

And that makes perfect sense. That makes perfect sense. You want them to be able to have the best Duke experience that they can have. And that means there's a lot of work on this side of things to be able to, like you said, remove those barriers and to be in deep conversation and communication with folks as they're progressing through their Duke experience. So, I've got two more questions and then I'm going to let you all go. I think the pandemic has been kind of a big crush for a lot of folks. It has pushed in major ways, even throughout this conversation, we've bumped up against things that aren't able to happen because of the pandemic's existence. And I know a lot of folks are thinking about the return, there's this hope that we can return to quote unquote whatever normal is.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:25:39](#)):

And I know that Duke is on the precipice of trying to be able to be one of the, if you will, change makers with relation to that while still being responsive to, best practice. So given COVID-19 in Durham's lack of affordable community housing, how are you all helping to navigate those who are able to live on campus? How are you considering COVID disproportional impact on Brown and Black communities, especially since the decisions for students to live on campus designates who effectively lives in Durham. Gary, I'm going to throw that one to you first...

Gary Bennett ([01:26:22](#)):

One of the things that I think certainly Mary Pa has spearheaded a lot of the work in this effort, but, I'd say this is something that we talked about or thought about nearly consistently since the start of this. I mean, certainly since the moment that the administration made the decision to shift to remote course delivery. And it's one of the reasons that, one of the first considerations that Mary Pat's team and the university in general decided to put in place really, was a system that allowed students who could not return home for a wide variety of reasons, that to ensure that they could stay.

Gary Bennett ([01:27:01](#)):

And indeed they've stayed. I mean, one of the most remarkable things for me about the pandemic is the perception that people have left and gone home. And in fact, that there have been students here for not the same students, but the students who've been here for the duration and again, I say this not as a... I fear sometimes when we talk about these kinds of things that, I think about myself as an 18 year old, who was critical, or at least mildly suspicious of the administration. And I've listened to people say things like what I'm about to say. And I would roll my eyes and think that people like me were patting themselves on the back.

Gary Bennett ([01:27:41](#)):

It's not that, I'm an alumnus of the place and I've been here for a long, long time. And I'm really proud that in the midst of a pandemic, one of the first principles was that we tried, as best as we could, in the midst of a pandemic to take care of our community. And I think that stands really in stark contrast to what we saw at other institutions. We have, checking our privilege moment, we have had the resources to be able to do more and we've done a little more. And I think that's been good. And I've been really, really proud of the way that the team and that the community has rallied around our students who are most economically disadvantaged to try to help where we can.

Gary Bennett ([01:28:22](#)):

We have not gotten this right all the time, but I would say that I do think that we've tried to be as open as possible to fixing the mistakes that we've made. That gives me a lot of pride. I'd say right now, as we're staring down the vaccine dissemination, I think there's a new charge for us as a university community, to ensure that we're doing all we can, to provide both for members of this community, of the Duke community, but also to make sure that we're providing for the broader Durham community to the best of our ability. And I also feel quite confident that today we're meeting that charge as well.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:29:01](#)):

Mary Pat, did you want to jump in? I saw that you came off mute right there.

Mary Pat McMahan ([01:29:05](#)):

One of the things that's been different about this year in the pandemic, has been the number of our students that are living and renting apartments or renting homes in Durham, right? That's a significantly higher number than a typical year. Next year, it's going to be somewhere between the typical year and this year, right? We have to figure out exactly how we're going to do our de-densification strategy again. And one of the most impactful conversations for me this year has been with the Durham Neighbors United Group and working with Stephanie Williams and the Durham Community Affairs team, and thinking about the engagement points and also working, John I'm working with the black coalition against policing and thinking about the Durham and Duke relationship, those student leaders who are bringing that conversation into the forefront with the other part of our pandemic or our double pandemic, and sort of thinking about racial justice in terms.

Mary Pat McMahan ([01:29:57](#)):

So there's so many ways that I could go with this piece, Michael, but it's important to me that, as we continue post pandemic and the after times when they come. That some of the humility and the thoughtfulness that we bring, we always need to bring more right, into the relationship, both with our students and with the administration, but also with Duke and Durham, that there are so many lessons that people are taking in profound fashion. And a lot of people know a lot before this, but the collective

moment that we're in, gives us opportunity to really understand place, space, all the work of this podcast thing, all the thematics here. And there's work to do for sure.

Mary Pat McMahon ([01:30:39](#)):

I don't want our undergraduate experience to be one that where you touch into Durham and you touch out and you have a consumer mentality or I don't know, transactional again, mentality with our home community. And that's going to keep going. I do think the broader Duke awareness around racial justice issues with Black and Brown community has to be part of what we fold and continue, and not flash in the pan, but our continuous commitment institutionally. [inaudible 01:31:12] One of my big jobs being here is to think about how students bring that, all students bring that awareness of our whole community into all their experiences in Durham and the broader area. So that's got to be part of how we emphasize both the living learning taskforce, but again, so much more than that.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:31:28](#)):

Exactly, exactly. John, did you want to, expand?

John Blackshear ([01:31:34](#)):

What you mentioned is a nationally a systemic problem [crosstalk 01:31:39] with how COVID has disproportionately affected Black and Brown communities. And none of that is lost on us. And at the same time it's been pretty remarkable watching teams of our best and our brightest come together to think about COVID and its impact from so many different perspectives. And just to make sure that we have... With our access being responsive to the needs in Durham, that we are being responsive to our student's needs and being responsive to staff and faculty, and a part of being responsive to Durham's need is also being, how to [inaudible 01:32:21] students, but it has been remarkable to be a part of such a vast array of minds that have come together to think about how to take care of this community during this prolonged pandemic.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:32:43](#)):

Thank you so much, joining us for this episode of Space of Justice. If you like what you heard today, be sure to stop by sites.duke.edu/justspace for the recordings of this past year's Just Space Week. Duke University's conference centered entirely on the conversation of Spatial Justice.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:33:04](#)):

This year, Just Space Week is focused on anti-racism, equity and connecting Duke to Durham in meaningful and just collaborations. Head over to sites.duke.edu/justspace/conference to check out the recordings today. A special thanks to vice-provost McMahon, vice-provost Bennet and associate vice-provost Blackshear for taking time to talk us through the ways in which Duke is trying to develop a much more connected living and learning environment for it's students through this next gen living learning initiative. If you would like to find out more about this work, that Duke is undertaking, and how it will impact you, check out nextgen.duke.edu.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:33:44](#)):

For more information today's episode was logistically possible because of the brilliance of Elmer Oriana, Paige Vincent and Lindsey Miller Furiness. Our web presence is possible only because Tara McCurdy makes it so. Francesco Santos and Matt Stark are the genius minds behind our assessments and

analytics. To the fearless podcast team of editors and collaborators that consist of Semiah Faison, Ling Gin, Esra Uzon Mason and Brian Lachman, as well as the Just Space conference chair who is pulling double duty, Kevin Erickson, thanks. Also, a special thanks to Marcy Edenfield's group for making sure our equipment specs are just right.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:34:25](#)):

Just Space conference marketing is handled by the luminous Sarah Nev and Sam Bab's keen eye keeps us all looking perfect and synchronized. Catherine Lester Bacon and Victoria Krebs ensure our online learning design is tight. As always Jeff Nelson and Jenna McCullers are the tireless captain and first mate of the Just Space Committee. Tasha Curry Corcoran is kind enough to ensure that the office of student affairs at Duke University keeps us the Just Space team going one more turn around the sun.

Michael A. Betts, II ([01:34:58](#)):

Our theme song Yureba is by Le sana Tibete. Engineering and mix of today's episode, like always is by yours truly. Be sure to check back every Tuesday for the next episode. As always a special non-sponsored shout out to Zencast for making it possible for our team to do remote recording sessions safely, while in the middle of an international health crisis. Please remember to continue to wear a mask and always wash your hands. And although the vaccines are here. Remember, we're not quite at the finish line. Also, be sure to get your questions answered so when it's your turn to get the shot, you can. It's been a pleasure to spend some time with you today. Can't wait to see you next week. And as always I'm Michael Betts II, and this has been Space Of Justice.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:35:59]