

A message from the participants in *Mutual Aid*:

Muhlenberg College has a history of theatrical productions that center whiteness on stage and we refuse to perpetuate that history.

We gathered at the beginning of last week to start generating an ensemble performance about the concept and practice of mutual aid. Mutual aid coalitions work to meet each other's needs when the systems that are supposed to meet those needs are failing or hurting the individuals within them.

After a series of generative conversations about the politics of theatre-making, the racial politics of Muhlenberg, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we have decided to shift our project from being a collectively devised performance about the history of mutual aid towards being a decentralized collective process of engaging in mutual aid. We are no longer the cast of a production but a collective enacting an open process together, alongside any members of the Muhlenberg community who wish to join us.

Rather than presenting a series of performances as originally planned, we will do the following:

- Hold seven meetings over the course of the semester that will be **open to anyone** in the Muhlenberg community to join and co-learn about mutual aid projects and creatively plan a series of mutual aid initiatives together. Anyone is welcome, regardless of their commitment to productions (ie. the “two rule” does not apply).
- The schedule for these open assemblies will be every other Wednesday, from 7 pm until 9 pm, starting on Wednesday, January 26th (with subsequent assemblies on February 9th, February 23rd, March 9th, March 23rd, April 6th, and April 20th).
- We will use the remaining budget allocated to the project to materially support these mutual aid initiatives.

We arrived at this change of course for the following reasons: the group of people who gathered to work on this project are white. We refuse to be another all white company perpetuating the history of all white theatrical productions on Muhlenberg campus, particularly within a piece centering intersectional, radical collective practices. In addition, as we started to engage with the concept and practice of mutual aid, theatrical performance didn't feel like enough. It is not a time for an ensemble of white performers to make art about addressing systemic issues such as racial injustice or broken health care systems, it is a time for an expansive and inclusive community to use our creativity to try to directly address the issues within these systems. And most importantly, to do

this work in rooms that are not filled solely with white theatre makers and in which everyone is not only invited to the table but is supported and uplifted.

Please join us.

In solidarity,

The Mutual Aid Project at Muhlenberg