

Racial Justice Teach-ins for the Town of Arlington

I. Overview

In effort to forward the racial equity work of the Town, Powerful Pathways proposes to hold “teach-ins” workshop style discussions on racial justice topics. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the session will be held virtually.

II. Objectives:

- To help participants develop shared understanding of key terms
- To help participants consider methods in which they can support racial justice in their own lives and work.
- Through a facilitated peer learning process, participants develop best practices for positive collection action to support racial justice on an ongoing basis in the Town.

Each teaching is a different module of 120 minutes (2 hours). Depending on the time constraints, each module should take place within reasonable time after another to ensure continuity of participants and content retention. For example, for a 4-month long process, each module session should occur within at most 2 weeks of another. For a 6-month process, each module can occur once a month, with “homework assignments” in between sessions to maintain engagement and preparedness of the participants.

III. Descriptions

Training 1. Understanding Foundational Terminology

This module will focus on raising and developing shared definitions of terms that will permeate throughout the entire life cycle of the training program. These include but are not limited to: “equity”, “diversity”, “inclusion”, “popular education”, “The Four I’s” as well as common terminology used in transportation planning.

Participants will then discuss the difference between outreach, public participation and community engagement, and why inclusive planning is vital in this process. This will lay the foundation for the following modules.

Interactive workshop sample activities: Model City & Vocabulary Jeopardy!

Training 2: Identity and Cultural Efficacy

Research beyond general demographics

- History – knowing the story
A short introduction to understanding the history and nuances about the community
- Developing your cultural competency

A brief exercise on cultural efficacy ('Cultural Competency is Not Real')

- Traditional & Non-traditional assets

An exercise in identifying traditional and non-traditional assets in a community

Interactive workshop activity: Communicating Across Difference

Training 3: Different People Engage Differently; Tools for Diverse Participation

- The Iceberg: Challenging Perceptions - An exercise in understanding the identity
- Accessibility
An overview of basic ADA standards, as well as universal adaptive practices (heights and widths, visual aids, Multi-option Visuals for wayfinding, etc)

Interactive activity: Mattering vs Marginalizing

Training 4: Local Action; Global Change

This module explores the importance of having Courageous Conversations, and how one can have those conversations. Revisiting the 4 I's of Equity, we will discuss how systems influence us and cultural conditioning make it hard for us to have difficult conversations.

Participants will then break into small groups and practice in a safely structured setting.

Interactive workshop activities: My Uncle Jim, and Other Tough Conversations

Training 5: More than a Non-Racist: How to be an Anti-Racist

The final session puts the participants as the lead. We begin with thought-share with one another via an Open Space Technology. Participants will then talk with one another, with a facilitator present, in a world café style reflection exercise – a series of discussions about the training experience, lessons learned and changed behaviors.

The last component is an evaluation process exercise.

Interactive workshop activity: Program Evaluation

IV. Consultant Qualifications and Credentials

About Powerful Pathways:

Powerful Pathways (www.powerfulpathways.org) is a public interest consultancy and social practice works in planning, policy and creative placemaking using creative tools and design thinking methods within a social equity framework.

We work with public agencies, social impact businesses, and non-profits to advance innovative solutions that drive economic, environmental and social change.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Culturally Competent Diverse & Inclusive Community Planning
- Creative Public Engagement and User Experience Strategy
- Designing strategic events in the areas of public policy & placemaking
- Equity Implementation and Training
- Research and;
- Project Technical Assistance

Additional areas of work: civic design, policy writing, business development planning, coaching, organizational development and strategic planning, facilitation, fundraising support and graphic design.

Team Bios:

Allentza Michel is the Founder of Powerful Pathways. She is an urban planner, artist and intercultural facilitator with a background in community organizing and organizational development. Allentza has brings 17 years of diverse experience in the public and non-profit sectors at the local, national and international levels in:

- Transportation Policy
- Community Development;
- Education;
- Economic & Workforce Development;
- Organizational Development and;
- Food Security

Ms. Michel has served in various roles in transportation policy and planning. She also has several years of experience in designing and leading training and speaking on cultural competency, inclusion, equity and community engagement. Previously she served on the Equity Committee for the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, supported establishing priorities for the Boston Alliance on Racial Equity and is a trainer for the Action for Regional Equity Network. Allentza received a Master's in Public Policy from Tufts University's Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning with a concentration in transportation and community development. She also holds a graduate certificate in Non-profit Management from Boston University's Questrom School of Management and B.As in English and a Social and Political Systems from Pine Manor College. Ms Michel speaks Haitian Creole (fluent), Spanish (working proficiency) and French (intermediate) and Japanese (conversational).

Ruby Reyes is a community advocate and non-profit professional with a range of advisory, administrative and organizational development experience. She spent ten years with The City

School, a social justice youth education non-profit, first as a Development Associate and eventually graduating as Co-Executive Director. There she developed innovative shared leadership models that institutionalized that included equitable stakeholder voice in all parts of the organization from the board to staff to fund development. Prior to that she worked as a college and career counselor focusing on at-risk and immigrant students. She has a B.A. in Communications with a concentration in Journalism and Literature from Emerson College and is fluent in Spanish.