REAL Talk: Advancing Racial Equity in Your City
Rising Tensions
The Need for Greater Equity

“Prejudice is a burden that confuses the past, threatens the future, and renders the present inaccessible.”

—Maya Angelou
REAL Goal

To strengthen local leaders’ knowledge and capacity to eliminate racial disparities, heal racial divisions and build more equitable communities
REAL Today

Training and Capacity Building

Technical Assistance

Network Building

Building Special Populations Work
Racial Disparities

From infant mortality to life expectancy, race predicts how well one will do.
Racial Disparities

6 in 10 of U.S. prisoners are Black/Latino (yet only comprise 30% of the U.S. population)

65% Black or Latino men graduate from High School (80% of White males will)

Black and Native American unemployment is 2x that of Whites

57% of Blacks and Latinos spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs
What Does Racial Equity Require?

• “Closing the gaps” so that race does not predict one’s success, while also improving outcomes for all.

• Targeted strategies to focus on improvements for those worse off.

• Move beyond “services” and focus on root causes by changing policies, institutions, and systems.
Effective National Practices

NORMALIZE
- A shared analysis & definitions
- Urgency / prioritize

OPERATIONALIZE
- Racial Equity tools
- Data to develop strategies & drive results

ORGANIZE
- Internal infrastructure
- Partnerships

NLC Race, Equity And Leadership - http://NLC.org/REAL
REAL Theory of Change

Change happens when people recognize:

1. Why the change is needed
2. Potential of proposed solutions
3. Shared urgency
Why is Change Needed?
• Create a shared analysis and language about racism and equity

• Foster the urgency of equity to prioritize it in governance

**Normalizing Racial Equity**
Equality = **Sameness**

Equality provides the same thing for everyone. This only works when people start from the same place, history and set of circumstances.

Equity = **Justice**

Equity is about fairness, and providing people with the resources and opportunities they need, given their history and set of circumstances.
What is Bias?

- The evaluation and association of one group and its members relative to another.
- Inescapable reality of humanity
- We do have choice over how much we let bias influence our actions.
- Acting on bias can be discriminatory and create negative outcomes for particular groups.

**Explicit**
- Expressed directly
- Aware of bias / operates consciously
  - Example: Sign in the window of an apartment building noting “Mexicans need not apply”

**Implicit**
- Expressed indirectly
- Unaware of bias / operates sub-consciously
  - Example: A property manager doing criminal background checks on black applicants and not white applicants.
The Unconscious Mind

- Schemas: the “frames” through which our brains help us understand and navigate the world
- They are shaped by our environment and largely reside in the sub-conscious.

1) Sort into categories
2) Create associations
3) Fill in the gaps
Count how many passes the white team makes
What Color are the Lines of Text?

- Cvur zxyq brrm
- Xoc jbni oew mne
- Vqeb peow ytro
- Vqeb peow ytro
• Black
• Red
• Blue
• Green
• Green
• Black
• Yellow
• Blue
Bias in Institutions = Inequitable Outcomes

a. Institutional / Explicit
   - Policies which explicitly discriminate against a group.
   
   **Example:**
   U.S. Court Rules Dreadlock Ban During Hiring Process Is Legal

b. Institutional / Implicit
   - Policies that negatively impact one group unintentionally.
   
   **Example:**
   Police department using “stop and frisk” style racial profiling.

c. Individual / Explicit
   - Prejudice in action – discrimination.
   
   **Example:**
   A restaurant owner threatens to call ICE on Spanish speaking customers

d. Individual / Implicit
   - Unconscious attitudes and beliefs.
   
   **Example:**
   Employer not calling back applicant with “black” sounding name.
What to Do with Bias?

Suppressing or denying biased thoughts can actually increase prejudice rather than eradicate it.

Be Accountable: Take the time to examine your actions or beliefs.

Take Action: Increase contact with people outside of your own demographics, experiences, and thought groups.
Levels of Racism

**Individual racism**
Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race.

**Institutional racism**
Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

**Structural racism**
A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.
The House We Live In

Blockbusting

Racial Covenants

Redlining

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Redlining of Arlington: 1938

Foreign infiltration will come in the next five years from the adjoining third grade area.
• Racial equity tools

• Data to help identify strategies that will yield different results to reduce racial inequities

Operationalizing is Action
Intent vs. Impact

• Fairness and Justice
• What does it mean to look at impact rather than intent in policy?
What is the **Process for Racial Equity**?

- Desired Results
- Analysis of Data
- Strategies for Racial Equity
- Implemental Plan
- Community Engagement
- Communications and Accountability
Decision Making with a Racial Equity Tool

- STREETLIGHTS / COMPLAINT-BASED SYSTEMS
- BAN THE BOX POLICIES
- CONTRACTING POLICIES + PROCEDURES
- INCREASES TO THE MINIMUM WAGE
- POLICING + CRIMINAL JUSTICE + BAIL
- INFRASTRUCTURE + TRANSPORTATION

- RE-ENTRY + EMPLOYMENT
- SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY POLICIES
- LOCAL FINES + FEES
- ZONING + PERMITTING
- PUBLIC + RECREATIONAL SPACES
- WHAT ELSE?

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Organizing for Racial Equity

• Developing capacity for racial equity across all departments
• Resourcing the work through partnership, training, intentional structure & process
6 steps:

- Set an Example
- LISTEN
- Make a Public Declaration
- Dedicated Infrastructure → Action
- Commit to Change Systems & Policy
- Create a Racial Equity Plan

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Highlighting Efforts of Local Leaders
Good Governance and Racial Equity

- Strategy to help you meet key city goals
- Prosperity
- Health
- Safety
- Accountable government
Improving outcomes for all: The economic benefits of equity
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA Metro Area

In 2015, the economy would have been $45.78 billion larger if there had been no racial gaps in income.

https://nationalequityatlas.org/data-summaries/Boston-Cambridge-Quincy,_MA_Metro_Area/
I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change.
I am changing the things I cannot accept.

-Angela Y. Davis
• Please check out additional REAL resources for your community at:
  www.nlc.org/REAL

• Or reach out to directly to me:

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