



# Equity, Inclusion and Racial Justice Newsletter

Spring 2022

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## Message from Our Executive Director

Spring has come to our small part of the world. As the sun sets later into the evening, we may find ourselves outside more, observing what is happening in our world. We see the flowers blooming and the grass growing. A few weeks ago, we noticed the blossoms on the cherry trees. In the early morning, birds outside our windows are letting us know the sun is up hours before my alarm is set to go off. The changing of the seasons presents us with a chance to take a fresh perspective on our world. Sometimes we'll recognize things as old and familiar and other times we may see something for the first time.

For me, working to create a more equitable and inclusive community and confronting racial justice issues has parallels to spring and the changing seasons. As we strive to be more understanding, aware and competent as individuals and as an organization on these societal issues, we sometimes experience the joy and satisfaction from making positive strides and contributions. Yet, as we learn and understand more, we are simultaneously dismayed by the history and on-going systemic racism and inequality in our society. We may also feel stuck by how massive the problem is that we face and how little impact we seem to have as individuals.

I invite you to think about your endeavors into equity, inclusion and racial justice like it's springtime. Permit yourself to see things you may have overlooked. Listen for the positive and negative messages being delivered. Find joy in developing new or deeper understanding. Experience deep emotions when learning about historical trauma and the on-going inequitable treatment of various groups based on their skin color, country of origin, religion or culture. Take the time to pause and experience.

My hope for us is that as we continue to increase our own awareness and understanding and as we take individual and collective action, we will come to see greater impact and change. My hope is that we will continue to strive for a more just society - if it comes in a landslide moment all the better, but knowing full well that changing people attitudes, institutional practices and racist and inequitable infrastructures will likely require slow incremental gains. We recognize that the shifts we seek may be two steps forward and one step back much of the time, but also recognize that the more our collective will and collective action grows, the greater our collective impact.

## Internal Growth For All Staff

Monthly opportunities for sharing and discussing topics about equity, inclusion, and racial justice are available to all staff through the Exploring Equity Learning Opportunities, EELO Group. Past topics include Critical Race Theory, cultural appropriations as well as racial and cultural identity development. This month and for the next few, we will be focusing on exploring Elena Aguilers podcast series “What To Say When Someone Says Something Racist” in hopes of continuing the work in dismantling racism. We invite you to come join some rich discussion... whether you are new to this work, or seasoned in it! Through EELO, all staff have access to interesting articles, videos, webinars, and podcasts. Links to resources are located [HERE](#).

## Community Partnerships

The Community Partnerships subcommittee continues to develop content for and update the EIRJ page of CCAC's website. We are beginning to asset map community-based organizations and services in our region which will help us develop a strategy for approaching potential partner organizations. To facilitate this outreach, we are also developing materials to share during these conversations. We invite any staff members interested to attend an upcoming meeting and learn more. For more information contact:

beverly.barker@ccacwa.org;  
tracy.mitchell@ccacwa.org; or  
alison.ponder@ccacwa.org

## Recruiting, Hiring and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

Through research and discussion, our group has created a draft Hiring Practices Checklist. This checklist includes the changes we have recommended that CCAC incorporate consistently with all program hires as our agency moves toward creating more equitable hiring processes. Many of these new processes have been piloted recently and more are being refined. We look forward to working with Ijumaa on this checklist and discussing which policies we might target in the near future. If you would like to join our Policy and Hiring group please contact: Kristin.Gomez@ccacwa.org; Gary.Burris@ccacwa.org; Sandy.Kelly@ccacwa.org; Yvette.Hernandez@ccacwa.org; or Sabrina.Perry@ccacwa.org.

## Integrating EIRJ Organizational Culture

Our goal for this work group is to support a more equitable organizational culture, ensuring Indigenous, and people of color feel valued when engaging with CCAC. These are the projects that the Organizational Culture group is working on:

- Our group has been working on systemizing tribal land acknowledgements, which are based on truthful history, the impacts of colonization, tribal strengths, and individual tribes current work to support the tribe's mission and vision. Each statement includes acknowledgment that we are on tribal lands and that the tribes are Sovereign nations. For more information on tribal land acknowledgements click Honor Native Land Guide, or contact Shelly Knight at shelly.knight@ccacwa.org.
- Our work group has been developing an anti-bias glossary of terms, which is a living document to be expanded and revised as we evolve in our anti-bias work. Currently, we added the term affinity groups and LGBTQIA to the glossary of terms. [Access the anti-bias glossary of terms here.](#)
- Our leadership team has selected the Just Lead Washington Race Equity Justice Initiative (REJI) Toolkit to guide our work towards creating a more equitable organizational culture where Indigenous and People of Color feel valued when engaging with CCAC. The toolkit includes surveys for our board and leadership team, all staff, community partners and stake holders. Thus far, the Organizational Culture workgroup has organized the completion of three surveys by the board and leadership and all staff. The results of the surveys have been reviewed and while some work has been and is in the process of addressing our organizations' gaps, we are awaiting support from our consultant prior to developing more formal and measurable anti-bias goals and action plans. Access the [REJI Toolkit here.](#)
- Finally, the Integrating Equity, Inclusion, and Racial Justice Organizational Culture work group facilitates the creation of this newsletter and invites any and all who are interested in participating in this worthy work to contact Shelly.Knight@ccacwa.org , Debbie.Roberts@ccacwa.org or Melinda.Luark@ccacwa.org . Join our work group!

## Book Totes Project

This project provides all staff access to more than fifty books through a rotating mobile library process. Individual offices receive a selection of these books on loan for about 3 months. Staff can check out books for 3 weeks. Topics include history, stories, and ways to develop our skills for equity and justice work.

You can access the complete book list [HERE](#).

Did you read a book from the tote? [Write a review!](#)



## Activities to Support Anti-Bias Goals with Children and Families

Below are examples of putting the anti-bias goals in action with providers, families, and young children:

Try a family tree showing the diverse photos of children and their families and the families of the teacher or provider. Include a dictated caption from the child about their family photo. This activity supports the anti-bias goal for fostering a healthy identity.

Another idea for fostering an anti-bias way of being with preschool children includes class made books with child drawings and dictations of what the child has shared using the following three prompts. This activity supports the anti-bias goal of comfort and joy with human diversity.

- Who cares for us at home?
- This is what we like to eat at home.
- How we like to have fun at home.

## Anti-Bias Approach to Curriculum: The Four Goals

Our EIRJ Team understands that staff, community partners, and providers hear a great deal about the Anti-Bias approach to curriculum and how to live together peacefully in a diverse world. These are the NAEYC four anti-bias goals concisely laid out to help understand:

1. **Identity:** We grow healthy personal and social identities and demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride. Two types of identity development include personal identity and cultural identity.
2. **Diversity:** We are open, comfortable, and empathic with others from diverse backgrounds. We express comfort and joy with human diversity and form relationships with diverse people.
3. **Justice:** We think about and understand bias and nurture empathy for the hurt that biases cause. We recognize fairness and unfairness (injustice) and have the language to describe bias and unfairness. We can come up with solutions to the problems that bias causes.
4. **Activism:** We actively confront injustice. We demonstrate the ability and skills to take a stand against injustice, alone or with others. We implement solutions to the problems that bias causes.

For more information on an anti-bias approach to curriculum, check out these links:

[Anti-Bias Curriculum - YouTube](#)

[Understanding Anti-Bias Education: Bringing the Four Core Goals to Every Facet of Your Curriculum | NAEYC](#)



## Personal Development through an Anti-Bias Journal

Cultural change in organizations is sometimes messy, especially when we are focusing on “hot button” emotional issues like race and equity. To help process emotions our group supports the idea of individualized and private journaling. Keeping a personal anti-bias journal helps add clarity to our thoughts and hopefully paves the way for more empathy, understanding, and stronger growth mindset for equity and diversity.

One EIRJ member, Debbie Roberts, has been keeping an anti-bias journal for about a year and a half and has recently found a new source from [AMAZE Works!](#), that has focus area prompts for reflecting and journaling on identity development, family, culture, and traditions, and more.

Think about these questions for your personal identity development:

- What emotions, thoughts, and questions arise for you when you reflect on your various privileges? Where do you think these emotions, thoughts, and questions are coming from? What support do you need to help you process these emotions, thoughts, and questions?
- What stereotypes or negative messages did you receive from home, school, society, and/or the media about yourself or those who were not your childhood version of “normal” or “ordinary?” How did these messages help shape the value you put on yourself and/or other people?

A prompt about how perceptions are shaped by family stories:

- What stories did you hear from family members growing up that helped you connect to them and your family history?

And one more to come back to time and time again:

- Reflect on a place or a time in which you felt you belonged. What and who created belonging for you?

When thinking about this prompt, we may often think of the attributes of a person who helped us feel like we belong and we may want to emulate these personal qualities, getting us in a growth mindset.

Access more of the reflective prompts by Rebecca Slaby with [AMAZE Works!](#)

For more information on anti-bias journaling, contact Debbie Roberts at [debbie.roberts@ccacwa.org](mailto:debbie.roberts@ccacwa.org)

## What Are Affinity Groups?

Affinity groups support the ideas of a separate and protected space for people who share a racial identity to come together, share experiences, and develop suggestions to help the organization to become more equitable. For more information about affinity groups, check out:

- "[An Inside Look at Workplace Racial Affinity Groups](#)" (The Society for Human Resource Management)
- "[Why I don't complain about racism to White people](#)" (Washington Post)

Do white allies hold space for people of color to vent and share about injustices and micro-aggressions they have experienced? If not, why? Are white allies defensive about the injustices that communities of color continue to experience in both large and small ways? Is defensiveness because of collective white guilt or is it victim blaming? Maybe it's both. What do white people need to understand and do about all of this? A likely first step is to recognize the issues that white people have. Turning a blind eye, looking the other way, an omission of the truth simply means we continue to be a part of the problem.