AN INTRODUCTION TO SYSTEMIC RACISM

FOR
NASCO INSTITUTE

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About ERACCE

ERACCE is an organization that provides training and technical support to dismantle institutional racism and build antiracist multicultural diversity, equity, and justice within institutions and communities in throughout Michigan. Established in 2000, ERACCE is located in Kalamazoo, MI. ERACCE programs focus on systemic racism and seeks to address the root causes of racism through long-term institutional transformation. ERACCE offers introductory and advanced trainings and workshops, consultation, and technical support on cultural competency, antiracism, institutional organizing and organizational development and works in partnership with Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training.

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Facilitators

ALIISA LAHTI grew up in central Michigan and now lives in Kalamazoo where they have been engaging in antiracism organizing with the local nonprofit, ERACCE (Eliminating Racism & Creating/ Celebrating Equity) since 2009. They studied Comparative Religion and Environmental Studies at Western Michigan University. Aliisa serves on the Antiracism Transformation Team at the People’s Food Co-op where they previously served on the board for six years. Aliisa is a skilled facilitator and core trainer with Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training (ERACCE’s national partner). Collective decision making is a practice they engage in as often as possible. Aliisa finds the work of antiracism to be humanizing and life giving and is passionate about further exploring the intersections of identity. Aliisa became a parent in 2014 and loves being outside and teaching and learning with their child, Weaver.

J./JASMINE KYON is an organizer and trainer in ERACCE (Eliminating Racism and Creating/ Celebrating Equity). J. is a queer Burmese-Taiwanese organizer who grew up in Queens, New York. J. has a Kalamazoo College B.A. in Economics, Public Policy and Urban Affairs. In 2015, J. studied in the International Sustainable Development Studies Institute, researching indigenous farmers’ rights, urbanization, and seed sovereignty in Thailand. In 2016, J. was a Student Research Fellow at the Arcus Center of Social Justice Leadership, doing research on equity within the public transportation of Kalamazoo County. J. was also an organizer in the Kalamazoo Poetry Collective, connecting Kalamazoo college to local artists, introducing community youth to higher education, and facilitating storytelling workshops. J.’s passion is working toward a world where cities serve everybody.

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Purpose & Goals

The purpose of this antiracism workshop is to provide an introductory process for participants to explore and deepen their understanding of systemic racism and to begin to investigate ways to more effectively dismantle and eliminate racism within their institutions.

Learning Objectives

1. To explore common language and definitions to understand the continuing issue of racism throughout the United States.

2. To understand racism and bias as systemic issues, and not simply issues of individual attitudes and actions.

3. To explore approaches to dismantling racism that can provide the foundation for enduring solutions that lead to true racial and social justice and collective community healing.

4. To explore interest and motivation for continuing education and action of participants and their institutions.

5. To explore the Continuum as a tool to begin dismantling racism with your organizations.
COMMUNITY AGREEMENT
For Creating Courageous Space
Defining Racism

1. We need a common definition and a common analysis of racism if we want to work on solutions to racism.

2. Racism is not the same thing as individual race prejudice and bigotry. All people are racially prejudiced (regardless of racial/ethnic identity). It is part of the air we breathe. It is socialized into every person. But this does not mean that everyone is racist.

3. Racism is more than race prejudice. It is more than individual attitudes and actions. Racism is the collective actions of a dominant racial group.

4. Systemic power turns race prejudice into racism. Racial prejudice becomes racism when one group’s racial prejudices are enforced by the systems and institutions of a society, giving power and privilege based on skin color to the group in power, and limiting the power and privilege of the racial groups that are not in power.

Race Prejudice + the misuse of power by systems and institutions = RACISM
### Continuum on Becoming an Antiracist Multicultural Institution

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<tr>
<td>Intentionally and publicly excludes or segregates African Americans, Arab Americans, Native Americans, Latinos and Asian Americans</td>
<td>Tolerant of a limited number of People of Color with “proper” perspective and credentials</td>
<td>Makes official policy pronouncements regarding multicultural diversity</td>
<td>Growing understanding of racism as barrier to effective diversity</td>
<td>Commits to process of intentional institutional restructuring, based upon antiracist analysis and identity</td>
<td>Future vision of an institution and wider community that has overcome systemic racism</td>
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<td>Intentionally and publicly enforces the racist status quo throughout institution</td>
<td>May still secretly limit or exclude People of Color in contradiction to public policies</td>
<td>Sees itself as “non-racist” institution with open doors to People of Color</td>
<td>Develops analysis of systemic racism</td>
<td>Audits and restructures all aspects of institutional life to ensure full participation of People of Color, including their world-view, culture and lifestyles</td>
<td>Institution’s life reflects full participation and shared power with diverse racial, cultural, and economic groups in determining its mission, structure, constituency, policies and practices</td>
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<td>Institutionalization of racism includes formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels</td>
<td>Continues to intentionally maintain white power and privilege through its formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels of institutional life</td>
<td>Carries out intentional inclusiveness efforts, recruiting “someone of color” on committees or office staff</td>
<td>Carries out intentional inclusiveness efforts, recruiting “someone of color” on committees or office staff</td>
<td>Implements structures, policies and practices with inclusive decision making and other forms of power sharing on all levels of the institution’s life and work</td>
<td>Full participation in decisions that shape the institution, and inclusion of diverse cultures, lifestyles, and interests</td>
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<td>Usually has similar intentional policies and practices toward other socially oppressed groups such as women, disabled, elderly and children, gays and lesbians, citizens of developing nations, etc.</td>
<td>Often declares, “We don’t have a problem.”</td>
<td>Expanding view of diversity includes other socially oppressed groups such as women, disabled, elderly and children, gays and lesbians, citizens of developing nations, etc.</td>
<td>But… “Not those who make waves”</td>
<td>But… Institutional structures and culture that maintain white power and privilege still intact and relatively untouched</td>
<td>A sense of restored community and mutual caring</td>
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<td><strong>But…</strong></td>
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<td>Allies with others in combating all forms of social oppression.</td>
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