

OCTOBER
2017

Visit us at:
equityalliancemn.org

EQUITY CONNECTOR

New School Year, New Energy, The Work Continues

There has been an incredible amount of learning going on through Equity Alliance MN's professional learning department. Equity Alliance MN has hosted a fall cohort of Innocent Classroom, a course entitled Science Teachers and Race: Let's Talk and Teach, and the first of three installments of My Culture, Your Culture and Success in the Classroom for Inver Grove Heights. Three SEED classes will begin in the next two weeks, and American History through a Latina/o Lens began October 5th. In addition to that, two of our school districts began their work with Equal Opportunity Schools.

Science Teachers and Race: Let's Teach and Talk

Almost two years ago, Roseville Area Middle School science teacher Lisa Lindquist was asked if she and a colleague could design a couple of lessons about the social construction of race that could be integrated into their units on genetics and heredity. She thought about it and said she'd think about that. Well, not only did she think about it, she wrote the lessons, piloted them with her seventh-grade classes in the spring of 2017, and is now teaching those lessons to other seventh and tenth-grade science teachers. Lisa, her colleague Ann Hite, and Mary Bussman of Equity Alliance MN shared their work with seventeen science teachers and curriculum leaders. Feedback from the first session included, "I grew up not talking about race; so as an adult, I appreciate the opportunity to have safe conversations about this issue." Another stated, "I'm definitely ready to expand my time spent discussing the lack of scientific basis for race. I really liked the gallery walk." Finally, one teacher wrote, "All the great resources you have/use that are public that I could have found on my own, but hadn't." Congratulations, Lisa, Ann, and Mary on a terrific workshop!



Culturally Responsive Leadership and Equal Opportunity Schools

Inver Grove Heights and South St. Paul Schools met with Dorothy Miranda of Equal Opportunity Schools to plan for the implementation of their *Lead Higher Initiative*. Each school will survey their ninth and tenth grade students and their high school teachers to understand students' interests in college, identify trusted teachers and staff, and consider their growth mindsets. The goal of the project is to increase the number of students of color, English learners, and students with lower socioeconomic status in advanced placement courses. The *Leading Higher Initiative* is supported by a grant Equity Alliance MN received from The St. Paul Foundation, and F.R. Bigelow Foundation, and is partnered with the culturally responsive leadership training with Jamie Almanzán. Our goal is to increase and deepen cultural responsiveness in leaders who will guide the continued development of cultural responsiveness in teachers, so that all students will learn in welcoming, engaging classrooms with high expectations and support for all students.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

American History Through A Latino/Latina Lens

Dr. Jimmy Patino, Assistant Professor of Chicano and Latino Studies at the University of Minnesota, will develop educators' core knowledge of Chicano/a and Latino/a history, culture and politics. Participants will also grow in their culturally responsive pedagogy and cultural understanding of Latino/a students.

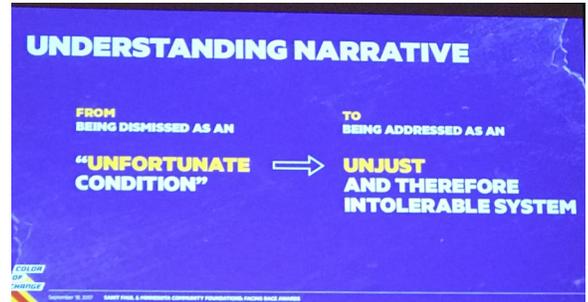
For more information on this series or to register, click [here](#).

STUDENT PROGRAMS

Raise Voices and Face Race

On September 18, Equity Alliance MN staff members attended the 11th Annual Facing Race Awards at The Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. Also attending the event were two students from Forest Lake High School, who are part of our Youth Executive Board.

The Facing Race Awards were established in 2007 to celebrate and honor individuals and organizations working to create a racially equitable community and are part of the Saint Paul & Minnesota Community Foundations' ongoing commitment to racial equity. Hamse Warfa and the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood were named as the 2017 Facing Race Awards recipients. Mr. Wafra was born in Mogadishu, Somalia and has worked at the intersection of community building, philanthropy and social entrepreneurship for the past 20 years. The Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood is a transformative racial justice initiative that puts youth on the pathway to college and career readiness.



The theme of the event was “Changing the Narrative” and the program included powerful words from Keynote Speaker Rashad Robinson, the Executive Director of Color of Change. Mr. Robinson spoke about the need to center the voices of those who are often dismissed and overlooked as means to truly affect transformational change in the many systems within our society.

Closing remarks by Dr. Eric Jolly, president and CEO of The Saint Paul & Minnesota Community Foundations, spoke truth to power about the collective efforts that are needed by all individuals and organizations doing the work to support racial equity. Equity Alliance MN staff members were inspired by the evening's event and are even more committed in their resolve to be the leading force for systemic educational equity and integration.

Vision Progresses with ReImagine MN

Members from the leadership teams of the east metro districts met at TIES on October 5th to continue the ReImagine MN work by identifying the barriers that are keeping us from “seeing, serving, and supporting ALL.” They also identified actions that could be taken immediately in the short-term, and longer-term.

The feedback will be compiled with that of the other two area meetings and presented at the December 8th AMSD Policy Institute.



UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

Visit: equityalliancemn.org for our current calendar of events

-  **YEB Overnight Retreat**
Thurs. Oct. 19-Sat. Oct. 21 @ Camp St. Croix
-  **YEB Workshop at Overcoming Racism Conference @ Metro State Univ.**
Fri. Nov. 3
-  **WE Day**
Wed. Nov. 8 @ Xcel Center
-  **MEAD College Visit**
Fri. Nov. 10 @ Concordia Univ.