Building An Equitable & Inclusive Organization
Sunday, July 21, 2019 | 2:00pm

City Park Essentials
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SPEAKERS

Mickey Fearn, Professor of Practice, North Carolina State University
Elizabeth Lindner, Manager, Park Internship Programs, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
Radious Guess, Community Outreach, Race and Inclusion Manager, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
RDI and Public Parks and Recreation

Relevancy, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workshop

Mickey Fearn, Professor of Practice, North Carolina State University
• When people who are brilliant in the context of what they do come together to do something they have never done, they maintain the arrogance and confidence they have in the areas they specialize in but are not always aware of the reality that their IQ has actually dropped.
Referral Pain

- Referred pain occurs when a problem in one place in the body causes pain or manifest in another place." We must consider that maybe the obvious symptoms could be caused by, and may be a signal, something more serious going on.
Conditions in healthy ecosystems

What you find in every eco-system

• Randomness
• Order
• Chaos
• Diversity
• Adaptability

You either be enriched by them or afraid of them
We already have the capacity to do this!

• Stop describing the problem
• EIS work was difficult when we first started
• If you have the skill to do your job, you just need to apply those skills to this work
• We need to have real commitment and make it a real priority
• Understanding why it's important to all of us
• Understand what the challenges “really” are
In order to live powerfully in America, and to do equity work, we must be self-aware and constantly mindful of our personal and collective...

- Expectations
- Predispositions
- Ethnocentricity
- Egocentricity
- Defensive emotions
Are conversations regarding relevancy, diversity, and inclusion…

…Toxic/Pathological?

• Anger
• Sad
• Fear
• Frustration
• Anxiety
• Resentment
• Blame
• Guilt
• Confusion
• Conflict

…Aspirational?

• Joyous
• Courageous
• Excitement
• Compassion
• Satisfying
• Enriching/Educational
• Hopeful
• Trusting
• Open
Recreation programs and services, more than any other public service, is a reflection of the values, attitudes, experiences, and culture of those who plan them!
The homogenization of diversity!

“Socially homogenous memberships inevitably results in movements that reflect The practices, lifestyles, language, thought processes, and values that will be an extension of the culture of that group.” Rose (Stories of Inclusion) Failure to recognize Take responsibility, and learn from the cultures and conditions they created.
Areas of DEI focus

• Organizational structure and culture
• Inclusive community engagement
• Examination of current practices, and policy, personnel, and budget decisions
• Design and relevancy of programs and services
• Deep analysis of how ethnicity, culture and class impact the design and delivery of recreation program, and career decisions and recreation choices
• The world in which you were born is just one model of reality. Other cultures are not failed attempts at being you: they are unique manifestations of the human spirit.
  - Wade Davis

• We can’t use our values to motivate people whose culture, lifestyles, and choices have emerged from a different values system. We have to have a clear understanding of their cultures. We have to understand how they experience us and what relevance we have in their world.
This is the country we think we live in. I am normal. Anything different than I am is abnormal. In order for me to accept them, they must assimilate into my concept of normal
This is the country we actually live in! There is no such thing as normal!
What prepares us to live in this country?
Both career and recreation choices are based on a calculation, sometimes conscious--sometimes not, of return on investment (ROI). The question we ask ourselves is, “For the amount of money, time, and energy I have, what choice is likely to give me the greatest return on my investment.

ROI calculations are comprised of a complex grouping of economic, demographic, cultural, ethnic, social, and psychological factors, the characteristics of ancestral environments, perceptions of the safety, biophobia, historical interactions with government, and current environmental influences.
For every act of creativity

There is an act of destruction!
You can’t solve a problem until you realize you are a part of the problem you are trying to solve.
SPEAKER

Elizabeth Lindner
Manager, Park Internship Programs
Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Goals

- It is critical to ask and answer, “what are we hoping to achieve?” and, “why should stakeholders/staff care?”

- Without support and participation of leadership, work will be much harder to take off

- DEI is a muscle that we keep working and building

- “Straight forward” ideas, no matter how well intentioned, will fail
Reflect (3 mins)...

- What are the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals for my organization?

- What challenges do I foresee in reaching those goals?
Strategies: Building an Equitable & Inclusive Organization

- Gain buy-in from the board to front line staff
- Meet everyone where they’re at
- Give staff ownership
- Elevate work already being done - especially when done by members of marginalized communities
Reflect (2 min)...

- How do these strategies fit in to what your organization is currently pursuing or experiencing with DEI work?
Strategies: Creating Inclusive Programming

- Cultivate relationships
- Create relevant opportunities - but do not appropriate
- Break down your own institutional barriers
Reflect (3 min)...

- What community relationships do you want to cultivate? What existing partnerships can I leverage to build those relationships?
Accept that you’re going to fail - and that it’s going to be uncomfortable.
Table Top Conversations (10 min)

1. What institutional barriers is my organization perpetuating that prevent all communities from connecting with parks?
2. What messaging would help engage leadership and staff in DEI work?
SPEAKER CONTACT

Elizabeth Lindner
Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
elindner@parksconservancy.org
Advancing Racial Equity

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

Radious Y. Guess, M.Ed.
Community Outreach, Equity and Inclusion Manager
Welcome
• Designed to determine baseline knowledge or preparedness for advancing racial equity.

• A useful method for measuring the level of improvement over the course of the training. A post test will be administered at the end of the training.
Getting Centered

- Orientation
- Grounding
- Self-Pacing and other Tracking
- Self Touch and Communal Touch
- Movement
• Over 25 years of professional experience working with communities of color, immigrants, school districts, state departments of education and a national parent teacher advocacy organization.

• Led legislation and training on race/gender and educational equity, in urban, rural and reservation communities, school districts and higher education.
• Knowledge of MPRBs Equity Change Initiatives including outcomes and actions, timelines, and accountability;
• Understand how our culture and that of others unconsciously influences decisions we make; and
• Recognize how our success as an organization depends on ensuring the inclusion of EVERYONE.
• To engage, sustain and deepen interracial dialogue about race;
• To develop a shared understanding of key racial equity terminology such as individual, institutional and structural racism; and
• To develop strategy and actions that build internal capacity to advance racial equity.
• **Stay Engaged**
  - Remaining morally, emotionally, intellectually and socially involved in the dialogue.

• **Experience Discomfort**
  - Acknowledge that discomfort is inevitable, especially, in dialogue about race.
  - Make a commitment to bring issues out in the open.

• **Speak Your Truth**
  - Being open about thoughts and feelings and not just saying what you think others want to hear.

• **Expect and Accept Non-Closure**
  - It’s OK to “hang out in uncertainty” and not rush to quick solutions, especially in relation to racial understanding, which requires ongoing dialogue.
• Deepening Our Understanding – identify similarities & differences
• Line up against the wall facing the facilitators.
• A series of statements will be read. If the statement describes or applies to you, then silently step away from the wall. Look to your right, left, then return to the wall when directed to do so. No pressure. There is no right or wrong answer, share what is comfortable
  • Two Ground Rules
    • Listening – no talking, snickering, giggling
    • Respect – confidentiality, shared here, stays here. Learned here, leaves here!
Debrief

• How did this exercise make you feel?
• Which statements stood out for you the most?
• What questions do you have or want to offer to the group?
• What do you think the purpose of this activity was?
• Defined
  • When race is no longer a predictor of access to parks and recreation, health, well-being, and quality of life.

• Strategy
  • A REAP is used to affect change in all levels of MPRB’s work
  • The REAP is the heartbeat of MPRB’s racial equity work.
Nationwide, parks play a vital role in the health and wellbeing of community members as well as the livability of our cities. Historically underrepresented and underserved communities, including immigrants, experience poorer general health and shorter life spans than white community members.

Research shows that the number one prescription for healing health and educational disparities is to provide access to parks and open space.

Minneapolis has had an amazing shift in cultural and racial demographics over the past twenty years. As a result, the city is more diverse in terms of age, race and ethnicity, and recreational needs of its residents.

Minneapolis is fortunate to have an extensive park system that allows ninety-four percent (94%) of residents to live no more than one fourth (1/4) of a mile from a park.
• An internal working document that guides MPRBs racial equity agenda.
• Represents the heartbeat of racial equity work at the MPRB
• A lens that establishes priorities, timelines, accountability, and performance measures.
• Five goals guide the racial equity work
• These goals support the ongoing internal transformational change to ensure a continued high level of service to involving community and staff.
MPRB’s Racial Equity Plan
The REAP

- Sets Outcomes
- Involves Multiple Stakeholders & Analyzes Data
- Determines Benefit and/or Burden
- Advances Opportunity or Minimize Harm
- Evaluates. Raises Racial Awareness. Establishes Accountability
- Reports Back!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Outcome / Action</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Progress Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Employees</td>
<td>Convene RE Committee</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Monthly Meetings</td>
<td>In Progress</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The REAP
Equity in the MPRB CIP

• MPRB has the first (and still only) empirical, equity-driven Capital Improvement Plan in the nation
• Projects are selected not only based on park assets, but on community need
• Annual process
  • Data is updated
  • Parks are ranked
  • CIP adds parks with most need, per the rankings
• Neighborhood and Regional Parks have separate though similar metrics
Equity Metrics for Neighborhood Parks

Community Characteristics
- Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty
- Population Density
- Youth Population
- Neighborhood Safety

Park Characteristics
- Park Asset Lifespan
- Park Asset Condition
- Proportion of Value

Neighborhood Parks: Major Rehabilitation and Capital Project Selection
# Equity Metrics for Neighborhood Parks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria Categories</th>
<th>Maximum Possible Points</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Characteristics</strong></td>
<td>[12 of 23 Total]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Population Density</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Population of Neighborhood</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Crime Statistics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Park Characteristics</strong></td>
<td>[11 of 23 Total]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Asset Condition</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Park Assets</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of Value</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Commitment to retain the pre-equity CIP, to keep promise to community on planned projects.

• Projects already in the CIP keep funding amount and year
  • Keeps promise to the community

• Parks with equity ranking get new money
  • Specific project depends on master planning

• Parks already in that also have equity ranking get a “boost”
  • Existing funds increased
  • Some projects moved forward (accelerated)
Concentric Circles

- A powerful relational exercise that provides the opportunity to share thoughts and experiences with others in one-on-one conversations.
- You will be given an ordered situation in which to have these conversations without the pressure or awkwardness that are often part of social interactions.
A Deeper Dive
Who’s Job is it?

- This is a story about four people: Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did. Somebody got angry because it was Everybody’s job. Everybody knew that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Somebody wouldn’t do it. It ended that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.
Race Equity

- Improves planning, decision-making, and resource allocation leading to more racially equitable policies and programs.
- Establishes a set of principles, reflective questions, and processes that focuses on individual, institutional, and systemic levels by:
  - deconstructing what is not working around racial equity;
  - reconstructing and supporting what is working;
  - shifting the way we make decisions and think about this work; and,
  - healing and transforming our structures, our environments, and ourselves.
When we advance racial equity:

- People, including people of color, are owners, planners and decision-makers in the systems that govern their lives.
- We acknowledge and account for past and current inequities, and provide all people, particularly those most impacted by racial inequities, the infrastructure needed to thrive.
- Everyone benefits from a more just, equitable system.
Final Evaluations & Closure
MEMBERSHIP

Your connection to information and expertise on new urban park models, practices, and innovative partnerships.

Members have access to a suite of highly-curated resources specifically designed for the parks community including:

- Webinars
- Online resource library
- Urban park study tours
- Advocacy tools
- Discounted registration to Greater & Greener

Join City Parks Alliance today! To learn more, visit our membership table in the exhibition hall or go to cityparksalliance.org/membership.