



Path to Racial Equity 6-Month Foundation

WHY RACIAL EQUITY?

Racial equity is an outcome.

Yet, this outcome requires an intentional process and targeted practices and strategies.

Adopting a racial equity framework does not mean simply thinking about race in the context of a decision.

Racial Equity requires that we 1) develop an awareness of how race as a social construct impacts experiences and outcomes for others; 2) examine how systems and institutions create and perpetuate inequities on the basis of race; and 3) transform our institutions so that within and across we can no longer predict outcomes by race.

Racial Equity: When people have access and opportunity regardless of race. Therefore, outcomes become random and not able to be predicted by race.

Want to get started? Read [“Ten Lessons on Taking Leadership on Racial Equity.”](#)

Many assume that having a strong diversity and inclusion strategy equates to [Racial Equity](#). While they are not mutually exclusive, they are distinct enough to warrant a discussion.

Diversity: differences such as social identities (e.g., race, gender identity, age, religion, sexual orientation, class, physical ability, nation of origin, etc.) and can also mean other characteristic such as personality, political affiliation, etc.

Inclusion: A sense of belonging, which allows people to engage and contribute within an environment (the key to reaping the benefits of diversity).

Don't get me wrong; diversity and inclusion are nice things to have. Yet, I can acknowledge our differences and include you without shifting policies and practices to allow you equitable access and opportunity.

Some people argue that remedying racial inequities is at the heart of diversity and inclusion efforts. Historically, I can see how this perspective might be the case. However, “diversity” nowadays typically becomes about numbers and “inclusion” about a sense belonging.

Others argue that these concepts are intentionally watered down to make Whites feel more comfortable. This perspective also has merit. As an individual, it is within my control to respect and include — I might much rather have that conversation; whereas, system-wide change feels daunting and potentially out of my control or sphere of influence.

I would encourage us to consider another approach: when we see racial inequities as systemic rather than individually inflicted, it allows us to see the system as we have inherited it and perhaps be less defensive about ourselves as individuals. This approach does not preclude individual accountability, but perhaps can catalyze an individual to implement changes in policies and practices (e.g., a focus on Racial Equity) rather than solely to be accepting of difference and inclusive (e.g., a focus on diversity and inclusion).

It’s time for institutions to intentionally morph their D&I efforts to include Racial Equity.

A number of organizations are doing just that, adopting DEI (i.e. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) strategies. [It’s no longer merely a business imperative](#). The shifting demographics of our nation, and more specifically the St. Louis region, require us to consider supporting systems that allow individuals to reach their full potential regardless of race.

HOW THE FERGUSON COMMISSION MADE A COMMITMENT TO ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY

(Ferguson Commission Playbook, 2015)

The Commission committed to intentionally applying a “racial equity lens” to the work. Applying this racial equity lens meant considering racial disparities in areas including education, economic opportunity, health care, housing, transportation, childcare, business ownership, and family and community stability. In modeling the application of this lens for the region, important lessons were learned about moving hearts, minds, and institutions toward equity.

Lean Into the Discomfort. The Commission knew that talking about race, inequity, and privilege would make some people uncomfortable, and that even if they were not uncomfortable, they needed to understand and acknowledge that others might be. However, the commissioners and staff learned that discomfort means change is

happening, and, when they sensed it, learned to lean in rather than back away.

Words Matter. People struggle with language around race and equity. One role the Commission embraced was to help people find the language to talk about these issues—to define common terms to be able to discuss these issues productively.

Build the Business Case. Most people understand the social justice case for racial equity.

But there is a business case for racial equity as well, with benefits to business, government, and the economy as a whole. While speaking to what is just, the Commission also spoke to the benefits that all segments of the community would experience if the region could achieve greater racial equity.

See the Role of Policy. The Commission realized that progress toward racial equity should be achieved by long-term sustained work for policy change, not simply by creating new programs. Public policy was recognized to have played a key role in creating a racially segregated region. Any intention to significantly build a pathway towards racial equity necessarily involved changes to institutional policies.

[Business case for racial equity in St. Louis](#)



The Business Case for Racial Equity in St. Louis

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

If the St. Louis region wants to thrive and remain viable, it has strive for racial equity.

Addressing racial disparities will have a profound impact on the future of our region and our economy.

- The St. Louis region ranks 42 out of 50 large metropolitan areas for economic mobility, defined as a person, family or group's ability to improve their economic status by moving up in income (Chetty, 2014).
- Researchers found that less racial segregation is one of the five predictors of upward mobility (Chetty, 2014). St. Louis currently is the sixth most segregated metropolitan area in the country (East-West Gateway Council of Governments 2014).
- The National Urban League Policy Institute found that racial disparities in health cost the U.S. \$60 billion in excess medical costs and \$22 billion in lost productivity in 2009. They projected that if these health disparities remain, the burden will rise to \$126 billion by 2020 and \$363 billion by 2050. An additional economic loss due to premature deaths was valued at \$250 billion in 2009 (National Urban League Policy Institute, 2012).

Today, where you live in St. Louis can determine much about your life. At its extreme, life expectancy differs by nearly 40 years depending on your zip code. The story behind those numbers lies in a complex, interconnected set of socioeconomic factors, including disparities in access to quality housing, healthcare, education and employment that we will discuss in this business case.

INTRODUCTION

From 2000 to 2010, 53 percent of population growth in the St. Louis region was from racial minorities, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The trend is projected to

continue in St. Louis and across the U.S. By 2018, children in the nation will be “majority minority,” and people of color will surpass 50 percent of the U.S. population (Sandoval 2015). The St. Louis region must face its reality, understand its history and tackle its current challenges in order to thrive.

The legacy of racism in the United States has maintained inequities in key areas that impact quality of life, achievement and opportunity, including income, wealth, health and education. This legacy runs especially deep in the St. Louis region, where disparity can be traced back to the Missouri Compromise in 1820 -- which made Missouri the only slave state in the Midwest -- to a zoning law passed in 1916 that made St. Louis city the first place in the nation to enact mandatory residential segregation based on the logic that if hotels and schools were segregated, housing should be as well (Wells and Crain 1999). Since then, generations of systemic racism and segregation, in communities, schools and municipal offices, have impaired the region’s economic and societal growth.

Public policy has played a key role in creating a racially segregated St. Louis. These policies included zoning rules that classified black neighborhoods as commercial or industrial and white neighborhoods as residential; municipal boundary lines designed to separate black neighborhoods from white ones and to deny services to those black neighborhoods; replacing integrated low-income areas with segregated public housing projects; and urban renewal plans intentionally designed to shift blacks from central cities like St. Louis to inner-ring suburbs such as Ferguson. Many of these governmental actions ended in the late 20th century, but their ramifications have contributed to today’s racial segregation patterns (Rothstein, 2014).

At its extreme, life expectancy differs by nearly 40 years depending on your zip code. In mostly white, suburban Wildwood, Mo., the life expectancy is 91.4 years; in the mostly black, inner-ring suburb of Kinloch, Mo., it’s 55.9 years (St. Louis County Health Department). The story behind those numbers lies in a complex, interconnected set of socioeconomic factors, including disparities in access to quality housing, healthcare, education and employment. Researchers estimate that in one year alone, the loss of life associated with low levels of education and poverty among African Americans is \$3.3 billion. (Purnell, J., et al., 2014)

Reducing racial inequities requires long-term, sustained and strategic efforts. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has made clear that investments of time should be for at least a generation, approximately 25 years. The events in St. Louis since August 2014 have laid bare our region’s racial inequities for the world to see. It is now more urgent than ever

before that we address these issues and transform our region to an equitable place for all.

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ADDRESSING DISPARITIES

Segregation has allowed the inequities in our region to not only exist, but to expand and proliferate in nearly every part of our society. Now is the time for St. Louis to consider root causes as opposed to creating a more disparate system. No more lucky ZIP codes and mapping decline and distance. For the sake of all in the region, it is critical that we name and address the clear and persistent racial inequities that exist here.

Acknowledging how racism has created inequities in numerous domains—housing, education, income and savings, and health — is a necessary step toward dismantling inequity.

The composition of our region is changing, which makes racial equity even more imperative.

There are social benefits to addressing these disparities. For example, in secondary education where the student body is diverse, there is also increased achievement and cultural learning. College students exposed to racially diverse cultural knowledge in integrated classes experience enhanced development of their critical and complex thinking. These racially integrated school environments positively impact attitudes students from one racial group have toward students of other racial groups, promotes cross-racial friendships and increases comfort levels between races (Spencer & Reno, 2009).

Let's take a more detailed look at how racial inequity affects our economy.

The economic impact of addressing racial disparities is big -- about \$10 billion big. Racial equity would have increased the region's GDP of \$136.677 billion by \$13.56 billion, or nearly 10 percent (Public Policy Research Center, University of Missouri-St. Louis 2015).

Income gains from racial equity would have a dramatic effect on the population: Latinos, the fastest-growing ethnic population in the St. Louis region (Sandoval 2015), would earn 41 percent more. Blacks would receive the most gains if there were racial equity in income, with an increase in wages of 75 percent. Native Americans would earn 39 percent more and Asians 15 percent more (Public Policy Research Center, University of

Missouri-St. Louis 2015). In the U.S., the median amount of net wealth for blacks was \$11,184. Latinos earned \$13,900; Asians \$91,440; and whites \$134,008. Race is one of the three strongest predictors of family wealth, along with age/birth year and level of education (Boshara 2015).

Racial inequity has a dramatic effect on our school children and the future of the economy. In 2012, one in 10 African-American students in grades 9 to 12 dropped out of school. Those 2,000 African American students that dropped out of high school in 2012 are likely to earn about \$7,000 less per year than white high school graduates. Their lifetime earnings' loss -- ranging from \$347,000 to \$739,410 -- reduces their purchasing power and contributes to the increased costs of social services. That adds up to a \$694 million to \$1.5 billion loss for the St. Louis economy for these dropouts. (Purnell, J., et al., 2014)

In regards to health, a reduction in the occurrence of chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes in African-Americans, could save St. Louis \$65 million a year in inpatient hospital charges. Eliminating racial and ethnic differences in mental health could save as much as \$27 million per year in inpatient hospital charges. (Purnell, J., et al., 2014).

In addition to the history of policies that have reinforced racial inequities, the region also has a lower number of immigrants relative to other cities. If St. Louis had experienced inflows of immigrants similar to other large metropolitan areas since 1970, income growth would have been four to seven percent greater, making the region's income seven to 11 percent larger through the injection of another \$1.7 billion into the local economy (Strauss 2012).

CONFRONTING OUR REALITY: INEQUITY IN ST. LOUIS TODAY

Economic Mobility and Segregation

In order to improve economic mobility for all, we have to address our reality: St. Louis is the 6th most racially segregated of the 50 large metropolitan areas. We also are the 20th most segregated of the 50 metros by income. In many parts of our region, racial and economic segregation pervade and overlap in impact. Approximately 16.7 percent of African Americans live in high-poverty neighborhoods, compared to 4.6 percent of

Latinos, 1.4 percent of Asians and 0.6 percent of white families (Public Policy Research Center, University of Missouri-St. Louis 2015).

Harvard University identified five predictors of upward economic mobility: Less racial segregation, less inequality, higher quality K-12 schools, strong social capital and community institutions, and lower percentage of single-parent families overall.

The St. Louis region ranks 43 out of 50 large metropolitan areas for economic mobility, defined as a person, family or group's ability to improve their economic status that is measured in income (Chetty 2014).

As we've noted so far, the inequalities embedded in many sectors in our region -- in our health, housing, income and education -- have dramatically impacted our region's ability to economically thrive.

Housing

The St. Louis region has a long history of segregation when it comes to housing: In 1916, St. Louis became the first city in the nation to make integrated housing legal. Our region's legacy of complex municipal and zoning laws that have made St. Louis the 6th most segregated city in the nation. People of color have been pushed into lower-quality neighborhoods, and with that, experienced less access to opportunities for wealth, income, health and education.

Inequality in housing is a root cause for different life outcomes for people of color because of differences in rates of homeownership and the value and appreciation of those homes. Inequities in rates of homeownership and value and appreciation of homes have created significant gaps in economic security and wealth accumulation between whites and racial-ethnic minorities.

According to the Altarum Institute, white families buy homes at an average of eight years earlier in life than African Americans do. Whites more often receive financial assistance from their families to support homeownership, allowing them to qualify for lower interest rates and other lending costs.

In St. Louis, the disparities are seen both in the numbers of homeowners of color and in the value of their homes compared to those of whites.

In St. Louis County, 49 percent of blacks and Latinos own their homes, compared to 78 percent of whites. In St. Louis city, 32 percent of blacks and 34 percent of Latinos are homeowners, compared to 56 percent of whites (ACS 2009-2013 via Community Commons).

Even when incomes are comparable, racial and ethnic minorities own homes with lower values than do whites, according to the Altarum Institute. Houses in neighborhoods with higher percentages of minority residents typically have lower values and appreciate more slowly.

Throughout the St. Louis region, the median home values of homes owned by blacks are significantly less than those of whites (Purnell, J., et al., 2014).

Median Home Values

	Black	White
St. Louis County	\$108,600	\$195,600
St. Louis City	\$82,900	\$145,700

Source: ACS 2006-2010 5-year estimates via “For the Sake of All” Report, 2014
<https://forthesakeofall.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/for-the-sake-of-all-report.pdf>

Nowhere is this more apparent than on St. Louis’ “Delmar Divide.”

North of Delmar Avenue, between Delmar and Page Boulevard, the population is 99 percent African-American, the median income is \$22,000 per year, 5 percent of residents have a bachelor’s degree and the median home value is \$78,000.

South of Delmar, between Delmar and Lindell Boulevard, the population is 70 percent white, the median income is \$47,000 per year, 67 percent of residents have a bachelor’s degree and the median home value is \$310,000 (Gilbert 2015).

The desire for segregation has a long history rooted in beliefs about race. The Missouri Compromise in 1820 made Missouri the only slave state in the Midwest. A zoning law passed in 1916 made St. Louis the first place in the nation to enact mandatory residential segregation based on the logic that if hotels and schools were segregated, housing should be as well (Wells and Crain 1999). Though the U.S. Supreme Court made

racial zoning illegal in 1917, systematic segregation through the use of neighborhood association restrictive covenants barred selling or leasing property to people of color, usually blacks, up until 1948. After the use of restrictive covenants was outlawed, segregation continued through the practice of redlining, when realtors steered buyers and renters to certain parts of the city based on their racial demographics. Documentation as recent as the 1990s confirms that realtors continued the practice by routing blacks to historically African-American neighborhoods regardless of preference or price, while whites were warned away (Gordon 2009).

According to the Altarum Institute, the most recent national research study of discrimination in housing showed that in 2012 the most overt forms of discrimination, such as refusing to meet with a minority home buyer/renter, have decreased since the first national study was conducted in 1977. But more subtle forms of discrimination persist, and they increase the housing search cost and limit housing choices for people of color.

Education

In our region, housing and K-12 education are inextricably linked. Where you live determines which one of the 23 public school districts between St. Louis city and St. Louis County in which your children will enroll. Place matters when it comes to education – property taxes have always been a key part of public school funding. While the Missouri Legislature redeveloped its funding formula in 2005 to give more state money to less wealthy school districts (Future Builders Foundation), it has not been able to even meet federal guidelines for per-student funding because of budget shortfalls. In fact, St. Louis County has one of the widest variations in districts that are adequately funded or not (The Missouri Budget Project, 2014).

In its 1972 decision *Liddell v. Board of Education of the City of St. Louis*, the Supreme Court ruled that St. Louis public schools had not provided equal educational opportunity for black children.

In 1983, almost 30 years after *Brown v. Board of Education* and after a decade of countersuits and negotiations, a settlement was made, creating a dual transfer system. The desegregation program allowed children from the St. Louis public school system, who were mostly black, to transfer to mostly white suburban schools, and suburban students to transfer to city magnet schools.

Progress toward integration started to reverse in 1999 when St. Louis Public Schools reached a settlement agreement that ended federal court supervision of its integration efforts. Suburban schools no longer had to accept a specific number of transfer students, and as a result, the number of transfer students, which peaked at 14,227 during the 1999-2000 school year, fell to 5,130 by 2013 (Grooms, 2014). This settlement decision, combined with legal limitations on mandatory racial integration, has resulted in a re-segregation of St. Louis city and county public schools.

The “re-segregated” educational system is due, in large part, to the racial and economic segregation that persists throughout the region because of decades of government policies, residential zoning practices and racial prejudice that have reinforced these residential divides (Rothstein, 2014). This has created widespread socioeconomic disparities, including neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty (Purnell, et. al. 2014). As the courts have weakened the legal foundation of race-based integration efforts, returning children to their neighborhood schools has resulted in public schools again becoming as segregated as their communities and neighborhoods. In St. Louis, with its long history of segregation, the impact of re-segregation on educational equity has been pronounced.

The impact of this re-segregation is significant, because the socioeconomics of a school district help shape the educational opportunities in that district. In Missouri, public schools receive 49 percent of their funding from local government revenue, plus 42 percent from the state and nine percent from the federal government (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Local government revenues are derived primarily from property taxes, meaning that in Missouri, almost half of a public school district’s funding is determined by the amount of property tax revenue generated in that district. Low-income communities, with fewer homeowners and lower property values, generate less property tax revenue and have less money to fund public schools. Consequently, children in low-income communities have become increasingly re-segregated into neighborhood schools with fewer resources and less funding.

In fact, since the supervised transfer program ended, several of the most segregated school districts in the region have lost their accreditation from the state -- including St. Louis City Public Schools.

In 2007, the Missouri State Board of Education removed its accreditation of the St. Louis Public Schools and simultaneously created a new management structure for the district.

Currently, St. Louis Public Schools has a report card rating of 43 percent according to the Missouri Department of Secondary Education Report Card.

But a few of the region's other failing districts have lost their accreditation from the state in recent years.

Most recently, the Normandy School District where 97.5 percent of the students are African-American and 71 percent qualify for free and reduced lunch, received a 7.14 percent on the state report card (Missouri Department of Secondary Education 2015).

Riverview Gardens, where 97.5 percent of the students are African-American and 78 percent qualify for free and reduced lunch, has also been at risk. Last year, it scored 45.4 percent on the state report card (Missouri Department of Secondary Education 2015).

Another component in reducing inequities in our schools is looking at the gaps in the disciplining of children of color, compared to that of their white counterparts. Education experts believe that ignoring the gaps in school discipline make it impossible to closing the achievement gap (Losen et. al. 2015). Research shows that higher suspension rates are closely correlated with higher dropout and delinquency rates, and that they have tremendous economic costs for the suspended students and for society as a whole (Losen et. al. 2015). These disparities will likely have an adverse and disparate impact on the academic achievement and life outcomes of those children.

Missouri ranked last among 50 states in a UCLA study for having the highest gap in suspension rates between black and white elementary school pupils in 2011-12. Across the state, 80 percent of black students attend elementary school in a district with suspension rates above 10 percent for black elementary students.

The study found that in St. Louis, 28 more black than white students are suspended per 100 enrolled in St. Louis. In fact, three school districts in the St. Louis region -- St. Louis City, Normandy and Riverview Gardens -- suspended more than 20 percent of its elementary school children, ranking in the top 10 of schools with the largest rate of suspensions in the nation.

Post-secondary and Into the Workforce

Among white residents 25 years and older in St. Louis, 73 percent have some college or more as their highest level of education. That percentage drops to 54 percent among African Americans. (Purnell, J., et al., 2014)

The statistics become even more disheartening when you consider the need for higher education for the workforce of the future.

By 2020, 42.6 percent of the jobs in the St. Louis region will require at least an associate's degree or higher for family-supporting wages, according to estimates from PolicyLink and the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE).

The projections also estimate that 67.1 percent of workers will have some college or higher; 42.6 percent will have an associate's degree or higher; and 33.6 percent will have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Furthermore, there is a population of young people from age 16 to 24 who are not enrolled in school or currently working. Most of them are people of color. Nearly 24 percent of African-American youth currently do not have jobs and are not enrolled in primary or secondary education, compared to 11.9 percent of Latinos, 9.1 percent of whites and 7.5 percent of Asians (Public Policy Research Center, University of Missouri-St. Louis 2015).

Also contributing to the disconnect in school enrollment and youth unemployment, roughly 21.3 percent of African Americans in the St. Louis Region do not have access to a vehicle, which reduces access to education and work. Only 4.7 percent of whites don't have access to a car.

Lastly, St. Louis is one of the most decentralized labor markets in the nation's 100 largest metropolitan areas: 61 percent of the region's jobs are located more than 10 miles away from downtown, making it even more difficult to contribute to the economy without access to a vehicle (Ferguson Commission 2015).

Income, Savings and Wealth

Even as adult workers, people of color consistently experience higher rates of unemployment than white workers in the labor force. The average unemployment rate for people of color is double the unemployment rate of white workers (Public Policy Research Center, University of Missouri-St. Louis 2015).

Income disparities have not improved drastically over time as some might expect. For example, in 1980 the median wage for people of color compared to whites was \$6.

Currently, that gap is \$5, outside of Asian Americans with university degrees, who are outpacing all groups that are similarly situated.

From 1990 to 2012 job growth in low-wage industries outpaced job growth in both middle-wage and high-wage industries, with an increase of 16.2 percent. The region saw a reduction in middle -wage industry jobs, and marginal growth in high-wage industries (Public Policy Research Center, University of Missouri-St. Louis 2015).

The wealth gap is much larger than the income gap and, many would argue, more consequential. Net worth is the key driver of opportunity from one generation to the next (Boshara 2015).

In the U.S., the median amount of net wealth for blacks was \$11,184. Latinos earned \$13,900; Asians \$91,440; and whites \$134,008. Race is one of the three strongest predictors of family wealth (Boshara 2015).

One of the main drivers of net worth is homeownership. As we saw in the housing portion of this document, this is an area that has historically been rife with inequities -- and that continues to be.

Health

According to *For the Sake of All*, “social and economic factors are strongly linked to health outcomes like disease, disability, and death.” Researchers refer to this as the socioeconomic gradient in health.

In the St. Louis region, at its most extreme, disparity looks like a life expectancy gap of 40 years. In mostly white, suburban Wildwood, Mo., the life expectancy is 91.4 years; in the mostly black, inner-ring suburb of Kinloch, Mo., it is 55.9 years.

In Clayton, ZIP code 63105, where the racial makeup is 78 percent white, 9 percent black and 14 percent other, life looks like this: an average life expectancy of 85 years, a median household income of \$90,000, 4 percent unemployment and 7 percent of the population living below the poverty line. Ten miles away in North St. Louis City, ZIP code 63106, where the racial makeup is 95 percent black, two percent white and three percent other, life looks a lot different. The average life expectancy is 67 years, the

median household income is \$15,000, the unemployment rate is 24 percent, and 54 percent of people live below poverty line (Purnell, et. al 2014).

Life expectancy differs drastically by race and gender across Missouri: White women are expected to live 79.4 years, compared to an average life expectancy of black men at 63.9 years.

In a place that prides itself on its healthcare economy, even hospital emergency room visits vary drastically by race, with blacks significantly overrepresented in numerous areas compared to whites, for conditions including asthma, diabetes mellitus with complications and hypertension (Barker 2015). For example, five blacks were seen for asthma for every one white in the region. It's not just in physical health that disparities are evident, but it's mental health too. Blacks are seen in the emergency room for schizophrenia at a rate of seven blacks compared to one white (Barker 2015).

Certainly other factors contribute to these disparities, such as income, gender, and physician perception of presenting symptoms, but the literal health of the region-- physical, mental and economic -- will be enhanced by embracing a racial equity lens as we work to rebuild our region.

MAKING THE CASE TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND AVOID COMMON PITFALLS

As the region takes the bold step to acknowledge the policies and norms that have contributed to the racial inequity of today, it is important to be aware of common pitfalls that stymie progress.

Tokenism is one common mistake organizations make as they attempt to move towards equity. It is the assumption is that numerical diversity will fix the problem. However, having one or a handful of people of color within a predominantly White organization fails to alter patterns of institutional inequity. To benefit from the innovation that comes from diversity, an organization will need to do more than make room at the table. Facilitating idea sharing, creating mechanisms for different perspectives to contribute, and ensuring an inclusive climate are necessary ingredients for success.

Another common pitfall is failure to accept that on a personal level, we all have unconscious biases that need to be examined and more than likely, be challenged. The phrase, "I don't have a prejudiced bone in my body," is inaccurate, because each

individual has been socialized within a particular cultural context, which shapes how they judge the world. Inherently, these judgments are not all “bad” but become problematic when unchecked and allowed to guide and drive behavior. Psychological research has given us blueprints for how to dismantle biases and contribute on a personal level to institutional racial equity (for examples, see the work of Patricia Devine (Devine, Forscher, Austin, Cox, 2012) and the Perception Institute, <http://perception.org/>, (Godsil, R. D., Tropp, L. R., Goff, P. A., powell, j. a., 2014)). We all have a role to play in becoming more aware of how inequity plays out on personal, cultural, and institutional levels. It is not a matter of “who are the bad apples in the barrel?” because we have all been socialized in ways that have contributed to unconscious biases. The dynamics of racial equity go beyond this personal work to include reflection on institutional policies and procedures—“How is the barrel constructed and who does it benefit?”

The last pitfall is that of colorblindness. The end goal for racial equity is to make race a non-factor in the distribution of resources and opportunity. It is not to make us colorblind and fail to see differences. In fact, research has found that having a colorblind perspective can increase bias (Apfelbaum, Norton, Sommers, 2012). To that end, the disaggregation of data can help us see clearly where we are and where we need to be. To be honest and steadfast in making progress, we must be willing to consistently and openly disaggregate data by race.

CONCLUSION

From quality of life to life itself, striving for racial equity will have a dramatic effect on nearly every sector of our region, from education and health to income and employment. Racial equity will have a billion-dollar impact on our economy and change the trajectory for all who live in our region.

Racial equity is possible in St. Louis, and the region can be a model for other cities. Our past and present suggest that continuing to ignore the racial implications of our policies and practices will result in a future where we fail to thrive.

So, how do we get there?

There is no roadmap to racial equity. No one place has it all figured out. Therefore it can be extremely uncomfortable to strive for something that feels elusive and ephemeral.

Yet, the data presented frames the urgency of the matter. Forward through Ferguson has attempted to articulate the many pieces that might make up a successful attempt at creating Racial Equity. There are also numerous resources and frameworks that have been developed (<http://racialequitytools.org/rel#>, <http://www.racialequityresourceguide.org/guides/guides-and-workshops>, http://racialequityalliance.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/GARE-Racial_Equity_Toolkit.pdf, <http://greenlining.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GLI-REF-Toolkit.pdf>).



The Path for institutions

The Path Toward Racial Equity outlined here is a road map organizations and institutions can use as they join Forward Through Ferguson in this work. Though different organizations will find themselves at different starting points along this path, all organizations will find opportunities to advance.

PHASE 1: KNOW WHERE YOU STAND

To advance along a path toward Racial Equity, it's vital to know where you stand. Examining your institution's data, language, and culture through a Racial Equity lens may mean facing some hard truths, but it will make clear where change is needed, and provide a baseline for evaluating future progress.

As you engage in this discovery, talk to people across the organization to let them know you're working to address Racial Equity. Don't let this effort seem like a secret, or surprise people with your findings at the end. Invite them into the process.

1. Examine your data.

What does your organizational data say about race? Unconscious bias may blind you to racial inequity, but the numbers don't lie. Start with whatever data is available, and disaggregate it by race.

Look at hires, promotions, racial composition by level, who gets tapped for development opportunities, who gets the best projects ... any metric you value, disaggregate it by race. You might not like what the data has to say, but you will see any problems you have more clearly -- and you can't treat a problem you don't see.

Once you have this data, prepare for both backlash and support. Some will say "I told you so," and some will say even running the analysis is needlessly divisive, but others will line up to help. Prepare for these reactions, and commit to examining the data anyway. You need to understand to advance.

2. Examine your language.

How does your organization or institution talk -- or avoid talking -- about race? Examine the language of your organization, and look at it through a Racial Equity lens.

Do people talk about equity? Diversity? Inclusion? Cultural competency? Race? If so, how? Is there language in your mission, vision, or other guiding documents that supports equity, diversity, or inclusion? If not, why? If there is more generic language about “doing the right thing” or “serving all customers well,” do you evaluate how you live up to that? If not, how could you?

Words matter. The way we talk about race impacts our ability to foster Racial Equity.

3. Examine your culture.

The numbers only tell part of the story. Organizational practices and personal experience tell the rest. To understand the organizational culture, engage in radical listening, and ask people to share their stories. Seek to understand the experiences of non-White people in your organization, perhaps with the help of an outside facilitator.

Examine your institutional practices, from hiring to what you reward. For example, where and how do you recruit? Is this process equitable, or biased toward those with certain connections? Explore ways you might make recruitment and hiring more equitable.

Leverage the data you examined to help identify policies, practices, and processes to analyze.

PHASE 2: REACH OUT TO OTHERS

As you and your organization navigate along the path to Racial Equity, you will be joined by fellow travelers who are invested in your success. Let them know what you’re working on, and invite them to help.

4. Share what you’ve learned.

Once you know where you stand, communicate what you’ve learned to stakeholders within the organization, and within the community you serve. There may be shame and discomfort in sharing what you’ve found, but honesty and transparency are key to moving forward.

Being up front about what you’ve discovered also invites people at all levels of the organization, as well as all facets of your community, to get involved in figuring out a

way forward. If you are concerned about negative reactions, start small, and start with leadership.

As you share with new audiences, continue to listen. Be patient. Expect a range of reactions. Understand that buy-in is essential to progress, and that clear, honest communication is essential to buy-in.

5. Seek input.

Don't expect solutions to come from the leadership team alone (or even worse, from the HR team alone). Solicit input, ideas, and recommendations from people at all levels of the organization. Ask other organizations, in your industry and in others, how they are approaching these challenges. Engage consultants and organizations that specialize in this work. Make connections.

PHASE 3: PLAN YOUR STEPS

You've made significant progress to this point, but the real work lies ahead. Tempting as it may be to dive in, the right move at this point is to develop a strategic plan for your efforts.

6. Choose your words.

The words you use to talk about Racial Equity will frame your efforts, impacting the mindset of individuals and the culture of the organization. Work with key stakeholders to make decisions about the words the organization will use going forward, and develop a common language related to race, racism, and Racial Equity. Determine the key terms that are most essential for the organization to adopt. Ensure people understand the difference between equality and equity.

Start at the top of the organization. If people at the lower and middle levels are asked and expected to use certain language, but don't hear that language used by senior leadership, the change will not stick. If senior leadership models use of the new language, the rest of the organization will understand that this effort matters, and will follow suit.

7. Create space for the work.

Once you know how you will talk about change, you need to make space -- emotional, temporal, physical, and financial -- for people to work on these changes. If you want to

communicate clearly that these issues are important to the organization, you must dedicate precious resources to addressing them.

This means setting aside designated times during the workweek, and creating and supporting physical spaces inside and outside the workplace, where individuals and teams can learn, practice, connect, and engage in dialogue about dismantling racism and deconstructing unconscious bias.

This also means creating space in meeting agendas to discuss Racial Equity, rather than considering it an add-on that can be sacrificed when time or money is tight. And it means creating space in your budgets for the resources needed to appropriately and effectively do this work.

8. Determine success criteria.

Ask yourself: What does success look like? Which metrics will we use to track our progress? How often will we measure progress? What is a reasonable time frame to expect measurable change to have occurred? Who is responsible for progress? How do we create accountability, in the organization and in the community?

You won't have an effective strategy unless you know where you want to go.

9. Develop a systemic strategy.

When considering strategies, look at all the elements of the system, not just isolated aspects of it. Work to address the root causes of a problem, not simply attack symptoms. Challenge the organization to develop a systemic, long-term approach to problem solving. Commit to making sustainable, integrated change, and not pouring effort into a short-term, one-facet program that will one day be referred to as "that Racial Equity initiative from a few years ago."

Consider the energy, focus, patience, and critical thinking you would commit to crafting a strategic plan for launching a new product, entering a new market, or reaching a new benchmark, and apply the same effort here.

PHASE 4: TAKE ACTION

Reflecting, evaluating, thinking, and planning are important. But action is necessary for change.

10. Implement your strategy

Whatever strategy you've developed, pursue it. Invest your energy, time, and resources in it. Seek out training, support, and partnerships that will help you reach your objectives. And be patient.

11. Check and Adjust

Use the success criteria you established earlier to monitor your progress, and adjust your actions accordingly. At periodic intervals, go back to the earlier steps in the path -- examine your data, language, and culture to see if you are progressing, reach out to others to share what you've learned and seek input, and plan steps to take your efforts to the next level. Keep working the steps in the path until you achieve Racial Equity -- and once you have achieved it, embrace the new challenges of sustaining it, and helping other organizations and institutions achieve it.



6- Month Process to Develop a Common Language of Racial Equity and Disaggregate Data

This process represents the first two steps along the path to racial equity within institutions. You have the full arc of where an institution might need to travel on its way to Racial Equity as presented above. However, this process outlines step-by-step how to build a strong foundation.

Are you ready?

This process can be uncomfortable and should not be embarked upon if you are unclear about why Racial Equity is important and central or uncertain it is something that you can facilitate the organization working towards. You will be pushed to ask tough questions and have difficult dialogues with people in power to develop or leverage buy in. If you have questions about your ability or willingness, please let us know. No judgment. It's better to know now rather than later. If you need guidance equipping yourself to implement The Path, also let us know. There are regional resources we can refer you to that speak to the personal path to understanding and enacting racial equity.

WEEK 1-2: WHY EQUITY

Goal:

To get buy-in from leadership that Racial Equity is a worthy goal—a goal worth investing time, energy and resources.

Tools:

- Ferguson Commission Report and website
- Forward Through Ferguson website
- Organization website
- Documents within the sector that hold up racial equity and related goals (e.g, http://racialequityalliance.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/GARE-Resource_Guide-Step_4.pdf, <http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityinSeattleReport2012-14.pdf>).

Tasks:

- Read the mission/vision statements and strategic plan of the organization.

- Review notes from when you read the report, path, and data supporting why Racial Equity is important to the institution or the sector.
- If needed, gather additional compelling research that speaks to the need to focus on Racial Equity (e.g., https://cue.usc.edu/files/2016/01/CUE_WhyRace_2013.pdf)
- Have meetings with your supervisor and institutional leadership to present the direction for developing Steps 1 and 2 of The Path. (e.g., “Here is my understanding of Racial Equity.... Do you feel prepared to work towards Racial Equity? If no, how can I support you to learn more? If yes, here is what Forward Through Ferguson is putting forward as the first two steps in a broader path..... Do you have specific concerns or material you want to share with me at this time?)
- Listen carefully to specific concerns they have. Do not get defensive if they don’t have a firm grasp on the concepts.
- What resources do they need to get on board? Have they read the report? Set a timeline for getting that info to them and schedule another meeting either to walk them through the material or discuss after they had read.

Outcome:

Leadership agrees to move forward with steps 1 and 2 of The Path.

WEEK 3-4: COMMON LANGUAGE RESEARCH

Goal:

Explore the current language used by the institution- internally and externally- related to race, Racial Equity, diversity, inclusion, etc.

Tools:

- Institutional brochures, websites
- HR, diversity councils or committees, leadership, employees

Tasks:

- Inquire with leadership, HR, and supervisor about language and terms.
- Examine both formal (published) and informal (daily conversation) language.
- Read materials.
- Be on the lookout for colorblindness (the minimization of race).
- Are they able to directly say racially descriptive words (e.g., “race,” “Black,” “White,” “Asian,” “Latino(a),” “Native American,” etc.)?
- Understand how these terms were used, applied, put into action. Are racially descriptive words used in conversation but not in print? This understanding can help to assess for readiness and capacity for clear racial equity language.

Outcome:

A list of the existing definitions and terms.

WEEK 4-6: COMMON LANGUAGE DISCUSSION

Goal:

Using the definitions and terms from Forward Through Ferguson as a starting point, help to guide and develop a common language regarding Racial Equity.

Tools:

- Definitions and terms from Forward Through Ferguson (see appendix)
- Definitions and terms from other sources (e.g., <http://www.racialequityresourceguide.org/about/glossary>)
- Resources from other organizations this organization sees as a peer or exemplar

Tasks:

- Analyze the list from the prior week.
- Begin to draw distinctions for the institution between what language is being used and Racial Equity. Identify gaps if present.
- Share the list of current language along with the racial equity terms with leadership and potentially a wider audience.
- Have small group and/or one-on-one discussions about thoughts, reactions, questions regarding the lists paying particular attention to the extent to which the Racial Equity language is a fit for the organization (e.g., What do people think about the language? What do they think is missing? Do they think there's a place for racial equity within the organization?)

Outcome:

A list of racial equity definitions and terms the institution will utilize.

WEEK 7-8: GAP ANALYSIS REPORT

Goal:

To write a report that outlines where the language was in relation to Racial Equity, and your recommendations. (see appendix)

Tools:

- Lists from prior weeks

Tasks:

- Compare current and suggested language

- Identify how having the list and common language could serve the institution in its goals
- Identify where the list could be posted, shared and discussed.
- After a draft of the report is written, socialize it with your supervisor and leadership.
- Decide on how the report will be disseminated to the broader organization.
- Have leadership consider how they will exhibit commitment to these suggestions and support the work beyond your time with the organization. How will the work be integrated and institutionalized?

Outcome:

A brief report.

WEEK 9: PRESENT REPORT

Goal:

Using the report as the basis, create an informative and engaging presentation that will communicate the current status of language at the institution. Include suggestions and recommendations for change.

Tools:

- The data and materials gathered previously

Tasks:

- Develop presentation based on collected data.
- Incorporate outside exemplars and models to increase the extent to which the organization feels a shift (if recommended) is feasible.
- Consider having leadership send an email, speak at an event or show some other sign of buy-in and commitment to institutionalizing this work beyond you.

Outcome:

A presentation to leadership and broader audience to create shared buy-in.

WEEK 10-11: METRICS

Goal:

Examine internal and external metrics that are related to performance, profit, and values of the organization.

Tools:

- The relationships you have developed within the organization.

Tasks:

- Discuss with leadership, HR, and employees the internal evaluation process. (e.g., Gather the basics of numbers of individuals in departments, level of the organization, salary, promotion, retention, recruitment. At least these data need to be disaggregated by race. Then go beyond the numbers “What performance indicators, both quality and quantity, are valued? What measures let you know an employee is succeeding or an organizational goal has been met?” http://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/gare-racial_equity_toolkit.pdf page 8)
- Also discuss external benchmarking. What are others that we aspire to measuring that we are not (e.g., in education <http://advance.oregonstate.edu/metrics-evaluating-support-equity-inclusion-and-justice>)?
- Ask how they will know when they have “arrived” in terms of Racial Equity.
- Listen for stories about “way back when” (e.g., when all the Black patrons had to enter the side door, when women had to wear panty hose, etc.). These stories can be used to frame where the organization has been and propel it forward. They can also be a source of validation for those within the organization from under-represented groups. So often their stories go unheard and buried. Simply lifting them up to say “Historically, _____ had to enter the back door, and now represent a third of our workforce, and a quarter of our leadership” acknowledges inequities and progress.

Outcome:

A list of metrics that will be measured at baseline and set intervals.

WEEK 12-14: DESIGN AND PLAN FOR DISAGGREGATION

Goal:

As you complete gathering values and metrics, begin to keep track of when data on these items has been disaggregated. Is there any institutional data disaggregated by race or any other demographic or social identity measure? Oftentimes, organizations have such data by gender, which can then be considered as a potential model for focusing on Racial Equity.

Tools:

- HR
- University statistical support

Tasks:

- Quantitative data: Sift through reports and data set (http://www.educationnewyork.com/files/The%20importance%20of%20disaggregating_0.pdf)
- Qualitative data: Meet with employees, one on one or by focus groups to understand the lived experience behind data available.
- This step is a place to consider intersectionality. What are the various social identities that intersect with race that need to be taken into consideration? For example, it might be important to examine not only the experience of Latino men, but you might need to make extra efforts to interview Latino women. What can data tell you about how Black women are represented in leadership compared to Black men, White women and White men?

Outcome:

An accounting of which metrics have and have not been disaggregated by race with special attention given to the metrics and values identified previously.

WEEK 14-15: STATE OF THE DATA AND DISAGGREGATION

Goal:

Support the institution to disaggregate data using the person who assesses programs or runs statistical analyses on employee and climate data or take the data back to your institution. If so, make sure to be cognizant of holding sensitive data points. For example, if there is one person of color in leadership, do not report data about people of color in leadership. It might be necessary to collapse multiple categories to have enough in a group to report data while still protecting confidentiality.

Tools:

- Internal/external capacity for disaggregation

Tasks:

- Meet with the staff member who runs the data analyses. If this resource is not available, reach out immediately to secure the expertise from a peer institution or a consultant.
- Consult widely to confirm the metrics and values that are at the forefront are the ones being measured.
- If not, meet with leadership to reconcile what is being valued vs measured.
- Decide on which metric data needs to be disaggregated, which needs to start being measured, and which does not align with a Racial Equity framework.
- Look to aspirant institutions to see what data they disaggregate.

Outcome:

Metric data disaggregated by race.

WEEK 16-17: GAP ANALYSIS REPORT

Goal:

Write a report that synthesizes the findings and makes recommendations.

Tools:

- Internal and external data gathered

Tasks:

- Write up the internal data disaggregated by race.
- Write up what metrics were not able to be addressed and suggestions for filling those gaps
- Write up what other peer or aspirant organizations are measuring that would be worth considering.
- Be sure to use language from the common language process.
- Discuss the “so what?” Articulate how this information links to not only the broad goal of Racial Equity in the organization, which is a part of the region, but also connects with the mission of the organization.

Outcome:

- A brief report

WEEK 18: PRESENT AND DISCUSS REPORT WITH LEADERSHIP

Goal:

Share findings and recommendations with leadership to create buy in.

Tools:

- Gap analysis report

Tasks:

- Meet one on one with leadership to discuss the report.
- Inquire the extent to which recommendation can be adopted. If there are commitments, it shows institutional support and should be shared at the presentation or with dissemination of the report.

Outcome:

- A discussion with leadership about the report.

WEEK 19-20: PRESENT AND DISCUSS WITH WIDER LEADERSHIP AND INSTITUTION

Goal:

Share ideas and recommendations beyond the leadership to create a shared commitment around Racial Equity.

Tools:

- Buy-in and visible institutional commitment.

Tasks:

- Have a series of small group presentations if possible. If a large gathering works, have small group dialogue afterwards.
- Also, make the report available internally on the website, or other more non-traditional channels.

Outcome:

- A presentation to a wider audience.

WEEK 21-22: NEXT STEPS REPORT

Goal:

To leave the organization with a document that examines internal and external factors related to Racial Equity, captures a common language and disaggregates data,

Tools:

- Aspen Institute
- Race Forward
- A peer or exemplar

Tasks:

- Write the report.

Outcome:

A report that summarizes both reports and feedback gathered from the wider audiences.

WEEK 23-24: SOCIALIZE NEXT STEPS REPORT AND FINALIZE PLANS FOR INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Tools:

- Next Steps report

Tasks:

- Looping back to the individuals and groups you met with over the course of this process, share and discuss the report. It serves as a source of accountability to show that you did something with the information and time they invested. If there were commitments of how this work will continue given by leadership, this information should also be shared.

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Racial Equity Definitions

Equity: Fairness and justice rather than sameness (equality)
(equity vs. equality graphic)

<http://www.sewallfoundation.org/uploads/pdf/Social%20Equity.pdf>

Racial Equity: When people have access and opportunity regardless of race.
Therefore, outcomes become random and not able to be predicted by race.

Ten Lessons on Taking Leadership on Racial Equity:

http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/images/rcc/Lessons_final.pdf

Race: Something we have created that has no basis scientifically but still means a lot socially in terms of access, opportunity, education, assumptions, etc. (we can't tell it by DNA, or any other physical characteristic. Really).

Race: The Power of an Illusion

http://www.pbs.org/race/000_About/002_04-about-01.htm

Ethnicity: Common cultural or national heritage (different from race but often used interchangeably)

People of Color: Often used to refer to the collective group including African American/Black, Latino/a, Asian American, Native American, and people who are multiracial. Not to be confused with "colored," which is a derogatory term historically used to refer to African Americans. These terms are imperfect and change with time. Be open and responsive to people's self-definitions of their race or ethnicity.

(a system) Racism: A system of privilege and disadvantage on the basis of race.

(an act) Discrimination: Treating people differently, on purpose, because of their group membership

(an act) Implicit/unconscious bias: Treating people, unconsciously/without being aware of it, because of their group membership

(within an institution) Institutional Racism: Unfair and disparate norms, policies, and procedures within an organization on the basis of race

(across institutions) Structural Racism: Unfair and disparate norms, policies, and procedures across institutions on the basis of race, which accumulates and compounds inequities.

Privilege: Unequal access to benefits that should be available to everyone or advantages that come with group membership. (something to leverage rather than feel guilty about; acknowledged rather than ashamed)

Stereotypes: Short cuts where we attribute traits or tendencies to an entire group (good or bad, they are important to be aware of, because it's easier for us to "see" stuff that fits our ideas of people)

Prejudice: Feelings about a group based on prior and often incomplete information

Microaggressions: Subtle messages (sometimes explicit sometimes implicit) that give the message someone is less than due to their group membership. Even though "micro" is in the word, they are not small or unimportant.

Diversity: Differences such as social identities (e.g., race, gender identity, age, religion, sexual orientation, class, physical ability, nation of origin, etc.) and can also mean other characteristic such as personality, political affiliation, etc.

Inclusion: A sense of belonging, which allows people to engage and contribute within an environment (the way to reap the benefits of diversity).

Intersectionality: Acknowledgement of the overlapping nature of social identities, which highlights the ways discrimination and disadvantage is compounded leaving some groups invisible (e.g, if we think about the group disadvantaged by race as Black men and the group disadvantaged by sexism White women, we miss the experiences of other groups with racism and sexism)

Colorblindness: The tendency to minimize the importance of race and its relevance (e.g., "I don't see color." "If we would stop talking about race, it would become less of an issue." "It's _____ that we need to focus rather than focusing on race." "Talking about race is what is divisive.")



Sample Structure Gap Analysis Report Structure for Common Language

1. Reiterate the goal of Racial Equity and the reasons, drawn from leadership, it is a goal for this particular organization.
2. Introduce the first two steps of the Path as a way to build a solid foundation for moving forward.
3. Present the importance of having a common language.
4. Report back the local language of the organization.
5. Discuss how it has been used and where it was found.
6. Speak to how this language does and does not forward Racial Equity.
7. Give suggestions about the language might better align with Racial Equity.
8. If needed, link to the Forward Through Ferguson definitions or other institutions that are respected within the organization.
9. Close with any institutional commitment to weave this language into internal culture and written documents that are internal and external facing.



Sample Structure Gap Analysis Report Structure for Disaggregating Data

1. Reiterate the goal of Racial Equity and the reasons, drawn from leadership, it is a goal for the organization.
2. Remind them of this second step on the path is building a solid foundation for moving forward.
3. Present the importance of disaggregating data.
4. Discuss how you went about collecting this data.
5. Report back what metrics are currently collected that relate to Racial Equity.
6. Report what values were noted as important related to Racial Equity.
7. Discuss the extent to which these metrics and values give a full picture of where the organization is with regard to Racial Equity
8. Offer recommendations about what could be measured and collected that could further the organization's understanding of where it is.
9. Offer recommendations about benchmarks and goals related to where the organization is currently potentially pulling in data and progress of exemplar or aspirant organizations.
10. Be sure to use language from the common language process.
11. Discuss the "so what?" Articulate how this information links to not only the broad goal of Racial Equity in the organization, which is a part of the region, but also connects with the mission of the organization.



Sample Structure for the Next Steps Report

1. Reiterate the connection between working towards Racial Equity and this institution's mission.
2. Recap the process of creating a common language and disaggregating data
3. Share the resources you have gathered that can further guide their work. Exemplars within the sector are most helpful.
4. If applicable, recap leadership's commitment to integrating this work into the organization and follow the metrics over time.
5. If no commitments have been made by leadership, share recommendations for what next steps might look like using the Path.