



City of Seattle

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Seattle Office for Civil Rights

Patricia Lally, Director

November 6, 2014

To: Honorable Tim Burgess, President
Seattle City Council

From: Patty Lally, Director
Seattle Office for Civil Rights

Subject: **Overview of RSJI Actions and Accomplishments in 2014**

This year marks the end of the Race and Social Justice Initiative's (RSJI) current three-year plan. As we continue to develop our draft 2015-17 RSJI Strategic Plan, I am pleased to present a summary of RSJI's accomplishments in 2014. Highlights in 2014 include:

RSJI Executive Order signed

- On April 3, Mayor Murray signed an Executive Order affirming the City's commitment to the Race and Social Justice Initiative, and expanding it to include measurable outcomes, greater accountability, and community-wide efforts to achieve racial equity throughout Seattle. The Executive Order requires the City to:
 - Establish new goals, track outcomes over time and report on the City's progress towards achieving racial equity in nine equity areas.
 - Use a Race and Social Justice Assessment Program to review programs, policies and practices.
 - Incorporate a racial equity lens for all Citywide initiatives.
 - Apply the City's Racial Equity Toolkit on all budget proposals.
- SOCR and other City departments have used the Executive Order to prioritize RSJI actions and activities.

Development of a new RSJI 3-Year Plan

- Starting in May, SOCR began holding a series of discussions and community meetings to assess the Race and Social Justice Initiative and chart the Initiative's future direction in 2015-17.
- A total of 36 internal and external listening sessions, including three extended community forums (Education, Criminal Justice & Public Safety, and Equitable Development), were held to compile input for the new plan.
- SOCR plans to share a draft version of the plan with the Mayor's Office and Council by late December, followed by a public community event in mid-January. The final version is planned for release by the end of January 2015.

Racial Equity Fund

- SOCR awarded funding to six organizations in 2014 to address structural racism in the community:
 - Partners for Black Parent Empowerment

- School's Out WA
- King County Coalition on Racial Disproportionality
- Southeast Seattle Education Coalition (SESEC)
- Non-Profit Anti-Racism Coalition (NPARC)
- WA State Indian Commission
- In 2013, more than 700 youth and adults had received racial equity training, had learned to facilitate racial equity discussions and had connected with more than 80 community organizations to address structural racism in education and social services. The organizations also held more than 25 "How to Talk about Racism" workshops for adults and youth in the community and how to access college and university level education.
- In 2014, the six organizations selected for funding implemented use of racial equity toolkits in the child foster care system, increased training and curricula for youth to address racism in schools, supported racial equity professionals in Seattle and began racial equity work in the Urban Indian community. SOCR will be collecting final reports by the end of this year.

Community Survey Results

- In 2014, SOCR released a detailed report on the first biennial RSJI survey to track Seattle community perspectives on race and equity. ([Click here to read the survey report](#) and [here for the appendix.](#)) The survey, which SOCR conducted in November 2013, found:
 - There is overwhelming support for government to prioritize addressing racial equity gaps in jobs, health, housing and other areas. A combined 70% of respondents feel this should be a high priority of government.
 - Seattle's economy is on the rise; yet the benefits of a strong economy are not felt equally by all. Community members across all demographics spoke to the need for greater housing affordability. People of color rate economic opportunities lower than their white counterparts, even while the majority of people feel positive about the economy.
 - A sizeable portion of Seattleites are distrustful of the Police Department. Over 70% have only a little or just some confidence in their local police to treat blacks and whites equally. African Americans are the least likely to have confidence in police officers to do a good job enforcing the law, and the least likely to have confidence that police officers will treat blacks and whites equally.
 - Concern about the growth and economic development in Seattle is the most important issue facing community members. Many respondents are concerned that Seattle is becoming a white, wealthy city, inaccessible to the diverse populations who helped build it.
 - Across Seattle, there is consensus that racial problems continue and we have more work to do. Community attitudes and perceptions about racial equity matter. Ninety-four percent of respondents agreed that we have more work to do to address racial inequities in Seattle.
- The RSJI Community Survey provides the City with baseline data to measure future RSJI work.

Use of the Racial Equity Toolkit within City government

- Following the RSJI Executive Order's direction to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit to all budget proposals, SOCR provided training on the Toolkit to all Central Budget Office staff and Finance Managers from all City departments.

- Multiple departments and interdepartmental teams applied the Toolkit in 2014. Notable uses include the Utility Discount Program, the Seattle Preschool Program (creating a specialized toolkit for program implementation), the Seattle Department of Human Resources strategic planning process development, and the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan (specialized Toolkit processes for each chapter).

Equity Area – Equitable Development

- Co-chairs of the Equitable Development Team: Diane Sugimura and Patricia Lally.
- A public community forum and listening session on September 6, 2014 focused on equity in equitable development.
- Embedding racial and social equity in the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan has been the major focus of this Equity Team.

Equity Area – Education

- Co-chairs of the Education Equity Team: Holly Miller and Patricia Lally.
- A public community forum and listening session on October 11, 2014 focused on equity in education.
- The Education Equity Team will be developed in 2015 with guidance from the new RSJI three-year plan.

Equity Area – Criminal Justice & Public Safety

- Co-chairs of the Criminal Justice & Public Safety Equity Team: Darby DuComb and Patricia Lally.
- A public community forum and listening session on September 6, 2014 focused on equity in criminal justice and public safety.
- The Criminal Justice & Public Safety Equity Team will be developed in 2015 with guidance from the new RSJI three-year plan.

Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement (IOPE)

- The IOPE Interdepartmental Team meets on a monthly basis to provide tools and support to departments and citywide initiatives. Highlights in 2014 include:
 - Development of IOPE tools and manuals tailored for specific departments, such as Human Services Department, Office of Housing, Public Utilities and Transportation.
 - Support for individual departments' targeted outreach to non-English speaking communities for programs and projects.
 - Training for departments on use of simple English in written materials. Departments agreed to review their materials and web contents to remove jargon and be more accessible.
 - A best practices clinic last spring to share outreach strategies and lessons learned.
 - IOPE training to the Mayor's Office Outreach Team.

Training and support to departments

SOCR continued to sponsor and lead Citywide training for departments:

- Race: Power of an Illusion for new employees: monthly in 2014.
- Racial Equity Toolkit training: quarterly in 2014.
- In-depth racial equity training for Change Team members, other advocates: quarterly in 2014.

- Department-specific training and workshops: numerous sessions and events throughout 2014.

Building Public Will

- From June 2013 through February 2014, SOCR partnered with Pacific Science Center to support free pre- and post-exhibit workshops for over 200 groups serving more than 3,500 people from Seattle as well as King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties. SOCR trained 185 volunteer community facilitators to lead the workshops. Multiple departments and several community organizations contributed funds to support the project. Groups that organized workshops but could not afford Science Center admission were provided free tickets.
- 130 groups signed a Commitment to Action for Racial Equity following the group workshops.
- On January 29, over 300 people attended a final celebration and volunteer thank-you event at Seattle Center.

Community Institute for Racial Equity

- In May, RSJI launched the Community Institute for Racial Equity as part of the Campaign for Racial Equity. The Community Institute offered free training to other institutions, non-profit organizations, and groups from across the community, including a number of the groups who participated in the RACE Exhibit workshops and signed the Commitment to Action for Racial Equity.
- Through the Institute, RSJI provided two half-day trainings on racial equity for the Seattle Metro Chamber of Commerce.

Gender Equity

- On April 2, 2014, Council and the Mayor issued a joint resolution that affirmed the City's commitment to gender equity, and called for comprehensive measures to achieve it.
- SOCR is working with Deputy Mayor Kim and Councilmember Godden to develop an initiative to address gender equity in the private sector.
- SOCR is supporting the Seattle Department of Human Resources to develop training and strategies that address gender equity in Seattle City government, with a focus on institutional and structural sexism, and the intersections of race, gender and gender identity.

Department highlights – a few examples:

- **Department of Planning and Development:** Comprehensive Plan, *Seattle 2035*: DPD worked with PolicyLink to develop Comprehensive Plan policies through a racial equity lens.
- **Seattle Public Utilities:** SPU conducted language-interpreted outreach to low income and limited English speaking customers to receive feedback from immigrant and refugee communities on SPU's Strategic Business Plan. As a result, the Plan includes support for language and culture-specific outreach strategies, increased community education and partnerships.
- **Parks and Recreation:** The Seattle Parks District Measure passed this year includes RSJI outcomes with funded initiatives that will increase future access and opportunities to programs and facilities by underserved and underrepresented communities.
- **Office of Arts & Culture:** ARTS, in partnership with SOCR and community organizations, turned the controversy that happened surrounding the Seattle Gilbert and Sullivan Society's production

of “The Mikado” into an opportunity to engage the community in a conversation about race. 400 people attended a public forum on August 18 at the Seattle Repertory Theatre representing a broad cross-section of the community. ARTS followed the forum with two sold-out workshops on October 28 and 29 with Robin DiAngelo on White Fragility – a concept that many started referencing in relation to “The Mikado” controversy.

- **Office of Sustainability and the Environment:** OSE collaborated with Got Green, a people of color-led organization in Southeast Seattle, to hold the first Southeast Seattle Climate Justice Forum. Over 80 participants were largely people of color and youth. In anticipation of the event, OSE and Got Green co-hosted a cross-training to build capacity among Got Green Leadership Corp to engage in conversations on climate change and climate justice, to build OSE’s community outreach capacity, and to build relationships between City staff and environmental justice groups working in South Seattle. This collaboration dovetails with the Mayor’s new Equity and Environment Initiative.
- **Seattle Center:** Assisted with outreach and coordination for the highly successful Seattle/King County Clinic with Remote Area Medical held at Key Arena October, 23-26. This remarkable initiative partnered with more than 75 agencies and 1,400 volunteers to provide a range of free health, dental and vision services to 3,400 individual over a four-day period.
- **Office of Housing:** The OH Change Team developed its first OH RSJI Charter, approved by Senior Staff and the Department Director. They identified RSJ training needs in the department, collaborated with SOCR on two tailored RSJ trainings for all staff. This focus on RSJ fundamentals positions the Office of Housing to better assess and address race and social justice issues in its day-to-day work.

Looking ahead to 2015, SOCR will:

- Introduce a new RSJI Three-Year Plan that will strengthen the City’s commitment to community accountability.
- Increase Racial Equity Toolkit use by requiring a minimum number of utilizations by departments and increased trainings.
- Introduce a new workshop that explores social identity and social position, and how they intersect with race, as a way to explain why RSJI leads with race as a strategy to achieve equity for all. The material was used successfully in recent workshops for the Mayor’s Office and the RSJI Subcabinet. Two departments have already requested the training.
- Strengthen the Community Institute with a focus on training and workshops offered in partnership with community groups addressing the three main Equity Areas (Education, Criminal Justice & Public Safety, and Equitable Development).
- Partner with the Office of Arts & Culture to build racial equity within the arts and cultural sector and using arts and culture as vehicles to increase racial equity in other equity areas such as education and criminal justice.