

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE MEETING
MT. CALVARY AME ZION CHURCH
800 LASALLE STREET
MONROE, NC 28110
www.monroenc.org**

April 15, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.

AGENDA

Meeting will be conducted in the sanctuary.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. March 14, 2024 Meeting
 - b. March 20, 2024 Special Meeting
 - c. Presentation from March 20, 2024 Special Meeting
3. Old Business
4. New Business
5. Adjournment

Mission Statement

The City of Monroe is committed to ensuring that barriers of inequality are removed and all voices are heard. We will develop

and improve socio-economic opportunities. We pledge to promote open and inclusive conversations to foster cultural sensitivity that creates a sense of belonging.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.**

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee met on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. at Mt. Calvary AME Zion Church in Monroe.

Staff Present: Sheila Couick, Minute Taker

Members Present: Councilman Surluta Anthony (Chairperson), Benita Sanders, Cynthia Baez, Councilmember David Dotson, Melvin Tate (Co-Chairperson), Melissa McKeown, Tamara Williams, Tiffany Wilson

Members Absent: Althea Richardson-Tucker, Cress Barnes, Councilmember Franco McGee, Lanny Lancaster, Michael Hall, Selina Campbell, and Swindell Edwards

Guest: Jessica Eason, Human Resources Manager, Lisa Hollowell, Assistant to the City Manager

Chairperson Anthony opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. by welcoming everyone to the meeting and stating that there currently was not a quorum in attendance. Due to not having a quorum, items can be discussed but no action can be taken.

Benita Sanders handed out a draft DEI event schedule for all in attendance to review. She stated that the event would start at 6:00 p.m. Benita also handed out a task listing showing dates and the person assigned to handle each task. Copies of the event schedule and task listing are attached. Benita commented that she had someone that was going to help with the setup of the tables and chairs for the event.

Tamara Williams asked what time the committee members should arrive at the Dowd Center Theatre. Benita commented that committee members needed to be there by 4:00 p.m.

Benita Sanders asked if there were any flyers or a registration email. Chairperson Anthony commented that a committee email had been created and it was deiccommittee@monroenc.org.

Benita Sanders stated that cards and pens would be placed on the tables for questions.

Melissa McKeown commented that the date in the minutes was showing March 21, 2024. Chairperson Anthony stated the date was changed to March 20, 2024 due to the availability of the Dowd Center Theatre.

Chairperson Anthony stated that committee members needed to let Cynthia Baez know how they would like for their name to be announced at the event.

Benita Sanders commented that she was working on getting a cater for the event.

Chairperson Anthony commented that Melissa McKeown was assigned to talk about the job fair.

Melissa McKeown asked what the dress attire was for the event. Chairperson Anthony stated that it would be business attire.

Chairperson Anthony commented that the doors would open for the public at 5:15 p.m.

Chairperson Anthony asked everyone to look at the schedule to see the allotted time for them to speak at the event.

Cynthia Baez asked if she could get a list of all committee members emailed to her. Chairperson Anthony asked Sheila to email a list of committee members to Cynthia.

Benita Sanders asked if the committee had received a list of employers from Mark Watson. Chairperson Anthony stated that Mr. Watson would supply a listing.

Chairperson Anthony stated that Councilmember McGee was assigned to create a flyer.

Chairperson Anthony instructed committee members to send invitee contact information to Sheila so she could send out the invitation and receive RSVP's.

Lisa Hollowell commented that the city had sign in sheets for employers who attended the meetings for the Good Jobs/Great Cities meetings. Chairperson Anthony stated that she should have the listing on March 15.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she had meet with Pat Kahle, Union County Chamber in reference to having a more prominent role with the job fair. The job fair will be held in the same place as last year at the Union County Agricultural Center.

Chairperson Anthony commented that she had also met with Kristy Phifer, SPCC.

Chairperson Anthony called the meeting to order at 6:53 p.m. due to additional members arriving and establishing a quorum.

Approval of Minutes:

Chairperson Anthony stated that there were three sets of minutes for review and approval. Melissa McKeown commented that she was in attendance at the November meeting and a correction was needed on the November minutes. Councilmember David Dotson made the motion to approve the minutes from November 9, 2023 with noted correction, January 11, 2024 as presented and January 25, 2024 as presented. Tamara Williams second the motion. Chairperson Anthony asked for a vote by show of hands for those in favor of accepting the minutes.

Ayes: All in attendance

Nayes: None

The minutes from November 9, 2023 with noted correction, January 11, 2024 as presented and January 25, 2024 as presented were approved and accepted.

Old Business:

Chairperson Anthony stated the DEI event was scheduled for March 20, 2024 at the Dowd Center Theatre. Invitee names should be sent to Sheila. Dress for the event will be business attire. Tiffany Wilson asked about guest asking questions and was told that guest would write them on the cards at the table.

Benita Sanders asked what Dr. Patterson would be doing for 45 minutes. Chairperson Anthony stated that Dr. Patterson had a presentation and would answer any questions during that time.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the committee needed a time keeper and she volunteered to handle the time keeping piece.

Chairperson Anthony stated that everyone needed to be at the Dowd Theatre by 5:15 p.m. to help. Lisa Hollowell asked how many people were expected to attend? Chairperson Anthony commented that hopefully 55 people would attend.

New Business:

Chairperson Anthony commented that committee will help with the Union County Job Fair again this year. It will be at the Union County Agriculture Center.

Chairperson Anthony stated that Kristy Parker, SPCC, will help to prepare residents for the job fair.

Chairperson Anthony commented that the committee will be more involved this time. If you have any suggestions on how the committee can help, please send them to Chairperson Anthony. Prior to the job fair the committee will need to get the word out about the job fair to the communities.

Cynthia Baez commented that the flyer for the job fair had already been created and distributed. The date of the job fair is April 30, 2024. Councilmember Dotson commented that social media was already announcing it also.

Tiffany Wilson commented that last year the committee visited churches to relay the information.

Tiffany Wilson suggested placing a public announcement on the local radio stations.

Councilmember Dotson asked if there were be printed media? Chairperson Anthony stated that she would get some flyers from the Chamber of Commerce.

Melissa McKeown asked about the classes to help prepare for the job fair and transportation.

Benita Sanders asked if county transportation could provide transport for residents. Chairperson Anthony stated that county transportation was used for health visit and for older adults. Melissa McKeown commented that they were busy and short of drivers.

Tiffany Wilson asked about churches with vans providing transportation. Melissa McKeown commented that community centers could be used as pick up locations.

Jessica Eason stated that churches would have to provide certificates of insurance for transportation and the committee would have to have a contract with each church and have to pay drivers. Chairperson Anthony asked if a contract would be needed? Tiffany Wilson asked if the Union County Homeless Shelter provides transportation with their van would be still have to have a contract? Jessica Eason

stated yes, the committee would have to have a contract, certificate of insurance from each church and an indemnity clause.

Chairperson Anthony asked the committee how many job fair flyers were needed and stated that she would get 300 to start.

Chairperson Antony stated that she needed two dates for the SPCC prep class at the Old Armory and needed people to help on the date selected. The dates of April 16 and April 18 at 6:00 p.m. were suggested. Chairperson Anthony commented that the SPCC prep class would be either on April 16 or April 18 at 6:00 p.m. at the Old Armory.

Tiffany Wilson commented that the city needed to look at some type of transportation to the SPCC class. Chairperson Anthony commented that transportation would be needed from the Sutton Park area.

Tiffany Wilson asked if this would be posted on the City's website. Chairperson Anthony commented yes.

Chairperson Anthony asked who would be available to work at the Job Fair on April 30, 2024 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Chairperson Anthony stated that she could work for 4 hours. Cynthia Baez commented that if it was the same as last year that she could sit at the table and hand out information.

Tiffany Wilson suggested putting the SPCC prep class information in the probation offices.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the committee's role at the job fair would be discussed at the next meeting.

Chairperson Anthony commented that she would check with Councilmember McGee on the name tags for committee members to wear at the DEI Event.

Benita Sanders asked what should be displayed on the marquee at the Dowd Center Theatre? Benita Sanders commented that she would talk to Lynn Price at the theatre about this.

Chairperson Anthony and the committee member stated the mission statement.

With no other business to discuss, Chairperson Anthony adjourned the meeting. Councilmember Dotson made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Tamara Williams second the motion. The motion carried by all in attendance the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sheila Couick.

Surluta Anthony, Chairperson

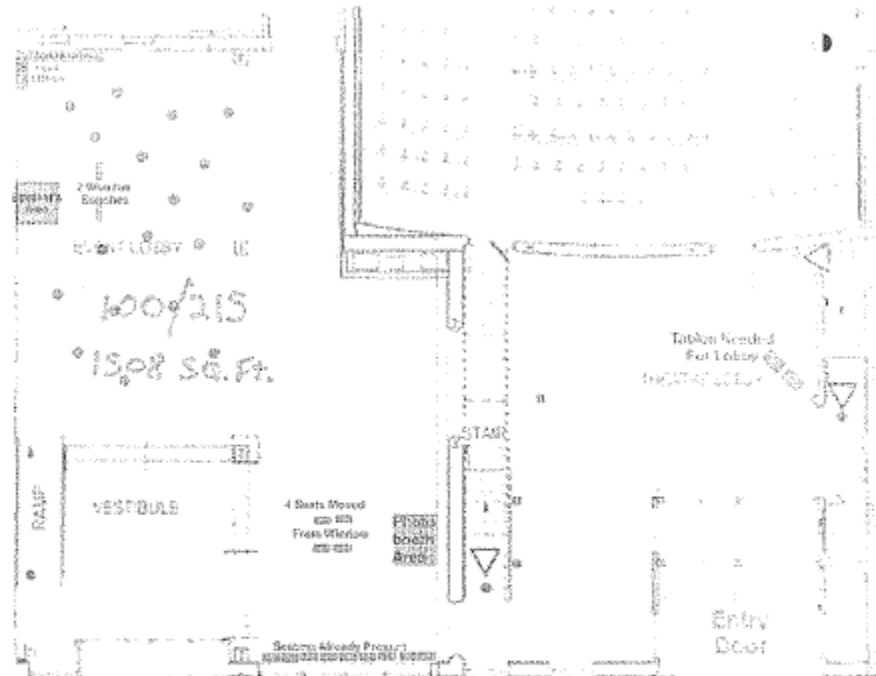
Week ending	Respon- Person	Feb 10 6 weeks before	February 17 5 weeks before	February 24 4 weeks before	March 2 3 weeks before	March 9 2 weeks before	March 16 1 week before	March 20 Event Day
Confirm the Location	Surluta	Compid on Jan. 31, 2024						
Confirm the Dates/Times	Surluta	Compid on 01.31.2024 March 20, 2024						
Confirm Caterer	Benita/Surluta	Confirmed on Jan. 30, 2024						
Confirm Guest Speakers	Surluta	Confirmed on Jan. 30, 2024						
DEI								
Swag/Materials	Melissa							
Invitations/Flyer /Program distribution	Fianco							
List of G./GC Employers	Surluta & Teresa Campo							
Create Social Media event on CoM website								
Create Press Release announcement								
Create mobilize registration link								
Plan Agenda/Run of Show for event	Benita	Completed						
Launch event	ALL							
Thank-you email to guest speakers/co-chairs	Surluta							

Introducing The City of Monroe DEI (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion)
Run of The Show

DRAFT ONLY

TIME	WHAT	WHO
4p-5p	Set-up	Benita & Volunteers
4p-5:15p	Caterer set-up	A Perfect Blend Catering-Damien Massey
5:15p-5:30p	Doors open	People Trickle In
6p-6:05p	Greetings	Tamara
6:05p-6:10p	How We Began	Surluta
6:10p-6:15p	History	Rev. Tate
6:15p-6:20p	Committee Intro	Cynthia
6:20p-6:25p	Mission Statement	Franco
6:25p-6:30p	Intro. Of Guest Speaker	Althea
6:30p-7:30p	Guest Speaker	Dr. Dana Patterson
7:30p-7:40p	Q & A	MC-Tiffany
7:40p-7:45p	Guest Acknowledgment	David
7:45p-7:50p	Good Jobs, Great Cities	Mark W.
7:50p-7:55p	Job Fair	Melissa
7:55p-8p	Wrap up	Surluta
8p-8:30p	Clean-up	ALL

- + -
- - Represents Cocktail Table
- 3 guests per table
- 55 guests potential
- = 18 tables



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**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Special Meeting Minutes
March 20, 2024 – 6:00 P.M.**

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee conducted a Special Meeting on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Dowd Center Theatre in Monroe. This was a presentation by Dr. Dana Patterson, Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, Wingate University on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging.

Staff Present: Debra C. Reed, Human Resources Director, Sheila Couick, Minute Taker

Members Present: Councilman Surluta Anthony (Chairperson), Althea Richardson-Tucker, Benita Sanders, Cynthia Baez, Councilmember David Dotson, Councilmember Franco McGee, Tamara Williams, Tiffany Wilson

Members Absent: Melvin Tate (Co-Chairperson), Melissa McKeown, Cress Barnes, Lanny Lancaster, Michael Hall, Selina Campbell, and Swindell Edwards

Guest: Jessica Eason, Human Resources Manager, Lisa Hollowell, Assistant to the City Manager, Dottie Nash, Chris Harbin, Beverly Dickerson, Daryle Anderson, Denise Altherr, Karen Harbin, Liane Watson, Allen Watson, Jennifer Stringfellow, Linda Little, Chief Bryan Gilliard, Monroe Police Department, Captain Steve Morton, Monroe Police Department, Maria Lander, Eddie Vassar, Dr. James R. Samuel, Insight Consultants, Kimberly Hansley, Pat Kahle, Union County Chamber, Robert Capers, Monique Huntley, Freddie Gordon, Chris Rivera, Chief Ron Fowler, Monroe Fire Department, Melanie Miller, Tomika Brown, Maurice Brown, Karyl Jones, Mike Jones, Captain T. J. Goforth, Monroe Police Department, Captain Shannon Huntley, Monroe Police Department, Rev. Osco Gardin, Mark Watson, City Manager, Deloris Chisley, Tiguanne Sowell, Ryan Cureton, Ashley Fomen, and John Kirkpatrick

The presentation started at 6:05 p.m. with a greeting by Tamara Williams. Chairperson Anthony provided a brief statement on how the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was established. Dr. James Samuel, Insight Consultants, provided a history on the diversity, equity, and inclusion committee.

Cynthia Baez recognized the City of Monroe Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee members.

Councilmember Franco McGee read the mission statement for the City of Monroe Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

Althea Tucker-Richardson introduced the guest speaker Dr. Dana Patterson, Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, Wingate University.

Dr. Dana Patterson conducted her presentation on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. Dr. Patterson's presentation is attached to the minutes. At the conclusion of her presentation, Dr. Patterson asked for questions from the guest and there were no questions. Dr. Patterson provided copies of her presentation to those in attendance.

Councilmember David Dotson thanked Dr. Patterson for the information that she shared with everyone in attendance.

City Manager Mark Watson provided an overview of the Good Jobs/Great Cities program.

Chairperson Anthony thanked everyone for coming to the presentation and adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sheila Couick.

Surluta Anthony, Chairperson

DEIB INCLUDES **me**

A PRESENTATION BY DANA MURRAY PATTERSON
(SHE, HER, HERS)

DEIB **me**

GOALS FOR TODAY'S WORKSHOP

- Participants will better understand what is meant by diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging through both definition and practical, relatable examples.
- Participants will better understand how they contribute to diversity and their role in helping to create a sense of belonging for others.
- Participants will better understand how to use empathy as a tool to increase DEIB.

CONVERSATION COVENANT

- **What do you need from this group to feel absolutely safe sharing from your heart today?**
- Respectful and civil conversation
- Confidentiality
- Challenge by choice
- Others?

UNDERSTANDINGS

- As part of this workshop, we welcome dialogue, as it improves the learning experience. You may share questions or comments at the end of this session. Dr. Patterson is also available to have further dialogue about topics presented (either immediately following or soon thereafter depending on schedule availability).
- This workshop is designed to share information related to diversity, equity inclusion and belonging. It is likely that you will encounter information with which you are not familiar. That is OK.
- Materials for this training have been gathered from researchers, scholars, and other experts on matters related to diversity and inclusion. You may not agree with everything you encounter during this session, which is OK. If you would like a list of resources consulted for this presentation please email Dr. Patterson at Dana.Patterson@wingate.edu

DEFINING DIVERSITY

- Diversity is the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs. In the workplace, it means having employees with varied backgrounds and perspectives, ensuring a broader range of ideas and fostering creativity and innovation.

UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

- We all contribute to a diverse society
- We all have culture and identity

SOME ASPECTS OF OUR DIVERSITY ARE VISIBLE. OTHERS ARE LESS VISIBLE OR INVISIBLE.



DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY

- Gender
- Age/generation
- Ethnicity
- Nationality
- Language/dialect
- Skin color
- Religion
- Class (wealth, family background, education)
- Region (N/S, Urban/Rural)
- Country (region of origin/residence)
- Educational level
- Occupation
- Sexual orientation
- Political orientation
- Disability
- Culture (beliefs, expectations, behaviors)
- Subculture

ACTIVITY

- “My name is ____ and I am from _____. One thing you cannot tell just by looking at me is _____. This is important for me to tell you because _____.”

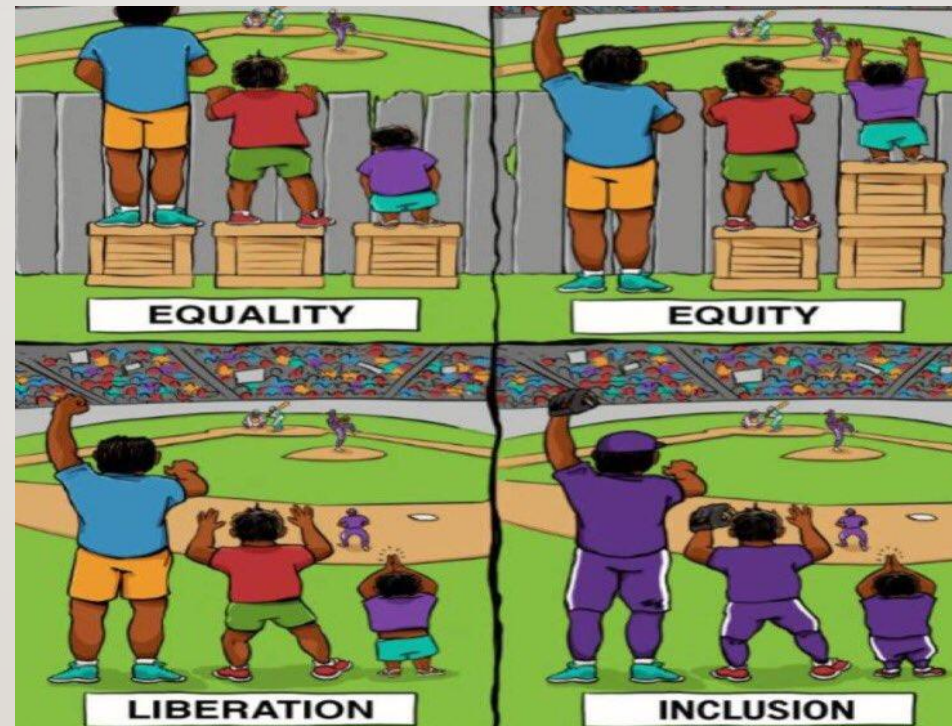
DEFINING EQUITY/EQUALITY

- **The term “equity” refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality: Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances. The process is ongoing, requiring us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures.**

UNDERSTANDING EQUITY/EQUALITY

- A demonstration

AN ILLUSTRATION



DEFINING INCLUSION

- Inclusion means that people across varying identities are and feel valued, welcomed, respected, included, represented, and heard and that they fully belong, can be authentic, can contribute to the collective, and have a voice.

UNDERSTANDING INCLUSION

DIVERSITY IS BEING
INVITED TO THE PARTY.

INCLUSION IS BEING
ASKED TO DANCE.

BELONGING IS
CHOOSING THE MUSIC
YOU WANT TO DANCE TO.

REALMAMABEARS.ORG

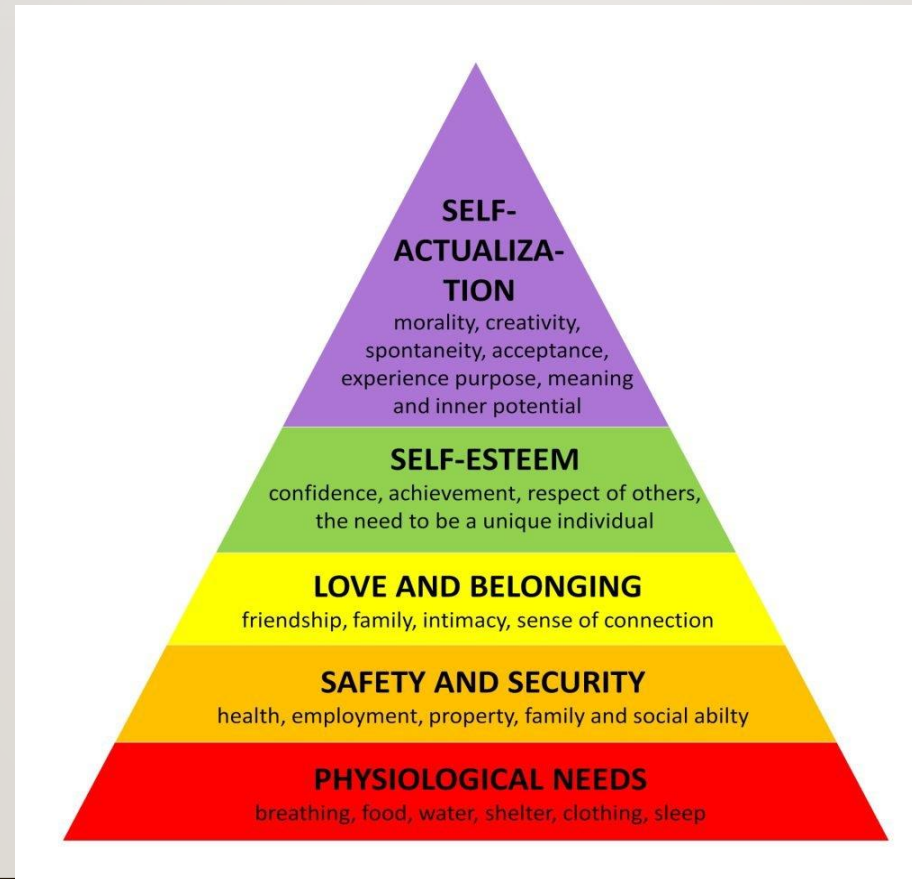
DEFINING BELONGING

- ***Belonging*** is a felt sense in our bodies of safety, power, wholeness, and welcome. It is a relational quality that can be cultivated and practiced.

UNDERSTANDING BELONGING

- **Safety.** This is the starting point: our bodies cannot experience belonging if we feel under threat. This means that belonging requires the absence of oppression and coercion.
- **Power.** To belong is to be significant: it is for our existence to matter. It is to have agency; the ability to influence our context.
- **Wholeness.** For so many of us the path to alienation begins by denying or rejecting aspects of ourselves: it is about fragmentation. Belonging is about integration, about showing up as our full, unalienated selves.
- *Belonging requires both agency and power to co-create.*

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



COMMON GROUND ACTIVITY

- Common Ground is a simple yet effective way to promote belonging and connection within your team. By discovering shared experiences, team members can form deeper connections and feel a greater sense of unity. This exercise also encourages active listening and collaboration, essential skills for effective teamwork.
- In the time allowed with your group, please list as many commonalities as possible.

TOP TIPS TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF BELONGING

- **1. Do your own work first**

Look inward – listen to yourself, to your own biases and question your assumptions and reactions. You can then open space for challenging conversations and listening with empathy and understanding.

- **2. Encourage open communication**

This is the best asset in building an environment that helps people feel secure, accepted and supported. Allow people to respectfully bring up any issues that they notice and, rather than just issuing apologies, actively draw up solutions.

- **3. Empower people**

Create an environment that encourages people to speak up. Community members should have no apprehensions in being open with their ideas, because they know that they're in a safe space to share ideas without receiving a biased reception.

- **4. Use inclusive language**

Inclusive language is communication that proactively uses words, phrases and expressions that are welcoming. Inclusive language encompasses emails, marketing material, social media, websites, and other forms of communication, such as imagery. A few examples: 'team' instead of 'guys', 'double check' rather than 'sanity check', 'sexual orientation' as opposed to 'sexual preference', 'reject/approve' versus 'blacklist/whitelist'.

- **5. Be mindful of gender classification**

More and more, people are using the pronoun 'they' rather than 'he/she'. Check job adverts, policies, etc. to ensure that any reference to 'he/she' is changed to 'they' as necessary.

- **6. Implement welcoming diversity training**

Tailor the training to your organization so they can address issues specific to them.

- **7. Prioritize connection**

Leaders must spend time getting to know their team members, to really connect with them, in order to help people feel secure, accepted and supported. Connect with people to get them to open up to you; listen when they have concerns or issues and help them find solutions that leave them feeling respected and supported.

- **8. Avoid micromanagement**

Micromanaging has the power to destroy relationships and cause good people to leave. Demonstrate that you are available to help when they need it but allow people the opportunity to overcome issues on their own before they seek help.

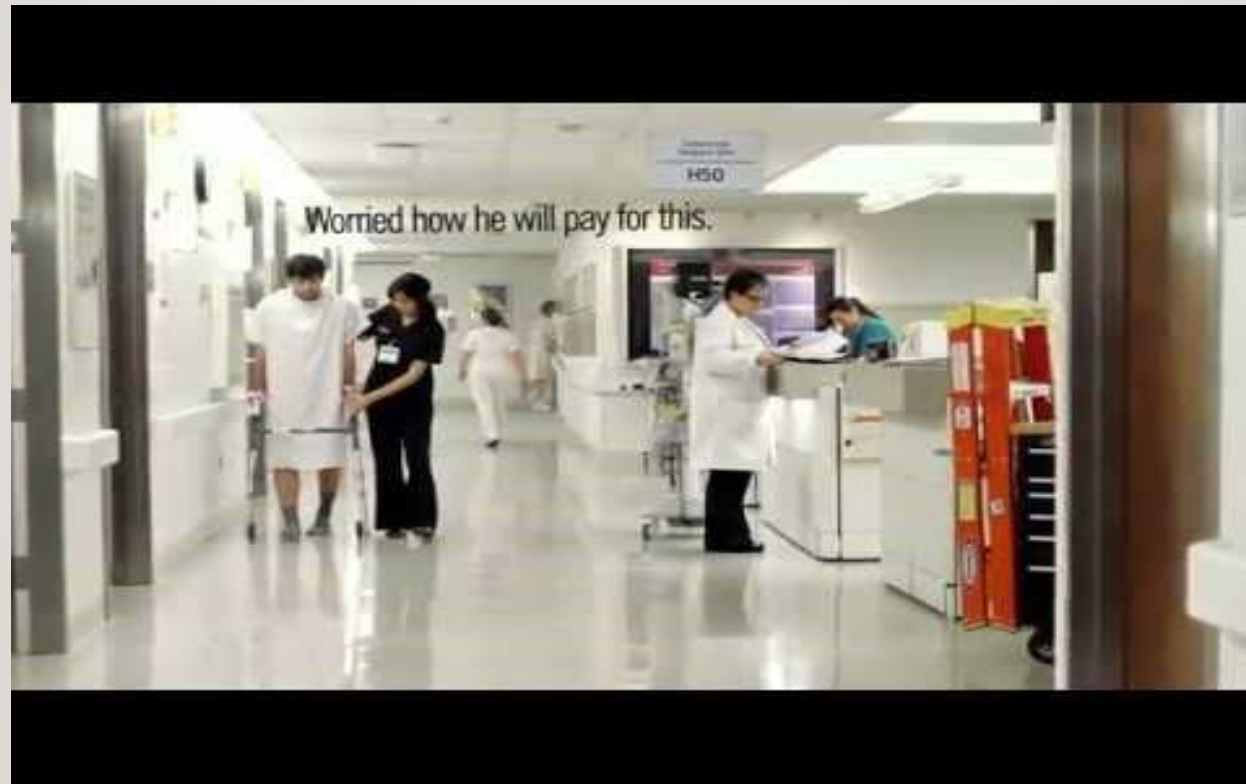
- **9. Learn from mistakes**

Creating a culture where people belong but also in which they can be unique can be a hard balance to strike. Along the way, people will feel uncomfortable and mistakes will be made... but that's ok. It's important to view that as progress – it's to be expected when you move beyond a cerebral approach to diversity and inclusion to a place that captures people's hearts.

EMPATHY

- Empathy is the ability to emotionally understand what other people feel, see things from their point of view, and imagine yourself in their place. Essentially, it is putting yourself in someone else's position and feeling what they are feeling.

EMPATHY



SIX-STEPS FOR DEVELOPING EMPATHY

Step 1: Imagine Yourself in the Other Person's Shoes. The first step to developing empathy is to imagine yourself as the other person...

Step 2: Investigate Underlying Feelings. Having put yourself in the other person's shoes, it's time now to dig a little deeper to uncover the person's feelings and underlying intentions.

Step 3: Identify with the Person's Experience. When the other person starts feeling comfortable in your presence, they will be more willing and able to express themselves.

Step 4: Verify the Accuracy of What You're Hearing. While interacting with the other person, it's important to keep in mind that people are rarely 100 percent honest and real.

Step 5: Offer Your Support. This is where you provide the other person with emotional support...

Step 6: Practice Emotional Detachment. The one drawback to practicing empathy is that it's very easy to get emotionally drawn into the other person's world, where their problems, pain, and feelings are transferred to you.

EMPATHY AS A TOOL TO EMBRACE, ADOPT, PRACTICE AND HOLD SPACE

- Embrace and celebrate **diversity**
- Adopt a mindset that prioritizes **equity** and then equality
- Practice **Inclusion** as a rule rather than an exception
- Hold space for others and make room for folks to experience a sense of **belonging**

THE BOTTOM LINE



Q&A

Please feel free to put your question or comment on the index card you were handed earlier in the workshop and hand it to me. You do not have to put your name on the card but you are welcome to do so. I will try to read and answer them for the entire group if time permits.

You may also ask your question or offer your comment aloud at this time.

“You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb in his skin and walk around in it.” --from To Kill A Mockingbird

CONTACT DR. PATTERSON

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- Dana.Patterson@wingate.edu work email
- Drdanampatterson@gmail.com personal email
- (937)765-0764 cell
- (704)233-6130 office
- Thank you for your time and participation in today's workshop.

CLOSING: ONE WORD AND A SONG

