

**CITY OF MONROE
SPECIAL MEETING
OPEN CONVERSATION ON RACISM COMMITTEE**

May 6, 2021 – 1:00 P.M.

AGENDA

www.monroenc.org

Meeting will be conducted by a Zoom meeting in accordance with the Monroe City Council's Rules of Procedures for Electronic Meeting. Members of the public will not be permitted to attend the meeting inperson. Meeting will be live-streamed on the City of Monroe YouTube channel at Monroe North Carolina Government - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzrGKOKR72fmCEn7D0f9mlg>

1. Call to Order
2. Selection of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Members
3. Scheduling of First Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Meeting
4. Discussion of Proposal Request for Trainer for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
5. Acceptance of Open Conversation on Racism Meeting Minutes from February 2, 2021, February 23, 2021 and March 4, 2021
6. Adjournment

**Open Conversation on Racism
Zoom Meeting
February 2, 2021 – 1:00 p.m.**

In Attendance: Chairperson Surluta Anthony, Chairperson
Councilmember Angelia James
Councilmember Freddie Gordon
City Attorney Mujeeb Shah-Khan
Assistant City Attorney Ashely Britt
Debra C. Reed, Human Resource Director, Liaison
Sheila Couick, Minute Taker

Guest by Phone: Michele King

Chairperson Anthony opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m. by welcoming everyone.

Chairperson Anthony commented that the meeting today was to discuss the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and schedule the second participant Open Conversation on Racism ZOOM meeting. Chairperson Anthony stated that she had received an email from Assistant City Attorney Ashely Britt stating that this meeting was limited to what was indicated on the meeting agenda and in the meeting notice.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she had met with Mayor Kilgore in reference to the Mayoral Committee request and was scheduled to meet with him again on February 3, 2021 for clarification on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

Mujeeb Shah-Khan, City Attorney, commented that he had advised Mayor Kilgore after the January 13, 2021 Council meeting that Council could not appoint a Mayoral Committee, only the Mayor could appoint a Mayoral Committee. If Council wants to take action in reference to creating a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee then this would need to be addressed at the February 10, 2021 Council meeting. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee would then only be able to start meeting in March. Mr. Shah-Khan stated that he made it clear at the January 13, 2021 meeting that Council could not approve the creation of a Mayoral Committee. Mr. Shah-Khan stated that Council could vote on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and govern how it should perform.

Councilmember Freddie Gordon commented that there was confusion at the January 13 Council meeting in reference to the creation of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee with it being created as a Mayoral Committee. Mr. Gordon stated that for anything to come out of this committee it should have a broad base of participants, not just citizens within the city limits, but also citizens outside of the city limits such as Chamber of Commerce, NAAPC, etc. Mr. Gordon stated that it should not matter if it is a Mayoral Committee or not.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee request needed to be presented back to Council for clarification. Mr. Shah-Khan stated if the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee was to be a Mayoral Committee then there could only be twelve participants and three of the participants would have to be councilmembers and a Councilmember would have to be the Chairperson. Mr. Shah-Khan stated that a Council approved committee would not have a size limitation.

Councilmember Angelia James recommended that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee be created as a Council approved committee. Mr. Shah-Khan stated that on a Council approved committee the committee would appoint the chairperson and vice-chairperson.

Councilmember Freddie Gordon made the motion to recommend to Council that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee be a Council appointed committee and appoint Councilmember Surluta Anthony as the Chairperson, and for this committee to be exempt from the standard city committee application process. Councilmember Angelia James second the motion. The motion carried by vote approval from all committee members.

Chairperson Anthony commented that the number of participants for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee should be determined by Council. Councilmember Gordon agreed with setting a participant number limit for the committee stating that committees with a large number of participants were hard to work with when trying to reach consensus on recommendations. Councilmember Angelia James stated that Dr. Samuel had commented on a number of participants and asked what that number was. Debra C. Reed stated that Dr. Samuel had stated that twenty-five participants was adequate.

Councilmember Angelia James made the motion to limited the number of participants for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to twenty-five participants and to ask for exemption from the city's application process. Councilmember Gordon second the motion. The motion carried by vote approval from all committee members.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she would take the recommendations back to Council at the February 10, 2021 meeting.

Councilmember Gordon commented that the second Open Conversation on Racism participant session date needed to be scheduled. Mr. Shah-Khan commented that the second participant meeting date for the Open Conversation on Racism Committee could be established at this time.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee if approved would meet quarterly and that the first meeting would be delayed.

Councilmember Gordon asked if we needed to reach out to Dr. Samuel in reference to scheduling the date for second session with the participants for the Open Conversation on Racism Committee. Chairperson Anthony stated that Dr. Samuel was open to any date due to the meeting being after 5:00 p.m.

Councilmember James asked what the criteria would be for selecting participants for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Chairperson Anthony stated that the Open Conversation on Racism Committee members could send in names.

Chairperson Anthony stated that once twenty-five applications were received then the application process would close. Councilmember Gordon commented that Councilmembers on the committee could review the applications and that there would need to be a set deadline for applications to be returned. Councilmember Angelia James stated that participants needed to state the reason that they were applying for this committee on the application. Councilmember Gordon agreed that applicants needed to state a purpose or reason on the application.

Chairperson Anthony commented that she would present the following recommendations to Council at the February 10, 2021 Council meeting:

- 1- The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee would meet quarterly.
- 2- Application process for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee would be two weeks.
- 3- Councilmembers on the committee would select the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee members based on applications received and ask for exemption to the City's application process.
- 4- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee would be limited to 25 committee members.

Councilmember Gordon and Councilmember James both agreed with the stated recommendations to Council by Chairperson Anthony.

Councilmember Gordon commented that the Council is scheduled to meet on February 10 and if the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is approved then application notices should be published on February 11. The application period would close on February 25 and the first meeting would be in March.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she would contact Dr. Samuel in reference to a date for the second participant session with the Open Conversation on Racism Committee.

Councilmember James made the motion for the second Open Conversation on Racism participant session to be March 4, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Councilmember Gordon second the motion. The motion carried by vote by all committee members.

Chairperson Anthony commented that there was no other business to discuss and needed a motion for adjournment. Councilmember Gordon made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember James second the motion. The motion carried by vote by all committee members.

With there being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1:42 p.m.

Surluta Anthony, Chair

**Open Conversation on Racism Committee
Zoom Meeting
February 23, 2021 – 1:00 P.M.**

In Attendance: Chairperson Surluta Anthony
Councilmember Angelia James
Councilmember Freddie Gordon
City Attorney Mujeeb Shah-Khan
Assistant City Attorney Ashley Britt
Debra C. Reed, HR Director/Liaison
Sheila Couick, Minute Taker

Guest: Dr. James Samuel, Insight Consulting

Chairperson Anthony opened the Zoom meeting at 1:00 p.m., welcomed everyone and conducted an attendance roll call to establish the presence of the council members.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the meeting agenda for today included preparation for the March 4, 2021 meeting, discussion of the DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) Committee, and approval of minutes. Chairperson Anthony stated that Dr. Samuels would be joining the meeting to help with the preparation for the March 4 meeting. The next Open Conversation on Racism participant meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 4 at 7:00 pm.

Dr. Samuels stated that he had a slide presentation in which he would like to share with the committee and asked Bruce Bounds to allow screen sharing access. Dr. Samuel stated that the slides would help to facilitate the discussion and provide structure for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion conversation. Dr. Samuel stated that in the last meeting, which was December 3, 2020, participants were asked to create SMART goals. SMART goals are goals that are **S**trategic, **M**easureable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**imely. Dr. Samuel stated the participants created the SMART goal to create a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and voted unanimously to ask the City to allow the members to form a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee. Dr. Samuel stated that there was tentative approval for a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee by Council at the February 10 Council meeting. Dr. Samuel stated that his firm conducts development, management, and training on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for companies, organizations and communities and has done this since 1995. Dr. Samuel stated that the slide presentation would provide some basic understanding of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and how it works, why it is important and why it is a good goal for the community in Monroe.

Dr. Samuel presented a PowerPoint presentation on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. (A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.) Dr. Samuel began the slide presentation by stating that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion begins with the basic consideration of diversity. Dr. Samuel stated that when we discuss diversity we talk of the major divisions in human relationships and identity. There are three dimension of diversity - primary, secondary, and tertiary (third). Dr. Samuel explained how these three dimension function in regards to a person's identity in organizational structures and how these layers of diversity affect everyone. The primary dimension includes characteristics that are most visible to people such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, etc. These are components of our personality that we feel most emotional about. If you offend someone's race, gender, age, etc. you will get a strong response. You cannot change the primary dimension – they control us and cannot be changed. The second dimension is less visible such as education, income, work style, family status, religion, etc. The secondary dimension is important, but not as important at the primary due to these dimensions can change. The tertiary dimension such as work location, job title, management, etc. are invisible and you cannot see these things about a person, you have to ask or be told about these dimensions. The tertiary

dimension is associated more with organizational relationships. You have to be careful on how you touch on a person's primary dimension, not so careful on the secondary dimension and even less on the tertiary dimension. As you move out from the primary dimension, a person has more power to control how they are viewed. However, human diversity is not limited to only three dimension.

Dr. Samuels commented that the next slide explained equity. Equity is defined, in this work, as the fair and equal treatment of all people throughout every area and level in his or her relationship within the organization or community. Equity refers to making sure that all members of our community are given fair treatment to opportunities and advancements at their individual level. Work in this area means that we would be committed to identifying and working to eliminate the barriers that prevent the fair treatment of individuals or groups that impose systemic disadvantages. Dr. Samuel showed a slide with two pictures, one showing equality and one showing equity. Dr. Samuels explained that equality is the assumption that everyone will benefit with the same support. Equity means that everyone gets the support that they need in order to become an equal participant in his or her organization or community.

Councilmember Gordon commented that Councilmember James had lost connection to the ZOOM session and ask Bruce Bounds if she had rejoined. Councilmember James rejoined the session and Dr. Samuel asked if he needed to repeat what he had covered on the slide. Chairperson Anthony asked Councilmember James if she had seen the slide and Councilmember James replied that she had.

Dr. Samuel presented a slide on inclusion. Dr. Samuel stated that diversity means that everyone feels they are given the opportunity and respect of being a part of the group. Equity means they are given the support they need to be able to compete and be on equal footing. Inclusion involves the feeling of belonging. People can be given access and support, but not necessarily made to feel that they belong. Inclusion is an important element in developing a progressive and sustainable community. An inclusive environment will directly affect the satisfaction and retention of those who are a part of that culture or group. Why does satisfaction and retention matter to the City of Monroe? It matters if the City of Monroe is going to continue to grow, develop, and progress to its highest potential. Studies have shown that when companies, organizations, and communities do not provide a culture of inclusion, to make people feel that they are valued and belong, individuals will leave that community, organization or company within two years of their being able to make that move. It is important to all cities, because a lot of smaller communities that do not have the offering of larger communities will have a talent drain on the population. Young people will go to college and leave the communities to go to larger communities. Young people feel that there is nothing here for them to stay and build a personal and professional life. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion helps to change this by the process of creating cultural inclusion. Inclusive cultures means that you intentionally create support for affinity groups based on the importance of diversity. Members of these groups then are made to feel that they are wanted, welcomed and valued in that community. In return, the community is provided the insight, gift, creativity and production that they themselves have to offer and therefore the entire environment of that organizational community is uplifted. With diversity the more people you have that are different, the greater potential you have for innovation and productivity.

Dr. Samuel stated that someone said the diversity creates the potential, equity creates the treatment, which provides opportunity, but inclusion creates the greatest benefits and highest potential. Why does inclusion, diversity, and equity matter? Dr. Samuel stated that it is projected that by the year 2045 the United States population will be 49.7% white, 24.6% Latino/Hispanic, 13.1% African American, 7.9% Asian, 3.8% Multiracial, and .9% Other. This tells us that there are many changes on the horizon for the nation. Changes that we have no control over. Dr. Samuel stated that American is fast becoming a non-majority nation. Dr. Samuel stated that by the 2045 America would be a majority-minority nation. This will pose tremendous challenges for the country due to the country being vested in the concept that America is a white majority nation. Changes will be very profound and imperative and we need to prepare our youth and ourselves for the changing face of the America. By the year 2022, a majority of the people under the age of 18 will be people of color for the first time in this country.

Dr. Samuel presented a slide on “Generational Trends” stating that millennials currently account for over one-third of the United States labor force. Millennials will soon be the largest living generation in the United States. Despite the increase in the millennial population, the overall United States population will continue to grow older and the population of the older Americans is expected to double by year 2060.

Dr. Samuel stated that societal trends or sexual orientations within communities is becoming more prevalent. Communities who have a supportive approach to this will be the fastest growing communities and communities that oppose societal trends will be left behind.

Dr. Samuel stated that the next slide referenced gender based trends and in 2018, there were close to 76 million women over the age of 16 in the workforce. Dr. Samuel stated that diversity does not just include the fair treatment for race, sexual orientation and age, but it involves fair treatment on the base of gender. The gender base trend is that women will become the dominant leaders in this country. Communities, businesses and organizations will need to change their mindset towards women’s empowerment and leadership.

Dr. Samuel stated that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is a visionary suggestion from the committee and future progress will require every community, corporation or organization to develop a business case for promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Dr. Samuel commented that when it comes Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in consideration for the work at the City of Monroe, the initiative should begin with a shared purpose. Two things make Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work:

- 1- Must be a shared purpose of who we are.
- 2- Have a collaborated and creative vision and decide what we want to be or accomplish.

Dr. Samuel stated that he was available to discuss any questions on the presentation on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from the committee.

Chairperson Anthony thanked Dr. Samuel for the explanation of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Chairperson Anthony stated that the committee needed to focus on how to structure the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. It was suggested that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee have quarterly meeting. There was discussion at the last meeting as to what type of committee this was going to be. Initially it was going to be a Mayoral Committee, but now it will be a Council Committee. The difference is that in a Mayoral Committee, there are monthly reports to the Council and is appointed by the Mayor. A Council Committee can have up to twenty-five members. A Mayoral Committee has twelve members and three of those members have to be councilmembers. Chairperson Anthony stated that there was a discussion on the application process stating that the Open Conversation on Racism Councilmembers would review the applications and select the committee participants for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

Chairperson Anthony asked Dr. Samuel what the first step should be for the next meeting. Dr. Samuel stated that the first conversation was fruitful and was an icebreaker. Dr. Samuel commented that there were several participants who identified themselves on the ZOOM session, however not everyone talked or gave input. Dr. Samuel stated that we should try to develop more of a conversational exchange. Dr. Samuel stated that second conversation needed to be continuation of the first ZOOM meeting after reporting on the SMART goal that was established at the last meeting. The SMART goal was to request permission to create a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee. The second ZOOM conversation will help to refine the conversation. Dr. Samuel stated that part of his objective is to submit an overall report on the two conversations; however, without the benefit of the second conversation the report would

not be useful. Dr. Samuel stated that in the first two conversations, August and December, he started out with a preface on contextualizing the conversation. Dr. Samuel stated that on this was not necessary for the March meeting since it was done previously. Dr. Samuel stated that the participants should know that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee had been approved and would be discussed further with regards as to what that means. Dr. Samuel stated he could do a brief overview description of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; however, that would lead the conversation towards a conversation on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Dr. Samuel stated that it was important to have the committee members do what we set out to do, which is to share their feelings on the community, how they fit into it and start focusing on developing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she agreed with what Dr. Samuel was saying and that during the meeting we would talk about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, explain that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee had been approved, and discuss steps a person could take to be a part of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Chairperson Anthony stated that we are not ready to announce the application process for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion recruitment at this time.

Dr. Samuel stated that the second conversation in March should be broad enough to allow participants to say what they want to say in reference to racism.

Chairperson Anthony stated that replies had been received that some of the participants did not get the chance to speak at the last conversation. Chairperson Anthony asked the committee members their thoughts on this statement. Councilmember James stated that an action plan was needed for the meeting. Councilmember James stated the group needed to form subcommittees due to the committee being so big. Chairperson Anthony stated that was something that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee could focus on and asked Dr. Samuel for input. Dr. Samuel stated that the most important step was overlooked, which was to create an entity that can take ownership of these initiatives. Dr. Samuel stated that if you do not have a committee to take ownership of these initiatives, they can get lost. A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee operates to keep the focus on initiatives that will come out of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Dr. Samuel stated that the City of Monroe's approach to a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee is to create a best practice profile on how to get these initiatives done. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee will definitely touch on a lot of areas such as economic development, education, employment, housing, creating a good neighbor network, etc. Dr. Samuel stated that at the next meeting we should let participants talk about what they want to do. Dr. Samuel stated that people will own what they help create and the way to get ownership is by way of being a part of the conversation. Chairperson Anthony asked Councilmember James for comments. Councilmember James stated that she understood what Dr. Samuel was saying. Chairperson Anthony asked Councilmember Gordon for comments. Councilmember Gordon stated that everything that works starts with conversation and goals. Councilmember Gordon stated that only a certain percentage of the population on the last conversation had comments. Councilmember Gordon stated that it is hard to get people to open up about racism and it may be even harder to get them to open up about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, but if we do not have this conversation, it is going to be hard to get attainable goals. Councilmember Gordon commented that change does not come over night and it will take time to have conversations. Councilmember Gordon stated that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee should focus on a few topics and accomplish them then move on to something else. Councilmember Gordon stated that taking the steps outline is the proper way to reach something that could be accomplished.

Chairperson Anthony asked if the committee was in agreement with having participant conversation first and then starting the discussion on the SMART goal of creating a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee as the agenda items for the March 4 meeting. Councilmember James asked if there was a timeline for the agenda items? Chairperson Anthony stated that the meeting is scheduled for 2 hours and a portion would be for conversation and a portion would be to talk about the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Chairperson Anthony stated that the work for the actual Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion Committee would not begin until members are appointed. Chairperson Anthony stated that thirty minutes would be for discussion on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and the remaining time would be for conversation allowing participants to talk.

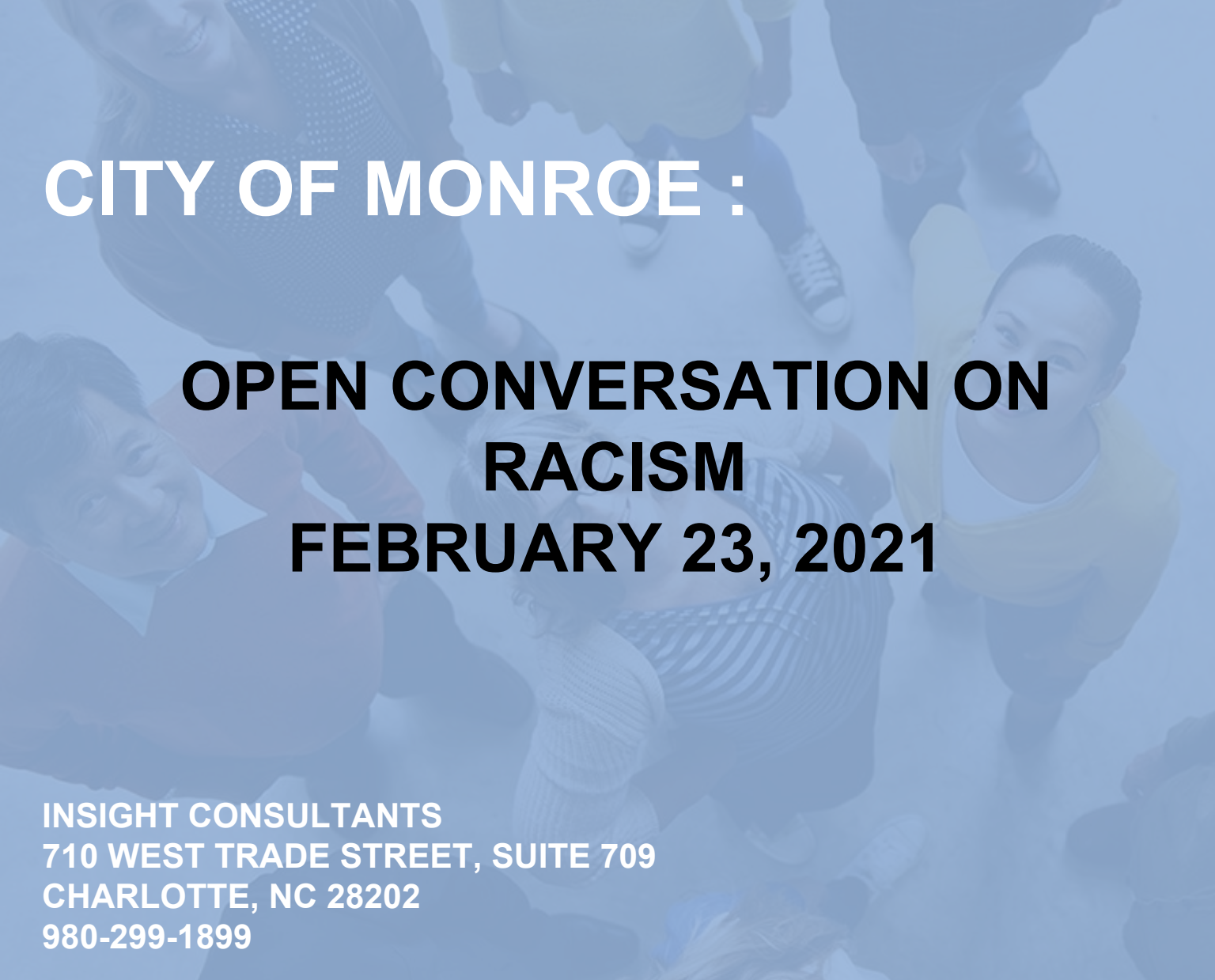
Chairperson Anthony asked if there were any more questions or discussion on the agenda for the March 4 meeting. Chairperson Anthony reviewed the agenda for the March 4 meeting stating that it was as follows: 1) Call to Order, 2) Introductions, 3) Begin Conversation, 4) Discussion of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and 5) Adjournment. Chairperson Anthony asked Dr. Samuel if anything was missed on the agenda. Dr. Samuel stated that everything was covered and the more general the agenda the better in order to wrap up the session.

Chairperson Anthony stated that minutes from August 25, 2020, September 11, 2020, October 20, 2020, December 7, 2020 and December 10, 2020 needed to be accepted and asked if everyone had read the minutes. Chairperson Anthony asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Councilmember James made the motion to accept the minutes in the entirety. Councilmember Gordon second the motion. The motion carried by vote of all members of the committee.

Chairperson Anthony asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember James made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Gordon second the motion. The motion carried by vote of all members of the committee.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:13 p.m.

Surluta Anthony, Chair



CITY OF MONROE :

**OPEN CONVERSATION ON
RACISM
FEBRUARY 23, 2021**

**INSIGHT CONSULTANTS
710 WEST TRADE STREET, SUITE 709
CHARLOTTE, NC 28202
980-299-1899**



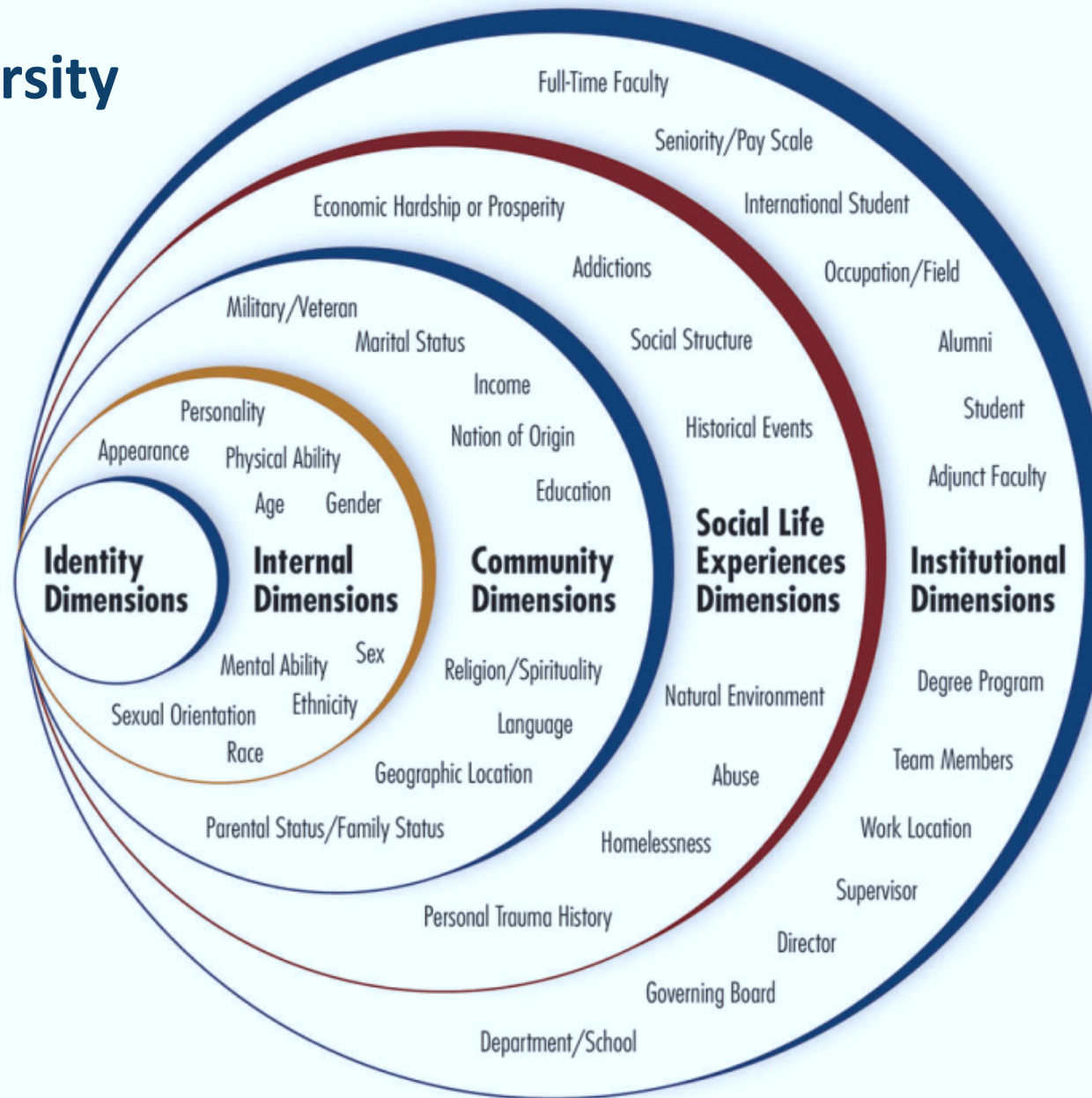


DEI: DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION



What is Diversity?

Layers of Diversity



* This diversity wheel aligns with Bronfenbrenner's (1977; 1994) nested model of the ecological systems approach. In this case, the individual is the focal point from which radiates the varied types of influences upon the individual organized in concentric circles (from narrow to broad).



What is Equity?

Equality



The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.

Equity



Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.

A high-angle, top-down photograph of a diverse group of people. Their arms and hands are extended from the edges of the frame towards the center, where they are stacked on top of each other in a circular formation. The individuals are wearing various clothing, including a black and white striped shirt, a green and white patterned shirt, a white long-sleeved shirt, a grey t-shirt, a dark blue long-sleeved shirt, a grey and white striped long-sleeved shirt, and a green hoodie. The background is a plain, light-colored floor. The overall image conveys a sense of teamwork, unity, and inclusivity.

What is Inclusion?



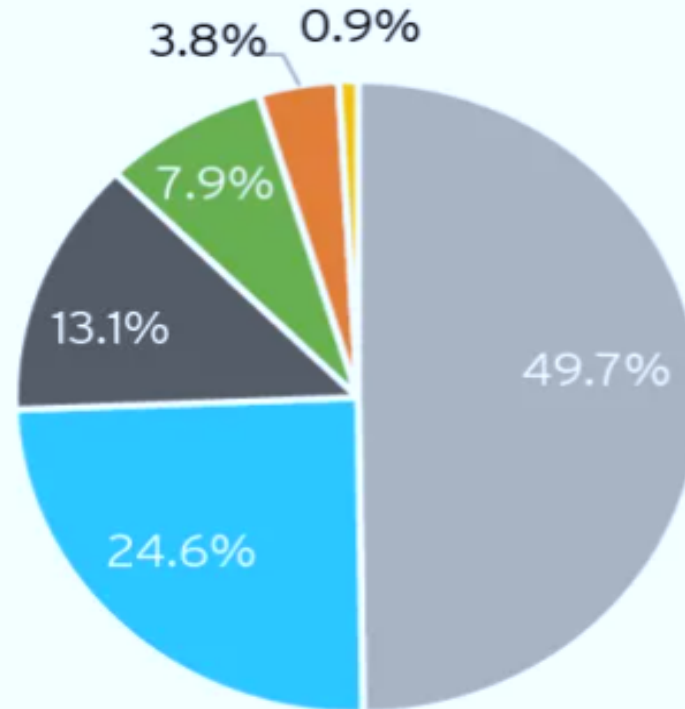
WHY DOES INCLUSION MATTER?

STATS

RACIAL TRENDS:

Projected Racial Profile of US Population by 2045

Racial profile of U.S. population, 2045



White* Hispanic Black* Asian* Multiracial* Other*



By 2022, a majority of people
under the age 18
are predicted to be people of color
for the first time.

GENERATIONAL TRENDS:

Millennials currently Account for Over 1/3 of the US Labor Force

Millennials will soon be the **largest living generation** in the US

Generation Z have started working, making up 5% of the labor force

Despite the Increase in **Millennials'** Representation, the Overall US Population **Continues to Grow Older** and the population of **older Americans** is expected to double by 2060

By 2030, 1 in 5 US residents (20%) will be in retirement age

SOCIETAL TRENDS—SEXUAL ORIENTATION:

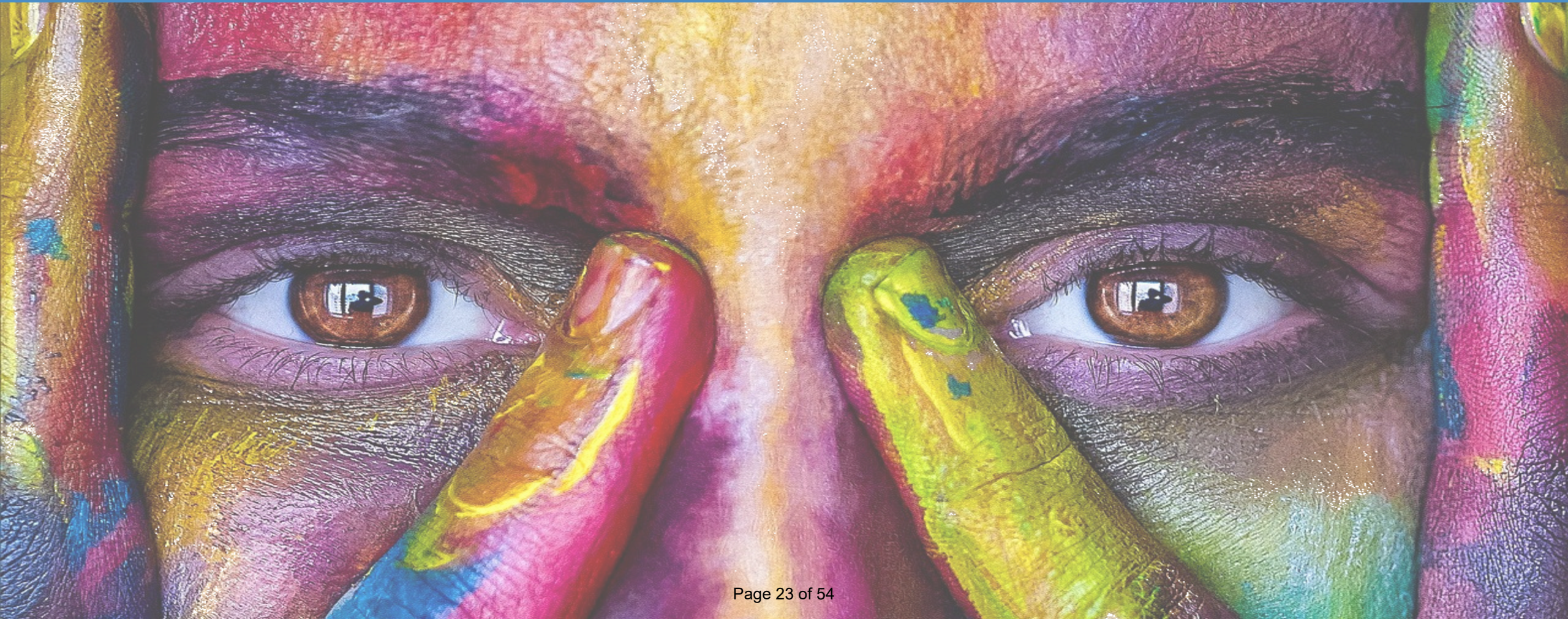
In the United States an estimated 4.5% of the population—11 million people—identify as LGBTQ. With a large majority of this population—88%—in the workforce.



GENDER-BASED TRENDS:

In 2018, there were 75,978,000 women over the age of 16 in the labor force, representing 47% or nearly ½ of our entire labor force

Future Progress Requires Every Sustainable Organization, Corporation and Community to Develop A Business Case for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion





Diverse teams perform better and tend to make sound decisions 60% faster than non-diverse teams.

Improved teamwork increases with greater diversity

Workforce Diversity correlates with increased creativity

Diversity increases human understanding and decreases incidents of racial and social conflict

Diversity offers a greater opportunity for personal and professional growth

Inclusive organizations, companies and communities are 1.7 times more likely to produce innovative thinkers and leaders.

**DEI INITIATIVES BEGIN WITH A SHARED PURPOSE—WHO ARE WE?
AND
A COLLABORATIVE-CREATED VISION—WHAT DO WE WANT TO BE?**

What Do We Want To Accomplish?

**Open Conversation on Racism
Zoom Meeting
March 4, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.**

This was a Zoom meeting hosted by the City of Monroe and was recorded.

Councilmember Anthony opened the Zoom meeting at 7:00 P.M. and welcomed everyone. Councilmember Anthony reviewed the agenda for the meeting and stated brief introductions were conducted and the conversation part of the meeting began.

Chairperson Anthony introduced Dr. James Samuel. Dr. Samuel stated that this was the second open conversation on racism meeting. Dr. Samuel stated that in December the citizens developed a “SMART” goal requesting the creation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to work with City Council and the Mayor. Dr. Samuel stated that time had been set aside at the end of this meeting to discuss the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee request.

Dr. Samuel stated that he hoped for more active speakers during this session. Dr. Samuel stated that one hour and forty-five minutes was designated for open conversation relating to how participants had experienced racism.

Ms. Loretta Melancon started the conversation by talking about how she had experience racism while growing up in Louisiana. She stated that she knew about the separation of blacks and white, however, she was excited when the first black student attended her all white Catholic high school for girls. Ms. Melancon commented that she was approach by another girl in her class when she was sticking up for integration and ask her how she would feel if her daughter came home and told her she was going to marry a black man. Ms. Melancon commented that she told her that she would be concerned because they would have a lot of hurdles to get over and marriage is not easy to begin when the odds are stacked against them. However, she would be concerned with what they would be facing in society. Ms. Melancon commented that she would support them and the student could not understand that. Ms. Melancon commented that she looks a person from the inside, not by the color of their skin. Ms. Melancon commented that she is all about people being accepted and embraced for their goodness.

Dr. Samuel thanked Ms. Melancon for sharing her story and asked if anyone had any comments on what she had said.

Mr. Swindell Edwards welcomed Ms. Melancon to the group. He asked Ms. Melancon what kinds of racism had she seen in Union County and how did she help someone look beyond a person’s skin color. Ms. Melancon stated that she tries to communicate more in action and modeling when talking to that person to get them to understand.

Mr. Swindell Edwards stated that if we do not tell someone what they are accustomed to doing is wrong, they think that what they say or do is okay. Mr. Edwards commented we have to be open with people around us about their actions. Mr. Edwards stated that he served in the military and he saw the difference in the military with rank and color. He stated that he saw how certain events were being patrolled on base and off base when blacks were doing one thing and whites were doing another. Mr. Edwards stated that he also works in the prison system and sees the same things happening there. He stated that he sees white officers harassing and black officers being quiet. Mr. Edwards stated that he refuses to see it take place and if he does not say anything it will not change.

Ms. Melancon stated it took her a long time to find her voice and when she speaks out it is difficult to speak the truth. Ms. Melancon stated that this is an important topic and she needed to find a way to discuss it without offending.

Dr. Samuel stated, that as a person of color, that it is difficult for a person of his demographic to fully appreciate the courage it takes to be able to challenge racism from the perspective of being a white person who is submerged in a culture that has been almost “inbred” with concepts of white supremacy. Dr. Samuel commented to Ms. Melancon that he appreciated her courage for sharing her information. Dr. Samuel stated that when you find a person who has a “whole heart” like Ms. Melancon has demonstrated, we want that person to be multiplied but it comes at a great cost. Dr. Samuel commented that he talked about this at the last meeting stating that standing up against racism, as a white person is not easy and will always come at a great cost. A cost that people of color cannot appreciate.

Ms. Melancon stated that some African American tend to have a “chip on their shoulder” about entitlement because of the injustice of the past. Ms. Tiffany Wilson asked for clarification on the meaning of “chip on the shoulder”. Ms. Melancon replied that there is an attitude that certain people bring forth that they deserve entitlement – look at what we have been through. Ms. Tiffany Wilson commented that this relates to the younger generation. Ms. Wilson stated that “attitude” and “chip on the shoulder” were not the correct words. In relation to people of African American slave descendants, they were brought here not by choice, have suffered a lot over the last four hundred years and have never been paid for the suffrage. Ms. Wilson commented that all other cultures that have been through this have been compensated in some type from their government or there has been an acknowledgement from the government that there was a wrong. Ms. Wilson stated that she did not think it was “entitlement”; it is more so something that they feel is owed to them. Ms. Wilson stated that tribal descendants were given the reservations. Ms. Wilson stated that the slaves were promised the “Forty Acres and Mule” however it was never seen. They had black wall streets but those were taken away and burned down. Ms. Wilson stated that they feel that they are owed it due to the history. Ms. Melancon asked what the difference was between “entitlement” and “owed” for clarification.

Ms. Medlin stated that she did not think young or old African Americans are looking for a handout. African Americans are tired that in 2021 we are still having the conversation on this. Ms. Medlin stated that their ancestor were not brought here voluntary and were brought here as slaves. Ms. Medlin stated that Abraham Lincoln gave the slaves their freedom but that did not happen and finally Civil War ends and reconstruction begins with the Forty Acres and Mule and this did not happen. Then the Jim Crow laws came about and shut everything down again. After Jim Crow there is segregation. It is the same repetitive things so it is not entitlement or an attitude, but what you are seeing is that we are tired that we have to have this conversation. We are Americans and so whatever rights you think you have we are saying we need those rights also. Ms. Medlin commented that people need to see “color” due to GOD making them that way for a reason. Therefore, when you say you don’t see color it does not come off as great as you think it does. See color, but do not make differences because of my color, culture, or hair. Recognize it and appreciate it because it is GOD given, but don’t make a difference.

Mr. Michael Hall commented that we should not forget that right now in Monroe, African Americans pay taxes, but they do not get anything for the taxes they pay. Mr. Hall stated that they have to fight for programs. Mr. Hall stated that you need to look at the statistics for Monroe; however, the City does not provide statistics based on race and you have to go to the Federal Government to get them. African Americans pay a large portion of the taxes in the City of Monroe, but they are getting nothing for their tax dollars; there are no programs that help black people. If they get anything it is very small. They have no seat at the table. Segregation happened with these tax dollars and we were not given anything for it. Mr. Hall stated that single family neighborhoods are a racism thing, they were created to keep African American out of the neighborhoods. Mr. Hall stated that there are a mountain of things against people

of color. Mr. Hall stated that we need to get real about these conversations and need to continue having these conversations so we can break down the barriers. The injustice needs to be recognized and stop being denied.

Chairperson Anthony commented to Ms. Melancon to not take what has been said as an attack on her and that she was not discounting what had been said. Chairperson Anthony stated that when we talk about racism it can be very emotional; especially if old scars bring the emotions up. Chairperson Anthony stated that the point of the conversation is to talk through things, to understand and communicate with each other. Chairperson Anthony stated that racism exist and it will not be eradicated in her lifetime, but perhaps we can work towards being anti-racist. We can only work on ourselves. Each of us can become a more anti-racist person and perhaps what we model will branch off to other people. Chairperson Anthony stated that racism is old, an institution, and for some people it was the norm, but if you have experienced it then it was a nightmare for you. Chairperson Anthony stated that she wanted the group to continue talking, but to respect what everyone has to say and to really listen to what is being said.

Ms. Melancon stated that she was on this conversation to be in the presence of people who would listen to what she had to say, reflect on it and give feedback to help her to grow and to improve her way of living so that she could be part of an active and successful part of the change that needs to happen. Ms. Melancon stated that she sees color but does not let "color" back her off from interacting with a person.

Dr. Samuel commented to Ms. Melancon that it takes courage/character to say what she has said and agreed with Chairperson Anthony sentiments. Dr. Samuel commented that many white people are intimidated by black males. Dr. Samuel stated that when he was growing up in the South white people scared him also. Dr. Samuel stated that the incident on January 6, 2021 frightened him, his children and his friends and what happen that day has frightened black people more than anyone can imagine. The fear comes from the historical realism of the confederate flag. It is the same thing they used to rape, lynch, to enslave, and to segregate and when black people see that, it instills fear. Dr. Samuel stated that we understand the fear of the not knowing. Dr. Samuel commented that there are white people in high places with "chip on their shoulder" also. Dr. Samuel commented to Ms. Melancon that there is nothing to fear from the participants in this conversation; they are passionate for the need for change. Dr. Samuel commented to Ms. Melancon that she is not a part of the problem and to not take offense; she is part of the solution and he championed her courage and character. Dr. Samuel stated to Ms. Melancon that she is doing all of the right things, except that she is the only one that is saying it, but what she is saying does not make her the only person that is feeling it. Ms. Melancon stated that she had conversations with her family and received criticism from family in reference to her conversations; however, she stated that she would grow from these conversations.

Ms. Cynthia Baez stated that she grew up in the 60's and 70's when an African American could not sit at a restaurant counter. Ms. Baez stated that she went to Livingston College and stayed on campus and there were several night where the dorm manager told them they had to stay awake all night due to the Klu Klux Klan coming to burn a cross on campus. That happened on several occasions and you could not walk downtown by yourself, you needed someone with you. Ms. Baez stated that she learned while in school at Livingston College that you can do anything you want to do, you just have to be strong enough to do it. When she left college for New York, there were times that she was the only black person in a meeting but on lunch or breaks she would go around and introduce herself to people. Her intent was that whatever the other person was doing or whatever their title was, she could do the same thing or have the same title. Ms. Baez stated that she had a white director who showed her the road to move up the ladder to get to where she wanted to be in the Department of Labor in the State of New York. After she retired and moved to Union County. She stated that in the early years of Monroe there must have been a lot of racism. Ms. Baez stated that it was good that we are having this conversation.

Chairperson Anthony commented that she grew up in Monroe and she remembered the Klu Klux Klan coming into her neighborhood and everyone having to hide. Chairperson Anthony commented that was her first time of seeing the Klu Klux Klan. Chairperson Anthony commented that some of them had on hoods and some did not have hoods on and she recognized one of the local doctors and it bothered her for years. When she was 16 and studying Africa, the Presbyterian Church was having a missionary come and speak and she wanted to go to the church. She commented that she called the pastor and told him she was coming and the Pastor stated that he would need to meet with his board first. She stated that she told him he could meet with his board but she was going to be there. She stated that she had two of her friends to go with her and went to the church where an usher was waiting for them and sat them in the front of the church. She stated that no one said anything to them but you could feel the stillness. She stated that she got the information that she went for and it did not occur to her until she went to leave that she had to walk home. Chairperson Anthony commented that she wants to work towards society being more inclusive and understand where other people are coming from and to discredit the myths that keep racism alive. Chairperson Anthony stated that she had been in a lot of meetings where she was the only black person but she does not let that bother her.

Pastor Lanny Lancaster commented that he was raised in the South, here in North Carolina, and being a teenager in the 80's he started reading about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King's preaching inspired him to become a preacher. He was told a lot of myths on racism when he was growing up. Pastor Lancaster stated that he was optimistic as a teenager in the 80's, about how people were getting along with each other and with opening opportunities for everyone. Pastor Lancaster commented that ever since then he has been learning about the myths and what opportunities were available for people and over the years he has learned that there are at least two Americas. The America he grew up with as a white person with the privileges and opportunities other people did not have. He stated that he thinks the myths are a big part of what the obstacle is right now due to the percentage of the white Americans who are still living under a myth that things are okay and everybody has the same chance if they work hard. Pastor Lancaster stated that he is encouraged by the formation of the committee that is being formed to work on structural forms of racism in our community to make the dream of America come true.

Dr. Samuel commented to Pastor Lancaster that it takes a lot of intellectual courage to admit to what he just did because the myths are there for a purpose. Dr. Samuel stated that in the 80's we had turned the curve on racism and that racism was finally beginning to be a thing of the past, but today it seems that we are further behind now than we were in the 80's on racism. It seems that our generation has lost the first best chance to move beyond being a racist society to an anti-racist society. Dr. Samuel stated that we have regressed and it is up to us to do our best to move the process forward and with people like Pastor Lancaster who are willing to step up and say what he did will be a great part of that progress.

Ms. Tiffany Wilson commented, in reference to Ms. Melancon's comments, that when she was growing up that actions actually spoke louder than words and it is more important that she put forth the action instead of just saying she is doing something. Ms. Wilson stated that she moved back to Monroe when she was in sixth grade and when she was in high school her class was 50/50 (white and black) and it was in the 90's and they all got along. It was more about city and county not blacks and whites. When she went to college she learned a lot of history but she thinks that it lacks in her generation because we do not teach the next generation about the past history, they do not learn a lot about the 70's, 60's and other struggles due to technology coming into place. Everything now is coming back because history will repeat itself if we do not teach it. One of the reasons she came to this meeting on racism is to see how do we teach this to the next generation. The generation that is in their twenties and the generations that are doing the rioting and the protesting because they do not know the difference between the two. They don't know how to get their point across or who to go to; so where do we go from there? How do

we educate them? Ms. Tiffany stated that she is in the court system and in the court system she see a lot of her brothers and sisters that look like her and it is a struggle to see how to help them but at the same time she has to remain on a professional level. She feel some of their pain and sees some of the bias that go on in the courthouse when it come to them. Ms. Tiffany asked how can we educate both the old and new generations? Change may not come to people in their 80's and 90's, but if the next generation is taught so that they can instill it in their next generation then change can come.

Dr. Samuel thanked Ms. Wilson for her legal structure in her statements and stated that was where the conversation was going in a few minutes; how do we get something started that could be structural, substantive, and sustainable.

Dr. Samuel asked Dr. Melvin Tate for comments on the conversation. Dr. Tate stated that one of things he has heard while listening is that as a person of African American color has not had the luxury to ignore racism neither has he benefited from the initiatives of racism. That structural, institutional, biased, bigotry and prejudice has been perpetuity down through the centuries. We are now talking about how it relates to America in the fifth century of racism based upon the color of one's skin. Pastor Tate stated that if we buy into racism and never address it, then racism will live; it is a terminal condition. Pastor Tate commented that Dr. King said, "That if we don't learn to live together as brothers and sisters we will die apart as fools." Pastor Tate commented that this has become such a critical setting in our lives that people of color lives are at risk and day to day they live with threat on their continual existence. Pastor Tate stated that he often ask himself how long will we have to contend or deal with matters in which we have no control over and yes education is important but going into the fifth century of educating, protesting and having legislation passed. It is painful being in black skin and living in black skin in America. It is almost a punishment for us, not because we have done anything, it is undeserved suffering. Dr. Tate commented that one of the participants stated that they are tired and suffer from black chronic fatigue. Dr. Tate commented that he was tired of being tired and would like to leave a legacy so that his children would not have to be fatigued and tired. As a black person you won't have to feel that you are at risk or unwanted or not accepted as being part of the human fabric that makes us all one people, one nation, under one GOD. We have work to do, hard work, intensive work and the work has to be done in order for the future to be brighter and better for us.

Dr. Samuel thanked Dr. Tate for his comments. Dr. Samuel stated that there is a phrase out there now that is becoming popular called "racial fatigue". Dr. Samuel commented that Dr. Tate expressed it well and stated that he did not see how it is possible for anyone who is not black to understand the physiological pressure of being black in America. Knowing that every time you step out of your door that you are subject to the pressures that being black in American imposes. Dr. Samuel commented that Dr. Tate said that living in America in black skin is painful. In fact, it is not just painful, it can be lethal and you live with the mortality of that possibility every time you go out of your door, if you get pulled over by a police officer, or if you are encounter in any type of aggressive way. It is no wonder that black people die earlier and they have more conditions that are chronic. Every quality of life standard in America shows black people are at the bottom. You can escape whiteness; you can walk out of a door and not be seen as a black person or be held in suspect that a black person is somehow less than equal to every white person. Because in America we have made whiteness an idol and we have demonized being blackness. That is not just spiritual symbolism but social realism.

Dr. Samuel stated that the time was 8:15 p.m. and that he would like to share information on the goal that was established during the last meeting. During the last meeting, the participants came up with a SMART goal that was to create a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee initiative in the city.

Dr. Samuel stated that he has a consulting firm along with Jan Barton and that they had done cross cultural training and diversity training literally all around the world. They have consulted a lot of

municipalities on diversity and sensitivity training but this would be the first time that they had been involved in starting a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee at a city or civic level. Dr. Samuel commented that he thought that this was a stroke of genius.

Dr. Samuel commented that he had a PowerPoint presentation that he would like to share with some basic information and fundamental values of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and why these initiatives are becoming popular initiatives in creating anti-racist organizations, communities, companies, and corporations. The concept is called DEI and stands for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. When the word "Diversity" is used, many people think that it is talking about race and gender but the truth is diversity is a lot more than those two dimensions. In order to talk about diversity you begin to talk about diversity as having three dimensions. Dr. Samuel began the sharing of his slide presentation. There are three dimensions of diversity – primary, secondary and third (tertiary). The primary dimension has to do with characteristics that can not be changed such as age, race, gender, etc. When you touch on a person's primary dimension the response will be emotional. The secondary dimension has the most influence on us and is things that can be changed or controlled somewhat but it tends to be less influential over our character and personality development than the primary dimension because these are things we choose like education, religion, military experience, work style, family style, etc. We choose these things, therefore they have less impact and influence on helping us be who we are. In the tertiary dimension, a person has more control over these dimensions such as work location, profession, work seniority, etc. The tertiary dimension are things that we have complete control over, therefore we do not feel very emotional about them and are not easily offended when someone happens to cross them.

Dr. Samuel reviewed the slide on equity. When we talk about entitlement, equity comes into this area. Equity is not the equal treatment of people, which may surprise some because most people think that if you give people what you think they need then they will be satisfied. This slide shows three different aspects looking at equity. On the left three people are trying to watch a ballgame and they are all given equal platforms to stand on but the person on the right is still unable to see the game where the other two can. Equity means that everybody gets what he or she needs to be equal. Equity can not be achieved without addressing reality. Reality is that some people are not on level ground. People of color start out not with an asset but with a deficit.

Dr. Samuel stated that he was reading an article that stated that when children of ethnic backgrounds are given ethnic sounding names and apply for job more than fifty percent of the applications are tossed to the side because the name gives their race away. It allows them to be treated with discrimination even before the person sees them.

Dr. Samuel moved on the next slide on inclusion. When it comes to talking about inclusion, the best way to describe inclusion is in the language of statistics. Statically speaking there is no doubt that the face of America is changing. Believe it or not, much of what is in the news, in Washington, in political circles around the country, has to do with the face of America changing. When we say that the face of America is changing, the demographic trends projected by the year 2045 states the percentage of white people in America is going to be less than fifty percent. Twenty years from now, there will be no majority race in America. The largest minority will be white, the second will be Hispanic, the third will be black and so forth. What that means is that whites are fast on the track to becoming a minority in America. In twenty years, we will not have to tell white people how it feels to be a minority because they will be one. In 2020, the boomer generation shows that the percentage of whites is 71.6% and in the Gen-X the percentage is 59.7%, Millennials are 55%, Gen-Z are 54.1% and Post-Gen Z are 49.6% which shows the decline in whites in America. Whites in the Post-Gen Z age group are already seeing that they are a minority of the population in America. The percentage of Millennials and younger in the next slide show that in 2010 they were 40.7% of the population and by 2019 they were 50.7% of the population.

Dr. Samuel talked about the next slide that is gender-based trends. We have looked at the change in race and youth and will now look at the change in women. Right now women make up fifty-three percent of the United States population. In 2020, women became more than half of the total United States labor force. Women in 2020 comprised 50.4% of all jobs held in America.

Dr. Samuel stated that the number of minorities is increasing, people of color is increasing, the number of young people is decreasing and the number of women in positions are decreasing. Another trend is sexual identity. The next slide shows the percentage of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender) in America by generation.

Dr. Samuel stated that minorities make up a majority of Americans who are under the age of 18 for the first time in the history of this country.

Dr. Samuel stated that things are changing whether we change or not. The world around us is changing and you can see with all of the tension and conflict and all of the animosity in the air – things are changing and they will get worse.

Dr. Samuel stated that inclusion is more than the reversal of exclusion. First we tried segregation, people that are not necessarily accepted into the larger society. The solution post-civil war was to establish Jim Crow Laws, which means they are separate and they are not equal. After that in 1964, with the passage of the Civil Rights Act by President Johnson, we went from segregation to integration. Why didn't integration work? Integration did not work because integration meant that you were allowed to enter into the larger pools of society but you were relegated to certain positions and never apart of the actual society in which you were integrated into. Affirmative Action, which followed the Civil Rights Act, led us from integration to assimilation. Assimilation is different from integration because assimilation means that you can come into the company and have a job but more than likely you will not be given equal and free access to be rewarded and promoted as other are but you are in the firm or institution. After that in the 1980's we started diversity training. Diversity Training was met with marginalization. Marginalization is different from segregation, integration and assimilation in that it means that you are in and are given some of the benefits of being inside that organization, but you are relegated to a certain area of that company. Most organization accepted people of color and women and other minorities but they had designated areas in which they are over represented.

Dr. Samuel commented that all elements of diversity are intentional acts, meaning that there is not enough good will in America to do right in regards to race. We have had over 400 years and still have not gotten it right. It will be another 500 years if we want things to just occur by osmosis.

Dr. Samuel used the word "UBUNTU" which is a South African phrase, and has no counter part in the English language. "UBUNTU" forces people to think in a different way. When we think in different terms let us look at the concept of "UBUNTU". This phrase means "I can not be a whole person unless you are also a whole person." The picture on the slide show each person clasping the right wrist of the person beside of him or her. When you look at this symbol, it shows that there is not one person that is less or more of important than the other person. Each person can only become a whole person only if they are unselfish in looking after the well-being of another person. "UNBUNTU" is important when it comes to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion because it calls for forgiveness, reconciliation, reparations, unity, and the forming of an inclusive community centered around a common good.

Dr. Samuel stated at the end of the presentation that City Council had approved the creation of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

Dr. Samuel closed with stating his company logo, "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion begins with an awareness of the problem – what is the reality? A solution driven purpose – what do we want to achieve? A commitment to the process – how will we get it done?" This is where the Open Conversation on Racism Committee is and you have already done the "heavy lifting" because you have already received permission from City Council to proceed with a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Dr. Samuel commented that he urged the committee not to waste it, do not turn it into a "gripe" session, a platform to air many grievances, or use as a complaint forum. Let us consider what the reality is when it comes to race and racism in Monroe. Let us together decide collaboratively what do we want to achieve and then let us make a commitment to pursue the process. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work is not a program, not an initiative, and not an event, it is a process and it will require systematic, strategic, and sustainable processes. Everyone on this conversation is indispensable to the success of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. The only way it can succeed is that everyone understands that none of us have the answers. No two Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs are the same, they all differ because every organization, company, and community differs. If we do the work and use all of the collective wisdom on this ZOOM call, we will create a model that will become the gold standard for other communities to follow. There is not another community that has attempted to do what this committee is doing. Dr. Samuel predicted that if we do this and do it well, then one day we will look up on Sixty Minutes and see ourselves setting the standard for this nation by developing an approach to taking a community that is esteemed in racist, systematic, and strategic discrimination and turn it into an anti-racist community where diversity, equity, and inclusion of all people is embraced.

Dr. Samuel ended his presentation and turned the meeting over the Chairperson Anthony.

Chairperson Anthony commented that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee had been approved by City Council and it will be a City Council Committee. Chairperson Anthony stated that it was suggested for it to be a Mayoral Committee; however, a Mayoral Committee would be limited to no more than nine members and would have to report monthly on progress. A City Council Committee can have up to twenty-five members and the more people involved the better we will be. Chairperson Anthony suggested to Dr. Samuel that he would be needed for the structure, formation and guidance with this committee. Dr. Samuel commented that this is what his company does, thanked her for the opportunity to partner with us and looked forward to the things that we are going to do together in this community.

Dr. Samuel commented that the first thing that needed to be done is to start confirming, soliciting or appointing members to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Dr. Samuel advised that an elected official should not lead the committee; it should be led by or chaired by someone from the committee and from the group. Dr. Samuel commented that from there we could start putting in place a plan to train that committee, to organize them, to share with them what a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee looks like and how that committee functions. This is a working committee and is not something that is just a "glam show"; it will require a lot of work.

Chairperson Anthony stated that she was asked by Council to Chair this committee, however she would gladly co-chair the committee. Chairperson Anthony requested that Dr. Melvin Tate co-chair the committee due to his unlimited experiences. Dr. Samuel commented to Dr. Melvin Tate that his name had been lifted up and he thought it should be placed to a vote and if so elected would he serve. Dr. Tate responded that he would be glad to serve as co-chair. Dr. Samuel commented to Chairperson Anthony that he would go through the process and stated that the group had heard the nomination of the co-chair by Chairperson Anthony, which was for Dr. Melvin Tate to be chair and ask for a second to the motion.

Mujeeb Shah-Khan commented to Chairperson Anthony that before this continued it should be noted that this conversation committee does not have the ability to select the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee chair. Mr. Shah-Khan stated that Chairperson Anthony was empowered by Council and it would be appropriate by the committee when it is constituted to select the chair. Mr. Shah-Khan commented to Dr. Samuel that if he would like to have a consensus from this group that would be appropriate prior to naming Dr. Tate as co-chair. Mr. Shah-Khan stated that the recommendation would be to have this committee provide a recommendation to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee once formed.

Dr. Samuel thanked Mr. Shah-Khan for his input and para-phrased what was said. Dr. Samuel commented that what was said was that this committee can vote to recommend Dr. Melvin Tate and asked Mr. Shah-Khan if this was correct. Mr. Shah-Khan stated that the committee could move to recommend to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee that it select as a co-chair Dr. Melvin Tate, which would be the motion. Dr. Samuel commented that he agreed with Mr. Shah-Khan and stated that Chairperson Anthony had made that motion and requested a second on the motion. Cress Barnes second the recommendation. Dr. Samuel asked for all in favor of the recommendation say "I". Dr. Samuel asked that anyone opposed to the recommendation say "naye". Dr. Samuel stated that it was a unanimous "I" and so ordered. Dr. Samuel thanked Attorney Shah-Khan for keeping this in order. Mr. Shah-Khan commented to Chairperson Anthony that typically with electronic meetings there would be a roll call, however, in this particular situation, with the number of people involved and plus the fact that it was unanimous, he would suggest that the record show that based on an absence of "naye" that everyone voted in the positive. Because this is merely a recommendation, Mr. Shah-Khan stated that he would not push that they do a roll call because we would be here till about 10:00 p.m. in the evening.

Dr. Samuel thanked everyone from the standpoint of being the facilitator stating that it had been a labor of love, honor to share with them and he thinks this committee has great things in store. Dr. Samuel thanked Ms. Melancon for her conversation in being the catalyst in getting a very meaning conversation started. Dr. Samuel turned the meeting back over the Chairperson Anthony.

Ms. Melancon thanked Dr. Samuel for helping her to grow.

Chairperson Anthony commented that she need to ask Mrs. Debra Reed if there had been discussion on how we will recruit members for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Mrs. Debra C. Reed stated that since that would have normally come through Administration, she needed to try to find out how to obtain those applications. Mrs. Reed stated that at the last meeting, the committee determined that those applications would go straight to the committee that was appointed by Council; therefore, we would get them from Administration and make sure that the Councilmembers receive a copy of the applications. Mrs. Reed stated that we would have to find out how to advertise the application to get people to apply. Chairperson Anthony asked if the applications would be available to people who have participated in the conversations or would it be a general population application? Mrs. Reed stated that since people have participated, the application would post to the general population and those who know about it can apply, but hopefully other people will have heard about it in conversation and other people will be aware of it through the posting.

Chairperson Anthony commented to Dr. Tate that she did not have the words to adequately thank him for the amount of information that he had given and stated that we are in a much better place as far as understanding this concern. Chairperson Anthony stated that she thought we were all in the thinking mode and hoped that all of us were in the mode for change and that all of us will be a change agent. Chairperson Anthony also stated that she seriously hoped that each person would apply for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Chairperson Anthony this is a serious matter, but it

does not have to be it, and it can be a labor of love. Chairperson Anthony stated that she is glad to begin this work and it is a vision she has that we can become more anti-racist city.

Chairperson Anthony stated that we were near the end of the time and would like to give people the opportunity to express whatever they are feeling now.

Penelope Locklear asked if the applications were going to be email or would they have to look to see when the application is posted? Chairperson Anthony stated that she was going to refer that question to Debra Reed. Debra Reed stated that she would have to determine how they are set up since this was something she did not have information on. Chairperson Anthony did state that there was a maximum of twenty-five participants. Dr. Samuel stated that there were twenty-five participants according to the screen showing participants on this ZOOM call tonight, which is a good number.

Chairperson Anthony asked if anyone would like to share his or her growth or ideology.

Dr. Melvin Tate stated that he felt that his heart was strangely warm and feels that we are embarking upon something that is going to make a great difference in our community, our city, our county, and who knows this nation and the world.

Dr. Samuel asked if there was anyone who would like to speak to the success or lack thereof during this process? Was this meaningful, important, helpful – any closing thoughts about the process we have experience in these last two conversations.

-Cress Barnes commented that she feels great about all of the conversations that we have been having, but it seems like such a huge undertaking. She is super excited about it and ready rock and roll and let us to go for it. But in the same light too, because of where we are in Union County, and just experiencing moving here, and learning the history which is so rich and astute in racism in Union County and knowing that there are city and county divisions during the elections and in the parades seeing the confederate flags, she is a little overwhelmed with thinking how are we going to reach these people that are teaching their children those same ways. Looking forward to looking at this with you guys and taking it piece by piece to do everything we can. She stated that she has three sons who she has instilled in them that they do not have to worry about walking out the house with a hoodie on or be worried when they get pulled over by the police and that they automatically started on second base because of their skin color. She stated that she is trying to raise this next generation to be open, but there are so many people that are not.

-Lakeysha Medlin encouraged all participants to share information as Ms. Melancon did. She stated these conversations, in order for us to move forward effectively, have to happen. In order to tear down the myths that Pastor Lanny brought up we have to have the hard conversations.

-Rev. Osco Gardin stated that he was not sure if he overlooked the email but had been a part of these meetings since their inception but got on late tonight and was just listening because he had an ideal of what the conversation was. Since he was late, he figured the most polite thing would be to be quite and listen. Since given the opportunity to say something he stated that he was grateful for what he had heard. He stated that he was cautiously and prayfully optimistic about this whole process. He stated that he understands exactly what Ms. Barnes expressed because this is an uphill battle and we need to be realist about it and be committed to the very end. If we think any of this is going to be easy then we are fooling ourselves. We are starting out at a deficit, let's be real about it, and so if we can approach this prayfully, cautiously, untiringly, then maybe change will come. He stated that he hoped sooner than later but having been here for twenty-six years it certainly has not come soon. He is grateful and very excited about this effort and stated as far as he is concern he is all in.

-Loretta Melancon thanked Dr. Samuel for the presentation and stated that she was involved in some very serious issues in the city and county in reference to litter abatement. She stated that through the county, she hoped soon to have a litter task force and focus will be on prevention. Imagine how to change the culture of our citizens who just freely throw trash on the roadside but the ideals in your presentation are going to help her tremendously when she forms that committee.

-Martha Allen thanked everyone for letting her be a part of the committee tonight. She stated that she was thinking while listening to everyone tonight speak, very eloquently and honest, that real change happens at the end of our comfort zone. Everybody has been living in their own little bubble, their own little place where they are comfortable and for us to get beyond that we are going to have to enlarge our comfort zone and get out there a little further. That is going to be a little bit uncomfortable but if we make peace with that and say, "it's going to be okay" we will get through it, especially together we will get through it. Before long that place where we have gone to that is uncomfortable will be enlarged and encompassed and becomes part of our comfort zone. Thank you to everybody for your comments.

Chairperson Anthony stated that everyone could look forward to putting in an application once it is determined how it is done. We can look forward to working together and getting out of our comfort zone.

Dr. Samuel did a collective thank you to everyone because everything that has happened here is a result of your vision, initiative and commitment to see this thing happen. Someone once said that you can not spell success without the "u", we cannot spell success without Chairperson Anthony and we thank you.

Chairperson Anthony replied with a thank you and stated that this is a team effort.

Chairperson Anthony stated that we could talk about this all night. Please discuss this with your friend, neighbors and family because we are going to do this thing. Chairperson Anthony stated for everyone to be safe and have a blessed evening.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting ended at 9:11 p.m.

Chairperson Surluta Anthony



CITY OF MONROE :

**2ND OPEN CONVERSATION
ON RACISM
MARCH 3, 2021**

**INSIGHT CONSULTANTS
710 WEST TRADE STREET, SUITE 709
CHARLOTTE, NC 28202
980-299-1899**



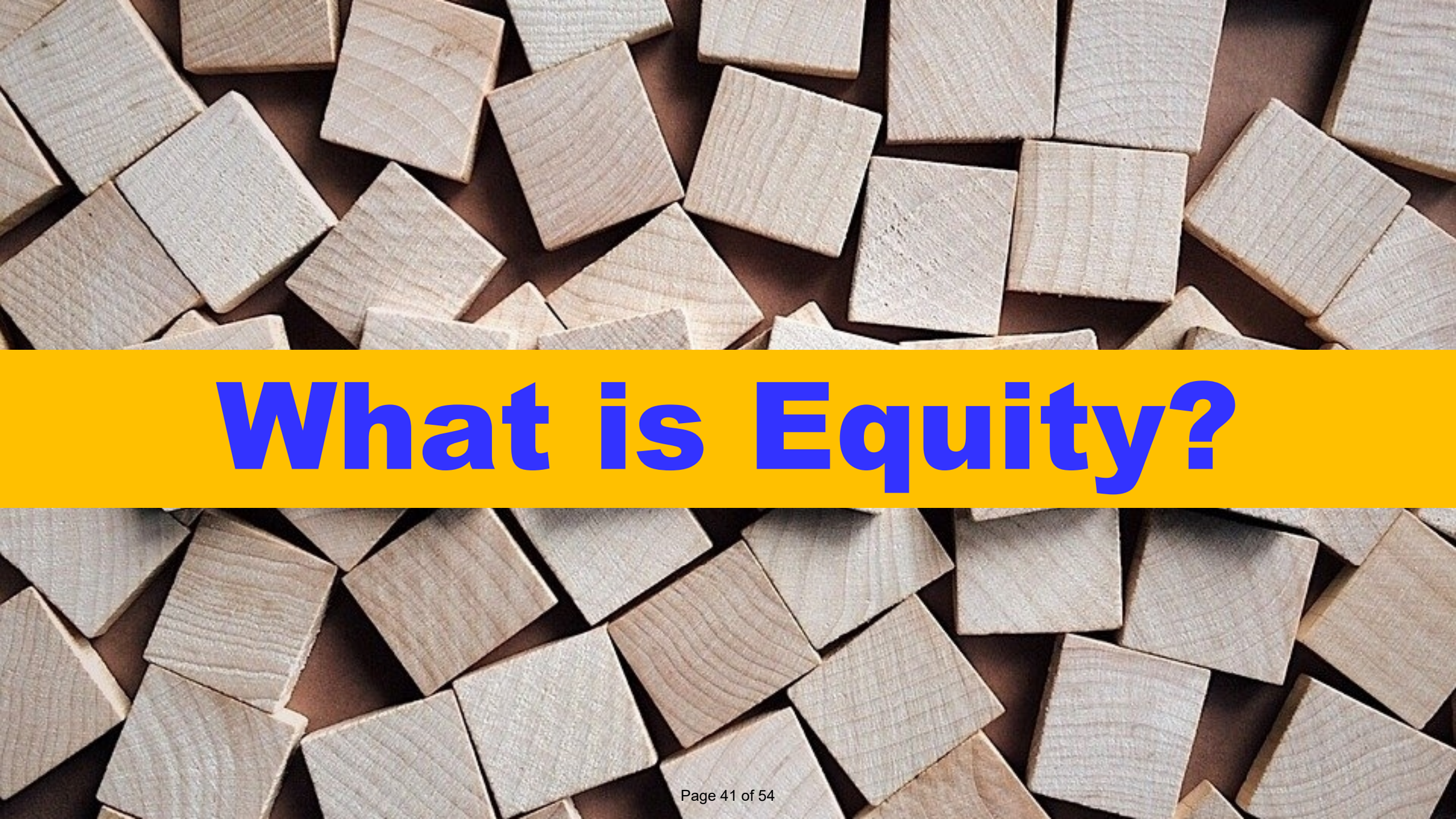
DEI: DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION



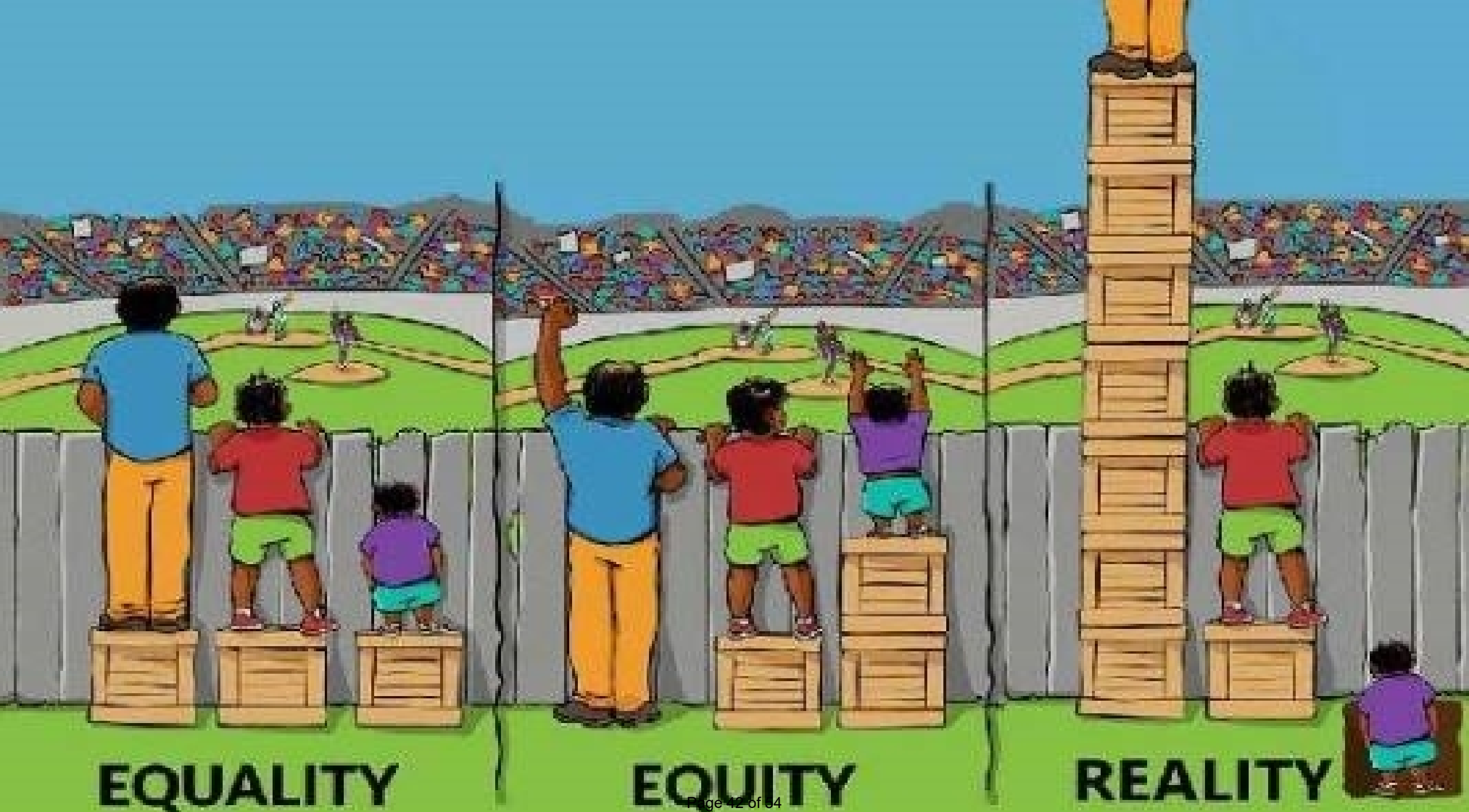
What is Diversity?

Dimensions of Diversity





What is Equity?

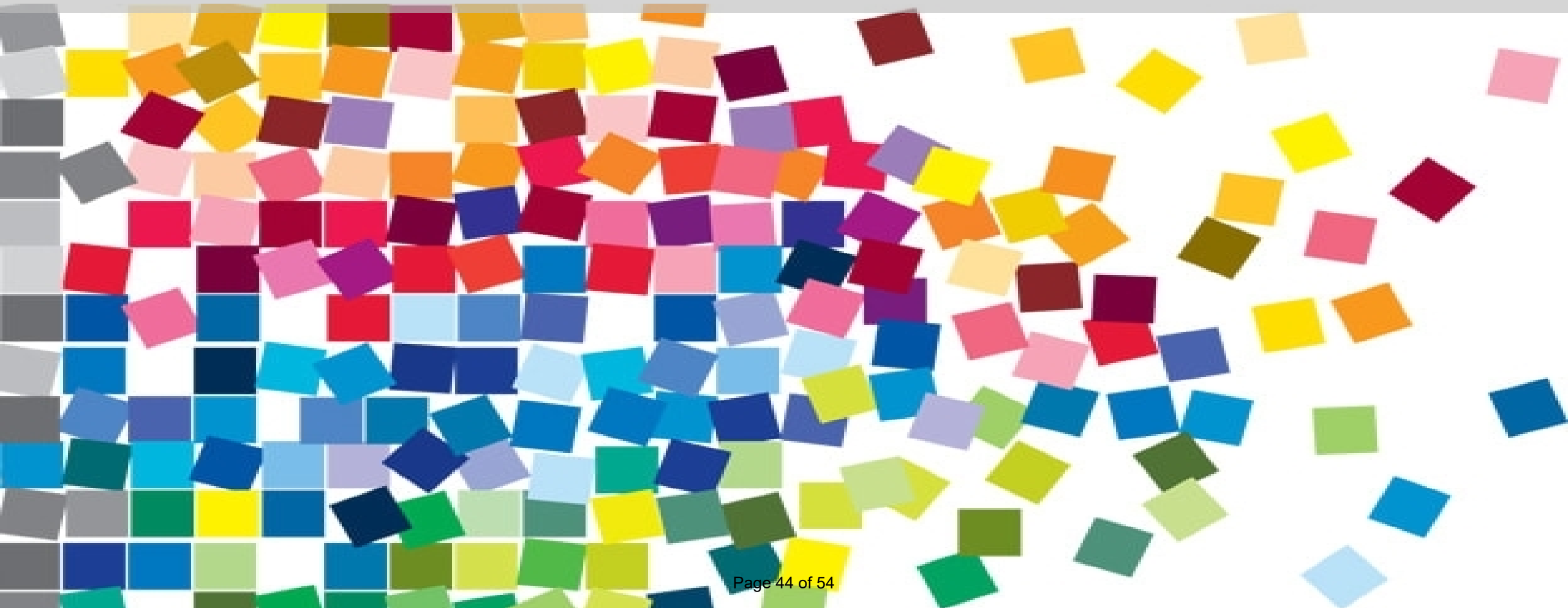


A high-angle, close-up photograph of a diverse group of people's hands and forearms stacked together in a circle. The hands are of various skin tones and are reaching from different directions towards the center. The people are wearing various casual clothing, including a striped shirt, a green hoodie, and a grey and white striped long-sleeve shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored floor.

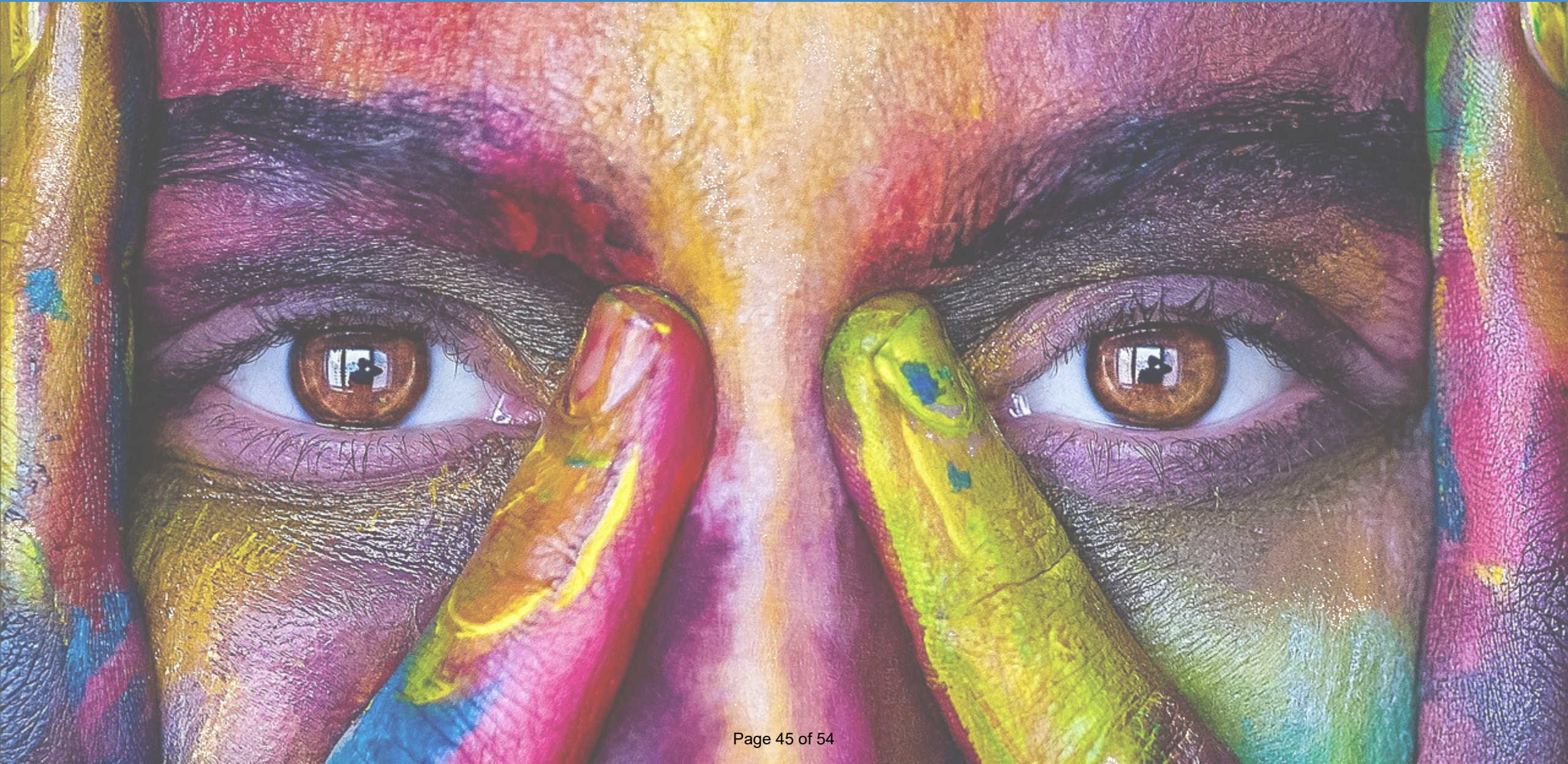
What is Inclusion?

WHY DOES INCLUSION MATTER?

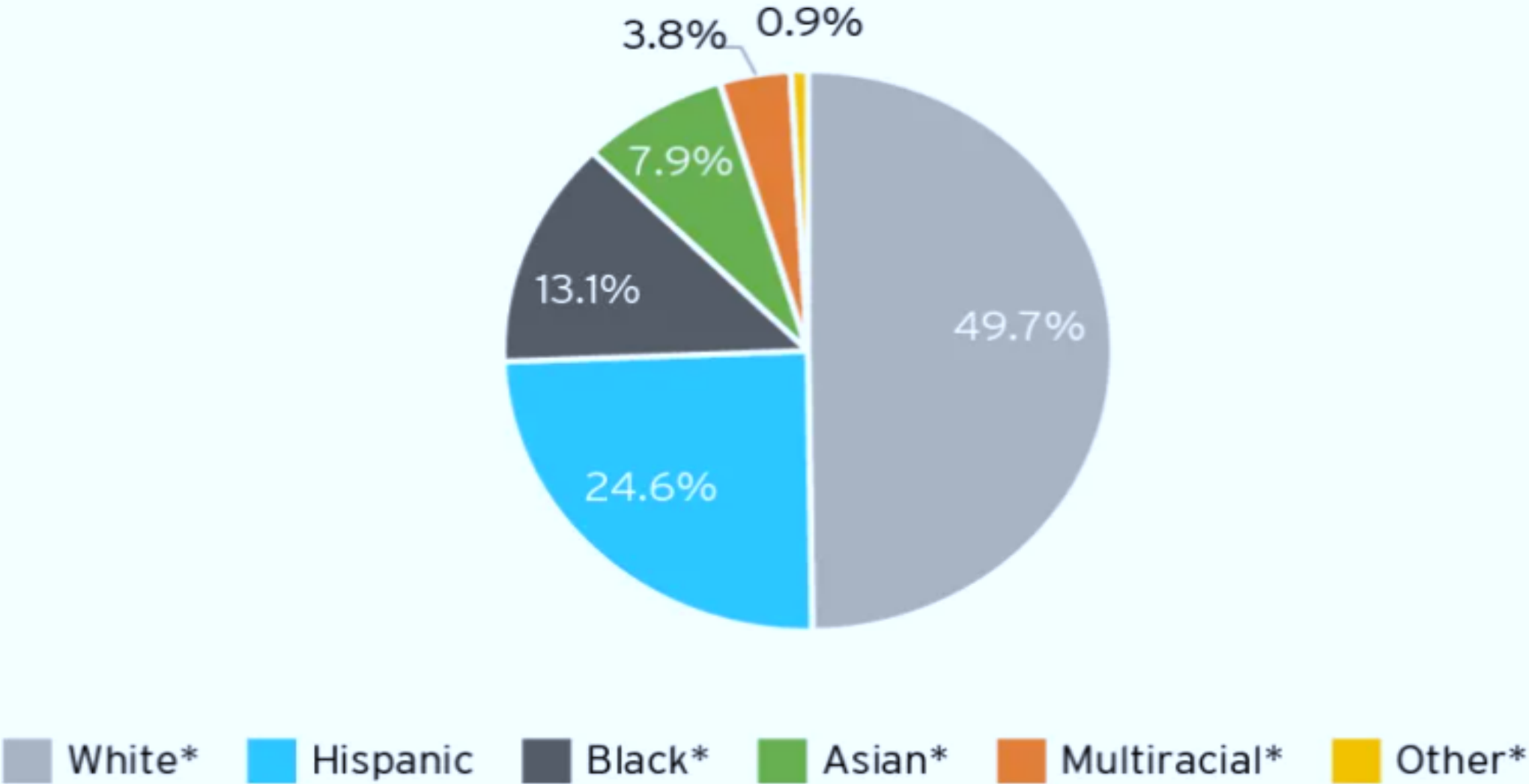
STATS



THE FACE OF AMERICA IS CHANGING



RACIAL DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS – U.S. 2045

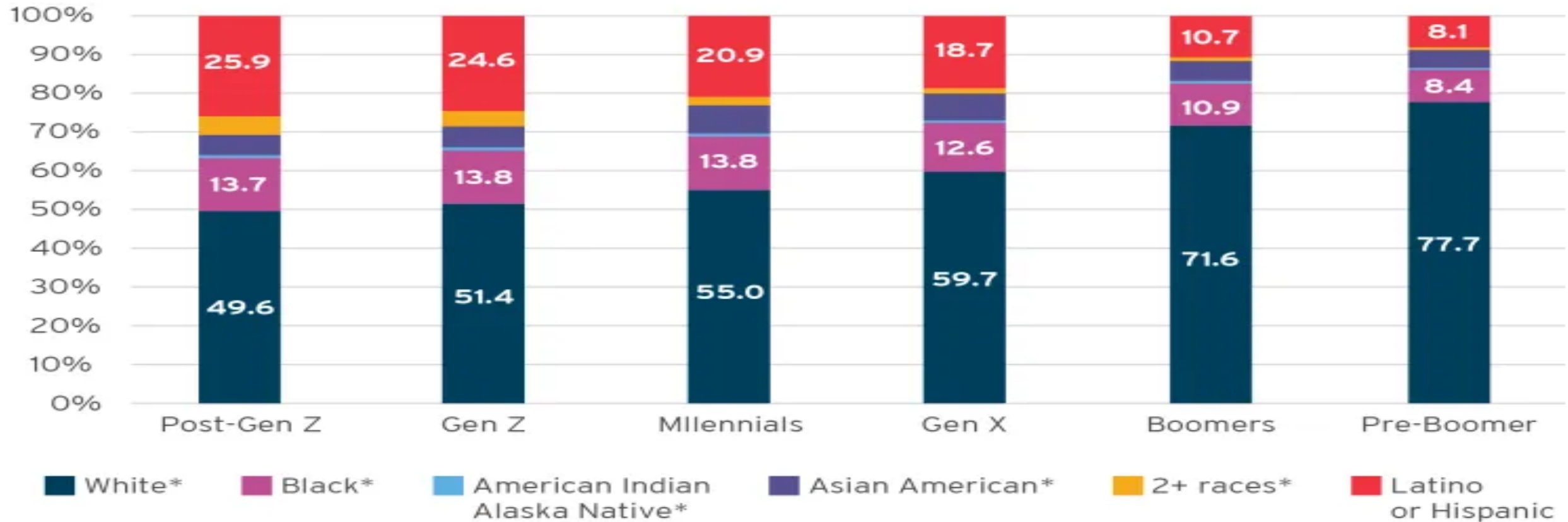


* Non-Hispanic members of race

RACIAL-GENERATIONAL TRENDS – 2020

FIGURE 3

US racial profiles by generation



Notes: Numbers pertain to July 1, 2019. Asian American includes Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders

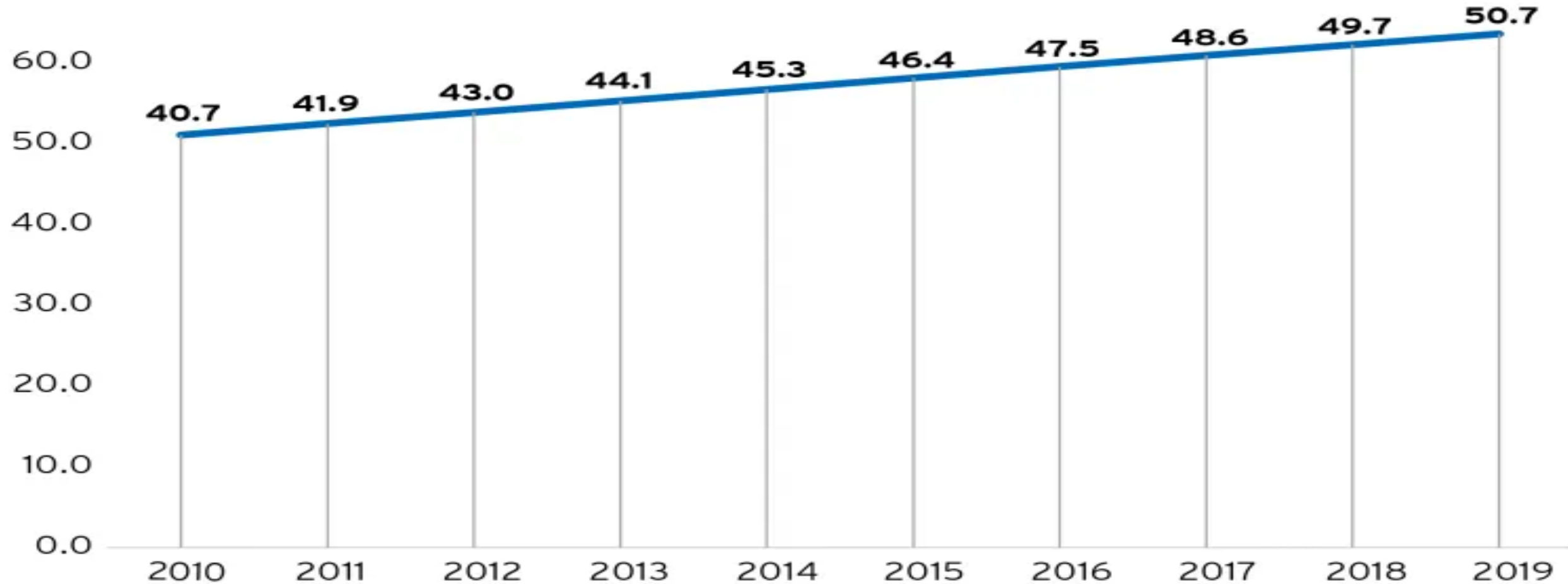
* non Hispanic members of race

Source: William H. Frey analysis of Census Bureau population estimates released June 25, 2020.

GENERATIONAL TRENDS – 2020

FIGURE 1

Percent of population: Millennials, Gen Z, and younger



Source: William H. Frey analysis of Census Bureau population estimates released June 25, 2020.

GENDER BASED TRENDS - 2020

WOMEN MAKE UP 53% OF THE U.S. POPULATION

In 2020 **WOMEN** became **MORE THAN HALF THE TOTAL U.S. labor force**

50.4%

Of all jobs are now held by **WOMEN**

SEXUAL IDENTITY TRENDS - 2020

LGBT AMERICANS BY GENERATION

Gen Z (born 1997-2002) **15.9%**

Millennials (born 1981-1996) **9.1%**

Gen X (born 1965-1980) **3.8%**

Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) **2%**

Traditionalists (born before 1946) **1.3%**

Source: GALLUP, 2012-2017 wording: Do you, personally, identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender? Based on more than 15,000 interviews conducted throughout 2020. 18 and older.

THE FUTURE OF AMERICA IS NOW



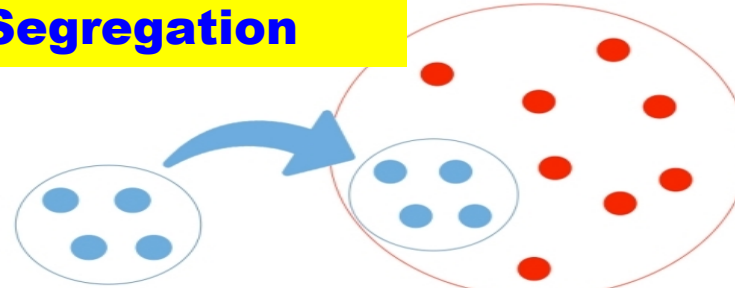
MINORITIES MAKE UP a MAJORITY
of AMERICANS **UNDER THE AGE OF 18**
for the first time.

INCLUSION IS MORE THAN THE REVERSAL OF EXCLUSION

SOCIETIAL APPROACH

Segregation

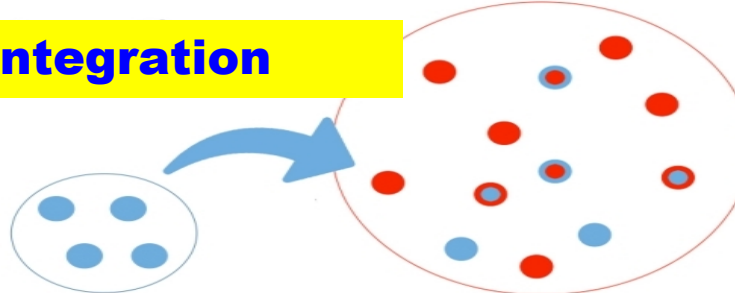
POST CIVIL WAR: 1865
Jim Crow Laws



LEGAL APPROACH

Integration

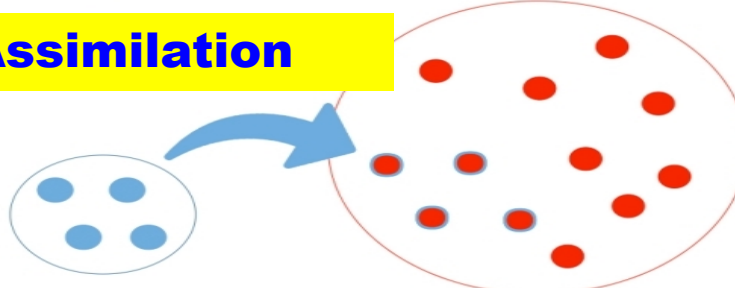
CIVIL RIGHTS ACT: 1964
Anti-Segregation Laws



INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH

Assimilation

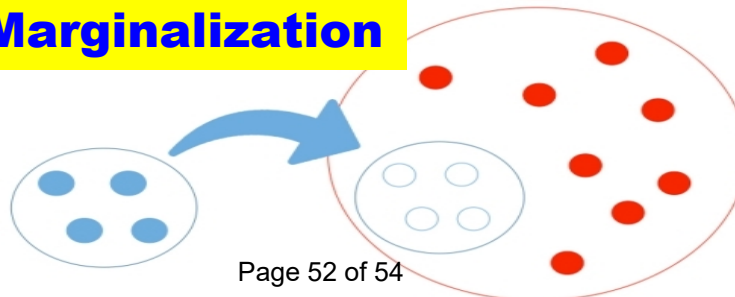
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: 1965
Anti-Discrimination Legislation in
Education & Employment



EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

Marginalization

DIVERSITY TRAINING: 1980'S
Cross-Cultural Sensitivity



ALL ELEMENTS OF DEI ARE INTENTIONAL ACTS **BY WHICH WE CHOOSE TO BECOME WHOLE - “UBUNTU”**



**DEI INITIATIVES BEGIN WITH
AN AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM—WHAT IS THE REALITY?
A SOLUTION DRIVEN PURPOSE—WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?
A COMMITMENT TO THE PROCESS—HOW WILL WE GET IT DONE?**

