

Creative Practices for Racial Equity in the Government Workforce

Tuesday, April 16th

8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Breakfast and Lunch provided

\$125 per person

Hosted and facilitated by the City of Seattle, Race and Social Justice Network

How can government workers identify racialized power dynamics, interrupt racism and shift the culture of our institutions to support racial equity in all of our work – both within our institutions and with the community? What behaviors, mindsets and skills are needed to embody racial equity as a regular practice, a way of being that counters the traditional white dominant culture of government agencies? How can these practices help managers, supervisors and people advising on human resources matters strengthen decision-making for racial equity across all levels of hierarchy? Through arts-integrated learning, mindfulness and scenario-based problem-solving, participants will gain tools to build racial equity in the workplace. They will examine power differentials based on race and its intersections with gender and sexuality; unpack the differences between white dominant culture and relational culture; and develop strategies and tactics to make decisions and provide advice rooted in racial equity and belonging.

This workshop will draw from new curriculum for a multi-part community of practice on racial equity strategies and tactics for human resources advisers, managers and supervisors. The community of practice will incorporate a video of a performance that playwright Sara Porkalob is writing and directing based on personal stories of racism and racial equity from the City's workforce. Workshop activities will incorporate scenes from the script, which will be performed and filmed this spring. Individual scenes from the film will be used as teaching tools in a range of Citywide racial equity trainings. The video and an activity guide will be available for free, public download in 2020.

This project is part of the Creative Strategies Initiative (CSI), a component of the City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative that uses arts- and culture-based approaches to build racial equity in non-arts areas like the environment, housing, workforce and community development. CSI aims to shift the culture of government by focusing both on racial equity outcomes – what harm is eliminated, or opportunity increased for those who are most impacted by structural racism – and process – how the City does racial equity work.

This CSI project is a partnership between the Office of Arts & Culture, Department of Human Resources and Office for Civil Rights, and is sponsored by the Citywide Workforce Equity Planning and Advisory Committee. Efforts to improve workforce equity began in 2008; more recently, they have included the creation of a dedicated workforce equity director and staff within the Department of Human Resources; internal organizing and advocacy by employee groups including the Coalition of Affinity Groups Against Racial Harassment, the Race and Social Justice Affiliates and Seattle Silence Breakers; and the creation of an Anti-Harassment Interdepartmental Team, which developed recommendations that informed policy and procedure requirements in a 2018 mayoral executive order. The theater portion of the project is inspired by Real Talk, an original performance based on the experiences of people of color working in Seattle area arts organizations. Real Talk was written and directed by Porkalob and produced by Elisheba Johnson, Jenny Crooks and Kathy Hsieh with the Seattle Arts Leadership Team (SALT) through the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture in 2017 and was inspired by a similar project by Arts Workers for Equity (AWE) in Portland, Oregon.



**RACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE
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Dr. Andrea Ramirez is a scholar and practitioner devoted to creating systemic social change and improving the lives of communities most impacted by injustice and oppression. She spent over 15 years working in higher education where she was an advocate for communities of color and developed programs centering the experiences of communities most impacted. Andrea utilizes a multidisciplinary approach of storytelling, creativity, and research as tools to help people understand the experience of difference. Her equity and justice work is informed by her identity as a Latina, her family experience, growing up in a military family, being a first-generation college student, and through her experiences of often being the only woman of color in leadership roles within organizations. Andrea is a member of the City of Seattle's Workforce Equity Unit within the Seattle Department of Human Resources. In that role, she provides consultation and support for improving equitable practices across City government. Most recently, Andrea facilitated and supported the Citywide Anti-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Interdepartmental Team (IDT) to develop recommendations on "Addressing and Preventing Workplace Harassment and Discrimination."

Kyana Wheeler is a Black woman with extensive experience in anti-racist organizational change, curriculum development, training, facilitation and racial caucusing. She is an accomplished race relations trainer and has actively engaged in moving the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative forward over the last 14 years. With an M.Ed in Educational Leadership and an MPA in Policy Development, Kyana is skilled in implementing systemic change within a large complex government structure and embedding institutional practices that create space for conversations about race and racism. Kyana is a proven consensus builder and is adept in developing partnership between leadership and staff. She has coached, trained and motivated staff to build skills and create capacity to challenge racial inequity.

Diana Falchuk is a mother, artist, trainer, strategist and institutional policymaker who works in diverse contexts – from government, social services and arts organizations to educational institutions, grass roots community groups and faith-based organizations – to cultivate racial justice and belonging. In her role as Manager of Arts & Racial Equity with the City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative, she designs policies, projects, strategies, partnerships and trainings that use arts and culture to build racial equity across government and with community. Diana holds a Master's in Social Work from the University of Washington where she was certified in and taught Intergroup Dialogue and where she now teaches in the Museology Graduate Program. She is the current Co-Chair of the GARE Arts & Culture Work Group. A white Jewish woman with Venezuelan cultural heritage, Diana organizes with various multiracial, white and Jewish community groups.

Sara Porkalob is an award winning storyteller and activist based in Seattle. She's been featured in Seattle Magazine's Most Influential People of 2018 and the City Arts 2017 Futures List, and served as Intiman Theatre's 2017 Co-Curator. She is a co-founder of DeConstruct, an online journal of intersectional performance critique. Her one woman musical Dragon Lady is the recipient of three 2018 Gregory Awards for Outstanding Sound/Music Design, Outstanding Actress in a Musical, and Outstanding Musical Production. In 2019, she will have her 5th Avenue Theatre debut in Rock of Ages, American Repertory Theatre in Boston will produce Dragon Lady and Dragon Mama (the first two shows in her trilogy of autobiographical plays The Dragon Cycle) and Nordo's Culinarium will produce her new play, 7th and Jackson, a historical fiction with music and immersive dining, inspired by Seattle's International District.



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