

## SPOTLIGHT ON Dubuque, Iowa



Intentional work to address organizational change around diversity and inclusion began in Dubuque, Iowa in 2006 with an organizational assessment and capacity-building to increase understanding and develop and implement institutional strategies that advance racial equity. This was carried out with the help of an outside consultant using an intercultural communication approach. Scenario-based workshops using adult learning principles were implemented with all government workers, focusing on cultural communication and conflict styles and introducing tools to assist employees in developing their personal skills. The training reduced defensiveness, established a common language, and empowered employees with an alternate narrative and tools to develop shared understanding in order to more successfully navigate deep cultural differences. This training is still given to all government employees, as well as many members of the community who have become ambassadors in the community.

Work inside the city has been supplemented by work in the community with the creation of Inclusive Dubuque in 2013. Currently, its focus is both internal and external. For example, internally, a cross-departmental recruitment and retention team is working to recruit a more diverse applicant pool. Externally, the focus has been largely on capacity-building with local non-profit organizations and the Dubuque Community School District and developing a community-wide Equity Profile.

### **Inclusive Dubuque**

Inclusive Dubuque is a community network of leaders committed to supporting an equitable and inclusive culture to meet the economic and cultural needs of a diverse community. It is comprised of faith, labor, education, non-profit, and government leaders. The vision is a community where all individuals feel respected, valued, and engaged. Inclusive Dubuque network partners have funded roles at the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, which serves as a hub for data and communication. Inclusive Dubuque is currently creating a Community Equity Profile, with the goal of increasing understanding of Dubuque's population not only around race, but also gender, socioeconomic status, religion, and more.

The Equity Profile will provide a snapshot of how diverse populations are affected by societal systems in Dubuque. The particular focus areas include economic well-being, housing, health, education, neighborhood safety, transportation, and arts and culture. The research for the Equity Profile will be completed in 2015 and includes quantitative population level data, community surveys, community dialogue sessions to share experiences, and meetings with focus area specialists.

### **To Learn More**

Inclusive Dubuque ([includedbq.org](http://includedbq.org))  
Community Foundation of Dubuque ([www.dbqfoundation.org](http://www.dbqfoundation.org))

### **RESOURCE GUIDE**

**Advancing  
Racial Equity &  
Transforming  
Government**

Government  
Alliance on  
Race and Equity