

Improving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Libraries: Programs and Methodologies to Consider

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In August of 2020, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) celebrated the 20th anniversary of its signature diversity recruitment effort, the Kaleidoscope Program, formerly called the Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce. Although established in 2000, the program developed out of consultative capacity at ARL that had been developed since 1990. In the past 20 years, looking solely at the five racial/ethnic categories tracked by the US Census Bureau (African American, Caucasian/other, American Indian and Native Alaskan, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic), representation of minoritized populations in professional positions in US ARL university libraries has increased from a combined 11.4% in 1999–2000, to 16.2% in 2018–2019.^{1,2} Looking at the raw numbers, in 1997–1998, there were 854 MLIS or comparably credentialed “minority” librarians employed in the 98 US university libraries for which those data were tracked. In 2018–2019, that number increased to 1,507 in 100 libraries, for a net gain of 654 library professionals who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Causation is difficult to impossible to attribute without a detailed analysis of the current population of minoritized professionals employed in ARL member institutions, but it is fair to say that there has been a significant increase in the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color populations since the inception of the Kaleidoscope Program in 2000. Although not 100% of those who fall into those racial/ethnic

categories have participated in ARL diversity recruitment programs, certainly a large percentage has over the course of two decades.

These percentages are favorable when compared against national demographics in the profession. Although not updated since 2012, the American Library Association (ALA) *Diversity Counts* report indicated representation of credentialed librarians from minoritized populations at 11.1% of the total workforce of academic, public, and school librarians in the US.³ For the purpose of contrast, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates for “librarians” across four demographic groups indicate that approximately 9.2% of the credentialed librarian workforce in 2019 was from two racial/ethnic categories: Black or African American and Asian.⁴ Hispanic or Latino-identifying individuals make up approximately 9.8% of the librarian workforce, but may identify as other races listed in the statistics. Individuals identifying as White make up approximately 87.8% of the librarian workforce. No breakdown is given on the remainder of the workforce groups, which includes but is not limited to Native American and Alaska Native.

What analysis of the ALA *Diversity Counts* and other reports indicates is that, in spite of concerted efforts from major library associations as well as library and information science programs over the last several decades, based on the above data, little progress has been made with respect to representation of racial and ethnic categories that, historically, have been a underrepresented within the profession. There has been a great deal of literature published about enduring challenges to diversifying the workplace and how many interventions do little more than sustain and maintain homogeneity in the workforce, particularly in managerial ranks. In a notable article in the *Harvard Business Review* from 2016, two sociology professors point to evidence that, in the business sector, diversity initiatives often have the opposite effect of what is intended.⁵ Much of the literature regarding diversity in higher education laments the lack of progress in diversifying.

Lack of Demographic Change in Spite of Efforts to Diversify

Perhaps no other industry has seen such an abysmal return on its investments to diversify the profession than the technology industry. Speaking about the “technology giants” such as Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Intel, etc., a recent article from the Associated Press provided sobering statistics for the rate of “diversity” hiring by these corporations when compared to percentages of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color graduating with computer science and related degrees.⁶ This is in spite of hundreds of millions of dollars and ubiquitous training committed by these tech giants.

Research from the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) identified considerable gaps between what leaders in large organizations saw as the most significant barriers to developing a more diverse workforce and achieving greater diversity in managerial and leadership ranks, on one hand, and what people from identified “underrepresented” or “marginalized” groups perceived to be preventing progress, on the other.⁷ The same can be said of the proposed interventions that would lead to sustained change. The BCG researchers indicated that corporate leaders tend to see recruitment as the major obstacle to diversifying their workforces, whereas people from underrepresented groups see the obstacles across the employment life cycle: recruitment, retention, and advancement. As the BCG authors noted:

Hiring people from diverse groups is easier than successfully addressing the deep-rooted cultural and organizational issues that those groups face in their day-to-day work experience.

Unfortunately, the story is quite similar in higher education, specifically with respect to diversification of the professoriate. A recent study published in the *Hispanic Journal of Law and Policy* showed there has been little progress in the representation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and women among university faculty.⁸ The article, which tracked federal data of demographic trends from 2013 to 2017, reported that the number of Black tenured faculty members grew by

only 0.1% in the four-year period, while representation of Hispanic tenured faculty grew by only 0.65%. Tenured faculty positions filled by Asian Americans saw the greatest gains, with a 1.2% increase over the period studied.

Rather than thinking of ARL's members as homogenous, it may be better to think of each library as its own micro-culture. In a 2018 autobiographical article for *Wired*, Joi Ito wrote, "People who are wired differently should be able to think of themselves as the rule, not as an exception."⁹ This quote can be rephrased in terms of ARL and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as, "ARL members and their patrons who have different needs should be able to think of themselves as the rule, not as an exception."

This need for diversity to be the rule and not the exception has implications for leadership as ARL moves forward. In 2019 Gallup reported that administrators' investment in support and resources for managers is key to retention and productivity of all employees, and that management roles and experiences need to be tailored to the individual.¹⁰ Wiegert and Maese asserted, "Managers account for an astounding 70% of the variance in their team's engagement." From this we can discern that in order for managers to integrate DEI into their hiring, management style, and the work of those they supervise, we must first provide support and resources to leaders of ARL libraries to develop these skills and habits.

ARL recognizes the need to develop leaders who model and encourage self-care, setting boundaries, delegation, setting specific achievable goals, and actively working towards dismantling institutionalized structures of inequality while also addressing any loss of trust and trauma from previous or current policies, systems, administrators, coworkers, collaborators, or patrons.^{[11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18](#)}

Programs and Methodologies That *Appear to Be Working*

Please note that this section highlights a small sample of models and programs that organizations are using to address DEI issues. Inclusion in this section is informational and not an endorsement, due to a lack of data on the effectiveness of these and other DEI interventions.

National Day of Racial Healing and the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Framework

The National Day of Racial Healing website,¹⁹ sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation as part of their Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Framework,²⁰ provides resources for libraries and other groups to participate in the annual event. The National Day of Racial Healing was deliberately designed to follow Martin Luther King Jr. Day and emphasizes talking and listening with compassion.

On January 16, 2020, the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) announced that 13 institutions would “host Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) Campus Centers.”²¹ This brought the total number of AAC&U TRHT centers to 23 with a long-term goal of 150 centers throughout the United States. The purpose of these centers is to use the pillars of TRHT to “prepare the next generation of leaders to confront racism and to dismantle the belief in a hierarchy of human value.” These campuses not only participate in the National Day of Racial Healing, but also participate in workshops, consultations, and designing and co-facilitating Rx Racial Healing Circles, while following the five pillars of the TRHT framework.

Truth and Racial Healing, & Transformation Framework Pillars

1. Narrative Change
2. Racial Healing and Relationship Building
3. Separation
4. Law
5. Economy

A video of one National Day of Racial Healing event is available for view on Facebook.²² The video begins with an interpretive dance describing the history of adversity and oppression of Native Americans and African Americans in the United States. The leader of the dance troupe stated that they wanted to demonstrate that nevertheless they dance through the struggle, despite the systematic oppression and genocide that Native communities have experienced throughout US history. This was followed by a Q&A session, which modeled how people can come together and discuss complex DEI issues as well as techniques to create change. The event continued to alternate between artistic performances, art, storytelling, highlighting relevant initiatives, and panel discussions.

Tips from the discussions in the Q&A session included:

- Don't heavily encourage/force individuals who are in multiple communities to pick a side; they are always 100% part of each community.
- There is a gap between where we are and where people think we are.
- Don't just hire people like you. Hire people who are different because you want to, not because it's a rule.
- Pay attention to suffering and feel the heartbreak so that you stay engaged and care.
- Do you perceive that I am all the things that I should be? versus Do you see me? and Do I see you?
- Do we learn from each other?

Strategic Diversity Leadership: Activating Change and Transformation in Higher Education

Those interested in a strictly higher education take on DEI may be interested in *Strategic Diversity Leadership: Activating Change and Transformation in Higher Education* by Damon A. Williams.²³ Williams uses boxes, tables, and figures throughout the book to provide frameworks, case studies, and benchmarks for honoring and increasing

diversity in higher education. While not all of the information in Williams's 2013 book pertains to libraries, resources such as the case study in Box 7.6 "Creating Shared Commitment," Table 9.3 "Criteria and Pitfalls for Developing Diversity Committees," and Box 5.6 "Strategies to Successfully Navigate Campus Politics" can provide lessons learned and frameworks to support the development of deliberate and sustainable change related to DEI (pp. 356, 418, 239).

Cooperative Extension

Cooperative Extension's DEI website²⁴ shares resources, frameworks, experts, and competency areas (understanding implicit bias, microaggression development and understanding, cultural competency, promotion of civility, social justice development, organizational learning). This website will be most useful to organizations looking for do-it-yourself ideas to advance DEI efforts.

DeEtta Jones & Associates (DJA)

DeEtta Jones & Associates (DJA)²⁵ specializes in e-learning, consultations, training, and adapting their methods to fit each organization they work with. Their online learning is targeted at social justice warriors, educators, and business leaders and managers. The website has a constantly growing blog²⁶ featuring arguments for DEI and steps individuals²⁷ and organizations²⁸ can take to work towards a more inclusive world.

Currently, DJA's *Equity Toolkit* consists of four modules designed to build upon each other: "Essentials of Cultural Competence," "Reducing the Negative Impact of Bias in the Workplace," "The Work of EDI: Integrating Inclusion into Organizational Practices," and "Enabling Equity: Strategy and Structures that Drive Transformation."²⁹ The next offering of "Essentials of Cultural Competence" starts in January 2021 at \$429 per person.³⁰

The Inclusive Manager's Toolkit is a “10-week online course for anyone in a formal or informal leadership or managerial role who wants to have inclusive and practical tools for maximizing workforce performance.”³¹ Pricing for *The Inclusive Manager's Toolkit* is \$2,250 for individuals from non-profit organizations and \$4,500 for individuals from for-profit organizations. Groups should contact DJA for custom pricing.³²

The components of *The Inclusive Manager's Toolkit* are listed below. Each topic covered includes an overview of relevant language, why a concept is important, current trends, and ends with a module summarizing the content and how to apply the concept(s) in practice.

The Inclusive Manager's Toolkit

Week 1: Managers are the Key

- Your Changing Role
- Inclusive Skills
- Inclusive Language
- Your Behavioral Preferences
- Privilege Ally-ship and Anti-Oppression
- Leadership Philosophy

Week 2: Executive Skills

- Emotional Intelligence
- Cultural Competence
- Find and Use Your Voice
- Communicating across Cultures
- Power and Influence
- Strategic Thinking and Acting

Week 3: Transition Week

- This week will allow space for reflection and application of the material from the first two weeks, along with additional live sessions with DJA faculty

Week 4: Getting the Best from Others

- Hiring, Onboarding, Motivation, Coaching, and Mentoring
- Mindful Feedback—Soliciting Feedback
- Meaningful Feedback—Giving Feedback
- Meaningful Feedback—From Vicious to Virtuous

Week 5: Groups and Teams

- High-Performance Teams
- Effective Team Practices
- Making Meetings Work
- Decision-Making

Week 6: Transition Week

- This week will allow space for reflection and application of material from the last two weeks along with additional live sessions with DJA faculty

Week 7: Organizational Culture

- Strategy, Structure, and Organizational Culture
- Engagement, Creativity, and Innovation
- The Importance of Values
- Transforming Workplace Culture

Week 8: Leading Change

- Change That Works
- Establishing Vision, Setting Direction
- Communicating through Change
- Integration and Sustainability

Week 9: Transition Week

- This week will allow space for reflection and application of the material from the last two weeks along with additional live sessions with DJA faculty

Week 10: Your Ongoing Development

- Positioning Yourself for Your Next Steps
- Leading in Place
- Interviewing and Negotiating
- From Your Vision to Reality

DJA's methodology centers on developing understanding; determining the needs of an organization's internal and external stakeholders; and creating measurable, attainable, and transparent action plans to increase inclusion (including strategies to address bad behavior). Dialogue, mentoring, recruitment, and constant reassessment feature heavily in DJA's strategies for developing long-term buy-in and organizational change.

Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE)

The Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE)³³ uses a racial equity framework built upon the premise that there is no substitute for doing the work.³⁴ This model includes significant time for pre-work, and internalization. It assumes there are no shortcuts and the work will be done for as long as it takes to produce change. GARE emphasizes that organizations should use racial equity tools as soon as possible to prevent problems and provide a variety of case studies in their supplemental materials highlighted below.³⁵ Also listed below is GARE's "Six-Part Strategic Approach to Institutional Change." GARE's publication *Advancing Racial Equity in Public Libraries: Case Studies from the Field* provides multiple examples and case studies of how the GARE framework is being used create and drive action plans in public libraries.³⁶ Other Issue Paper publications, found in the Tools & Resources section of GARE's website, that may interest readers highlight their work with local governments and public sector jobs.³⁷

Six-Part Strategic Approach to Institutional Change

Normalize

- Use a racial equity framework
- Operate with urgency and accountability

Organize

- Build organizational capacity
- Partner with other organizations and communities

Operationalize

- Implement racial equity tools
- Be data-driven

Racial Equity Tools and Resources

- *Racial Equity Core Teams: The Engines of Institutional Change*
- *Racial Equity: Getting to Results*
- *Racial Equity Action Plans: A How-To Manual*
- *Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity*
- *Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government: A Resource Guide to Put Ideas into Action*
- Issue Papers examine equity in a variety of contexts, most notably *Advancing Racial Equity in Public Libraries: Case Studies from the Field* mentioned above.

Korn Ferry

Korn Ferry is a company that focuses on talent development and acquisition.³⁸ Korn Ferry’s Self-Disruptive Leadership model,³⁹ which they describe as a way to “Future Proof Yourself,” and their Leadership Accelerator Portfolio⁴⁰ contain elements of DEI.

Self-Disruptive Leadership

In regards to diversity, their Self-Disruptive Leadership model focuses on creating a competitive advantage through the following strategies:

ADAPT (Anticipate, Drive, Accelerate, Partner, Trust)

- **Anticipate:** Demonstrate contextual intelligence to make quick judgments and create opportunities; focus on the societal needs that the organization wants to serve; provide a direction to unify collective efforts even among disoriented environments.
- **Drive:** Energize people by fostering a sense of purpose; manage the mental and physical energy of themselves and others; nurture a positive environment to keep people hopeful, optimistic, and intrinsically motivated.
- **Accelerate:** Manage the flow of knowledge to produce constant innovation and desired business outcomes; use agile processes, quick prototyping, and iterative approaches to rapidly implement and commercialize ideas.
- **Partner:** Connect and form partnerships across increasingly permeable functional and organizational boundaries; enable the exchange of ideas; combine complementary capabilities to enable high performance.
- **Trust:** Form a new relationship between the organization and the individual that centers on mutual growth; integrate diverse perspectives and values; help individuals to uncover their sense of purpose and facilitate them in providing their maximum contribution.

Leadership Accelerator Portfolio

The Leadership Accelerator Portfolio's Diversity & Inclusion section includes 13 learning opportunities:

- *A Taste of D&I*
- *Activators*
- *Building Trusting Relationships (eLearning)*
- *Conscious Inclusion (eLearning or in-person)*
- *Creating an Inclusive Experience*
- *Faststart Pairs*
- *Getting Started: Real Talk*
- *Inclusive Hiring*

- *Inclusive Recruiting (eLearning)*
- *Leading Inclusion: Executive Briefing*
- *Making Inclusive Hiring Decisions (eLearning)*
- *Managing Inclusion (eLearning or in-person)*
- *The Power of Choice*

Other offerings for leaders and individual contributors include:

- *Activating Personal Agility*
- *Activators*
- *Coaching Accelerator*
- *Effective Communicating*
- *Emotional Intelligence for Leadership Success*
- *Inspiring Innovation*
- *Leadership Accelerators*
- *Leadership Development Series*
- *Leadership Principles*
- *Leading Change*
- *Leading for Impact*
- *Leading Virtually in Disruptive Times*
- *Self-Disruptive Leadership*
- *TalentDevelopment (eLearning or in-person)*
- *TalentSelection (eLearning or in-person)*
- *Your Leadership Aspiration (eLearning)*

These categories provide a loose framework of DEI-related competencies. Paid services are available in the areas of organizational strategy, assessment and succession, talent acquisition, leadership development, and rewards for individuals, groups, and institutions. No prices are available online but individuals are encouraged to call and speak to a representative or browse their list of consultants.⁴¹ A large amount of free blog posts about everything from negotiating a salary to taking over a team are available on the Korn Ferry Institute portion of the website providing self-guided mentoring and learning.⁴²

Racial Equity Institute (REI)

The Racial Equity Institute (REI)⁴³ is a limited liability corporation based in Greensboro, North Carolina, that offers training throughout the US, although much of its work is concentrated in the southeastern United States and in North Carolina.⁴⁴ REI's principal offering is a series of two-day institutes in a sequential pattern (Phase I and Phase II). The workshops are offered (typically) to groups of 30–40. The organization recommends that participants repeat the Phase I Institute several times (at a reduced cost) prior to participating in Phase II. REI offers an abbreviated form of the Phase I Institute entitled the “Groundwater Approach” for organizations/constituencies seeking an introduction (three- to four-hour workshop) to the program content.

The curriculum of the Phase I Institute includes:

- An in-depth historical and contemporaneous analysis of the structures and policies that sustain inequity on the basis of race/ethnicity, specifically in the US
- The power of implicit bias and how it affects our decisions and policy making and how it is socialized within larger systems
- The relationship between racism and poverty
- The concept of power and its relationship/interplay with systems, institutions (policies) and communities, particularly communities of color
- The historical and enduring construction of “race” and how it has been leveraged throughout history to create disadvantage for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and create advantage for people of majority cultures and identities
 - Definitions of race and racism
- Internalized racial oppression (colorism)

The REI Phase I Institute content forms the basis for moving into a deliberately anti-racist frame, further explored in the Phase II Institute. Following a review of the core concepts presented in Phase I, this experience focuses on the development of racial identity and the

socialization and institutionalization of inferiority and superiority based on racial/ethnic identity. Phase II challenges participants to develop a vision (personal, institutional, societal) for an equitable future and for one's place in realizing that vision.

REI contains several related institutes including the “Latino Experience” and “Racial Equity Leadership Institute for Youth,” as well as process consulting for organizations, institutions, and affinity groups that are designed to move the entity toward deeper commitments to abolishing racism.

The fees for attending the REI institutes vary depending on who is coordinating them. Organizing Against Racism (OAR), a network of anti-racism groups in the Research Triangle area of North Carolina, currently offers REI workshops virtually.⁴⁵ They charge a \$295 registration fee, \$275 for groups of three or more, \$175 for students, and a sliding scale for those without the financial resources to pay in full. Prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the institutes were offered exclusively in-person. OAR also offers REI alumni the opportunity to caucus by racial identity to dive more deeply into the content presented in the institutes, and to explore collective ways to address racism and heal from impacts of it in society.⁴⁶

White Men as Full Diversity Partners

White Men as Full Diversity Partners (WMFDP)⁴⁷ has several programs⁴⁸ targeted at leaders, but open to anyone, in addition to developing customized strategies and programming for organizations. As with many organizations their programming has shifted from in-person residential and on-site offering when this article was first drafted to virtual offerings since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. White Men's Virtual Caucus (\$3,000) is focused completely on white men and how they can work to eliminate racism, sexism, and homophobia from organizations. Full Diversity Partners Virtual (\$3,000) is open to all and focuses on creating and/or deepening partnerships to create inclusive organizations. There are several shorter programs and consultation options listed on the website.

WMFDP's methodology is based on the premise that buy-in and commitment by leadership to put in the time and resources necessary to work towards personal transformation is vital to successfully leading organizational change. There is an emphasis on leveraging ambiguity and uncertainty, which acknowledges that this type of transformation is a difficult and uncomfortable task. Three case studies⁴⁹ are available that provide the challenges, solutions, and outcomes of their work with Applied Materials, Northwestern Mutual, and Rockwell Automation. WMFDP programming is built around "8 Critical Leadership Skills"⁵⁰ and "understands that D&I is an essential part of leadership development achieved through experiential learning."⁵¹ The critical leadership skills are listed below.

8 Critical Leadership Skills

1. Courage of Their Convictions
2. Integrating Head and Heart
3. Listening
4. Balancing Key Paradoxes
5. Leveraging Ambiguity and Turbulence
6. Managing Difficult Conversations
7. Seeing/Thinking Systemically
8. Being an Agent of Change

For those who prefer to develop their own programming, WMFDP provides several resources including articles they have written,⁵² such as "White Men & Diversity: What White Men, White Women, and People of Color Can Do to Make a Real Difference in Their Workplace Diversity,"⁵³ webinars and podcasts they have produced, and case studies.⁵⁴

Global Diversity Practice Coca-Cola Enterprises

In 2013 Coca-Cola Enterprises (CCE) began implementing their "European Strategy Policy on Diversity and Inclusion," which included "a Diversity and Inclusion learning deck for roll out across

key regions.”⁵⁵ According to Global Diversity Practice (GDP), “The toolkit was built to be dynamic, highly relevant and business focused as well as being transferable to all areas of the business from sales and marketing to the bottling plants. CCE trainers were trained to deliver in a memorable fashion; the toolkit included a deck with full trainer notes and a set of diversity sound bites.” The focus of the strategy was to develop “competence and confidence” of executive leadership in order to ensure that Coca-Cola Enterprises demonstrated inclusive leadership and would “produce business results and effective management of talent in all its diversities.” The format included a one-day workshop with three- and six-month follow-ups focused on accountability, unconscious bias, and gender. A notebook was also provided that included tips and techniques that participants could consult as needed.

This program was designed to incorporate the “Heart, Head, and Hands” model⁵⁶ and “D&I Window.”

Desired Outcome

Leaders across all areas “are capable of understanding, valuing and managing differences effectively.”

Learning Outcomes

- “Articulating the business case for Diversity and Unconscious Bias”
- “Understanding the Unconscious Bias mechanism”
- “Developing behaviour and practices consistently fair, inclusive and proactive”
- “Creating a gender bilingual working environment Action Planning for change”

Conceptual Areas

- “CCE D&I Strategy—linked to Leadership framework / corporate values”
- “Unconscious Bias / Micro Inequities” [Please note microinequities and microaggressions overlap but are not equivalent terms.]
- “Inclusive Leadership”
- “Being Gender Bilingual” [Gender-multilingual would be more inclusive.]

Participant feedback from the 30 sessions held in 2014 showed that 94% of participants felt they could “promote Diversity and Inclusion,” compared to a pre-survey where 74% indicated they could not. The success of this work led to a similar GDP session for the European D&I Council and 10 additional sessions for Coca-Cola Enterprises in 2015. Of particular note, one of the participants included the following comment in their feedback, “The learning style is very participative and is centred upon learning through not only sharing group experiences but also **practically applying the insight models introduced as part of the course** [emphasis added].” The accountability check-ins were positively linked by participants to “increasing sales, production, innovation and also connecting to customers, which has been a key component of its success and credibility.”

KAIROS Blanket Exercise

In Canada, perhaps one of the most well-known and impactful experiences related to DEI training is the KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE).⁵⁷ Named after the organization that manages and facilitates the KBE, the effort is a kinesthetic activity that chronicles the history of Indigenous populations in Canada, particularly with respect to their treatment by the colonial settler populations that occupied Canada beginning in the late 17th century and the modern implications of that history. The KBE was originally developed in 1997 by the Aboriginal Rights Coalition (ARC), which preceded KAIROS, “an ecumenical

movement for ecological justice and human rights around the globe.” The KBE, used throughout sectors in Canada and throughout the world, is two to four hours in duration, depending on the size of the group participating in the activity. The ideal group size for the exercise is 30–40 people, although much larger groups have been accommodated.

The content of the KBE is described as quite compelling, if not unsettling, and was intended to “introduce Canadians to the major themes and findings of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). ARC brought together Indigenous Elders and educators with allies who wanted to make sure that RCAP and its recommendations were not shelved and forgotten.”⁵⁸ The experience has been modified, over time, to reflect contemporary historical analyses, particularly following the activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada from 2007 to 2015. The KBE follows a set of protocols to ensure that KBE facilitators are either from Indigenous backgrounds or that the events are led by “Indigenous Leadership” and that Elders and Knowledge Keepers are consulted throughout the execution of the exercise.⁵⁹ Each KBE concludes with a debrief experience called a “talking circle” where the participants have an opportunity to reflect on their experience, come to terms with and discuss their emotional reactions to the exercise, and explore the content more deeply.

In response to the global pandemic, KAIROS Canada has developed an online version of the KBE meant to replicate the in-person experience, due to be rolled out in 2021. The website contains numerous other resources to help develop knowledge about the deep effects of colonization and oppression on Indigenous populations and suggestions for strengthening the relationships with those communities.

Next Steps for ARL

From the Desk of Mary Lee Kennedy, ARL Executive Director

This has been a year of tremendous turmoil and uncertainty—the negative impact on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and their communities has been devastating. With the heightened awareness of too-long-existing systemic societal inequities and a renewed commitment to enduring social justice, particularly as it relates to racism and systems of oppression, the Association of Research Libraries reviewed and deepened its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all it does, as well as its own structures.

ARL will enhance its diversity fellows and scholars programs by a commitment to recruiting, retaining, and advancing participants' careers. ARL will formalize its mentorship program to focus on long-term relationships including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color sponsorship. At the same time, as this article articulates, library leaders need the support and resources to develop the necessary skills and habits to design and implement systems of structural equity, and to lead inclusive organizations. Steps ARL is taking in 2021 include the following:

- ARL will review and, as appropriate, adopt the recommendations of the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)–ARL–ALA–Public Library Association (PLA) Task Force on Building Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity Framework⁶⁰ in ARL's professional development programs. ARL received a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to plan a Diversity Institute and will launch the planning later in 2021 to take advantage of the Racial Equity Framework recommendations.
- Recently the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) completed their work on strategies and practices for hiring and retaining diverse talent. ARL will review the CARL toolkit in the context of helping members to use it.

- All ARL leadership and organizational development programs are being designed with the diversity, equity, and inclusion lens. This is evident in the soon to be relaunched Leadership Fellows program.
- The Association policies and practices are under review and the recent changes to the committee and task force recruitment process reflects the Association’s work to ensure structural equity. This includes strengthening partnerships with research libraries in historically Black colleges and universities and in Hispanic-serving institutions, as well as working with library associations representing Black, Indigenous, and People of Color colleagues.

With so few Black, Indigenous, and People of Color leaders and staff members, our profession has much to do to create the diverse and inclusive cultures that represent the communities we serve and the full range of talent in our society. ARL is committed now and for the long term.

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