Advancing Racial Equity: Putting Theory Into Action
A learning cohort for local and regional government in Minnesota

The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), in partnership with the League of Minnesota Cities, will launch a new cohort of governmental jurisdictions that are systemically focusing on advancing racial equity. Participating jurisdictions will be cities, towns and counties from across Minnesota that make a one-year commitment, as described below. In addition, an elected official track will support the engagement and leadership of elected officials in advancing racial equity. Click here to register your city or county. Click here to register for the elected official caucus.

Key components of the cohort will include:
• A curriculum that builds on the existing and growing field of governmental practices to advance racial equity. Technical assistance and academic research from the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and Center for Social Inclusion will be provided.
• Mentors from similarly situated jurisdictions who have experience with implementation of racial equity initiatives. Mentor connections will take into account: location, size, form of government, demographics and other characteristics. Beyond mentoring, the cohort as a whole will be structured to support peer-to-peer strategizing and problem-solving.
• An “Advancing Racial Equity” speaker series that will provide the opportunity to learn and strategize across jurisdictions and with the community. The series will help increase broad understanding of and commitment to the leverage potential of cross-sector, cross-jurisdiction collaboration.

Deliverables for each jurisdiction include:
• A racial equity training curriculum and a set of trained facilitators ready to implement the training,
• A Racial Equity Tool to be used in policy, practice, program and budget decisions,
• Example policies and practices that help advance racial equity, and
• A Racial Equity Action Plan (developed by the jurisdiction’s team with technical assistance from GARE)

The structure will consist of monthly sessions, with a quarterly rotation between 1) skill building and strategy development, 2) an “Advancing Racial Equity” speaker series, and 3) peer-to-peer networking and problem solving. This quarterly rotation process will allow three months for implementation of action steps before new topics are introduced.

Each participating site will identify a team of people to participate in the entire series (recommended size of team is two to six people). Teams should include key governmental leadership and staff firmly committed to advancing racial equity and transforming government,
as well as elected officials who will participate in the speaker series. Community based organizations that work with government are also welcomed team members.

An elected official track will include the “Advancing Racial Equity” speaker series and two caucus meetings. The pre-identified interests of the elected officials will determine the agenda for these caucuses. Elected officials whose jurisdictions are not participating in the cohort are welcome to register independently.

A general overview of the series is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Core racial equity concepts and train-the-trainer (two days)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>“Advancing Racial Equity” speaker series (two hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Report on homework, networking, problem solving and strategizing (two hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Caucus meeting of elected officials leading on racial equity</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Developing and implementing structure and leadership for a racial equity initiative, working with the community (one day)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>“Advancing Racial Equity” speaker series (two hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Report on homework, networking, problem solving and strategizing (two hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Using a Racial Equity Tool (one day)</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>“Advancing Racial Equity” speaker series (two hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Report on homework, networking, problem solving and strategizing (two hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Communications and strategic planning (one day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Report on homework, networking, problem solving and strategizing (two hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>“Advancing Racial Equity” speaker series with a special recognition and celebration of completion of first cohort (two hours)</td>
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To participate in the cohort, jurisdictions will:

- Commit to send a team of two to six people to the entire series (total commitment of 56 hours per person at cohort events, as described above, plus completion of action steps between sessions)
- Work with GARE and LMC to promote the Advancing Racial Equity speaker series to elected officials, government staff and community partners.
- Training cost – $5,000 per jurisdiction, plus travel costs. All events will be in Minnesota, with the bulk being in the Twin Cities region. The cost for participation in the elected officials track is $100.
GARE will

- Manage and implement the overall project, including provision of training, sharing of curriculum, tools and resources, arrangement of speaker series, communications and outreach, etc.
- Provide the following for all jurisdictions participating in the cohort:
  - Best, promising and next practices. Practices will include racial equity tools, racial equity training curriculum, model policies, and surveys.
  - Cross-cohort learning opportunities, including peer-to-peer exchanges, as well as technical assistance from academic and advocacy experts.
  - Technical assistance on cross-jurisdictional priority areas, such as education, living wage jobs, criminal justice, health, equitable development, public infrastructure, etc.

The League of Minnesota Cities will:

- Assist with recruitment for the series
- Disseminate information to LMC membership and publicity for special events
- Work with GARE to obtain foundation funding

Background

The Government Alliance on Race and Equity is a national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. The Alliance uses a three-prong approach:

1) Support a cohort of jurisdictions that are at the forefront of work to achieve racial equity.

2) Build pathways for new jurisdictions to begin doing racial equity work

3) Expand and strengthen local and regional collaborations that are broadly inclusive and focused on achieving racial equity

Across the country, we have seen governmental jurisdictions that are:

- Making a commitment to achieving racial equity,
- Focusing on the power and influence of their own institutions, and
- Working in partnership across sectors and with the community to maximize impact in the community.

Government’s proactive work on racial equity has the potential to leverage significant change, setting the stage for the achievement of racial equity in our communities.

The Alliance launched a national cohort of jurisdiction at the forefront of racial equity work in 2014, including four jurisdictions in the Twin Cities area – Minneapolis, Saint Paul, the Minneapolis Park Board and the Metropolitan Council. Supporting a targeted cohort of jurisdictions and providing best practices, tools and resources is helping to build and sustain current efforts and build a national movement for racial equity.

In addition to the four jurisdictions that are a part of the current cohort, additional interest has been expressed by other cities and counties as a result of increasing awareness of the importance of government working on racial equity. The Convening on Racial Equity in August of 2014 and the Minneapolis City Managers Association 2015 Mid-Winter Workshop on Racial Equity coalesced additional interest from cities and counties across the state.