THE ROLE THAT WHITE PEOPLE CAN PLAY IN DISRUPTING SYSTEMIC RACISM

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE FINDINGS FROM DR. VICTORIA FARRIS' DISSERTATION RESEARCH

WORKPLACE RACISM
WAS LARGELY
EXPERIENCED
THROUGH
MICROAGGRESSIONS
ROOTED IN CULTURAL
WHITENESS OF
MANY OFFICES AND A
LACK OF
MULTICULTURAL
COMPETENCE AMONG
COLLEAGUES AND
SUPERVISORS.



OF PARTICIPANTS
EXPERIENCED
RACISM/BIAS IN
STUDENT AFFAIRS
WORKSPACES

95% EXPERIENCED IT IN MULTIPLE POSITIONS.

WORKPLACE RACISM IS
UPHELD THROUGH
UNPRODUCTIVE POWER
DYNAMICS, A CULTURE
THAT LACKS TRUST,
AND BY WHITE
FRAGILITY THAT LEADS
TO INACTION IN
RESPONSE TO
CONCERNS.

SOME OF THE EXPECTATIONS PARTICIPANTS HAVE OF A SUPERVISOR ARE:

- 1. A HIGH LEVEL OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, DEMONSTRATED THROUGH ACTIONS, DECISIONS, PRIORITIES, AND ADVOCACY
- 2. GET TO KNOW ME, INDIVIDUALLY; APPRECIATE AND UNDERSTAND MY PERSPECTIVE. SKILLS. MOTIVATORS, AND CHALLENGES
- 3. FOSTER AN AUTHENTIC, OPEN, AND HONEST RELATIONSHIP WHERE TRUST IS BUILT AND OPEN CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE AND IDENTITY OCCUR

DR. VICTORIA FARRIS

CONSULTANT · SPEAKER · COAC

VICTORIAFARRIS.COM

FRAMEWORK FOR ASPIRING WHITE ALLIES & CHANGE AGENTS

THE FOLLOWING FRAMEWORK OUTLINES THE ROLE THAT
WHITE PROFESSIONALS CAN PLAY IN DISRUPTING SYSTEMIC
RACISM, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PROFESSIONALS OF
COLOR AND A CRITICAL RACE THEORY LENS

Learn

Learn independently about: race & racism as constructs, structural or institutional racism, and different racial & ethnic identities

Understand

How racism is
experienced
personally and
universally, how it is
systemic, how Whites
fit into, and benefits
from, the system

Reflect

Recognize one's own values, biases, racist beliefs, & internalized dominance; asking critical questions to disrupt racist habits

Actions

Individual Level

Get comfortable being uncomfortable; have authentic dialogue about race, racism, and identity with vulnerability

Group Level

Recognize and disrupt microaggressions and Whiteness in group and organization culture, and engage other White people in critical understanding

System Level

Facilitate critical revision of organization policies and practices; align decisions, values, and resources

Engage with Other Whites

The goal of this study was to better understand, from the perspective of people of color, how systemic racism and bias in the supervision of people of color in Student Affairs could be disrupted, and what role, if any, White people can play. This was a qualitative research study using a Critical Race Theory framework. Participants were interviewed about their experiences with workplace racism, what inclusive workplaces would look like, and how White folks can play a role in partnering to create an inclusive, socially just environment.

For more information please contact Dr. Farris at: victoria@victoriafarris.com

DR. VICTORIA FARRIS

CONSULTANT · SPEAKER · COACH

VICTORIAFARRIS.COM

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