

**COMMUNITY CHANGE INITIATIVES TO
ADDRESS RACIAL INEQUITIES:
BUILDING A FIELD OF PRACTICE**

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and the
National League of Cities Institute**

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FOREWORD

Across America, communities are trying to address two critical race-related issues: persistent racial inequities in individual, family, and community well-being; and inter-group relations, especially given the rapidly changing demographics of the country. This paper provides a snapshot of community efforts underway to address these racial dilemmas—why they were started, how they are structured, the activities they are pursuing, and the outcomes they are achieving.

The paper was produced by Maggie Potapchuk of MP Associates, in consultation with the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change and the National League of Cities (NLC), and was sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Aspen Roundtable and NLC joined together in this effort because each institution is dedicated to helping build neighborhoods, towns, and cities that are prosperous, inclusive, and just. Progress toward resolving the challenges of racial disparities and improving race relations is central to the work of each organization.

Both the Aspen Roundtable and NLC strongly endorse the conclusion of this paper by MP Associates that there is a nascent “field” of people and organizations working on racial equity and race relations that needs to be supported and scaled up. There are many individuals doing this work in their local communities who would benefit from access to information and technical resources, peer learning forums, sharing of best practices, in-person or virtual convenings, technical assistance and training, and the like. Moreover, the field as a whole would be greatly strengthened by a systematic learning enterprise that documents, analyzes, and disseminates innovations in policy and practice. This important work could be greatly enhanced through a deliberate effort to build a “Field of Practice to Promote Racial Equity,” the outlines of which are proposed at the end of this paper.

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OVERVIEW

Every community in the United States must, at some point, confront issues of racial diversity—whether that means overcoming a long history of racially inequitable outcomes, resolving periodic flare-ups of racial tensions among residents, or accommodating demographic changes now underway. Communities typically undertake this work in isolation, without a tested base of concepts, strategies, and tools. Some find strategies that respond to specific racial dilemmas while others flounder, unsure what to do, especially when they encounter community resistance. They may deal with the immediate crisis but make no further effort to identify or address the root cause: “structural racism” embedded in the very fabric of communities.

WHAT IS STRUCTURAL RACISM?

“Structural racism refers to a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in...reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with ‘whiteness’ and disadvantages associated with ‘color’ to endure and adapt over time.”

—Aspen Institute Roundtable for Community Change, *Structural Racism and Community Building*, 2004

Community change initiatives (CCIs) offer a path forward because they work holistically, using community building strategies with multiple stakeholders, to strengthen communities and address poverty. CCIs are not a new phenomenon. As defined by the Aspen Institute, they are community efforts that seek improved outcomes for individuals and families and improvements in neighborhood conditions by working comprehensively across the social, economic, and physical sectors.¹

In recent years, a body of knowledge has emerged about CCIs that use community-building strategies and principles, typically with a focus on poverty issues. Less is known about community change initiatives that focus explicitly on racial inequities using a more diverse set of strategies—known as CCIRs. The research summarized in this report marks the first attempt to document the growing trend of these initiatives. Community change initiatives on racial inequity do not follow a single blueprint for action, but common experiences across CCIRs suggest patterns in the kinds of issues that prompt community action on racism, the institutions and individuals that play key roles, key strategies and programmatic responses, necessary supports, and obstacles or challenges.²

THE TIME IS RIPE FOR LEARNING

Two out of three city officials (67 percent) say their cities and regions could do more to promote equal opportunity, fairness, and citizen engagement. But local elected officials and community leaders often are at a loss about how to make progress on these issues.

—National League of Cities’ 2006 *Annual Opinion Survey of Municipal Officials*

CCIRs are important because their holistic, integrated approach offers the best chance to overcome structural racism. The effects of structural racism will not be resolved by addressing a single issue, such as educational improvement, service delivery, or economic development, but by changing the way these and other issues interact to create gaps in achievement, opportunity, and support between the poorest and the most advantaged residents.

¹For more information, see www.aspeninstituteroundtable.org.

²Potapchuk, M. in partnership with Aspen Institute Roundtable for Community Change and National League of Cities Institute (2006). “Lessons Learned: How Communities are Addressing Racial Inequities.” Report to the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Available at www.mpassociates.us.

SCOPE OF PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

During the first two quarters of 2006, researchers conducted three activities:

Convened practitioners, evaluators, and community leaders to suggest criteria for identifying CCIRs for the study and to design survey questions about community-based initiatives to address race and racial disparities;*

Identified and surveyed 58 communities with CCIRs to learn about their strategies, level of community involvement, and outcomes. The study sample (42 respondents) represented 31 states, nearly every U.S. region, and diverse population sizes and demographics. We selected CCIRs that:

- Engage a diverse stakeholder group, whose members lead the process
- Implement a community assessment process or research to: identify barriers to racial equity and improved race relations, understand a community's awareness of racial and ethnic issues, and establish baseline data in different disparity areas (e.g., home ownership, high school graduation rates, suspension rates, small business loans)
- Use multi-pronged strategies (e.g., individual, interpersonal, institutional), including dialogue groups, anti-racism training, community organizing, advocacy work, media campaigns, organizational assessments, and community report cards
- Implement a multi-year initiative involving a significant investment of time and resources
- Build the community's capacity to proactively address racism (e.g., increasing residents' knowledge and awareness; providing opportunities for diverse residents to build relationships and work together on issues; developing diverse leadership; changing institutional policies, practices, and procedures)
- Engage a critical mass of diverse residents to participate in and lead the initiative
- Focus on racial inequities, especially institutionalized disparities in power, policies, and practices


Conducted in-depth follow-up interviews with respondents in 14 communities (typically the lead staff person of each initiative). The interviews surfaced details about the communities' conditions and readiness; the composition, responsibilities, and struggles of local leadership; the characteristics, focus, and evolution of strategies; community resistance to change; outcomes; lessons learned; and expectations for a learning network.

*Thanks to Linda Bowen, Institute for Community Peace, Yoke-Sim Gunartne, Cultural Diversity Resources; Les Heitke, Mayor of Wilmar, MN; Sally Leiderman, Center for Assessment and Policy Development; Martha McCoy, Study Circles Resource Center; Shirley Strong; Project Change.

We believe that communities' efforts to address structural racism would become more strategic, powerful, and effective if there was a recognized "field of practice" for CCIRs that provided data, promising practices and strategies, information about outcomes and indicators of progress, opportunities to learn and build capacity, and other supports. This report summarizes findings from a survey and interviews conducted by MP Associates, in partnership with The Aspen Institute Roundtable for Community Change and the National League of Cities Institute, to understand patterns of experience among CCIRs and lessons learned about what does and doesn't work.

The research was driven by a belief that to build the capacity of U.S. communities to address structural racism, we need to identify the lessons of CCIRs, map the community change process, discover community capacities and resources, create a learning network, collect and analyze more data, and then disseminate the knowledge through opportunities to build skills and share practices.

PATTERNS IN CCIR EXPERIENCES

 Our survey and interviews of people involved in community change initiatives on racial inequity elicited some common experiences in terms of: the factors that precipitated development of the CCIR; types and sources of support for the work; initiative focus; leaders, participants, and roles; strategies and programmatic responses; and outcomes.

PRECIPITATING FACTORS

The most common events to precede the formation of a CCIR are: (1) changing demographics; (2) a hate crime, legal case, or racial incident; and (3) a convening of leaders and/or residents. Black, Latino and Asian populations remain the demographic core of old metropolitan areas, but they also are fueling the growth of suburban and “exurban” areas, especially the job centers of the South and West and affordable areas near the high-priced cities on the Coasts. Simultaneously, the number of “hate groups” in the U.S. is growing—from 762 to 803 just in the last two years—aided in part by a flourishing Internet presence (524 hate sites operated online in 2005, up 12% from the previous year).³

These statistics suggest that many more communities will become racially and ethnically diverse during the next decade and thus will face some of the precipitating factors for racial equity initiatives. Yet many communities that face these changes may not have the infrastructure, capacity, and leadership needed to respond effectively.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY SAMPLE

Population: 13 of the communities have 100,000 to 300,000 residents. Another 13 are in the 300,000 to 1 million population range. The smallest has 19,287 residents, and the largest has 2.8 million.

Race/ethnicity: 38% of the initiatives are in mostly White communities. In 8 of those communities (mostly in the Northeast or Midwest), at least 90% of the population is white. Another 40% of the initiatives are in diverse communities (mostly in the Southeast) where Whites make up 50% to 70% of the population and people of color 15% to 42%.

Demographic change: 76% of respondents said their communities have had major demographic changes during the last decade, especially an increase in the Latino population (37%).

Impetus: For 28% of the communities, a racial incident, legal case, or hate crime sparked the CCIR. (This may be an undercount, because a few respondents did not describe their precipitating issues or events.) For 38%, a community convening or institutional goal led to the initiative.

Lead entity: For most (47%), the institution that maintains and sustains the effort is a nonprofit organization, although community foundations have a growing role.

Focus of the initiative: 28% of the communities focused on increasing community awareness, improving race relations, or both. 66% focused either specifically on racial inequities or on racial inequities plus other issues.

Duration: 40% of the CCIRs have existed for 6-10 years. The oldest is 19 years old.

³ Mark Potok, The Year in Hate, Southern Poverty Law Center Intelligence Report, www.splcenter.org, accessed May 10, 2006.

WHAT PROMPTS PEOPLE TO CREATE A COMMUNITY CHANGE INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS RACIAL INEQUITY?

A predominantly White community in the Midwest became a **refugee resettlement area**. Over the course of several town meetings, community members decided that the challenges of finding resources for the newcomers and helping new and long-time residents adjust warranted a regional, collaborative effort. There were no existing organizations, programs, or institutions addressing racial/ethnic issues, but key community leaders (including elected officials) stepped forward to support the effort.

A mayoral candidate in a large, Northwestern city learned during the campaign that his community was deeply divided across racial lines. The concerns he heard about how a neighborhood's racial/ethnic composition determined the city services it received affected him deeply. He decided to prioritize work across all departments to eliminate racial preferences in service delivery and to create an organization free of institutionalized racism.

After **two young Latino men were shot by police** in the 1980s, a midsized Western community established a community relations department and ombudsman position. That led to the city government's adoption of an internal diversity plan in the early 1990s. Community C also reviewed the county's demographic assessments (used to determine population-based programs and services), which typically had insufficient data on Latino/as. Frustrated at the lack of data, members of the Latino/a community conducted their own assessment. The city council required all city employees to receive a briefing on the data, which led to the creation of a CCIR.

Community organizing in a Southwestern community led to the restructuring of a federal grant to involve neighborhood residents in the funds distribution process and to ensure that money addressed neighborhood blight through better housing, commercial revitalization, and youth development programs. Local elected officials did not become involved in the effort until residents threatened a lawsuit for breach of contract.

Several factors prompted action in a large, Southeastern city: **the police shooting of an unarmed African-American male, a lawsuit against the school district regarding pupil assignments, and a significant influx of immigrants**. Two local elected officials asked a major convening organization to bring the community together to address the issues. The initiative included a two-day community conference for residents, which identified six issue areas. Community members then formed action teams whose work extended beyond the planned nine-month process.

A local foundation in the Northeast—in one of the most segregated suburban regions in the country—**surveyed its donors** and noticed an interest in funding innovative approaches to social justice and race issues. Presenters at donor education forums described how other communities were addressing racism and race relations, and the donors decided to focus on institutional racism. The foundation also began to look at racial issues internally and made changes in its staffing, board makeup, and grant-making process.

A Midwestern college town experienced several **hate crimes and racial profiling incidents**, mostly affecting the staff and students of a local university. The mayor brought a diverse group of residents together to talk about the issues and they focused on several topics: government, business, education, health care, human services, and faith communities. The next mayor continued the initiative and instituted an accountability structure for the committee. When someone painted racial epithets on an ethnic community center later that year, the community rallied around the center and the people it served.

TYPES AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Preexisting institutional support. The initiatives we studied had an average of 3.5 institutional supports in place. Such supports include: one or more organizations able to convene diverse stakeholders; one or more organizations that work specifically on race relations or racial equity issues; a formal leadership group that addresses racial issues, such as a school board, chamber of commerce, mayor, city council, civic leadership group, etc; respected community leaders who speak up about racial issues; an organized or informal group of residents that continually raises racial issues to a formal authority, such as the city council; a coalition of organizations that continually brings up racial issues.

Those led by a foundation typically had more institutional supports to draw upon, and those located in small communities had fewer. CCIRs that focused on improving race relations or community awareness of racism, meanwhile, began with fewer institutional supports (2.6) than initiatives focused on inequities (4).

Respondents described two particularly important institutional supports that existed prior to their initiatives: **local leaders** (elected, institutional, and grassroots) who served as messengers and supporters of the effort, and **local organizations or groups** that either addressed race in some capacity (e.g., via programs, research, or discussions) or convened diverse stakeholders.

A review of the institutional supports leaves us with more questions than answers, however. For example: Are some types of institutional entities willing to take the risk of starting a CCIR without having these supports in place? Will the initiatives with the most supports in place be better able to engage their communities well and sustain the effort for a long time? Do efforts to improve race relations or community awareness of racism increase a community's readiness to address racial inequities?

Monetary resources. The average annual budget for initiatives in our sample is \$182,819.⁴ Initiatives led by foundations had larger budgets (\$795,000 average) compared to those led by a government entity (\$38,750), leadership group (\$60,666), coalition (\$176,116), or nonprofit (\$201,549). Local foundations and individual donors were the two primary sources of funding (in 27 and 21 of the 42 responding communities, respectively).

Diversity of funders. Among the initiatives led by government entities, three-fourths (6 of 8) were completely funded by city or county government. Nonprofit entities had the most diverse funding base, including services, events, individual donors, corporations, and foundations. Local foundations appear to support most categories of initiatives except for those led by a government entity.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

Within the shared goal of addressing racial inequity and race relations, initiatives' focus on community issues varied. Among CCIRs in our interview sample, the community issues being addressed included: police and community relations, equitable and affordable housing issues, minority business development and contracts, diversity of commissions and government and/or nonprofit boards, health

⁴ Average based on a 69% response rate to this question and excluding one outlier—a funding collaborative with a \$1.3 million budget.

care access and disparities, education disparities and achievement gaps, immigrant issues and services, cultural competence in the health care and school systems, human rights, perceptions and inequities in the justice system, community involvement and citizen engagement, organizational assessment and inclusiveness, and predatory lending.

Each of these issues spawn different action plans, but part of the underlying strategy for all of them is to build the community's capacity to address racism more proactively. This means: increasing residents' knowledge, establishing a common analysis of racism, developing leaders and their skills, getting race on residents' radar screen, engaging residents in the work, and working with community organizations in a peer network. These strategies build a basis and infrastructure that can lead to sustained, systemic change.

“The feedback we received [from the community] ranged from, ‘Is this really making a difference, will my life get better?’ to, ‘The issue is so big, why don’t we just retreat to our respective corners,’ to, ‘This discussion is so middle-class,’ to, ‘How will we really get people to focus on action?’

“There is hopelessness and despair to end racism. We need Pentagon-level resources to address this issue; we are just scraping by to do what we do.” —Initiative director

LEADERS, PARTICIPANTS, AND ROLES

Composition and diversity of leadership. The leadership groups for initiatives in our sample range in size from 15 to 150 participants. Most include key community leaders and the managers or directors of organizations and agencies rather than residents with no organizational affiliation.

Our criteria for selecting CCIRs for the study stipulated that the initiatives engage a diverse array of “community sectors, grassroots and management leadership, and representation from each racial/ethnic group.” Within our survey sample, the nonprofit, faith, and government sectors are most consistently involved as leaders, supporters (through services or financial contributions), and participants of the initiatives. Local foundations and corporations are strong supporters of CCIRs (66% and 46%, respectively), although survey respondents gave local foundations a low rating as participants in program activities. Representatives of real estate businesses, housing organizations, the criminal justice system, and economic development organizations are less involved in CCIRs, overall, than any other sectors (although the protocol did not have a follow-up question to assess whether the outreach to these sectors was different or less substantial.) The communities that have a strategic focus (on building awareness, creating relationships, addressing inequities, and sometimes one “other” strategy) consistently engage the most diverse sectors as leaders (17 different sectors), supporters (16 sectors), and participants (18 sectors).

Most of the leadership groups, at least initially, have focused on recruiting participants who have mid- to upper-management roles. Their reasons vary; some seek system insiders who can work with outside advocates to change policies and practices, some believe they need insiders' buy-in to make progress within a sector, and for some it is simply the “community norm.”

“Our early efforts focused on building knowledge and awareness in the community. We are now beyond awareness; we...are moving beyond education [and focusing] on addressing inequities.” —Community representative

Roles and activities. Examples of the responsibilities of CCIR leadership groups and boards provided by

interviewees are: ensuring that objectives are accomplished; generating ideas for future strategies; giving feedback on current activities; assisting with outreach to institutions and partners; recruiting and developing group members; attracting financial resources; “acting as thinking partners” during program planning; and conducting (or commissioning) research on relevant topics and sharing it with the community. Leaders seem to play especially valuable roles as messengers, symbols of credibility, and conveners.

STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMATIC RESPONSES

Menu of strategies. The CCIRs we studied use an average of eight different strategies to achieve their goals, including:

- Dialogue groups/Study Circles
- Awareness training
- Anti-racism training
- Community/ neighborhood forums
- Media campaign
- Skill-building training
- Community organizing
- Leadership development
- Policy change
- Advocacy work
- Community events/conferences
- Mediation
- Action teams/groups
- Storytelling
- Organizational assessments/audits
- Community/sector report card
- Research/community report
- Diverse stakeholder leadership group

Many CCIRs intend their strategies to build the community’s capacity for change by (a) increasing knowledge of racism, (b) establishing a common analysis of racial inequity, (c) developing leaders and their skills, (d) increasing awareness of racial inequities, or (e) involving organizations in a peer network. Overall, the most frequently used strategies are:

- Community events/conferences (71%)
- Dialogue groups/Study Circles (66%)
- Awareness training (59%)
- Community organizing (57%)
- Community/neighborhood forums (55%)
- Diverse stakeholder leadership groups (55%)
- Leadership development (52%)
- Anti-racism training (50%)

A CCIR's strategic focus influences the choice of strategies. For instance, communities with a focus on achieving racial equity rely most heavily on community events, anti-racism training, dialogue/Study Circles, action teams, community research report cards, awareness training, community forums, leadership development, and diverse leadership groups. Meanwhile, communities that pursue the combined objectives of increasing community awareness, improving race relations, and promoting equity (and, in some cases, a fourth "other" objective) place a higher priority on community organizing and also use action teams and dialogue strategies.

Starting points for action. According to interviewees, some communities enter this work by developing a critical mass of skilled people. They train individuals and invite them to join action teams and conduct research to learn about racial disparities on a particular issue. Some communities organize neighborhood forums to learn the priorities of residents most affected by a specific issue, while others form action teams to negotiate policy changes.

One initiative shared its findings with the community and used the report as a community organizing tool to engage residents. Another created a media campaign to inform the public, while another worked behind the scenes convening key sectors and prodding them to take the lead in forming action teams. Another community created a set of potential scenarios for organizational leaders to discuss. The leaders created staff teams to further explore the issues and propose responses to the scenarios. The leaders then were invited to join a peer learning network where they received feedback on their plans and found opportunities for collaboration.

Key Programmatic Responses. Two programmatic responses emerged as common across CCIRs: training on racism and efforts to cultivate awareness of racism and its effects.

The initiatives use a variety of national **training** providers (e.g., People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, Re-Evaluation Counseling), specialized curricula created on-site, and material developed for a specific audience or issue with help from local or national consultants. Some initiatives follow up with trainees with invitations to join action teams and topical workgroups or coalitions; some track what participants do with the knowledge after training, while others engage them as messengers and leaders in the community. A few initiatives have no connection with participants after the training except through organizational communication.

As noted earlier, CCIRs **cultivate community awareness** through study circles, public art, and events featuring public speakers. (In one community, residents read a book that supported the mission of the initiative, organized book clubs, and held a "Community Read" that culminated in a

STRATEGIC QUESTIONS FACED BY CCIRs

Does it make sense to create an African-American or Latino organization when a predominantly White organization is already working on the same issue? Should we invest in creating a new organization or in making the existing organization more inclusive and equitable?

How do we choose effective strategies for individual or institutional-level change?

What assessment questions will help us know when to implement different strategies?

How do we engage the whole community and sustain its interest and participation?

discussion with the author.) Not every community consistently translates these strategies into actions, however.

Awareness and skill building are closely related, as we saw in an initiative that devised a two-pronged approach to reach majority and minority residents. The focus for people of color and immigrant groups was on developing leaders, strengthening ethnic-focused nonprofit organizations, and providing translation and technology services. For the majority White residents, the focus was on awareness-building activities that eventually included training modules on institutional racism and White privilege.

OUTCOMES

Our findings about CCIR outcomes are not firm, for several reasons. One-fourth of the initiatives in our sample are less than four years old, and another quarter have not yet begun to evaluate their work. Nonetheless, survey respondents reported having achieved 7.5 of the 12 possible outcomes we identified, on average.

“Authentic relationships with people and organizations in the community have made a difference. We recently had a gang-related shooting, but because of strong relationships we were able to launch a community outreach process in a couple of days that kept things from flying apart.”
—Program Staff

The most **frequently** reported outcomes⁵ of CCIR efforts are: increased community awareness (90%), different/increased conversations about race (81%), a growing group with knowledge or skills (81%), and new alliances across racial/ethnic lines (71%). The following comments by interviewees are illustrative:

“New programs now start by increasing awareness of diversity issues in the community. Nonprofit organizations are thinking about these issues internally and when designing programs. There are more collaborative partnerships between predominantly white organizations or groups and ethnic-based ones.”

“We have 150 trained facilitators for our community-wide dialogue program. This has led other organizations to contact us when racial incidents occur—to help facilitate and, in some cases, mediate.”

“We are working with a state agency to deal with realtors who are not following ethical guidelines. County government has been involved since the report was released and they are currently working on changing policies.”

Outcomes reported by the **fewest** communities: increased diversity in civic leadership roles (45%), organized response to a racial crisis (33%), and tracking of racial indicators in different sectors (31%).

⁵ Outcomes listed in the survey were: increased community awareness; a growing group with knowledge or skills; new programs to promote racial equity; changes in policies or practices; improved/more media coverage; increased diversity in civic leadership roles; different/increased conversations about race; new alliances across racial/ethnic lines; more leaders advocating for racial equity; tracking of racial indicators in different sectors; organized response to racial crisis; and more organizations working internally on equity.

CHALLENGES

Our survey and interview respondents described many obstacles and pitfalls in their work, especially the following:

Staying the course for the long haul. Progress comes slowly, while expectations are immediate and intense. It is difficult to attract resources and allies to the initiative's mission when other results might be easier or faster to achieve. The turnover in political leaders and organizational allies that naturally occurs over time means that re-training and recruitment never ends.

Limitations on human resources. The difficulty of tackling complex, marginalized issues can leave residents overwhelmed about where to start and burn out the professional staff. Volunteers don't have a lot of time to spare; initiative leaders work to convince them that "this is not something additional but about doing things differently." The initiatives' small staffs struggle to respond to all the requests for help they receive, and some worry that potential allies will fall through cracks in the process. It isn't easy to find staff who are skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced to do consistently challenging work on racial equity.

Limited financial resources. It is hard to find funders who will invest in this work over the long haul. And when an initiative is just getting by from year to year, it's hard for leaders to plan ahead strategically. As one respondent noted, "We have only two staff members so our time [to raise funds] is limited. It seems not even worth the time to go after the small grants from local foundations."

Skepticism, fear, and distrust. Members of ethnic communities may question the initiative's authenticity and staying power, while some Whites have their own doubts and fears to overcome. Some participants want the initiative to be more than just talk, while others are leery when the discussion moves to policy changes. As one respondent said, "As what is happening in the community becomes more visible...we are getting phone calls and emails from people fearful that our community will be viewed as a sanctuary [for immigrants]."

Negative political and group dynamics. Within communities of color there sometimes is conflict and competition over limited resources and insufficient communication between groups. More broadly, the anti-immigrant sentiment currently sweeping the nation has jeopardized progress on racial equity in some communities. And a general history of antagonistic discussions about race in many places has to be dealt with before an open, inclusive discussion is possible.

LESSONS

What can be done to address these obstacles? The following lessons about key resources and supports, managing the community change process, and stages and indicators of progress emerged from our preliminary study.

KEY RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

Seek personal commitment from leaders and participants.

When staff, funders, and leaders stay the course and remain involved, when local elected officials feel invested, when volunteers are energetic and enthusiastic, and when institution that houses the initiative has a long-term commitment to the issue—then the initiative has the greatest chance of achieving long-term results. Some respondents commented that their leaders stayed with the group because of the constant opportunity for personal development and relationship building.

“You need to make a 100%-plus commitment—this is not something to dabble in. Individuals need to be...willing to take risks, to work on not becoming burned out, and to understand when you are actually reinforcing the things you are trying to overcome.” —Initiative director

Cultivate durable, trusting relationships with diverse stakeholders.

The funder has to trust initiative leaders and give them leeway to test new theories and approaches. A diverse group of participants need to contribute a variety of perspectives, skills, and experience, including those of residents, traditional power brokers, and policy makers. Local media should be on board to keep the issues front and center over time.

“We need to build trust. We need to be attentive to what we are modeling, how we are perceived. There needs to be intentionality for the duration. We need to always ask if we are perpetuating or reinforcing the fact that there is this hierarchy.” —Initiative director

Nurture political allies, continually.

City and county governments are important collaborators for CCIRs; they provide volunteers, connections, and resources. At the same time, community change is not a linear process—even people of good will won’t stand at your side all of the time—so the development of political allies, and transparent communication with them to ensure accountability, are continually necessary.

Educate institutional allies and partners.

Allies within systems and institutions are helpful when the CCIR aims to change policies. However, many leaders within key social and economic development institutions (e.g., philanthropies, banks, corporations, research institutes) have benefited from this country’s historic racial inequities, and that may compromise their ability to confront issues of racial equity. It may be necessary to improve these leaders’ cultural competency. An interviewee from a CCIR that did this says, “It is important to have trained internal allies when working on policy issues within a particular institution. We always had the CEO present. The CEO always started the training by telling staff they are going to be uncomfortable for a while and that we all needed to be uncomfortable for a while. We also included customers of the institution to provide an opportunity for the employees to hear their perspective.

Training workshops also provide an opportunity to develop a common frame of reference. Noted one respondent, “We wish we’d had the leadership committee go through training earlier in the process so we could have...figured out the diagnosis sooner. It would have been helpful for us to have a set of definitions for the group to use” so we were all on the same page.

Collect, analyze, and disseminate data to underscore the urgency of action.

Data usually tell a powerful story about racial disparities in the community, and it is hard to argue with the statistics. Data are two-edged, however: they can be intimidating and daunting to people unaccustomed to working with statistics, and they can be manipulated to reinforce stereotypes.

MANAGING THE COMMUNITY CHANGE PROCESS

Resolve conflicts within the leadership group. Not every leadership group in our interview sample experienced conflicts, but those that did offered two lessons. First, put intra-group issues on the table and talk about them candidly. Second, establish a common definition and analysis of racism. This has several advantages: it clarifies the group's purpose, making it easier to prioritize requests for support from the community; and it enables leaders to speak with a coherent voice. Group training sessions are one way to instill a shared definition and analysis.

“This is messy work and we need to be willing to get messy.” —Program director

Deepen the work in stages. Some communities may need to start with the topic of diversity and then add cultural competency before jumping into institutional racism. Or it may be necessary to build individual awareness before tackling group advocacy. Don't try to be all things to all people, but do provide information at varying levels of complexity using a variety of methods (e.g., dialogue, storytelling, skill-building, community discussions, media campaigns) so everyone can join the work, no matter what their starting point is.

Build bridges within the initiative, not just to external allies. “Link the different efforts that are working on racism,” a respondent advised. “We need to be there for each other consistently over the long haul.” Another respondent was more explicit: “Make sure the White people are doing their ongoing work on racism and privilege and the people of color are working on internalized oppression. Keep reaching for each other.”

Do your homework. Take time to learn about stakeholders and build relationships. Don't assume that a person described as a leader in a particular ethnic group does, in fact, speak for that constituency. Observed one interviewee, “It's interesting to hear who the Whites think the leader of a particular ethnic group is, versus what the members of that group think. Some of the ethnic group members want nothing to do with the person the Whites perceive as the leader.” Another interviewee suggested, “Take time to understand the issues and do the research. Just don't jump in with awareness activities. Find out what the community needs, what are they talking about, because each community is different. Bring people together and talk about sharing the power”

Send a persistent, consistent message. Don't be afraid to hammer away at the issues, even if people react defensively. When you think you're finished talking, find a new way to talk some more. The message bears repeating because racism and racial inequity are tough issues that many people would prefer to ignore. “Given the nature of race in the United States, this work is not about getting it right [once and for all]. You have to stay with it; there are going to be missteps” a respondent said. Be willing to continuously name racism and to talk about it in terms of access and control.

Build on what is already known. Don't keep reinventing the wheel—collaborate, adapt, and adopt.

Tailor your approach to each constituency. The same strategy does not necessarily work in every situation. For instance, grassroots organizing around race issues, which works well in communities, may be too confrontational to change processes within an institution. There, it may be more effective to target structural racism by gaining buy-in from top administrators, establishing a collaborative dynamic, and then slowly expanding the initiative's reach.

Use the community assessment process to understand issues and engage participants. Bring people together to talk about what it means to have power, what is preventing some groups from sharing that power, and what it will take to remove the obstacles. For example, one CCIR held a town forum attended by 400 people, where participants reviewed data on racial disparities. The subsequent discussion built momentum for change, as participants reconvened in focus groups to address specific topics.

“We received unsolicited feedback from a community-based organization with a Latino constituency that we were ‘walking the talk.’ The relationship began as an adversarial one after a major incident in the community. We have made progress with individual projects, but it is the bigger task of creating mutual relationships that I am most proud of achieving.”

—Staff member of leadership group

Spend time building one-on-one relationships. Individual relationships among community members are the first step toward powerful community partnerships because they establish trust and commitment to a shared goal. Even though these relationships don’t grow quickly, a respondent said, “We have to take the time to have conversations with each other and to do the personal work.”

Establish mutual accountability. As one interviewee said, “We realized that if we were engaging the community to do this work our own institution had to do the work ourselves. Our internal process is focused on education and training, office culture and environment, and institutional policies and procedures.”

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The research findings summarized in this paper underscore both what we know about community change initiatives on racial equity and what we do not yet fully understand. We know something about CCIRs’ precipitating factors; types and sources of support; issues of concern; leaders, participants, and roles; strategies and programmatic responses; and outcomes. We know a little about what works (and doesn’t work) in terms of initiative management, support, and implementation. But this knowledge is just the tip of the iceberg.

If the United States is to respond well to persistent racial inequity and the demographic shifts already underway, the migration patterns projected for the future, and the hot-button issues of immigration and racial profiling, we need to do more. We need a more systematic and deep effort to understand the essential principles and practices that produce powerful CCIRs. We need to build the knowledge base, share information, fine-tune strategies, and create tools. We need to further explore the change process and the resources that come into play. We need to sharpen our own understanding of how community change initiatives can create long-term, racially equitable outcomes. And we need to build the capacity of communities across the United States to undertake their own efforts to address racial inequities through comprehensive change.

Communities in this country undertake this work in isolation without the benefit of lessons, strategies, and tools that have been tested and developed in other venues. Even the respondents we

interviewed had limited knowledge of other communities' initiatives.⁶ We recommend three steps to address this knowledge gap and foster a community of practice for CCIRs:

- 1. Create a learning network for representatives of communities with CCIRs.** A learning network would provide mutual support through structured learning processes, technical support, regular convenings, and peer site visits. The goal would not be to promote a specific issue or type of strategy but to stimulate learning and reflection and to help the initiatives distill lessons in a form that can be shared with other participants and with other communities that wish to create CCIRs.

Learning network activities might involve: an annual convening of initiatives to share information about progress, problems, and successes; cross-site pairings for problem solving, to develop case studies, or to exchange best practices; shared research, policy debates, and reports; and site visits to each community to gather information on the community's history, stories, geographic layout, and culture and to meet with residents and initiative leaders in focus groups.

We believe that research-based and anecdotal stories that highlight a community's racial inequities and place them in historical and regional context are essential prerequisites for goal setting and strategic planning around issues of racial justice and community change.

Every community has multiple stories, told from multiple perspectives, that create a "common sense" about race for that community. This common sense both actively and passively affects private and public decision making.

- 2. Gather data, ideas, and information from network participants and distill additional lessons.** Researchers could work with participants in the learning network to create structured learning processes and instruments for gathering data, qualitative information, illustrative stories, and candid feedback from diverse community sources. The goals would be: to learn more about the impact of strategies, community readiness and capacities, and indicators of progress; to share valuable information with communities that want to create initiatives; and to build the field as whole by informing key leaders and community builders about lessons that can improve their skills.

For example, we hypothesize that there are at least five broad capacities needed to develop and sustain CCIRs, including the capacity to:

Community efforts that address racial injustice must be informed by comprehensive knowledge—not only of racial outcome disparities but of the community's history of racism and its current state of race relations and inequities.

engage a diverse stakeholder leadership group; implement a community assessment process; use multi-pronged strategies; create an organizational and programmatic framework that can weather the variable, demanding, and complex nature of this type of community initiative; and engage a diverse critical mass of residents and institutions in addressing racism proactively, effectively, and strategically.

⁶ The primary initiative that some of our interviewees knew about was Project Change, created by the Levi Strauss Foundation in 1990 to address institutional racism in four communities. Project Change had significant funding to document, evaluate, and publicly share its work, which has given it extra visibility.

The support team for such a project could, among other things, develop methods to assess the five capacities as well as community readiness, the viability of strategies, stages of implementation and progress for CCIRs, and the key actors and factors that help communities focus on systemic issues of racial inequity.

- 3. Disseminate lessons broadly.** Our third recommendation also represents the final thread of a community of practice: a process for sharing information with other communities that want to create CCIRs and for informing key leaders and community builders about lessons learned.

Activities might include: inviting all CCIRs to a national convening to share their lessons and best practices, discuss trends, and lead and participate in organizational and CCIR capacity workshops; developing a curriculum to be used to inform key leaders about this work and to build their skills; creating a Web-based clearinghouse for reports, tools, tip-sheets and other resources for CCIRs and organizations involved in race relations and racial justice; developing a toolkit for community leaders and local elected officials, based on Learning Network members' practices and lessons; and convening academic experts, practitioners, and CCIR representatives to share their practices and research, develop learning opportunities, and create collaborative partnerships.

Community leaders, residents, and institutions cannot keep trying to make progress in isolation when we know there are lessons and methods to support their commitment and needs. We can no longer just talk about how demographics are changing; the changes are here, and so are the inter- and intra-group racial tensions. It is time now to help leaders understand the importance of working on structural racism and develop the skills and confidence they need to take action. Race and ethnic identity can no longer be the identifier of disparate outcomes; we must find and use strategies that target the underlying, systemic issues and can be sustained.

The growing prevalence of community change initiatives on racial inequity is a vital, promising source of knowledge that has potential to transform practices. Moreover, the communities that have already stepped up to address racial injustices are vulnerable and in need of continuing support; they have an urgent desire for more information, strategies, and tools. Therefore, it is imperative that we make a systematic effort to build CCIRs' knowledge about and skills for increasing racial equity.

The next steps proposed above would cultivate a field of practice around promoting racial equity. It would strengthen the racial justice movement, share tools and lessons broadly, and provide vital support to communities where people are working to address racial inequities. CCIRs are showing us what can be done; now we need to make sure it gets done.



APPENDIX: RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

City	State	Community Change Initiative
Little Rock	AR	The Racial and Cultural Diversity Commission
Tucson	AZ	YWCA Tucson Racial Justice Programs
Santa Barbara	CA	Just Communities Central Coast
Riverside	CA	Human Relations Commission and Mayor's Multicultural Forum
Longmont	CO	Longmont's Multicultural Plan
Windsor	CT	National Conference for Community and Justice of CT and Western MA
Westport	CT	TEAM Westport - Together Effectively Achieving Multiculturalism
Wilmington	DE	YWCA Study Circles Program
Jacksonville	FL	Jacksonville Community Council
West Palm Beach	FL	Toward a More Perfect Union
Sarasota	FL	Sarasota County Openly Plans for Excellence
Delray Beach	FL	Mayor's Committee on Race Relations
Springfield	IL	Study Circles on Race
Aurora	IL	Aurora Community Study Circles
Fort Wayne	IN	United Way of Allen County's Task Force to Undo Racism and Overcome Barriers Diversity Initiative
Kalamazoo	MI	Kalamazoo's Summit on Racism
Flint	MI	FACTER-Flint Area Community to End Racism
Birmingham	MI	Race Relations & Diversity Task Force Birmingham/Bloomfield Area
Wilmar	MN	West Central Integration Collaborative
St. Paul	MN	Facing Race - We're all in this together
Rochester	MN	Diversity Council
St. Cloud	MN	Create CommUNITY Initiative
St. Louis	MO	Racial Equity Collaborative
Charlotte	NC	Crossroads Charlotte and Community Building Initiative
Greensboro	NC	Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission
Winston-Salem	NC	Institute for Dismantling Racism
Fargo	ND	Cultural Diversity Resources
Pennsauken	NJ	Pennsauken Stable Integration Governing Board
Maplewood	NJ	South Orange/Maplewood Community Coalition on Race
Albuquerque	NM	Anti-Racism Training Institute of the Southwest and Project Change Fair Lending Center
Syosset	NY	ERASE Racism
Syracuse	NY	Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism (CWD)
Dayton	OH	Miami Valley Community Summit on Eliminating Racism
Cincinnati	OH	Better Together Cincinnati
Rock Hill	SC	No Room for Racism
Sioux Falls	SD	Race Relations Task Force
Knoxville	TN	Race Relations Center of East TN
Waco	TX	Community Race Relations Coalition
Norfolk	VA	Norfolk United Facing Race
Burlington	VT	Greater Burlington Study Circles on Racism
Seattle	WA	City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative
Kenosha	WI	Diversity Circles on Dismantling Racism

INTERVIEWEE SNAPSHOTS⁷

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA	
INITIATIVE	Mayor's Multicultural Forum and Human Relations Commission
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	City Hall
REGION	West
POPULATION	300,351
DEMOGRAPHICS	African American: 8% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 10% Latino/a: 45% Native American: Did not respond White: 37% Multiracial: Did not respond
STRATEGIC FOCUS⁸	Community Awareness, Race Relations, Racial Inequities
MISSION	<i>The Human Relations Commission:</i> "Advocating for equal opportunity, justice, and access in the City of Riverside to services and opportunities. Fostering mutual understanding and respect between people; encouraging education and outreach; developing and promoting programs which work to eliminate prejudice and discrimination." <i>The Mayor's Multicultural Forum:</i> "With a membership that includes people from many ethnic communities of Riverside, the Forum will be a place of discussion and a way to offer the City advice on diversity and multicultural issues – in particular, how to address cultural differences as economic, educational, and civic strengths."
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Dialogue groups/Study Circles, anti-racism training, media campaign, policy change, community events/conferences, awareness training, community/neighborhood forums, mediation, community/sector report card, diverse stakeholder group
FIRST YEAR	Human Relations Commission: 1966, Mayor's Multicultural Forum: 1998
WEBSITE	www.riversideca.gov

LONGMONT, COLORADO	
INITIATIVE	Longmont's Multicultural Plan
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	City and Community Collaboration
REGION	Southwest
POPULATION	82,798
DEMOGRAPHICS⁹	African American: 0.5% Asian American/Pacific Islander, 1.9% Latino/a: 19.1% Native American: 1% White: 84.8% Multiracial: 11.9%
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Community Awareness, Race Relations, Racial Inequities; Build and sustain relationships with the Latino community
MISSION	A five-year plan to guide the community while becoming a multicultural community, which establishes and sustains connections with the Latino community but will also serve as a tool to help the people of Longmont work together to become a caring and inclusive community

⁷Information current as of March/April, 2006.

⁸ Respondents could pick one or more strategic focus: Increase the community's racial/ethnic awareness, knowledge, and/or skills; Improve race relations amongst groups and/or in the community as a whole; Reduce racial inequities in community; and/or "Other."

⁹ Duplicate counting of multiracial individuals may result in totals of more than 100%.

LONGMONT, COLORADO	
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Dialogue groups, community organizing, policy change, community events/conferences, action teams, community report, community/neighborhood forums, leadership development, advocacy, mediation, storytelling, diverse stakeholder leadership group
FIRST YEAR	2002
WEBSITE	www.ci.longmont.co.us

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA	
INITIATIVE	Jacksonville Community Council (JCCI)
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Non-Profit
REGION	Southeast
POPULATION	1.2 million metro; 880,000 city
DEMOGRAPHICS	African American: 28% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 3% Latino/a: 4% Native American: 0.3% White: 66% Multiracial: 3%
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Racial Inequities
VISION	As stated in the 2002 report, the vision is one of racial justice and inclusion, in which all residents feel free to, and actually do, participate fully in public life, unimpeded by race-based disparities or discrimination.
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Dialogue, awareness training, anti-racism training, community/neighborhood forums, media campaign, leadership development, policy change, advocacy, community events/conferences, organizational assessment/audits, community report card, research report, diverse stakeholder group
FIRST YEAR	Organization: 1975, Comprehensive study: 2001
WEBSITE	www.jcci.org

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA (Allen County)	
INITIATIVE	United Way of Allen County's Task Force to Undo Racism and Overcome Barriers Diversity Initiative
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Non-profit organization and coalition of organizations
REGION	Midwest
POPULATION	336,441
DEMOGRAPHICS	African American: 11% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 2% Latino/a: 5% Native American: 0.1% White: 83% Multiracial: 4%
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Community Awareness, Race Relations, Racial Inequities
VISION	To foster understanding and acceptance of ethnic and cultural differences in order to create a diverse environment where all people have equal opportunity to develop and utilize their talents and abilities without regard to race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation
CURRENT STRATEGIES	dialogue groups/Study Circles, anti-racism training, action teams, awareness training, community/neighborhood forums, skill-building training, leadership development, diverse stakeholder leadership group.
FIRST YEAR	1994
WEBSITE	www.unitedwayallencounty.org

ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA (Stearns County)	
INITIATIVE	Create CommUNITY Initiative
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Leadership group of Diverse Stakeholders
REGION	Midwest
POPULATION	167,392
DEMOGRAPHICS	African American: 0.8% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 1.5% Latino/a: 1.3% Native American: 0.3% White: 96% Multiracial: Did not respond
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Racial Inequities
MISSION	To provide a welcoming, non-discriminatory environment with respect and opportunity for all in the St. Cloud, MN area
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Dialogue groups/Study Circles, anti-racism training, media campaign, community organizing, community events/conferences, action teams, organizational assessments/audits, research report, awareness training, community/neighborhood forums, skill-building training, leadership development, diverse stakeholder leadership group
FIRST YEAR	1998
WEBSITE	www.CreateCommUNITY.info

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA (Ramsey, Dakota, and Washington Counties)	
INITIATIVE	Facing Race <i>We're all in this together</i> TM
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Foundation
REGION	Midwest
POPULATION	1,068,000
DEMOGRAPHICS ¹⁰	African American: 5% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 6% Latino/a: 4% Native American: 0.5% White: 85% Multiracial: Did not respond Other: 4%
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Community Awareness and Racial Inequities
VISION	To create a more equitable, just, and open region and a community in which everyone feels safe, valued, and respected
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Dialogue groups, awareness training, diverse stakeholder leadership group, learning cohorts composed of institutional leaders
FIRST YEAR	2002
WEBSITE	www.facingrace.org

SOUTH ORANGE AND MAPLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY	
INITIATIVE	South Orange/Maplewood Community Coalition on Race
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Non-profit organization
REGION	Mid-Atlantic
POPULATION	40,912
DEMOGRAPHICS ¹¹	African American: 31.5% / 32.7% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 3.9% / 2.9% Latino/a: 4.9% / 5.2% Native American: 0.1% / 0.1% White: 60.2% / 58.7%

¹⁰ Total may add up to more than 100% due to rounding.

SOUTH ORANGE AND MAPLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY	
	Multiracial: 2.7% / 4%
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Community Awareness, Race Relations, Racial Inequities; To achieve and sustain the robust participation of all races in housing, schools, and civic life
MISSION	To achieve and sustain the robust participation of all races in housing, schools, and civic life
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Dialogue groups/Study Circles, media campaign, community organizing, policy change, community events/conferences, action teams, organizational assessments/audits, research report, awareness training, community/neighborhood forums, advocacy, mediation, storytelling, diverse stakeholder leadership group, pro-integration training
FIRST YEAR	1996
WEBSITE	www.twotowns.org

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO	
INITIATIVE	Anti-Racism Training Institute of the Southwest and Project Change Fair Lending Center
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Non-Profit Organization
REGION	Southwest
POPULATION	1.2 million – New Mexico
DEMOGRAPHICS ¹²	African American: 3% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 2% Latino/a: 47% Native American: 10% White: 40% Multiracial: Did not respond
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Racial Inequities
MISSION	ARTI is committed to anti-racism organizing and community building through education, training, advocacy, inclusion, collective and democratic decision-making, and accountability to the community. Our goal is to promote equity and eliminate racial disparities in institutional outcomes in New Mexico, particularly in health and access to credit, capital, and homeownership.
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Anti-racism training, community/neighborhood forums, community organizing, leadership development, policy change, advocacy, diverse stakeholder leadership group
FIRST YEAR	1991
WEBSITE	None

LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK (Nassau and Suffolk County)	
INITIATIVE	ERASE Racism
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Non-Profit Organization
REGION	Northeast
POPULATION	2.8 million
DEMOGRAPHICS	African American: 10% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 3.4% Latino/a: 12% Native American: 1% White: 73% Multiracial: 0.5%
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Racial Inequities

¹¹ First number is South Orange and second number is Maplewood. Source: 2000 U.S. Census.

¹² Duplicate counting of multiracial individuals may result in totals of more than 100%.

LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK (Nassau and Suffolk County)	
MISSION	To address racial segregation and disparities and promote racial equity in civil society and in institutions
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Anti-racism training, media campaign, policy change, community events/conferences, action teams, organizational assessments/audits, research report, advocacy, community/sector report card, diverse stakeholder leadership group
FIRST YEAR	2001
WEBSITE	www.eraseracismny.org

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK	
INITIATIVE	Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Non-profit and Interfaith Group
REGION	Northeast
POPULATION	150,000
DEMOGRAPHICS¹³	African American: 5% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 2% Latino/a: 3% Native American: 2% White: 90% Multiracial: Did not respond
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Community Awareness, Race Relations, Racial Inequities; Serve as a catalyst for personal and group action for racial justice
MISSION	Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism and Promote Racial Healing is committed to: providing opportunities for honest conversations about race and racism; offering a format for learning from the experiences of others; engaging and joining with community leaders, organizations, groups, and individuals to develop practical recommendations and strategies for addressing institutional racism, improving race relations, and bringing about racial equity; continuing to build a broad network of organizations and sectors of the community to take complementary action on racial justice issues, with CWD's role as a conduit and a conveyor; and ending racism in Central New York and repairing the social, economic, and emotional wounds caused by past and present racism.
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Dialogue groups/Study Circles, community organizing, policy change, community events/conferences, action teams, organizational assessments/audits, research report, skill-building training, leadership development, diverse stakeholder leadership group
FIRST YEAR	1996
WEBSITE	www.irccny.org

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA (Mecklenburg County)	
INITIATIVE	Community Building Initiative/Crossroads Charlotte
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Foundation
REGION	Southeast
POPULATION	700,000
DEMOGRAPHICS	African American: 28% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 3% Latino/a: 7% Native American: 0.4% White: 61% Multiracial: 0.6%
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Racial Inequities

¹³ Duplicate counting of multiracial individuals may result in totals of more than 100%.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA (Mecklenburg County)	
GOALS	<i>Community Building Initiative:</i> Achieving racial and ethnic inclusion and equity <i>Crossroads Charlotte:</i> To discover ways to increase social capital/connectivity through a laboratory project; to influence the “course that Charlotte-Mecklenburg charts for all its residents over the next 10 years as we deal with issues of access, equity, inclusion, and trust in the social, political, economic and cultural life of the community”; to effect positive community change on issues of access, equity, inclusion, and trust through awareness and collective action.
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Dialogue groups, community events/conferences, action teams, research report, storytelling, poetry/spoken word, infusion of the arts, scenario planning
FIRST YEAR	Community Building Initiative: 1997, Crossroads Charlotte: 2004
WEBSITE	www.communitybuildinginitiative.org , www.crossroadscharlotte.org

FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA AND MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA	
INITIATIVE	Cultural Diversity Resources
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Non-profit organization
REGION	Northwest/Midwest
POPULATION	147,000
DEMOGRAPHICS	African American: 0.7 % Asian American/Pacific Islander: 1.2% Latino/a: 2% Native American: 1.2% White: 93.6% Multiracial: 1.3%
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Community Awareness, Race Relations, Racial Inequities; Increase participation of ethnic individuals/groups in public and community affairs through serving on boards, committees, or volunteerism
MISSION	To build communities that value diversity by increasing the understanding of the value of diversity in the community; and to eliminate barriers to community participation experiences by diverse populations
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Dialogue/Study Circles, community organizing, awareness training, skill-building training, leadership development, advocacy, community report card, diverse stakeholder leadership group, building the capacity of newly formed ethnic non-profit groups and creating liaison/alliances among different ethnic groups
FIRST YEAR	1994
WEBSITE	www.culturaldiversityresources.org

CINCINNATI, OHIO	
INITIATIVE	Better Together Cincinnati
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	Coalition of funders
REGION	Midwest
POPULATION	317,000
DEMOGRAPHICS	African American: 45% Asian American/Pacific Islander: Did not respond Latino/a: 5% Native American: Did not respond White: 50% Multiracial: Did not respond
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Racial Inequities
MISSION	To achieve greater equity, opportunity, and economic inclusion for the African-American community in the areas of police/community relations and criminal justice, including the implementation of Cincinnati’s landmark Collaborative Agreement, employment, and educational achievement.
CURRENT	Community organizing, policy change, community events/conferences, organizational

STRATEGIES	assessment/audit, research report, leadership development, diverse stakeholder leadership group
FIRST YEAR	2003
WEBSITE	www.greatercincinnati.org

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON	
INITIATIVE	City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI)
INSTITUTIONAL ENTITY	City Hall
REGION	Northwest
POPULATION	563,374
DEMOGRAPHICS¹⁴	African American: 8.4% Asian American/Pacific Islander: 13% Latino/a: 5.2% Native American: 1% White: 70% Multiracial: 4.4%
STRATEGIC FOCUS	Community Awareness, Race Relations, Racial Inequities; Address institutionalized racism in City of Seattle government
MISSION	The focus of the Race and Social Justice Initiative is initially internal to City of Seattle government. All city departments have developed RSJI work plans focused on dismantling institutionalized racism and supporting multiculturalism within each respective department. Issues identified in the initial RSJI work plans pointed to five central concerns that cut across all city departments: capacity building, workforce equity, economic equity, public engagement, and immigrant services. City-wide efforts are focused on these five central concerns.
CURRENT STRATEGIES	Anti-racism training, community organizing, policy change, action teams, organizational assessments/audits, awareness training, skill-building training, leadership development
FIRST YEAR	2004
WEBSITE	www.seattle.gov/civilrights/default.htm

¹⁴ Duplicate counting of multiracial individuals may result in totals of more than 100%.