

Application for Funding – Cover Page

Applicant

Business Name or Individual	BlacBird Investments LLC DBA Racial Equity Group	Street Address Including City, State, and ZIP Code	391 Las Colinas Blvd. ste 130350 Irving, TX 75039
Contact Person	Bird Guess	Title	CEO
Phone	888.369.1339	Email	bird@racialequitygroup.com
Authorized Representative	Bird Guess	Title	CEO
Phone	888.369.1339	Email	bird@racialequitygroup.com
Federal Employer Tax Id #	20-4916459	Unique Entity Identifier #	MX63JNW175R4
Dates of Active Registration in System for Award Management			Jul 26, 2023

Total Amount of Funding Request

74,723.25

Total Hours of Service

940

Project Period

24 months

Signature



Signature of the Person Submitting this Form

Name

Bird Guess

Name of the Person Submitting this Form (print)

Date of Signature

11-9-24

Budget Summary

Applicant: Racial Equity Group

Project Period: 1-1-26 to 1-1-28

	Grant Request	Match	Total
Budget Categories:			
Personnel	-	-	-
Fringe Benefits	-	-	-
Travel	6,067.00	-	-
Supplies	-	-	-
Subaward/Contractual	68,656.25	-	-
Other Direct Costs	-	-	-
Indirect Costs	-	-	-
Total Grant Funds	74,723.25	-	-

Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative

Applicant: Racial Equity Group

Project Period: 1-1-26 to 1-1-28

Personnel				Total Grant Period		
Position	Name	Annual Salary	Grant Allocation %	Grant Request	Match	Total
			#DIV/0!			
			#DIV/0!			
			#DIV/0!			
Total Personnel Costs				\$0	\$0	\$0

Personnel Narrative:

Bird Guess, president and CEO of Racial Equity Group (REG) is a tribal member of the Choctaw Nation, will be the single point of contact and will have binding authority to enter into contracts. Bird will be responsible for conducting meetings, requesting and analyzing data, coordinating meetings and trainings with SAG and partners. Bird will be responsible for conducting the racial equity gap and barrier analysis, focus group preparation and report presentation, racial equity foundation training, development and design of the SAG racial equity toolkit.

Fringe Benefits				Total Grant Period		
Position	Name	Annual Benefits	Grant Allocation %	Grant Request	Match	Total
			#DIV/0!			
			#DIV/0!			
			#DIV/0!			
			#DIV/0!			
			#DIV/0!			
Total Fringe Benefits				\$0	\$0	\$0

Fringe Benefits Narrative:

Travel			Total Grant Period		
Purpose	Location	Expense Type (Hotel/Mileage/Per Diem)	Grant Request	Match	Total
Racial Equity strategic planning and training sessions	North Dakota	airfare hotel and rental car	\$6,067		
Total Travel Costs			\$6,067	\$0	\$0
<p><i>Travel Costs Narrative: Bird Guess of Racial Equity Group (REG) will travel periodically from Dallas Ft Worth to North Dakota for in-person strategic planning sessions, community stakeholder meetings, and training on best practices for system stakeholders on reducing the overrepresentation youth and evaluating the fairness of the the juvenile justice system. Federal and state per diem rates will be used for all travel expenses.</i></p>					

Supplies			Total Grant Period		
Item	Quantity	Per Unit Cost	Grant Request	Match	Total
Total Supply Costs			\$0	\$0	\$0
<p><i>Supply Costs Narrative:</i></p>					

Subawards/Contracts		Total Grant Period		
Description/Purpose	Computation	Grant Request	Match	Total
Bird Guess, Executive Consltant and Project Manager and responsible for all project deliverables and monthly reporting of activities.	555 hours X \$81.25 per hour	\$45,094		
REG intends to partner with Sacred Pipe Resource Center for assistance with identifying and convening community partners, hosting listening sessions, moderating discussions and providing insights and feedback to inform final reports. Meeting with system stakeholders and obtaining ideas on impacts to indigeneous youth and parents in the juvenile system.	250 hours X \$81.25 per hour	\$20,313		
REG Associate Consultants and assitant to project manager for facilitating strategic planning sessions, qualitative note taking and coding, and stakeholder listening sessions report.	50 hours x 65 per hour	\$3,250		
Total Subaward/Contractual Costs		\$68,656	\$0	\$0

Subaward/Contractual Costs Narrative:

Bird Guess, a tribal member of the Choctaw Nation, will be the Executive Consultant/Project Manager and single point of contact and will have binding authority to enter into contracts. Bird will be responsible for conducting meetings, requesting and analyzing data, coordinating meetings and trainings with SAG and partners, monthly reporting, facilitation of strategic planning sessions and ongoing discussions with BIPOC stakeholders, government agencies, schools and courts; collecting, aggregating, and sharing information; and providing training to public and private agencies. Associate Consultants from REG and also strategic partner, Sacred Pipe Resource Center, located in Bismarck North Dakota will assist the Executive Consultant with qualitative research, including community listening sessions with community stakeholders including BIPOC youth and parents, law enforcement, ND Department of Health & Human Services, school districts, and the ND Juvenile Court. Associate Consultant and Sacred Pipe will also help prepare notes, presentations, provide insights and feedback for reports.

Other Direct Costs		Total Grant Period		
Type	Computation	Grant Request	Match	Total

Total Other Direct Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0
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Other Direct Costs Narrative:

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Indirect Costs			Total Grant Period		
Description	Base	Rate	Grant Request	Match	Total
Total Indirect Costs			\$0	\$0	\$0

Indirect Cost Narrative:



Racial Equity Group

Making Racial Equity Standard Operating Procedure



RFP: Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Plan

TO:

**North Dakota Association of Counties
Attn: Lisa Jahner**

P.O. Box 877

1661 Capitol Way

Bismarck, ND 58502-0877

FROM:

BIRD GUESS



President & CEO

Racial Equity Group LLC

391 Las Colinas Blvd, Ste. 130-350

Irving, TX 75039

P/F: (888) 369-1339

E: Bird@RacialEquityGroup.com

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Abbreviations Used Throughout This Document

- REG = Racial Equity Group
- SAG = State Advisory Group
- SP = Sacred Pipe Resource Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dear Lisa:

The Racial Equity Group (REG) intends to partner with Sacred Pipe (SP) in response to the committee's request to help address the over-representation of Black, Indigenous and other people of color (BIPOC) youth in North Dakota's juvenile justice system.

REG has extensive expertise in human biases, including bias for ingroups (e.g. favoritism), bias apathy toward outgroups (discrimination) and bias against outgroups and protected classes (e.g. discrimination). We plan to utilize our evidenced-based Racial Equity Mindset framework to help the SAG achieve the desired deliverables. REG and ER have conducted equity assessments across the nation for public and private sector clients, but we have a unique area of expertise in providing these services to public sector organizations. We believe what distinguishes our firm from other consultants is *our data-driven approach to equip organizations to effectively measure, monitor and manage data to prevent the overrepresentation of specific demographic groups. We believe if organizations don't have data, then all they have are opinions on equity and fairness.*

REG will work collaboratively with the Sacred Pipe Resource Center to facilitate a series of focus group interviews with native youth, parents and community organizations that serve or support native populations in Burleigh County, to gain deeper insights and understand their lived experiences.

REG and SP have deep expertise working with local governments, police departments, and public sector serving organizations to prevent discrimination and bias listed below, but not limited to:

- Fairfax County Government, Virginia
- Town of Needham, Massachusetts
- Arlington County Government, Virginia
- Metropolitan Council of Saint Paul Minnesota
- City of Newton, Massachusetts
- Town of Brookline, Massachusetts
- Massachusetts State Health Connector
- San Mateo County Community College District, California
- City of Framingham Massachusetts
- State of North Dakota Juvenile Justice Advisory Group
- Kenosha County Government, Wisconsin
- City of Concord, New Hampshire
- Tarrant County Government, Texas

Below is a brief summary of our approach for the requested scope of work. REG has the capacity and is fully committed to delivering the SAG's requested deliverables over the two-year timeline.

- ❖ **Apply a systems thinking approach to address complex and recurring racial disparities of youth**
- ❖ **Conduct a best practices gap and barrier analysis of juvenile system stakeholders in Burleigh County**
- ❖ **Facilitate focus group interviews with Indigenous BIPOC youth and families and youth-serving community-based providers and community leaders with lived experience in the juvenile justice system to obtain their feedback on prevention strategies and areas for improvement**
- ❖ **Develop a report of key findings, recommendations and an action plan**

Thank you for the opportunity to share our framework and ideas to help the SAG continue its journey of reducing racial and ethnic disparities and monitoring fairness of the juvenile justice system throughout the North Dakota.

Respectfully,

Bird Guess



President and CEO
The Racial Equity Group
391 Las Colinas Blvd, Suite 130-350
Irving, TX 75039
T: (888) 369-1339 | F: (888) 369-1339
E. bird@racialequitygroup.com

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

REG is a certified Choctaw tribal member and minority and veteran owned management consulting firm based in Irving, Texas, which began as a limited liability company in 2004, and provides advisory services to public and private sector organizations on equity and inclusion strategies. REG also customizes and facilitates DEI audit assessments and bias training experiences. With a mission and purpose to equip organizations to make Racial Equity standard operating procedure, REG designs strategies that transform policies and practices to help public and private sector institutions identify how their organizations may be unintentionally perpetuating systemic inequity, and to empower them with our framework to guide decision-making, promote equity and results-based accountability.

REG partnered with Sacred Pipe Resource Center, a community based organization who initially developed Community Engagement Teams within Burleigh County, and these teams have evolved in the current Community Councils. The Community Councils are groups of Native community members who have an interest in making positive change in certain areas of life. Each Council is staffed by an SPRC team member who helps the ideas and plans of community members come to life. The Councils tap into area stakeholder organizations for training and feedback as well. Council members are volunteers and do not need any special expertise or training or qualifications. Each Community Council meets once a month to discuss the current activities, future goals, and needs. Meals and refreshments are provided and random incentives are also provided.

Bird Guess, is the President and CEO of Racial Equity Group, and Founder of the think-tank, Center for Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity, Bird Guess will be the project manager, main point of contact, and has binding authority to enter into contracts. Bird is responsible for all aspects of company operations including; facilitating training, advisory consulting, equity assessments and policy recommendations. and quality control and customer service.

Dr. Rene Paulson is the Founder of and Senior Statistician of Elite Research and Divergent Web Solutions. She will be the assistant project manager working collaboratively with Bird to design, administer, and prepare graphs and charts of the customized equity assessment (EA2).

Rene will also oversee staff responsible for quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis and facilitating focus group interviews

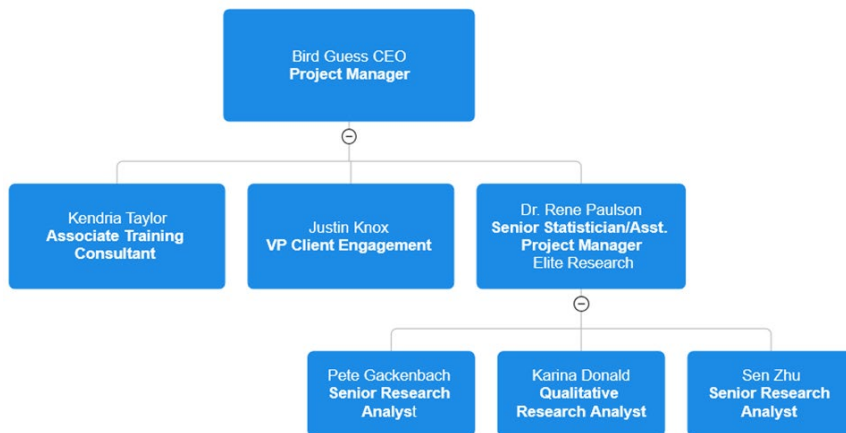
Pete Gackebach is a Senior Research Analyst for Elite Research and is responsible for cleaning equity assessment data, identifying statistical significance for any racial disparities between demographic groups, preparing data by assessing invalid data, missing data and basic assumptions testing, coding analysis syntax, and writing technical reports on research findings.

Dr. Sen Zhu is a Senior Research Analyst for Elite Research and works collaboratively with Pete, to monitor data collection and apply statistical techniques that illustrate data analysis in graphs and charts for all equity assessments.

Karina Donald is a Qualitative Research Analyst with Elite Research. Karina oversees the design, facilitation of all qualitative data obtained from focus group interviews

Kendria Taylor is an Associate Training Consultant with Racial Equity Group and will assist Bird with training of the Assessment Team and also help facilitate focus group interviews with internal and external stakeholders.

All of the above staff are key staff and participated on all past projects including those listed in this proposal.



QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)



President and CEO of Racial Equity Group and Founder of the think-tank, Center for Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity, **Bird Guess will be the project manager, main point of contact, and has binding authority to enter into contracts.** Bird brings over 15 years of expertise in conducting Racial Equity audit assessments, advising executives on diversity and inclusion strategies, designing, and delivering Racial Equity training curriculum, integrating equity into organizational policies and practices, and ultimately making Racial Equity standard operating procedure. He attended the United States Air Force Academy and received an honorable discharge. Bird obtained a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Austin College in Sherman Texas. He has been published in the field of management consulting with best-selling books, *Lead Like Water*, *Leadership Virus*, and his upcoming book, *The System: America's Last Chance before Racial Inequality is Permanent*.

Professional Core Competencies

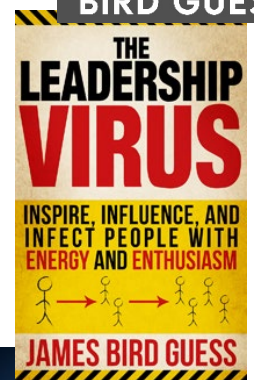
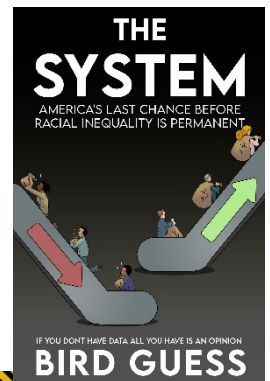
- Racial Equity Mindset
- Project Management
- Conflict Resolution
- Oral and Written Communication
- Adaptability
- Decision-making

Education

- Honorable discharge, Veteran, U.S. Air Force Academy
- Bachelors of Business Administration, Austin College, Sherman, Texas

Experience

- Conducted first study of DEI within local government for an entire state (Massachusetts). President of Racial Equity Group and International Training Success Academy since 2008. Retained by United States Army (Army Medical Command), Texas Instruments, Tarrant County, QuikTrip, Shiner Bock Brewery, and Tenet Health Care.
- Designed customized course "*Inclusive Leadership*" for the U.S. Army's global leader development programs (Aspiring, Intermediate, Mentoring)
- Designed and facilitated core training program, "*Bias and Blind spots*" for the Management Development Institute of Tarrant County. Created bias and inclusion assessments to measure team's level of awareness on inclusion and biases in the workplace
- Retained by the U.S. Army to facilitate the highly credentialed and exclusive "Leadership Challenge"
- Developed and delivered curriculum on effective leadership, diversity and inclusion, safety mindsets and emotional intelligence, to the first state agency in the U.S. created for the purpose of developing and managing the water resources of an entire river basin, the Brazos River Authority
- Recognized as a training innovator for increasing retention rates based on 70 percent interactive and 30 percent lecture methodology, and "open training" workbooks, in which participants must fill in content of each page of workbooks
- Best-selling author of the books, *Lead Like Water*, *Leadership Virus*, and upcoming book, *All Eyes on Equity*.



QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)



Dr. Rene Paulson is the Founder of and Senior Statistician of Elite Research and Divergent Web Solutions. She will be the assistant project manager working collaboratively with Bird to design, administer, and prepare graphs and charts of the customized equity assessment (EA2). Rene will also oversee staff responsible for quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis and focus group interviews.

Rene has provided scientific and technical capacity to institutions seeking collaborative expertise for research and evaluation, program design, marketing and advertising, informational systems and technologies, operations and strategic planning, and finance. Her personal research has been dedicated to attitude and behavioral change in relation to minority groups and women in STEM. Dr. Paulson has led the inception, strategic planning, implementation and staffing of the first research design and analysis center in Texas State institutions. She has sat on the boards for strategic planning, quality enhancement and improvement, and advancement and opportunity for various academic entities. She is exceptional at the evaluative process and hold a Six Sigma Black Belt in optimization. Her psychological background is a foundation for the way that she leads teams and motivates and propels her staff and colleagues. She has published her work in optimization, change management, research design, and evaluation for over 20 years.

Professional Core Competencies

- Creativity in reviewing external and internal factors that are the bases for current or future strategies
- In-depth knowledge of performance measurement and corrective action
- Designing effective research and evaluation strategies
- High performer capable of leading exceptional team under tough deadlines to meet key deliverables and expectations
- Creating tools and solutions for process optimization and presentation
- Multi-tasker, with strong organization ability; planning, project, and people management

Education

- Ph.D. Honorary, Community Leadership, Franklin University, 2015
- Ph.D. Experimental Psychology, Texas Christian University, 2004
- M.S. Experimental Psychology, Texas Christian University, 2001
- B.S. Psychology, Ohio University, 1999

Experience

Elite Research, LLC

- Direct Team of Consultants
- Research Design and Statistics
- Evaluation of Institutional and Organizational Effectiveness
- Factors for strategic development and implementation
- Optimization of Data File Management
- Verification of Statistical Approaches
- Analyze Data, Manuscript Preparation for Grants, Industry, and Individual Research
-

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)



Pete Gackenbach is a Senior Research Analyst for Elite Research and is responsible for cleaning equity assessment data, identifying statistical significance for any racial disparities between demographic groups, preparing data by assessing invalid data, missing data and basic assumptions testing, coding analysis syntax, and writing technical reports on research findings.

He is often the most directly involved with the data on a micro level trained to identify critical decision points for Dr. Paulson and senior research consultants. He empowers the research consultant team to present key findings and decision points to clients to ensure maximum return and accuracy on research aims and methodology.

He has extensive prior experience working in monitoring and evaluation outcomes-based research for international and cross-cultural nonprofit work. He has served as a project manager in more than 20 countries providing methodology design, evaluation oversight, and research training in the field.

Education

B.S. Aerospace Engineering, University of Maryland, 2005

Professional Core Competencies

- Data cleaning, preparation, and analysis in a variety of statistical software packages and programs
- Technical writing for bivariate and multivariate statistical analysis
- Project management and training for cross-cultural/multicultural monitoring and evaluation projects
- Data analytic services for senior research analysts
- Qualitative and quantitative research experience in over 30 countries

Experience

Elite Research, LLC

- Designed, validated, and conducted reliability testing for quantitative research instruments to measure outcomes.
- Coached organizations on conducting monitoring and evaluation projects internally and externally
- Facilitated focus group trainings and lead focus group research for partner organizations
- Conducted literature reviews for instrument design.
- Created data entry templates with dashboard results displayed to automate analysis for international nonprofit organizations.

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QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)



Karina Donald is a Qualitative Research Analyst with Elite Research. Karina oversees the design, facilitation of all qualitative data obtained from focus group interviews.

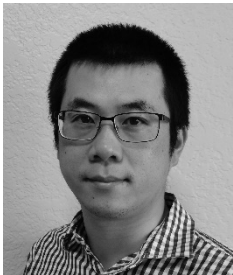
She has worked as an analyst on qualitative and mixed methods projects for diverse clients across a broad range of industries since 2015. Karina holds a Bachelor's degree in psychology from Brooklyn College, a Master's degree in art therapy from George Washington University, and doctor of philosophy in marriage and family therapy from Texas Woman's University. She is passionate about utilizing social science research methods to provide culturally-relevant solutions to underserved communities. Karina specializes in analyzing non-verbal expressions in human experiences, including projects in the arts.

Education

- Ph.D. Marriage and Family Therapy, Texas Woman's University, 2020
- M.A. Art Therapy, George Washington University, 2011
- B.A. Psychology, Brooklyn College, University of New York, 2008

Professional Core Competencies

- Focus group and interview question development and facilitation
- Insight into cultural considerations and culturally-appropriate approaches to research
- In-depth analysis of the creative arts and non-verbal expressions
- Rigor in the integration of qualitative and quantitative data analysis



Dr. Sen Zhu is a Senior Research Analyst for Elite Research where he directs and conducts advanced statistical techniques to project consultation, design, data visualization, statistical analysis, and write up. His dual doctoral work gives him unique understanding in the fields of bioinformatics and medical research, but his statistical knowledge and experience expand into areas of data visualization and presentation, data mining and statistical analysis, and business intelligence and strategy. With more than ten years of experience in the field of data science, Dr. Zhu is proficient in using statistical and machine learning tools to deliver data-driven insights.

Education

- Ph.D. Pathophysiology, Peking University, 2011
- MD. Jining Medical University, 2006

Expertise

- Capable of leading high performing research teams under tough deadlines to meet expectations of client/program needs
- In-depth knowledge of statistical techniques and modeling
- Profound experiences in building machine learning models for prediction and actionable insights

Experience

Elite Research, LLC
Statistical analysis, research design

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)



Kendria Taylor is an Associate Training Consultant with Racial Equity Group with over 15 years of leadership experience in the public sector, she is also a published author of a children’s book series focused on social-emotional learning. Kendria will assist Bird with training of the Assessment Team and also help facilitate focus group interviews with internal and external stakeholders.

As a certified workplace dispute resolution expert, Kendria empowers managers and business leaders with her expertise in emotional intelligence, team integrated systems and professional ethics. She is a keynote speaker for educational institutions, government agencies and nonprofit organizations across the country. Prior to joining REG, Kendra served as Vice President of Community Relations for the College of Health Care Professions, where she provided oversight on operations and processes for 10 campuses across the state of Texas.

Professional Core Competencies

- Social-Emotional Learning
- Workplace Dispute Resolution
- Commitment to ADEI
- Team Integrated Systems
- Professional Ethics
- Facilitating Crucial Conversations

Education

- Master’s degree in Family Studies from the University of North Texas

Experience

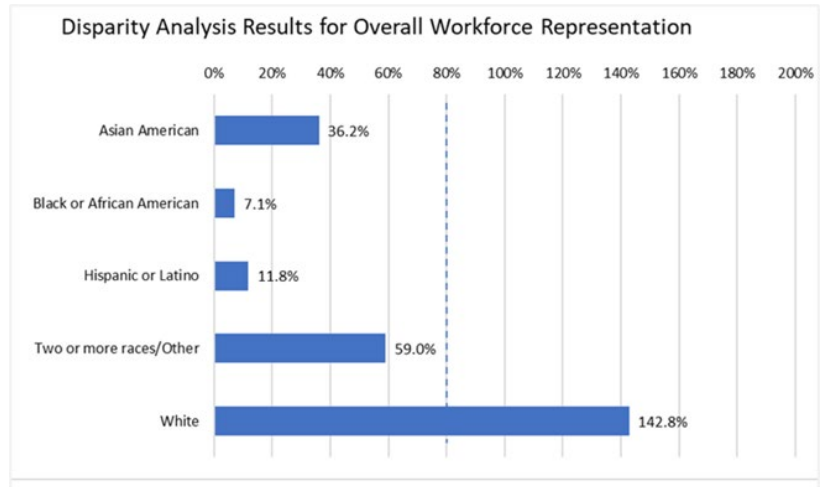
- Workplace Dispute Resolution Expert
 - Vice President of Community Relations for the College of Health Care Professions

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QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)

Project 1: Arlington County Virginia (4,000 total employees). (Experience evaluating the culture and effectiveness of large organizations).

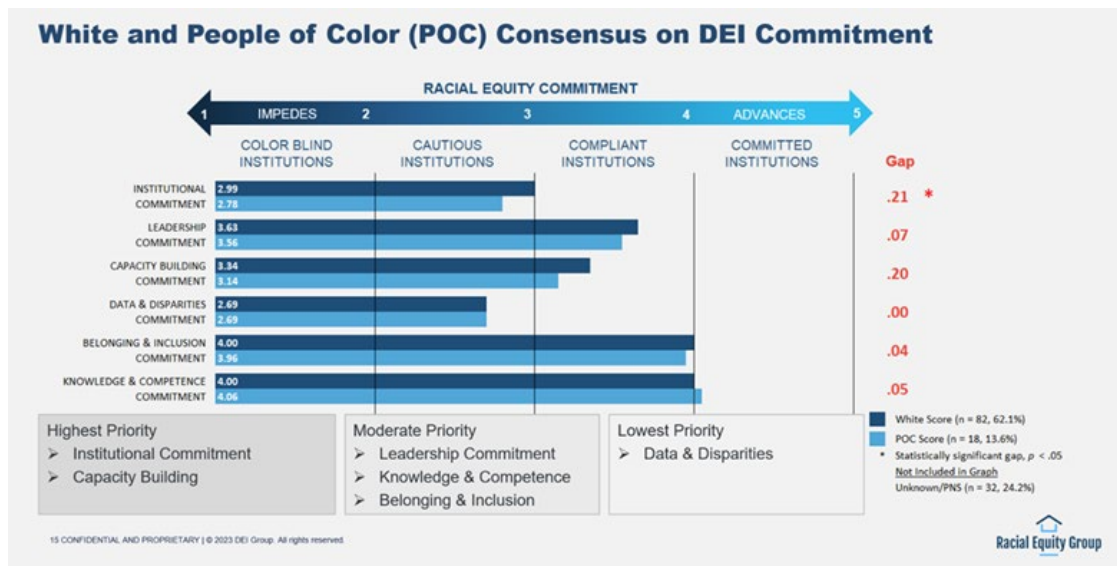
In 2022, REG and ER developed an internal and external racial equity framework for Arlington County Virginia by focusing on *four racial equity domains; employment, service delivery and programs, purchasing and procurement and community engagement*. REG and ER conducted a racial equity audit that included analyzing county workforce representation and conducting a disparity analysis to identify significant and/or persistent disparities, which are defined as “inequities,” within the County’s workforce. This approach included performing statistical analyses to benchmark the County’s workforce representation against quantitative validated benchmarks including the County’s relevant recruitment area. A disparity index of 100 indicates an exact match between representation and availability for a particular group overall, and for a job category, also called *parity*. An index score of less than 100 indicates a disparity between representation and availability. *A disparity index less than 80 indicates a significant disparity between representation and availability and would trigger racial inequities*. The disparity analysis used a data driven approach to measure the County’s targeted recruitment strategy for employment.



In addition, REG designed and administered a Racial Equity Audit Assessment survey to all staff to measure the County’s level of commitment to racial equity and establish a baseline benchmark that measures staff perception of the County’s commitment.



A key component and evidence-based equity principle is to disaggregate the data by race/ethnicity while also ensuring confidentiality and anonymity to protect individual employee responses. Its important to identify how White employees and employees of color assess and perceive the County’s commitment to racial equity. The graph illustration on the following page shows there is a strong consensus between White and employees of color on five of the six racial equity competencies, with knowledge and competence commitment and belonging and inclusion being the strongest competencies. *This required analyzing and synthesizing information in a way that accurately represents a range of participants (White staff and staff of color)*.



QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)

Project 2: City of Salem Massachusetts Police and Fire Departments (specific knowledge of law enforcement policies and procedures).

In 2024, the City of Salem, acting through Department and Human Resources requested proposals to identify strategies for increasing recruitment, promotion and retention from diverse and historically underrepresented communities for the Salem Police and Fire Departments within the confines of the Massachusetts Civil Service system. In addition, the City desired recommendations for an interview process that is equitable, appropriate in a public safety/police and fire context, and valid, in order to make a positive or negative assessment within the Civil Service framework.

In May 2024, the City awarded Racial Equity Group (REG) the contract and REG provided the following key deliverables:

- REG conducted qualitative and quantitative analyses of the Salem Police and Fire Departments hiring process.
- Developed an interviewing scoring rubric template to be utilized by both police and fire departments to effectively evaluate candidates objectively by reducing bias.
- Conducted a disparity Analysis which included analyzing demographic group data to identify significant disparities, or “inequities.” This approach included performing statistical analyses to benchmark the police and fire department’s workforce representation against quantitative validated benchmarks including the City’s relevant labor force, which is the available qualified workforce in the City’s reasonable recruitment area.
- Conducted a barrier Analysis by exploring recruiting and outreach efforts, reviewed police and fire department policies and practices to investigate how they may be unintentionally influencing or contributing to any inequities detected. Relevant data and materials provided by the departments were reviewed and analyzed to uncover potential barriers that may contribute to any inequities identified.
- Prepared final recommendations and an action plan to expand the recruitment channels and attract a more competitive qualified applicant pool of candidates.

Project 3: Town of Needham Massachusetts Police Department ((specific knowledge of law enforcement policies and procedures).

In 2025, the Town of Needham Massachusetts requested proposals to help the Town’s leaders, including the police department develop and implement observable, measurable, and comprehensive diversity, equity, and inclusion goals aimed at improving internal culture and operations, expanding program and service delivery, promoting public engagement, and building capacity.

In November 2024, the Town awarded Racial Equity Group (REG) the contract and REG provided the following key deliverables:

- Analyzed sensitive police department data on motor vehicle stops and use of force data disaggregated by race/ethnicity for all residents and nonresidents of the Town.
- Conducted a disparity analysis to identify any significant disparities or “inequities,” for each racial group based on Town census population demographics.
- Provided recommendations and developed DEI SWOT analysis and action plan for the police department to continue monitoring data and develop communication strategies to maintain public trust based on results of racial inequities.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)

Project 4: City of Newton Massachusetts, (3,000 total employees) (Experience evaluating the culture and effectiveness of large organizations).

In February 2022, the City requested proposals to develop a comprehensive, meaningful DEI strategy including measurable and comprehensive goals to adapt and improve internal culture and operations, external programs and service delivery, and engagement with diverse community members, and building staff capacity to use an equity mindset to cultivate a culture of inclusion and equity. *In September of 2022, the City awarded Racial Equity Group (REG) the contract to assist the City in conducting a DEI audit* of internal operations and external services. REG conducted disparity analyses to identify if any demographic groups were significantly underrepresented for employees and board/commission volunteers, and underutilized for vendors and contractors, based on their availability. REG’s methodology and approach included: facilitating DEI training for all Department Heads; conducting a DEI staff survey to establish a baseline for measuring staff perceptions of the City’s commitment to DEI; and facilitating focus group interviews with residents to understand their lived experiences and hear ideas on how to make the City a more inclusive community where all residents have a sense of belonging.

Overview

In February 2022, the City requested proposals to develop a comprehensive, meaningful DEI strategy including measurable and comprehensive goals to adapt and improve internal culture and operations, external programs and service delivery, and engagement with diverse community members, and building staff capacity to use an equity mindset to cultivate a culture of inclusion and equity. The scope of work entailed identifying the following:

- Recruiting, hiring, training, promoting, and retaining a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- Improving systems, policies, programs, processes, protocols, initiatives, organization structure and staffing within the City of Newton to identify and address systemic impediments to issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Leveraging data to identify areas for improvement, establish goals and develop a measurement program to assess progress.

REG’s methodology and approach included: facilitating **DEI training** for all Department Heads; conducting a **DEI staff survey** to establish a baseline for measuring staff perceptions of the City’s commitment to DEI; and facilitating **focus group interviews with residents** to understand their lived experiences and hear ideas on how to make the City a more inclusive community where all residents have a sense of belonging.

REG also administered a **community wide survey** to gain insight to whether residents have equal access, equal opportunity, and experience equal treatment related to City services, programs, employment, procurement, and volunteer opportunities; conducted a **disparity analysis** within all of City government operations, to identify any significant disparities within representation for a particular demographic group; and conducted a **best practices gap and barrier analysis** by evaluating the City’s current policies and practices benchmarked against evidenced-based best practices for advancing DEI.

Key Findings

Employment, Procurement, Boards and Committees

People of color are significantly underrepresented in most job categories based on their availability for work in local government within the City’s recruitment area. Whites are overrepresented in all seven job categories. Gender inequities were found for females in two job categories. We did not observe any gender inequities for males. The City does not currently collect demographic data for vendors and contractors, or board and committee volunteers, and was unable to determine if there is equal opportunity to do business with the City or serve on boards and committees.

Services and Programs

Based on the city-wide community survey, respondents were **most satisfied** with the following, indicated by 90% or greater agreement: access to public services such as fire, police, emergency, and rescue services; access to groceries and households necessities. Respondents were **least satisfied** with the following, indicated by 40% or less agreement: public feedback influences City government policies and are valued by decision-makers; access to become a vendor or contractor doing business with City government, and City government transparency when making decisions.

Living Experiences, Belonging and Inclusion

Data from the city-wide community survey illustrated that residents identifying as people of color do not feel as connected, or have a sense of belonging and inclusion, due to the lack of programs and events reflecting their backgrounds compared to White residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS...



ATTRACT AND RETAIN DIVERSE TALENT

Explore developing/expanding City internship program that creates a diverse pipeline of talent. Develop a process to review all job descriptions over time, as job vacancies occur to validate criteria and qualifications, prevent biases and barriers for attracting talent.

MEASURE AND MONITOR EQUITY FOR VENDORS AND CONTRACTORS

Survey all bidders/contractors to identify baseline representation data and identify if equal opportunities exist. Demonstrate good faith efforts to expand outreach to all businesses, including minority and women-owned businesses, to generate a competitive pool of qualified contractors.

ENHANCE BELONGING AND INCLUSION FOR ALL RESIDENTS

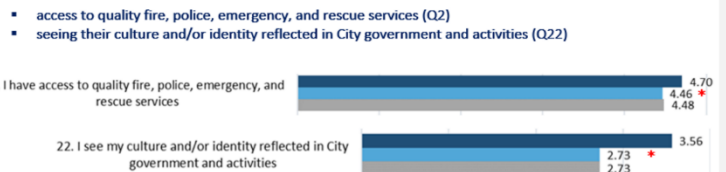
Develop a community engagement strategy for increasing resident awareness of diverse cultural events and programming sponsored and/or supported by the City. Collaborate with community leaders and organizations to enhance diverse events and activities.

REG has extensive experience working with historically marginalized groups using cultural competence. REG administered a community wide survey that involved outreach to a variety of community organizations, including faith-based institutions, nonprofits, translators and BIPOC groups. REG also *conducted focus groups with City residents and stakeholders (Russian and Mandarin translation services were provided), and collected feedback from a City-wide community-based survey.* REG found statistically significant differences in resident experiences between White residents and residents of color as illustrated in the image above.

Highlights: Community Survey

The overall average scores present the profile of the City collectively, but further analysis segmented by racial/ethnic background provides important context.

A series of disparity analysis tests revealed that White respondents had significantly greater agreement than People of Color regarding:



QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)

Project 5: Town of Wellesley Massachusetts (500 employees)

In February 2021, the Town adopted an Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias Statement, to make it clear to residents that anti-racist and anti-bias values are values that the Select Board espouses and holds very strongly. A DEI Committee and Task Force was formed in December 2021 and in July 2023, the Town requested proposals to conduct an equity audit.

In October 2023, the Town awarded Racial Equity Group (REG) the contract to assist the Town conducting an equity audit. REG provided the following key deliverables:

- **Facilitated a series of foundational DEI training sessions** for the Select Board Office, and department leaders to develop a shared understanding and language regarding DEI terminology and concepts.
- **Administered a DEI audit assessment to measure the Town’s level of commitment based on DEI best practices** and to establish a baseline and benchmark for measuring staff perceptions on the Town’s commitment to DEI.
- **Conducted focus groups interviews with residents and stakeholders to understand their lived experiences** related to and collect ideas on how to make the Town more inclusive, and a community where all residents have a sense of belonging.
- **Administered a community wide convenience sample survey to gain insights if residents and stakeholders have equal access to Town services, programs, jobs and contracts, are treated fairly** by Town staff, and receive quality services and programs.
- **Conducted a disparity analysis within employment, purchasing and procurement, services and programs, boards and committees**, to identify any significant disparities or “inequities” within representation for a particular demographic group.
- **Developed an equity action plan and scorecard** with clear timelines and accountability metrics.

Highlights from Employment Analysis below revealed significant racial inequities in separations and talent retention. Data below used for sample illustration purposes only.

Workforce separations and retention: If a separation is union or civil service, the applicable CBA or legal process applies. Separations data below are for the period: 07/01/2023 to 06/30/2024 and disaggregated by race/ethnicity. REG calculated separations rates to gain insights into voluntary separations initiated by employee. The voluntary separations rate is the number of people who voluntarily separated within a demographic group, divided by the total number of people in the Town’s workforce in that particular demographic group.

Reason:	Hispanic:	White:	Black:	Asian:	2+	Unknown:	Total:
Voluntary	3	20	2			2	27
Retirements	1	13		1			15
Involuntary		1					1

While the participation rate of Black employees in the Town’s total workforce is 2%, they are separating from the Town at a rate of 28.5% (2/7). Hispanics represent 5.5% of the workforce and are separating at a rate of 15.8% (3/19). White employees represent 90% of the Town’s workforce and are separating at a rate 6.4% (20/311). Over the last 20 years, employees have separated from state and local governments at rates less than 2%.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)

Project 6: City of Framingham Massachusetts (1,000 employees)

In June 2020, the City of Framingham issued Joint Order Number E02020-004, declaring racism a public health crisis. As a result, Framingham launched an aggressive plan to infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies into the fabric of its government structures and community. In November 2021, the Sitsisky administration was voted into office, and during the same time period, the Chief Diversity Officer resigned. Unfortunately, during this transition period, the DEI Officer position went unfilled, and many of the DEI initiatives stalled. In December 2022, Framingham's new Mayor Sisitsky, appointed a new DEI Officer to lead DEI efforts for the City. The City of Framingham issued an RFP in 2024 to conduct an internal review/audit of the City's policies and practices through a DEI lens. In April 2024, the City awarded Racial Equity Group (REG) the contract to assist the City in achieving the above objectives and deliverables.

In order to achieve the City's objectives, REG attempted to measure and identify the following:

- Is there equal opportunity to be *employed* with the City?
- Is there equal opportunity *to do business* with the City for all vendors and contractors?
- Do all residents have *equal access* to City services, receive *equal treatment and quality* when seeking services, and see their culture and social identity reflected in City government, events and activities?
- Do all residents have *equal access to serve* on boards and committees?

REG's utilized the following evidenced-based best practices framework to achieve the City's desired deliverables:

- Facilitated **foundational DEI training sessions** for the City's DEI committee, to develop a shared understanding and language regarding DEI terminology and concepts, and best practices for advancing DEI.
- Administered a **DEI audit assessment** to measure the City's level of commitment based on DEI best practices, and to establish a baseline and benchmark for measuring staff perceptions of the City's commitment to DEI.
- Conducted **disparity and inequity representation analysis** within employment, purchasing and procurement, services and programs, boards and committees, to identify any significant disparities or "inequities" within representation for a particular demographic group.
- Conducted a **best practices gap and barrier analysis** by evaluating City current policies and practices benchmarked against evidenced-based best practices for advancing equal opportunity within employment, purchasing and procurement, services and programs, and boards and committees.

REG found staff witnessed/experienced significant levels of unfair treatment due to their identity.

Data below used for sample illustration purposes only.

Highlights: DEI Staff Survey cont.

Additional analysis was conducted to identify how frequent respondents reported witnessing unfair situations from "rarely" "sometimes" to "often," compared to those indicated "never" witnessing or experiencing these situations. Below are the results:

- **I have witnessed or experienced situations where the City didn't treat employees fairly due to factors such as their race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or other identities.**
 - ⚠️ Only 27% of staff of color reported **never** witnessing or experiencing these situations.
 - Only 43% of White staff reported **never** witnessing or experiencing these situations.
- **I have witnessed or experienced situations where an employee's ideas or perspectives were not valued or considered due to factors such as their race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, or other identities.**
 - ⚠️ Only 32% of staff of color who reported **never** witnessing or experiencing these situations.
 - Only 52% of White staff reported **never** witnessing or experiencing these situations.

Percentages total less than 100% due to respondents who chose not to answer these items.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE (CONT.)

Client name: Arlington County Virginia

Contract size \$250,000

Contact: Director of Race Equity, Samia Byrd Sbyrd@arlingtonva.us 703-228-3529

Period of performance 2021 – 2024: REG was awarded a contract to assist the County with its commitment to Racial Equity for all stakeholders. REG administered a Racial Equity Audit Assessment to 4500 employees to establish a County-wide baseline and benchmark for measuring commitment to racial equity. Additional deliverables included a customized training series for the County's Racial Equity Core Team members, and facilitation of an equity toolkit training series for all staff to evaluate policies and practices relative to each department's line of work. All departments were equipped with the knowledge and tools for creating department specific Racial Equity Action plans. In addition, REG worked with the Race Equity office to identify metrics, develop racial equity scorecards and indicators for measuring, monitoring, and managing Racial Equity long-term.

City of Newton Massachusetts:

Contract size: \$205,000,

Hattie Kerwin-Derrick, Director Community Engagement, hkerwinderrick@newtonma.gov (617) 796-1104

Period of performance 2022 – present: REG was retained as a coach/advisor to the Director of Community Engagement, Human Resources Director and Procurement Manager to effectively implement racial equity action plan. REG also conducted a disparity analysis to identify significant and/or persistent disparities, which are defined as "inequities," within the City's workforce. This approach included performing statistical analyses to benchmark the City's workforce representation against quantitative validated benchmarks including the City's relevant labor force. The disparity analysis used a data driven approach to effectively measure the City's targeted outreach and recruitment strategy and inform the DEI action plan. Beginning in Q4 of 2024, the City of Newton requested to enter into a consultant retainer agreement with REG to assist with coaching and equipping department leaders to implement REG's recommendations from conducting a DEI audit beginning in 2022.

Client name: University of Virginia

Contract size: \$85,000

Contact: Melody Bianchetto Vice President, melodybianchetto@gmail.com 434-962-7754

Period of performance 2020 – 2022: REG was awarded the contract for the University of Virginia (UVA) that to conduct a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) audit that included the following: measure and evaluate the current state of all employees as related to knowledge of and feelings of equity, diversity, belonging, and inclusion; engage leadership to develop a deep understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion; bias; and best practices; conduct a SWOT analysis within the context of equity, diversity, and inclusion. REG also evaluated current HR practices and how they impact equity, diversity, and inclusion, including but not limited to practices in recruitment, hiring, promotions, performance management, and compensation. DEI foundational training was customized and facilitated for University leadership and department heads to develop a shared purpose, shared language and understanding of DEI terminology and concepts. Final deliverables included a DEI action plan aligned with the University's strategic equity plan.

Client name: National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD)

Contract size: \$80,000

Contact: Robyn Taylor, V.P. Center for Justice in Public Health rtaylor@barhii.org (510) 929-7522

Period of performance 2020 – 2022: REG was awarded a contract to conduct a racial equity audit and work collaboratively with association's racial equity alliance committee. REG conducted a comprehensive analysis of NACDD's internal employment and board representation, procurement, and services and programs. Within employment and board representation, REG identified underrepresentation and compared the association's workforce to validated benchmarks for significant disparities or inequities. In addition, *REG surveyed staff to identify the current climate, level of discrimination experiences, and overall sense of belonging and inclusion. The final deliverable resulted in a Racial Equity Action plan and scorecard presented to the board with clear timeline and metrics.*

METHOD AND APPROACH

The *Racial Equity Mindset*, is an **evidence-based framework based on best practices for reducing racial and ethnic disparities**. REG has extensive expertise in human biases, including *bias for ingroups (e.g. favoritism), bias apathy toward outgroups (discrimination) and bias against outgroups and protected classes (e.g. discrimination)*. Our framework will be curated specifically to the needs of the SAG and will achieve the following objectives:

1) Conduct a Best Practices Gap and Barrier Analysis

- REG will conduct a gap and barrier analysis that involves evaluating juvenile system stakeholders, including; Burleigh County school districts, Police Department, Juvenile Court, and community-based service providers, to determine their capacity for effective intervention and prevention of youth becoming involved in the juvenile system. Any barriers to effectively prevent involvement in the juvenile justice system will be identified.

Below is an example of best practice indicators for a client focused on equity and fairness.

Evidenced-based Best Practices	CURRENT STATUS
Dedicated position responsible for DEI (e.g., diversity officer)	✓
Council or committee monitoring DEI progress	✓
Collects demographic data on applicants, current employees, volunteers, vendors and contractors	🕒
Disparity analysis conducted to identify if inequities exist within employment, service delivery/programs, purchasing and procurement, representation on boards/committees	🕒

- 🕒 **Not started:** practice not present, inactive or currently undetermined
- 🕒 **Emerging:** discussions started, awaiting approval or decision
- 🕒 **Establishing:** practice partially in place or process for implementation has started
- ✓ **Reinforcing:** practice currently present and active

SAG requested deliverables met:

- ✓ Understanding and application of best practices for reducing the overrepresentation of BIPOC youth in the juvenile justice system;
- ✓ Systems thinking approach to identify root causes of overrepresentation;
- ✓ Evaluation of existing intervention and prevention services and programs;
- ✓ Determination of whether best practices are present and active with juvenile justice system stakeholders
- ✓ Review policies, procedures, training programs, and data collection practices related to hate bias incidents and hate crimes.

2) Facilitate Focus Group Stakeholder Interviews

- REG will work collaboratively with Sacred Pipe to facilitate a series of structured discussions with juvenile system stakeholders, to gain deeper insights and understand their lived experiences, identify barriers to prevention and intervention services, and specific needs of youth and families overrepresented in the juvenile system. The process involves using qualitative research best practices for collecting and analyzing data to identify key themes and patterns from diverse stakeholder responses. REG will use qualitative coding best practices to identify themes and patterns from participant responses and prepare a final report with recommendations.

SAG requested deliverables met:

- ✓ Conducting surveys and focus group sessions with BIPOC youth and families, youth-serving agencies, and system stakeholders;
- ✓ Engaging with BIPOC youth and families with lived experience in the juvenile justice system to obtain their feedback on community-based prevention strategies and areas for improvement;
- ✓ Collaborating with each of the system stakeholders (i.e. schools, service providers, law enforcement, juvenile court, etc.) to garner feedback on issues, data collection and analysis, and existing services and programs.

METHOD AND APPROACH

3) Design a Presentation of Findings and Action Plan:

- Leveraging data from all of the above components and design and develop a report on key findings, recommendations and an action plan to help prioritize actions once the scope of work is completed.

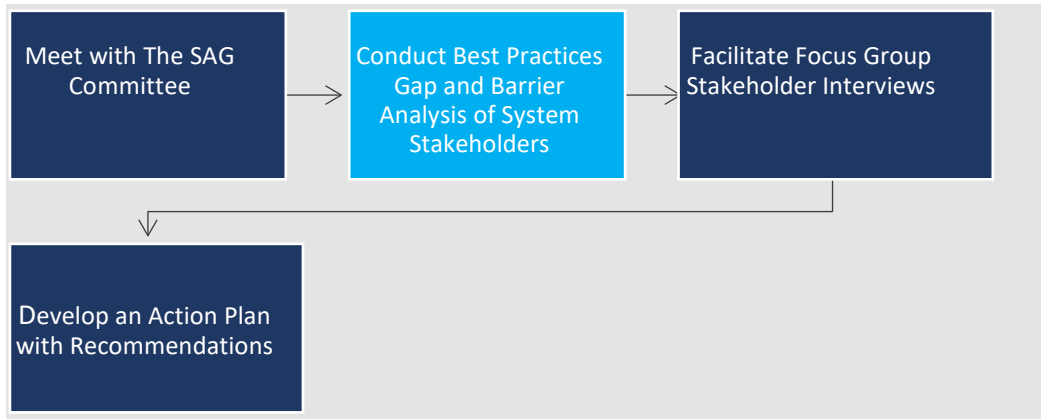
SAG requested deliverables met:

- ✓ Identifying and sharing funding and capacity-building opportunities for expanding and strengthening prevention services;
- ✓ Addressing barriers to service access and engagement.

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METHOD AND APPROACH (CONT.)

THE ROADMAP TO AN EQUITABLE MINDSET (GRAPHIC 1)



The Gap and Barrier Analysis

A barrier analysis is a process that involves reviewing system stakeholder policies and practices to investigate if barriers exist. *A barrier is an organizational policy or practice that may unintentionally impede fairness in the juvenile justice system.* Relevant data and materials received from system stakeholders will be analyzed to determine if best practices for reducing overrepresentation of minority youth within the Burleigh County are present and active within their respective organizations. The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) will be used with a convenience sample approach, to benchmark intervention and prevention programs available in Burleigh County, against best practices of the most effective evaluated programs for juvenile justice.

The Report of Key Findings and Action Plan

Leveraging data from the above components, REG will design a report of key findings, recommendations and an action plan. The recommendations and action plan will inform the SAG’s strategic action plan.

Focus Group Stakeholder Interviews

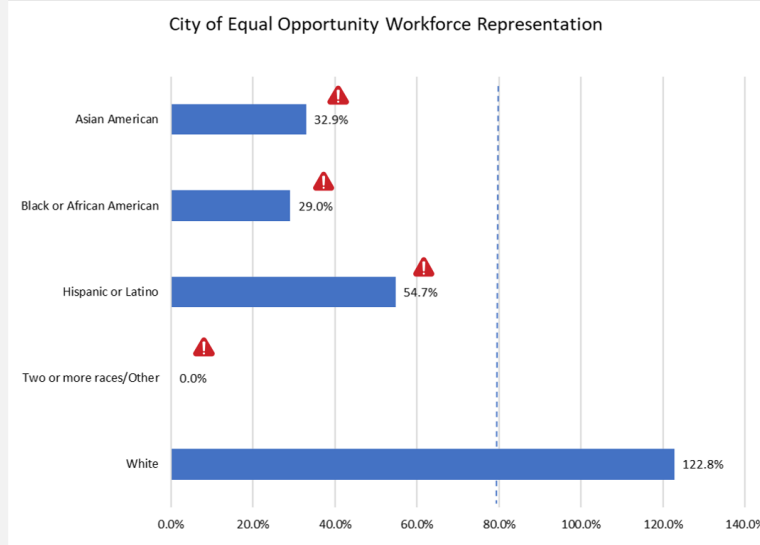
A focus group is a small group of five to twelve people participating in a deep discussion about a specific topic, led by a moderator and/or facilitator. Focus groups are a type of research known as qualitative research, and is used to identify individual attitudes, opinions, beliefs and values, and tends to be narrative-oriented, rather than quantitative. REG will work collaboratively with the Sacred Pipe Resource Center to facilitate a series of focus group interviews with native youth, parents and community organizations that serve or support native populations, to gain deeper insights and understand their lived experiences. For qualitative research using focus groups, we typically strive for 3 to 5 interviews consisting of 5 to 12 participants. REG will use qualitative coding best practices to identify themes and patterns from participant responses and prepare a summary report. REG will work with Sacred Pipe to recruit a diverse pool of participants. Participants are then screened using a brief questionnaire and ultimately selected based on background, lived experiences and feedback we consider will be most valuable in answering the research question. Randomization is also used to generate a nonbiased cross-section, essentially giving everyone in the qualified participant pool an equal chance of being selected. Randomization helps to minimize selection bias.

REG will develop a script including a list of open-ended questions relevant to the research question and project goal. The focus group script will include ground rules and encourage participants to share their opinion, even if it differs from what others stated. Participation is completely voluntary, and participants may choose only to answer certain questions, and leave the focus group at any time. To help foster an honest and safe discussion, all participants will be asked not to share what they heard in their focus group. Finally, participants will be informed that the final report would be aggregated and de-identified and not link to any individual who participates.

Employment Disparity Analysis (cont.)

A disparity index of 100 indicates an exact match between representation and availability for a particular racial group, also called parity or achieving reasonable expected outcomes. An index score less than 100 indicates a disparity between representation and availability.

A disparity index of less than 80 indicates a significant disparity between representation and availability and would trigger racial or gender inequity.

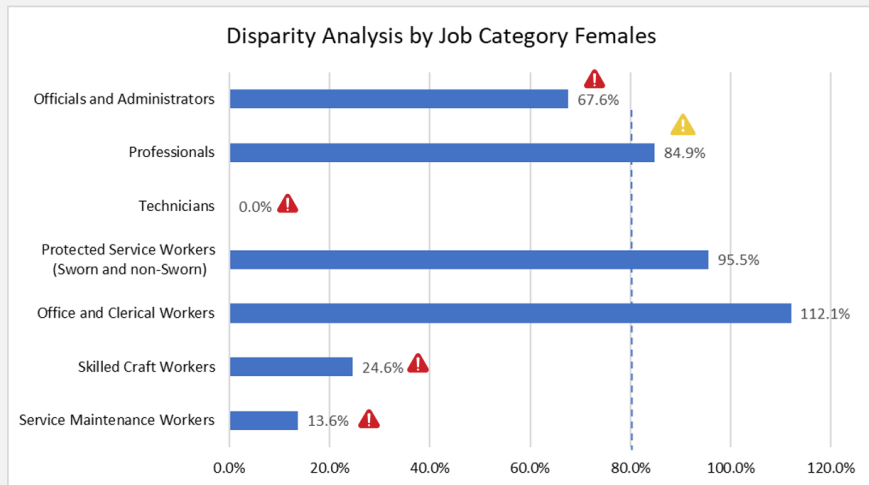


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Employment Disparity Analysis (cont.)

Women were significantly underrepresented in Officials and Administrators, Technicians, Skilled Craft and Service Maintenance roles.

Women are near parity for Protective Service and Office and Clerical roles, and marginally close to being significantly underrepresented for the Professional job category.



Data is composite of EEOC job group categories table (EEOALL6R) Officials/Administrators, Professionals, Technicians, Protective service: Sworn and Non-sworn, Administrative support, Skilled Craft, Service/Maintenance within the following Massachusetts counties; Suffolk, Middlesex, Essex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Bristol, and Worcester counties. Source 2018 Most Recent Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Equal Employment Opportunity.

Boards and Committees Disparity Analysis

The City is not currently collecting demographic data for volunteers. Due to lack of available data, REG could not conduct a disparity analysis to determine if there is equal opportunity to serve on the City's boards and committees.

Racial/Ethnic Group	City Board, Commission and Committee Representation 2024	City Population Demographics Census 2020	Disparity and Inequity Indicator
Hispanic or Latino	6%	18.7%	33%
White, non-Hispanic or Latino	55%	51.7%	-
Black or African American	6%	6.4%	-
Asian American	2%	7.2%	27%
Two or more races or other	10%	16.5%	60%

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Strengths (keep doing)

- Advertises positions to diverse professional organizations (e.g. Black MBAs of Boston)
- Evaluates all open position job descriptions to validate qualifications as necessary
- Notifies minority businesses of upcoming procurement opportunities; collaborates with state supplier diversity office and diverse business associations to attract diverse suppliers

Opportunities (start doing)

- Develop formal mentoring and training program to provide access to career advancement/professional development opportunities
- Conduct a bi-annual community survey to measure performance and satisfaction with municipal services and programs disaggregated by demographic groups

INTERNAL

EXTERNAL

DEI SWOT
ANALYSIS
EXAMPLE

Weaknesses (stop doing)

- Requires management positions to be filled internally (municipality is majority homogenous and has employment representation inequities)
- Communication of available services/programs are in formats not completely accessible to everyone (e.g. digital, English)
- Contract solicitations do not include meaningful language that encourages firms from underutilized groups to respond

Threats (start addressing)

- No policy or practice exist for collecting data disaggregated by demographic groups throughout municipal operations.
- Studies on civil service found that civil service exams hurt hiring and advancement of qualified minority candidates and that civil service exam results could not predict success in public safety positions, particularly for supervisors (Mark Brodin, Babson College, 2018)



SMCCCD Climate Survey Statement Results

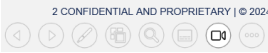
TALENT RETENTION AND WORKPLACE CLIMATE SURVEY STATEMENTS	CURRENT STATUS
My workplace has representation of staff from diverse backgrounds, including race, ethnicity, and sexual identity.	75.1
Cultural focused professional development programs/opportunities are available to me (e.g. training, conferences)	64.5
I feel connected and feel like I belong within my immediate workplace.	64.4
My workplace fosters an inclusive, supportive environment, that values diversity and promotes belonging for underrepresented groups.	62.9
I am treated fairly in my workplace, regardless of my social identity (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other identities).	61.4
In my workplace, I do not feel that I have to hide parts of my individual identity to be treated like I belong.	57.0
My workplace actively seeks and values diverse staff perspectives to inform decision making.	55.6
My supervisor takes immediate and appropriate action in response to discrimination, bias, or harassment.	48.4
There is equal opportunity for me to be promoted when positions become available.	38.1
Favoritism is not an issue in my workplace.	37.8

ACHIEVED 65 PERCENT OR GREATER STAFF AGREEMENT BENCHMARK

NEAR 65 PERCENT STAFF AGREEMENT BENCHMARK

SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW 65 PERCENT STAFF AGREEMENT BENCHMARK

65% to 79% = Average
 80% to 89% = Above Average
 90% to 100% = Exceptional



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POLICY NAME	POLICY ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
(1.1) Removing Barriers and Bias From Job descriptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All job descriptions shall use gender-neutral language; jobs with a minimum level of education as an entrance requirement must be reviewed by the Human Resources Department who will conduct a job analysis and determine that a particular level of education or experience is a valid business necessity. All hiring managers must consider the full set of competencies and skills that candidates can bring to the job beyond traditional education and experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids unnecessary barriers that are not a valid business necessity to perform the job, and bias that may unintentionally exclude talent.
(1.1) Job Postings that Promote Equal Opportunity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All job postings will include additional equal opportunity commitment language. <i>Example: Alert: The City of Equal Opportunity is committed to an equal opportunity and inclusive workplace where all employees feel respected, valued, and empowered to serve our residents and stakeholders. Join us today! We encourage individuals from historically underrepresented groups to apply, including minorities, females, veterans, and persons with disabilities. The City of Equal Opportunity is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, national origin, veteran status, or any other basis covered by appropriate law.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages and promotes equal opportunity. Generates an applicant pool reflective of the qualified available labor pool, in the City's reasonable recruitment area.

POLICY NAME	POLICY ACTION	INTENDED OUTCOME
(1.4) Benchmarking Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Select Board Office will collect demographics of City board and committee volunteers, and benchmark the representation of volunteers to the most recent Census population demographics of the City, identifying any significant disparities or "inequities." The City will address any inequities by evaluating board and committee volunteer barriers to participation and enact policies that promote equal opportunity to serve on all board and committees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a validated quantitative benchmark for measuring representation of volunteers and monitors if all voices in City are being heard prior to decision-making on City policies, budgets, and programs. Defines expectations by which each candidate will be evaluated, including a scoring scale/range, description of the scoring range and sample questions that demonstrate how to apply the scoring rubric.
(3.0) Volunteer Training and Expectations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All board and committee members are expected to become informed and knowledgeable of any quantitative or qualitative disparities that may infer discrimination, or demonstrate barriers to equal opportunity for all City residents and stakeholders within the community and City government departments, including; equal access to City government employment and contracting opportunities; City government services and programs; board and committee positions; and resident and stakeholder experiences within public accommodations, by collecting and/or obtaining data disaggregated by demographic group from City staff or validated sources. The City will provide all board and committee members with training to align with the City's adopted Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias Statement, and civil rights and equal opportunity laws. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informs and equips board and committee volunteers with the necessary knowledge that for effective decision-making on City policies, practices, budgets and programs. Provides insights into the needs of all residents and stakeholders. and understanding to shape belonging and inclusion for the entire City.

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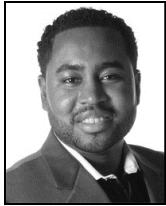
REFERENCES

Arlington SAG Virginia Amber Barnett AKLBarnett@gmail.com (443) 832-5144 **Period of performance 2022 – present**: REG was awarded the \$200K contract to assist the County with its commitment to Racial Equity for all stakeholders. Deliverables included customized training for the County’s Racial Equity Core Team and also training for evaluating policies and practices (equity toolkit training) for 12 Department heads and equity team members to create Racial Equity Action plans. In addition, metrics, scorecards and indicators training were provided for best practices on measuring, monitoring and managing Racial Equity.

University of Virginia Patty Marbury, Director of training UVA Finance pam5w@virginia.edu, N. Emmet Street, Charlottesville, Virginia 22904-4210 **Period of performance 2020 – September 2022**: REG was awarded the \$50K contract for the University of Virginia (UVA) that included the following: measure and evaluate the current state of belonging and inclusion, develop a deep understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion, bias, best practices, evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within UVA, starting with the Finance Department, in the context of Racial Equity, evaluate current policies and practices and how they impact equity, diversity, and inclusion, the faculty, student and stakeholder experience, and managing UVA progress towards desired goals.

Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) Candace Pierce, Senior Executive and Director of Communications & Membership, cpierce@mma.org 617-426-7272 x131 **Period of performance September -Present**: MMA released a request for proposal to help support municipalities in incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion (racial equity) values into their practices, policies, and cultures and making it a core function of local government. REG was selected for the \$75k contract to conduct a racial equity maturity level assessment of the 351 municipalities to identify if polices and practices to advance racial equity are present and active within municipalities’ internal operations, and challenges facing municipalities to advance racial equity . REG used the racial equity maturity level assessment to develop a strategic action plan and scorecard to inform MMA of potential training needed to support municipalities as well as, a digital toolkit of resources and information to support municipal advancing racial equity .

Town of Wellesley Massachusetts Meghan Jop, Executive Director, mjop@wellesleyma.gov 888 Worcester Street, Suite 120 Wellesley, MA 02482 **Period of performance March 2023-Present**: Racial Equity Group (REG) was awarded the \$100k contract and with data collection and analysis support from Elite Research, is conducting a racial equity audit to help the Town of Wellesley — a community of 30,000 residents. With a median household income of \$213,684, Wellesley has one of the highest median household incomes in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Town is approximately 78 percent white, 14 percent Asian, 5 percent Hispanic or Latino, 3 percent Black or African American, 4 percent Two or More Races, and .1 percent Native American. This relative lack of racial diversity presents the biggest challenge to weaving diversity, inclusion, and equity into the fabric of the town. REG facilitated a racial equity organizational audit, focus groups, a community survey and training of Town on leadership on best practices for advancing racial equity , as well drafting a racial equity strategic implementation plan and scorecard to track progress.



Bird Guess currently serves as President and CEO of The Racial Equity Group. Bird has over 10 years of management consulting experience including designing customized curriculums for public and private sector clients, leading global teams in executing training programs and online platforms, facilitating community conversations, advising, and coaching managers and executives on racial equity, implicit bias, strategic leadership, diversity and inclusion, to maximize employee engagement and create thriving communities.

Professional Core Competencies

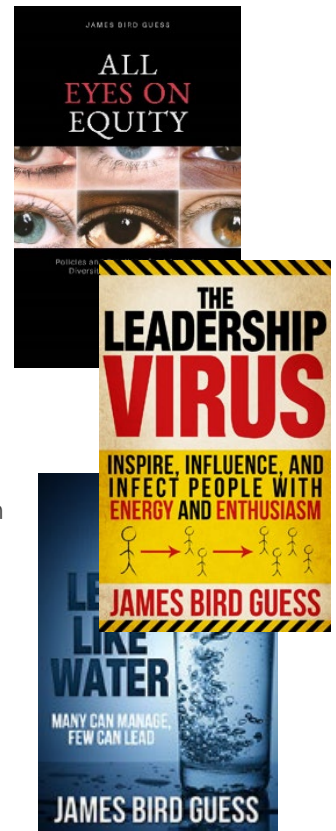
- Racial Equity Mindset
- Project Management
- Conflict Resolution
- Oral and Written Communication
- Adaptability
- Decision-making

Education

Honorable discharge, Veteran, U.S. Air Force Academy
 Bachelors of Business Administration, Austin College, Sherman, Texas

Experience

- President of Racial Equity Group and International Training Success Academy since 2008. Retained by United States Army (Army Medical Command), Texas Instruments, Tarrant County, QuikTrip, Shiner Bock Brewery, and Tenet Health Care.
- Designed customized course “*Inclusive Leadership*” for the U.S. Army’s global leader development programs (Aspiring, Intermediate, Mentoring)
- Designed and facilitated core training program, “*Bias and Blind spots*” for the Management Development Institute of Tarrant County. Created bias and inclusion assessments to measure team’s level of awareness on inclusion and biases in the workplace
- Retained by the U.S. Army to facilitate the highly credentialed and exclusive “Leadership Challenge”
- Developed and delivered curriculum on effective leadership, diversity and inclusion, safety mindsets and emotional intelligence, to the first state agency in the U.S. created for the purpose of developing and managing the water resources of an entire river basin, the Brazos River Authority
- Recognized as a training innovator for increasing retention rates based on 70 percent interactive and 30 percent lecture methodology, and “open training” workbooks, in which participants must fill in content of each page of workbooks
- Best-selling author of the books, *Lead Like Water*, *Leadership Virus*, and upcoming book, *All Eyes on Equity*.



Relevant Publications

- Guess, James Bird.** (2016). *The Leadership Virus: Inspire, Influence, and Infect People with Energy and Enthusiasm*. James Bird Guess International Success Academy.
- Guess, James Bird.** (2014). *Lead Like Water: Many Can Manage, Few Can Lead*. James Bird Guess International Success Academy.
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- Guess, James Bird.** (2009). *How I Made a Quarter Million Dollars From the Trunk of My Car, Real Life Lessons on Making Money, Entrepreneurship & Success*. James Bird Guess International Success Academy.



Dr. Rene Paulson is the Founder of Elite Research and Divergent Web Solutions. Her main goal in the development of both companies was to provide scientific and technical support to institutions seeking collaborative expertise across academic business functions including research and evaluation, program design, marketing and advertising, informational systems and technologies, operations and strategic planning, and finance. Her personal research has been dedicated to attitude and behavioral change in relation to minority groups and women in STEM. Dr. Paulson has led the inception, strategic planning, implementation and staffing of the first research design and analysis center in Texas State institutions. She has sat on the boards for strategic planning, quality enhancement and improvement, and advancement and opportunity for various academic entities. She is exceptional at the evaluative process and hold a Six Sigma Black Belt in optimization. Her psychological background is a foundation for the way that she leads teams and motivates and propels her staff and colleagues. She has published her work in optimization, change management, research design, and evaluation for over 20 years.

Professional Core Competencies

- Creativity in reviewing external and internal factors that are the bases for current or future strategies
- In-depth knowledge of performance measurement and corrective action
- Designing effective research and evaluation strategies
- High performer capable of leading exceptional team under tough deadlines to meet key deliverables and expectations
- Creating tools and solutions for process optimization and presentation
- Multi-tasker, with strong organization ability; planning, project, and people management

Education

Ph.D. Experimental Psychology, Texas Christian University, 2004

M.S. Experimental Psychology, Texas Christian University, 2001

B.S. Psychology, Ohio University, 1999

Experience

Elite Research, LLC

- Direct Team of Consultants
- Research Design and Statistics
- Clinical Protocols & Program Evaluations
- Evaluation of Institutional and Organizational Effectiveness
- Factors for Strategic Development and Implementation
- Optimization of Data File Management
- Training and Capacity Building
- Verification of Statistical Approaches
- Analyze Data, Manuscript Preparation for Grants, Industry, and Individual Research
- Small and Large Group Training Seminars
- Manuscript and Grant Preparation
- University/Company Wide Consulting

Divergent Web Solutions

- Direct technical teams from project inception to maintenance
- Develop long and short-term strategies for growth
- Develop and manage budgets for marketing, operations, and technology
- Recruit, manage, and develop personnel to support business growth
- Develop a culture of success and employee satisfaction
- Directs solutions to functional and technical problems
- Directs the work of project staff that design, develop, and test programs and information systems



Justin Knox accepted a position with the Racial Equity Group in 2019 as Vice President of Client Engagement and Training. Justin serves as project manager responsible for clarifying client goals, designing diversity, equity, and inclusion curriculum, evaluating organizational development needs and managing client training experiences. Justin graduated from Northwestern Missouri State University with a degree in Business Management.

Professional Core Competencies

- Business Transformation
- Operational Leadership
- Commitment to DEI, Health
- Enterprise Workforce Training
- Diversity Metrics and Analysis
- Facilitating Crucial Conversations

Education

- Business Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services, Northwest Missouri State University

Experience

- Managing Partner, KSA Dynamics
- Operations and Head of Sales, QuadBox
- Board Member, Sleepyhead Beds
- General Manager, SkillPath
- Vice President of Sales, symplr



Vernita Stevens is a retired United States Marine, DoD Certified Mediator, and Certified in the Narrative Big 5 Assessment. She has been assisting organizations make situations more palatable at all levels and ensuring they understood one another by using a shared language for over 17 years. Her training experience both nationally and internationally, solid leadership skills, congressional and command experience has given her the distinctive ability to take extremely complicated procedures and situations and turned them into teachable moments. Vernita's presentation style is energetic, interactive, and always delivered with a smile. She holds the Blacks in Government Meritorious Service Award, Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition and Secretary of Defense for Legislative culture and climate that is sustainably inclusive to all members of the community.

Professional Core Competencies

- Shared Language
- Operational Leadership
- Commitment to DEI
- Teachable Moments
- Mediation
- Facilitating Crucial Conversations

Education

- Bachelor of Business Administration from Strayer University

Experience

- DoD Certified Mediator
- Certified in the Narrative Big 5 Assessment
- Blacks in Government Meritorious Service Award
- Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition
- Secretary of Defense for Legislative Culture and Climate



Kendria Taylor is an Associate Consultant with Racial Equity Group with over 15 years of leadership experience in the public sector, she is also a published author of a children's book series focused on social-emotional learning. As a certified workplace dispute resolution expert, Kendria empowers managers and business leaders with her expertise in emotional intelligence, team integrated systems and professional ethics. She is a keynote speaker for educational institutions, government agencies and nonprofit organizations across the country. Prior to

joining REG, Kendra served as Vice President of Community Relations for the College of Health Care Professions, where she provided oversight on operations and processes for 10 campuses across the state of Texas.

Professional Core Competencies

- Social-Emotional Learning
- Workplace Dispute Resolution
- Commitment to DEI
- Team Integrated Systems
- Professional Ethics
- Facilitating Crucial Conversations

Education

- Master's degree in Family Studies from the University of North Texas

Experience

- Workplace Dispute Resolution Expert
- Vice President of Community Relations for the College of Health Care Professions