

Marginalized Voices in Eugene:

*Report on Focus Groups
in Eugene's Communities of Color,
Muslim and LGBTQ Communities*



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This report was
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Report

Introduction	3
Methodology	3
Overview	4
Findings: Theme-Based	5
Recommendations	14
Conclusion	16

Appendices

Focus Group Questions	18
Information Sheet, Eugene Human Rights Commission	21
African American Focus Group Themes	23
African American/Biracial Youth Focus Group Themes	26
Asian American Focus Group Themes	29
Latinx Focus Group Themes	32
Latinx Families Focus Group Themes	35
Muslim Focus Group Themes	38
Native American/Alaska Native Focus Group Themes	41
Pacific Islander Focus Group Themes	44
LGBTQ Focus Group Themes	47
Trans Focus Group Themes	50

“Marginalized Voices in Eugene”

A Report by

Eugene Human Rights Commission

Anti-Discrimination Work Group

June 2017

Introduction

Between February 2016 and April 2017, the Anti-Discrimination Work Group of the Eugene Human Rights Commission hosted 10 focus groups comprised of people from communities of color and the Muslim and LGBTQ communities in Eugene. The purpose of the focus groups was to listen and learn about the experiences of marginalized individuals living in Eugene at this moment in time and to glean possible ways that the City could help make Eugene a more welcoming, comfortable and safe place for these particular communities and for all of Eugene’s residents.

The focus group participants all live in Eugene and are members of the following communities: African American, African American/Biracial Youth, Asian American, Latinx, Latinx Families, Muslim, Native American/Alaska Native, Pacific Islanders, LGBTQ and Trans.

We want to note that, while the above groups represent a significant number of marginalized individuals in Eugene, there are certainly others. These include members of the Jewish community, which in recent months has increasingly become a target of blatant bigotry, bias and hate, as well as people who are homeless, those with disabilities and undocumented immigrants.

While focus group participants made it clear that they do not speak in behalf of their entire community, their personal stories do reflect common experiences of many others. In the attached appendices, we are providing significant raw data in order to offer the Mayor and City Councilors a better understanding of the life experience of a large number of Eugene’s residents, many of whom are members of marginalized and vulnerable communities.

Although not a quantitative or scientific study, participants in these focus groups provided valuable information for the City to reflect on as it considers the recommendations in this report.

Methodology

Human Rights Commissioners Bonnie Souza and Ken Neubeck co-chaired the Anti-Discrimination Work Group. Both planned and facilitated each of the focus groups, often with the assistance of one or two community members who helped put together the list of invitees for individual groups and, at times, arranged invitations and helped plan the food as well. The Office of Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement (HRNI) provided staff support and other Commissioners assisted us in a variety of ways. We cannot be more thankful or appreciative of everyone’s efforts; without them, it would have been a much greater challenge to complete this project.

Each of the focus groups included between 6 and 10 people, with at least two youth (ages 17-27) in each group, and met for two hours, including one-half hour for dinner and an hour and a half for discussion. A set of questions was prepared prior to hosting the first focus group, taking into consideration feedback from individuals in the different communities about the questions we

should be asking (questions attached, see Appendix). The same set of questions was asked in each of the groups. At the commencement of each discussion, we advised all of the participants that the information they provided would not be confidential, but that it would be shared anonymously; their names would not be associated with any of their stories or comments.

The focus groups themselves were informal, and oftentimes the facilitators only asked the first two questions or so and the discussions then took on a life of their own, with many of the questions being answered without being asked. Each of the groups was also provided with an information sheet about the Eugene Human Rights Commission (see Appendix), and information was shared about the process for reporting hate and bias crimes. The main role of the facilitators was to bring the discussions back to the questions, if necessary, and to otherwise listen and take comprehensive notes for this report.

Each group was informed that, once all of the focus group meetings were completed, the Anti-Discrimination Work Group would draft a report and recommendations for the City Council and share it with each of the participants prior to its completion. All of the participants were invited to a large gathering held on May 31, 2017, to share a meal and give their feedback about the report and recommendations. Representatives from most of the focus groups attended this event, and a rich and passionate discussion took place, partly in small groups and then with everyone together in the same room. Their feedback was taken into account and helped us finalize the report for presentation to the full Human Rights Commission at their June 2017 meeting.

This is the finalized report and recommendations, approved unanimously by the Eugene Human Rights Commission. We submit this to the Mayor and City Council for your consideration and action.

Overview

We have organized our findings around a number of themes that arose during the course of discussions in the ten focus groups. In the case of each theme, we have selected statements illustrative of the kinds of things that were being said. (For a fuller accounting of what was shared, see attached Appendix for each focus group.)

Taken together, the themes and statements collectively serve to demonstrate how it feels to be a member of a marginalized group in Eugene. (In fact, the themes and statements likely demonstrate how it feels to be a member of a marginalized group in many places across the country.) In multiple instances, focus group participants also expressed that they held membership in more than one marginalized group, a topic we discuss under the theme of “Intersectionality” below.

As stated above, we invited focus group participants to a May 31 gathering to give us feedback on our draft report. Almost all of the focus groups were represented at this meeting, typically by two to four people. One of the most striking features of the discussion that took place was participants’ frequent references to the current political climate. Fear of violence or of being mistreated, always present, was said to have escalated among people of color, Muslims and the LGBTQ population since the November 2016 election.

As one participant put it, “People feel like they won and have permission [to mistreat others]. This makes it scary. Many of us now don’t want to shop, send kids to school. We fear harassment in public.” Another participant: “I have been in this country since 1951. As an immigrant, this is the most hateful and fearful time. It has always been here, but [now] it is huge and dangerous and scary. I am more aware of other communities. I want this community to figure out how to respond in a real way, quickly and loudly, and not wait until someone gets killed.”

One of the most striking features of those participating in the ten focus groups – despite the post-election fear factor – is their resilience in the face of adversity. While we will speak below about the types of emotionally damaging and sometimes frightening experiences members of all groups have undergone and continue to confront, all were intent on finding ways to thrive. In this regard, resilience was clearly reliant on in-group relationships of support, coupled with a shared sense of group pride and worth. Being with people like themselves, when it was possible, provided members of the focus groups sanctuary from being judged by members of the dominant majority* and being found to be “less than.” As one Asian American participant put it, “People in Eugene are interested in Asian cultures, but not in getting to know the people.” A similar distancing was experienced by members of all of the focus groups.

Each of the ten groups had a unique flavor, depending upon the makeup of the group. There were differences in each group’s characteristics in terms of participants’ ages, length of time residing in Eugene, experiences prior to residing here, current degree of engagement with the broader Eugene community and their visibility as being different from members of the dominant majority. Each focus group’s characteristics helped to drive its discussion. Though each group was presented with identical questions, participants often responded to one another’s comments and moved the discussion in new directions. Out of these varying focus groups and discussions, flowed our findings and recommendations.

* The “dominant majority” refers to whites in the case of communities of color; non-Muslims in the case of Muslims; non-members of the LGBTQ community in the case of those who are part of the LGBTQ population; and, at times, white LGBTQ community members in the case of people of color in the LGBTQ community.

Findings: Theme-Based

Theme #1: Characteristics of Discrimination

The discrimination that participants in our ten focus groups have faced has involved race, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, class, housing status and gender discrimination. Discrimination comes in many forms: institutional discrimination, group discrimination and personal discrimination. Whether it is intentional or unintentional, discrimination is harmful to the persons on the receiving end and reduces the quality of life for all. Here are some of the comments made by focus group participants. (The labels in parentheses refer to the focus group in which the statement was expressed.)

- You are acceptable “because you are acting white”. (African American)
- I would tell a parent not to send their kid to Sheldon; I have never felt welcome there. Too white to hang out with the black kids and too black to hang out with the white kids. (Biracial Youth)

- It is annoying to be grouped by color; people are proud of their ethnicity and need respect. (Pacific Islander)
- Never had incidents until this past year, with the presidential election and hate wave in the media. Had three incidents where people yelled at me to go home, all after the conventions. (Muslim)
- Movies create stereotypes. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- “I will not hold my wife’s hand” in public. (LGBTQ)
- Is crazy-making; this community values not being racist, deny that they are because they don’t want to be a bad person. (African American)
- Blacks here have always been pushed aside. Biggest problem, no one wants to own up to it. Living here, you are going to be confronted with racism. (African American)
- Eugene is progressive, but there is passive-aggressive racism and implicit bias. (African American)
- Told to wash my skin. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- When you talk with people here, they’re nice to your face but masters at saying one thing to your face and something else behind your back. “When you leave the room, the script flips.” (African American/Biracial Youth)
- Until coming to mainland, never knew I was a woman of color; Pacific Islanders identify with ethnicity, not color of skin. (Pacific Islander)
- There is an attitude in Eugene among whites that we don’t need to talk about racism; they see themselves as beyond that, post-racial. (Asian American)
- Latinos are seen as a threat when they complain about their treatment. (Latinx)
- Restaurant vandalized (bricks thrown through window) after 2001; was very frightening; also had a smoke bomb thrown into the dining room once. Need to be vigilant with rise of right. (Muslim)
- The folks in my circles who struggle the most are trans and gender queer people. (LGBTQ)
- Am always on guard, never know when someone is going to strike – verbal remarks, looks, lot of people feel uncomfortable. (Trans)
- “We deal with the same issues,” referring to all focus groups. (Latinx)

Theme #2: Intersectionality

Another feature that clearly emerged during focus group discussions is the role that intersectionality played for members of these groups. In the U.S., each of us is simultaneously a member of multiple systems of inequality, such as class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability status and age. Where we are positioned in each of these systems mediates our life experience and affects our life chances. For example, people of color who are gay or are thought to be gay are not only vulnerable to harm from heterosexism and homophobia by whites and other people of color; they are also subject to expressions of racism by whites, including by some of their own white gay peers.

- I did not feel like part of the black community; being in Eugene’s lesbian community was a more welcoming place. (African American)
- Gay Latinos are ignored by the white LGBTQ community; lack of diversity and racism go unrecognized. (Latinx)
- I knew I would have to work twice as hard because I came from a low income family. (LGBTQ)

- From what people are sharing, the experiences of men are different because, looking at us, you wouldn't know I'm Muslim. With women wearing headscarves, people know right away. With men they get to know us first and then find out. (Muslim)
- White LGBTQ people have white privilege; people of color are more subject to mistreatment. (LGBTQ)
- In my experience, I cannot separate homophobia, xenophobia, accent, old or look young; my heart is pounding because the stories of folks of color around the table are my stories as well. (Latinx)
- Homeless trans people can't get jobs because homeless. (Trans)
- Daily stories about mistreatment of people who are trans or gay and are also of color. (Latinx)
- White women murdered or missing get media attention, not women who are people of color. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- Being a POC and LGBTQ is very different. I was harassed by a white gay man; it caused a lot of trauma. I was still trying to figure out who I was. (LGBTQ)
- I don't feel welcome in Eugene at all ever, not because I'm queer but because of my race. I spend most of my time in my house. (LGBTQ)
- I have a friend who is autistic and biracial (black). It's really easy for him to get into trouble. (Trans)

Theme #3: Institutional Expressions of Discrimination

The City of Eugene

The City of Eugene government and staff have no established means of systematically listening to and tapping into the issues and concerns of vulnerable and marginalized groups. Participants in our focus groups expressed gratitude that the Human Rights Commission had undertaken this project. In the course of discussions, they mentioned a number of matters on which they would like to see definitive actions taken. Focus group members look to the City to be an ally and expect it to be more supportive than they feel is presently the case.

- City needs to get information about people's rights and what is going on, what the City offers. City web site is not very accessible—it's in English. Churches can be used to provide information. (Latinx Families)
- Know someone who quit City job due to chronic misgendering; creates hostile work environment. (Trans)
- I find that Eugene is unique with its events. I'm really pissed we don't have the Eugene Celebration any more... have the African square, the Hawaiian square, the Taste of Chicago, through food... (African American)
- Asian Americans are a resource to the City when it needs their help, but when Asian Americans need help, the City does not respond. (Asian American)
- If you go to the parks to meet other Native Americans, do not go by yourself – it's safer. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- Skinner Butte has KKK plaque celebrating "illuminated crosses." Systemic white power structure(s). (Latinx)
- City organization does not know how to engage with the Latino community; needs to diversify. (Latinx)

- We have a very expensive, new skate park near where many Latinos live, but they don't skate. Need multicultural centers built and events held. (Latinx)
- It should not be the responsibility of POC to educate whites. (Asian American)

Law Enforcement

Members of the various focus groups had interacted with the Eugene Police Department and sometimes with local campus police (LCC and UO). Because of the gravity of the relationship between the police and all of Eugene's residents, but particularly the fact that the police hold the life and death of people in their hands, included here is a sampling of focus group participants' experiences with law enforcement.

Eugene Police Department

- Once the police were called on me because a neighbor had reported that I was stealing a car; I was getting into my own car. It feels like they come when they're called ON us, but not when they're called BY us. (Latinx Family Member)
- "I feel the least safe when I'm driving." It's a fear because of my experiences. There was a question about, is this really you, could you step out of the car. I'm afraid because I don't know what is going to happen. (Trans)
- My voice is not valued; I'm treated as a criminal. Police are scared of people of color. (Latinx)
- I feel scared to call the police after seeing blacks being shot and killed. I won't call the police because of that; I don't trust them the way I did growing up. (Muslim)
- After the tazing of the Chinese students, Chief Kerns was to set up an advisory group of Asian Americans, but it doesn't meet. (Asian American)
- I get pulled over a lot; my husband does not (he is white). (African American)
- Latinos are profiled by whites, who call police about "suspicious" people – treated like criminals. (Latinx)
- Seems less safe for Latinos in Eugene than decades ago, e.g., police behavior and public attitudes. (Latinx)
- My sister was here, a Filipina, someone in "police gear" was trying to flirt with her – exotification of Asian women. (Asian American)
- If a Latino is the victim, they don't help. If a Latino may be the perpetrator, they come. (Latinx Family Member)
- I called the cops. When they come in, and see these two guys, they are going to arrest US! (Pacific Islander)
- No-one is going to call the cops. (Pacific Islander)
- I have had really bad experiences with the police department. Showing my identification, gender doesn't align. Officer took my license with him in Springfield. Towed my car because he didn't believe it was me. (LGBTQ)
- I do not trust police; I would never invite police to my home ever. (Native American/Alaska Native)

Campus Police (LCC and UO)

- I do not feel safe on campus, especially when police are armed or could be in the future. (Latinx)
- Police are afraid of us; a lot of officers want to get armed. (Latinx)

- What trainings are they getting? Cultural training? Who is giving that training? (Latinx)
- No police of color. (Latinx)
- Police on and off campus treat Latinos with negative bias. (Latinx)
- Police are so sassy on campus; it's unnecessary sassiness. (Muslim)

Across the Community

Focus group members also touched on their experiences interacting with people across the community, including: fellow shoppers and employees at local businesses; landlords and neighbors; staff in public schools, higher education institutions and social services; with potential employers and as employees. We heard many stories of the ways in which they were made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, and even fearful in certain settings. Many of the participants found themselves constantly on guard when they walked out the door of their homes, which provided most of them with a sense of safety and a setting in which they could relax, socialize with others like themselves and feel protected.

Businesses

- I always get followed in a store by the mall; they don't train. Staring at me, I make eye contact, looks away. (African American/Biracial Youth)
- Am followed around at malls and stores, asked "Can I help you?" – or ignored if you have a question or want to buy something. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- Was in line in Safeway, not paying attention, person in front of me left, checker asked "Is this WIC?" We were dressed nice. It was offensive. "Could raise hell, but it's every day, am just going to go home. People don't get it." (Pacific Islander)
- I feel least comfortable in commercial areas because people think that black people steal things; I get looks, glances, people watch me when I'm in stores. (LGBTQ)
- Am hypervigilant in malls. "Not all people are accepting and to know there are people who would be quite happy to shoot me in the head; I am aware of that all the time." (Trans)
- Latinos are blamed when others start trouble or cause conflicts, e.g., at local bars. (Latinx)
- Racism is expressed by rudeness in the provision of services, e.g., library, coffee shop... (Latinx)

Housing

- Tried to rent houses; it's "a real struggle, had to go through the university." (African American)
- Friend was booted from the Mission as soon as workers there realized she was trans. (Trans)
- Very hard to find places to live. Landlords charging higher rents, not getting deposits back. (Latinx)

K-12 Education

- Teachers: Don't ask a black person how they feel if you are talking about a black issue; let them raise their hand if they want to share. Don't put them on the spot. Don't purposely split up or clump the kids of color together. They put us in the same area or separate us if we are too close. (African American/Biracial Youth)
- My son was asked to welcome a new student in middle school. He met and greeted her with a kiss on the cheek (a custom in our culture). The girl was not offended. Someone down the

hall saw and accused him of sexual harassment; he was suspended from school for three days. (Pacific Islander)

- Level of ignorance about diversity is root of the problem --- not just having knowledge of the issue, many people not really wanting to have that knowledge, don't want to learn. (African American/Biracial Youth)
- We need to be strong advocates for our kids. The administration is not taking responsibility for teaching our children. My child was getting all A's before we came to Oregon and is now being defined as unlikely to be successful in school. (Latinx Family Member)
- Youth try to connect with other Polynesians, just like blacks or Mexicans. "If I see a Polynesian in school, I want his number, to hang out. I am happy to see someone." (Pacific Islander)
- Child in middle school was harassed and called a terrorist. The principal couldn't control the situation and blamed my son for the problem; said he was not allowed to come to school or attend the graduation party. I had to fight with the principal to get this harassment recognized and stopped. (Muslim)
- Kids are embarrassed for who they are. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- Is "Sheldon way of doing things," meaning the white way; makes POC feel marginalized (e.g., kid on football team knelt and was admonished "this is not the Sheldon way"). Staff at the time made our kids feel marginalized, disguised as a school thing. (Pacific Islander)
- South Eugene High School would allow stuff to happen. Senior pranks, kids driving trucks across lawn and teachers helped. Okay to do that if you're white. (African American/Biracial Youth)

Social Services

- Need to educate medical providers, both doctors and nurses. We do the education about the treatment they are giving us; we should not have to do that. (Trans)
- Latinos not taught how to work the system; it sucks not being able to navigate systems. (Latinx)
- Frequently asked where to find a primary care physician who understands gay men's issues, therapist who is familiar with gay men's mental health issues (LGBTQ)
- Agencies need cultural competence, are not providing services, very few materials in Spanish. (Latinx)

Theme #4: Hostile Political Environment

Participants in all ten focus groups were acutely tuned in to the dynamics and rhetoric of the recent presidential campaign and the role played by Donald Trump and his supporters in maligning people of color, Muslims and members of the LGBTQ population. They could see that incidents of bias and hate crimes were increasing locally and across the nation. They felt that the campaign (and its outcome) had given license to reported attacks by bigots and hate groups. They expressed a sense of insecurity, had concerns about their safety, and were anxious about being out in the larger community, fearing something bad could happen to them.

- Nationalism is very real right now – the undertone is just hate. (African American)
- Presidential campaign was to "make America great again". What does that mean? When things were worse for people of color? (Pacific Islander)
- Lots of people, hippies, Rainbow Gathering raising funds for Standing Rock but, when there,

they are stealing culture—calling gatherings powwows when they are not powwows, burning sage, all inappropriately. (Native American/Alaska Native)

- People not being able to get drivers' licenses is discrimination. (Latinx Family Member)
- Bathroom bills are designed to dehumanize. Extremely painful on a personal level. Fundamental religious organizations back these laws. (Trans)
- Jewish community has said they will register as Muslims if there is a registration. (Muslim)
- After the election, I started attending NAACP meetings and I lost a handful of friends; people said I can't hang anymore because I'm doing the black thing. (African American/Biracial Youth)
- Daughter in high school wears headscarf; do not feel safe any longer having her walk to school. Especially after the election, I drive her to school. (Muslim)
- People who fight racism get pushback. (African American)
- My best friend from grade school told me to stop talking to her the day after the election; she had a Trump shirt on; it's like it's ok to be racist now. "Brought out peoples' true colors." (African American/Biracial Youth)
- Our liberals can hurt us too; they can fall back into the mainstream – every day we walk out the door, we are dark. (African American)
- Today we're hearing Muslims will be forced to register; it's telling everyone who is a bigot that it's ok to go and do whatever you want with others who are different from you. (Muslim)
- Trucks with confederate flags go around the city, striking fear in people. (African American)
- The incident in Springfield, with the Nazis in the street, is being normalized. I was getting some pizza late at night and somebody said to me to be sure to record when I get beat up by the Nazis. I've never felt more unsafe by myself on the streets." (Latinx)
- Don't tread on me – images that are meaning to cause fear. (African American)
- This is an urgent time. People who have the ability, power and voice to say something need to act. (Latinx)
- At May 31st meeting, with most focus groups represented: "Now that I know you, if I see anyone saying anything to you out of line, I'm going to be there for you. I wouldn't care about going to jail. I'm not going to tolerate it until somebody really snaps on someone – thinking they can tolerate it. Two innocent white people died [in Portland] trying to protect people of color. I never wanted a gun and now I want one." (African American)

Theme #5: Micro-aggressions

A micro-aggression is an often-subtle statement or action that intentionally or unintentionally insults, degrades, or stereotypes members of a marginalized group. Our focus groups expressed a variety of examples of ways in which, day in and day out, participants experienced micro-aggressions from the dominant majority.

Whether these offensive statements or acts on the part of majority group members occurred due to ignorance or prejudicial attitudes is important, but not nearly as important as the accumulated hurt that results from micro-aggressions. When experienced again and again, albeit in different places and different forms, one cannot help but develop a sense of "other," of not being accepted, of being different and in a negative way.

- I have been in places where I felt comfortable and then I realize that I am not comfortable – stares, whispering, you feel people move away from you. (African American)
- Constant micro-aggressions occur. You need to be with other people of color to survive them. (Asian American)
- People tell me I am in America, to speak English. (Latinx Family Member)
- I was rejected by a customer (while working at a City of Eugene service counter) as someone to provide him with customer service. (Trans individual)
- I am trying to teach my son to drive, driving slow, white guy flips us off, tried to run us off the road, “go back to where you came from” (go back to Seattle?? My kid is in the car...). Ignorance. (Pacific Islander)
- Last week we were doing a training on the computer and this one group named themselves the Knee Grows. We asked them about the name and they acted like they were joking. (African American/Biracial Youth)
- Commonly individuals are asked to “speak for your community”. No white person is going to ask you to speak for all whites. (Latinx)
- People have come to me to say they have voted for Trump and then say sorry; I don’t have time for that. (Muslim)
- People expect Muslims to apologize if terrorism occurs elsewhere; it’s not my job to apologize for these acts. (Muslim)
- Racism is not recognized; people get mad if you point it out. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- We need to support each other. We are out there on our own, and there is no-one advocating for us. (Pacific Islander)
- Am hypervigilant. When guard is let down, that is when bias incidents happen. (Trans)
- As a trans person, relate to not seeing people like you in authority. (Trans)

Theme #6: Isolation and Need for Safe Space

Members of all of the focus groups talked of the need to be with others like themselves. Many newcomers to Eugene said the first thing they did was to seek out others who would be accepting and supportive. A few groups had a safe space in which this could happen. Native Americans had longhouses, Muslims had a mosque and older African Americans had black churches. Most of the focus group participants said there was not a safe space in which persons like themselves could regularly gather, make new friends, network with others and enjoy a sense of belonging. Many expressed a desire for there to be such a gathering place.

- No place to go. No barrio, tortillas, a place to feel supported. You need physical space, a place where you can go and feel safe. (Latinx)
- If you don’t want to talk about where you come from, who you are, you do not have to worry about that coming here (to longhouse). (Native American/Alaska Native)
- Need some news in Spanish or Spanish caption, especially when dealing with safety and with things the whole community needs to know about. (Latinx Family Member)
- Still don’t see a safe place here in Eugene for LGBTQ people of color; they opened the Lamb, great place to go dance, but not open to dance to other music and experiences. (LGBTQ)
- “[Church] is where we are safe; doesn’t extend into the community.” (African American)
- It is not safe to be invisible—the majority assumes you are doing well even when you are not. Don’t feel like I belong, am thinking of leaving. (Asian American)

- Church is a bedrock for older generation; it is a sanctuary and black people have power there, but not in the community. (African American)
- Would like to see more faces of color. Coming to Eugene, “it’s a bit of a culture shock to be around so few people of color.” (African American)
- Have always felt unsafe in Eugene, felt like the “other.” Is important to find other POC. (Asian American)

Theme #7: Differences Within Communities

Communities are not monolithic; there are differences within all of them. So it is with the communities from which participants in our focus groups came to us. Views on life in Eugene and toward one another was often conditioned by such things as how long participants had resided in Eugene, where they had lived before, their ethnicity, their skin color, their ages, their cultures, and how much their behavior and appearance stood out from that of the dominant majority. And yet the omnipresent, majority-dominating environment within which all must function encouraged within-group acceptance, cooperation and collaboration among most of the focus group participants.

- Diversity in NA community not recognized—all are just “Redskins,” when every tribe, every clan and band is different. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- Two communities here, by generation. Older generation are bedrock of black community. Younger, educated people have different experiences – classism with racism. “You are not black. You’re not from the ghetto.” (African American)
- Pacific Islander cultures are different from one another, not all Hawaiian. (Pacific Islander)
- No one person speaks for Latinos. Need forums instead. (Latinx)
- You do not have to represent all Indians at longhouse. Each tribe is different... (Native American/Alaska Native)
- My first identity doesn’t come through lens of race, but being a child of God, though I have experienced racism and recognize social injustices. (African American)
- Older generation has disconnected, is self-secluded, and doesn’t go out for civic engagement (“it’s not for us”); church is safe and outside world is distrusted. (African American)

Theme #8: Needs of Communities

The themes we have discussed point to a body of fears, concerns and grievances that most members of the dominant majority are unlikely to know, or upon hearing about them, may be prone to be dismissive. Race in particular seems to be a difficult topic for members of Eugene’s white majority. It would be helpful if Eugeneans listened to the ways in which behavior on the part of the dominant majority (and the institutions controlled by the dominant majority) is limiting the life chances, and thus the opportunity to make contributions to our community as a whole, of all those whose voices are reflected in these ten focus groups.

- I wish there was somewhere to go where people could gather – really helpful as a community, to celebrate holidays that are unique to our culture, to make connections, a place for our kids to go. (Pacific Islander) (also strongly expressed by Asian American, Latinx, LGBTQ and Trans)
- Anselmo Villanueva’s “Exit Files” show many professional people of color coming to Eugene

and then leaving for reasons discussed—no cultural center, too few events, food, lack of cultural competency, sense of isolation, etc. (Asian American)

- Cultural competency is important. Learning how to engage community is important. (Latinx)
- Number one concern of Muslim community is safety at work, on street, at mall. (Muslim)
- We are asked to many focus groups and want to see the results. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- Need some news in Spanish or Spanish caption, especially when dealing with safety and things the whole community needs to know about. (Latinx Family Member)
- There is a need for centralized information. In other big cities you have a queer community center where you know to go for information. (LGBTQ)
- Need gender diversity awareness program for City employees and for employers. Transponder can help. (Trans)
- Need training in community on what hate crimes are and about City process for responding to bias incidents and hate crimes. (Native American/Alaska Native)
- Cultural Competency: Extreme amount of ignorance, the amount of knowledge when it comes to diversity, not taught in school, not enough to reinforce understanding. (African American/Biracial Youth)
- Cultural Competency: You're watching a slavery movie and the teacher says, if it's too uncomfortable you can leave the room (everyone looks at the one African American kid); it pushes people farther into their shell. (African American/Biracial Youth)
- Need more teachers of color: Black teachers go the extra mile to help us. White teachers might, but there's no one who has gone as far as the black teachers do. They push harder for us because they know about our barriers. (African American/Biracial Youth)

Recommendations

From a human rights perspective, those who are experiencing human rights violations – in this case the right to be free from discrimination – should take the lead in defining the problems they are experiencing and in identifying solutions. For this reason, we invited people from marginalized communities to review and help shape the questions asked in the ten focus groups and used contacts from these communities to help identify participants and organize the groups. We functioned primarily as note-takers for the focus groups so as to concentrate on capturing the participants' words and voices, and shared a draft of our findings and recommendations with all participants to get feedback before preparing this final report. The recommendations made here flow from what we heard during the focus group discussions and from the feedback we received from the participants on our draft of this report.

Goals attainable within a short time frame

1. Implement a rapid response policy for immediate public response by top city officials (e.g., Mayor, City Council Chair, City Manager, Chief of Police) to hate crimes and other activities that threaten or bring harm to vulnerable communities in Eugene. People with power and voice need to show vulnerable communities they care.
2. Recruit or assign a staff member who will serve as a full-time liaison between the City of Eugene and people of color, Muslims, the LGBTQ population and other marginalized

groups, and charge this staff member with coordinating a campaign of public awareness building and advocacy for those experiencing discrimination.

3. Charge the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office with making the Rights Assistance Program (RAP) much more visible and user friendly to marginalized communities, and reporting quarterly to these communities on the types of complaints received by RAP and from which groups, along with their disposition.
4. Make organizations that advocate for Eugene's vulnerable communities more visible and their activities more easily accessible by using the City's website to describe and provide links to these organizations, their leaders, their programs and resources, and their calendars of activities.
5. Designate City-owned physical space(s) for members of marginalized groups to gather on a regular basis to welcome newcomers, make new friends, network with others, share common concerns and celebrate cultural traditions.
6. Establish a planning committee for a centrally located, comprehensive multi-cultural center in Eugene, with the majority of committee membership drawn from marginalized groups.
7. Require the City staff members responsible for programming events downtown in the Park Blocks, in Kesey Square and elsewhere in Eugene to systematically reach out to marginalized communities each year to find out what events they would like to see occur, what events they would like to participate in and if/how they would like to showcase their presence to the broader community.
8. Fund a summit for marginalized communities where attendees explore common problems and needs, discuss ways in which they can cooperate with and support one another, and identify issues on which it would be most effective to speak with a common voice.
9. Provide Know Your Rights trainings on a regular basis aimed at marginalized communities.

Goals attainable in the longer term

1. Establish a centrally located, City-owned, multi-cultural center that provides a home base where members of marginalized communities – young and old – can gather, meet, teach, provide information and celebrate their cultural traditions.
2. Expand cultural competency and gender diversity awareness trainings for all City employees, including police, which focus on marginalized communities in Eugene, and open these trainings up to teachers and administrators at 4J and Bethel Schools. Seek recommendations directly from marginalized community members as to which trainings and trainers would be most effective.
3. Provide City resources and support to groups in the community interested in resurrecting the annual Eugene Celebration in the form of a Multicultural Parade and Festival, an event showcasing the foodstuffs, music and other cultural attributes of the different communities that make up Eugene.

4. Work with all marginalized communities to stir interest among their young people in pipelines – including summer high school and college internships – that offer a potential route to full-time employment with the City of Eugene.
5. In planning for a new City Hall, incorporate artwork and photos that represent Eugene’s many different communities. Also include signage in different languages.

Conclusion

The human right to freedom from discrimination is being denied members of Eugene's communities of color as well as its Muslim, LGBTQ and other marginalized communities. Their many contributions to the broader community are too often bypassed or ignored, a product of their marginalization by the dominant majority. In our large group gathering on May 31st, participants expressed appreciation for hearing about others’ experiences and the similar themes among the groups. Indeed, a lot of people have felt overlooked, a lot of voices unheard.

In the course of the focus group meetings, it was not unusual for participants to thank the Human Rights Commission for reaching out and "really listening" to their experiences in Eugene. All groups had positive things to say about the City. At the same time, they expressed hurt, resentment and anger over repeated assaults on their dignity and worth, assaults that ranged from blatant to subtle.

Fearful of a political climate in which they are maligned by officials at the highest levels of government, focus group participants at times expressed anxiety over where this was leading. It is not surprising then that many look to local government for support in resisting discrimination and gaining respect for their unique identities and contributions. The recommendations in this report logically track what these marginalized groups believe needs to be changed.

One participant expressed a sentiment heard throughout the focus groups, “I have an internal dialogue full of cynicism. I’ve participated a lot and given tons of feedback. I’m doing it again. I want to see what will happen this time. I’m trying not to be cynical.”

We thank all who participated in the ten focus groups and urge the City Council to view acting on these recommendations as critical to improving the quality of life for all of Eugene’s residents.

Bonnie Souza
Eugene Human Rights Commissioner

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June 2017

APPENDICES

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**Eugene Human Rights Commission
Anti-Discrimination Workgroup
Focus Group Questions**

1. How do you feel about living here?
 - a. Let's imagine that you just met someone new to Eugene who is a (fill in focus group community name, e.g. Pacific Islander). What are some of the things you would tell them about living here as a (focus group name)? Would you offer them any advice as they settle into Eugene?
 - b. Do you feel welcome in Eugene?
 - i. How do you feel in parks and open spaces?
 - ii. At work?
 - iii. Schools?
 - iv. Walking around your neighborhood? (And which neighborhood is that?)
 - v. Local Businesses?
 - vi. Malls?
 - vii. Commercial Districts?
 - c. From your perspective, what are the key concerns you have for yourself, your family and the (focus group name) community? Of the things you have identified, which do you feel are the top two concerns in your community?
 - d. Are there places or times that you feel more comfortable than others?
2. Has your treatment in the Eugene community been affected by the presidential campaign and election? If so, how?

3. What if any experiences have you had with discrimination, hate or bias in Eugene?

a. In the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office we track incidents of hate, bias and discrimination. Do you have or do you hear stories from community members about incidents of hate, bias or discrimination in Eugene? Do you hear these stories regularly?

b. From these experiences, which are the most common experiences? Do you think they are reported, and to whom?

4. When you have experienced discrimination, hate or bias what do you think could be done to help you?

a. Given what we just talked about, do you have ideas that would help make our community or your neighborhood a better place to live for you?

b. When you or others in your community have these kinds of experiences, what are the types of community support or solidarity you as an individual or your community would find most helpful?

c. Reporting hate and bias incidents is one of the most effective ways to ensure we do not have repeat offenders. What do you think would encourage people in your community to report these incidents? How can we ease the process?

If time permits, additional questions are...

A. Who are your strongest allies in the Eugene community? Which organizations do you turn to for support in this work, and why?

B. Are there groups or individuals in your community that you feel are not as well represented or served by organizations, service providers or by the City?

- C. What role do you think City government and commissions can play in helping your community feel more welcome and included in Eugene?
- a. One of the things we really want to focus in on is how the HRC is serving the community. What are your perceptions and thoughts about the Eugene Human Rights Commission?
 - b. (Refer to the Is/Is Not piece) - Does this document clarify anything for you about the Human Rights Commission? Do you have questions/comments about the function of the HRC?
- D. Is there anything else you'd like to share with us?

City of Eugene Human Rights Commission

Mission Statement

The mission of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) is to promote implementation of human rights values and principles in all City of Eugene programs and throughout the wider community.

To carry out this mission the Commission shall affirm, encourage and initiate programs and services within the City of Eugene's government and the wider community designed to place priority upon respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the full range of universal human rights as enumerated in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. To support and promote human rights, the Commission will:

- a) Provide human rights education
- b) Be proactive in human rights efforts
- c) Address human rights violations
- d) Help ensure active public participation
- e) Be transparent and open
- f) Be publicly accountable for human rights progress

SOME EXAMPLES OF WORK THE EUGENE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION HAS DONE

- **Bringing a human rights lens to City operations.** Examples: The Commission successfully pressed for creation of a community-based oversight committee, including a human rights representative, on building projects proposed by developers seeking tax incentives under the City's Multi-Use Property Tax Exemption (MUPT). Internal to the City, the Commission has been working with City staff on carrying out their Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan, which includes implementation of human rights values and principles in all City departments. A Commissioner serves on the staff's Equity and Human Rights Board which oversees the Plan. Commissioners also serve as liaisons from the HRC to other City boards, committees or commissions, including the Police Commission and Civilian Review Board.
- **Advising the Mayor, City Council, and City Manager.** The Commission: sought and received Council endorsement of the Integration Network for Immigrants of Lane County Statement of Principles that welcomes immigrants to our community; has advised Council on the need to address the criminalization of homelessness in Eugene; and received the Council's unanimous approval for revising the City's Human Rights Ordinance to include the full range of human rights in response to findings from a 2011 Human Rights Listening project involving wide community participation.
- **Outreach to and collaboration with community groups.** Commission members have established relationships with such community groups as: Eugene/Springfield NAACP, Integration Network for Immigrants of Lane County, Springfield/Eugene Showing Up for Racial Justice, Beyond Toxics, Juventud FACETA, the PRIDE Festival, Lane County Fair Shot, Eugene Winnemem Support Group and many others.
- **Bringing human rights education to the community.** The Human Rights Commission stages a variety of public events, often in collaboration with other social justice groups in the community. For example, the Commission partnered with the Community Alliance of Lane County (CALC) on a forum called "Voices of the Homeless," with CALC and the First Congregational Church on "Human Rights and the Crisis of Youth Homelessness," and with LGBTQ groups on the annual "Transgender Remembrance Day."
- **Annual Celebrations of International Human Rights Day** Each December, the Commission hosts a public celebration of the anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* that focuses upon human rights issues in Eugene. Themes vary and have included "Intersections of Racism and Rights" and "Immigrant Rights Are Human Rights!"

THE CITY OF EUGENE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

IS:	IS NOT:
An advisory body on human rights	A human rights enforcement agency
Made up of community volunteers and a liaison member of the City Council	Made up of City employees or paid Commission members
Appointed by City Council, which reviews applications to fill Commission openings	Elected
A group that seeks to amplify the voice of those who are being or have been marginalized or excluded in Eugene	A group that only listens or answers to City of Eugene elected officials and staff and/or powerful and influential people and businesses
Concerned with the full range of human rights and the elimination of human rights violations in Eugene	A group with the capacity to be sufficiently informed about and take positions on human rights violations in other nations
Interested in learning from and working with all segments of the community who experience human rights violations	A group whose focus is single issue
Guided by an annual work plan created by Commission members with the help of the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office staff	Able to take on all emergent human rights issues, mainly because of limitations in capacity
Required by City ordinance to submit its annual work plan to the City Council for approval	Subject to interference by the City Council in its work
Mandated to follow state public meetings law requiring public notice of HRC and HRC work group meetings and keeping notes on attendees, topics discussed and decisions or recommendations made	Permitted to meet or conduct its business outside of the public eye (in the interest of transparency and public participation in providing input to the Commission)
Prohibited by state law to endorse political candidates, take a position on state referendums or lobby on bills	Prohibited from allowing its members to be politically partisan as private individuals

AFRICAN AMERICAN Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Racism

- People don't want to appear racist, but there is a lot of racism. It goes back a long ways.
- Is crazy-making; this community values not being racist, deny that they are because they don't want to be a bad person.
- Blacks here have always been pushed aside. Biggest problem, no one wants to own up to it. Living here, you are going to be confronted with it.
- You are going to experience [racism] from jobs, education...
- There have been black communities here, such as on the north bank of the Willamette River, where the Ferry Street Bridge and Alton Baker Park now stand.
- Was Klan cross on Skinner Butte, starting in the 1920s. For years (1964-1997), concrete cross on Skinner Butte.
- Klan activity like ISIS, Taliban.
- When new in Eugene, you are going to interact with people who hold more progressive values.
- Eugene is progressive, but there is passive-aggressive racism and implicit bias.
- People are nice, but not honest.
- You are acceptable "because you are acting white."
- If you come in confident, dress well, speak white, smile at everyone, you will be accepted—but that is racism too.
- We have internal conversations on how people will deal with you and how you should act.
- I expend a lot of energy when I speak.
- We go to the back door always; when the front door opens we still go to the back door—don't want to hurt whites' feelings.

Intersectionality

- Did not feel part of the black community; being in Eugene's lesbian community, a more welcoming place.

Institutional Expressions of Racism

The City of Eugene

Across the Community

Police

- Know I'm a target. Been pulled over for license plate. 11 moving violations on my record.
- Police seem to have gone through training, more than other places I have been in my life.
- I get pulled over a lot; my husband does not (he is white).

Businesses

- Depends on who you encounter in stores; people assume I don't know things

Housing

- It is a struggle to find housing with private landlords.
- Tried to rent houses, a real struggle, had to go through the university.
- 75 years ago, my uncle had the money, only place he could buy a home (2800 block of Monroe), considered out of the city.

Jobs

K-12 Education

- There is no narrative to explain black identity except the slave narrative; ancient civilizations and accomplishments are denied so there is nothing positive about black history; education sticks to this.
- I am an ancient African whose people were captured; through our fortitude, we came through it.
- Mental confusion – "Who am I? Where do I fit in? Am I a thug maybe, or am I authentically black because I am a

black person?” Self-identity issue.

- Knowing one’s history is stabilizing to identity. We would be so much better off if we learned a different narrative.
- “If a person doesn’t remember where he came from, it’s hard to get to where you want to go.”
- Grew up “white” in her mind until age 26—didn’t accept mistreatment.
- He had to work really hard in school to survive, co-exist.
- Lack of respect for black achievement.
- “Bedrock” of being African American – “seen generational discrimination in educational achievement, employment, housing.”

Higher Education

- U of O is dealing with KKK names on buildings.
- Because of racism, we have not been able to have our books in UO.

Social Services

- In emergency room, people not knowing how to act, how to react – Is it okay to call you black or African American? What should we call you?

Hostile Political Environment

- People who fight racism get pushback.
- Nationalism is very real right now – the undertone is just hate.
- Trucks with confederate flags go around the city, striking fear in people.
- Don’t tread on me – images that are meaning to cause fear.

Micro-aggressions

- Moved into Amazon neighborhood—people stop and stare
- People know they are new—no other black people here; people don’t know how to react.
- Moved into neighborhood, smiled at everyone, found people to be friendly, but had to prove my hippy credentials. But I am not a hippy; I am a leftist.

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- “I am a redneck in disguise; makes it easier for me.” Hunts and fishes, thus passes.
- “We choose different paths, but don’t forget we are black.”
- Propensity to stay in our own space. Why are you here? Self-secluded, keep to ourselves, not a lot of civic engagement.
- Church is a bedrock for older generation; it is a sanctuary and black people have power there, but not in the community.
- “[Church] is where we are safe; doesn’t extend into the community.”
- Confidence of faith.
- Black church is more powerful than is imagined; it is not embracing other religions, young people, and greater community.
- Black people are not only Christians – Muslim, Buddhists, Atheists...
- “Granddaughter 4-5 years old looks in the mirror and says ‘I want to be white’.”
- “We need our spiritual people.”
- White pastors who would like to reach out – long-standing history of whites not engaging.
- Would like to see more faces of color. Coming to Eugene, “it’s a bit of a culture shock to be around so few people of color.”
- Where higher population of African Americans, people are more comfortable.

Differences Within African American Community

- Have two communities here, by generation.
- Older generation experienced racism—they are the bedrock of the black community.
- Younger, educated people have different experiences—classism w/racism.
- “You are not black. You’re not from the ghetto.” “I think we really are experiencing some classism around racism.”

- Where do I fit in? Young people have few positive role models.
- It is important for us to acknowledge men in our community.
- My first identity doesn't come through lens of race, but being a child of god, though I have experienced racism and recognize social injustices.
- A lot of the time, we are fighting each other – we all have differences.
- “Our real enemy has nothing to do with color or economics – it is a spiritual thing. Once we can work those things out, a lot can take care of itself.”
- I am learning things about people who are local to this area. Different sources of hurt that I have experienced. I step back and acknowledge that we live in a hurting world.
- Early generation has disconnected, is self-secluded, and doesn't go out for civic engagement (“it's not for us”); church is safe and outside world is distrusted.

Needs of African American Community

AFRICAN AMERICAN/BI-RACIAL YOUTH Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Racism

- Eugene is a very welcoming place, never had any racist or bad things, but I'm not darker.
- Don't let the color of your skin keep you from doing something.
- I don't think race determines anything with my experiences; it's welcoming.
- I would tell a parent not to send their kid to Sheldon; I have never felt welcome there. Too white to hang out with the black kids and too black to hang out with the white kids. Hung with Asian girl.
- When you talk with people here, they're nice to your face but masters at saying one thing to your face and something else behind your back. "When you leave the room, the script flips."
- I am not a big fan of Eugene. I am a Senior and will leave here. I will return to visit my parents, but I do not want to be here.
- You should probably re-title this group to be bi-racial; others' responses would be different.

Intersectionality

- Racism fuels other oppressions.

Institutional Expressions of Racism

The City of Eugene

- I find that Eugene is unique with its events. I'm really pissed we don't have the Eugene Celebration any more. The HRC should make that a recommendation. Have the African square, the Hawaiian square, the Taste of Chicago, through food...

Across the Community

Police

- I just got my license and I haven't been stopped. I've never had an encounter with the police.

Businesses

- The day after Trump was inaugurated, I've been to that Safeway hundreds of times. I felt like people were looking at me like, what are you doing in that store, can you even afford to be there?
- There have been concerns in stores, about being out at night.
- You get followed in stores; it's really bad. I always get followed in a store by the mall; they don't train. Staring at me, I make eye contact, they look away.
- They watch until you leave.
- I hadn't been followed since I was 18 or 19, but last year I was at a store in the mall and it was really obvious. I came back later and talked with the manager. That's me at 24. I'm an adult.
- It was my 18th birthday and we went to the sex store because that's what you do, right? And they kept being there right behind us. I just left.

Housing

Jobs

K-12 Education

- As long as you're fitting the part, taking the classes they think you should take, fitting their narrative; when you push the boundaries, they don't like it.
- Walk into physics, calculus, I was the only brown person in the class; I was the only African American taking the full IB program (only five of us in the entire city).
- We have other brown students who are strong in math and other high level courses but they're not pushing through and doing it; they're capable but for whatever reason, they stop pushing.
- Extreme amount of ignorance, the amount of knowledge when it comes to diversity, not taught in school, not enough to reinforce understanding.

- Level of ignorance is root of the problem --- not just having knowledge of the issue, many people not really wanting to have that knowledge, don't want to learn.
- In my ethics class I did a presentation with my friend on white privilege. We weren't asked any questions but all other presenters were. It was awkward and there are still kids from that class who won't talk to me now.
- There was a dude in a truck with a confederate flag and he called middle schoolers who were walking the N-word.
- People think my sister is Mexican and treat her differently now.
- My little brother is in elementary school. He looks Mexican and got called "Juanita".
- The problems at South, it's never outright; it's all the professors' kids. They're going to do it when you leave the room.
- I have Courageous Conversations class and I stand up for stuff when the kids are saying something.
- We did an implicit bias thing and this guy was, like it says, I'm more comfortable around white people but I don't believe it. I said c'mon, you would be so uncomfortable if you were the only white person in a room full of black people.
- Teachers: Don't ask a brown person how they feel if you are talking about a black issue; let them raise their hand if they want to share. Don't put them on the spot. Don't purposely split up or clump the kids of color together. They put us in the same area or separate us if we are too close.
- Everyone stares intently at you when you're talking about racism. Then they clap when you are finished speaking!
- You call somebody a racist in Eugene and everything stops. No one wants to be called a racist; it's the most offensive thing.
- You're watching a slavery movie and the teacher says, if it's too uncomfortable you can leave the room (everyone looks at the one African American kid); it pushes people farther into their shell.
- The teacher brought up that African American people are most likely to have AIDS and everyone turned and looked at the only black kid in the room. The student came to me (a teacher) and said I like white girls, and now they are all going to think I have AIDS.
- Black teachers go the extra mile to help us. White teachers might, but there's no one who has gone as far as the black teachers do. They push harder for us because they know about our barriers. I had none at Sheldon, but I do at Churchill.
- I had one black teacher, actually a principal, became like family.
- We need more teachers of color, black computer science professors...
- At one basketball game we didn't stand for the pledge of allegiance. Why should I stand for people who don't respect me? And all they can say is what about the veterans. But they fought for us to have the right to choose if we want to stand, not for us to have to stand.
- 4J put more teachers of color at Churchill, concentrating the few they had in the District all in one school, so they could say Churchill is equitable. It is the system that is broken.
- South Eugene High School would allow stuff to happen. Senior pranks, kids driving trucks across lawn and teachers helped. Okay to do that if you're white.
- At school, there isn't enough training for teachers and administrators. Teachers don't have support of staff; students asked for ethnic studies class and principal said No.

Higher Education

- Want more teachers of color, but colleges don't provide support for their graduate students of color.

Social Services

Hostile Political Environment

- After the election, I started attending NAACP meetings and I lost a handful of friends; people said I can't hang anymore because I'm doing the black thing.
- My best friend from grade school told me to stop talking to her the day after the election; she had a Trump shirt on; it's like it's okay to be racist now. "Brought out peoples' true colors."
- Making America great again is a code for making America white again.
- Kids have gotten really bold; confederate flag on truck.
- If you don't assimilate to making a lot of money or running with rich people, you're going to be called the N-word, you're going to be called less than.
- Our liberals can hurt us too; they can fall back into the mainstream – every day we walk out the door, we are dark.
- People who support Trump are bolder. We are seeing it a lot more than we were before.

Micro-aggressions

- I live over by the mall and was walking with a mixed friend; an old man out watering his lawn starts watching us and followed us. I was in middle school then. Even if the person was in his 20s, it could happen; racism is passed down, no one is born like that.
- The level of ignorance is so high. I got called black face, said I was wearing it as a Halloween costume.
- Friends have taken screen shots of others (white kids) using the N-word on snapchat.
- I do not understand why people use the N-word. It is poison and you cannot turn poison into kool aid.
- I have been in places where I felt comfortable and then I realize that I am not comfortable – stares, whispering, you feel people move away from you.
- We went up to my old basketball coach, the parent of my friend. He said, “congrats on me being Student of the Month, it beats jail.” You laugh it off, maybe that’s a saying or something, but why would you say that?
- Lately I haven’t been hanging out with white people. It’s all black girls. We get looks; I feel like we look intimidating so people don’t try us.
- Last week we were doing a training on the computer and this one group named themselves the Knee Grows. We asked them about the name and they acted like they were joking.

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- Not a lot of black people here but we’re pretty close knit.
- I moved from Portland to Eugene in ‘99. Had lived in a black neighborhood where communities take care of kids. No neighborhoods like that in Eugene. African Americans are spread out. To see a black person was like seeing Bigfoot; there were pockets at institutions, U of O.
- Get involved in community stuff; that is where there are people who are allies.
- Nowhere to walk outside of school – my house, the Y, the mall.

Differences Within African American/Bi-Racial Community

Needs of African American/Bi-Racial Community

ASIAN AMERICAN Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Racism

- If you were raised in a predominantly white environment where there were few or no POC and are used to white dominance, your view on experiences here is different than if you came from San Francisco or Seattle.
- It's really white here.
- My experience in Eugene is not a white experience. I learned to be safe, going toward fairness and justice, and found my place with other POC.
- Been here for 25 years. "There are times when you feel you don't belong. South Eugene feels safer, more progressive, more inclusive."
- My third week here, I was told to go back to China.
- Came from Hawaii to the mainland in the hopes of being "white" but you can't try to be white, so I was forced to think about my identity—found my way to Asian American groups.
- People in Eugene are interested in Asian American cultures, but not the people.
- "It is more safe to be invisible. I am grateful that we have this focus group."
- There is an attitude in Eugene among whites that we don't need to talk about racism; they see themselves as beyond that, post-racial.
- Will not walk downtown alone. Am subject to catcalls with racist undertones.
- In this town, it is seen as a negative if a person doesn't speak English as a first language.
- Racism is important to us. We want a safe place. No one will back us up but ourselves.
- The white ally part has not developed for us.

Intersectionality

Institutional Expressions of Racism

City of Eugene

- The City does not really support the Asian American community.
- It does not provide financial support for events at the level it provides for NAACP/African Americans.
- The City supports events but does not support Asian American people.
- Need to get City electeds to come to Asian American cultural events where they can build their awareness and begin to gain some cultural competency.
- Asian Americans are a resource to the City when it needs their help, but when Asian Americans need help, the City does not respond. Community word of mouth is most important in Asian Americans deciding to come to Eugene, not the information put out by the City about itself.
- We challenge the Human Rights Commission to make something happen in this city.
- It is tiring and taxing to have to help our own community; the City and County need to play more of a role and to work with Asian Americans as allies.
- Asian Americans need space for young people to learn Taiko – a cultural space.
- We need to present the City with a plan for what we want in a cultural center, costs, timetables, and what is needed from the City to make this plan happen, but the Asian American population is very small and lacks the critical mass of professionals that could create this plan.

Across the Community

Police

- After the tazing of the students, Chief Kerns was to set up an advisory group of Asian Americans, but it doesn't meet.
- My sister was here, a Filipina, someone in "police gear" was trying to flirt with her – exotification of Asian women.

Businesses

- There are few places to get food that truly reflect our culture. "Not a single dim sum place."
- Asian American businesses and churches do their own thing, don't get involved with the larger community.

Housing

- South Eugene seems like a safe environment in which to live.
- 40 years ago, could not get a house if you were Indian, Asian American, Latino.
- It is a good place to live.

Jobs

- I was asked at work (Lane County) if I can translate for Korean or Japanese.

K-12 Education

- 4J has not changed in years. The staff is not necessarily safe. It is still necessary for POC to try to educate people there that they work with. Cultural competency is lacking.
- It should not be the responsibility of POC to educate whites.

Higher Education

- We need to find space for people in the community and at U of O to meet that is off campus; many people don't feel comfortable coming to campus.
- Will be happy to graduate and to get out of Eugene.
- International students are very vulnerable to racial abuse. There have been unreported sexual assaults of Asian women. We should have a focus group to hear from international students.
- Students avoid coming downtown, don't feel safe or welcome.

Social Services

Hostile Political Environment

- It's not safe to be political here, as an Asian American woman. Whites see you as a threat.
- There can be backlashes to speaking up—you can get fired.

Micro-aggressions

- There is a lack of cultural competency in Eugene.
- Consistent micro-aggressions every day—without connections, could not survive.
- It is necessary to behave as expected at work, to fit in and “act white.”
- We have a duty not to respond to expressions of racism with anger, but instead should respond in a way that educates.
- Anselmo Villanueva's “Exit Files” show many professional POC coming to Eugene and then leaving for reasons discussed—no cultural center, too few events, food, lack of cultural competency, sense of isolation, etc.

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- There are times you feel you don't belong.
- Have always felt unsafe in Eugene, felt like the “other.” Is important to find other POC.
- I keep my mouth shut a lot.
- If you are not black, brown, or white, you are invisible in Eugene.
- It is not safe to be invisible—the majority assumes you are doing well even when you are not.
- People need to network with other groups to survive here.
- Don't feel like I belong, am thinking of leaving.
- Retention is a big problem.
- The Asian American population is small, which contributes to its invisibility.
- Many people do not interact with the community or engage in political or civic activities, but stepped up in response to the tazing of the Chinese students.
- There is no place for youth to gather.

Differences Within Asian American Community

- There is racial prejudice among and between Asian American populations.
- Asian Celebration helps to bring these populations together; “for a lot of us, only time we see each other.”
- All Asian American groups support each other’s events—that is something unique about this community.

Needs of Asian American Community

- We need space where we can gather, be with people like us, teach about our history and what they are not teaching in schools, practice our own cultures (e.g., line dancing), “a space for people to just go and be.”
- Finding someplace to have events. “We have members who don’t feel comfortable meeting on campus.”
- Finding and funding a communal space would be a big step forward.
- We don’t know where or how to report complaints.
- Most times people reach out in severe cases. We want to report, but we don’t. If being catcalled, for example, the process isn’t easy enough when you want an immediate resolution.

LATINX Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Racism

- Racism is highly systemic.
- Builds on its own history.
- Name-calling and milk shake thrown at me and my brother when I was 11.
- White privilege prevails.
- Not bad people; bad actions, because of their privilege to ignore.
- Oregon and Eugene are progressive, but only on the surface.
- Whites believe they know the experiences of people of color when they do not.
- Latinos are seen as a threat when they complain about their treatment.
- 1964 before people of color (POC) could move here.
- Occupy needed representation from POC.
- We deal with the same issues,” referring to all focus groups.

Intersectionality

- Intersectionality is important to understand as racism impacts people differently.
- No Latino nights for gay Latinos or other people of color in white dominated clubs.
- Gay Latinos are ignored by the white LGBTQ community; lack of diversity and racism unrecognized.
- A lot of hetero-normative directed at you; you are going to feel out of place, uncomfortable.
- Daily stories about mistreatment of people who are trans or gay and are also of color.
- “I knew I would have to work twice as hard because I came from a low income family.”

Institutional Expressions of Racism

- A lot of systems set in place to benefit white people – segregation, slavery...
- Housing access, loans from banks, ban the box...

City of Eugene

- City organization does not know how to engage with the Latino community; needs to diversify.
- Reporting experiences of hate or bias does not help stop these incidents.
- We have a very expensive, new skate park near where many Latinos live, but they don't skate. Need multicultural centers built and events held.
- Skinner Butte has KKK plaque celebrating “illuminated crosses.” Systemic white power structure(s).

Across the Community

Police

- Latinos are profiled by whites, who call police about “suspicious” people – treated like criminals.
- Latinos are followed by and stopped by police (profiling) when not doing anything wrong.
- I do not feel safe on campus, especially when police are armed or could be in the future.
- Seems less safe for Latinos in Eugene than decades ago, e.g., police behavior and public attitudes.
- They flagged their lights, detained me 15-20 minutes, searched (I allowed) and found nothing, have to call more officers every time.
- My voice is not valued; I'm treated as a criminal. Police are scared of POC.
- May seem safe here to Latinos who have escaped much worse places, e.g., South LA.
- “Police are afraid of us, a lot of officers want to get armed.”
- Police do not listen, can feel threatened by efforts to explain or to disagree; scary when they're armed.
- How am I supposed to feel safe? Police must be held accountable.
- No police of color.
- What trainings are they getting? Cultural training? Who is giving that training?

Businesses

- Latinos are blamed when others start trouble or cause conflicts, e.g., at local bars.

- Racism is expressed by rudeness in the provision of services, e.g., library, coffee shop.
- Customer service, person in front of you treated well, then not the same for you, different, rude.
- Hard for a minority to date here. Dating apps allow expression of racial preference and discrimination: “whites only, just a preference, sorry”.
- VRC, Gateway, followed by security, randomly checked.

Housing

- Very hard to find places to live. Landlords charging higher rents, not getting deposits back.

Jobs

K-12 Education

- Have been patted down by school security, but not white students.
- Schools are not culturally competent.
- Name calling, “beaner”, educational system.
- PBS Video “Precious Knowledge” shows culturally competent curriculum in Tucson.

Higher Education

- Parents don’t speak English, no help. If I came from white, middle class family, parents would be taking care.
- Undocumented don’t get a lot of info or resources.
- Police on and off campus treat Latinos with negative bias.
- People rude to me.
- U of O has statues of oppressors; buildings named after racists, e.g., Deady Hall.
- If mistreatment is bad on campuses, how bad can it be in the outside world?
- Get discouraged by this treatment, lose confidence and ability to strive and achieve in school/college.
- Pay attention to movements by students of color on the campuses; they carry significant messages.

Social Services

- White Anglo social service providers route people to Centro Latino, hardly serve Latinos.
- Agencies need cultural competence, are not providing services, very few materials in Spanish.
- Latino professionals are tokenized and kept on a leash; everyone just refers Latinos to them.
- Mental health services for Latinos are lacking or do not exist in Spanish.

Hostile Political Environment

- I have been in this country since 1951. As an immigrant, this is the most hateful and fearful time. It has always been here, but [now] it is huge and dangerous and scary. I am more aware of other communities. I want this community to figure out how to respond in a real way, quickly and loudly, and not wait until someone gets killed.
- Dave Ralston picks up on racist attitudes, speaks out, and reinforces those attitudes.
- The incident in Springfield, with the Nazis in the street, is being normalized. I was getting some pizza late at night and somebody said to me to be sure to record when I get beat up by the Nazis. I’ve never felt more unsafe by myself on the streets.
- This is an urgent time. People who have the ability, power and voice to say something need to act.
- Is there a way for the City to respond (to hate and bias incidents/crimes) so that people feel like somebody cares?

Micro-aggressions

- Micro aggressions go on all the time, every day.
- Commonly individuals are asked to “speak for your community”. No white person is going to ask you to speak for all whites.

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- Feel out of place, uncomfortable, in the absence of people who look like me.
- Here we have the need to blend in, not stand out.
- On arrival one needs to find (make) their own community and space; it’s what keeps you sane.
- Some places are not safe to be, you know when it is time not to be there or to leave.

- No place to go. No barrio, tortillas, a place to feel supported.
- You need physical space, a place where you can go and feel safe.
- Just not a lot of brown faces in Eugene and in its institutions.
- Moving from Arizona, experienced culture shock in awareness of lack of brown faces here.
- You need to find your community to have safe space to be Latino, be yourself.
- I have experienced more problems in Eugene than in Arizona, more comfortable because my people were there; the Latino community is not connected here. Community can provide a safe space to be.

Differences Within Latino Community

- Other Latinos may try to pull you down.
- Must mind who you align yourself with in the community.
- White power structure uses people of color; no one person speaks for Latinos, need forums instead.

Needs of Latino Community

- Latinos not taught how to work the system; it sucks not being able to navigate systems.
- Need cultural centers for community members, not just on the campus; they can provide resources.
- Community needs a center to gather; Latinos are spread out.
- Few Latino cultural events occur.
- People don't understand they have rights.
- Need information and community services in their native language.
- Hard to find ways around because of lack of Spanish language signage.
- Need to hold police and others accountable for their behavior in order to change it.
- Power centers need to be diversified.
- Police training and curricula need to be examined.
- With systemic racism, specific policies are needed to tear down racism.
- Eugene needs to become a sanctuary city that protects and cares for Latino immigrants.
- Need to follow up on this focus group and report out, so folks know what was done with their input.
- Ethnic studies should be mandatory.
- Cultural competency is important. Learning how to engage community is important.

Latinx Families Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Racism

- Feel more safe here than in California.
- Have experienced racism in schools, businesses, at work.
- Racism happens more like jokes and playing around, mostly from younger people.
- Calmer here, no rush hour.

Intersectionality

Institutional Expressions of Racism

- The fact that undocumented people cannot get licenses is discrimination.

City of Eugene

- Should report discrimination (e.g., at stores) to the City. We need to know our rights.
- City needs to get information about people's rights and what is going on, what the City offers. City website is not very accessible—it's in English. Churches can be used to provide information.
- There are 10-14 year old kids smoking in parks. When I ask them to move away from where my children are playing, they don't. What can be done? Police don't come to check their ages. They are supposed to be smoke-free, but is it being enforced equitably?
- Make the smoking kids do volunteer work.
- At parks, we need more basketball hoops and lower levels of hoops for smaller children.
- Skate park in Barger area is good.

Institutional Expressions of Racism

Police

- I have been stopped and followed by police, once by four officers. Once stopped, police were cordial.
- Police would not help with vandalism.
- They would not come out for two stolen cars.
- If a Latino is the victim, they don't help. If a Latino may be the perpetrator, they come.
- Once the police were called on me because a neighbor had reported that I was stealing a car; I was getting into my own car. It feels like they come when they're called ON us, but not when they're called BY us. This happened in South Eugene.
- When I've called and needed help, the police came right away.
- Police did not respond to the report of a stolen truck. Went to EPD and they would not allow me to report it.

Businesses

- Royal Avenue store will not sell me lottery tickets without ID, and will not accept my passport; said it was not legal. This happens to other Latinos. Also happens at Springfield Mall.
- Happens to Latinos in stores if they do not speak English. ID's are not accepted, even if they are totally legal, such as the Oregon ID Card.
- You are followed in the store. They don't trust you.
- If you don't speak English, more problems at stores and in restaurants. I find myself helping in those situations and defending people.

Housing

Jobs

- People experience discrimination at work.
- I see discrimination in how people are served or treated at my job. I was asked to leave and, while I was walking out, I was watched carefully the entire way to the car to make sure I didn't take anything. Felt I was let go because of discrimination.
- People at work question if I'm documented. When my papers weren't in order, I was very concerned about this.

They were willing to help somebody else with a similar problem, but not me.

- When I was applying for a job, I was told I couldn't have my son's help in filling out the application. It was returned to me. Treated me badly.
- There is little upward mobility for Latinos at work; difficult to move up, increase pay.
- Need to find ways to get some time off so we can be with our kids.

K-12 Education

- Daughter defends herself from bullying in school and she gets in trouble with the teacher, often substitutes. Once it gets to Administration, they respond well.
- They are substitute teachers, and new principal needs to know about incidents.
- Latinos are singled out during afterschool programs.
- Once, my son and others were lined up in school and blamed when bathrooms were found dirty. This happened after school when regular staff were not there.
- After school programs need to follow school rules in treatment of children.
- We need to be strong advocates for our kids. The administration is not taking responsibility for teaching our children. My child was getting all A's before we came to Oregon and is now being defined as unlikely to be successful in school.
- Good for parents to get involved in the school so they can see what is going on.
- Playground equipment needs to be adjusted to accommodate different age kids. Some is too low for older kids.

Higher Education

Social Services

- People getting child welfare called on them because they leave their kids in the car. Our families don't always understand the rules in the U.S. There is a disconnect between ways of doing things culturally versus the laws here.
- Need trainings to communicate what is neglect, what are the laws, different themes, including immigration, would help us do the right thing.

Hostile Political Environment

- People not able to get drivers licenses is discrimination.
- People feel like they won and have permission [to mistreat others]. This makes it scary. Many of us now don't want to shop, send kids to school. We fear harassment in public.

Micro-aggressions

- People tell her she is in America, speak English.
- Followed in businesses, treated like criminals.

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- Need some news in Spanish or Spanish caption, especially when dealing with safety and with things the whole community needs to know about.
- Are two AM and one FM radio stations in Eugene. One station has news in Spanish.

Differences Within Latino Family Community

Needs of Latino Family Community

- Helpful if city could share "know your rights" information. Also what the City offers and what events are happening.
- It would help if, when news is shared, especially concerning community safety, if it was also captioned in Spanish.
- City web site is not very accessible—it's in English.
- Good outreach for the City – use churches that serve the Latino community. Can be used to provide information.
- We have 3 Spanish-language radio stations here and the City could share information with our community that way.
- Bosses may not know what their employees are doing. The City needs to educate employers and put them on notice

about discrimination, such as at the store mentioned on Royal Avenue.

- Could police regularly drive by parks to monitor 10-14 year olds smoking? It's supposed to be smoke free, the smokers don't listen to me.
- It would help for the parks to think about better serving a range of ages.

MUSLIM Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Islamophobia

- One incident in my two years here, but good place. One guy told me “No Syria” while I was walking downtown.
- Moved here six years ago. Never had incidents until this past year, with the presidential election and hate wave in the media. Had three incidents where people yelled at me to go home, all after the conventions.
- The majority of what I experience is on campus. The hate things and of go home and you don’t belong here is simply for being Muslim, instead of being treated as an individual. That is wrong.
- On campus, since Trump won, I’ve been attending rallies to spread compassion and stand up to that.
- Restaurant vandalized (bricks thrown through window) after 2001; was very frightening; people sent flowers and offered sanctuary. Also had a smoke bomb thrown into the dining room once. Need to be vigilant with rise of right.
- Been here for five years, had two incidents when I first got here, both at Costco; I believe they were the expressions of country people.
- From what people are sharing, the experiences of men are different because, looking at us, you wouldn’t know I’m Muslim. With women wearing headscarves, people know right away. With men they get to know us first and then find out.

Intersectionality

Institutional Expressions of Islamophobia

City of Eugene

Across the Community

Police

- Feel comfortable calling the police in an emergency.
- Do have trust in the police.
- Kids watch that the police shoot someone because of who they are; sometimes the person shot is not armed or anything and then the kids have a memory that the police may hurt you.
- I feel scared to call the police after seeing blacks being shot and killed. I won’t call the police because of that; I don’t trust them the way I did growing up.
- Police are so sassy on campus; it’s unnecessary sassiness.

Businesses

- Only two experiences (at Costco) when I first came here five years ago. The same type of individual, “country people.”
- Has been discrimination against me at work at pre-school center; I felt the woman who was in charge was discriminating against me. Every day I experienced this, I felt sad and couldn’t just feel better; wondered if I should put my health at risk to get paid. I quit my job working with preschoolers; didn’t report it to my employer.
- I have worked here for seventeen years and, in each place where I worked, there was someone who doesn’t accept me. I just ignore them and focus on the positive things.
- My experience at work, I have not had any issues whatsoever; my co-workers respect and support me. They know I’m Muslim from day one.

Housing

Jobs

K-12 Education

- Child in middle school was harassed and called a terrorist. The principal couldn’t control the situation and blamed my son for the problem; said he was not allowed to come to school or attend the graduation party. I had to fight with the principal to get this harassment recognized and stopped. We’ve been going through counseling since then. Something like that happens every year, we have to navigate this all of the time. It affects a child’s self esteem.
- South Eugene High School group hug of Muslim student after election; told her they wanted her to stay.

- Daughter in high school wears headscarf; do not feel safe any longer having her walk to school. Especially after the election, I drive her to school.
- All have kids in this generation who will be adults who will not be able to live to the fullest because they don't feel accepted.

Higher Education

- To be honest, the president and vice-president are working very hard to make campus welcoming; still on campus you might face hate crimes; getting emails and contact from the VP about how it's going, those efforts are very meaningful.

Social Services

Hostile Political Environment

- UO campus has incidents since Trump campaign.
- Were incidents this year on the street after convention; had three people yell at me to go home.
- President tells rednecks it is ok to mistreat Muslims.
- Today we're hearing Muslims will be forced to register; it's telling everyone who is a bigot that it's ok to go and do whatever you want with others who are different from you.
- Jewish community has said they will register as Muslims if there is a registration.
- The night after the election, we had some high schoolers painting their faces black in front of the African Student Union. The election has unleashed the racism inside of people.
- My experiences since the election have been great and positive; since the election I have received comfort and support; I'm glad that people are being nice to me.
- I used to feel safe and okay about going out. Since the election, I don't feel the same. I don't go out now without my husband or others. Don't feel safe, especially since I wear a headscarf.
- I also don't feel as safe walking places.
- My experiences have been great and positive. Since the election, I received comfort and support. I'm glad people are being nice to me.

Micro-aggressions

- Looking at men, you wouldn't know if we were Muslim or not; with women wearing head scarves people know right away you are Muslim; with men they get to know us first and then find out; the experience is different.
- People have come to me to say they have voted for Trump and then say sorry; I don't have time for that.
- I personally don't like when people say sorry to me; I get it but it's not their responsibility. I want to be left alone; saying sorry doesn't help me.
- People expect Muslims to apologize if terrorism occurs elsewhere; it's not my job to apologize for these acts.

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- If you are new, go to mosque because, once you go there, you fall in love with the community. Small group of people, know everyone personally.
- Eugene safe, no incidents, good place to raise family.
- Love it here.
- Safe place, no incidents.
- Eugene is very accepting.
- Other faith communities show support.
- Even mellow Eugene has some hate among them; since 9/11 we have had incidents at the mosque where people came from the community and stood outside with signs saying we are here to protect you.
- After 9/11 and vandalism at my business, I received many cards, flowers and calls offering support. Incidents that were bad were one percent and the good responses by the community were overwhelming majority.

Intersectionality

Differences Within Muslim Community

Needs of Muslim Community

- I think number one concern is safety; if you're not feeling safe it takes away from your life.
- Number one concern of Muslim community is safety at work, on street, at mall.

NATIVE AMERICAN/ALASKA NATIVE Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Racism

- Not comfortable speaking for my entire tribe.
- New Agers take over your culture, get upset and defensive when questioned.
- Very few places are native-friendly.
- “I avoid Country Fair because I do not want to be token Indian.”
- “I take Halloween off each year” people with headdresses, blackface. “Jovial Racist Day”
- “I thought you were all wiped out. How did you survive?”
- Told to wash my skin.
- Stereotype all tribes as getting lots of money.
- Movies create stereotypes.
- Images of Plains savage kind of Indian. When you vary from that, people question your identity. Most of what people know is inaccurate.
- People have romantic notion of who NAs are and how they dress.
- Native men are put down.
- There is bias when you are recognized as native.
- A lot of NA people shot and killed in Eugene in the past, seen as “justified” and not racism. This memory lives on in the NA community.
- When you come from a place where everyone is family and then you come here and everyone is alone, you are treated like you are bad.

Intersectionality

- White women murdered or missing get media attention, not women who are POC.

Institutional Expressions of Racism

City of Eugene

- If you go to parks to meet other NA do not go by yourself—it’s safer.
- Not many parks that are friendly.

Across the Community

Police

- In Whitaker “Planet” called police on NA girls renting lower level; person is afraid of POC; police question POC, not complainant.
- Don’t trust police with complaints; they say we are overreacting.
- Mistreatment of NAs is not reported on – we know it won’t be handled appropriately, such a high profile town with Ducks and Olympic Trials publicity.
- There is a lot of distrust of police.
- I do not trust police; I would never invite police to my home ever.

Businesses

- Saturday Market, hippy places, are not comfortable for NAs.
- In Market of Choice, asked where products are, as though she works there.
- Looked at like a criminal—don’t belong here.
- Am followed around at malls and stores, asked, “Can I help you?” – or ignored if you have a question or want to buy something.
- Frequently get served last in restaurant, forget food, napkins, something.
- Don’t know what to do with you when you walk in a restaurant; jaws drop.

Housing

Jobs

K-12 Education

- Schools not friendly—headdresses were worn at Thanksgiving. At churches people dress up like pilgrims and Indians.
- In schools, kids are jumped; school officials say they are wrong, are overreacting.
- Difficulty being the new kid of color at school.
- Kids are embarrassed for who they are.

Higher Education

- May be only dark face in class.
- Lane has no more people of color than 17 years ago.
- At UO, was asked to be designated speaker for entire tribe or all NAs.
- Dating is weird—guys look for NA women as a trophy.
- International students from Asian countries are taken advantage of and don't know they have rights; young Asian women are often a target and ashamed or afraid to report it, especially to superiors.
- I am so done with the university.
- Predators are moved, not fired.
- NA students have been written up when they complain.
- POC are very marginalized at UO. Faculty and staff have been tossed around. What happens to students?

Social Services

Hostile Political Environment

- Lots of people, hippies, Rainbow Gathering raising funds for Standing Rock but, when there, they are stealing culture—calling gatherings powwows when they are not powwows, burning sage, all inappropriately.
- Whites and other POC don't know about current NA issues except big ones like Standing Rock.
- Because of social media, people are at least aware of Standing Rock. Refreshing that people are listening.
- Standing Rock is not a festival or celebration; some people don't believe the bad treatment happening to NAs there.
- Hippies and Rainbow Gathering people have been condescending at Standing Rock.

Micro-aggressions

- Cultural appropriation is all over.
- People act as if you are on display.
- People want to know everything about you, ask personal questions.
- "You don't look native. You look white."
- "Oh, so you get your college for free, huh?" Demonized because they think you get a lot of things.
- People eating bacon, shaming me for eating seal.
- North Eugene not friendly: son's name is a "nigger's name"; husband is dark.
- Children have long hair and are mistaken for girls.
- At work, I am the "designated office Indian." Isn't this racist?
- Racism is not recognized; people get mad if you point it out, like Lane County "brown" bag lunches.

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- Feel alone when you first come to Eugene.
- Culture shock, hard transition.
- People adopt others.
- Where are the natives? Come to the longhouse at UO and LCC.
- Making connections by coming to longhouse.
- Whites don't understand native humor.
- Cultural differences are not understood, e.g., NAs eat meat.
- Don't have to tone down or worry about offending someone in safe space like longhouse.
- You don't want to talk about where you come from, who you are; you do not have to worry about that coming here (to longhouse).
- Some of the tribes (Siletz) have programs open to all Native Americans/Alaska Natives.

- Also there is a native center in Springfield schools.
- Places I think are not very friendly: schools, Willamalane Day Care (make paper bag headdresses), some churches (dress up like pilgrims and Indians).
- International students don't have a safe place to go to; administration does not listen to complaints or protect people (ex: sexual harassment by employer)

Differences Within Native American/Alaska Native Community

- You do not have to represent all Indians at longhouse. Each tribe is different; each clan and band is completely different.
- Diversity in NA community not recognized—all are just “Redskins”, when every tribe, every clan and band is different.

Needs of Native American/Alaska Native Community

- Need training in community on what hate crimes are.
- NA community does not know about City process for responding to bias incidents and hate crimes.
- Important to train about rights and de-escalation.
- We are asked to many focus groups and want to see the results.

PACIFIC ISLANDER Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Racism

- At times, I don't feel welcome; "invisible" is the current word for me.
- The first year was so difficult for my son; others thought he was black.
- People thought he was Mexican.
- Are noticeable in public, stared at, so youth stay out of public and meet with family and friends.
- Until coming to mainland, never knew I was a woman of color; Pacific Islanders identify with ethnicity, not color of skin.
- Is annoying to be grouped by color; people are proud of their ethnicity and need respect.
- When we are in public, we are noticeable. Don't want to be subjected to the comments, the looks, whatever.
- Plan on moving back to islands after the kids are educated.
- Don't know who your enemy is in predominantly white Eugene.

Intersectionality

Institutional Expressions of Racism

City of Eugene

Across the Community

Police

- I called the cops. When they come in, and see these two guys, they are going to arrest us.
- No one is going to call the cops.
- If you can intervene before you get to law enforcement, you do that.
- Eugene is better than other places.

Businesses

- Was in line in Safeway, not paying attention, person in front of me left, checker asked, "Is this WIC?" We were dressed nice. It was offensive. "Could raise hell, but it's every day, am just going to go home. People don't get it."
- I am really surprised it is happening here in Eugene. It is upsetting. Assuming he was on welfare because of how he looks.

Housing

Jobs

K-12 Education

- Youth try to connect with other Polynesians, just like blacks or Mexicans. "If I see a Polynesian in school, I want his number, to hang out. I am happy to see someone."
- Some people think Polynesians are big Mexicans.
- Is "Sheldon way of doing things," meaning the white way; makes POC feel marginalized (e.g., kid on football team knelt and was admonished "this is not the Sheldon way"). Staff at the time made our kids feel marginalized, disguised as a school thing.
- Son had a difficult transition, labeled as troublemaker; starving to be around others like him.
- There is no cultural competence in the school and similar incidents keep occurring.
- Son asked to welcome new student in middle school. He met a girl and greeted her with a kiss on the cheek (custom in our culture) The girl was not offended. Someone down the hall saw and accused him of sexual harassment; suspended from school for three days.
- At high school sports events, we stick out like sore thumbs.
- Asked what I could do to make staff more culturally competent; to be proactive, I taught ukulele classes once a week, to teachers, students, administrators, taught about our culture.

Higher Education

Social Services

Hostile Political Environment

- Presidential campaign was to “make America great again”. What does that mean? When things were worse for people of color?
- I am really surprised it is happening here in Eugene. It is upsetting.
- Have worries about deportation of some PI family and friends.

Micro-aggressions

- Does not like cultural appropriations.
- Are micro-aggressions every day; white people just don't see it.
- They happen at UO and high school.
- She has been asked five times a day about UO blackface incident.
- I am trying to teach my son to drive, driving slow, white guy flips us off, tried to run us off the road, “go back to where you came from” (go back to Seattle?? My kid is in the car...). Ignorance.
- Easy 20-30 things each year.
- Being that marginalized population, each of us has exact stories. It is only when you get together that we hear them.
- Usually, I can see it coming. I can't even talk.
- We need to support each other. We are out there on our own, and there is no-one advocating for us.

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- Establishing relationships of support and help with newcomers is part of the culture.
- Not a lot of Polynesians here.
- I want everyone in Eugene to know what Samoans are. Samoans are going to make a difference in Eugene.
- It is not easy to start off; you don't know where to go to look for your people, to get help.
- No people of color, all white, where are the average regular people?
- Polynesians are everywhere, but are underground.
- Tough if you don't know anyone; it takes a while.
- There has to be a place where you can find your people.
- When I wear my clothes, I am Polynesian.
- Biggest thing for us is respect. Respect is a two-way street.
- Moved from San Diego; life was fast lane all the time; Eugene and Oregon is completely different. Laid back in the Islands; weather like at home, only difference is temperature; I'm comfortable in the life here.
- Hard to move to a new place, new rules, trying to establish myself.
- Island life is so different.
- Pacific Islanders are easy going.
- Don't care about resumé, family name, what high school; connect on a familial level.
- Would meet Polynesians at sports events.
- In our culture you don't automatically offer advice, you offer help.
- Important to bond and be family; who is your family, your town, your high school.
- So hungry to make connections that I would approach strangers in stores wearing Hawaiian t-shirts.
- Want to share my culture with others, as at monthly Aloha show, third Friday every month, at Cosmic Pizza. Music, hula.

Differences Within Pacific Islander Community

- Found a hula class, that is where I started (when I first arrived in Eugene and was looking for other Pacific Islanders); run by Japanese woman who had left Hawaii 4 years before; cultures very different.
- PI cultures are different from one another, not all Hawaiian.

Needs of Pacific Islander Community

- Wish there was a place to go and get help; not by yourself, need more gatherings like this.
- I wish there was somewhere to go where people could gather.
- Having a gathering place or opportunities to gather, really helpful as a community, to celebrate holidays that are unique to our culture, to make connections, a place for our kids.

LGBTQ Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Homophobia

- There are always outliers but generally in South Eugene we're accepted or people even think they want to be with us so that their children can have an enriching gay experience.
- The folks in my circles who struggle the most are trans and gender queer people.
- I have not experienced any kind of discrimination, no issues in town; I tell my friends to come.
- When I moved in twelve years ago, Eugene was tolerant of queers; I've seen that moved toward acceptance and I want to move it further toward celebrating.
- I feel very privileged I have a good job. I also feel very uncomfortable -- when I go out dancing at night, I want to dress up in pink sparkly things and I don't feel comfortable with that.
- "I will not hold my wife's hand."
- This community speaks about being progressive, but not enough to embrace people of color and all that means.
- I think that Eugene is very accepting of what is now mainstream heteronormal gay culture.
- Having grown up in a rural community, I feel more embraced in Eugene; feel safe coming to town.
- Eugene has become more accepting of gay people so long as they're like the ones they show on TV.
- I was born here and have seen a lot of change; things have gotten better.
- I get to hear a lot of conversations. Lots of ignorance and lack of information about trans people.
- This community speaks about being progressive, but not enough to embrace people of color and all that means.

Intersectionality

- If you're new in Eugene and white, I would say welcome, you're in a great place. If you are a person of color, the answer is different; tell them to be careful going out at night, colored by my own experiences. I would "prepare a gathering with my people, introduce to POC; we can lift each other up and keep each other safe."
- I have reached out to every community group that is welcoming to female people and have not found a place where I fit. Not a lot of support besides meeting individuals who are like-minded. A white person may not share that experience.
- Being a POC and LGBTQ is very different. I was harassed by a white gay man; it caused a lot of trauma. I was still trying to figure out who I was.
- In the Latino community, it tends to be closed minded about these issues.
- I don't feel welcome in Eugene at all ever, not because I'm queer but because of my race. I spend most of my time in my house.
- I only feel safe in my house. I'm glad to hear that we are talking about the intersections of race because in my experience I don't think I could separate them.
- In my experience, I cannot separate homophobia, xenophobia, accent, old or look young; my heart is pounding because the stories of folks of color around the table are my stories as well. There needs to be a shift in the culture, from the top down.
- For a lot of white people in Eugene, you have to make an extra effort to reach out to diverse communities; John (owner of Lamb) moved here from NY; still doesn't know how to reach out.
- White LGBTQ people have white privilege; people of color are more subject to mistreatment. (LGBTQ)

Institutional Expressions of Homophobia

City of Eugene

- We never experienced harassment. Every supervisor I had in my 25 years with City of Eugene. The current city manager's motto was bring everything you are to work. I appreciate that in a professional setting.
- EWEB's culture has changed a lot and I am out at work and feel comfortable with that. Still that's in presenting myself in a heteronormative context. How do I express that part of who I am and not suffer negative consequences? How "out" can I be at work? If there is a promotion or the possibility of being assigned to the right project, then "not very."
- My drive to push the boundaries has been there with running for Slug Queen and doing queer burlesque—that is where I feel most at home, with the freaks and outcasts.
- Those talking sessions 4-8 years ago that happened with city employees, community members. I was labeled that I was too angry and my anger was creating my experiences. Not saying that everyone at COE is like that, but those types of people are everywhere. As long as an agency has people like that, I question how much progress there is going to be.

Across the Community

Police

- I had really bad experiences with the police department. Showing my identification, gender doesn't align. Officer took my license with him in Springfield. Towed my car because he didn't believe it was me.
- "I feel the least safe when I'm driving." It's a fear because of my experiences. There was a question about, is this really you, could you step out of the car. I'm afraid because I don't know what is going to happen.
- "I only feel safe in my house – no other place."

Businesses

- I feel most comfortable going to the Lamb. Around my people where I can just be me.
- Have friend who works for a TV station; he found out through colleagues that he was not getting promotions like others because he was too gay. Too feminine. Was threatened physically at a laundry place in West Eugene. Is now moving to Washington.
- I feel least comfortable in commercial areas because people think that black people steal things; I get looks, glances, people watch me when I'm in stores.
- I was assaulted outside of Cowfish.
- My roommate was jumped in the parking lot at the Flying Squirrel. As a person of color you need to know where you are. He didn't look, but I noticed the looks that we were getting.
- I've been there and had the same feeling of being unsafe.
- I was assaulted downtown and I don't know if it was because of my race. That's my experience every day. I'm aware of who is around, where the exits are. I'm planning on moving to Seattle because of it.
- I do not feel safe in Eugene.
- I feel there is no place that I couldn't go with the exception of West 11th or 99. When I go to LA, it's like drinking at an oasis in the desert of multicultural and racial experience. Eugene is the first place where I really haven't had that.
- The Lamb, look at the wall on the community project. We wanted to make sure people know Eugene is diverse. Everyone is white except the drag queens who are African American.

Housing

Jobs

K-12 Education

- Was in middle school in Eugene as person of color and trans. District did not know how to handle the situation. Teachers spoke of my situation openly without thinking about the consequences of what could happen to me. Didn't feel safe there, so I skipped. I don't know what it is like now. People are a little more scared to discuss these topics in middle and elementary.
- My kids go to Kelly Middle School where there are gay, trans students dating and holding hands. I just really think what it must be like growing up in this generation; with what's going on politically, the pendulum could swing back any moment.

Higher Education

Social Services

- Frequently asked where to find a primary care physician who understands gay men's issues, therapist who is familiar with gay men's mental health issues
- Mental health services in general is an issue. LGBTQ community services are lacking. If you have OHP, then it really gets even harder. OHP has a very long waiting list.
- There is a need for centralized information. In other big cities, you have a queer community center where you know to go for information.
- People who don't speak the language are struggling for support. Where are the services and support for these folks? Being a young Latino who doesn't speak English, your culture is different, etc.

Hostile Political Environment

- Politically speaking I feel like they're trying to split us. Can't judge people based on race or color.
- Most people watch television and they grasp information that is not accurate.

Micro-aggressions

- Micro-aggressions from ignorance and curiosity are emotionally exhausting. Happens dozens of times per day. I witnessed it happening and didn't have the skills to call it out – “What did you mean by that?” In institutional situations, can there be someone at city council meetings, etc., to note or call it out?

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- I didn't reach out to groups. Moved into town and grew friends through networks.
- Providing a space for queer people of color to celebrate and belong is very important. It's hard to belong when you can't find people to relate to.
- Still don't see a safe place here in Eugene for LGBTQ people of color; they opened the Lamb, great place to go dance. But not open to dance to other music and experiences.

Differences Within LGBTQ Community

- See examples of “Intersectionality” in second section.

Needs of LGBTQ Community

- There is a need for centralized information. In other big cities you have a queer community center where you know to go for information.
- We have neighborhood associations. Maybe we could have queer neighborhood associations. City was instrumental in starting the arts and business alliance, a good model.
- We are building a new city hall. I want to see artwork from the different communities and photos with representation from many communities. Signage in English and Spanish. Bathrooms that are gender neutral.
- I reported [hate/bias incident] to the police and was not told about HRNI. Need stickers in bars, on city property, bus stations, bus ads, inside bathroom stalls; owners are pretty good and would put up signs; radio public service announcements; booth at PRIDE; kids camps (one day focus on issues like this), start in Rec Guide; use different languages to get the word out.
- Work away from response to proactive prevention; have a visible campaign to raise awareness of diversity and positivity of inclusion.
- Still don't see a safe place in Eugene for LGBTQ people of color; they opened The Lamb, great place to go dance, but not open to dance to other music and experiences. For example, Latinx night.
- Need for ongoing, effective training for all City staff, including EPD.

TRANS Focus Group Themes

Characteristics of Transism

- Have had nasty experiences on street, in neighborhood.
- Feel tolerated on the streets.
- Am always on guard, never know when someone is going to strike – verbal remarks, looks, lot of people feel uncomfortable.
- Hypervigilant because in past have had hate incidents, but treated well in Eugene. Feels safer.
- If you “blend in” you’re ok; not all can do that (\$40,000 and good plastic surgeon). Tall M2F stands out, does not blend in as attractive young woman.
- Response online to KVAL interview was violent, mentioned bullets. This eats away at you, makes you anxious, afraid to leave the house, to speak, to be outgoing.
- Ignorance, benign or otherwise, lot of people just don’t know concept of gender, sexuality; needs a lot more coverage, far from over.
- Yelled at in restrooms.

Intersectionality

- Homeless trans people, can’t get job because homeless.
- I have a friend who is autistic and biracial (black). It’s really easy for him to get into trouble.

Institutional Expressions of Transism

City of Eugene

- No problems in park, no stares.
- There have been incidents at work with City.
- Had to battle with the City to get my medical needs as a trans person included in City health insurance. Hurts to never be told why it was being denied. Finally got some coverage. It was discrimination but City still will not acknowledge that. Union finally won it for all trans.
- Have been rejected by a customer as someone to provide him customer service. Yelled at in restroom. Am grateful it has been uncommon.
- Know someone who quit City job due to chronic misgendering; creates hostile work environment.

Across the Community

Police

- Good experiences with EPD, UOPD. Possible gender awareness training at EPD.
- In the 90’s, pulled over a couple of times, treated me really well (Lane County Sheriff).
- UO Police Department, “We are here to help, here to make your life easier”.
- EPD, “If anyone gives you any difficulties, let me know”.
- Worked with police, good relations. Transponder been directing the trans awareness with EPD.
- Experience and sense with EPD, positive.
- Experience with police, two instances, I applied, confusion, lack of education.

Businesses

- I feel welcome but in some businesses not so much.
- Local businesses and malls? It depends on business.
- Am hypervigilant in malls. “Not all people are accepting and to know there are people who would be quite happy to shoot me in the head; I am aware of that all the time.”
- Had nasty confrontation at fast food place in Springfield.

Housing

- Eugene is friendly, more welcoming than LA.
- There are trans people who are homeless.
- Need to feel safe in the home, if there is a problem, somewhere to go where I can get help. Otherwise can become

isolated, lose contact with world, could become suicidal.

- Unemployed, facing homelessness, and feel I have no future.
- If in transitional state, people less likely to want to rent to you.
- Live in South Eugene; when started coming out, brought us closer to neighbors, not further apart. One neighbor with confederate flag on their truck questionable.
- A lot of hypervigilance about my neighbors; afraid to present myself out in my front yard, to weed.

Jobs

- Jobs, especially small businesses. Discrimination from ignorance; don't know what transgender is.
- I have been called to job interviews and turned away.
- Jobs, concern, is it going to be an issue, is it not? I have been hired for my skills, old job, bathroom issues.
- Look for work, not easy, lot of interviews, no hires.

K-12 Education

Higher Education

Social Services

- Need to educate medical providers, both doctors and nurses. We do the education about the treatment they are giving us; we should not have to do that.
- Should not be my job to educate nurses.
- Friend was booted from the Mission as soon as workers there realized she was trans.
- There have been issues with Ridesource drivers.
- Assaulted at VA by a doctor, during an exam. Been discriminated in the VA here and in Roseburg. Assault is on the record.

Hostile Political Environment

- Powerful elements in society committed to harm us, encouraging states to pass laws, e.g., bathroom bills.
- “This law is as much about bathrooms as water fountains were during Jim Crow.”
- Bathroom bills are designed to dehumanize. Extremely painful on a personal level. Fundamental religious organizations back these laws.

Micro-aggressions

- Am hypervigilant. When guard is let down, that is when bias incidents happen.
- At my job, some customers “give me my menu and walk away.”
- As a trans person, relate to not seeing people like you in authority.

Isolation and Need for Safe Space

- There is a nice support network, people are accepting, more people understand.
- Was in L.A. I like Eugene, a little more welcoming, friendly community. Haven't had much problem.
- Make connections and friends like you because they will be your support. Nice to know you are not alone.
- Get involved with Transponder, be with people like you.
- Community has evolved and there is more support in the last five years. Trueselves web site is helpful; FB/Reddit for trans, asking questions, getting answers. Live people more helpful.
- Eugene gives you breathing room to figure things out.
- Societal pressures/discrimination; got here and it was like the chains came off. Wayward Lamb is welcoming.
- It's easy to be isolated, especially at the beginning of transition, awkward stage, easy to become insular.
- Transitioned in Eugene in 90s, from '95-2000. Now being a trans woman in the community, larger support network.
- Get involved with Transponder or gender support group. Common experience all of us have. Knowing you are with people who get it, who understand what you are going through every day.
- Most early transitions report on the internet. Lynn Conroy's site is invaluable.
- Moved at 17, moved a lot, Eugene has felt like my first true home, about 7 years now.
- What pronouns would you prefer? “Thank you so much for respecting me.”
- Feel blessed that I live here in this city, that I have the Transponder community.

Differences Within the Trans Community

Needs of Trans Community

- Need gender diversity awareness program for City employees and for employers. Transponder can help.
- A center for trans people (LGBTQ people more generally) is needed.