



National
RTAP

2021 Preconference Training

"Operational Rural and Tribal Strategies
for a Connected Network"



Date: October 19-21, 2021

Diversity Awareness and Environmental Justice in Rural Transit

Julie Schafer, RLS & Associates, Inc.

How to Participate

The image shows a Zoom meeting interface with a 5x4 grid of participant video feeds. Annotations highlight key controls for participation:

- Audio On/Off:** A blue box with an arrow pointing to the microphone icon in the top-left control bar.
- Video On/Off:** A purple box with an arrow pointing to the video camera icon in the top-left control bar.
- Chat Box:** A grey box with an arrow pointing to the chat icon in the bottom-right corner of the interface.

The Zoom interface includes the following elements:

- Top Bar:** Contains icons for "Recording", "Speaker View", and "Exit Full Screen".
- Participant Grid:** Displays 20 participants in a 5x4 grid. Names are visible below each video feed, including: martinka bobrikova, jorisjanssens, jessicahuber, Milica Ilic, sofie joye, Dirk, Dorota Ogrodzka, Marijana Rimanic, lorselys, Tamara, Ursula Wahl, silvia, lupe garcia, marine thevenet, grzegorz, Pau Cata, Chiara Organtini, StevenBrett, Marta Martins, paky viassopoulou, Peter Jenkinson, Ingrid Vranken, and anchett.
- Bottom Bar:** Contains icons for "Unmute", "Stop Video", "Invite", "Participants" (47), "Share Screen", "Chat" (1), "Record", "Reactions", and "Leave Meeting".
- Control Bars:** The top-left bar shows "Mute" and "Stop Video" buttons. The bottom-left bar shows "Unmute" and "Stop Video" buttons. A tooltip near the bottom-left bar reads: "Click if you want to switch to a different microphone or speaker".

Instructors



Julie Schafer

- Rural Transit Manager for 7 County System for 12 years
- Registered Guardian for Adults with Developmental and Other Disabilities for Many Years

Transit Was Created in a Segregated World



LAWS REQUIRING SEGREGATION ON BUSSES ARE HIT

Unconstitutional, High
Court Says; Dr. Shep-
pard's Appeal Rejected

Washington, Nov. 13 (AP)—The Supreme Court today struck down as unconstitutional city and state laws requiring segregation of Negroes and whites on busses.

Unanimous Order

In a unanimous order, it affirmed the decision of a three-judge federal court in Montgomery, Ala., June 5 that Montgomery and Alabama laws requiring bus segregation are unconstitutional.

The ruling was far more sweeping than a high court action last April 23 which outlawed bus segregation in four southern states—but on a technicality without settling the constitutional question.

Children to At Birthd Of Pet A

Washington, —Seven grande nieces and grandsons gathered for a joyous frolic at the White House Wednesday night to celebrate the 60th birthday of the "Mimi"—their grandmother, the First Lady. The festive occasion was marked by a reception in the White House last November celebrating her recovery from a heart attack. The First Lady's blue eyes were a striking feature of her face.

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Carter took
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Our Role

- We Are Stewards of Systems That Have Inequity and Discrimination Deeply Rooted In Them
 - We Must Step Back and Question Ourselves
 - Have we inherited past inequitable or discriminatory decisions?
 - Are there different standards for “dependent riders” and “choice riders”?

Our Role

- We Must Understand, Accept and Respect That Each Individual Is Unique and Recognize Our Individual Differences
- Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Socio-economic Status, Age, Physical Abilities, Religious Beliefs, Political Beliefs, or Other Ideologies.

Our Role

- It Is About Understanding Each Other and Moving Beyond Simple Tolerance to Embracing and Celebrating the Rich Dimensions of Diversity Contained Within Each Individual.
- Diversity Is Not Something An Agency Does, It Is Part of Who The Agency Is
- Who Are Our Customers and What Are Their Needs?

Our Role

- Everyone Has a Role In Ensuring Diversity
- Leadership and Organization: Vision, Mission, Strategic Plan, Staffing, Board
- Operations: Service Model, Route Changes, Fare, Equipment, Budget, Facilities, Union Engagement
- Customer Relations: Public Relations and Marketing, Customer Communications Systems, Marketing Materials, Customer Comments and Complaints, Limited English Proficiency, Generational Differences, Seniors
- Supervisors, Dispatchers, and Drivers: Customer Interaction, Rule Enforcement, Assistance

Our Role

- Enlightened Workforce
 - Respects Every Single Customer Regardless of Race, Language, Religion, Ethnicity, Gender, Age, Sexual Orientation
 - Eliminate Stereotypes or Preconceived Notions—Focus on the Individual Rather Than Assumptions of Who They Are
 - Pays Attention to Customer's Actions, Voice Inflections and Professed Needs
 - Shows Compassion and Supportive Attitude Towards Passengers
 - Looks Out for the Passenger's Best Interest

Empathy



Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

"I was taught to see racism only in individual acts of meanness, not in invisible systems conferring dominance on my group."

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
3. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
4. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
5. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
6. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
7. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.

Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

8. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.
9. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods that fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
10. Whether I use checks, credit cards or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
11. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.
12. I can swear, or dress in second-hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.
13. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.
14. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.

Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

15. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
16. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
17. I can criticize our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behavior without being seen as a cultural outsider.
18. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.
19. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.
20. I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children's magazines featuring people of my race.

Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

- 21. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, or feared.
- 22. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.
- 23. I can choose public accommodations without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.
- 24. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.
- 25. If my day, week, or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it has racial overtones.
- 26. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in “flesh” color and have them more or less match my skin.

Increased Understanding



Terminology

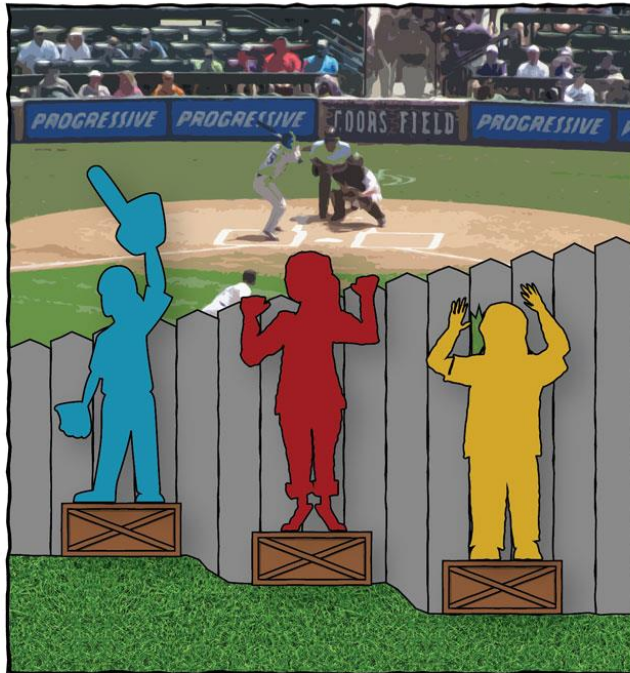
- ***Civil Rights*** Are The Rights of Citizens to Political And Social Freedom and Equality
- ***Environmental Justice*** Are Efforts That Avoid, Lessen, Or Improve Harmful Health, Environmental, Social, Or Economic Effects On Minorities Or Low Income Populations

Terminology

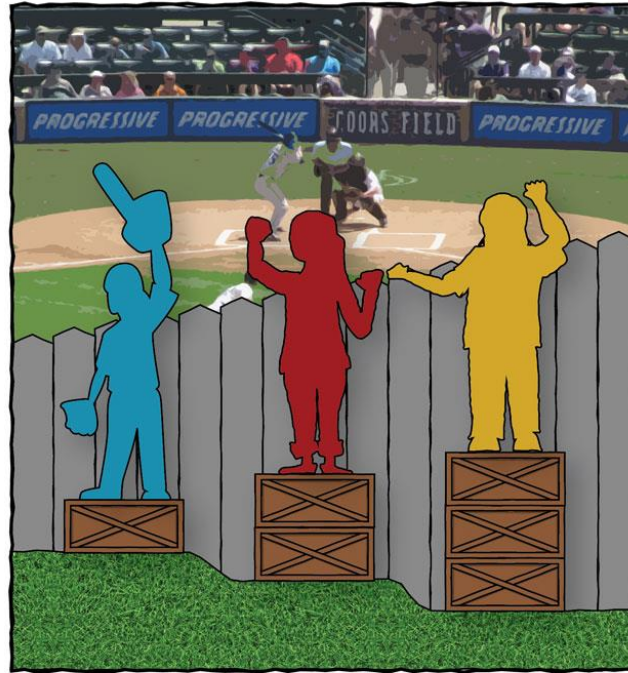
- ***Diversity*** Describes Distinct Or Unlike Qualities Such As Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race, Disability, Religion, Family Status, And Age. Includes An Infinite Range Of An Individuals' Unique Characteristics Such As Language and Experiences
- ***Inclusion*** Describes The Extent To Which Each Person Feels Welcomed, Respected, Supported, And Valued As A Team Member
 - Do your customers feel welcomed? Do they feel cared for?

Terminology

- ***Social Justice*** Is To Provide Everyone With Equal Rights, Opportunities, And Treatment



EQUALITY



EQUITY

Art by Paul Kuttner,
available at
<https://culturalorganizing.org/the-problem-with-that-equity-vs-equality-graphic/>

Terminology

- ***Diversity Management*** Is The Strategy Of Using Best Practices To Create A Diverse And Inclusive Organizational Culture
- ***Bias*** Is Personal Judgement For Or Against A Person, Group Or Idea, Often Based on Prejudice
- ***Equity*** Is The Fairness With Which Impacts Such As Benefits and Costs Are Distributed
- ***Culture*** Is The Integrated Patterns Of Human Behavior That Includes Thoughts, Communications, Actions, Customs, Beliefs, Values, And Institutions Of Racial, Ethnic, Religious, Or Social Groups

Terminology

- ***Cultural Competency*** Is Defined As A Set Of Congruent Behaviors, Attitudes, And Policies That Allow Employees To Work Effectively In Cross-cultural Situations.
- ***Cultural Sensitivity*** Is Knowing That Cultural Differences And Similarities Exist Without Assigning Values, I.E., Better Or Worse, Right Or Wrong, To Those Cultural Differences.
- ***Ethnicity***: A Group Identity Composed Of People Who Share A Unique Cultural Background Or Social Heritage That Is Passed From One Generation To Another

Terminology

- ***Ethnic Distinction*** Is Usually Based On Things Like Common Ancestry, Shared History, A Common Place Of Origin, Language, Dress, Food Preferences, And Participation In Rituals, Networks, Clubs Or Activities
- ***Heritage*** Is The Practices, Customs, Beliefs And Even Material Goods Which Are Handed Down By Our Ancestors.
- ***Stereotype*** Is A Conception, Image, Or Opinion About A Person, Place Or Thing Based On Incorrect Assumptions Often Made From A Lack Of Knowledge.

Terminology

- ***Racism:*** Prejudice Or Discrimination Based On An Individual's Race; Can Be Expressed Individually Or Through Institutional Policies Or Practices
- ***Prejudice:*** Prejudging; Making A Decision About A Person, Place Or Thing Without Sufficient Knowledge

Awareness Check-up



Organizational Assessment

- Evaluate Agency Behaviors In The Following Areas:
 - Foundation: How Does Your Agency Promote Diversity And Inclusion When Creating A Positive Customer Experience
 - Leadership: How Are You, As Leaders, Setting The Example For How Front-line Employees Provide Service To A Diverse Community
 - Service Delivery: How Does Your Agency Promote Input From Diverse Populations
 - Communication: How Does Your Agency Make Information Available To Diverse Community Groups
 - Performance Improvement: How Does Management Incorporate Diversity When Analyzing Ways To Improve Service

* An organizational assessment tool is provided in the resources tab*

Organizational Assessment

- What Kind Of Transit Service Do I Provide?
 - Do Polices Cater to Choice Riders?

Some Transit Systems have Designed Service That Segregates Choice Riders from Dependent Riders

- Commuter routes designed to target Choice riders
 - Shorter ride time
 - Higher fare
- Local routes designed to target Dependent riders
 - Lower fare
 - Longer ride time

Organizational Assessment

- **Intentional And Unintentional Discrimination**
 - Assigning Newer or Better Equipped Vehicles to Higher Income Communities
 - Superior Shelters at Higher Income Communities
 - Disproportionate Number of Shelters in Choice Rider Areas
 - Superior Transit Hubs and Transfer Centers at Higher Income Communities
 - Disproportionate Number of Transit Hubs and Transfer Centers in Choice Rider Areas
 - Hours of Operation Focused on the Needs of Choice Riders
 - Fare Structure Restricts Use by Lower Income Individuals
 - Superior Safety Features in Higher Income Communities
 - Fare Media Options that Cater to Choice Riders (cashless)
 - Unbalanced Representation for Dependent Riders on Boards and Committees

Reflection

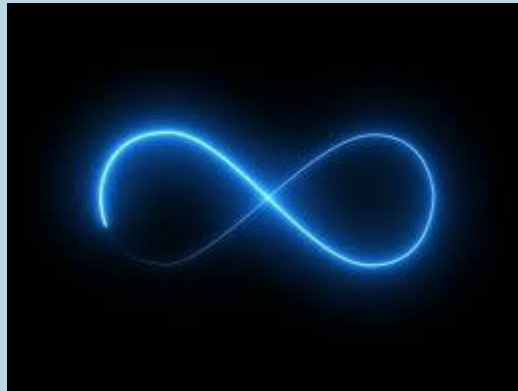


Reflection

- **Equitable Transit**

- Requires Us to Question How We Make Decisions
 - It means we may need to be willing to question, educate, and call out decision makers at times
- It Means Listening to All Riders and Communities, Not Just People Who Have the Time and Confidence to Show up at a Board Meeting
- It Means Having Boards and Committees that Reflect the Diversity of Riders and the Community
 - Token representation is not enough
- Requires Us to Affirmatively Trying to be Part of the Solution
 - We have to be thoughtful about what we do (“we’ve always done it that way”)

Perpetuating Change



Perpetuating Change

- Tips

- Transit Leadership Must Embrace the Concept of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Diversity Training For All Staff And Boards
- Hire and Retain A Diverse Workforce
 - Value the Diversity and Leverage Knowledge and Talents
- Establish and Maintain a Diverse Board and Advisory Committees
- Assess Operations, Service Policies, and Planning To Evaluate If Practices May Be Discriminatory
 - Token representation is not enough
- Requires Us to Affirmatively Trying to be Part of the Solution
 - We have to be thoughtful about what we do (“we’ve always done it that way”)

Perpetuating Change

- **Tips For Serving The Public**
 - Formal and Informal Conversations About Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
 - Solicit Input from Places that Help People of Diverse Backgrounds
 - Collaborate with Businesses that Serve Diverse Communities
 - Consider Rider Needs when Conducting Public Meetings
 - Market and Provide Information in Plain Language
 - Be Aware that Different Cultures have Different Norms
 - Prioritize Stops and Routes Based on Equity Needs and Transit Dependent Populations
 - Plan for Affordability Options for Lower Income Riders
 - Discount Fares
 - Vouchers

Perpetuating Change

- **Final Comments**

- Unless We, as Transit Leaders, are Willing to Step Back and Question Ourselves and Our Service, are Willing to have Uncomfortable Conversations, and Embrace Our Power to Influence Change, We Continue to Perpetuate Injustices
- While Our System May Not be Large Enough to Trigger Title VI Fare and Equity Analyses, Providers Are Still Required to Ensure Services Are Provided in a Non-discriminatory Manner.
- Change Begins with Us

Self-Assessment Resources

- Project Implicit Is A Non-profit Organization And International Collaboration With The Goal Of Educating The Public About Hidden Biases.
- Excellent Tool For Front-line Employees To Recognize And Change Behaviors.
- Web-based Testing Model To Determine Biases And Provide Data To Researchers

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>

Questions?

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