

United Way of Ventura County Anti-Racism Statement

The United Way of Ventura County affirms its commitment to recognizing, addressing, and eradicating all forms of racism and ethnic oppression in our community and beyond. We recognize that structural racism and other forms of discrimination have contributed to persistent economic, educational, and healthcare disparities, which United Way seeks to dismantle. United Way Board of Directors, staff, and community partners are united in the pursuit to end racial and ethnic bias and to empower our community towards this collective goal.

We also resolve to challenge ourselves, take part in reflective self-critique to understand and correct any inequities we may discover and gain a better understanding of our own biases during this purposeful process.

The United Way of Ventura County is committed to:

- Being an anti-racism organization;
- Developing, maintaining, and publicly posting an organization statement opposing all forms of racism and discrimination;
- Annually providing racial equity training for all board members and staff;
- Conducting an organizational assessment of all policies, practices, and programs to better reflect the values we hold related to equity and justice;
- Continuing to examine our role in advancing the end of racism, especially any systemic racism that continues to perpetuate inequities and discrimination;
- Promoting programming that promotes equity and advances opportunity for all.

Staff, volunteers, Board, and community partners are expected to uphold these values as we work together to build a more equitable and inclusive community. Harassment, bullying, and discrimination will not be tolerated. We consider diversity, equity, and inclusion integral to our work, and at the heart of what it means to Live United.

Definition List:

Anti-Racism: Anti-Racism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. An anti-racism organization not only seeks to acknowledge that racism exists, but the organization is intentional in its actions to eliminate racial inequities in everyday life.

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

Racial Equity: In a racially equitable society, the distribution of society’s benefits and burdens would not be skewed by race. In other words, racial equity would be a reality in which a person is no more or less likely to experience society’s benefits or burdens just because of the color of their skin. This is in contrast to the current state of affairs in which a person of color is more likely to live in poverty, be imprisoned, drop out of high school, be unemployed and experience poor health outcomes like diabetes, heart disease, depression and other potentially fatal diseases. Racial equity holds society to a higher standard. It demands that we pay attention not just to individual-level discrimination, but to overall social outcomes.

Diversity: Diversity has come to refer to the various backgrounds and races that comprise a community, nation or other grouping. In many cases the term diversity does not just acknowledge the existence of diversity of background, race, gender, religion and sexual orientation but implies an appreciation of these differences.

Sources:

11 Terms You Should Know to Better Understand Structural Racism. (2016, July 11). Aspen Institute. <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/blog-posts/structural-racism-definition/>

Singh, A. A. (2019). *Racial Healing Handbook: Practical Activities to Help You Challenge Privilege, Confront Systemic Racism, and Engage in Collective Healing*. New Harbinger Publications.