



DEI COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS REPORT

We Are All in this Together

In Fall 2022, United Way of Clallam County hosted three community conversations about diversity, equity and inclusion in Clallam County. Conversation participants shared their aspirations, main concerns and actions for our community. This report is an overview of what we learned and what we're planning on doing next.

As an organization committed to **supporting** our community's human service agencies, we focused our invitations to the staff, boards, volunteers and clients of our partner agencies. With this limited list, we were not surprised that participants were mostly white, female, nonprofit workers. We will be expanding our invitation list for future conversations to incorporate new perspectives.

Aspirations

- Back up language with actions and systemic changes.
- Examine the power differential.
- Explore how to center lived experience; create brave/safe spaces.
- Reach out and involve others in **community** awareness; raise up voices and experiences of oppressed community members.

Conversation participants envisioned a community where everyone feels part of the fabric of the community, regardless of any differences that may be present. They understood that a more powerful community is one that reflects the diversity of the community: tribal members, folks of Latin heritage, differently abled people, justice involved community members, ALICE families and many others.

Main Concerns

- Not representing enough of the community within the conversations. Having different perspectives at the table creates more successful solutions.
- Engagement with the Native American community is critical, but there's low **collaboration** with the tribes. Lots of opportunity to build those relationships (agency to agency).
- Are we asking the right questions to discover each other's differences? Not asking enough of the right questions leaves us in the dark.
- Racial, economic, and geographic stigma needs to be addressed.
- Over the last few years of polarization people feel restrained in public discourse.

From housing and economic issues to healthcare, **education** and technology, participants had concerns about how to ensure equal representation for all given the many systemic **barriers** present for people whom society has marginalized.

Read on for our community's concerns and actions for diversity, equity and **inclusion** matters within our community.

As long as we are moving towards equity and inclusion, we are heading in the right direction; let's not let these conversations burn out. - Conversation Participant

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Actions

- Keep using our collective resources.
- Being verbal and inclusive about what the community wants will make a big difference in the work.
- Involve more people. Continue the conversations with intention.
- Work to lead through this process and uplift those who are on the same journey.
- Create **belonging** across communities.
- Those who are most affected and on the ground doing the work; let them drive the direction we go.

Remaining Questions

- What is the **diversity** of leadership in Clallam County? Do we have people in the right positions to help **advocate** for these changes?
- How do we change long standing systemic norms?
- How can the non-profit sector cultivate **compassion** for this cause on the part of industry leaders, corporations?
- How do we have DEI conversations in a thoughtful way that would help others examine their surroundings?

United Way Conclusions

- Economic inequities are a top concern.
- Under-represented folks were missing in these conversations.
- People don't know how to talk about racism.
- People are seeking community and collaboration.
- There is a sense of tension in this work – gossip, lack of safety, fear of confrontation/saying the wrong thing/conflict.
- People don't know how to take actions around diversity, equity and inclusion or don't know what actions to take.
- People are uncertain about how to step into leadership.
- People are willing to act but don't know how.

Next Steps

Educate

- Community Convenings
- Book Studies
- Film Screenings

Connect

- CEO Roundtables
- Worker Affinity Groups
- Community Conversations

Communicate

- Workplace Trainings
- Decolonizing Policies
- Cross-Cultural Communications