Notes on the "Symposium on Race Relations and Social Justice: Dismantling systems of Racism and Exclusion for a Better I.E"

University Diversity Committee

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Symposium 2019 Notes

Keynote Speaker – Dr. Gail Christopher

1. Narrative Change – Stories
   - Tell a new story about America.
2. Racial Healing = Trust Building
   - Overcome our bias across racial lines.
3. Separation
4. Legal systems maintain hierarchy of human value
   - Hierarchy of human value must be jettisoned
   - Oppression through legally sanctioned violence.
5. Economy

Visioning
Where are we now?

What are the critical points of leverage?

How do we cause systemic change? Who makes these changes?

We must build and sustain infrastructure to create change.

Create new models to make old ones obsolete.

American Association of Colleges and Universities is creating centers (150 libraries targeted)

Symposium History / Overview

2013 – Westside Action Group

- Retreat and Committees
- Organized to address discrepancies and disparities

2014 – First Symposium

- Keynote Speaker – Samuel Benitez
- Nothing happened – no serious goals or sustained result
- We need Action Plan to keep it going.

Books

- Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America by Ibram X. Kendi (April 12, 2016)
- Rising Out of Hatred: The Awakening of a Former White Nationalist by Eli Saslow
Roll Call (Who is here at the Symposium today?)

- Students (CSUSB, UCR)
- Community health organizations
- Special Education teachers
- Office of Public Defender
- Native American Council
- Valley Star Behavioral Health (business)
- *The Way* World Outreach (church)

Notes from Working Group 1 – Homelessness and Food Insecurity

*When the issue is complicated, there is rarely an easy solution.*

- Issues are intertwined, so that keeps things in silos.
- Collaboration and communication within, and among agencies is critical.
- Need for sustainable resources.
- Helpful vs. punitive efforts.
- Need to define homelessness: chronic homelessness with other concerns or families being pushed out, or housing insecurity.
- The best intervention is to pay someone’s rent, before they lose housing.
- Minimal homeless programs exist, many of them geared to people with chronic mental illness (students cannot access)
- We have only two shelters in San Bernardino County – we need more shelters, and specific types of shelters.

Who Are the Homeless in San Bernardino County?

2,118 Homeless (does not include (people sleeping in their) vehicles, couch surfers)

1,443 Unsheltered (68%)

Subpopulations

- 349 Unaccompanied Women
- 125 Veterans
- 113 Youths, Ages 18-24
- 29 Families
- 646 homeless people in the City of San Bernardino

Barriers to Success

We need to develop a sustained, targeted strategy for each different type of homeless population.

- Identify existing resources in San Bernardino County
- Dialing “211” to access resources does not work, because the system is lacking.
• Minimal homeless programs, many of the resources geared to people with chronic mental illness (students cannot access)
• Need to change stigma of homelessness (use Strategic Framing Analysis, UCLA Public Policy) Families, Family Members, Humanizing Homelessness.
• Process entails: 2 weeks temporary housing, connecting students to financial aid and community services.
• Waiting list for housing voucher is about 5-8 years.
• We have only two shelters in San Bernardino County – we need more shelters and specific types of shelters.
• Kim Carter (Time for Change) was going to build 21-unit facility for domestic violence victims, but there was pushback from the community.
• We need to build trust, speak the same language and follow through.

Drivers of Homelessness
• Lack of affordable housing, drug and alcohol use
• Poor health, mental illness, physical disability
• Divorce, separation
• Domestic violence
• Unstable /disruptive home environment
• Mass Incarceration

Close to Home: Homelessness and Students at CSUSB
Jesse: “In last 2 years, I have encountered 73 homeless CSUSB students.” We need supportive housing that provides life skills too (e.g. like cooking)

• College student does not have access to sustainable housing, so resorts instead to more loans and debt.
• It’s a vicious cycle, because increased loans create increased debt and increased stress. In hopes of alleviating the stress, the student takes another loan, and the cycle repeats
• The DEN can provide some support, but is not enough.

Short-Term Strategies
The housing situation is complicated. What if we could support families with other needs (food, groceries) in a different way? How can we help families access other securities, while addressing housing insecurity at the same time?

• Care packages
• Food/groceries
• Funds to purchase/access medication
• School supplies
• Sanitary supplies
Hygiene units (Showers of Hope)
• Clothing
• Laundry units

Long-Term Strategies
• Humanizing Homelessness
• More shelters
  o Collaborate with local government representatives
  o Phone campaign
  o On-site social workers
• identify nonprofits that need funding
• Normalize homelessness at CSUSB
  o Incorporate into orientations (DEN brochure, have one student as representative on panel)
  o Provide access for students, with stipulation and support
  o Housing for Project Rebound students
• Permanent, supportive housing with comprehensive services
• Counseling – addiction, psychological
• Medication management
• Life-skills training
• Employment programs
• Since homicide and suicide rates are manifestations of lack of self-value, we must raise young people’s perception of their own self-value

Working Group 2 – Intersectionality of Race and Mental Health Services
• African-Americans/Hispanics are more likely to use Mental Health Services, yet problems show even greater need
• African-Americans (ages 6 to 10) showed significant unmet needs
• African-Americans/Hispanics are less likely to receive specialty services
• African-Americans used fewer services

Some Reasons for Inadequate Care:
• Racial disparity
• Disproportionality
• Lack of resources
• Monetary allocations

A SWOT Analysis of Mental Health in Our Community
Strengths
• Community collaboration, including faith-based providers/partners
• Willingness to be educated
• Acknowledgment of large disparities between race and mental health (evidenced by this event, school presence, Public Defender’s Office, law enforcement)
• People who are passionate about the topic.
• Historical participation and partnerships
• State acknowledges the importance of treating “the whole person” – both physical and mental/behavioral health are equally important
• AB 27/26 Funding – Mental Health Accessibility Bill means money to the School District.
• Mental Health Services Act – brings more awareness of the issue
• Celebrities admitting to mental health needs helps to decrease the stigma
• Continued efforts make progress in dismantling the stigma that is attached to mental health.
• Desert Valley Hospital (DVH) has regularly-scheduled provider meetings for mental health professionals.
• Increased funding allows for expansion of programs.
• **County Department of Behavioral Health**
  o Services are peer-driven, peer-influenced.
  o Increases both community and consumer effectiveness.
  o Allows more appropriate delivery.
• Mental health providers in schools (one for every 400 students)
• Youth are more advanced than adults in that they are aware of their mental health needs
  o Youth have a willingness to say, “I do need some help.” Parents/other adults are not so open to doing the same.
  o They have emotional intelligence
  o They are aware of the specifics of mental health issues
  o They are knowledgeable about treatments, options (e.g. meditation in schools)

**Weaknesses**

1. Lack of access
   • Particularly for children, homeless and minorities
   • Lack of Insurance
   • Lack of information
   • Special needs population (disabled) often shut-in, due to lack of transportation
2. Inadequate “System of Care”
   • Systemic Issues
   • Unrealistic timelines (group homes, 6 months, EAP)
   • Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP formula)
   • Limited funding streams lead to premature closure of cases
3. Limited Funding
   • Prioritization of needs
• 400 students to one Mental Health professional
• More funding to military

4. Prioritization
• Policies and agendas get in the way
• Department of Behavioral Health uses community-driven agenda with feedback from consumers, community and providers
• Each agency believes that their own priorities are the most important

5. Cyclical
• Same problems occur year after year because finding solutions is not a priority.

6. Misdiagnoses
7. Diagnoses are stereotyped (e.g. ADHD and African-American males)
8. Lack of cultural responsiveness
9. Underrepresentation of people of color in the field (mental health professionals)
   • Cultural competency is an issue
10. Under-preparedness or complete lack of preparation
   • Not enough training of educational clinicians
11. We allow “bad apples” to remain when it is clear they need to find another profession.
   • Same phenomenon is found in professionals, teachers, government
   • Problems with credentialing
   • Agencies are often more interested in recruiting bodies
   • Needs to be more than one class
   • Racist White ideologies
   • Problems with curriculum materials

12. Accountability
• Need to hold universities accountable in preparing our Mental Health professionals!
• CAPS on college campuses are not enough!
  i. Not enough counselors on campus
  ii. Counselors do not have capacity to help students, they must refer to other providers, but lack adequate educational resources to do so effectively.
  iii. They are forced to do acknowledge weaknesses of existing student services.
  iv. When services are needed, counselors and students must rely on outside sources.
  v. Revisit metrics/Improve program assessment
  vi. Actionable change is needed
13. Tele-therapy Is not necessarily a good thing, creates a “disconnect”
14. There is reporting of positives, but not problems or concerns

Opportunities
1. Cross-sector collaboration (e.g. including law enforcement in behavioral health training and education)
2. Training/education (e.g. Crisis Intervention Training [CIT] retrained and reframed
3. Crisis Stabilization Centers for Youth
   - Avoid admitting youths into juvenile corrections system
4. Mental health programs at CSUSB and other colleges and universities
5. More holistic programs
6. Student/community-led initiatives/self-starting, grassroots efforts)
7. Create groups for populations that are most at-risk
   - LGBT community
   - Female firefighters
   - Black student union
8. Keep groups that have historical, present-day value
   - Add multi-cultural groups, without dismantling and replacing
9. Advisory group – Different sub-communities meet separately, then come together to discuss issues, solutions, how to make progress

Threats
1. Limited or expired funding
   - Allocation of funding distribution
   - Providers need to be trained at comprehensive levels
   - Need to exceed state requirements
   - Lack of community and family support
   - Staying silent about Mental Health
   - Provide smaller contracts to smaller agencies, to grow them
2. Upcoming professional level of preparedness
   - Cultural competency
   - Trained by educators who maintain the system
3. Accessibility
4. Existing stigma, especially among black and brown communities
   - Not talking about mental health... is it cultural?
5. Social media
6. Using mental health as an excuse to justify White violence
7. Stereotypes
8. Lack of self-advocacy
9. Reactive vs. proactive

Mental Health “Call to Action"
1. Provide smaller contracts to smaller agencies; do not continue to fund the “Walmarts” of Mental Health.
2. Accountability:
   - Elected officials, schools, universities, educators, professionals.
   - We need to be conscientious about how we train and treat Mental Health.
3. Place funding and responsibility in the hands of the community
   - Community providers
   - Commission of Community Providers
4. Who decides where the money goes?
   - Make available funds public before distribution
     i. Announcement
     ii. Some folks never even know about it!
     iii. Awareness/accessibility of information
     iv. Money goes to the SAME people, agencies, nonprofits

5. Establish better metrics to evaluate success of services to determine contract and dollar distribution. No automatic renewal.

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**Working Group 3 – School to Prison Pipeline**

(Melissa Rubio)

1. Build relationships with students, families
   - Support must be meaningful and impactful
   - What do they need from us? Not what do we think they need?

2. Train, coach, professional development for anyone who interfaces with students, socioemotional learning (SEL)
   - EVERY person who interacts with a child is a TEACHER

3. PBIS – Positive Behavior in Support, ACE scores
   - Address without judgment or exclusion
   - Police department – change strategies and practices
   - Identify triggers so that a difficult situation is not inadvertently exacerbated

4. Different labeling, marketing programs – “parenting program”
   - “What’s wrong with my parenting?”
   - Should invite parents, not make them feel judged.

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**K-12 Professional**

- Roots of Expulsion –defiant because ...? Need to discover root cause before we can solve the problem.
- Too many want punishment instead of correction
  - Punishment frequently creates a situation where bad behavior repeats, and often escalates
  - Correction addresses a problem and mitigates or eliminates it. Successful correction means that the problem does not recur. Usually, correction is gradual, requiring time, attention and positive reinforcement for good behavior.

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**How to Deal with Micro-Aggression**

Teaching how to deal with micro-aggression
Three-dimensional relationships
Moving away from validating stereotypes
Make vulnerable students strong by building resiliency
Active listening, see viewpoint of other people
Find the source of micro aggression
Find out why the student is behaving that way – Is something going on at home?
Build caring relationships between students and teachers
Build healthy, positive attachments with an adult who cares
Mentorship programs
Student = situation/problem and solution

Cause of Negative Academic Performance
What is the root of the problem?

- Flags (e.g. chronic tardiness)
- Adversity at home and in the community
- Children are re-conditioned to think differently from people in authority
- The body “keeps the score.” (ACE)

Intervention

- Create juvenile intervention program for youths with no criminal history.
- System needs to intervene to show children that they are safe.
- Create structure (restore and justice)
- Family conference meeting – Connect with resources (Corrective measures)
- Parent project – parents and educators together (community, collaboration)

Solutions

- Evaluate the situation and decide if it is the real problem, or if the current situation is hiding the “real” problem.
- Authority figures must let children know that they are in a safe place.
- Mentorships -- Give children recognition for their effort.
- Identify ACEs and intervene
- Train anyone who interacts with children.
- Create a support system.
- Show student how to heal and restore without re-traumatization.
- Build a bridge between two different cultures.
- If problems are prevented early, there will be no need for intervention later.

How Do We Build Academic Resiliency If Student Is ACEs?

- We must be supportive at school.
• Wellness centers (mindfulness)
• Reach out to existing resources and talk to administrators to find new resources.
• Connect children and families with advocacy programs.
• Improve conditions for teachers and keep them in the loop.
• Try not to change leadership too much, or children’s needs won’t get met.
• What does the community need? Include the community in finding solutions.
• School is a place of transformation.
• Take students as they are. Be inclusive. “How can I help you?”
• Learn to teach a child whom you don’t love.
• Students know when you care for them.
• Connection builds trust, and when there is trust between teacher and child, the child will work harder to excel, to please the teacher.

Creating a System of Care
• Three students per staff member.
• Create a system to help kids.
  o What are the needs?
  o What are the barriers?
• Everyone is a piece of the solution.
• Create a tracking system for the school system?
  o Courses taken
  o Truancy, etc.
• ASP/OYSO can help identify these things.
• CSU and remediation are part of this.
• Take it to the Community College system.
• Does creating this system “label” the student in whom we want to see growth?
• (Must have) early intervention to help student who faces academic adversity, before it is too late.
• Still look at those who are doing well in school.
• It takes a community (village) to raise a child.
• Find ways to share data.
• Connect with other organizations.
• When making a connection, be careful with language use.
Breakout Session Panel Presentations: Call to Action

Working Group 1: Homelessness and Food Insecurity (Robie and Daisy)

**Homelessness**

1. Building trust— use nomenclature
2. Humanizing homelessness
   - Avoid “othering”
   - Cultivate reservoir of compassion
3. Complicated issues
   - Targeted, integrated approach to groups
   - Create funding with a bond on the ballot
4. Develop permanent supportive housing (long-term)
5. Section 8 Housing (Federal Government Housing)
6. Temporary tiny homes (short-term)
7. Put a bond on the ballot

**Food Insecurity**

1. Hungry kids cannot learn
   - One in five children struggle with hunger, according to California Department of Education
2. Provide the connection, be the connection if you have contacts
3. Connection – make a connection, provide a correction.
4. Easing child hunger is more accessible than homelessness.
5. No Kid Hungry needs to get access to San Bernardino County Unified School District
6. Use different models to get the job done
   - Elementary – breakfast in the classroom – first 15 minutes (Rialto Unified School District)
   - Middle/High School – Grab n Go carts in high-traffic areas before school starts and between first and second period.
   - Feed 80% of kids
7. “It Takes a Villag.” It takes a community to create change
8. It takes commitment and working together to create greater change
   - Tap into:
     i. Nonprofits
     ii. Faith-based organizations

**Action Item:** Emailed San Bernardino County Unified School District leaders and a school site leader at a Victorville elementary school to connect them with Share Our Strength.

**Group 2 – Intersectionality of Race and Mental Health Services**

- “Something is happening to our kids, and we are not talking about it.”
• Institutions are no longer the standard treatment for mental issues.
• Make the community accountable for mental health.
• When a contract is available, make sure that the community knows about the availability
• Place funding in responsible hands. Let them decide who gets the contract, according to who can leverage existing resources and new resources for the most public benefit.
• We need a better way to assess services as they are needed/used.

Group 3 – School to Prison Pipeline  (Melissa Rubio)
• Persistent Bio-Accumulative Toxic Substances (PBTs)
• Connect community organizations and share data so that resources are best used and agencies are not working against each other.
• Reap the benefit of a trauma-informed classroom.
• “Give a hand and relate to others.”
• Dismantle the “school to prison pipeline.”
• Just because someone is living in poverty doesn’t mean they are poor.
• Hold policymakers accountable for closing gaps in schools

Group 4 – Prevention, Intervention and Barriers to Resources and Re-entry
• Make resources accessible.
• Community collaboration.
• Help people see the benefits of programs.
• Build trust together.
• There is a lack of positive role models.
• We are 3D people, and we need to see the world in the same place.
• We must find the power in helping and loving each other.
• Practice listening and expressing, respecting other people’s viewpoints. Just because they don’t agree with you doesn’t mean that they are against you.
• Think about students as the solution, not as the problem. Everyone needs to be a part of solution.
• Students drive change (e.g. create events and social media campaigns)
• Project Rebound
• We must encourage financial aid literacy.

Group 5: improving Race Relations and Social Justice for Future Leaders
• We need parent engagement.
• Increase role models. What is the role of the community?
• Increase University diversity
• Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)
• Learning Opportunities for the Future (LOFF)
• “(You are standing) in a room full of giants!”
• Bypass system and go directly to the source (parents and leadership).
• Be persistent and make it a priority
• Doing something of good conscience!
• Targeting suggestions

Summary
• Connections that students have with teachers or anyone surrounding them throughout their education (home, school, etc.) are always a benefit.
• There is always a cause for every positive or negative action/reaction.
• We need to work on creating appropriate consequences.
• Before dealing with “what” happened, deal with*why* it happened.
• Keep students first
• Students are the solution, not the problem
• What are the underlying causes of students “acting up?”
• Understand where kids are coming from to find out what is causing their actions or behavior before you try to help their issues/situation.
• Educators (need to) find out what the needs of students are.
• Value all students equally, regardless of their grades, behavior, actions
• Adults need to view students’ world (e.g./culture) as students do, so that students can communicate effectively.
• ASK, get everyone in the community involved to acquire and implement what is needed
• Build relationships. They are key.
• Once programs and openness are in place, there might need to be adjustments. “It’s a never-ending train ride.”
• Stakeholders to support student success.
  o We MUST check our privileges and biases.
  o Trauma-informed strategies in the classroom.
  o Build relationships in the classroom, get to know their homes.
  o Involve parents and the rest of the family.
• ACE scores
• Loving, connected communities (way from social media).
• Social, emotional learning strategies.
• Recognize sources of micro-aggression.
• Implement restorative justice and cultural relevance (Ethnic studies?}
• Create alternative discipline strategies.
• Move away from entry into the criminal justice system.
Call to Action (3 Next Steps)

Brief historical overview of Symposium. Whose idea was it?

2013 – List of things that were not financed and in which there were disparities.


2019 – Highlight progress of today, Action Plan

• Summary recommendations and PowerPoint uploaded to website.
• Goal – recruit more people into Action Groups.
• What now? What is next?
  o Monthly meeting
  o Funding, with update reports
  o Planning of 3rd Symposium

The socioeconomic environment and consequences affect us all in one way or another.

Umbrella Idea – Support student needs in all aspects. (Emotional, educational, mental health, etc.)

What Now? Final Questions/ Comments/ Next Steps

1. Recommendation for next year’s symposium
   • Highlight progress and results
   • Impact on the community

Action Groups– Sign-Up sheets

• Meetings once a month
• Annual Council Meeting
• Status reports on work being done
• Annual Council meeting status reports
• Have next Symposium in 3 or 4 years? Maybe make timeline shorter?