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# Equity in the Center

A project of  **ProInspire**

## **Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture**

**Kerrien Suarez, Andrew Plumley**

# Webinar Facilitators



Kerrien Suarez  
Director of Equity in the Center



Andrew Plumley  
Senior Program Manager  
Equity in the Center

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# About Equity in the Center

Equity in the Center works to shift mindsets, practices, and systems within the social sector to increase racial equity. We envision a future where nonprofit and philanthropic organizations advance race equity internally while centering it in their work externally.

Equity in the Center's goals are:

- Nonprofit and philanthropic organizations adopt a Race Equity Culture focused on proactive counteraction of social inequities
- Organizations define, implement, and advance race equity internally while advocating for it in their work externally
- Race Equity is centered as a core goal of social impact across the sector

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# Webinar Results

Participants will be introduced to research and resources Equity in the Center provides to support leaders and organizations in advancing race equity.

Participants will understand key research findings from the “Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture” publication, and how to apply the Race Equity Cycle framework in their own work.

Participants will learn about management and operational levers that can shift organizational culture towards race equity.

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# Terms and Definitions

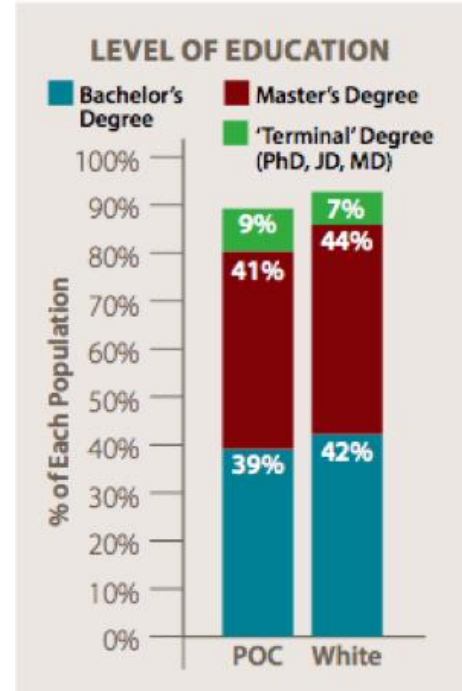
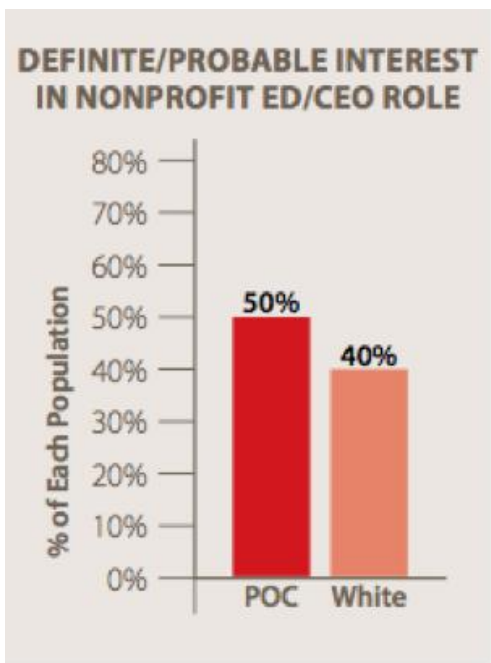
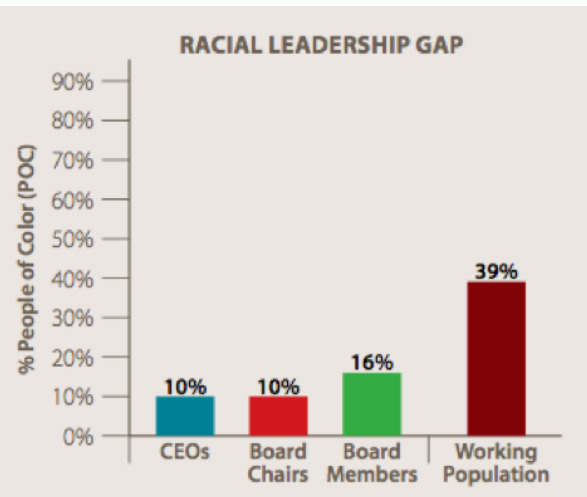
**RACE EQUITY:** The condition where one's race identity has no influence on how one fares in society. Race equity is one part of race justice and must be addressed at the root causes and not just the manifestations. This includes the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race.

**RACE EQUITY LENS** The process of paying disciplined attention to race and ethnicity while analyzing problems, looking for solutions, and defining success. A race equity lens critiques a “color blind” approach, arguing that color blindness perpetuates systems of disadvantage in that it prevents structural racism from being acknowledged. Application of a race equity lens helps to illuminate disparate outcomes, patterns of disadvantage, and root cause.

**RACE EQUITY CULTURE:** A culture focused on proactive counteraction of social and race inequities inside and outside of an organization.

# Building A Race Equity Culture in the Social Sector

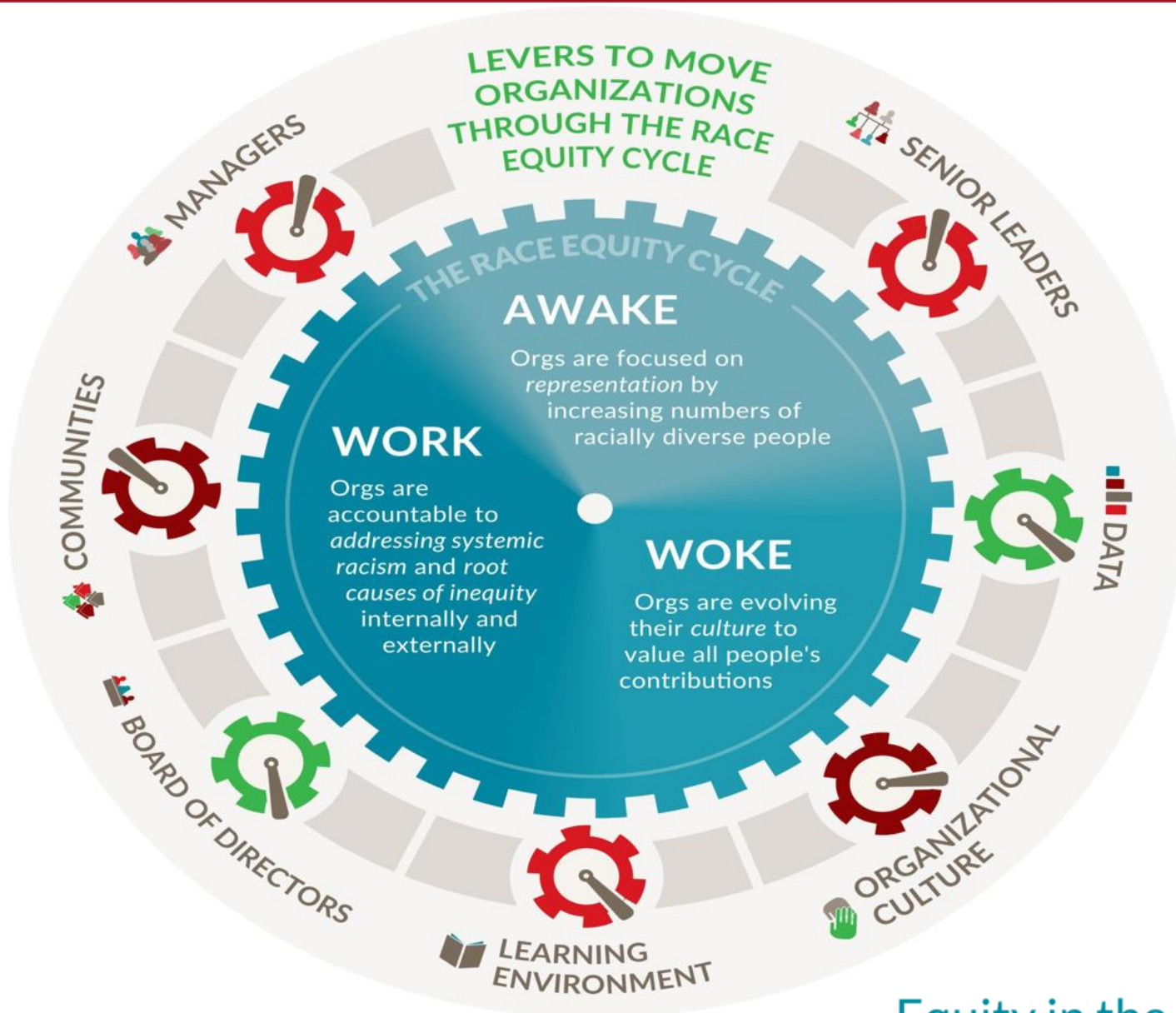
SOCIAL SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS NEED A RACE EQUITY CULTURE TO ADDRESS THE RACIAL LEADERSHIP GAP



Creating a race equity culture and closing the racial leadership gap will help organizations succeed at their missions.

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# THE ROLE OF LEVERS IN BUILDING A RACE EQUITY CULTURE



## Senior Leadership

Individuals in a formal leadership role



## Learning Environment

Investment in staff capacity



## Management

Individuals who oversee operations of teams



## Data

Metrics to drive improvements and focus



## Board Of Directors

Individuals who oversee operations of teams



## Organizational Culture

Shared values, assumptions, and beliefs



## Community

Populations served by the organization

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**SENIOR LEADERSHIP LEVER**

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# SENIOR LEADERSHIP LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Believe that diverse representation is important, but may feel uncomfortable discussing issues tied to race

## Policies & Processes

- Place responsibility for creating and enforcing DEI policies within HR department

## Data

- Have started to gather data about race disparities in the populations they serve

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# SENIOR LEADERSHIP LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Prioritize an environment where different lived experiences and backgrounds are valued and seen as assets to teams and to the organization

## Policies & Processes

- Evaluate hiring and advancement requirements that often ignore system inequities and reinforce white dominant culture, such as graduate degrees and internship experience

## Data

- Disaggregate internal staffing data to identify areas where race disparities exist, such as compensation and promotion

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# SENIOR LEADERSHIP LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Model a responsibility to speak about race, dominant culture, and structural racism both inside and outside the organization

## Policies & Processes

- Show a willingness to review personal and organizational oppression, and have the tools to analyze their contribution to structural racism

## Data

- Can illustrate, through longitudinal outcomes data, how their efforts are impacting race disparities in the communities they serve

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# LEADERSHIP LEVER IN PRACTICE

## AWAKE

### **Leadership for Educational Equity:**

Analyzed disaggregated program data to identify how many people of color participated in external leadership programs about running for elected office.

## WOKE

### **Leadership for Educational Equity:**

Sets and communicates goals around diversity, equity, and inclusion across all programming. Incorporates goals into staff performance metrics. Adjusts strategy upon quarterly reviews at the department and organizational levels.

## WORK

### **Leadership for Educational Equity:**

After a four-month pilot, executive coaching program for VPs expanded to a year-long investment. VPs receive coaching about diversity/inclusion to help improve their team and organizational leadership.



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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS LEVER**

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# BOARD OF DIRECTORS LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- May not be comfortable discussing issues tied to race at the board level

## Policies & Processes

- Seek individuals from various racial backgrounds for board and Executive Director/CEO positions

## Data

- Have limited understanding about race disparities in the populations served by their organizations

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# BOARD OF DIRECTORS LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Create and sustain practices (e.g., shared norms, vision, values, policies) to foster an inclusive environment that encourages and values differing viewpoints in decision making process

## Policies & Processes

- Evaluate board membership requirements that ignore systemic racial inequities and reinforce dominant culture, such as minimum donation amounts and conventionally prestigious backgrounds

## Data

- Analyze disaggregated data and root causes of race disparities that impact the organization's programs and the populations they serve

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Lead internal processes, procedures, and culture to eliminate bias and disparate treatment

## Policies & Processes

- Show a willingness to review personal and organizational oppression, and have the tools to analyze their contribution to structural racism

## Data

- Hold the Executive Director/CEO accountable for all measures related to CEO performance on race equity, ensuring that financial resources are allocated to support the work

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# BOARD OF DIRECTORS LEVER IN PRACTICE

## AWAKE

### Year Up:

Conducted a review of its board member selection process and, based on the outcomes, revamped the composition of the board to include racially diverse alumni from its programs — with the express purpose of providing a unique perspective and skill sets.

## WOKE

### Year Up:

While the board engaged in its own learning about DEI, the organization created a special task force comprised of board members and staff who reviewed board policies and outlined recommendations for change.

## WORK

### Year Up:

Added trainings on diversity and inclusion to the board onboarding process so that every board member had the same base level of DEI knowledge. The board's quarterly learning sessions are focused on different diversity topics, including systemic racism and privilege, that relate to Year Up's work and students served.

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## COMMUNITY LEVER

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# COMMUNITY LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Value the community and population served, and believe they are worthy of partnership and investment

## Policies & Processes

- Encourage staff to volunteer in the community by providing paid time off to do so

## Data

- Use data analysis to assess the racial impact of their work on the communities they serve

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# COMMUNITY LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Regularly seek community input on programs and services they provide or intend to provide

## Policies & Processes

- Have community representation at the board level, either on the board itself or through a community advisory board

## Data

- Disaggregate data to adjust programming and educational goals to keep pace with changing needs of the communities they serve

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# COMMUNITY LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Expect staff to work with the community to co-create solutions to problems as a key way to meet the organization's mission

## Policies & Processes

- Define criteria and processes for grant awards and partner selection using a race equity lens

## Data

- Measure improvement using baseline data to see if program solutions are having a positive impact

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# COMMUNITY LEVER IN PRACTICE

## AWAKE

### **Annie E. Casey Foundation:**

Encourages staff to volunteer their time to work on race equity goals in the communities they serve.

## WOKE

### **Year Up:**

Held conversations with stakeholders to identify the community's perspective on how well Year Up was doing in terms of its diversity efforts.

## WORK

### **Annie E. Casey Foundation:**

Defined the work of race equity as mission-critical, along with the organization's need to understand and embrace race equity work internally. Made a clear connection between internal/external equity work and the Foundation's overall outcomes.

# QUESTIONS?

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# THANK YOU!

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**JOIN US** for our 2018 Equity in the Center Summit on October 9-10 in Baltimore, Maryland!!!

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**MANAGEMENT LEVER**

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# MANAGEMENT LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Push past their own low comfort level to discuss race-related issues with staff
- Possess an emergent understanding of the race disparities that exist among the populations they serve

## Policies & Processes

- Have familiarity with the organization's diversity policies

## Data

- Have diversity goals outlined in their hiring plans that focus on increasing the number of racially diverse staff members

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# MANAGEMENT LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- Can recognize and speak about race disparities and/or bias internally and externally
- Value diverse teams, providing training and coaching/mentoring support

## Policies & Processes

- Take responsibility for the implementation of change management strategies to build a Race Equity Culture
- Have promoted or hired a critical mass of people of color into staff positions

## Data

- Hold team members accountable by asking them to identify racial disparities in their programs
- Track retention and promotion rates by race (on their team) to identify where they need to offer professional growth and development

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# MANAGEMENT LEVER

AWAKE

WOKE

WORK

## Personal Beliefs & Behaviors

- View race differences as assets to teams and to the organization, enabling people of color to bring their full selves to work and use their lived experiences to fulfill their job responsibilities
- Show a willingness to review personal and organizational oppression and have the tools to analyze their contribution to structural racism

## Policies & Processes

- Ensure that people of color have equal access to leadership opportunities and promotions by supporting their professional growth
- Have a promotion process that anticipates and mitigates biases about people of color serving in leadership positions
- Hire and promote staff members who demonstrate proficiency in how to address racism and race equity with coworkers and in their programs

## Data

- Make race equity a performance measure during their team's annual reviews
- Have a long-term commitment to policy change based on racial disparities they see both inside and outside of the organization

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# MANAGEMENT LEVER IN PRACTICE

## AWAKE

### Year Up:

Added questions about diversity to performance reviews, holding individuals more accountable for progress.

## WOKE

### Year Up:

Local leadership teams developed site-specific goals to answer the question, “What will make our team feel more inclusive?” Each site shared its goals with the national office and continues to track results.

### Leadership for Educational Equity:

Provided managers training on how to coach, mentor, and manage across differences. They also disaggregate data on performance management (4 years) and promotions (18 months), and clarify management practices to ensure they are more transparent and equitable.

## WORK

### Annie E. Casey Foundation:

Reviews diversity data collected from grantees (across program units) to realign strategies and goals and to ensure positive race equity impact in communities served.

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# THE ROLE OF LEVERS IN BUILDING A RACE EQUITY CULTURE

How do organizations move through the Race Equity Cycle to build a Race Equity Culture? Our research identified seven levers — strategic elements of an organization that, when leveraged, build momentum towards a Race Equity Culture within each stage and throughout the Race Equity Cycle. The seven levers represent both specific groups of people engaged with an organization as well as the systems, structures, and processes created — sometimes unconsciously — to help organizations operate: Senior Leadership, Management, Board of Directors, Community, Learning Environment, Data, and Organizational Culture.

On the following pages, we outline the characteristics and actions that define each lever. For ease of consideration, we organized them within three categories:

- Personal beliefs and behaviors
- Policies and processes
- Data

We also provide brief examples of how social sector organizations have put these levers into practice to achieve success in building a Race Equity Culture. It bears repeating that there is no singular or 'right' way to engage in race equity work. Each organization needs to determine the levers to pull, and the actions to take, in order to progress in building its own Race Equity Culture.