

Advancing Racial Equity Initiative

Vision Action Network and community partners Adelante Mujeres, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, Bienestar, and Coalition of Communities of Color came together to **advance racial equity in Washington County and improve outcomes for people of color in education, economic well-being, and civic engagement.**

From January through April 2019, we held two county-wide forums and six culturally-specific community conversations that gathered over 500 people from local governments, nonprofits, businesses, and underrepresented communities. At the first county-wide forum, attendees generated dozens of great ideas to advance racial equity, and these are the ones that rose to the top:

1. Equity-based education including implicit bias training for students and parents in schools (and teachers and administrators)
2. Reduce/remove criminal background criteria used to screen applicants for eligibility for programs that assist or house low-income households
3. Increase engagement and representation of people of color on all civic boards and commissions
4. Free before and after school programs and including transportation
5. Mentorship programs for youth of color and underrepresented groups including how to run for office
6. Increase number of students of color accessing higher education through hiring/modeling diverse representation of educators and leaders; and public officials working collaboratively with schools, community colleges, and local universities



COMMUNITY VOICES

Some of the findings from the community conversations included the need for more effective **training** on cultural proficiency; more **public spaces** that embrace diversity and inclusivity; greater **representation** of people of color in government and public life; and **essential resources** for everyone, regardless of immigration status.

“The lack of representation of the Latinx community (in government) is concerning and damages faith and trust.”

- Community Member

