2019 Annual Report
WINCHESTER MULTICULTURAL NETWORK

NETWORK for SOCIAL JUSTICE
Educate • Engage • Activate

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT
ACTION ARMS
Dear Winchester Multicultural Network Community,

This is the final annual report that you will receive from the Winchester Multicultural Network.

It is with great pride and excitement that we take this opportunity to re-introduce ourselves to you as the Network for Social Justice. Our new appearance and direction represent the culmination of almost two years of intense reflection and planning by our dedicated board, staff and volunteers.

What are the changes, and why now?
As the Network for Social Justice we are prioritizing collective action, organizing, and advocacy by initiating new strategies to educate, engage, and activate our Network to effect lasting change. We are asking our members, allies and the larger community to work with us to directly target systemic factors perpetuating racism, discrimination, and all manifestations of white supremacy. The change comes at a critical time: The current administration and the global political climate are challenging the delicate fabric around which this country is built, while the Network’s high visibility and reputation mandates us to take the lead through a more proactive approach.

How will the future look?
With our rich history rooting us in Winchester, the Network will above all remain approachable, inclusive and a community resource. The Network for Social Justice is committed to:
– continuing to reflect the diversity of Winchester through intercultural community programming;
– remaining a support for those who feel they have been a victim of racism or discrimination; and
– creating safe spaces for dialogue and learning to foster welcoming community.

As you flip through this annual report, you’ll see the major transitions we’ve undergone this year. We bid farewell to our interim Executive Director, John Robins, maintained a full slate of programs thanks to our staff and volunteers, added two new committee action arms, welcomed our fourth Executive Director after a nationwide search, and overhauled our strategy to support our new line of programming.

We are confident in the changes our new direction is bringing. We invite you to familiarize yourself with our revised strategy, check out our new website, follow the work of our recently formed Immigrant Justice and Indigenous People’s Advocacy Committees, be part of our on-going responsive town-wide advocacy, and join us in learning more about dialogue and organizing for social justice. None of us needs to face the future alone, and we know we are stronger together.

Yours in hope,

Liora Norwich
Executive Director

Juanita Zerda
Board President
WE EDUCATE

BY PROMOTING DIALOGUE AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO RAISE PERSONAL AWARENESS AND DEEPEN COLLECTIVE UNDERSTANDING OF HISTORICAL AND CURRENT INJUSTICES AND PRIVILEGE

PAST

The Network was established in 1991 after Sandy Thompson attended a cross-cultural workshop led by VISIONS, INC, and saw an opportunity to bring their teachings and philosophy to Winchester. With that foundation, the Network has created a legacy of providing spaces for individuals to gather and learn from one another through our annual Community Workshop and programs celebrating diversity and our shared understandings of history in our community.

PRESENT

Unfiltered conversations about racism are difficult to engage in, but individuals within complex communities cannot move forward without them. In November, racial justice educators Claudia Fox Tree and Debby Irving held an unscripted conversation that examined racism against indigenous peoples and the gross inaccurate historical accounts that continue to perpetuate oppression and harmful stereotypes. The program included time and space for participant feedback, specifically an opportunity to offer suggestions around how to redress this legacy of ignorance.

FUTURE

We are developing a new workshop for all who live, work, or worship in Winchester around how to facilitate difficult conversations that may be emotionally charged or complicated. The workshop is designed to develop the capacity of individuals to lead conversations in a variety of settings. Our goal as the Network for Social Justice is to build a cohort of community members who understand, and can enunciate, the role of dialogue as a tool for social change.
WE ENGAGE
BY BUILDING A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY THROUGH EVENTS THAT GENERATE WIDESPREAD CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND APPRECIATION OF THE POWER OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS AND PERSPECTIVES

PAST

Over the past 28 years, we have demonstrated that raising awareness is about ‘showing up’ for our partners and allies. Historically, we are proud to have taken part in Winchester’s Town Day, the EnKai Fair, McCall’s Geography Night and Woburn’s World Fest. We have partnered with Family Action Network for many of our 22 past Martin Luther King celebrations, St Mary’s Church Peace and Justice Committee for Black History Month, and Parent to Parent to commemorate Pride Month.

PRESENT

Our 2019 Black History Month commemoration took a DEEP dive into issues of racial equity with Dr. Darnisa Amante, Harvard Adjunct Lecturer and founder of the Disruptive Equity Education Project (DEEP). Dr. Amante presented her case for transforming and reshaping our understanding of equity. Through Powerpoint slides, her personal experiences, and moments of “turn and talk,” the audience left with indelible knowledge of the state of race relations in 2019 and how we as individuals might make further progress.

FUTURE

We are excited about continuing to bring our community together through commemorative programming, and we look forward to creating more opportunities to meet people where they are: whether it’s through more intimate conversations in homes, holding pop-up conversational programs in pubs, or meeting a diverse group of caregivers at a parent’s discussion group. Join us as we unwrap, unpack, and deconstruct what social justice means and how we can be allies to advance equity and inclusion.
WE ACTIVATE

BY CONDUCTING AND SUPPORTING BROAD-BASED GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY FOR INSTITUTIONAL AND SYSTEMIC CHANGE, AND ADDRESSING INDIVIDUAL INCIDENTS OF HARASSMENT, BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION OR CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AS THEY ARISE IN OUR COMMUNITY

PAST

Over the years you have come to us as parents, home owners, and concerned citizens when you or someone you knew felt marginalized and wanted help facilitating a confidential conversation. We have provided support and advocacy for people who feel they have been targets of, or witnesses to, harassment, bullying, hate crimes, or discrimination. Some of the concerns addressed have included those related to race, religion, national origin, socioeconomic status, political views, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and ability.

PRESENT

In 2016, Governor Charlie Baker signed legislation protecting the rights of transgender individuals. When opponents to the legislation petitioned to have the law overturned, the vote was put to the people of the Commonwealth as a ballot initiative in 2018. We are proud to have taken a public stand on this important civil rights issue by hosting awareness-raising events to educate the public about the implications of a Yes on 3 vote. The Network was among the organizations, groups and individuals celebrating when the initiative passed.

FUTURE

In response to the dangerous governmental crackdowns and racist rhetoric toward immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, we are building a local coalition through our new Immigrant Justice Committee to establish Winchester as a Safe Community through passage of the Safe Communities Act (H.3573 and S.1401). Through our second newly formed committee, the Indigenous People’s Advocacy Committee, we are coordinating with groups throughout the Commonwealth in support of the MA Indigenous Legislative Agenda. We welcome your involvement on these new committees, both as a volunteer and through your contribution.
SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR GREATER IMPACT

IMMIGRANT JUSTICE (IJC)

This committee campaigns, through education and organizing, for legislation to promote the safety and inclusion of all residents of Winchester, with the goal of establishing the Safe Community Act in Winchester. Beyond legislative advocacy the IJC also strives to create an inclusive community, increasing accessibility of Winchester for immigrants and those from abroad, and developing our town as a model for best practices around welcoming and integrating newcomers into a suburban community.

RESPONSE & ADVOCACY (RAC)

This committee provides support, consultation and advocacy for individuals who have experienced or witnessed intolerance, bias, harassment, hate, or discrimination. The RAC also conducts responsive advocacy, partnering with local organizations to address institutional policies or practices that have resulted in discrimination or exclusion.

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

This committee seeks to broaden diversity and equity in Winchester Public Schools. The committee engages in building a strong base of teachers, parents, school officials, and students in an effort to generate a culture change towards inclusion in Winchester schools and the town as a whole. Work includes acting as a resource for inclusive social justice curriculum by providing annual micro-grants to educators, empowering parents to better guide their children around social and racial justice issues, and supporting Winchester High School’s social justice club (SoJust).

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE’S ADVOCACY (IPAC)

This committee promotes critical analysis and understanding of historical representations and contemporary challenges facing Indigenous Peoples, including those who lived on the land now recognized as Winchester. IPAC advocates with other grassroots groups for the rights of Indigenous Peoples at the town and state level. Its objectives are to raise community awareness to honor and highlight Indigenous Peoples’ history, foster greater community understanding around contemporary Indigenous Peoples’ issues, and eliminate stereotypes and the use of Native American mascots that negatively impact indigenous and non-indigenous youth.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

This committee focuses on advancing community dialogue and learning through two types of accessible and creative educational programming: 1) annual programs around celebration and remembrance (e.g. Black History Month, LGBTQIA Pride Month), and 2) workshops and trainings designed to build the capacity of individuals to advance social justice, community organizing and advocacy.
FINANCIALS & LEADERSHIP
JULY 1, 2018–JUNE 30, 2019

REVENUE
$154,078

EXPENDITURES
$140,048

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US
● Volunteer with us!
● Attend one of our community events/workshops
● Spread the word about the Network
● Donate by check or online

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Juanita Zerda –President, Susan Lewis – Vice President, Robin Smith – Treasurer, Sandy Thompson –Clerk, Michael Bettencourt, Deirdre Giblin, Wei Han, Mayra Rodriguez–Howard, Jon Swan

STEERING COMMITTEE
Sahar Ahmed –Program Committee Chair; Phil Coonley –Immigrant Justice Committee Co-Chair; Raegan McCain –Schools & Youth Committee Co-Chair; Rebecca Slisz –IPAC Co-Chair, Schools & Youth Committee Co-Chair; Seeme Moreira –Immigrant Justice Committee Co-Chair; Hillary Turkewitz –Response & Advocacy Committee Chair, IPAC Co-Chair; Kristen Bray, Dennis Brett, Margery “GeGe” Jackson, Gloria Legvold, Terry Marotta, Kaye Nash, Felicity Tuttle, Lauren Winterer, Lily Yamamoto

STAFF
Shawn Macannuco, Office Manager
Liora Norwich, Executive Director
Elena Varipatis Baker, Development & Communications Coordinator

Individuals 26.1%
Grants 69.1%
Administration 18.1%
Fundraising 13.8%

Other 4.8%

Programs 68.1%
GRATITUDE

IN KEEPING WITH OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, ALL INDIVIDUAL DONORS HAVE BEEN LISTED ALPHABETICALLY REGARDLESS OF THEIR GIVING LEVEL

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Alliance Data Systems
Automated Financial Solutions
Cummings Foundation, Inc
Family Action Network
Fizza Adamjee Charitable Trust
Harrison Mulhern Architects
Winchester Cooperative Bank
Winchester Educational Foundation
Litho–Craft, LLC
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Salone Estetica
W. Allen Wilde & Son
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