



The Native American Community in Multnomah County:
An Unsettling Profile

A partnership between



&



Portland State
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Executive Summary

Today, the Native American community in Multnomah county¹ exists as a testament to resilience and resistance. We are a community that has endured much hardship, and we are determined to build a positive future for all our members.

We are the 9th largest urban Indian population in the USA. We are home to 28 Native organizations in the Portland area, run by and staffed with Native people, whose combined resources represent over 50 million dollars in revenue that go to local taxes, businesses and services.² The legacy of pride and resilience has resulted in the development of a powerful core of advocates in the region. This grit and determination has, ultimately, led to the emergence of a robust and vital Native American presence in Multnomah county.

We appeal to the broader community to recognize and commit to solutions that are built in partnership with the Native American community, and to enact commitments that recognize that prosperity and well being for all in Multnomah county depends on the prosperity and well being of the Native American community.

We continue to recover from the legacy of colonization, and the practices of various governments that have alternated in approaches to public policy. A brief walk through history reveals the substance of our oppression. Genocidal policies existed in numerous ways: bounties were placed on our lives in several eastern US states (early 18th through 19th centuries), and California's governor advocated our extermination in 1851.³ Our lands were taken through outright breaches of treaty laws, as the US has broken over 500 treaties with our peoples – a number unmatched with any other array of nations.⁴ Denial of our citizenship occurred until 1924, but many states, Oregon included, denied our voting rights until the federal government stepped in with the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Our faith traditions were outlawed until 1993, and our children were forcibly removed from our care and placed in residential schools, stripping our youth of culture and community.

More than 60 of our Tribes in Oregon were terminated by the federal government in 1953. Termination meant revoking tribal sovereignty and government responsibilities to Native peoples, as well as claims to reservation land and unique identity.⁵ While done under the guise of the then-liberal notion of assimilation, the policy also meant our protected resources were taken from us, with millions of acres of land removed from our stewardship. Thousands of our Native women (and some men) were forcibly sterilized or coerced into sterilization when in the justice, mental health, and child welfare systems. Adding to this, we have been forcibly moved from productive lands several times through history, with the most recent being in 1956 when we were forced from reservations and into poor urban areas – with little more than a one-way bus ticket. It is this recent history which is a key factor in how Portland has emerged as the 9th largest Native American population in the USA.

Unfortunately, we could go on to profile many more dimensions of the devastating relationships we have encountered with various levels of the US government. Those who read the full report will engage more fully with these details. But the key point we want to make is that while these historic events have enacted a legacy of oppression, these are not just matters for the history books. First, they indicate the damages and pains inflicted on our community, recovery from which is a central feature of our experience. Our tasks include reclaiming our spirituality, recovering from the damaging myths that infuse our psyches, building and rebuilding our community strengths and resources, and finding our way in dominant society at the same time as protecting and nourishing our culturally-specific resources. We remain a resilient community. The second key point is that these are not just events of history – damage continues to be done to our community through a wide-ranging spectrum of institutional racism, detail of which is contained within the fullness of the pages of this report.

The findings of this report detail an array of disparities, including the following:

- Poverty rates in our community are triple those in White communities. Our average poverty rate is 34.0%, while that of Whites is 12.3%. With children and single parents, rates climb steadily. Our child poverty rate is 45.2%, which is almost four times higher than the White child poverty rate of 14.0%.
- Family poverty is particularly intense – with rates more than four times higher than Whites, deepening when single parents lead the family, and also deepening when there are responsibilities for younger children – with a poverty rate of 79.1% for single mothers raising children under 5.
- Our poverty rates are deteriorating rapidly, while those of Whites remain largely stagnant at much lower levels. For example, the poverty rate among our Elders has jumped from 9% to 21% between 2000 and 2009 while the rate of Whites has moved from 6% to 10%.
- Our incomes are typically half that of Whites regardless of our living arrangements. For example, married couples raising children try to get by on \$50,540/year while White families live with (on average) \$80,420/year.
- Our unemployment rate, in 2009, was 70% higher than Whites.
- More than 20% of Native Americans experience hunger on a regular basis (at least monthly).
- More than ½ of our students do not graduate high school (53.4%). In Parkrose and David Douglas, 80% of our students do not graduate. Centennial has the best graduation rate of Native Americans, at 66.7%.

- Among our graduating students, only 54% enter higher education. This level is worse than our best rate of 70% reached in 2001.
- Access to health insurance deteriorated rapidly from a high of 88% in 2000 to today's level of 76%.
- While crime rates drop across all communities, Native American adults are just as likely to be involved in the corrections system; over the last decade, the involvement rate for Whites has dropped significantly.
- We are incarcerated at almost double the rate of Whites.
- We are the victims of violent crimes at rates 250% higher than Whites.
- Our youth are charged by the police at levels three times higher than their numbers warrant. Once involved with the system, our youth are much more likely to deepen their involvement by being detained and less likely to be diverted away from the justice system and more likely than Whites to enter the chronic re-offender population.
- Decades of attention to the needs of our community finally was responded to by the creation of a set of separate legislative regulations for our families (called the Indian Child Welfare Act, or ICWA), while levels of our children removed from their families and placed into foster care settings reached as high as 35%. Despite this history, today we face the reality that 22% of our children in Multnomah county are taken from their families. This egregious rate is 20 times higher than that of White children. And this exists despite research that tells us Native parents do not abuse their children more frequently than White parents.

When we look at the comparison data between the situation facing Native Americans here and in other regions, we see signs that our distress runs deeper than elsewhere. To begin, Native Americans face deeper economic challenges here than compared with national averages for our community. Whether measuring income or poverty, our data deteriorates as we move closer to Multnomah county. For example, almost one-in-three local Native families live in poverty, while one-in-five Native families live in poverty nation-wide. Obviously neither rate is acceptable, but local conditions are significantly worse. In another example, home ownership levels are 50% lower here as only 37% of our community owns a home. At the national level, 56% of Natives own their homes.

Not only is our data weaker than national averages, it is confounded by disproportionality in conditions facing Natives and Whites. Native Americans incur a financial "hit" by living here, while Whites gain a "perk" compared with national averages. For example, the average Native per capita income is \$3,336

less than the national average, while the average White per capita income is \$1,005 higher than the White national average.

Current institutional disparities are the result of thwarted access to needed resources and decision making practices that narrow our access to beneficial services and expand our involvement with punitive services. We face significant disparities in accessing prime mortgages, being treated equitably in school discipline, accessing needed resources such as health insurance for our children, gaining subsidized housing, receiving a fair share of philanthropic grant dollars, accessing food from food banks and accessing homelessness services. These examples of the broad and deep disparities are expanded upon in this report.

And finally, disparities are illustrated through our comparison with King county (home to Seattle). When we compare our experiences of disparities with King county, the average size of disparities in key areas is 36% worse. One specific dimension is the holding of university degrees: locally, 42% of Whites hold university degrees while only 13.2% of Native Americans attain this level of education. In King county, more of both groups are able to gain such degrees, but the level of improvement is vastly superior for Native Americans there compared with here: in King county, 26% of Natives hold university degrees, while 48% of Whites hold these degrees. In total, the level of disparity in university education is much smaller in King county than here – explicitly, 47% smaller in magnitude than here in Multnomah county.

We seek equity, fairness, and a set of reforms that are entrenched in policy commitments that move the Native American community towards a brighter future. Now is the time for change.

Introducing the Native American Community of Multnomah County

The journey contained within this report will trouble most readers, because it profiles the disparities and experience of our community. It consolidates data on our status today, and it is a distressing profile of the experiences of our peoples. Know, still, that we are a resilient people, working hard to command voice, visibility, and influence in mainstream society. Our voice is growing more powerful each day and our community is uniting in our rebuilding tasks and in our efforts to press for urgent reforms to address racial disparities.

Multnomah county rests on traditional village sites of the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, bands of Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla and many other Tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River.⁶ We can be credited with naming this county. Multnomah is a band of Chinooks that lived in this area.

The late 18th and early 19th centuries brought disease, genocide, military conflicts, dislocation, and rapid change to the indigenous populations of Oregon. Everywhere, Native communities suffered. Our

communities suffered greatly. By the end of this era, only one of ten Native Americans survived. While many Tribes suffered terrible losses, descendants of these Tribes were removed to surrounding reservations, and many moved back to Portland – partially through termination and relocation policies. Today these same communities celebrate their heritage, showing resilience in the face of genocidal efforts. Many publications on the history of Portland make reference to Tribes going extinct when these same Tribes’ descendants walk amongst us.

By the mid-19th century, most Native Americans in Oregon were forced onto reservations.⁷ A series of federal decisions designed to eliminate and/or assimilate Native people followed this relocation to reservations. "Kill the Indian and save the man" summarized the philosophy behind many government policies of the era.⁸ For example, the General Allotment Act of 1887 (referred to as the Dawes Act) sought to divide the communal land base of Tribes. The allotment program was meant to “extinguish tribal sovereignty, erase reservation boundaries, and force the assimilation of Indians into the society at large.” Similarly, the boarding school policies, which lasted from the mid-1800s through the 1960s, were meant to educate, “civilize,” and assimilate indigenous youth into Western society.⁹

In 1880, Oregon became home to a boarding school for the Northwest’s Indian children, Chemawa Indian School. Chemawa, originally located in Forest Grove, began with a class of 18 students from reservations in Washington State. In 1885, the school moved to a site north of Salem. Enrollments at Chemawa grew such that by 1900, Chemawa had 453 students. By 1913, the school had 690 students, including 175 Alaskan Native children. Chemawa’s enrollment peaked in 1926 when almost 1,000 students were enrolled. During the 1930s funding for the school was cut and enrollments dropped, but special programs to increase enrollment – such as one for Navajo students and another emphasizing recruitment of students from Alaska – were started in the 1940s and 50s. Begun in the 19th century, Chemawa, still operating north of Salem, is the oldest continuously operating Indian boarding school in the US.¹⁰ Chemawa stands as an example of our convoluted relationship with governments – for as Chemawa was originally a site to place children removed forcibly from their homes, it has since been placed under Native American control and has become (belatedly) a source of pride for the achievements of students moving through this school.

In the early 20th century, facing dwindling resources in their home communities or coming out of boarding schools like Chemawa (after being removed from their families), Native Americans pursued new opportunities for waged work in the city in World War I industries.¹¹ As a regional center of industry, Portland could provide Native Americans with jobs in construction, the railroad industry, shipping, mills, and factories.¹² Migrants came from several reservations within a few days of travel. In addition, Pacific Northwest Indians continued to travel to fishing sites and encampments along the Columbia River as they had for centuries and perhaps longer. When the fish runs were over for the season, Portland could serve as a place to sell fish and other wares or a place to work.¹³ Yet inclusion of our people was barred as Natives were not allowed to live within the city limits until the 1920s.

During World War I, more than twelve thousand American Indians served in the United States military.¹⁴ However, even as Native Americans supported the war through their labor or military service, they were not yet citizens. The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 extended citizenship to Native Americans. Unfortunately, citizenship did not confer the benefits of enfranchisement, as many states denied suffrage to all or at least some tribal peoples. For many Native Americans, the situation had not improved by World War II.¹⁵ Notably, more than 44,000 American Indians, out of a total Native American population of less than 350,000, served with distinction between 1941 and 1945 in both European and Pacific theaters of World War II.¹⁶ Yet battles for enfranchisement of Native voters continued well after the war concluded; as one court noted in a 2001 decision, “There is ample evidence that American Indians have historically been the subject of discrimination in the area of voting.”¹⁷

Migration of Native Americans to cities accelerated during World War II. While the population of Native Americans grew in cities around the country, migration to places with war industries and military installations, such as Portland, experienced the heaviest migration.¹⁸ Native Americans supported Portland’s wartime industry, joining the throng of workers moving into Vanport to work in the Kaiser shipyards.¹⁹ Among the Turtle Mountain Tribe of 12,000 members, half joined the war effort and worked at Vanport. Kaiser Industries applauded this role by honoring workers in a ceremony at the Swan Island yards to christen the newly built USS Pendleton. The Indian workers of the yard were guests of honor at the ceremony and the luncheon that followed.²⁰ This ceremony not only shows the significant role Native Americans played in Portland’s wartime industry, but also is illustrative of the increasing presence of Indians in Portland. Many of our Elders today are those who grew up together in the Native section of Vanport.

Post-war, a new set of federal policies pushed many Native Americans into Portland and other cities. “Termination” served as the catchphrase that described the assumptions and ideas behind this change in federal Indian policy. Termination meant revoking tribal sovereignty and government responsibilities to Native peoples, as well as claims to reservation land and unique identity.²¹ Termination was championed by Douglas McKay, former governor of Oregon and secretary of the interior under Dwight Eisenhower. McKay felt that Oregon should be a showcase for the new era of policy. McKay argued that termination would bring Oregon Indians “full and equal citizenship,” even as Oregon law at the time continued to prohibit the marriage of an Indian and a non-Indian, providing fines and imprisonment for both the officiating minister or public official and the couple.²² Oregon’s anti-miscegenation laws were not repealed until 1951.²³

The federal government set the stage for expanded termination of Tribes when in 1953, Congress adopted House Concurrent Resolution No. 108, which declared that federal benefits and services to Indian Tribes should be ended “as rapidly as possible.”²⁴ Termination of federal recognition of many Tribes began in 1954. More than 60 different groups in Oregon were terminated, as well as 109 groups across the USA.²⁵ These groups had their governments abolished, lands taken and social services revoked. Oregon was the state with the highest concentration of terminated Tribes.

Upon termination, approximately 864,820 acres of Indian trust land in Oregon was sold, about 35% of the lands sold under termination across the nation.²⁶ Thus, while touted as “setting free” the Indian from second-class citizenship,²⁷ termination meant Native Americans’ remaining resources were “set free” as well. Termination eased private access to Indian trust lands where some of the state’s remaining resources were located,²⁸ such as the thousands of acres of virgin timber held by the Klamath tribe in south-central Oregon.²⁹ The breakup and loss of Indian control over reservation land that followed termination resulted in the displacement of over 4,000 Native Americans in Oregon, fueling Indian migration to Portland.³⁰ Tribal termination also resulted in loss of health care coverage under the Indian Health Service as well as access to tribal schools. Fishing and hunting rights were terminated. Termination increased poverty rates, partially as a result of business taxes being imposed on industry that had previously occurred on Tribal lands (and thus exempt from federal business tax). Following termination, Native families came to Portland seeking waged employment and a new place to call home.

Federal Relocation Policy, which began in the 1950s, also contributed to the growth of Portland’s Native population. Relocation was championed by Dillon Myer, named Indian Commissioner in 1950. Myer proposed a “mass exodus” of Indians to cities, which he claimed would integrate Native Americans into American society while at the same time depopulating reservations so that they could reach a point of “self-sufficiency” and no longer require federal services.³¹ In 1952, Operation Relocation became public, moving Native Americans to cities such as Portland with some minimal government assistance.³² Recruitment for the program was often coercive and the goals and assumptions guiding the relocation policy were terminationist in nature.³³

During this era, Portland became home to several vocational schools that were part of the Adult Vocational Training (AVT) Program under relocation policy. Under this program, Native Americans moving through relocation could be placed in a vocational school when they reached the city. Racist ideas, however, about the position of non-White people in the workforce circumscribed the opportunities available to those enrolled in the AVT. Federal guidelines stipulated that the AVT was not designed to support academic or professional study, and training was tied to ideas of gender and cultural appropriateness (e.g. auto mechanic training for males, general secretarial training for women).³⁴ Many program participants found themselves dealing with coercive and controlling program officials and the negative consequences of relocation.³⁵ Those who relocated often found low-wage work, racial discrimination, poverty, deteriorating urban conditions, social isolation, alienation, and loneliness at the end of the path of relocation.³⁶

By 1960, however, signs of an established, active Native American community in Portland appeared in the form of Native-specific community organizations and broadly sought improvements in education and employment that would heighten the quality of life for Native Americans. The Voice of the American Indian Association (VAIA) and Portland American Indian Center (PAIC) provided opportunities for Indians to engage with other Native people or to participate in cultural activities in Portland.³⁷ As a central

gathering place for many Tribes, as well as the desired location for numerous Native organizations, the area also became a desired space for regional and national Native centers. With the injection of funds to Native activities (particularly through Lyndon Johnson’s anti-poverty initiatives, and expanded upon by Richard Nixon), resources began to move into Portland – which, in turn, supported the development of our organizations, our leadership and our people. For the first time (circa 1970s), funding for Native activities and organizations was available outside of the Bureau of Indian Affairs³⁸ (with its mostly despised bureaucracy and assimilation policies and which had been responsible for residential schools) and our organizations began to build a stronghold in the human service landscape.

From the 1960s into the 1970s, the children of Native American migrants from the 1940s and 1950s came of age and began their own families. In addition, Native American migration to cities continued. Recent arrivals continued to flow into Portland, including veterans returning from Vietnam and students (including many of those from Chemawa) going to college in response to minority recruitment efforts.³⁹

During this time, the impact of national currents, such as the Red Power and American Indian movements and a new generation of Indian leaders, was being felt across Oregon. Claiming the rights of heritage, land ownership, and the illegitimacy of European “settlement,” these movements helped shift dominant discourses of the history of the USA and advocated for indigenous peoples. Politically conscious Native Americans established new organizations to address the social problems many Natives faced in the city and around the state by the early 1970s.⁴⁰ Redressing the problems of termination was a major focus. The efforts of Native activists were rewarded: the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians regained federal recognition in 1977. The termination status of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua, the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Klamath, and the Coquille Tribe also subsequently was repealed by Congress.⁴¹

While this restoration of six Oregon-based Tribes represents a major victory for Native Americans in the state, termination remains a bitter reality for some Tribes in Oregon; the effects of termination linger even for Tribes who have been re-instated. Many Tribes were not recognized again until the 1980s – a fact that has a harmful effect on Native identity. Consider the impact of having one’s Tribe terminated (and perhaps reinstated) by the government. This influences one’s willingness to self-identify as a Native American. Accordingly, we have a significant and longstanding challenge with population undercounts, as will be addressed more fully in this report.

As our activist leaders build voice and influence, a perpetual gaze has been focused on land rights. One such effort was the creation of the 13th Regional Corporation. The Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 was aimed at protecting the legacy of Native Alaskan resources. To accomplish this, twelve regions were created in Alaska to represent the interests of our people. Since settling the land claim, Alaska became a magnet for business interests, and exploitation of our resources began in earnest. These oversight corporations created Native “stockholders” to oversee distribution of federal funds and profits from business activities.⁴² Non-resident Alaskan Natives were not represented – and the 13th

Regional Corporation was created to achieve the same goals, but for those of us scattered outside of Alaska. This organizing effort was centered in Portland at the Alaska Native Association of Oregon, and the 13th Regional Corporation received federal recognition in 1975. The 13th Regional Corporation was located in Portland until they moved to Seattle in the 1990s.

Today, we are the 9th largest urban Indian population in the USA. We are home to 28 Native organizations in the Portland area, run by and staffed with Native people, whose combined resources represent over 50 million dollars in revenue that go to local taxes, businesses and services.⁴³ The Portland Indian Leaders' Roundtable (PILR) is an alliance of local Native organizations, working to educate key audiences on the Native American community's strengths and concerns. Several local Native organizations are profiled below.

The Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA) began in 1970 to respond to the substance abuse issues of our community. The failures of mainstream services in providing treatment for our community inspired the founders to define services based on Native culture and wisdom.⁴⁴ Pride in Native heritage was (and is) fostered with participation in powwows, sweat lodges, the Sun Dance, storytelling, the study of Native spirituality, and mutual aid. Since its beginning, NARA has expanded services to include outpatient substance abuse, residential family treatment, transitional housing for Native women and children, primary health care, and a family resource program. It is soon to open Totem Lodge, a comprehensive mental health resource.⁴⁵

The National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) responded to the failure of child welfare providers to meet our community's needs. By 1983, both conventional child welfare and Tribal systems were in need of knowledge, resources and research to understand our community and our children's needs. Training of these workers was the top priority and services became available through a partnership among the Parry Children's Center, Portland State University, and northwest Tribes. After determining the need for this resource to be firmly under Native American control, NICWA was formed. The historic training emphasis continues today, and the organization has added information exchange, community development, and public policy analysis.⁴⁶ It has grown into a national voice for Native American children and families.

The Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) began in 1974 as a cultural resource for our communities. Today its mission is "to enhance the diverse strengths of our youth and families in partnership with the community through cultural identity and education." As an urban Indian agency, NAYA Family Center serves over 1,400 youth and their families from over 380 tribal backgrounds annually. NAYA operates on the belief that traditional cultural values are integral to regaining sovereignty and building self-esteem. NAYA Family Center is a mission-driven organization that values respect for the environment, places the larger community before the individual, and involves Elders. We promote healthy living through positive alternatives to high-risk behaviors, and we promote the values of sobriety, family stability, culture, active lifestyles, and education.

We seek equity and fairness, and a set of reforms that are entrenched in policy commitments that move the Native American community towards a brighter future. Now is the time for change. We make the following recommendations for addressing the needs of the Native American community and the plurality of all communities of color.

- 1. Reduce disparities with firm timelines, policy commitments and resources.** Disparity reduction across systems must occur and must ultimately ensure that one's racial and ethnic identity ceases to determine one's life chances. The Coalition urges State, County and City governments and school boards, to establish firm timelines with measurable outcomes to assess disparities each and every year. There must be zero-tolerance for racial and ethnic disparities. Accountability structures must be developed and implemented to ensure progress on disparity reduction. As a first step, plans for disparities reduction must be developed in every institution and be developed in partnership with communities of color. Targeted reductions with measurable outcomes must be a central feature of these plans.
- 2. Expand funding for culturally-specific services.** Designated funds are required, and these funds must be adequate to address needs. Allocation must recognize the size of communities of color, compensate for the undercounts that exist in population estimates, and be sufficiently robust to address the complexity of need that is tied to communities of color.
- 3. Implement needs-based funding for communities of color.** This report illuminates the complexity of needs facing communities of color, and highlights that Whites do not face such issues or the disparities that result from them. Accordingly, providing services for these communities is similarly more complex. We urge funding bodies to begin implementing an equity-based funding allocation that seeks to ameliorate some of the challenges that exist in resourcing these communities.
- 4. Emphasize poverty reduction strategies.** Poverty reduction must be an integral element of meeting the needs of communities of color. A dialogue is needed immediately to kick-start economic development efforts that hold the needs of communities of color high in policy implementation. Improving the quality and quantity of jobs that are available to people of color will reduce poverty.
- 5. Count communities of color.** Immediately, we demand that funding bodies universally use the most current data available and use the "alone or in combination with other races, with or without Hispanics" option as the official measure of the size of our communities. The minor over-counting that this creates is more than offset by the pervasive undercounting that exists when outsiders measure the size of our communities. When "community-verified population counts" are available, we demand that these be used.
- 6. Prioritize education and early childhood services.** The Coalition prioritizes education and early childhood services as a significant pathway out of poverty and social exclusion and urges that

disparities in achievement, dropout, post-secondary education and even early education must be prioritized.

- 7. *Expand the role for the Coalition of Communities of Color.*** The Coalition of Communities of Color seeks an ongoing role in monitoring the outcomes of disparity reduction efforts and seeks appropriate funding to facilitate this task.
- 8. *Research practices that make the invisible visible.*** Implement research practices across institutions that are transparent, easily accessible, and accurate in the representation of communities of color. Draw from the expertise within the Coalition of Communities of Color to conceptualize such practices. This will result in the immediate reversal of invisibility and tokenistic understanding of the issues facing communities of color. Such practices will expand the visibility of communities of color.
- 9. *Fund community development.*** Significantly expand community development funding for communities of color. Build line items into State, County and City budgets for communities of color to self-organize, network our communities, develop pathways to greater social inclusion, build culturally-specific social capital, and provide leadership within and outside our own communities.
- 10. *Disclose race and ethnicity data for mainstream service providers.*** Mainstream service providers and government providers continue to have the largest role in service delivery. Accounting for the outcomes of these services for communities of color is essential. We expect each level of service provision to increasingly report on both service usage and service outcomes for communities of color.
- 11. *Name racism.*** Before us are both the challenge and the opportunity to become engaged with issues of race, racism, and whiteness. Racial experiences are a feature of daily life whether we are on the harmful end of such experience or on the beneficiary end of the spectrum. The first step is to stop pretending race and racism do not exist. The second is to know that race is always linked to experience. The third is to know that racial identity is strongly linked to experiences of marginalization, discrimination and powerlessness. We seek for those in the White community to end a prideful perception that Multnomah county is an enclave of progressivity. Communities of color face tremendous inequities and a significant narrowing of opportunity and advantage. This must become unacceptable for everyone.

Advancing racial equity depends on eliminating the multitudes of disparities profiled in this report. We aspire to catalyze an understanding of the challenges facing communities of color and to provide us all impetus to act, to act holistically, and to act under the leadership of communities of color who have the legitimacy and the urgency to remedy many of the shortcomings that besiege Multnomah county.