

Anti-Oppression Development

For Higher Education



Beyond Diversity Resource Center

Move Beyond Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

People in our society are hurt by oppression. DEI programs can fail to address why people are marginalized. Our Anti-Oppression Practices program addresses the root causes of institutional prejudice, discrimination, and exclusion—the factors that keep systemic oppression in place.

We partner with institutions of higher education so that people learn how to change their thinking and behavior in ways that work toward eliminating all forms of oppression.

Change Your Perspective

You had to rotate this document to read this section. In some ways, that is what organizational development is like: asking an organization to do something different than the norm. The ask can elicit both curiosity in something new and irritation about having to do something different. That tension is a driving force in organizational development and is acute in anti-oppression practice.

Rotating this document creates a new perspective. The act of turning the document 90 degrees is facially simple, but relates to critical skills—recognizing that there is more than one point of view and getting comfortable with multiple perspectives. The rotation can also be a metaphor for new ways of thinking. This can lead to unexpected breakthroughs, fueled by imagination and consideration of new possibilities.

Our anti-oppression work with colleges and universities inspires new thinking and possibilities for how people treat one another and, by extension, how the institutions care for the people they employ and serve. From there we can create lasting and compassionate organizational change.

Our Services

Our team (see reverse for bios) possesses a rich blend of experience in higher education, anti-oppression, organizational development. Our approach consists of a long-term process that helps develop organizational changes that can lead to sustainable transformation.

We offer:

- Capacity Building—giving your team the ability to recognize and address systemic oppression.
- Assessment—using appreciative inquiry to identify strengths and challenges.
- Training—learning the principles and practices of anti-oppression.
- Coaching—helping individuals get unstuck and find joy in anti-oppression work.
- Mentoring—providing people support to discuss challenges and offer models for change.

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Maria Ortiz Borden is Co-Executive Director of Pulse at the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research and an independent consultant/coach. She was formerly at Michigan State University in the Psychology Department implementing, training, and facilitating a systems change framework. Borden holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Michigan State University and is a Leadership That Works Certified Community Coach. ([More hyperlink](#))



Dr. Jason Laker is a Professor of Higher Education, Student Affairs, and Community Development (and former Vice President for Student Affairs) at San José State University. He is also an Affiliated Research Faculty with the Center for Research and Education on Gender and Sexuality at San Francisco State University studying sexual consent communication among college students. ([More hyperlink](#))

Robin Parker is the Executive Director of the Beyond Diversity Resource Center. He has over thirty years of experience conducting diversity programming with an anti-oppression focus while employed at the Center and earlier when he served as a Deputy Attorney General and Director of the New Jersey Office of Bias Crime and Community Relations. ([More hyperlink](#))



J.R. Reynolds is Special Initiatives Director of the Beyond Diversity Resource Center. He holds anti-oppression expertise in race and intercultural relations, food justice, and housing equity. He also is coordinator of the Beyond Separation design team with the Battle Creek Coalition for Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation, an initiative of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. ([More hyperlink](#))

Dr. Dena Samuels serves as a mindfulness-based diversity, equity, and inclusion author, speaker, leadership trainer, and consultant. As an award-winning tenured professor, she taught at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs for twenty years while consulting around the United States and beyond. She now consults full-time on mindful, inclusive leadership development, and remains on faculty at the University of Colorado. ([More hyperlink](#))



Jorge Zeballos is an independent equity and inclusion consultant with decades of expertise conducting workshops and leading long-term equity initiatives at K-12 schools, colleges and universities, healthcare organizations, city governments, police and departments and non-profit organizations. He spent 15 years in higher education during which the last position he held was that of Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer. ([More hyperlink](#))