

ESPRI

August 2018

Quarter 3



Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative

Buffalo ESPRI Commitment to Racial Equity

Financial hardship and persistent poverty in Buffalo is systemic and widespread. Buffalo ESPRI is committed to helping working individuals move out of financial hardship, while ensuring equitable access to jobs and promotional opportunities in our community. The 2016 ALICE Report examines working individuals in financial hardship, classifying them as part of the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed). Financial hardship affects people who earn above the federal poverty level but cannot afford basic needs. The report indicates that 26% of Erie County households experience financial hardship and 15% of Erie County households live in poverty.

Financial hardship affects families disproportionately in Erie County, with 66% of Hispanics, 64% of African Americans, and 46% of Asian Americans living in financial hardship as compared to 35% of Whites. A core value of Buffalo ESPRI is racial equity, such that ESPRI will align its work with the work of the Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable. The Roundtable works to improve systems in order to achieve transformational changes that shape the community for the better. Systems change can be accomplished with a focused commitment to racial equity and inclusion, strategic collection and use of data and a willingness to improve the quality life of those disproportionately disadvantaged in our community.

In [*The Racial Equity Dividend: Buffalo's Great Opportunity*](#) report released in November 2016, the Roundtable presented an in-depth examination of existing racial equity gaps highlighting 16 indicators across four inter-related areas: **education and job readiness, criminal justice and safety, quality of life and neighborhoods, and income and wealth**, Buffalo ESPRI will focus on these four main system areas.

To ensure consistent application of these important racial equity concepts, participating businesses, service agencies, and public partners involved with ESPRI will participate in Racial Equity Impact Analysis training. The training will include concepts of racial equity where participants develop a shared language and are presented with the Racial Equity Impact Analysis tool. This tool is applied to decision making at all levels of an organization.

Buffalo ESPRI is dedicated to affecting equitable practices and changes wherever possible. We hope that the data collected through this initiative can be used to inform public policy at the local and state level in order to address barriers to success that are commonly faced by those individuals and families living in financial hardship not only in Buffalo but across the state.

Racial Equity and Buffalo ESPRI

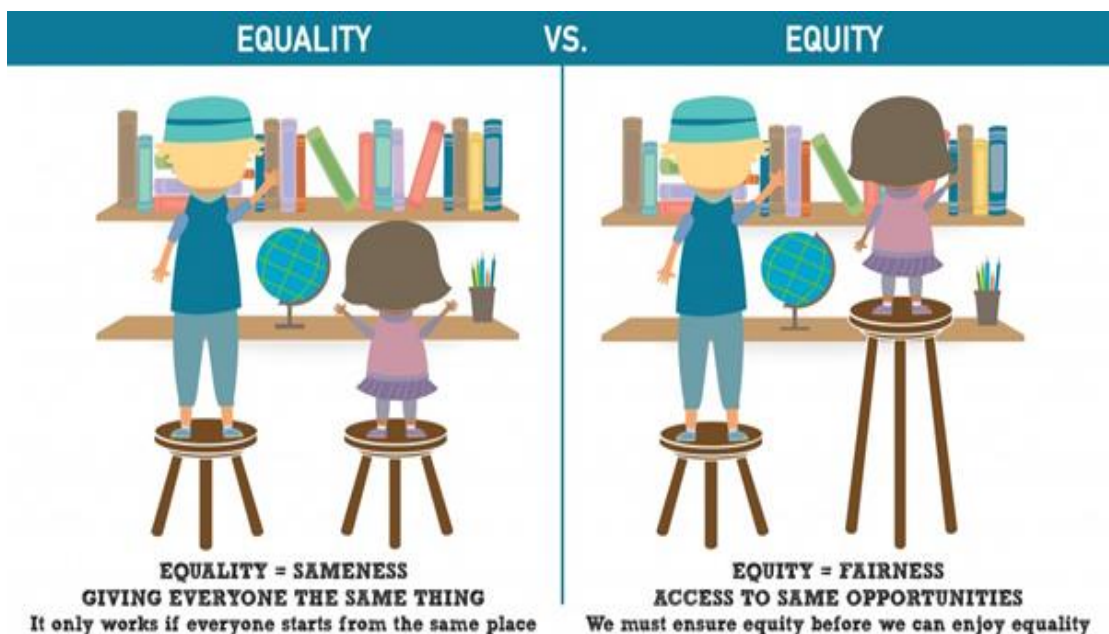
“Racial equity results when you cannot predict advantage or disadvantage by race. But the route to achieving equity will not be accomplished through treating everyone equally. It will be achieved by treating everyone equitably, or justly according to their circumstances.” (Race matters Institute, 2015)

Racial equity involves considering all of an individual’s traits such as gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, and background when implementing policy and programs. The goal is to take into account discriminatory factors in order to make opportunities more equitable in all aspects of life. The goal is to break the cycle of historical discrimination by understanding that our society is not fair and has not been for a long time.

Once this is understood, positions and policies that did not previously consider past discrimination can be changed to be equitable. An example of this is Buffalo ESPRI working with its partners to simplify job descriptions, in order to remove unessential qualifications that disproportionately limit the application and eligibility of people of color and minority groups. System level changes such as this will slowly change the job market to be more equitable.

“When we envision our ideal Buffalo, we envision an equitable community where all people have the opportunity, resources, and tools needed to achieve their potential, and to lead healthy and fulfilling lives with rewarding work.” (The Racial Equity Dividend Report: Buffalo’s Great Opportunity, 2016)

1. University at Buffalo Regional Institute, & Make Communities. (2016). The Racial Equity Dividend: Buffalo’s Great Opportunity (Publication). Retrieved August, 2018, from Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo website: <https://racialequitybuffalo.org/files/documents/report/theequitydividendfinaljune2018.pdf>



Where to go for Racial Equity training

Racial Equity Roundtable: Racial Equity Impact Analysis Training

The Roundtable is promoting the use of the Racial Equity and Impact Analysis. This user-friendly tool helps corporations and organizations think about how they can contribute to closing the racial equity opportunity gap while strengthening their performance. More than 130 leaders representing government, business and nonprofits have already participated in this training.

You can register for personalized Racial Equity Impact Analysis trainings at (716) 936-7474 or by email at:

info@racialequitybuffalo.org.

<https://racialequitybuffalo.org/contact-us/>

GREATER BUFFALO

Racial Equity Roundtable

Race Matters Institute:

Offers a 1.5-Day Introductory training, conference workshops, equity coach training, Webinars, factsheets, and a racial equity impact analysis tool for organizations.

What we're generally known for:

- 1.5 day introductory training
- conference workshops

Organizational technical assistance from RM tools:

- back-mapping on specific issues
- application of racial equity impact analysis tool
- document review for framing/messaging
- technical assistance packages/retainers: individuals and networks

Network mobilization:

- customization and branding of Race Matters introductory training
- equity coach training

Knowledge dissemination around current issues:

- webinar offerings: stand-alone and series
- speaking engagements
- factsheets

Additional Offerings:

- customized product development
- customized training (at client request)



<http://viablefuturescenter.org/racemattersinstitute/services-products-2/>

The ESPRI Team

<https://www.uwbec.org/espriwny>

Doris Carbonell-medina

Project Director

Email: doris.carbonell-medina@uwbec.org

Telephone: (716)-887-2735

Madelon Brown

Administrative Assistant

Email: Madelon.brownwoods@uwbec.org

Telephone: (716)-887-2671

Madeline Gerbracht

Community Outreach and Engagement Specialist

Email: Madelon.brownwoods@uwbec.org

Telephone: (716)-887-2671

Pictures taken at the Juneteenth Festival, Buffalo NY, June 2018



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