Ethnic Diversity in OACUHO

OACUHO

Ontario Association of College & University Housing Officers

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the contributions, compassion, and energy of many.

Dialogue related to the lack of diverse representation in our field has undoubtedly existed quietly between members for some time, but I must first thank two people who started a louder conversation within OACUHO: Aman Litt and Brian Cunha. Aman and Brian presented *The Elephant in the Room: Ethnic Diversity in OACUHO* at the 2017 OACUHO Spring Conference at Carleton University. Thank you encouraging a space within our association to have this conversation.

I must also thank the members who demonstrated their interest in keeping this conversation going throughout the rest of the Spring Conference and upon returning to campus. Your interest and engagement fueled the support for this project.

Ife Kolade, Carmen Law, and Dirk Rodricks each served as Subcommittee Leads for this project. Ife coordinated the preliminary research review; Carmen coordinated the individual interviews; and Dirk coordinated the focus groups, in addition to adding valuable subject area expertise to the project and the written report as a whole. Without their generosity, leadership, and countless hours of volunteer work, this project could not have been completed. I must also thank the members who served on the subcommittees: Shainiya Balachandran, Jessica Charbonneau, Sally Chen, Tuba Chishti, and Jennifer Trotman. Whether you conducted research, developed project questions, interviewed project participants, or completed hours of transcription, your contributions helped moved this project forward. Thank you to Katrina Persad, who completed the student staff survey analysis. Thank you to Seán Kinsella and Savannah Sloat for their

support with the report's commentary on Indigeneity in OACUHO.

Without question, I must thank the anonymous research participants of this project. Self-identified professionals of colour contributed their voices and experiences in a variety of ways: focus groups, interviews, and anonymous survey contributions. The participants include current association members, past members, and student staff from member institutions. Your voices tell the story of this report, and they matter deeply to this project's purpose.

Thank you to the 2017-2018 OACUHO Board and President, Amanda Ziegler, who supported this project and gave the project team the space to conduct its work. Thank you to 2018-2019 President Ian Crookshank, for showing full support of initializing this project and asserting that future work will continue to sustain progress.

Thank you to the readers of this report. Your interest, engagement, and ultimately your response will determine the path forward for this important work to continue. As a reader, you are an active player in the next phase of this project.

Finally, thank you to the self-identified professionals of colour in OACUHO. You work in a field where diverse representation is very low. Regardless of how this has influenced your professional experience, your contribution to your operations and to the lives of the students you serve is deserving of important recognition. Your voices matters. Your stories matter. Your identities matter. Thank you for everything you do.

A MESSAGE TO READERS

Jennifer Tabar
Member-at-Large, 2017-2018

I'm very pleased to share this report with the OACUHO membership after receiving approval from the 2017-2018 OACUHO Board of Directors. I ask you to consider the messages below, which I have included to frame some expectations.

To all readers: Within equity, diversity, and inclusion, the research is vast and the experiences are varied. Our priority was to provide a platform to share and compile experiences, while offering preliminary recommendations to the membership on further exploration within this topic. This report is a first step; we should expect many more steps in the future. For a high-level summary of the report, readers can also view the Executive Summary, attached separately.

SUBCOMMITTEE LEADS

Ife Kolade,
York University

Carmen Law,
Queen's University

Dirk Rodricks,
University of Toronto

To colleagues who identify as persons of colour: It is possible the stories you read in the following pages may or may not resonate with you. In either case, your experiences are valid. This report does not intend to represent all members of the association who identify as persons of colour; it captures the sentiments that participants chose to share with the project team. I am certain there is much more to understand. Thank you for engaging in the dialogue, however that may look to you.

To white colleagues: As you represent the majority of OACUHO, your response to this conversation is critical. Firstly, I recognize we have active allies (and folks who want to become better allies) in the association. This report is a space for you to continue understanding the experiences of some of your colleagues. Secondly, some readers may experience confusion or defensiveness when reading this report. You may doubt some of the stories, or you may search for an excuse to justify an experience. This gut reaction is propelled by white fragility, which is a feeling of discomfort on the part of a white person when confronted by information about racial injustice. White fragility works to silence and erase valid experiences. If you find yourself feeling defensive or challenging the narrative, check in with yourself and acknowledge this reaction. Thirdly, remember that the stories in the pages

below reflect experiences of some of your OACUHO colleagues. These experiences do not apply to every person of colour in the field. Be mindful when starting this conversation in your workplace; not everyone may want to have this discussion. Finally, a recurring sentiment from our research was the need for white colleagues and supervisors to develop a stronger knowledge base in equity, diversity, and inclusion. This report will not lay out all of the answers. Much of that work sits with you to research and start conversations with your colleagues and supervisors. I encourage you to accept this responsibility and use the power you hold to begin conversations about your organization's role in this issue.

To managers and directors: I encourage you to devote time, energy, and resources to making meaning of the information in the following pages. I ask that you prioritize action within your departments to make change for the future, and make space for everyone. Your operations and your students' experience will benefit from empowering your teams to engage in this work.

Thank you for considering the above messages. I look forward to engaging in future conversations about diversity in our association, and to the work ahead of us to make it a more inclusive place.

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INTRODUCTION

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are commonly used words in the field of student affairs. Within housing operations specifically, we pride ourselves on working in an environment that celebrates diversity. We run diversity training with our student staff, we teach our residents about inclusive language, we role model respectful community living by mediating conflict between roommates from various walks of life. But how are we really doing? As professionals in the field of on-campus student housing, have we successfully developed communities where all members are welcome, celebrated, and thriving?

Diversity comes in many forms and across many identities. Our goal should be to celebrate and represent all equity-seeking populations. This project's focus, however, points directly at a segment of diversity pertaining to ethnicity, culture, and race. For the purposes of this report, ethnic diversity captures the composition of individuals from diverse ethnic, cultural, or racial backgrounds, effectively resulting in a visibly diverse group of individuals. A mere glance around our membership will indicate that our association lacks visible diversity. Canada's campus populations have grown more diverse over the years (Cox & Strange 2016), yet housing staff teams remain predominantly white.

What are the consequences? What are the experiences of our members who identify with under-represented groups? Whose voices are not heard in this association and within our field?

This project begins to answer these questions by reporting on the state of ethnic diversity within OACUHO and the experiences of persons of colour within the association. First, we compile a brief summary of research to frame the conversation with an academic perspective. Next, we present data that attempts to quantify representation within OACUHO. Following this, we share experiences from our members to gain perspective on how ethnic identity intersects with one's professional experience. We conclude by recommending opportunities for further exploration of this issue within OACUHO.

Foundation for Discussion

Prior to presenting the research, we outline below some information to contextualize the report, outline the project timeline, and lay a foundation of terms for readers.

Contextualizing the project

Self-identified professionals of colour within OACUHO directed this project. The team approached this project with the perspective that under-representation has consequences on the members of OACUHO and the students we serve. We build on the perspective introduced during the 2017 Spring Conference presentation, when presenters asked professionals of colour to anonymously share what they would want their colleagues to know. One response from the presentation is included below:

This statement represents one experience of many that highlights a barrier to belonging and thriving in the field. The project team sought to uncover more to this story, because our experience has been different from our white peers. The positionality of the project team reflects a research approach supplemented by cultural intuition, which allows researchers to leverage their own experiences to contextualize and give meaning to collected data (Bernal, 1998; Hubain et al, 2016).

As a person of colour in a majority-white environment, you sometimes find yourself out of your comfort zone while everyone else is totally within their comfort zones, and you realize you aren't being your best self. You wonder if people like you for your white side. The feeling of being a foreigner, of having to learn someone else's social dynamics can be devastating.

Story–telling as research

While readers will find quantifiable representation data and a review of some academic research in the following pages, this project's focus is storytelling that centres the voices of those who are marginalized. Marginalized peoples have different histories and experiences with oppression. Often these histories and experiences are explained and sometimes even rationalized by those who occupy dominant positions in society. Because of the power that these tellers hold, these stories become normalized and often accepted as true often serving to reinforce and sustain the privilege of those who tell them. Today, these majoritarian stories, as they are known in the literature, continue to privilege as they have historically, White, upper-class, heterosexual, educated, Christian males. What makes this harmful to marginalized individuals is that these dominant narratives are laden with many generalized characterizations that obfuscate the heterogeneity and complexity of those who live on the margins. Historically, the voices and stories of these communities have always existed but they have not always been heard and therefore constantly run the risk of being rendered invisible and even erased. Counter-storytelling, or the telling of stories that run counter to the dominant majoritarian narratives, is the cornerstone of critical research in education.

Daniel Solorzano and Tara Yosso (2002) defined counter-storytelling as "a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told" (p. 26). These include racialized, women and gender-non conforming, queer communities, and lower income communities, to name a few. Thus, counter-storytelling becomes a way to resist the racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, and classist ideologies that make it difficult to thrive. Dorian McCoy and Dirk Rodricks (2015) note three important reasons to why counter-storytelling is important. First, by focusing on experience and encounter, we are able to see how the social constructs of race and its impact of racism, for example, operate at the individual, institutional, and structural level. Secondly, counter-storytelling builds community. This very project is a tremendous example of the power of cultivating solidarities across racialized communities. Third, the telling of these counter-stories is a way to challenge not only the universality contained in these normalized narratives, but also the myths and stereotypes that are based in assumption, rather than experience and encounter. Such challenge and resistance allow marginalized people to imagine alternative possibilities and create new worlds that can engage, sustain, and empower.

What do we know about diverse student populations in Ontario institutions and residences?

Ontario's higher education student population has undergone a considerable shift in composition over recent decades. An institution's context plays a significant role with student demographics, as numerous factors can influence campus diversity. A basic starting point, however, is to consider what data an institution collects about its students' ethnic or racial identities (among other identities). In the concluding chapter of *Serving Diverse Students in Canadian Higher Education*, the first recommendation to begin improving an institution's service to diverse students is to examine what is known about diverse student groups, including their numbers and needs (Cox & Strange 2016). While natural to assume that main campus collects this data, a CBC investigation highlighted that most institutions do not track race data on their students (McDonald 2017). Additionally, even if an institution centrally gathers race data and makes it available to its residence providers, an institution's residence population may look very different from the main student population. Regardless of scenario, collecting race data (along with data related to other identities) is critical to making informed decisions about the residents living on campus. Furthermore, meaningfully analyzing this data offers powerful information for decision-makers to make choices about support services, programming experiences, and general representation. Decision-makers should look critically at their assessment practices determine if they are fulfilling this step.

Key words and Resources

anti-racism:

the policy or practice of opposing racism and promoting racial tolerance.

aversive racism:

a form of bias or discrimination characterized by complex and ambivalent expressions, such as when someone believes and outwardly supports racial equality but unconsciously harbours biased feelings about other races.

counter-stories:

a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told, and whose stories are counter to the majoritarian narrative.

intersectionality:

the ways in which systems of oppression - racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, classism, etc. overlap (occur simultaneously) to produce a particular experience for an individual.

racial microaggression:

"brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults towards people of colour" (Sue et al., 2007, p. 271)

othering:

"a process whereby individuals, groups, and communities are deemed to be less important, less worthwhile, less consequential, less authorized and less human based on historically situated markers of social formation such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality" (Yep, 2003, p. 18)

racialization/racialized:

because the concept of race is a socially constructed one that is constituted relationally by time, place, and circumstance, it is seen as something that is fluid and framed both historically and contemporarily. What this means is that different people have been "raced" differently in time, space, and circumstance. The attributes of race - its status and meaning, have been applied differently and are subject to change often at the behest of those in power with consequences of those on the margins.

racism:

the reinforcement of a set of interpersonal, institutional, cultural, and structural patterns and practices that subordinates an individual or group and advantages people legally defined and socially constructed as "white". Racism can be enacted at the individual, institutional, and structural levels. E.g. when an organization fails to provide a service to people because of their skin colour, culture, or ethnic origin, then such a refusal constitutes institutional racism. It can be seen in attitudes and behaviours that manifest, unwittingly, in process and services. On the other hand, when a hierarchy of political, economic, social, and cultural inequity is legitimized, it is referred to as structural racism, such as gentrification. In its desire to "clean up" the city, gentrification deliberately targets racialized neighbourhoods, who also have historically made up most of the working and lower classes.

tokenization/tokenism:

the practice of taking superficial or symbolic action to be inclusive to individuals of a marginalized community and provide the appearance of equality, often in an institutional context. E.g. schools or places of work. It is important to note that the oppressive structures continue to remain in place even as these tokenizing gestures are made. Tokenization is used to deflect critique of discrimination by elevating exceptional cases and ignoring the realities faced by the majority of marginalized peoples.

white fragility:

discomfort and defensiveness on the part of a white person when confronted by information about racial injustice and inequality

white privilege:

refers to unearned, unrecognized, and often invisible advantages afforded to a particular social group over all others. White privilege refers to "a system of opportunities and benefits conferred upon people simply because they are white" (Solorzano & Yosso 2002, p. 27).

whiteness:

does not refer to culture, rather it is a socially pervasive worldview that is sustained by material practices and institutions. According to Estable, Meyer, & Pon (1997, 21), "whiteness is a dominant cultural space with enormous political significance, with the purpose to keep others on the margin. ... [W]hite people are not required to explain to others how 'white' culture works, because 'white' culture is the dominant culture that sets the norms. Everybody else is then compared to that norm. ... In times of perceived threat, the normative group may well attempt to reassert its normativity by asserting elements of its cultural practice more explicitly and exclusively." White culture is the subtle ways that norms, preferences and fears of white-European-descended people shape how we organize our work and institutions, see ourselves and others, interact with one another and with time, and make decisions. See Appendix G for specific examples of how white culture exists in the workplace.

Further Reading

The project team believes that each of us must own our responsibility to educate ourselves especially if we are socially located in the dominant group. In addition to the resources cited throughout the report, we hope that these additional resources will be helpful as readers seek to learn more about the world and its impacts on communities of colour and other marginalized groups.

For more on critical race theory, intersectionality, and counter-stories:

Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment by Kimberle Williams Crenshaw (2000)

Counter-stories as representations of the racialized experiences of students of color in higher education and student affairs graduate preparation programs by Bryan S. Hubain, Evette L. Allen, Jessica C. Harris & Chris Linder (2016)

Critical Race Theory in Higher Education: 20 Years of Theoretical and Research Innovations by Dorian L. McCoy and Dirk Rodricks (2015)

Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics by Kimberle Williams Crenshaw (1989)

For more on white privilege, white fragility, and whiteness:

What Does It Mean to Be White? Developing White Racial Literacy by Robin DiAngelo (2016)

White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo (2011)

White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness by Ruth Frankenberg (1993)

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack by Peggy McIntosh (2003)

White Privilege: Essential Readings On the Other Side of Racism by Paula S. Rothenberg. (2002)

For reading on indigeneity and decolonization:

Unsettling Setter Colonialism: The discourse and politics of settlers, and solidarity with Indigenous nations by Corey Snelgrove, Rita Kaur Dhamoon, & Jeff Corntassel (2014)

Winter 2018 CACUSS Communique on Indigenization and Decolonization in Canadian Student Affairs (2018)

Indigenous Canada course on Coursera

For general reading on equity and social justice in student affairs

The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities by Frances Henry, Enakshi Dua, Carl E. James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramos and Malinda S. Smith (2017)

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? and Other Conversations About Race by Beverly D. Tatum (Originally published 1997. Revised 2017)

2017 ACUHO-I Journal on Social Justice (2017)

Project Timeline and Process

The work for this project began when delegates of the 2017 Spring Conference attended the presentation entitled The Elephant in the Room: Ethnic Diversity in OACUHO. Presenters Aman Litt and Brian Cunha started a conversation about the lack of ethnic diversity in our association and shared anonymous stories and members' experiences. The presentation created a dialogue that fueled the decision to dedicate resources to understanding this topic. The following depicts a timeline and description of the project work over the past year.

AUGUST

- Development of project goals, values, and deliverables

- Intentional decision to focus the project on gathering experiences from professionals of colour to tell stories

- Intentional decision that contributors to this project should self-identify as persons of colour, in order to capture voice and perspective of persons of colour

SEPTEMBER

- Project announcement and invitation to participate as a main contributor or as an ally

- Members expressed interest in joining the project

- Shortlist of project members and allies* created

OCTOBER

- All OACUHO members invited to complete survey on diverse representation

- Intentional decision to collect data related to various equity-seeking identities

- Intentional decision not to collect disaggregated racial data apart from self-identification as Indigenous (i.e. ethnic identity segments such as East Asian, South Asian, etc.).

NOVEMBER

- Delegates of Residence Life Conference received invitation to complete a survey on their experience working in Housing

- Project members completed preliminary survey to generate initial list of common topics, areas for discussion, and research questions

- Three subcommittees established: Research review, Focus groups, Individual interviews

*At the time of writing, members who volunteered as allies had not yet been involved in the report.
The project team chose for the first phase of this project to be completely directed by voices of racialized members.

DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH

- Subcommittees worked interdependently on areas of focus to develop the report

- Research review: gathered and summarized research on critical race theory, diverse hiring, and experiences of persons of colour in student affairs

- Focus groups: developed a question set and protocol, ran three digital focus groups with 4-5 participants each using GoToMeeting, transcribed and analyzed the conversations

- Individual interviews: developed a question set and protocol, interviewed 18 individuals over phone or in person, transcribed and summarized the conversations

APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY

- Presentation during OACUHO Spring 2018 Conference and report shared with membership

- Intentional decision to focus the project on gathering experiences from professionals of colour to tell stories

- Intentional decision that contributors to this project should self-identify as persons of colour, in order to capture voice and perspective of persons of colour

PRELIMINARY RESEARCH REVIEW

Ethnic diversity remains lacking amongst housing professionals and within student affairs (SA). This project aims to encourage conversation within the association through engagement with existing research and with the lived experiences of professionals of colour. Engaging in these bodies of knowledge can serve as a starting point towards dismantling systemic barriers within our field. This review of relevant literature focuses on a range of research that seeks to understand and provide recommendations to address the continued lack of ethnic diversity within SA. It is important to note that the existing research speaks directly to the American experience; however, extrapolations can be made to the Canadian context.

A series of authors (Rapp, 1997; Komives & Kuh 1988; Phelps Tobin, 1998; Sagaria & Johnsrud, 1991) have noted the recruitment and retention of SA professionals of colour continues to gain importance due to increasing student diversity on post-secondary campuses (Linder and Simmons 414). However, a seminal study conducted in 1988 by the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) found several barriers to the recruitment of professionals of colour, including: lack of profession awareness, low salary, lack of mobility and lack of support (Linder and Simmons 414). From a student support and service perspective, eliminating the barriers to entry for professionals of colour in SA adds an increased level of security, understanding, and ease for students of colour. This is not to say that white SA professionals should be absolved of responsibility to support students of colour, or that professionals of colour should bear the burden of supporting students of colour. Rather, the research tells us that seeing people of colour in professional staff roles enhances the post-secondary experience of students of colour (Linder and Simmons 415).

A particular distinction between the American and Canadian context may offer that the lack of racialized SA professionals plays a particularly nuanced role to Canadian post-secondary students of colour. In the United States, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have a long and robust history across the country. HBCUs serve as an alternative to Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs)* for students of colour, allowing them to receive their education in spaces where whiteness is de-centered. In Canada, every post-secondary institution could be conceptualized as a PWI. If the presence of SA professionals of colour eases the climate for students of colour at PWIs (Linder and Simmons 414), then it would follow that ongoing underrepresentation poses a significant challenge towards diversity initiatives at Canadian institutions. Without positive experiences for students of colour in their interactions with SA professionals (which includes feelings associated with representation) it can be expected that the status quo remains and students of colour discount their ability to enter professional roles in student affairs.

The literature review that follows provides an overview of research into ethnic diversity within student affairs. Increasing ethnic diversity will require a multi-pronged approach supported by Critical Race Theory, which addresses: recruitment, retention, and mentorship. As previously outlined, strategic efforts to increase ethnic diversity amongst professionals may encourage organic recruitment to the field from students of colour. Arriving at this ideal outcome, however, would require tandem efforts in related issues, which will be described below and throughout the report.

Critical Race Theory

Student development theory has played a key role in SA since the late 1970s and the publication of Applying New Developmental Findings (Patton et al. 39-40). SA theories serve as a common language amongst professionals when making sense of complex experiences. Yet many foundational SA theories neglect to engage with race, ethnicity and racism. Of the most well-known student development theories, only one (the Model of Multiple Dimension of Identity by Jones and McEwen in 2000 and re-conceptualized by Abe, Jones and McEwen in 2007) engages with race explicitly (Patton et al. 41)**. Race, at least the way in which each person is visualized by society to fit a racial identity, cannot be easily concealed and therefore plays a key role in how one navigates and interacts with the world. As we intend to support diverse students, the omission of race and racism in the theories that underpin SA strategies indicates that inevitably students of colour are not served in a manner that addresses their needs. This affects recruitment of professionals of colour.

*Predominantly White Institutions (PWI) are typically defined as institutions where at least 50% of students identify as white. These institutions may have also been established to serve only white students and at a point in history, nonwhite students may have been restricted from enrolling.
** Patton et al. evaluate prominent student development theories and finds them lacking in their discussions of race. Chickering fails to discuss how race and racism intersects with the seven vectors. In Baxter Magolda's study which informed their theory, only 3 of the 101 student participants were from minority groups. Those 3 students were ultimately unreachable at the end of the study. Kohlberg doesn't discuss or engage with the differences in how students of colour may develop different understandings of moral reasoning when faced with structural racism.

Because of the gaps within student development theory, Critical Race Theory (CRT) was introduced to SA as a "framework for not only understanding our use of theories but also for guiding practice on college and university campuses" (Patton et al. 39). Originally created by racialized legal scholars to better understand the continued failure of civil rights legislation in practice (Patton et al. 43), CRT establishes that "racism is a normal and common aspect that shapes society [and] is deeply embedded in social, cultural and political structures, thus making it difficult to recognize and address" (Patton et al. 44). When CRT was introduced to higher education by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), they examined the effects of the underutilization of race in SA theories. Ladson-Billings and Tate established three propositions of applying CRT to student affairs. Of the three propositions, we can apply one specifically to understand the experience of SA professionals in the Canadian context: "race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States" (Patton et al. 44). Furthermore, in applying CRT to student affairs, Ladson-Billings and Tate concluded that the White and Western-focused post-secondary curriculum leads students of colour (i.e. prospective professionals) to engage repeatedly with learning that does not centre (and often overlooks) their experiences.

If foundational SA theories neglect to acknowledge racial realities and classroom curriculum continues to centre whiteness, how can SA professionals fully support the needs of their racialized students? How can racialized students feel validated in their experiences? Similarly, we should examine how this applies to supporting SA colleagues of colour. How do white SA professionals engage the lived experiences of their racialized colleagues? Acknowledging that non-whiteness is a significant barrier for SA professionals is the first step in any efforts by OACUHO to address underrepresentation. Once non-whiteness is accepted as barrier, applying CRT to SA adds depth to understanding the experiences of professionals of colour, both prior to entry (i.e. as students of colour) and as new professionals. CRT argues that the voices of people of colour (referred to as counter-stories) are "central, legitimate and relevant in contextualizing race and racial identities" (Patton et al. 43). Projects such as the Professionals of Colour Affinity Group in OACUHO and this very report provide counter-stories, which can help to establish systems that are truly supportive of racialized persons within our field. Because professionals of colour provide counter-stories themselves, CRT reduces the potential of excluding other identities the professional may hold. Each individual determines the degree to which race and ethnicity are centered in the counter-story.

Recruitment and Retention

With 80-90% of faculty and staff positions at post-secondary institutions occupied by white people (Kayes 65), the conversation around ethnic diversity must consider recruitment practices and retention efforts. Kayes notes that while student diversity has increased at the post-secondary level in the United States, in part due to affirmative action, "efforts to diversify the faculty continue to be amongst the least successful elements of campus commitments to diversity" (65). Diversity amongst post-secondary staff, specifically SA professionals, can be included in this evaluation.

Hiring practices are evaluated in much of the research on ethnic underrepresentation in student affairs. Utilizing CRT, hiring practices are a proxy for deeper race issues. Kayes argues that leadership and institutional policies have limited impact and "institutional […] cultures can overtly and covertly undermine the goal of faculty/staff diversity" (65). Kayes argues that diversity in candidate pools does not correlate to diversity in hired professionals; we must focus on recruitment and retention of professionals of colour. During this project's focus groups, many new professionals of colour reported having ethnically diverse peer groups as student staff, but saw themselves become one of few persons of colour in professional roles. If candidate pools feature representative levels of professionals of colour, what overt and covert practices impede their career progression?

The research points to the impact of institutional culture and covert practices on the hiring and retention of professionals of colour. This project's aim

of highlighting counter-stories is simply a starting point in undertaking systemic change. Creating tangible results in recruitment and retention of professionals of colour requires challenging and uncomfortable work of changing institutional culture. For white professionals, this includes honest evaluation of how they are shaped by race and racism. Kayes recommends comprehensive diversity education for faculty and staff on hiring committees. White professionals would benefit by learning about and addressing their practices of aversive racism: when someone believes and outwardly supports racial equality but unconsciously harbours biased feelings about other races. Lack of training means that for white professionals (even those who consider themselves as allies), aversive racism may influence their decision-making. The following example highlights how aversive racism may play out in a hiring process:

An employer influenced by feelings of aversive racism may subtly re-evaluate the most important qualification for a job, depending on the race of different applicants. If, say, a White applicant had broader experience and a Black applicant had more up-to-date training, the employer would decide that experience was more important: if the White applicant had more recent training and the Black more experience, the employer would decide that the experience was less important. Thus, the aversive racist would find a way to hire the White applicant without admitting to himself or herself that racial bias played a role in the choice. (Kayes 66)

Beyond aversive racism, other types of implicit resistance to diverse hiring have an impact on recruitment. The Bennett Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity provides a model to understand this resistance (Kayes 66). The model has six levels of intercultural sensitivity: denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and integration. Kayes suggests that the majority of white SA professionals sit at the minimization level (66), characterized by more readily identifying with candidates of colour who are similar to themselves and fit their perception of the institutional culture. Turner (2002) writes, "Search committees, without intending to, look for Afro-Saxons or Hispanic-Saxons" (Kayes 66). Ladson-Billings and Tate note that conforming to white norms (i.e. speech, clothing, family structure, and experiences) is the price paid by students and professionals of colour to feel welcome. If most white SA professionals are minimizers, it follows that the subjective idea of "institutional fit" acts as an unspoken and unwritten barrier towards the hiring of professionals of colour. Efforts to increase recruitment of professionals of colour must be coupled with efforts to support these professionals once they are in their roles. Otherwise, there will be no changes of actual value. Research also indicates that retention connects deeply to mentorship opportunities, to be discussed.

Kayes also proposes diverse hiring training as a tool for increasing representation of professionals of colour. Kayes identifies the DiversityWorks, Inc. model, based out of Illinois, as a positive example of a diversity education program (67). Their one-day workshop, New Paradigms for Diversifying Faculty and Staff in Higher Education: Uncovering Cultural Biases in the Search and Hiring Process, may be a good starting point for OACUHO member institutions looking to provide diverse hiring training to staff. Kayes also provides recommendations on the learning objectives of diverse hiring training program, which include: move white staff away from the defense and minimizing stage; develop the autonomous stage of racial consciousness in white staff; increase cultural awareness and understanding; develop intercultural competence; and develop the ability to identify cultural biases in the hiring process. Ultimately, diverse hiring will require a concerted effort to train and educate hiring committees to be aware of their implicit biases when recruiting candidates of colour.

Mentorship

A wide range of research (Thomas et al. 2007; Vahey 2011; Jackson 2003) indicates that the desire to enter a career in SA is influenced by mentorship and professional development opportunities for persons of colour. Defined as "the act of providing guidance and support delivered from a mentor to a protégé" (Thomas et al. 179), mentorship remains an element of workplace integration and retention that is often lacking for professionals of colour. The relationships developed between mentor and mentee serve to build "inspiration and belief in each other, promoting excellence and passion for work through guidance, protection, support and networking" (Thomas et al. 179). The shared understanding of the realities of navigating the workplace as a person of colour provides a safe space for learning (Jackson 12). The value of mentorship for professionals of colour is simply lost in mentorship with white staff members, because of the lack of lived experiences of being a professional of colour. Thus, mentorship has immense value when looking at retention of professionals of colour. New professionals often seek to determine their fit as SA professionals, and mentorship provides the "needed social interactions that promote a deeper personal and professional affiliation with the institution" (Jackson, 13). These types of interactions serve greater value to professionals of colour as our institutions primarily centre white experiences and ideals.

Several bodies of research (Forney, 1994; Hunter 1992; Richmond and Sherman, 1991) indicate that the influence of a mentor played a substantial role in the decision to enter student affairs for many new professionals. In fact, a study conducted by Taub and McEwen (2006) found that 80% of the 300 respondents identified encouragement from a seasoned professional as a catalyst for entering a career in student affairs. Another study by Alicea-Rodriguez (2007) found that 87% of 58 respondents also identified mentorship as significant in their decision to enter student affairs. Linder and Simmons (2015) found mentorship to be one of seven determining factors for students of colour to enter the field. Others factors they identified include shared values with the field and a desire to improve campus life due to their own negative experiences as students of colour. Having role models of colour in SA plays a paramount role in both the recruitment and retention of professionals of colour.

Student staff, the largest and most readily available pool for recruitment, must begin to see more faces of colour amongst professional staff to serve as champions for them to enter the field. Providing role models of colour to those interested in SA is important for social learning and recruitment to the field (Oseguera 33). Sagaria and Johnsrud (1991) articulate this well:

Role model and mentor influence manifested in two ways; first as an initial influence where interest is kindled, and secondly where mentors play a key role in assisting students to progress within the field. Mentors also supported students with advice for issues of general importance and matters unique to underrepresented students. (Oseguera 83)

Once recruited into the profession, the mentorship of upper management and/or more experienced professionals of colour are critical to retention. In the United States, the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program, abbreviated as NUFP, provides a model for engaging students of colour in SA. The NUFP program began in 1989 to address the lack of ethnic and racial diversity in SA (NUFP Handbook 4). Since 2003, it has also included LGBTQ+ students and students with disabilities. Currently, the mission is "to increase the number of historically disenfranchised and underrepresented professionals in student affairs and/or higher education, including but not limited to those of racial and ethnic-minority background; those having a disability; and those identifying as LGBTQ+ (NUFP Handbook 3). NUFP participants gain a thorough understanding of SA history and purpose. NUFP participants surveyed between 2008 and 2012 noted their desire to enter SA as a result of the NUFP program due

to the mentorship, internship and conference opportunities (Oseguera 65, 90). While the NUFP aims to support undergraduate students to increase the number of SA professionals of colour, the program's core components can also serve new professionals, if there was a desire to implement within OACUHO.

OACUHO can begin through its student staff and professional mentorship programs, both of which can be adapted to better suit the discussed needs of students and professionals of colour. As a starting place, both programs can better serve the needs of persons of colour by providing an option for mentees to express their desire to be paired with a mentor of colour. This option would be developed in partnership with experienced professionals of colour in OACUHO to ensure consideration is given to potential for undue burden on the mentors.

Conclusion

This review serves as a starting point for OACUHO to understand the key areas of challenge related to the lack of ethnic diversity in the field. Critical Race Theory must underpin any initiatives undertaken to address this underrepresentation. Hiring practices should be evaluated and the implementation of diverse hiring training would aid in both recruitment and retention. Providing mentorship

opportunities to persons of colour will be integral to retaining professionals of colour. Ultimately, member institutions must engage with the counter-stories of professionals of colour, illuminated through the focus groups and individual interviews, and the body of existing research to develop means of increasing ethnic diversity within the profession.

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REPRESENTATION IN OACUHO

The lack of ethnic diversity within OACUHO and within housing operations is a frequently addressed issue throughout this report. While this issue is a driving factor that influenced the development of this report, the observation has been strictly anecdotal thus far. This section of the report aims to quantify representation by summarizing survey data gathered over the past year. This data offers a basic picture of the diversity within OACUHO. If a point of departure for serving diverse students is to collect race data, it would follow that OACUHO collect this data periodically within our association, to gain understanding on who is present and in what strength.

All OACUHO members on the listserv received three invitations to participate in the survey on the *State of Diverse Representation within OACUHO*. The anonymous survey, offered through Survey Monkey, collected information on various aspects of one's identity and professional experience within Housing and Student Affairs (see Appendix A for the survey format). Please note that .5% of respondents selected "prefer not to disclose".
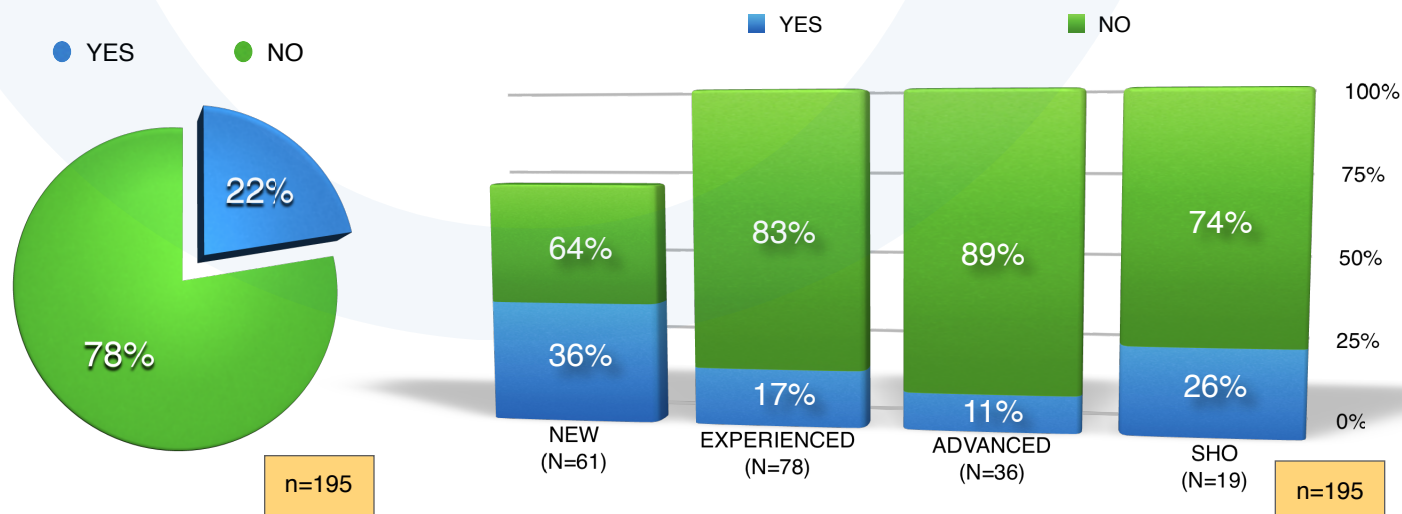

Figure 1:
Do you self-identify as a person of colour? (Percentage, overall responses)

YES — 22%
NO — 78%
n=195

Figure 2:
Do you self-identify as a person of colour (percentage, by organizational level)

YES — NO

Level	YES	NO
NEW (N=61)	36%	64%
EXPERIENCED (N=78)	17%	83%
ADVANCED (N=36)	11%	89%
SHO (N=19)	26%	74%

n=195

Limitations and Considerations of the Data

There are several points to consider upon analyzing the survey data. Firstly, it is critical to consider who might be compelled to complete a survey about diverse representation. One might assume that folks are more likely to complete a survey if they see themselves reflected in its subject matter; it would follow that a greater proportion of OACUHO members from diverse backgrounds completed the survey. The figures above most likely inflate the proportion of persons of colour in OACUHO, giving the illusion that there is a higher proportion of persons of colour than in reality. Readers should be cautioned that more survey responses would likely dilute the proportion of persons of colour, especially in the Advanced and SHO levels*, where there are fewer positions overall within organizations.

The survey results establish a starting point as a reference, but their value would pale in comparison to collecting this data within member organizations. A variety of factors can contribute to an organization's staff diversity, but tracking the data is the first place to start. Institution decision-makers should ask themselves if their teams reflect the student diversity on their campus and/or within residence. As stated previously, the data above likely misrepresents the proportion of persons of colour within some institutions, as readers will observe in the Individual Interview Analysis section of this report. Decision makers should look internally at their own state of representation to help inform their work moving forward in addressing this issue.

As described in the Project Process section, apart from gathering data on self-identification as an Indigenous person, it was decided not to collect disaggregated ethnic identity data (i.e. specific ethnic identities such as East Asian, South Asian, etc.). This means that while we can articulate how many respondents identify as persons of colour, we cannot demonstrate how many respondents identified as East-Asian, for example. Upon reconsideration, this data could have been highly valuable in determining which cultural identities specifically are under-represented within the field, or perhaps not at all represented. To highlight this point, consider that among the survey respondents, about 2% identified as Indigenous. If this project had gathered information about representation within OACUHO of East-Asian identities, for example, what might that have told us, and how might this compare to the East-Asian student population within our residences?

Finally, increased representation does not automatically provide equitable service provision to students and completely inclusive working environments. While greater staff diversity is better than less diversity, there are far more factors at play that will be discussed further in the report. It is equally important that members do not defer to "success stories" of persons of colour as an indicator of progress in equitable representation. In research related to Asian American higher education students, the researcher points out that perceiving one person's success as the success of an entire ethnic group is not only concerning, but inaccurate (Suzuki 2002).

*As of the OACUHO Annual General Meeting (May 2018) at the University of Guelph, the membership level names progress as follows: New (formerly Entry), Experienced (formerly Mid), Advanced (formerly Senior), and Senior (formerly CHO).

Suzuki asserts that focusing on "success stories", or "model minority stereotypes", the problems of income disparity and upward job mobility become easy to ignore or neglect. More specifically, just because we see persons of colour in some roles does not mean representation has been achieved, that upward mobility is as accessible as it is for white colleagues, or that the space is completely inclusive. Ultimately, the work involved in fostering inclusive atmospheres does not stop at equitable representation; there is more to consider and change that relates to work culture and upward job mobility that must remain priorities in this discussion.

What can we gather from this data?

Figures 1 and 2 present information about the current representation of self-identified persons of colour within OACUHO. Having articulated the considerations for the above data, what information can we gather from the survey responses? Based on the responses, the highest proportion of persons of colour within the respondents is within the New Professional group (0-3 years of professional experience). The smallest proportion of persons of colour can be found in the Advanced Professional group. The proportion of persons of colour decreases as we move from the New Professional group, to the Experienced Professional group, to the Advanced Professional group. In the focus group and interview analysis of this report, we will highlight stories and experiences that speak to this topic.

Further analysis of survey responses yields additional relevant data:
- Proportions between cisgender males and females show slightly more ethnic diversity amongst cisgender males within the association:
  o 24% of cisgender male respondents identify as persons of colour (POC)
  o 20% of cisgender female respondents identify as POC
  o Note: 1.5% of respondents identified as non-binary; 0.5% as Two-Spirit, 0% identified as transgender, 1% preferred not to disclose; overall 16% identified as LGBTQ+
- Representation varies within functional areas in housing operations
  o Off-Campus Housing and Community Relations: 35% of respondents identify as POC
  o Facilities, Services, and Front Desk Operations: 29% of respondents identify as POC
  o Residence Life: 24% of respondents identify as POC
  o Admissions, Marketing, and Assignments: 22% of respondents identify as POC
  o Living Learning Communities: 18% of respondents identify as POC
  o Information technology: 9% of respondents identify as POC
- Representation varies across level of involvement in OACUHO initiatives
  o 6% of Board members who responded identified as POC
  o 15% of Board Committee members who responded identified as POC
  o 20% of past delegates at OACUHO events (Spring Conference, Fall Business Meeting, Drive-ins, etc.) who responded identified as POC

What can we gather from what we do not see in the data?

As discussed previously, it is important to consider who is left out of the data by not being represented at all. Since the survey collected responses across various aspects of identity, it is valuable to consider these pockets of data (and what that means about who is missing). Firstly, none of the respondents identified as transgender (note: 1.5% of respondents identified as non-binary; 0.5% as Two-Spirit, 1% preferred not to disclose). Additionally, 9% of respondents identified as persons with a disability, but it is unclear what specific experiences related to disabilities are present within our membership. Thirdly, as stated above, about 2% of respondents identified as Indigenous. Finally, while the data speaks for current members of OACUHO who chose to participate in the survey, it does not capture members who have left the association, which could provide further insight into this issue. All of these points have implications on what voices we may hear and may not hear within our membership, which plays a role in the culture we develop and the priorities we set as an association.

VOICES
IN OUR ASSOCIATION

In the following sections, readers will find a variety of stories shared by the project participants. Members who identify as persons of colour participated via focus groups, individual interviews, or anonymous survey. **Readers should note that the names included below are not real names. Each interviewee selected a pseudonym and chose their own description of gender identity, ethnic identity, and professional context.** Within professional context, we asked participants to share their Housing functional area and approximate years of experience, if desired. Participants with less than three years are "entry-level"; participants with 3-7 years are "advancing", and participants with over 7 years are "experienced"*. Some participants opted for complete anonymity beyond the pseudonym.

Setting the Landscape:
A Review of Focus Group Participation

There were three focus groups conducted as part of this project, engaging 15 housing professionals who self-identified as persons of colour. Focus groups took place via teleconference or video chat and were semi-structured, lasting approximately one-hour long. The question set is available at Appendix B. The project team would like to acknowledge the work of Sally Chen in facilitating the conversations. This section summarizes three key themes emerging from the conversations:

1. **Possibility Models: Why They Matter**

2. **Making/Creating/Keeping Space: A Self-Sustaining Imperative**

3. **Being Conscious: Realities and Impacts**

* The professional experience descriptors in this section do not correspond to OACUHO membership levels.

Possibility Models: Why They Matter

It should come as no surprise that conversations about ethnic diversity on our campuses and indeed the profession tended to begin with issues of numbers. Persons of colour in the housing profession are still outnumbered by white-identifying professionals across entry-level, mid-level, and senior-level positions. Survey data from this project indicates fewer professionals of colour as one advances through career.

The issue of representation and visibility was instrumental in participants' decisions to join the project. A number of participants spoke about the disconnect between the visibility of racialized housing professionals vis-à-vis the students that constitute our residences and campuses. Darien offered this:

> I notice that there is a disparity between students that we serve versus the professionals that have a say in effecting policy and change to serve said students, especially as you move up [the hierarchy]. What's really important is our ability to connect with students, and right now, the representation isn't there. (Darien, South Asian male; entry-level residence life)

Kieran (male, person of colour) concurs with Darien: "It's not right now represented in higher management positions. Saying there's a discrepancy is a bit of an understatement." He adds, "But I know that we have been making progress, and I want to do my part". Sarah offers that the representation phenomenon felt particularly important in her transition from student to professional.

> My journey in housing began as a student staff member and having a lot of diversity in our team to when I started my first year as professional staff, I was actually part of the minority and just noticing that disparity in what it felt like as a student staff and then going to a conference and what it felt like as a professional staff - to be one of the few faces of colour. And now similarly, on my current team, I am the only person of colour. So just that dynamic of wanting to meet others that are perhaps having similar experiences and trying to understand how other people [like me] navigate that space. For me, it is also about finding folks - like mentorship and connections. As a woman, that's something that I've always strove for; looking for women in professional fields that I wanted to aspire to, but then ethnic considerations also come into play and wanting to combine those two things. I'm a woman of colour. I'm the only one representing that on my team. (Sarah, Black female; residence life)

Darien, Kieran, and Sarah gesture at representation and visibility as significant, but one should consider that representation and visibility are not the same thing. An analysis of comments suggests that representation is a passive term; it is about being counted as a number. The post-secondary landscape often is "stuck" on representation without being

conscious of how racialized and other marginalized bodies labour to remain visible, often at great cost. This particular moment beckons representation to be more visible. Visibility, therefore, refers to ways in which racialized individuals work to be fully present in their work, often mobilizing their marginalized identities to say, "I am here!" because for too long their voices have been not been heard and bodies not seen. As Huey Jong shares:

> It is important to consider that sometimes representation is where it stops; the visibility doesn't immediately follow after or at all. There are bodies of knowledge that we as racialized professionals have that are based on our own lived experiences that might not be realized to the full potential. So if these bodies of knowledge were given a chance to shine and be utilized, that would be a big step for visibility in addition to just being there [ie. representation]. (Huey Jong, East Asian woman; entry-level residence life)

Jong's reflection is not off the mark about bodies of knowledge. For almost 30 years, scholars have written about how certain knowledges of historically marginalized communities are erased or rendered invisible by those in power. Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992) and Yosso (2005) have respectively written about funds of knowledge and the community cultural wealth. These ideas refer to the often-overlooked knowledge, skills, awareness, and competencies cultivated through the life experiences of historically marginalized individuals. Mobilizing these knowledges facilitates greater visibility within our profession, and this visibility becomes key to growing a diverse profession. As Al (Canadian-born South Asian male; experienced residence life) notes, "There is need for the ability to see ourselves within the greater profession. That's a challenge for most of us whether you're a relatively new or young professional or a sort of mid-career professional". This can't solely happen with respect to numbers. It is about seeing people of colour living their truths as racialized professionals of colour. Lisa agrees with Al:

> To me ethnic diversity as a housing professional means giving others an opportunity to see themselves in that group...We do such a great job in hiring very diverse student staff, but then they come to conferences or will meet their management teams or other management teams and don't see themselves represented there, and then that becomes difficult for them to say, "that's where I want to be!" Or they're saying, "It's obviously a very challenging place to get to" - we are more of a pyramid where there is a lot of diversity at the base and not so much as you higher and higher, which I know that's something I have noticed. (Lisa, South Asian female; residence life)

What Al and Lisa allude to is the notion of possibility models (Cox 2014). Possibility Models embody the possibility that you or I, too, as racialized people, can hold leadership positions to which we aspire. The term has been used to describe respected people at the pinnacle of their careers or at the top of their game. We use the term to refer to those that allow us to realize the possibilities for ourselves as we see it in others who are like us. And for racialized students and student staff, this becomes an imperative.

> It's especially important to see diversity of our students in every form reflected in our housing professionals and really across our institutions. This is really important especially when they're trying to see themselves in roles, they can see that anything is possible for them to know that when they are talking about their stories - that there are people who kind of understand at least deeper parts of them. (Mindy, South East Asian female; entry-level residence life)

Connecting with students by being present and authentic becomes a personal project as Asha suggests:

> I see that you can have representation but it's a lot like leading by example and to be in a position of authority and allowing our student staff to see themselves in those positions. That's important to me especially as a women of colour and also being in residence life, representing our student staff and our campus student population. (Asha, female; entry-level residence life)

However, being visible and becoming a possibility model for others is not easy. There is not only a risk but also a toll. This impact is exacerbated when racialized people find themselves as "the only one". Dhiren spoke emotionally about the burden this role can carry:

> And then as someone who has multiple marginalized identities, I struggle with the responsibility I feel to advocate other people of colour and Indigenous peoples because I am the only one. If I'm not speaking up, who is speaking up for them? But then at the same time struggling with the fact that I'm always the one that gets called upon in situations and what does that mean in terms of my own mental health? Do I have the ability to say no? And what would be that cost, right? Do I have that agency? So in the ways that my staff or my team makes me feel like I belong, it's problematic because there are days where if I'm the only one that's doing the emotional labour, I don't feel I belong. I feel I'm being used. And then in other times, I feel like I do belong because I'm being valued. So there is a fine line between being valued and being used. (Dhiren, South Asian; entry-level residence life)

Jessica offered her own experience navigating the isolation:

> I certainly remember very clearly and deeply knowing that I was one of very few racialized people on campus. I think that we built a community around that. I came from the GTA. I came from a diverse high school in a very Missy Elliot-influenced hip hop high school experience and then moved to the line dancing town - very different...As a professional now in downtown Toronto at one of the most diverse schools in Canada, which was very intentional by the way, there are many meetings where I am certainly the only and/or one of a few. At my level in Canada, there are

> only two racialized women of color. I take the path of trying to be strong and represent myself fully and uniquely, and that doesn't come lightly. It takes a lot of personal work. I've done a lot of personal work on the side that people now kind of have become used to in my work, which pays off, if you will. But that was not out of interest; that was out of survival. (Jessica, Latina, first generation Canadian; experienced residence life)

Survival as a racialized individual in what still is a very predominantly white-led higher education landscape is almost a way of life. Much has been written across the K-16 spectrum and beyond about the strategies adopted by racialized and other marginalized groups to sustain themselves in their places of learning, work, and even play. This very valid experience of survival is what leads us to the second theme emerging from our focus group conversations.

Making/Creating/Keeping Space: A Self-Sustaining Imperative

We begin looking at this theme through the words of two participants that speak to the notions of two kinds of spaces*. The two spaces that these two excerpts speak to are home and away, where both `home' and 'away' refer to work places. The first excerpt speaks to 'home' and comes from Dhiren:

> Sometimes I wonder whether I was a diversity hire. Whether I was perceived to be just one of the respectable ones that will not blow shit up and make noise. I mean like, "Oh! He's great. He looks like some of the people that go here!" (Dhiren, South Asian; entry-level residence life)

And here is Frank speaking on the 'away':

> I was at a conference and the student affairs folks, a lot of residence life - but actually a broad subset or a broad population, but I looked around and realized that there wasn't very many people of colour. So it was mostly Caucasians. But then also as a straight male of colour in the room, I was looking around and realizing that I didn't really belong at that particular moment where there was again mostly Caucasian, and mostly female. Of the men that were there, they were openly gay men who had a tight community and knew everybody. And in terms of belongingness, that was a moment in my career that I looked around and saw a representation of who the student affairs folks were in the room. Not to say that that is a representation of everybody in student affairs but then again that was a particularly striking moment in time for me. (Frank, Asian male; residence life)

* We acknowledge that this might imply a dichotomy but in the interest of space, we feel that these two spaces represent the kinds of spaces most of us may encounter in the work we do.

We begin with these two excerpts because they speak to the cost of representation and visibility. On one hand, there is Dhiren who experiences imposter syndrome – an overwhelming feeling of not belonging to the place where he works. On the other hand, you have Frank who feels dissonance rooted in un-belonging as he finds himself at a professional development conference. Both these excerpts speak to a need for space – to make or create it and to keep and sustain it.

Why is making, creating, and keeping space an imperative? In her seminal essay, Gayatri Spivak asks, "Can the subaltern speak?" – a reference to communities that are socially and politically excluded from society's established and customary ways of knowing and being: its institutions. Simply put, the subaltern refers to people on the margins of society. Higher education and the postsecondary campus have been largely driven by dominant class: usually rich, white, heterosexual, Christian men. Historically, this group has served as gatekeepers to higher education, determining not only who is admitted, but how they were treated. For example, women who attended universities in Ontario in the 1880s were deemed to have "intellects that were inferior to men's", faced increased supervision and complex rules that restricted their movements (McCargar, 2016, p. i). Over the last 150 years, as our campuses become increasingly diverse, the pace of racial progress has been largely determined by those who hold power i.e. non-racialized staff. As Al notes, "It's almost like we don't have a voice to champion for ourselves." He contends that there is a need, now more than ever, to create spaces for marginalized groups to come together and share their experiences.

> I think just creating capacity for racialized folks to meet together and engage in dialogue and sort of say, 'This is what I need from the housing profession', right? I think that's incredibly important - creating that sense of space. And it's not a space where I think that others are not invited. It's just a space for us because others already have a defined space. (Al, Canadian-born South Asian male; experienced residence life)

Participants in the focus groups aired examples of when space evaporated for them in their roles as housing professionals. Sarah shared this touching story:

> I'll give a personal example that made me a bit sad was realizing that there wasn't a concerted real anything to acknowledge Black History Month this year and I realized this a bit late. Towards the end of the month, I was like, '"Well, I haven't seen anything!" So I emailed some offices who I thought would be kind of taking the lead on that end...and it hadn't even come up. And I'm like, "How did that slip through the cracks?" The mere fact that it hadn't come up; that I had to be the one to kind of take initiative and look for it? I'm at a super diverse school in a super diverse city. It's large. I just thought that there was something going on - perhaps a few events. So far I found that there are student groups putting on events but as an institution, there is one event that I'm aware of that's being held and it's a panel discussion. I had to personally seek that out to get information about it. It wasn't provided. And it's like I'm wondering if I had to seek that out, what about students. How acceptable is this? (Sarah, Black female; residence life)

For Sarah, commemorating Black History Month should be an easy "win" for any postsecondary institution at every level, from the department to the whole campus. While it is important to not see multicultural elements of food, festival, and fancy dress as an endpoint to celebrating diverse communities, how do racialized bodies in professional positions reckon with a lack of institutional support? Care must be taken to cultivate spaces that bring racialized faculty, staff, and students together to discuss issues and experiences. In the absence of leadership and initiative, institutions run the risk of alienating racialized members of their campus communities. The absence of leadership emerges when departments and institutions "download" or "outsource" their responsibility to student groups to celebrate diverse communities. Such (in)action allows the status quo to remain intact and the system that structures racialized life to be left unquestioned, uninterrupted, and untouched.

Closer to home, Mindy shared a poignant experience that deeply resonated with the project team.

> One of the things I often think about is how much world news and things that are happening in the world impact me in a way that they don't seem to impact people around me. So when I really get caught up in the news or when something really bad is happening in the world, I bring that to work with me. And I can separate that from not taking it out on anyone, but it still weighs on my heart and I know that it weighs on a lot of people's hearts because they see that this could target or does target them. This weekend, we were doing some stuff with our staff and we had a social and the Colten Boushie trial had just happened. And I recognized that even if there is no one else at work who is going to bring it up, I know we have students and we have staff who feel those things and who think about those things. I still think it's unfair that I have to do the emotional labour more than others have to, but I think it's important for me then to talk about those things, and be like, 'We need to be better or what are the things that we are going to do to support students?' And even just to talk about those things, it'd be like, 'You know, I'm still a little heartbroken by that.' And I have had incredible conversations with students and staff because of those moments where I totally feel this way and I feel like no one else cares. I have been crying because I feel like justice doesn't work the same way. So I think for me, at least with student staff, it's even talking about the stories outside of us because I don't feel like I have the luxury to turn off the news or to not let it impact me because it all feels targeted. (Mindy, South East Asian female; entry-level residence life)

We sometimes forget that racialized professionals are human too. We feel. We get affected by what occurs in the world. It weighs down upon our minds, our bodies, and our souls. And even as we seek to create space for our student staff and our housing communities, who creates space for us? Mindy passionately speaks to creating space for students and taking the initiative to do that in the wake of the Boushie verdict. However, what is left unspoken is the support that racialized people often need, would never ask for, but almost never receive in the workplace and on their teams. If you manage a team that consists of marginalized individuals, what are you doing to make sure they feel valued, appreciated, and seen? How are you recognizing some of the burdens that they have?

Creating space can take different forms. While Sarah and Mindy share their experiences about the lack of spaces, other participants shared strategies by which they bring their backgrounds and experiences into their work. Some of this has taken time to facilitate in their respective careers, but nevertheless, it helped validate who they are and what they bring to their teams and to their work.

> From my experience, having a brother who faced some challenges in high school, and having grown up in a very white town as one of the few black students and then black males and kind of the challenges we faced while we were growing up in terms of how he was differentially perceived and how he was differently held accountable for the same behaviours that his non-racialized peers exhibited and things like that, has definitely coloured how I sometimes interact with students in conduct meetings, especially students who come in with different challenges and things like that. I would say that I do take the time to try to get to know them and understand more than perhaps I might with others. But that's just something that's an experience that I've had from my brother and seeing his experiences there and how he kind of navigated that space with authority in education spaces. (Sarah, Black female; residence life)

Sarah speaks from her own experiences of witnessing her brother struggle through an educational system that treated Black bodies, and definitely Black males, differently. She draws on those memories to inform how she, as a professional with power and authority, engages with different kinds of students with varying challenges, some of whom may hold identities in complete opposition to her own. Sarah is creating space for her students by listening deeply while also creating space for herself to play out the ways in which she would want her brother (or even herself) to be engaged. This connects back to being a possibility model. By creating such a space, Sarah becomes a possibility model especially if she is encountering a racialized student at a conduct meeting.

Al, on the other hand, speaks to his own experience of bringing his values shaped, in part perhaps, by his own experiences with race and ethnicity as a Canadian-born South Asian male.

> I think one of my biggest struggles was early on in this profession was around policies, particularly in housing. And I felt that I was having to implement or support policies that didn't really resonate with the way I thought and felt. So as I got more progressive opportunities within my own career and was able to start developing policies, I started bringing in my own values into those policies, and that's where I realize I had the most power. It's not necessarily by using my voice but using my ability to shape the way we interpret our policies. And here I'm referring to student-facing policies that would allow for students of other experiences, be it ethnic, racial, whatever you want to define it as, to feel more comfortable and allow for them to bring themselves into the world of housing that I had immediately had control over. (Al, Canadian-born South Asian male; experienced residence life)

Al's approach to his work is supported by Jessica's own space-making strategies. She offered this in an exchange with Al:

> I have not felt as included and/or as welcomed in many spaces and I chose to take that [experience], learn about it myself, and now apply it to the students I work with. So yeah, salsa music and bachata music is playing from my office all the time. I don't really care if people don't like it. I know that I have positional power for sure at this level of my career. I know that that is something I take with a lot of responsibility. But I know that students see that and see themselves in that. (Jessica, Latina, first generation; experienced residence life)

As experienced residence life professionals, Al and Jessica both are possibility models. They exhibit the ways in which they create space by using the capital they have accumulated as they have advanced in their careers. Both admit that it has not always been a smooth, easy ride. But they both place an emphasis on people – on relationships with them, and staying conscious. This brings us to our final theme from our focus group conversations.

Being Conscious: Realities and Impacts

Participants recognized the need for more to be done to support and grow the diversity of the housing profession, even as there has been progress. Similarly, the participants recognized that each individual may be at a different stage of their own ethnic identity consciousness. However, all agreed that there is a need be conscious and stay conscious about issues of how marginalized communities and their intersections play out on our campuses and in our roles as professionals. How we represent our conscious selves in our work is an important consideration that each of us navigates differently. It is important because it shapes perception; how we are perceived, received, and treated. It is critical that those who hold dominant white identities need to recognize and "be careful not to brush stroke us as one common experience as diverse group … [they need to] recognize that within diversity, there is a ton of diversity as well" (Al, Canadian-born South Asian male; experienced residence life). Sarah echoes Al's call for greater consciousness for all people – racialized and non-racialized alike:

> I think diversity to me would mean a space where my colleagues are more fully aware. I feel like sometimes in residence life we preach about inclusivity and things like that. But sometimes it feels almost like just another thing to check off, like the surface is there but the depth behind it is sometimes lacking. It makes me feel weary. I wish I could be in a space where I felt that there was depth and a true understanding of some of these values and a desire actually to push on and not just check off boxes sometimes. (Sarah, Black female, residence life)

Sarah touches on an important point. If we were truly conscious, then diversity and inclusion would be a place from which to begin, rather than the finish line in a race that no one wins. DL Stewart (2017) wrote a sobering essay in Inside Higher Ed where they called out diversity and inclusion rhetoric for fundamentally stymying efforts that seek equity and justice. Stewart calls this a politics of appeasement, manifest through a series of "Kool-Aid approaches" aimed at quietening down all sides: Boards of Trustees, wealthy donors and alumni on one hand and the marginalized on the other, but "leave not only the institution fundamentally unchanged but also its students." Stewart continues, "Minoritized identities continue to face the same indignities and hostile campus climates, despite moderate increases in the compositional diversity of the campus" (para. 10).

As we gather racialized perspectives on campus climate, we acknowledge that not everyone is at the same place. Even among racialized professionals, it is a learning process. Such is the nature of systemic oppression and the impact of whiteness. Consider what Thomas had to offer:

> I grew up in a very racist environment. So coming to housing and coming to residence, that was very eye opening for me. I feel like, "Wow! This is such an accepting place where no one cares if I'm Asian or things like that." So for me, I'm still trying to define what that means because my experiences show me that working in residence life is by far the most inclusive and welcoming environment. But if that's not the case and that's not how other people are feeling, then what am I missing here? Where is the dissonance coming from? I don't know if I have an answer into what I think diversity means to me as an individual because I view this in a very positive way. But with that, there is also the other half of things where I can't speak on those experiences. I can't define it based on those terms. So it is hard for me personally and it involves a lot of understanding what these other experiences are that happen to others and what other people are going through. (Thomas, Asian male; entry-level residence life)

Thomas' vulnerability also represents possibility. It harkens back to the first theme about representation and visibility. The ability for Thomas to courageously share his struggle with hearing about the differential impacts of race and racism should be a lesson for us all. This is part of Thomas' story and it is the telling of this story that holds much promise if we are to shift the system from the status quo. Some of the participants shared experiences of how they bring their story into their professional practice:

> I have started in the last three years talking more about my identity and having people come up to me saying, 'You are the first person who has that identity that I have seen. Thank you for saying that.' It has really kind of inspired me to keep on saying it, verbalizing it, verbalizing the story, verbalizing the journey. Students can see that come through. (Jessica, Latina, first generation; experienced residence life)

> I like to share my story a lot. I like to share that I'm paying off my loans and where I come from and all of that, and that leads into my relationship with my co-workers and my student staff and our teams. Our team is a big team but we are somehow able to build those personal relationships. For me, being able to empathize and share my story is something I do often and I value that a lot. And as I've transitioned from student to paraprofessional role, and now to a professional role, I recognize more and more that I am a person of colour and also a woman, and I especially notice this more at conferences and big scale events. I find myself acknowledging that more and identifying more and having more conversations about it. (Asha, female; entry-level residence life)

Jessica's and Asha's willingness to share their stories generously has risks. Both, like many others who do the same, run the risk of being called upon repeatedly to put in the emotional labour to respond to issues that may specifically involve marginalized individuals. This is a form of emotional violence because while it might be unintentional, its impact implies that racialized individuals have unlimited reserves of patience and energy to intervene where it has been deemed needed. As Mindy described:

> I've had to do a lot more emotional labour than I ever expected to have to do on educating people. For example, a staff member had some students who were experiencing a lot of microaggressions and the staff member said, "I don't really know how to deal with this, but maybe you can go and talk to [Mindy] about this." And it's like that's not my job to help you navigate things like that. It's on you to educate yourself on these things…But I think having to do all of that work and having to be my own advocate all the time has been a struggle for me, and it hasn't been faculty or staff or students who are understanding, but it has been having to create that space for yourself and not having others ask or assume or create it for you. (Mindy, South East Asian female; entry-level residence life)

There is a certain consciousness required to recognize that you are being asked to put in the emotional labour beyond what might be required for the role. There are also likely to be consequences for not using the very same consciousness to ascertain what might be the "right" response to such requests or directives. We each have to learn to recognize our discomfort as professionals of colour and find our ways to voice that discomfort and speak that truth. As Jessica offered so poignantly:

> Learning to know what it is within you to feel uncomfortable is to have smart questions of your leaders, such as 'What's the unspoken culture and how can you help me navigate it?' or 'How can you welcome my culture in ideally?' You want to just be really transparent with yourself and that requires self-reflection. (Jessica, Latina, first generation; experienced residence life)

Jessica offers a lifelong journey. She continues, "It requires community and support from other people." Finding your people in the profession is critical. Sometimes the people you turn to and who become the best people for you are not in the profession. They are people who just understand and relate to who you are and what you're experiencing. "I would not be in this field if I did not have a best friend who is also a racialized woman in this field who I call at the end of each day and say, 'Wow, this just happened, and I am SO angry!' or 'Amazing, this just happened!"

If we are fortunate, we will find our people who would be in the profession and whose identities are in perfect alignment with our own. Unfortunately, that might not always be possible for various reasons. As a result, solidarities with those who hold other marginalized identities, among racialized groups, and even between racialized and non-racialized people matter. It is critical that we also consider how marginalized identities intersect to produce very particular experiences e.g. black trans women or queer people of colour, 2Spirit Indigenous communities, etc. These ideas were not lost during our focus group discussions. Consider what Mindy had to say:

> I think even working in a place where there are other people from equity-seeking groups has made a huge difference for me. It allows me to imagine what it would be like to have other people of colour in the same department. But having people from other equity-seeking groups, such as LGBTQ groups, which for me has been the most common, have really, really, really helped me also. (Mindy, South East Asian female; entry-level residence life)

Perhaps for Mindy and many others like her, purposeful engagement with other equity-seeking groups helps facilitate greater consciousness around issues of intersecting systems of oppression, and how they structure the experiences of faculty, staff, and students on a postsecondary campus. Too often, marginalized communities can remain siloed, working independently within their particular groups to facilitate a sense of belonging and resilience in what may be perceived as an otherwise hostile and unsupportive campus climate. We do not believe that this approach is misdirected; it holds tremendous validity and we need to do better at understanding why this is and listening to what the group needs. On the other hand, we also want to consider what is possibly lost when marginalized groups choose to work independently as they navigate and negotiate what critical race scholar Dorian McCoy calls "a sea of whiteness" in reference to the postsecondary campus. How might we begin to orient ourselves both ways: inward to work within our communities and its own complex diversity, as well as outward towards building connections and relationships so we might shift the culture and system?

I often think more about what can we be doing as people that belong to marginalized identities to be a united front. It's easy sometimes for someone to think that their narrative or their story is more important than someone else's, maybe because it's the only one that you know or the only one you can fully understand. But if we can't support and validate each other, how can we expect someone that hasn't had any sort of marginalized experience to extend that sort of understanding. So I think it starts with us seeking to understand and learning. Even just recognizing that everyone's experience is different and how what makes different people marginalized, it varies across the board. There are tons of overlap, but there is also a lot of difference still being willing to acknowledge that no matter how different it is, it's still valid, it's still difficult, and seeking to do what you can to support people in the way they need to be supported. (Sky, person of colour)

Solidarity also means going beyond marginalized groups, ethnic identity notwithstanding, to cultivate how we learn and grow with each other. Chances are even as we hold marginalized racial or ethnic identities, we occupy a position of dominance within gender identity and expression, sexuality, religion, socioeconomic class, national origin and citizenship status, and even language ability, to name a few. Thus, having accomplices matter. We use "accomplice" deliberately. At the 2018 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Porou, Māori), a celebrated Indigenous scholar of education, argued for the need to move past "allyship". "Accomplices will go to jail with you; instead of you. They are with you and by you for the long haul" (Personal communication, April 15, 2018). Following Smith's lead, the term "ally" has been watered down by neoliberal approaches to diversity and inclusion, where "check-box" training and "completion stickers" replace the need for ongoing, deep reflection and dialogue about equity and justice on our campuses. Some change is already occurring in housing programs at colleges and universities across the province and the country, but it is slow and often reactive rather than proactive. Darien offered this story:

One of the privileges I have at my institution is the staff is becoming more diverse especially with my peers. It is not as much with upper management but definitely the case with the team I'm in right now. [The management] made a point to make sure that incoming staff feel a better sense of belonging with the team. So I think there is something about having a more inquisitive team, asking what it would take for me and my diverse peers to feel we belong. Certain suggestions that were made from our onboarding over a year ago were implemented. I felt like I was heard and the efforts were made. It really made me feel like my unique experiences were welcomed and that was really beneficial for me. (Darien, South Asian male; entry-level residence life)

The invitation to be conscious is not limited to marginalized people. Those holding dominant identities (especially senior leaders) can use their consciousness to open up possibilities. In Darien's case, it was the simple action of asking prospective candidates what it would take for them to belong and then following through on some of that feedback. This helps secure an environment as being a potential space where one can be their whole selves in their roles. As Darien continues:

> I think it is important to have solidarities across racial lines because I don't think we're ever going to move away from having a dominant team here. So the first thing I would like to see is a recognition that diversity is important both for the team itself and the work that we do. And next is an invitation of diversity valuing, so exploring exactly what it means to people that come from diverse backgrounds and applying those voices into change when it comes to recruitment and hiring policies and the people that we serve.

Ultimately, this project is about hearing and receiving the voices and stories of historically marginalized visible ethnic minorities in our profession. These three themes set a foundation for further exploring the experiences of racialized professionals in OACUHO. We invite you to reflect on how we might be able to work together to create a more equitable and just environment both in OACUHO and on our campuses.

Counter–Stories: A Review of Individual Interviews

The individual interviews offered an opportunity to collect a high level of detail about the role that ethnic diversity plays in our professional lives. The committee interviewed 18 OACUHO members who volunteered to share their experiences. Participants came from 11 institutions, including colleges and universities, and professional levels ranged from entry-level, to mid-level, to senior-level roles. Once interviews were transcribed and analyzed, we grouped the stories into commonly discussed topics: Diverse Representation, Coaching Experiences, Hiring Process and Career Mobility, Professional Interactions, and Personal Challenges.

Diverse Representation

Similar to the focus groups discussion, it should come as no surprise that the topic of diverse representation and its role in our professional experience emerged frequently throughout the interviews. Much of the commentary focused on how under-representation within senior positions affects the experience. In some cases, participants vocalized never having a racialized role model or supervisor, which plays a role in the experience of receiving mentorship and of belonging in the workplace. Joey (Asian male; entry-level professional) says, "If I were to look up in my organization, I can't think of a person of colour in a senior position. That's part of the experience." Kari (Black Canadian female; experienced residence life) outlined that due to the lack of diversity in senior housing (and student affairs) positions, she has had to get creative to find role models. Kari looks for support outside of the field, specifically on how to navigate bureaucracy as a member of a marginalized group. Kari found support in folks who showed her how to own your difference when you feel isolated. But those mentorship opportunities were not available through the relationships she had in housing. Additionally, underrepresentation at senior levels incited concern for the experience of students living in residence. Darien (South Asian male; entry-level residence life) shared a fear that his operation's senior management team was overlooking a large segment of the students they served, because strategic decision makers don't demonstrate a priority to understand and consider the unique needs of diverse students. Darien articulated: "Often times we look at surveys to gather data on how students feel about cost, proximity, or experience with student staff. None of it has to do with, 'Do you feel like you belong?'" Darien goes on to assert that senior leaders need to prioritize this topic to best serve students, especially considering the growing number of international students in residence.

Participants also commented on diverse representation as it surfaced in their experiences on a professional team. Feelings of isolation and the sense of carrying a burden were commonly cited experiences. Some members highlighted that being the only person of colour (or one of few) led to personal development and growth, though at certain costs. Consider the following experiences below:

> I feel a burden of needing to self-advocate and be resilient in the face of these experiences. I have developed skills from this experience, but it is a burden. (Mindy, South East Asian female; entry-level residence life)

> When I started my career, I was the only visible minority on the team. This was difficult and rewarding at the same time. (Lisa, South-Asian female; residence life)

> It's ironic that two coloured people are doubled together on the ancillary side … there are power structures in place within localized institutions. (Al, Canadian-born South-Asian male; experienced residence life)

The experiences are naturally diverse; some share that being the only person of colour in their workplace presents specific challenges, and a smaller number share that this reality does not necessarily impact them. Some participants shared that they have not felt their ethnic identity to be the subject of any differential treatment from their colleagues or affected their career mobility. For example, Jacob (South-East Asian male; advancing professional), indicated that this issue does not often come up for him. More commonly present through the interviews were stories that underscored challenges such barriers to career mobility and microaggressions, as well as unique strengths of relating to racialized students, staff, and mentors. These pieces will be explored in the following sections.

Coaching Experiences

Participating in coaching conversations is a common aspect of working in housing. The role ethnic diversity plays in coaching conversations emerged throughout most interviews, including stories about coaching students, student staff, colleagues, and even supervisors. Additionally, participants had much to share about being coached by their supervisors or through formal or informal mentorship programs.

Participants shared stories about leveraging their identities to build rapport with racialized students and student staff. Participants recounted the ease with which they connected to racialized students who their peers had previously described as "challenging". Sky (person of colour) shared, "When people see someone that reminds them of home, they're excited, they're comfortable, they want to spend time with you." Logan (Asian; advancing residence life) outlined that their own upbringing gives them a lot of empathy for marginalized students, due to Logan's own experience coming from a refugee family.

Darien (South Asian male; entry-level residence life) highlights how his experiences connect him to students at various intersections of his identity. "As an immigrant, I know what it's like to walk into a world that I know nothing about. I know where my experience relates, and how [a student's experience] may be even more challenging, because I have had certain crutches." Darien's experience as an immigrant gives him the perspective to provide an enriched coaching experience for a student in a relatable position. Shared identity helps us serve students through individualized rapport building.

Moving on to supervisory experiences, several participants shared that they leverage their experiences to improve diversity training in their programs. Logan (Asian; advancing residence life) describes, "Usually people do equity and diversity at the end of training, but we flipped it so it's done early and frames the rest of the conversations we have with our staff." Kari (Black Canadian female; experienced residence life) articulated that she wants her staff to know where they fall within a structure in society. She ensures that student staff learn concepts such critical race theory, privilege, racial superiority and systemic race structures. Other participants repeated the previously mentioned advantages building rapport with racialized staff members through shared experiences. For example, Sam (Black male; advancing), has never had a formal mentorship relationship with another person of colour in housing; he brings this perspective to his student staff by advocating for them and offering them unique mentorship, as this is something he did not have. Alya (South Asian female; advancing residence life) reflects that her coaching interactions with racialized staff members are slightly different from her interactions with white staff members. Racialized student staff have explicitly told Alya that seeing a woman of colour in her role inspires them to pursue such opportunities, which calls back to the Possibility Models discussed previously. Participants offered that being a role model to racialized student staff sometimes affects team dynamics. For example, Lisa (South Asian female; residence life) describes an experience where a racialized student staff member from her white peer's team confided in Lisa on personal struggles that related to racial identity. Lisa's white peer (the student staff's supervisor) had difficulty accepting that his student staff did not confide in him personally. This put Lisa in a difficult situation where she was caught between supporting a racialized student staff member, while managing the ego of her peer.

In a particularly poignant illustration of how shared identity can play a powerful role as a coach, Darien recalls using his experiences of marginalization to enrich the coaching experience for the racialized full-time staff members he supervises.

> I'm able to understand their experience as a professional of colour in a very white field. For example, [I ask,] "Hey, how was that meeting?" [They reply,] "It was good, it was hard to speak." And I'm like, "Was that because you were the only person of colour in a white room?" And then seeing the look of relief on their face, like a gate opens … like here is somebody that can empathize with me as a supervisor, and here's me getting real tangible results as a coach because of that. Because we are looking at it through the same lens. It isn't just, "I gotta work on how to be assertive in a meeting." It's more, "I've got to overcome feeling inferior as a person of colour in a meeting of all white people, and still advocate for people of colour in the student population. (Darien, South Asian male; entry-level residence life)

Darien's approach gives his racialized staff members space to share struggles related to their racial identities in the workplace. He says that his ability to leverage his identity makes him a stronger coach. In the above example, instead of focusing on the surface level issue of practicing assertiveness, Darien and his staff member dive deeper into the struggle of working within marginalizing systems.

Some participants spoke to their desire to coach their own colleagues and supervisors about equity issues. In one example, Sky (person of colour) feels a responsibility to have intentional teaching conversations with colleagues so they do not say hurtful things, specifically with more experienced colleagues who have not had modern diversity training. For example, Sky described a colleague who made insensitive remarks about the frequency of Indigenous land acknowledgements, or a colleague who did not know the difference between equity and equality. Reflecting on these scenarios, Sky commented, "Sometimes I'm just flabbergasted that the training isn't provided." Sky could also recall an incident as a student staff member, when a white male supervisor applied an educational sanction to an incident of discrimination, after a white student had used a racial slur in the community. The sanction tasked the student with using a creative medium to highlight what the student learned from the incident. When the student submitted the sanction, it still expressed offensive opinions and perceptions of racialized individuals. The student did not receive any follow-up after this submission. In this example, Sky describes that some well-meaning colleagues think they are fostering a safe space, but their language, actions, or decisions actually indicate otherwise, intentional or not.

Darien (South Asian male; entry-level residence life) echoed Sky's sentiments of feeling a deep sense of responsibility to ensure his white colleagues and supervisors "do not make non-inclusive or ignorant statements to their students." He is upset that he has to educate his supervisors and peers about how to advocate for students and staff of colour. He is also shocked that his colleagues and supervisors are not well versed in equity issues, considering the position they hold in support roles or strategic decision makers of support services. He says, "The lack of understanding at a managerial level worries me, because these people make policy decisions about students." The listed examples contextualize the burden faced by professionals of colour who witness or experience un-inclusive (i.e. oppressive) language and actions. Navigating these situations, determining if and how to respond, and managing the repercussions of those decisions calls back to the emotional burden faced by racialized colleagues, as described in the focus groups analysis.

Perhaps most importantly, participants shared stories of receiving mentorship. These experiences varied, but participants made clear distinctions between their experiences with racialized mentors and white mentors. In describing coaching experiences with white mentors, members articulated a theme where despite feeling supported, something was lacking that was difficult to describe. Sky outlines an experience of receiving support from their white mentors during the job hunt:

> When I was graduating, three or four people were volunteering to edit my resume, and they were so wonderful, I'm so thankful for them. But I never really voiced to them, 'You all think I'm going to get a job because I have all this experience. But what if someone doesn't hire me because they don't like the way I look?' I never told them things like that. I just internalized that. (Sky, person of colour)

This example describes how Sky did not have access to someone with whom they could share vulnerable concerns about their identity. While Sky's white mentors were kind and supportive, Sky always felt that something was missing, until Sky had a racialized supervisor the following year. Sky recounted that their racialized supervisor helped Sky overcome fears related to going to the Fall Business Meeting, because Sky knew not to expect many racialized peers.

> I was able to voice: 'I'm scared, I don't want to go to this conference, I'm the only one that looks this way.' I was able to share those concerns and have [my supervisor] coach me through that, whereas it didn't even cross my mind to bring it up with my [white] mentors.

Darien contrasts this with the feeling of navigating a white-dominated space (such as the OACUHO Spring Conference) without the advanced coaching and support that he would have wanted to receive.

> When I was mentored on how to approach the conference, I was told: introduce yourself, find people that are interested in similar topics, take them out for coffee, make sure your LinkedIn is updated. Great tips, you know? No one ever warned me that when I would walk into the new professionals meeting at the conference, that the only people that looked like me out of a room of 70-80 people were the people serving hors-d'oeuvres. This was not a struggle faced by my white supervisors. (Darien, South Asian male; entry-level residence life)

Darien would have preferred an opportunity to prepare himself for the underrepresentation at the conference. Since Darien comes from a visibly diverse team, he was shocked by what he saw at the conference. He noticed more persons of colour in service roles (e.g. catering staff, cleaning staff) than actual delegates. He thinks if he had a racialized supervisor, he could have talked this over and considered some strategies for coping with what that experience meant to him.

These examples and others tell a story of a missed coaching opportunity for entry-level persons of colour in the field. At such a vulnerable time, where most people experience stress and uncertainty about their professional outlook, these stories highlight an incomplete offering of mentorship to racialized members, mainly because of the underrepresentation of racialized members in mentorship positions. One participant spoke to the need to be flexible with mentorship; Kari (Black Canadian female; experienced residence life) put forward that mentorship can come at all ages and skills levels, and that perhaps we need to redefine our view of mentorship, given the context of underrepresentation at senior levels. She shares that some of her most informed conversations are with students or peers.

The value of a new professional receiving mentorship from a person of colour can be seen through a few examples offered by the participants. Jacob (South East Asian male; entry-level, Off-Campus Housing) describes that early in his student affairs career, he could think of one racialized male in student services at his institution who became an informal mentor for Jacob. The mentor played a significant role in Jacob's sense of envisioning his own career path. He valued the relatability between his own circumstances and the experiences of his mentor. Jacob also described feeling a sense of pride for that mentor; he saw his mentor's success as something that he himself could achieve, and it motivated him to continue pursuing a career in student services. Similarly, Al (Canadian born South Asian male; experienced residence life) described that early in his career, there were few males of colour in senior roles. He could think of one person who served as an advisor to him. Al says, "It's nice to have someone to talk to who may understand what you are going through." Marium (South Asian female; entry-level residence life) supported this thought by describing the difference between mentorship that acknowledges your identity and one that does not. She says that instead of the mentor saying, "Here are ways that I can help advance you," the mentor would say, "I see you, I see who you are, I see your unique challenges, I see ways we can work together to help solve them."

At this time, however, racialized entry-level members in OACUHO (and members at more advanced levels) are more likely to have a white supervisor. How can white supervisors create a space and foster a rapport that contributes to a more complete coaching experience? A few participants shared specific examples. In one example, Alya (South Asian female; advancing residence life) recalls her white supervisor creating space for her identity when her supervisor asked Alya why she had not included her ethnic identity in her personal statement for graduate school. This supervisor knew how important Alya's identity was to her; Alya described this story as "a light bulb moment" and recalled feeling very supported by this supervisor. Alya also had the following information to share about her supervisor:

> People will often try to be colour blind in a way that they think is supportive. My mentor has not been colour blind. My mentor is not a woman of colour, but she is somebody who supports the fact that I have a racialized identity. I have family responsibilities and [she] encourages me to take the time to connect with those parts of my identity when I need to. ... If I had a student of colour who might have had a particular experience they needed support with, [my supervisor] would support decisions that I would make.

Logan (Asian; advancing residence life) shared that it went a long way when a white male supervisor verbally acknowledged the power and privilege he holds with his identity. Logan shared that this supervisor vocalized an interest in learning how to support his staff as an ally. Logan's supervisor named his power and privilege out loud, and in doing so, invited guidance from his staff. Marium describes receiving mentorship from her first supervisor in Residence Life, who was a white male.

> In my first year as a student staff member, I had a supervisor who took a great deal of time to talk to me about the things that made him different from his family and from people he worked with. It really opened a door for me to talk about my personal life. It was one of the first times that I had discussed my experiences as a minority and as a woman. It showed me that residence life was maybe a place where I could find a voice, and maybe I could find others who had similar voices. (Marium, South Asian female; entry-level residence life)

Marium described that this supervisor took the time to understand what her personal struggles were, and used the opportunity to open the door and share common experiences. Marium indicated that this supervisor's ability to open up about vulnerable issues helped her follow suit. This led to a mentorship experience where Marium derived valuable learning and passion for working in the field.

These stories about mentorship highlight the role that shared identity and experience plays in building rapport, offering a space to share fears and challenges, and providing a more authentic coaching experience. It also points to examples of white colleagues making space to embrace identity, as well as being creative with mentorship to find alternative coaching opportunities. Mentorship opportunities should be a primary focus of support in considering next steps for the association.

Hiring Processes and Career Mobility

Preliminary survey responses indicated that hiring would be a significant point of conversation within the interviews. Participants confirmed this by providing insights on hiring processes and commenting on how ethnic diversity plays a role in their own career mobility. Several participants shared experiences reviewing applications and conducting interviews that reveal an unintended bias that favours privileged candidates. In the following stories, participants focus on barriers to student staff roles, which are common stepping-stones to further opportunity in the field. Institutions should consider how their processes and policies create or remove barriers for equity-seeking populations at all levels of hiring.

Joey (Asian male; entry-level) advocated to hire a candidate whose application was deemed "not professional" by Joey's colleague. The candidate had relatable experience but her application did not stand out due to overall presentation. Joey knows that some students may not have the privilege of learning how to assemble application packages that favour Western (i.e. White) hiring standards. Joey's advocacy resulted in her hire, and she proved to be a high performer on the team. His ability to overlook systemic factors that were working against this candidate led to an open door.

Marium (South Asian female; entry-level residence life) offered a critique of the resume-screening process for student staff carousels. She argues that hiring teams should ignore the presentation of a resume, because basic design skills are learned through privileged opportunities; even growing up with a computer is a privilege that not all candidates might have. Marium, who coordinates the student staff hiring processes for her team, made sure to emphasize this point (among others) when she trained her team on screening applications. By doing so, she played a role in reducing the barriers for some candidates.

Sky (a person of colour) describes a time when a racialized student staff member had a programming idea that focused on marginalized communities, which was shared with professional staff. When the student staff member asked for feedback, the student staff member was told that she "missed the mark" in addressing the needs of incoming students.

Frank (Asian male; residence life) recalls his international student leaders sharing how difficult it was to become Dons. They told Frank that the ones who were hired were the ones who spoke English very well. This prompted Frank to reflect on his team's practices. He continues to think about improving them, and he shared that last year's OACUHO Pulse article (Appendix D) on bias in hiring decisions opened his eyes to some of these issues.

Alya (South Asian female; advancing residence life) described her approach to reviewing student staff applications: "Often times you think 'Oh, camp counsellor would make an excellent student staff member.' They totally do. But my mom never sent me to camp. I would have never been a camp counsellor. ... Even in terms of reading the applications, [it's important to] look for diverse experiences. I've been looking for individual tutoring or involvement in local cultural associations. Because that's where we can find those leadership skills ... or those skills that don't have the same trigger for us that a 'camp counsellor' might."

These stories highlight areas along the hiring process that are vulnerable to bias. All parts of the hiring process can and should be subject to similar scrutiny, in order to identify and reduce barriers. Consultation with community partners, human resources representatives, or experts in equitable hiring could inform these hiring process reviews.

Moving towards the interview and selection process for full-time staff, participants shared stories of when they advocated for underrepresented groups and challenged the environment of recruitment processes. Consider the following stories:

> Marium (South Asian female; entry-level residence life) asks herself what 'professionalism' means to a hiring committee. She wonders if her colleagues ever challenge their own biases on professionalism. Marium said, "I always assumed that if a person wasn't wearing a pencil skirt or dress pants to an interview, it meant they weren't taking the job seriously. That came from somewhere, right? That's a socially constructed concept." Marium is skeptical about rubrics or discussions that evaluate a candidate's "professionalism".

> Joey (Asian male; entry-level) shared that he finds comfort when the hiring panel is diverse. "When I applied, I saw people in these positions who looked like me and made me feel more comfortable." In another story, Joey gave feedback to a supervisor when all candidates for a professional staff interview process were white males. Joey gives the supervisor credit in that the selection seemed unintentional, but he feels that the situation was uncomfortable.

> Kari (Black Canadian female; experienced residence life) reflected on her experience on a hiring panel for an equity committee at her institution. She articulates the importance of valuing work experience, but also looking for candidates with an understanding of global perspectives. Kari says that panels should make space for questions that directly ask about a candidate's experience with or understanding of intersectionality, marginalization, and oppression.

> Al (Canadian born South Asian male; experienced residence life) says his experience at the SHO level showed him that there are not enough people in a persuasive position who can make real change in hiring policy work. He argues that individuals can make change for their own institutions. He adds that he is comfortable speaking up in his career, because he doesn't fear risk to his reputation. He knows not everyone has the space to do that.

Darien (South Asian male; entry-level residence life) perceives that hiring managers in his operation do not believe in diverse hiring. He says the managers dismiss the notion that hiring processes are biased, because they "just want the most qualified candidate". He says his seniors do not understand the systemic barriers to being a "qualified candidate".

An anonymous member had to influence their manager to interview a candidate who did not have a traditional English name. The candidate had the qualifications and experience, but they could have been overlooked due to their "unfamiliar" name. The candidate was hired for the position and did well in the role.

Some participants spoke against hiring a candidate to fit the "organizational culture", especially when that concept is not defined by the organization. Darien expressed concern over the concept of "culture" during his experience on hiring panels at his institution. Darien has heard a manager say, "Hire people you'd want to grab beers with after work." Marium reflected, "What is culture? Is it being a good person? Is it being friendly? Is it being someone they want to hang out with after work? Is it about being someone who can talk about the same topics as you?"

These stories highlight a variety of concerns at play within hiring processes at our institutions. Once a candidate is hired, what can stories tell us about the career mobility of persons of colour? Since the majority of persons of colour within OACUHO hold entry-level or mid-level positions, the question of career mobility is critical. Some participants stated that there is an unequal playing field between racialized and white professionals to advance to the next career level.

Al (Canadian born South Asian male; experienced residence life) believes that skin colour has consequences on the opportunities you get, because of the social power between folks who know each other, have similar interests, and similar approaches to work. "A few colleagues of mine that are on the periphery have come in from entry-level positions, and their careers have advanced because of who they know. So there is a certain social leverage that comes with being a non-racialized member of our group."

Marium (South Asian female; entry-level residence life) points to her gender and race as factors that work against her. "Being a woman of colour in higher education, it's hard because I look like a lot of the students we represent. I don't look like the people that make those big decisions, who go on to make change, who go on to build new programs, and move from institution to institution." This points to a story where her senior leaders, by default, don't see her as a likely candidate for career progression. She feels overlooked.

Logan (Asian; advancing residence life) observes that supervisors and leaders tend to applaud specific assertive or strong-willed behaviour (e.g. challenging viewpoints of supervisors to spur strategic discussion). Logan's cultural upbringing, however, taught them to respect authority without question. If Logan's supervisors reward a work style that does not come naturally to Logan, what cultural expectations should Logan follow? This demonstrates how racialized employees are forced to adopt Western (i.e. White) standards of work culture in order to stand out, even when those standards do not resonate with their own identities.

Darien (South Asian male; entry-level residence life) describes how he was lucky to progress from student staff to full time staff within his own institution. All things equal, Darien says he would not have felt welcome if he had come from another institution. "I had pre-existing relationships, so I naturally have a louder voice in some conversations now than I otherwise would have." This experience contrasts sharply to Marium's, whose experience in her entry-level role within the same institution was met with barriers related to her gender and race.

Some members believe they do not belong and thus do not aspire to be in senior positions. Darien (South Asian male; entry-level residence life) says, "Every single person above me in my unit and their supervisor is white. If I were to ever move up, I'd feel even more alone." Kari (Black Canadian female; experienced residence life), who is more established in her career progression than Darien, describes a sense of loneliness at her current table. She felt more comfortable as a student staff member than in her current role in senior leadership, because there was more camaraderie and diversity at lower levels. Al (Canadian born South Asian male; experienced residence life) adds another perspective of his experience in the SHO room, which he felt was a cliquey group where who you know matters. "You can't help but feel that you're not really included or welcome in those spaces."

These experiences point to a story that some racialized members in OACUHO feel there is no seat at the senior table for them. Racialized folks who are not yet there simply don't see themselves getting there. Racialized folks who are already there speak of the isolation and resilience required to feel welcome.

Participants identified senior leaders as the key influencers in improving the career mobility of persons of colour in the field. Lisa (South Asian female; residence life) suggests the need to empower student staff of colour to envision a career in student affairs and housing. As some students come from cultures where a certain career trajectory is expected, some students would not have awareness of a career in student affairs. Maybe the student shows tremendous promise connecting to residents or has a keen ability to respond to crisis, but has never mentioned a career in housing. Lisa believes senior leaders should challenge their teams to identify these student leaders and expose them to a student affairs career. Ideally, nurturing more racialized student staff into entry roles would increase the candidate pool for racialized staff looking for mid-level

and senior roles. One anonymous member argued that nothing can change about the composition of diversity in senior roles, because most folks in those roles are in permanent positions. Marium (South Asian female; entry-level residence life) made sure to challenge this notion. "There are always opportunities to fill positions or ask people to lead projects. If our supervisors want to show a commitment to giving opportunity, they should use these opportunities to raise the voices of the persons of colour in this field." In fact, Marium notices which leaders in OACUHO use their voices to speak to this issue. She remembers their names and aspires to work in their offices, because of the values they share.

The stories above describe a variety of experiences related to hiring practices, career mobility, and access to opportunities. Improving access and reducing barriers is not only about increasing representation. An environment can be visibly diverse, but it can still have systemic barriers within the culture and workplace interactions, which will be discussed in the next section.

Professional Interactions

In this section, participants share stories about day-to-day interactions with peers, supervisors, and OACUHO colleagues. These stories capture the daily nuances of working in a white-dominant space.

In reflecting on interactions with peers, participants identified "white culture" (and the ability to assimilate) as a direct challenge in the workplace. Marium describes that the way she socialized changed when she joined the management team. Early in an entry-level role, various colleagues within her operation formed a recreational sports team. Marium outlines the feeling of being an outsider in this situation, while trying to fit in and form relationships.

> Playing organized sports was not something I did growing up, it was not something that women did in my family, and it was not something that my family did for socio-economic reasons. I was like, 'Oh, I don't like sports but I'll come support you guys.' And I'd make snacks and come, and that sort of thing. But it sucked, I think, to be on the sidelines ... It gave me the mindset to adapt, which I'm not super proud of. Make it work, figure out how to like the things I need to like in order to fit into this group, because fitting in meant fun, and it meant being a part of this exclusive group of people. (Marium, South Asian female; entry-level residence life)

In this example, we see an entry-level professional trying to fit in by participating in a social experience that she did not have the privilege to experience growing up. She describes being on the sidelines, but wanting to engage with the group so as not to miss an opportunity to develop relationships. Darien provides a similar example of how he has conformed to white culture to fit in at work.

> The idea of camping and hiking … I love all those things, but I wouldn't have been introduced to them if it wasn't for the culture that I wanted to be a part of. That is definitely a part of me now, the beer, and the camping, and the outdoors, and I would never change that. But I also think: how many of my own interests have influenced the team culture, and how many people have gotten into what I'm into … the dancing, the hip hop, the music. It's extremely limited. Who's going to come with me to a J Cole concert? Who's going to talk to me about the basketball game or things that are happening with race relations down south? (Darien, South Asian male; entry-level residence life)

In this example, Darien expresses that conforming to the white work culture resulted new habits that are now part of his identity. He welcomes that experience, but the exchange of culture is one-way. Darien's white peers do not invest in or adopt Darien's personal hobbies, culture, and interests. This sort of non-exchange results in a clear display of whose culture is dominant, which can result in ignorant interactions. See the story below when Logan worked in an operation that was almost entirely white:

> I've had some interesting experiences with people questioning why I never went to camp as a kid, or participate in sports as a child. My parents were refugees, we lived in poverty, we didn't have the luxury to do these things. It was interesting to see people's reactions to me not having been to camp, or that I didn't live in residence as a first year student. (Logan, Asian; advancing residence life)

In this example, Logan had to justify why their childhood and adolescence did not look like the dominant culture's childhood and adolescence. This experience made Logan feel "othered", or different from the norm. Operations and individuals in dominant groups should reflect on these stories and consider how this default dominance can perpetuate exclusion and isolation.

A few participants described how they navigate the dominant culture. Sky (person of colour) said, "You are constantly gauging, listening, and watching to see who you can and can't have this conversation with." When asked what to look for in an ally, Sky said, "Someone who is open-minded, a listening ear. Someone who has, of their own volition, in their own conversations, brought up topics that may be difficult and handled them well." Darien (South Asian male; entry-level residence life) gathers support from his colleagues of colour and says, "I'm lucky I have plenty of peers in my position." Darien's perspective raises an interesting point: if he feels lucky for having racialized colleagues, what would Darien's experience be if he had none? One should consider how this scenario could influence a professional's overall job experience, wellness, performance, and, ultimately, his career mobility.

Participants also shared stories about professional interactions with supervisors. In one example, Mindy (South East Asian female; entry-level residence life) was asked to manage incidents of discrimination in residence because her supervisor deemed Mindy to be the best person to handle those meetings. Mindy was the only person of colour on the team. Mindy also shared that her supervisor asked her how she learned to speak English so well. Mindy said, "Those moments definitely made me feel like I didn't belong." In another example, an anonymous participant asked their supervisor for an accommodation while they were fasting for religious practices; the participant was denied their request. Finally, another anonymous member described an incident on a hiring panel where their supervisor observed a candidate's non-white name and said, "I hope they can speak English." These brief but poignant examples recount the ways in which racialized members in a white-dominant environment negotiate insensitive remarks or microaggressions. Important to note is a trend where most participants preface these examples by defending the integrity of the person who made the insensitive comment. Participants often said that they know their colleagues and supervisors mean no harm, and that the intent is not to marginalize. While intentions are important, we must be cognizant of how ignorance or lack of awareness can perpetuate these marginalizing situations. Consciousness, as described in the focus groups analysis, is an active choice that everyone must accept.

Marium (South Asian female; entry-level residence life) describes an ongoing incident that resulted in unintentional isolation and marginalization. The incident involves Marium being the only person of colour in an office of white male colleagues. She found the office dynamic to be non-inclusive and often felt on the sidelines of conversations. One of the senior leaders would consistently stop by and invite one of her white male colleagues for a coffee break, and the offer was not extended to her in any context. Marium said, "It was hard not to think that at least a part of it has to do with the fact that I don't look like them and I don't necessarily have the same interests as them." Marium did not describe this as an act of intentionally excluding her, but moreso an act of unintentionally overlooking her. She feels like senior leadership needs to actively develop informal connections with all team members, not just employees with whom senior leaders connect easily or who share common interests. As an entry-level professional who was not new to the institution, Marium knew that relationships were critical to gaining access to new projects or new roles. Marium's fear was that in being overlooked for casual connections, she would also be overlooked for career advancing opportunities. Marium also shared that with significant peer encouragement, she mustered the courage to speak with her supervisor about feeling overlooked and unseen in the office. She shared that she never would have given the feedback if she hadn't known her supervisor for years.

Sky (a person of colour) provides a similar example of a white male supervisor who, despite having a good working relationship with them, seemed to gravitate towards Sky's white colleagues for informal interactions. Sky noticed that their supervisor's relationship with their white colleagues was more relaxed and casual. When it came to his relationship with Sky, it was not negative by any means; it was simply professional. Sky often wondered why their colleagues had the opportunity to connect with their supervisor on a more personal level, while Sky was treated with more distance as an employee.

Marium and Sky's experiences describe a type of marginalization that is difficult to name. Folks who do not experience these interactions may not recognize them as marginalizing experiences. This makes changing workplace culture an uphill battle, because as racialized employees, we must first prove to department influencers that our experiences are valid. This often relies on giving direct feedback to colleagues or superiors about sensitive issues. As Marium describes above, she would not have confided in her supervisor about the office dynamics if she hadn't had tremendous peer support or if she hadn't known her supervisor for years. Power structures and hierarchy function as barriers to feedback. Senior leaders should consider that interactions similar to the above examples are indeed happening in their organizations, even if they have never heard about them, or even if folks express outwardly that the environment is inclusive. In fact, some participants expressed a belief that their white supervisors don't want to discuss equity issues within their organization at all. Darien says, "My experience is that I have to convince them that this is something worth talking about." This needs to be an area of focus for senior leaders, who should recognize and leverage the influence they have on their organization's work culture, all the way down to entry-level and student staff roles. Specific examples of how white culture can permeate standard office operations can be found throughout this section and in Appendix G.

Participants also recounted experiences of racial microaggressions from campus partners. One anonymous participant states how her position as a woman of colour consistently means she has to prove herself to campus partners, which interferes with her ability to do her job.

> In on-call situations, a police officer or a paramedic comes in, and they pretty quickly assume that I don't have authority here. Whereas I see my white colleagues jump into a situation and quickly be regarded as someone with power or authority. I frequently remind myself to put effort into coming across as more competent, because I know about the misconceptions with how I look. (Female person of colour)

Bias and aversive racism create barriers that marginalized folks must overcome in order to be taken seriously at work. Kari (Black Canadian female; experienced residence life) recognizes the challenges she faces as a Black female manager. Kari describes constantly needing to prove herself because of assumptions that Kari couldn't possibly be in her position of power; in fact, when meeting campus partners for the first time, people frequently mistake Kari's white colleague as the manager. This clearly shows the biased opinions Kari's campus peers have about who should occupy positions of power. In another example, Jacob (South East Asian male; entry-level, Off-Campus Housing) described when a colleague pointed out that other professionals within their institution routinely mistake Jacob for another South Asian male in student affairs. Jacob realized that his colleagues did not want to put effort into remembering Jacob as an individual; he was just another South Asian male colleague. This experience made Jacob realize the dangers of bias:

> How does that translate to how you deal with students? Did you have a bad experience with a person of colour? Do you project those same thoughts and feelings on that student? Do you see that student as an individual or do you project those [experiences] onto them? It's those types of things that I don't and can't understand. (Jacob, South East Asian male; entry-level, Off-Campus Housing)

In a final story about how this topic surfaces with campus partners, Lisa (South Asian female; residence life) said she even educates campus food providers on the importance of diverse dietary needs. Reflecting on her own experience as a vegetarian, Lisa remembers frequently relying on side dishes to fill up, like rice or salad. While the field (and society) has improved considerably since Lisa's student staff days, she still needs to advocate for staff dietary needs, even to food providers themselves. "I'm quite vocal about suitability, or lack of suitability, with catering. Especially when you think about training and feeding staff for breakfast, lunch, and dinner for two weeks. … Ensuring that food providers understand cross contamination and things like that." Lisa knows the feeling of having your dietary needs ignored, so her story demonstrates a willingness to ensure staff feel they belong. When coordinating large food orders for students, student staff, full-time staff, or event delegates, organizers should reflect on how much time and energy is placed on respecting individual needs. Do delegates have to track down catering staff to ask for ingredients? Do delegates miss full meals because their needs are not met?

Finally, participants talked about their experiences interacting with OACUHO colleagues and engaging with association activities. Some members sometimes avoid conference socials because of the emphasis on drinking culture. This becomes important when you consider that a quick survey of evening activities in the past few conference schedules finds delegates heading downtown or to campus bars for socials. As mentioned by participants such as Sky (person of colour) and an anonymous member, the lack of diversity within OACUHO delegations is the most notable challenge. Here is Marium's story as a first-time delegate:

> I had heard so many great things about being part of [OACUHO], and yet going [to the conference], I found that there was just no spot for us. I felt so out of place, to the point where we just stopped attending the sessions. It felt like we didn't have a place in that room… And I don't think there was anything outright that said, 'Hey, you don't have a space here.' But that overwhelming feeling was hard to explain. … The challenge of showing up to a conference and it being predominantly white is that you don't feel like right off the bat, this place is somewhere you belong, fit in or can relate to people. I wanted to be real with people, and that wasn't possible for me. (Marium, South Asian female; entry-level residence life)

Alternatively, Marium added that the session on ethnic diversity turned her whole experience around.

> I actually went and listened … and felt like I could raise my hand and contribute something. I felt like I could talk, I felt like I could stay afterwards and have conversations with the people that were leading that session … It was cool to see someone who looked like me presenting on a topic that involved me. I felt like I was part of the topic of conversation, as opposed to discussing really important matters but it didn't feel like I was meant to be there. (Marium)

Marium went on to share the impact of the Professionals of Colour Affinity Group at the 2018 Fall Business Meeting.

> For this affinity group, it was the fact that we were all people that had some form of shared lived experience. And I think in doing that, that's where you create a welcoming environment. That's where you open the door for conversation. That's where you find your buddy. Because it's so, so hard to be in this environment without a buddy. (Marium)

Other members comment on the value of creating a space where persons of colour can connect and share experiences. Kari would like to see panels or resources at future events and stresses that OACUHO much create space to hear unheard voices. Another participant wants OACUHO to provide more opportunity to celebrate ethnic diversity and share stories. Finally, some members expect the Board specifically to work on its own diverse representation and dedicate resources to continue this project work. Some members expressed doubt that this project could create change within institutions. Others, like Al, expressed hope and challenged the Board to continue the work:

> So what I would really say to conclude is to push back on OACUHO, specifically on the Board, to challenge ourselves to think differently and to change the system. A majority of the institutions in the country fall under OACUHO, so changes to this particular organization can have a ripple effect. So really seize this opportunity … It's one thing to collect the data and it's another to do something with it. (Al, Canadian born South Asian male; experienced residence life)

Personal Challenges

The interviews pointed to a variety of stories and experiences that capture overcoming obstacles through resilience and support. In the previous sections, we shared experiences related to diverse representation, coaching, hiring practices, career mobility, and professional interactions between colleagues. This section focuses on internal struggles such as finding voice and developing resilience in the face of the challenges described throughout this report. Consider the following experiences.

Fear that our performance will reflect poorly on our community:

Sam (Black male; advancing residence life professional) says that while he focuses on performing well for the sake of serving his students and staff well, he also knows that he goes above and beyond because he doesn't want to misrepresent people who look like him. "Part of me is saying, 'OK, I'm the only Black guy around here and I have to make sure I'm not the one messing up.' I can't let my community down in the reflection of my work."

An anonymous member feels they have not experienced microaggressions at work, but he finds that sometimes he places pressure on himself, because he knows he is in a position to represent people who look like him. "I can't let my community down in the reflection of my work."

Attributing success and career development to luck:

An anonymous senior participant identifies as one of the few racialized members in this position. The participant feels lucky and privileged to have advanced in the field, knowing the barriers that exist. This participant says they didn't experience the typical challenges that another person of colour may face and that "some opportunities may have fallen" on their lap.

An anonymous participant articulated feeling lucky that her supervisor "took a chance on her" by mentoring her and helping her embrace skills and follow her passion.

Developing skills, resilience and voice while navigating the space:

An anonymous member described that this overall experience of working in a white-dominant space has given her the language tools to talk about these issues. She said that the more people talk about the lack of diversity, the easier it is to talk about. "If we don't understand the words to use, I think we are always going to be too scared to use them."

Several members describe developing skills and strength from the experience. Sky has developed strong work ethic, because Sky "can't afford to not perform well". Marium is grateful because these struggles helped her articulate and validate feelings of difference and isolation.

Mindy (South East Asian female; entry-level residence life professional) shares that she feels she has found her voice in talking about race issues at work, mainly due to the current conversations taking place within OACUHO. Mindy is still concerned that sharing her voice about race issues will ultimately impact the way she is perceived by her colleagues or potential employers.

Joey (Asian male; entry-level professional) developed a perspective that encourages him to see the positive aspects of this issue by focusing on building skills of student staff. "So long as I carry myself accordingly, and do what I can and offer what I can, I get to see those that I helped do better. I know the world is not perfect so anytime that I can continue to offer myself and help people, that's good. All good is rooted in the sense that there's still a lot more to do."

Navigating self-doubt and comparing ourselves to our white colleagues:

Jacob (South East Asian male; entry-level professional in Off-Campus Housing) feels he has to work twice as hard and may not get the same respect or space to prove himself. He is scared that he is just a diversity hire. He wants people to recognize him for his work, not his skin colour.

Sam (Black male; advancing residence life professional) describes the judgment he receives from colleagues when a student makes a complaint about him. Sam's white colleagues get the benefit of the doubt when students complain about them; but if Sam is the subject of the complaint, he does not get the benefit of the doubt. Sam gets the sense that this is due to the historical negative attributes connected to blackness and male identity.

Sky (person of colour) struggles with thoughts of inferiority. Sky holds themselves to a higher standard, even when Sky knows their performance exceeds their white colleagues. Sky often wonders whether their perceptions of how they are treated differently are in their own head.

Marium (South Asian female; entry-level residence life professional) explains when she chose to assimilate silently over celebrating her personal identity, in order to do what she thought her white peers expected of her. "In my first role on management, our first team meeting fell on Eid, and it was such a huge celebration for my family. But for me, missing that first meeting meant more than missing that time with my family. And so I missed Eid. I didn't say anything, because I didn't want people to think, 'Oh, she's choosing this over this,' and to make assumptions based on that. Looking at it now, in comparison to someone missing Christmas with their family to be at a weekly staff meeting sounds crazy. But to me it made sense, it was something I had to do."

These stories capture a snapshot of reflections, fears, and resilience while navigating personal challenges. No two experiences are the same, but by reading the stories, one can see common experiences of finding strength and opportunity from the struggle on the margins. We also see very real fears and anxieties that we, as professionals of colour, face in our workplaces. It is important to consider these stories as part of a larger picture, so as not to generalize one person's entire experience with the details of one story. These shared experiences can lead to more story-telling, more space-making, and the opportunity for other voices to be heard and understood within our association.

Student Staff Survey Analysis

This project focuses primarily on the stories and experiences of self-identified OACUHO members in professional roles. The project team considered the value of collecting stories and experiences of current student staff members employed by OACUHO institutions, and decided to collect experiences through an online survey. Originally, this survey was sent to all delegates of the 2017 Residence Life Conference; eventually the reach of the survey expanded and all residence student leaders were encouraged to complete the survey, by invitation from their supervisors. An analysis of the survey responses is below. The project team would like to thank Katrina Persad for her contribution to this section of the report.

Reflecting on the Quantitative Data

Student leaders comprise a significantly higher representation of persons of colour than professional OACUHO members. At 57%, a majority of student staff identified as a person of colour in contrast to the 22% of professional OACUHO members outlined earlier in this report. . The majority of racialized student staff identified as South Asian, East Asian, and Black; only 3% identified as Latin/Hispanic. Out of 115 responses, none self-identified as holding Indigenous identities. Collecting disaggregated (specific) ethnic identity data proves complex, as several students felt their ethnic identity was not represented in the answer choices (e.g., Indo-Caribbean, Persian). It may be beneficial to revise or expand Question 1 (What is your ethnicity?) to better solicit data and account for variance in experience within ethnicities (e.g. the differences an Indo-Caribbean student recently immigrated from Trinidad may experience than a Canadian-born student with Indo-Caribbean heritage).

How diverse do student-staff see their peer team, management team, and campus?

Many of the student leaders felt that ethnic diversity was only present in their peer group. The sentiment that "student housing is an extremely white environment" echoed through the data, with numerous respondents commenting that management teams are mostly or entirely white. The low percentages of mid-level and senior management who identify as persons of colour is reflected in the student consciousness: "All of my immediate supervisors have all been white which has set an interesting perception on who holds power in residence life".

While students overall felt their campuses are diverse, several respondents suggested that the diversity on campus was comprised mainly of white and one or two other specific ethnic groups, rather than a broad range of representation. Several respondents observed "social groups tend to be formed by race and religion" and there is minimal "conversing between communities." One student remarked, "I have had unique opportunities to learn about different cultures and expand my knowledge but certainly the cultural experience at my institution is not immersive."

Do student staff feel supported?

Participants were asked to comment on the level of support they receive in their role. There were high levels of satisfaction among white respondents, who felt well-supported in their roles as student leaders. Student-staff of colour ranged across a spectrum of satisfaction. Around half of the racialized respondents described an "inclusive and welcoming" experience and identified receiving support "at an appropriate level" when needed. Several students observed a neutral experience of no different or extra support than their white peers; some ascribed this experience to having never needed or sought out additional or specialized support.

With reference to specific ethnic and cultural support, there were significantly higher levels of dissatisfaction from students of colour. Several student leaders identified feelings of distress and misunderstanding when communicating with supervisors:

• *"I definitely feel like a minority and outsider sometimes"*
• *"[As a person of colour] it is difficult to tell what conversations are comfortable to have with supervisors."*
• *"I mostly receive support from my team members that are also people of colour, because they also understand my struggles"*

The data suggests these students share an impression that there is a lack of knowledge around providing support for ethnic or cultural needs:

• *"There is very little culturally competent support."*
• *"Our managers don't have the knowledge to identify with our various cultural traditions…"*
• *"I feel a barrier in how I can relate to people who are not of colour and how they relate to me."*

Areas for further research and recommendations

1. Actively recruit and employ ethnically diverse professional staff

"Diversity is important for student representation and students will not feel supported or welcomed in an institution where they don't feel represented", said one participant. Student leaders of colour expressed a strong desire to see themselves represented in the professional staff teams; "diversity in management" was a consistent appeal throughout the survey results. "Better representation of minorities in the people that we are getting the support from" was identified as a measure in overcoming the barrier of feeling unseen and misunderstood. Students advocated for avoiding tokenism or perfunctory quotas— ideally rendering statements such as "My institution's residence life pro staff team is entirely made up of people of colour which I find to be unique!" to become unremarkable. Intentionally and consciously building an ethnically and culturally blended professional team not only contributes to the depiction of diversity, but holds nascent possibility of refreshing the residence experience in our increasingly-diverse institutions.

Reconfiguring the white-dominant composition of Housing departments across Ontario is complicated. Understanding its causes requires investigation: perhaps it is the cycle of residents becoming students leaders who find a passion for the work professionally, the career goals envisioned by students and families aligning (or misaligning) with Student Affairs work, or other contributing factors entirely. The modern employment catch-22 of requiring Housing experience to be hired in Housing is another barrier.

Expanding professional diversity requires a critical evaluation of the whiteness of hiring processes and an appraisal of the lens through which applicants are viewed as 'qualified'. This could include active solicitation of applicants with transferable (rather than direct) experience who meet the necessary skills and competencies, and a recognition of intersectionality reflected through the entire recruitment process, from marketing to interview questions and format. As Canadian institutions, there is especial work to be done in decolonizing the hiring experience to improve on recruitment, employment, and ongoing support for the Indigenous communities who are vastly underrepresented in the Housing field. As this report previously outlines, however, diverse hiring is just the beginning.

2. Offer opportunities to develop intercultural understanding and communication

The data reflects a strong desire for cultural education for staff and students. Student staff verbalized that "more education to work with students of colour and different racialized groups would be helpful". Repeated requests for "education on diversity," to "engage in dialogue," and have room for "race discussions and race-related support," were identified by student respondents as measures that would make them feel respected and "be better prepared to handle cultural differences in

living styles and behaviours." It is important to underscore the desire to receive training about other cultural backgrounds and how to navigate cultural differences: "We've spoken about how to respect one another...but we haven't really been trained to deal with the 'cold hard truth'. It might be better to address the fact that with diversity, there are some that won't be too welcoming and we should learn how to deal with those scenarios."

Increasing cultural-based programming was a priority identified across the survey. One respondent said, "Although I'm not a visible minority, I do have a unique religion and when I have experienced anti-Semitism in residence, there was not enough knowledge within residence staff or management to create a plan or program to educate students." Others commented on the puzzling specificities of Canadian culture often lost on their international residents, such as our Catholic-centric schedule of public holidays, and opined, "It is important to try to represent the other cultures especially during the holidays." Student leaders shared an active desire to move away from the sentiment "that Housing does not take that extra step or initiative in creating an inclusive environment".

Respondents sought for all staff to see programming that explores, celebrates, and elucidates other ethnicities and cultures as valuable and necessary work. Student staff identified frustrations of being cast in the role of cultural educator, with statements such as "There seems to be more expectations placed on the people of colour to do the labour of educating" and "I as a person of colour should not have to be the sole source of cultural programming material". The respondents of colour

identified a goal of having their white peers and supervisors be as invested in the importance of cultural-based programming.

It is evident that beyond visual representation, staff desire to feel culturally understood and to understand others through active learning about of differing cultural value systems and processes. Housing operations should consider the educational offerings to their student staff and offer a variety of options, such as:

- Formalized cultural competency education
- Workshops led by leaders of ethnic and cultural community groups
- Facilitated discussion during training about ethnicity and culture in a postsecondary environment
- Offer reading material through journal and academic resources, as well as informal memoir-style individual experiences
- Create a space for staff teams to discuss the knowledge they develop through these experiences

In reflecting on the data gathered from the student staff survey, operations should consider that these experiences come from the future members of OACUHO. These voices matter considerably in this conversation, as these are the individuals who will either feel compelled to pursue a career in this field, or perhaps will turn away from it due to the lack of space. Our role should be to continue listening to these voices, respond to the above stated needs, and improve their experience and sense of belonging.

Indigeneity in OACUHO

The project team would be mistaken to ignore the lack of Indigenous perspectives within this report. Indigenous peoples experience oppression in specific ways that differ from the oppression experienced by other racialized individuals related to settler colonialism and the dispossession of Indigenous lands through specific legal and structural frameworks (such as the Indian Act). Additionally, there is the particular nuance that our housing operations occupy (often unceded) lands that are subject to Treaties with various Indigenous Nations. We work for and support land ownership and land use, and our residence systems cannot be divorced from that reality or the responsibilities that result from such occupation. As such, the work we need to do to decolonize and Indigenize our spaces and processes requires a unique approach, specifically in the Canadian context and with the 2015 release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report.

While we have little representation throughout the report of Indigenous voices, some comments gathered anonymously are highlighted below. Consider the following stories and experiences:

> As an Indigenous person, I have experienced a lot of misconceptions around Indigenous identities and Indigenous students. In my experience, a lot of our "equity work" in housing tends to exclude Indigeneity, not recognizing that it is something distinct in the spectrum of diverse identities. Our operations do not work to understand the implications of educational housing and the historical violence of these systems for Indigenous people, and question why we don't have "broader" or more distinct representation of Indigenous students in residence. It's really disheartening. I have seen a lot of white folks identifying as allies "take up the cause" of diversifying our field without recognizing that it is a systematic concern. It feels like a check box for white professionals to say they're allies or that they're inclusive. It doesn't always feel safe.

> I have witnessed a lot of racism toward Indigenous people, both intentional and unintentional. It makes me feel unsafe at times where I feel the need to "out" myself to defend Indigenous students or the Indigenous perspective. I am often called upon to do the work of representing my community, or educating my colleagues about Indigenous cultural awareness. I have had to continuously asked for folks not to slang like "savage" or to ask to have a quick "pow-wow" when they mean that they want people to chat. I have had my identity questioned because I "look white", which means that I am not racialized enough for their expectation of what an Indigenous person looks like. Now that Truth & Reconciliation is a hot topic, I am consistently asked to be on panels to share my personal experience, or asked to facilitate activities that have a focus on Indigenous education. I often feel tokenized.

> There have been concerns around the programming included in the professional development OACUHO offers. Last year at the association's conference there were activities that promoted cultural genocide against Indigenous people and promoted colonialism (Canada150 Trivia - review the questions/answers). This was also true of this year's conference with the trip to Heritage Park; my institution paid for me to have access, and I didn't go because the description alienated me as an Indigenous person. Despite everything we say about our profession being inclusive and equity focused, my experience has been that we don't exactly walk the talk. I am hopeful that this project will be able to provide some solid feedback to the association, but am still skeptical about what will come next.

These stories provide a small glimpse into certain realities and challenges experienced by some members in our association. As mentioned in the representation and student staff data, our operations employ low numbers of Indigenous persons who are willing to self-identify as such, and none of the student staff survey respondents self-identified as holding any Indigenous identities. Unique work must be done to consider recruitment and retention, but particular focus must be placed on decolonizing our work spaces and housing operations. This work must be done regardless of Indigenous representation within the association; this responsibility falls on all of us, particularly our leadership, to make space to focus work in this area.

For further reading on indigeneity and decolonization:

Unsettling Setter Colonialism: The discourse and politics of settlers, and solidarity with Indigenous nations by Corey Snelgrove, Rita Kaur Dhamoon, & Jeff Corntassel (2014)

Winter 2018 CACUSS Communique on Indigenization and Decolonization in Canadian Student Affairs (2018)

Indigenous Canada course on Coursera

SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCES AND CLOSING QUESTIONS

This report touches on a variety of data: academic research on racial diversity within student affairs; quantitative results that estimate the current state of representation within OACUHO; and the counter-stories of persons of colour within our membership. At this point, most readers would expect to find recommendations on achieving a more inclusive workplace. The problems outlined in this report, however, are complex and require more than a checklist of recommendations. To be clear, the project team has identified that as a person of colour, barriers exist to feeling truly welcome and celebrated in our field and in our association. This problem is systemic, thus it requires a system-wide approach. The project team believes that next steps should be determined in partnership with OACUHO members of diverse backgrounds (including white members) and with representation from all organizational levels. This work must be owned by the membership and cannot rest solely in the hands of the project team. In lieu of outlining a list of recommendations, the project team identified summary statements that emerged from the data, followed by reflection questions for readers to consider about each statement.

Diverse Staff Representation: Persons of colour are underrepresented at all levels of housing organizations. Percentage of persons of colour decline as we move up within an organization. This is more than a numbers issue; it is also about *visibility* of persons of colour who are already here.

- What do individual operations and senior leaders know about who is present and in what strength within their workplace?
- How do we increase representation of people of colour on the OACUHO Board?
- How do we emphasize **visibility** over quantitative representation?
- What activities should the Board and individual operations promote and encourage in order to increase visibility and make space for community amongst persons of colour?

Knowledge of Diverse Student Populations: Persons of colour are expected to be sources of knowledge for white peers about how to effectively serve students of colour.

- What data do operations collect about the state of diversity in their residence population?
- How can operations use diversity data to understand student needs and make decisions?
- How can senior leaders demonstrate commitment to actively engaging in the above processes?
- How can white colleagues become "accomplices" instead of allies? (See page 39 of report)
- How do we reduce emotional labour on underrepresented individuals in their departments?

Inadequate "Equity" Training: Most peers and supervisors do not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of equity, diversity, and inclusion principles. Members experience unintentional microaggressions from peers and supervisors, and witness clear instances of behaviour that reinforces oppressive systems.

- What level of cultural competence is expected of Housing staff of all levels/ functional areas?
- What training can OACUHO offer to members to increase cultural competency and develop stronger skills in dismantling oppressive work environments?
- What training can OACUHO offer to senior leaders in dismantling oppressive environments?
- What can OACUHO and member institutions learn from parallel student services associations (e.g. CACUSS Professional Competencies on intercultural awareness)?
- How do members get access to training?
- What responsibilities do senior members have to ensure their staff get adequate equity training?

Hiring Bias: Barriers to access for marginalized groups exist at all levels of hiring within housing operations. Application screening, interview processes, candidate assessment, and career progression are all subject to bias that favours white culture.

- What training and resources can operations access to reduce bias within their hiring processes (e.g. recruitment, hiring, selection and retention)?
- What activities and exercises should operations adopt prior to engaging in a hiring process?
- How do we ensure diverse staff representation in recruitment, hiring and retention efforts?
- How do we remove barriers for equity-seeking populations?

Improving Mentorship Opportunities: Participants reported a natural inclination to feel more comfortable sharing vulnerable information with racialized mentors, due to similar life experience. White supervisors demonstrated strong mentorship when they made space for their staff's ethnic identities, or when they named their own power/privilege from the outset.

- What opportunities exist (or need to be created) to offer racialized OACUHO members with access to persons of colour in mentorship positions?
- How can we encourage and support creative mentorship opportunities for racialized members?
- What training and guidelines can white supervisors and senior leaders adopt to make more space for the identities of their staff?

Navigating White-Dominant Culture: Housing work culture is driven by white culture, and the conditions are such that members need to conform to white standards in order to succeed, perform well, and progress in their careers.

- How do our workplaces and OACUHO events perpetuate the pervasiveness of white culture?
- What can OACUHO, individual operations, and individual members do to challenge the pervasiveness of white culture?
- How can senior leaders, supervisors, and individual members create space for a more inclusive, evolving culture that makes all staff feel welcome, relevant, and important?
- How can OACUHO and individual institutions share and celebrate diverse cultural experiences?

Personal Struggles related to Identity: Members experience unique challenges of supporting diverse students or supporting themselves while navigating the isolation of a white work culture. These personal struggles are uniquely tied to ethnic identity (and other identities) in the workplace.

- What else can we learn about how personal challenges intersect with our work experiences?
- How can our work environments change to make social justice the responsibility of everyone?
- How can OACUHO partner with professionals of colour to share the burden of these struggles?

Creating Space for Dialogue: Members value the presence and progression of this topic within OACUHO, from the 2017 Conference presentation, to the establishment of the Professionals of Colour Affinity Group, to this project. At an institutional level, however, members experience varying degrees of indifference and support in pursuing this dialogue.

- What can OACUHO do to continue or improve the provision of space for this dialogue?
- How should this dialogue sustain through future OACUHO activities and experiences?
- How can senior leadership create space for this dialogue at their own institutions?
- What role does OACUHO play in fostering this dialogue within member institutions?

Access to and Knowledge of Relevant Research: Canadian research on racial diversity and equity within student affairs roles is sparse. Knowledge of student affairs theories within membership tends to focus on major foundational theories that do not consider racial identity.

- How can OACUHO support the education of membership on research in this topic?
- How can OACUHO support connecting membership to other knowledge networks within student affairs that pursue knowledge in this area?
- How can senior leaders, individual members, and OACUHO events facilitate dialogue around critical race theory in student affairs and related research amongst members?

Missing Voices: This report lacks representation from some equity-seeking groups (e.g. Indigenous members and trans-identifying members). It mainly captures stories from Residence Life members.

- What experiences are missing that could help inform this report and future recommendations?
- How are OACUHO and individual operations engaging with the calls to action within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?
- What can we learn from parallel student services associations (e.g. CACUSS Competencies on Indigenous cultural awareness) or community groups about engaging in decolonization?

Closing Recommendations

The statements and questions outlined above serve as a starting point for future work on this project. Questions are directed at the OACUHO Board, institutional leaders, and individual members. While the answers to every question are not immediately clear, reflecting on the counter-stories outlined in this report can serve as insightful and valid starting points to informal next steps. There is certainly room for further exploration and research, which leads us to three recommendations.

Recommendation to the Board:
Dedicate resources towards the project's next phase. Strike a 2018-2019 project team that will identify next steps, based on the findings in this report. Next steps should include tangible items such as changes to service provision, resources made available to the membership, etc. The Board should prepare to share a plan for next steps at the 2018 Fall Business Meeting.

Recommendation to senior leaders:
Create space in your operations to discuss this report on an ongoing basis. Empower your staff to engage with the topic, including how the data relates to your full-time staff, student staff, and residence population. Share what you are doing with colleagues; learn from other institutions.

Recommendation to all OACUHO members:
Engage with each other about the data in this report. Challenge your senior leaders, supervisors, and colleagues with influence to create space for this dialogue. White colleagues must demonstrate partnership in the work of dismantling barriers and making space.

The project team sees opportunity for immediate action. Merely spurring dialogue between members is a positive step forward. The project team thanks all members for reading this report, but reading is not enough. At the very least, talk to your colleagues about the report. Start or end weekly meetings with a question from the above list. Book your supervisors into meetings and ask them these questions. These conversations must be consciously raised so that this issue cannot be ignored. All community members should take accountability for their role in the system of opportunity and access. We hope as readers you will reflect on your role and leverage the power you hold to make space for change.

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APPENDIX A

State of Diverse Representation in OACUHO Survey

Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this brief survey on diverse representation within OACUHO. As part of the 2017-2018 OACUHO Member-at-Large project, the survey intends to be a preliminary investigation into the current state of diversity within the association. Please note that this survey loosely follows the model of standard equity surveys often circulated at our institutions.

Your information is used to produce aggregate data. No information that identifies an individual and their diversity self-identification data will be released or shared. Due to the importance of representation in this topic area, the project team intends to share survey results if we achieve at least 15-20% participation from the membership.

Please answer the following questions.
- How do you define your gender identity?
    - Cisgender male
    - Cisgender female
    - Transgender male
    - Transgender female
    - Two-spirit
    - Non-binary
    - Prefer not to disclose
- Do you self-identify as a person of colour?
    - Yes
    - No
    - Prefer not to disclose
- Do you self-identify as an Indigenous person?
    - Yes
    - No
    - Prefer not to disclose
- Do you self-identify as a 2SLGBTQ+ person?
    - Yes
    - No
    - Prefer not to disclose
- Do you self-identify as a person with a disability?
    - Yes
    - No
    - Prefer not to disclose

What level of position do you hold within your institution?*
- **New Professional** (professionals with less than 3 years experience in the housing field)

* As of OACUHO's Annual General Meeting (May 2018) at the University of Guelph, the membership level names progress as follows: New, Experienced, Advanced, and Senior.

- **Mid-Level Professional** (professionals with more than 3 years experience in the housing field)
- **Sr. Level Professional** (five years or more professional experience in housing or a comparable field. Senior levels professionals have direct responsibilities for full-time professional staff (unionized or non-unionized), budgetary control, and performance management of full-time housing professionals. In the absence of the CHO, the Senior Level Professional carries out the vision of the CHO including acting as the CHO in their absence.)
- **Chief Housing Officer** (Senior person who has overall responsibility for all facets of the housing operations as an employee of a post-secondary institution.)
- **Prefer not to disclose**

How long have you been working as a professional in Student Affairs?
(Multiple choice – select one)
- 1-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-20 years
- 20+ years
- Prefer not to disclose

Within which functional area is your current position?
(Multiple selection: select all that apply)
- Admissions, Marketing, and Assignments
- Living-Learning Communities
- Facilities, Services, and Front Desk Operations
- Residence Life
- Off-Campus Housing and Community Relations
- Information Technology
- Other: _____

What is your current/past involvement in OACUHO?
- Attended event (FBM, Drive-In, Conference)
- Involved in committee work
- Involved on the Board of Directors
- I've been interested in being involved but didn't have capacity
- I've not been interested in being actively involved

APPENDIX B

Focus Group Protocol and Questions

Instructions

- **Introduction (2 min.)**
    a. Welcome all participants to the focus group
    b. Introduce facilitator and observer

- **Conversation norms (3 min.)**
    c. Share and speak from own experiences
    d. Give all participants a chance to respond at least once to a given question

- **Background refresher (5 min.)**
    e. Project goals
    f. Ethnic Diversity Project survey
    g. Moving forward (Focus Groups in relation to Individual Interviews and Research/Writing)

- **Questions (40 min.) - See attached.**

- **Final comments (5 min.)**

- **Closing (5 min.)**

Focus Group Interview Protocol

- What does ethnic diversity mean to you as a housing professional of colour?
- How has your ethnic identity entered into interactions with students? Staff? Faculty?
- Belonging is a contested term: Can you give me an example of a time when you felt you belonged or didn't belong as a racialized housing professional?
- What does ethnic solidarity mean to you? How do you practice this as a housing professional of colour?
- What are some of the challenges or barriers you see that limits you as a racialized housing professional?

APPENDIX C

Individual Interview Script

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. As a refresher, this interview is part of the OACUHO Ethnic Diversity Project, which aims to report on the current state of ethnic diversity and representation across housing operations and professional roles. We hope, through these interviews, to facilitate and elevate existing dialogue around ethnic diversity in OACUHO. Thus, over the course of our conversation, we welcome you to share your experiences with us not only by answering our questions, but also by telling stories of your lived experiences that you feel to be significant. At the end of our interview, we will also have some time for us to converse freely beyond the set questions. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Definitions for reference:
Ethnic identity: an affiliative construct, where an individual is viewed by themselves and by others as belonging to a particular ethnic or cultural group. An individual can choose to associate with a group especially if other choices are available (i.e., the person is of mixed ethnic or racial heritage). Affiliation can be influenced by racial, natal, symbolic, and cultural factors (Cheung, 1993)

Intersectionality: the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

In this first section, we will be speaking about your personal experiences in the field of Housing.

1. Has your ethnic identity ever entered into interactions with student staff members? Colleagues? Supervisors? If so, how?
2. Through the lens of intersectionality, have other aspects of your identity ever entered into interactions with student staff members? Colleagues? Supervisors? If so, how?
3. Can you comment on your experience with mentorship as a housing professional? Can you provide us with a story of your experience?
4. Reflecting on the previous experiences you have shared, would you consider a particular interaction to be positive? Negative? (If necessary, new examples can be provided).

Thank you for your insights. In this next section, we will be speaking about some of the information that has been gathered so far as part of this project, from both the Focus Groups that were run in February, and the initial survey that was conducted in November of last year.

5. Did you participate in one of the focus groups?
    a) If yes: In regards to the focus groups, a theme that emerged was the challenge faced by entry-level professionals of colour as they seek to navigate the field. The higher a professional goes in the organization ladder, the easier it may feel to talk about ethnicity and representation. What comments do you have on this topic, from your experience?
    b) If no: Move on to question 6.

6. One of the common themes in responses from a survey conducted in November, is the drop in diversity within positions as people move to more senior levels. Have you experienced this? If so, can you tell us your experience?

Thank you for your insights. Looking ahead, with these final questions, we will return once again to your personal experiences.

7. Are there any skills, resources, and/or experiences that you have introduced, developed, and/or practiced to highlight the strength of ethnic diversity in your workplace?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share that has not been asked yet?

This concludes our interview. I want to thank you once again for taking the time to speak with us, and for everything that you have shared through our conversation. Moving forward, we will be compiling and coding the interviews. The information gathered in the interviews will be combined with information gathered in focus groups and research articles to form a report that will be delivered to OACUHO.

Thank you again for participating in this interview and sharing your experiences.

APPENDIX D

OACUHO Pulse Article, May 2017
Diversity or Lack Thereof in Student Affairs by Aman Litt

Racism is "a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race" (Racism, (n.d.).

White privilege "is a term for societal privileges that benefit people identified as white in Western countries, beyond what is commonly experienced by non-white people under the same social, political or economic circumstances" (Kendall, 2002, p. 1).

"'Whiteness' is a term that describes the ideology of those who have been racially identified as white. Whiteness, as with race, is a socially constructed reality. In other words, the meaning of one's skin color and how it shapes a person's worldview and lived experience is not inherent in an individual but determined by society. This is supported by the fact that the definition of the white race has changed over time and has been determined by the people in power" (Lietz, 2015).

Working within Student Affairs is such an exciting place to be; we are constantly challenging ourselves with continual changes, questioning best practices and whether we admit to it or not, putting way too much on our professional plates, with the best of intentions. For example, one area we are passionate about is diversity inclusion within our professional portfolio; most institutions have a diversity statement or mandate they follow, but what is the follow through?

Discriminatory hiring practices are not a thing of the past and we need to acknowledge and address the existence of bias within our own hiring practices in Student Affairs. What we need to be discussing in Student Affairs is what racism is, and not the stereotypical ideology of it, but how it is currently living and breathing within our society. We need to be educating ourselves about whiteness, white privilege and how it currently lives in society. "Although countering the individual level of oppression is important, fighting institutional oppression is also imperative" (Bondi, 2012, p. 398).

How are we able to teach and promote a multicultural environment, when our campuses' are all predominately white? It is difficult for us to create the proper training, support and structure within our Residence systems without a well-rounded, multicultural and multi-coloured staffing.

When doing research on this month's topic, I asked myself 'whose voice is currently being minimized within Student Affairs?' I have done some research on this subject and I know that the Indigenous perspective, people of colour and the international perspective are not being adequately represented in most Student Affairs departments. The fact that there is a

gap is a great challenge and opportunity for all of us to work together at bettering our current staffing structure.

"Student affairs professionals and faculty can ensure power and privilege are brought up in discussions about policy and practice" (Bondi, 2012, p. 408). Whether we are front line staff or hidden in an office with other duties, we have the voice and the opportunity to tell our colleagues and supervisors that this needs to be a primary focus of our departments. By bringing up these conversations and doing self-learning, it allows us the opportunity to make the conversation more upfront. "...[S]tudent affairs practitioners must create opportunities and be prepared to facilitate dialogues that help students deal with issues of privilege, diversity, and social justice" (Carter et al, 2007, p.152). We provide the tools and training for our staff to work with students, but what about within our own departments? If we are providing our student staff with training, why are we not training ourselves?

What does diversity look like on your campus? At the University of Alberta, over forty percent of our students are international students and we are working very hard at evaluating our hiring practices to ensure that we are able to create a more accessible application procedure for all potential new hires. What does this look like? One simple question I would start with is are there items in a resume or cover letter which prevent individuals from getting asked for an interview by you? For example, a personal practice I use to have revolved around grammatical errors. I was a stickler for grammatical errors, but now, upon reflection, I realize that this bias of mine was hindering the international applicants from potentially reaching interview stage because of something rather simple and not extremely necessary for their job. Of course our professional staff need to communicate well, but they need to be relatable and approachable before that.

Another question to consider is what makes someone stand out in an interview? For me, the first thing that comes to mind is someone who can sell themselves really well. This is a North American custom and not a cultural trait that is practiced all across the world. A year ago, I was helping a student staff member prepare for his first professional interview after graduation. I kept telling the staff member that they had to show the interview panel that they were the absolute best choice and to basically brag about how great they were. The Chinese student I was coaching told me no; he told me that there was absolutely no way he would feel comfortable selling himself in such a manner because it is highly undignified to brag about oneself in his culture. This was news to me and made me really reflect on who we deem the strongest candidates in our applicant pool and how North American we are, as to who is considered the strongest. Whenever I go through interviews, I think to myself, who was the strongest candidate or who stood out the most? This way of thinking could and has really diminished my ability to see potential in other cultural ways of exhibiting strength or ability within an interview setting.

I also think that another reason why we do like not talking about racism or personal bias is because we have come a long way and we do not see overt racism or bias in our workplaces, typically speaking. We do see people of colour on our campuses, who are very successful and are our colleagues, classmates or friends, so perhaps, day to day, it seems the problem no longer exists. The assumptions around the the problem being diminished or eradicated is that certain minority groups have a higher median annual income or higher years of schooling against the majority white population, but this simplifies the issue and rather paints it in a positive light and subverts the current issue (Suzuki, 2002). The fact that a specific number of visible minorities are doing well does not negate the percentage of minorities versus majority individuals. When all factors are put into play: number of working adults in the home, cost of living and disparity from white peers, the results show that there is not the success the simplistic assessment provides us (Suzuki, 2002).

A really honest way to know that the issue is still alive is to look around the room when you are in any meeting. Typically, most, if not all, the individuals in the room are white. Now, if you leave that meeting room and walk to a central location on campus, what do you see around you? I think I would be safe to say that not all, if even most people in the room are white. So where is the issue that we do not have people of colour in our profession?

I know that some individuals reading this will argue my vantage point and I welcome that. I am sure there are many campuses across Canada that have higher numbers of people of colour employed and to these institutions I would ask, in what roles? Entry level or management?

When it comes to managerial and upper management positions, minority groups are at a disadvantage to said opportunities. "Although [minority employees] are well educated and gain relatively easy access to entry-level jobs, they continue to face inequities in income and upward job mobility" (Suzuki, 2002, p.24). This is a very interesting fact and something that I do not think will change overnight. This issue also persists with women in positions of supervision and has through history as well.

The goal of this article was not to bring hard and fast solutions, but rather, get the conversation going, get you thinking about this topic and your own personal bias, from your cultural background, where you grew you up and your own personal philosophies. I do have some recommendations of goals, which all of us can take away from this and start working on in our respective institutions:

- Read! Education is a powerful tool and there are many useful journals, articles and studies done on the history of Student Affairs, traditions and practices.

- Hire an expert. There are many people, perhaps on campus, or in your local community, who could come and speak about hiring bias and how to identify it, so that you can create a more even playing field in forthcoming interviews.
- "Conduct workshops, retreats, and other activities for students, faculty, administrators, and staff on diversity and multiculturalism, including segments on the stereotyping and its damaging effects. Because attitudes and behaviors change very slowly, these activities should not be one-shot efforts but should be conducted on an ongoing basis" (Suzuki, 2002, 99. 29).
- Provide leadership training and opportunities for minority groups.
- Acknowledge your own shortcomings. Take a class, read a book, meet with someone who specializes on the topic and then share the knowledge with your colleagues and supervisors. This is a topic I am personally and professionally passionate about and I know many of us are.

Citations

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APPENDIX F

Departmental Self-Assessment from *The Elephant in the Room Spring Conference Session 2017*
Developed by Brian Cunha and Aman Litt

Exploring Ethnic Diversity in Student Housing
Departmental Self-Assessment

4	Full action taken	3	Substantial action taken	2	Partial action taken	1	Minimal action taken	0	No action taken

INDICATORS	EVIDENCE	SCORE
Every time my department hires staff, there are intentional conversations about diversity *and* my/our personal/professional biases.		
Inclusionary objectives are built into the job descriptions and performance appraisals of departmental staff.		
There has been acknowledgement and dialogue about the whiteness of my department and hiring managers are taking action.		
My department has created inclusionary goals and or key performance indicators on diversifying the staff.		
My department has hired a specialist to educate the staff on hiring biases and hiring diverse staff teams.		
Social activities in my department are diverse in that they do not repeatedly represent white culture.		
People in my department can speak openly to other staff about combatting white dominance, and the oppression of people of colour.		
My department is taking action so that the staff are a good representation of the students we serve.		
Ethnic Diversity in Housing **TOTAL SCORE**		**/32**

APPENDIX G

Excerpt from *Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups* (2001)

White Supremacy Culture
by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun

This is a list of characteristics of white supremacy culture which show up in our organizations. Culture is powerful precisely because it is so present and at the same time so very difficult to name or identify. The characteristics listed below are damaging because they are used as norms and standards without being pro-actively named or chosen by the group. They are damaging because they promote white supremacy thinking. They are damaging to both people of color and to white people. Organizations that are people of color led or a majority people of color can also demonstrate many damaging characteristics of white supremacy culture.

PERFECTIONISM

- Little appreciation expressed among people for the work that others are doing; appreciation that is expressed usually directed to those who get most of the credit anyway
- More common is to point out either how the person or work is inadequate
- Or even more common, to talk to others about the inadequacies of a person or their work without ever talking directly to them
- Mistakes are seen as personal, i.e. They reflect badly on the person making them as opposed to being seen for what they are: mistakes
- Making a mistake is confused with being a mistake, doing wrong with being wrong
- Little time, energy, or money put into reflection or identifying lessons learned that can improve practice, in other words little or no learning from mistakes
- Tendency to identify what's wrong; little ability to identify, name, and appreciate what's right

Antidotes: develop a culture of appreciation, where the organization takes time to make sure that people's work and efforts are appreciated; develop a learning organization, where it is expected that everyone will make mistakes and those mistakes offer opportunities for learning; create an environment where people can recognize that mistakes sometimes lead to positive results; separate the person from the mistake; when offering feedback, always speak to the things that went well before offering criticism; ask people to offer specific suggestions for how to do things differently when offering criticism

SENSE OF URGENCY

- Continued sense of urgency that makes it difficult to take time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful decision-making, to think long-term, to consider consequences
- Frequently results in sacrificing potential allies for quick or highly visible results, for example sacrificing interests of communities of color in order to win victories for white people (seen as default or norm community)
- Reinforced by funding proposals which promise too much work for too little money and by funders who expect too much for too little

Antidotes: realistic workplans; leadership which understands that things take longer than anyone expects; discuss and plan for what it means to set goals of inclusivity and diversity, particularly in terms of time; learn from past experience how long things take; write realistic funding proposals with realistic time frames; be clear about how you will make good decisions in an atmosphere of urgency

DEFENSIVENESS

- The organizational structure is set up and much energy spent trying to prevent abuse and protect power as it exists rather than to facilitate the best out of each person or to clarify who has power and how they are expected to use it
- Because of either/or thinking (see below), criticism of those with power is viewed as threatening and inappropriate (or rude)
- People respond to new or challenging ideas with defensiveness, making it very difficult to raise these ideas
- A lot of energy in the organization is spent trying to make sure that people's feelings aren't getting hurt or working around defensive people
- The defensiveness of people in power creates an oppressive culture

Antidotes: understand that structure cannot in and of itself facilitate or prevent abuse; understand the link between defensiveness and fear (of losing power, losing face, losing comfort, losing privilege); work on your own defensiveness; name defensiveness as a problem when it is one; give people credit for being able to handle more than you think; discuss the ways in which defensiveness or resistance to new ideas gets in the way of the mission

QUANTITY OVER QUALITY

- All resources of organization are directed toward producing measurable goals
- Things that can be measured are more highly valued than things that cannot, for example numbers of people attending a meeting, newsletter circulation, money spent are valued more than quality of relationships, democratic decision-making, ability to constructively deal with conflict
- Little or no value attached to process; if it can't be measured, it has no value
- Discomfort with emotion and feelings
- No understanding that when there is a conflict between content (the agenda of the meeting) and process (people's need to be heard or engaged), process will prevail (for example, you may get through the agenda, but if you haven't paid attention to people's need to be heard, the decisions made at the meeting are undermined and/ or disregarded)

Antidotes: include process or quality goals in your planning; make sure your organization has a values statement which expresses the ways in which you want to do your work; make sure this is a living document and that people are using it in their day to day work; look for ways to measure process goals (for example if you have a goal of inclusivity, think about ways you can measure whether or not you have achieved that goal); learn to recognize those times when you need to get off the agenda in order to address people's underlying concerns

WORSHIP OF THE WRITTEN WORD

- If it's not in a memo, it doesn't exist
- Organization does not take into account or value other ways in which information gets shared
- Those with strong documentation and writing skills are more highly valued, even in organizations where ability to relate to others is key to the mission

Antidotes: take the time to analyze how people inside and outside the organization get and share information; figure out which things need to be written down and come up with alternative ways to document what is happening; work to recognize the contributions and skills that every person brings to the organization (e.g., ability to build relationships with those important to the mission)

ONLY ONE RIGHT WAY

- The belief there is one right way to do things and once people are introduced to the right way, they will see the light and adopt it
- When they do not adapt or change, then something is wrong with them (the other, those not changing), not with us (those who "know" the right way)
- Similar to the missionary who does not see value in the culture of other communities, sees only value in their beliefs about what is good

Antidotes: accept that there are many ways to get to the same goal; once the group has made a decision about which way to take, honor that decision and see what you and the organization will learn from taking that way, even and especially if it is not the way you would have chosen; work on developing the ability to notice when people do things differently and how those different ways might improve your approach; look for the tendency for a group or a person to keep pushing the same point over and over out of a belief that there is only one right way and then name it; when working with communities from a different culture than yours or your organizations, be clear that you have some learning to do about the communities' ways of doing; never assume that you or your organization know what's best for the community in isolation from meaningful relationships with that community

PATERNALISM

- Decision-making is clear to those with power and unclear to those without it
- Those in power think they can make decisions for and in the interests of those without power
- Those with power often don't think it is important or necessary to understand the viewpoint or experience of those for whom they are making decisions
- Those without power understand they do not have it and understand who does
- Those without power do not really know how decisions get made and who makes what decisions, and yet they are completely familiar with the impact of those decisions on them

Antidotes: make sure that everyone knows and understands who makes what decisions in the organization; make sure everyone knows and understands their level of responsibility and authority in the organization; include people who are affected by decisions in the decision-making

EITHER/OR THINKING

- Things are either/or, good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us
- Linked to perfectionism; makes it difficult to learn from mistakes or accommodate conflict
- No sense that things can be both/and
- Results in simplifying complex things, e.g. poverty is simply a result of lack of education
- Creates conflict and increases sense of urgency, as people are felt they have to make decisions to do either this or that, with no time or encouragement to consider alternatives, particularly those which may require more time or resources

Antidotes: notice when people use "either/or" language and push to come up with more than two alternatives; notice when people are simplifying complex issues, particularly when the stakes seem high or an urgent decision needs to be made; slow it down and encourage people to do a deeper analysis; when people are faced with an urgent decision, take a break and give people some breathing room to think creatively; avoid making decisions under extreme pressure

POWER HOARDING

- Little, if any, value around sharing power
- Power seen as limited, only so much to go around
- Those with power feel threatened when anyone suggests changes in how things should be done in the organization, feel suggestions for change are a reflection on their leadership
- Those with power don't see themselves as hoarding power or as feeling threatened
- Those with power assume they have the best interests of the organization at heart and assume those wanting change are ill-informed (stupid), emotional, inexperienced

Antidotes: include power sharing in your organization's values statement; discuss what good leadership looks like and make sure people understand that a good leader develops the power and skills of others; understand that change is inevitable and challenges to your leadership can be healthy and productive; make sure the organization is focused on the mission

INDIVIDUALISM

- Little experience or comfort working as part of a team
- People in organization believe they are responsible for solving problems alone
- Accountability, if any, goes up and down, not sideways to peers or to those the organization is set up to serve
- Desire for individual recognition and credit
- Leads to isolation
- Competition more highly valued than cooperation and where cooperation is valued, little time or resources devoted to developing skills in how to cooperate
- Creates a lack of accountability, as the organization values those who can get things done on their own without needing supervision or guidance

Antidotes: include teamwork as an important value in your values statement; make sure the organization is working towards shared goals and people understand how working together will improve performance; evaluate people's ability to work in a team as well as their ability to get the job done; make sure that credit is given to all those who participate in an effort, not just the leaders or most public person; make people accountable as a group rather than as individuals; create a culture where people bring problems to the group; use staff meetings as a place to solve problems, not just a place to report activities

I'M THE ONLY ONE

- Connected to individualism; belief that if something is going to get done right, I have to do it
- Little or no ability to delegate work to others

Antidotes: evaluate people based on their ability to delegate to others; evaluate people based on their ability to work as part of a team to accomplish shared goals

PROGRESS IS BIGGER, MORE

- Observed in systems of accountability and ways we determine success
- Progress is an organization which expands (adds staff, adds projects) or develops the ability to serve more people (regardless of how well they are serving them)
- Gives no value, not even negative value, to its cost, for example, increased accountability to funders as the budget grows, ways in which those we serve may be exploited, excluded, or underserved as we focus on how many we are serving instead of quality of service or values created by the ways in which we serve

Antidotes: create Seventh Generation thinking by asking how the actions of the group now will affect people seven generations from now; make sure that any cost/benefit analysis includes all the costs, not just the financial ones, for example the cost in morale, the cost in credibility, the cost in the use of resources; include process goals in your planning, for example make sure that your goals speak to how you want to do your work, not just what you want to do; ask those you work with and for to evaluate your performance

FEAR OF OPEN CONFLICT

- People in power are scared of conflict and try to ignore it or run from it
- When someone raises an issue that causes discomfort, the response is to blame
- Emphasis on politeness; equate raising difficult issues with being impolite, rude, or out of line

Antidotes: role play ways to handle conflict before conflict happens; distinguish between being polite and raising hard issues; don't require those who raise hard issues to raise them in "acceptable" ways, especially if you are using the ways in which issues are raised as an excuse not to address the issues being raised; once a conflict is resolved, take the opportunity to revisit it and see how it might have been handled differently

OBJECTIVITY

- The belief that there is such a thing as being objective
- The belief that emotions are inherently destructive, irrational, and should not play a role in decision-making or group process
- Invalidating people who show emotion
- Requiring people to think in a linear fashion and ignoring or invalidating those who think in other ways
- Impatience with any thinking that does not appear "logical" to those with power

Antidotes: realize that everybody has a world view and that everybody's world view affects the way they understand things; realize this means you too; push yourself to sit with discomfort when people are expressing themselves in ways which are not familiar to you; assume that everybody has a valid point and your job is to understand what that point is

RIGHT TO COMFORT

- The belief that those with power have a right to emotional and psychological comfort (another aspect of valuing "logic" over emotion)
- Scapegoating those who cause discomfort
- Equating individual acts of unfairness against white people with systemic racism which daily targets people of color

Antidotes: understand that discomfort is at the root of all growth and learning; welcome it as much as you can; deepen your political analysis of racism and oppression so you have a strong understanding of how your personal experience and feelings fit into a larger picture; don't take everything personally

One of the purposes of listing characteristics of white supremacy culture is to point out how organizations which unconsciously use these characteristics as their norms and standards make it difficult, if not impossible, to open the door to other cultural norms and standards. As a result, many of our organizations, while saying we want to be multicultural, really only allow other people and cultures to come in if they adapt or conform to already existing cultural norms. Being able to identify and name the cultural norms and standards you want is a first step to making room for a truly multi-cultural organization.