AGENDA

• Introductions
• Ground Rules
• Cultural Competency Recap
• What is Implicit Bias
• Strategies to Mitigate Implicit Bias
• Speakers Panel
• Next Steps
GROUND RULES

• Respect
• Confidentiality
• Speak from the “I”
• OK to be “Raggedy”
• Practice “Both/And” thinking
ICE BREAKER

What is your own culture? How would you define yourself or your family?
- Were you born outside of Maine (from AWAY?!)
- Have you lived in Maine your whole life or most of it?
- Do you speak a language other than English?
- Are you from THE County (Aroostook)?
- Are you an only child?
- Are you the “baby” of the family?
- First college graduate in the family?
WHAT MAKES YOU, YOU?

Outer portions of the wheel represent dimensions of oneself that **commonly change over time**:

- Education
- Political Beliefs
- Family
- Organizational Role
- Language and Communication Skills
- Income
- Religion
- Appearance
- Work Experience

Inner portions of the wheel represent internal dimensions that are frequently **more permanent or visible** by members of the community:

- Race/Ethnicity
- Age
- Gender Identity or Expression
- Gender
- National Origin
- Sexual Orientation
- Mental/Physical Ability
CULTURAL COMPETENCY RECAP

• Understanding who you are and how that can help you understand who others are.

• The learned and shared values, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors of interacting people.

• Openness, Appreciation, Acceptance, and Flexibility
WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF THE WORD “CULTURE”?

What we see and cannot see.

Obvious:
- Language
- Dress & Appearance
- Food

Not obvious:
- Notions of modesty
- Individualism vs Groups
- Concept of time and timeliness
- Sense of self and space
CODES OF CONDUCT & BEST PRACTICES

- MRS Title 30-A, Chapter 123. MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS
  - 7. Municipal officers adopt ethics policy. In their discretion, the municipal officers may adopt an ethics policy governing the conduct of elected and appointed municipal officials. [PL 1989, c. 561, §19 (NEW).]

- MMA Newly Elected Officials Best Practices
  - #4. Be ethical and open. Being 100% ethical, and as open as possible, prevents larger problems from developing.
  - #8. Be ‘judicious.’ Maintaining impartiality is crucial in this role.

- The Maine Civil Rights Act prohibits bias based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.

- The Maine Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodation and credit based on race, color, sex, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry, or national origin.
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY IMPLICIT BIAS?
NOT EVERYONE ‘SEES’ THE SAME THING

LET’S SEE WHAT YOU SEE!

• Focus Video
BIAS IS HARD WIRED INTO OUR BRAIN’S FUNCTIONING

- At any one time, our senses are bombarded with as many as 11 million pieces of information while our brains can only functionally work with 40-50 items.
- We deal with this challenge by building unconscious perceptual filters that allows some information in and blocks some out based on our personal and cultural experience.
IMPLICIT BIAS IS:

• Activated quickly and unknowingly by situational cues (e.g., a person's skin color or accent or other characteristics), silently exerting its influence on our perception, memory, and behavior.

• Implicit bias isn’t something that only “bad” people have, but something that we all have as a product of our different experiences.
IMPLICIT BIAS

- Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner
  - **Generalization**
    - Reflects the patterns and behaviors for many people in a cultural group
  - **Stereotypes**
    - Automatically applying generalizations to every person in the cultural group
    - What stereotypes do you face? As a Municipal Worker? Union Member?
HARVARD UNIVERSITY IMPLICIT ASSOCIATIONS TEST (IAT)

- https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

- What did you find out about your implicit biases?

- What surprised you?

- Limitations
WHAT ARE SOME WAYS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED IMPLICIT BIAS?

• Respond to the poll confidentially
• Discuss the results

To understand your own Implicit Bias, check out:

• Harvard Implicit Associations Test (IAT)
• The Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI®)
• The National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) Self-Assessment
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS:

**Recognize** that everyone has innate/learned preferences and biases.

- Talk to people you trust about yours.
- Work with others to understand theirs better.

*Be respectful of BIPOC and understand conversations can be emotionally exhausting.*

In practice: Staff Meetings and Supervision
**STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS:**

**Stereotype Replacement and Counter Imaging:**

- When interacting with a person from a stereotyped and/or disadvantaged population, consciously **think about positive images from this stigmatized population.**

- Defined: A **stereotype** is an exaggerated belief, image or distorted truth about a person or group.

- In practice: Recognize when your own stereotypes are activated-how do you respond when you don’t “click” with someone?

In practice: Display positive and diverse images, symbols, resources you have in your offices.
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS:

Individuation:

- Particularly when working with a person from a population affected by bias, **obtaining specific information about that individual, instead of applying stereotypical generalizations. LISTEN.**

In practice: Conduct one-on-one meetings with colleagues to learn about lived experiences, develop a protocol for open ended questions at the beginning of client conversations.
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS:

PERSPECTIVE TAKING:

Imagine the actual circumstances of living in the situation of a person who triggers your biases.

- What do they face every morning upon awakening?
- How do they feel about the safety (and later, judgments) of themselves, their family and children?

In practice: Create opportunities for staff to participate in real life situations: riding public transportation, police ride along, spend night in homeless shelter.
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS:

Increasing opportunities for contact:

• Find common ground for partnership with persons from groups that activate your biases.

In practice: Host brown bag community lunches, attend cultural events.
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS:

EXPAND THE DIVERSITY OF THE WORKFORCE.

• Support more people from diverse communities within the workforce.

In practice: Examine internal policies that might be creating barriers in your own work. Ask yourself if you are gatekeeping or if you are asking others to be gatekeepers.
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS:

Improve Decision Making

• Negative emotions and stress may increase stereotyping, so **take conscious steps to manage stress and to heighten awareness** in these situations.

In practice: Take your time, prepare for stressful interactions, and review behaviors after
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS

- Practice, Practice, Practice!
- Other ideas or questions?
- Poll- What strategies will you use?
PANELIST DISCUSSION

Fowsia Musse- Executive Director, Maine Community Integration, Lewiston
Samuel Quintana- Police Office, Gardiner

1. How do you define your cultural identify?
2. How have you experienced bias in Maine?
3. What are some examples of bias that you see in your community, the schools, your children?
4. What are some assumptions people have made about you?
RESOURCES

- Harvard Implicit Bias Research: Project Implicit [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/]
- Healthy Androscoggin: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCiS0NTsq_aAaN82sEa3sFjw]
- National Center for Cultural Competence: [https://nccc.georgetown.edu/]
- ACLU Maine: [https://www.aclumaine.org/]
- Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine: [https://hhrcmaine.org/]
- Maine Intercultural Communications Consultants: [https://www.maineintercultural.com/]
- YWCA Central Maine: Webinars and Events [https://ywcamaine.org/]
- Follow your local cultural groups on Facebook!
Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.

-Maya Angelou