

From: Office of Equity <OfficeOfEquity@updates.gov.wa.gov>
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Subject: We the People 2024 Convening Registration Launch | Equity News Now



Welcome!

Welcome to Equity News Now (ENN), the official newsletter of the Washington State Office of Equity!

We're excited to bring you another issue of ENN, kicking off the summer right! The Office of Equity has been hard at work onboarding new staff, launching event series, working on creating internal and external processes, having team retreats and bonding activities, attending events all over Washington state... and so much more! Read on to get a snapshot of what we've been up to.

Don't forget to stay involved with us on all our platforms: [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) & [YouTube](#).

Click here to subscribe to our newsletters!



A goofy photo of the Office of Equity Staff at their staff retreat in March 2024.



Event Updates



Event Updates

We the People



BE BOLD. BE CHANGE.

Save the date
Oct. 15-16 2024
Yakima Convention Center



We the People 2024 Convening Registration

The Washington State Office of Equity is excited to announce our upcoming 2024 We the People Convening: Be Bold. Be Change. This event is an exciting opportunity to support state agencies as they co-create with their internal team members, other state agencies, Washington community members, and organizations. Our event fosters sharing and creating innovative approaches around pro-equity and anti-racism (PEAR), Relational Partnerships, systems change in state government, and creating a Washington state that fosters belonging. There is much to be done to create an environment where everyone belongs, and that work requires courage. We're challenging you – Be Bold, Be Change!

Event details:

Date: October 15-16, 2024

Location: Yakima Convention Center

Hotel Room Block Information: <https://cvent.me/Epxk7o>

Click here to register!

Registration for in-person attendees closes October 4th.
Registration for virtual attendees closes October 11th.



PEAR S.T.A.R. Awards

The Office of Equity is launching our first ever annual PEAR S.T.A.R. Awards. These awards will be given out to community organizations and state agencies that exemplify PEAR (Pro Equity Anti-Racist) qualities. A total of 30 awards will be given out, two for each of the 15 determinants of equity, with one going to a Community Champion and another going to an State Agency Champion. [Click here to see the 15 determinants of equity](#). The nomination form is included in this newsletter and on our website under the Accountability tab.

Click here to nominate someone!

Please help us spread the word throughout the state. We want to know about agencies and organizations that integrate and reinforce PEAR principles. This year, 2024, will be the inaugural year for the Office of Equity recognizing the amazing & outstanding work being done to create a belonging and inclusive state for all.

Thank you in advance for your efforts to ensure the unrecognized are now celebrated for their work!



Equity Learning Series Registration

We have launched our new monthly Equity Learning Series! Each month during 2024, the Office of Equity will host one webinar focused on equity and belonging topics. These webinars will be geared towards increasing the knowledge, skills, and ability of us all within State Government. We do this to fulfill one of our main goals: delivering services equitably to meet the unique needs of every person in Washington.

For more information, click and read through the links below associated with each event:

- **June 12th: 10-12pm - Removing Barriers to Self-Sufficiency for a Washington for All** - [Click here to register for the June 12th Webinar!](#)
- **July 17th: 9-12pm - The Six Pillars of Excellence Towards a Washington for All** - [Click here to register for the July 17th Webinar!](#)
- **August 7th: 9-12pm: - Facilitating Hard Conversations for a Washington for All** - [Click here to register for the August 7th Webinar!](#)
- **September 4th: 9-12pm - Equity is More Than Potlucks towards a Washington for All** - [Click here to register for the September 4th Webinar!](#)

We hope to see you there!



Community of Practice Updates

Community of Practice (CoP) is an ongoing virtual event and community series hosted by the Office of Equity. If you enjoy collaborating with like-minded individuals who are passionate about addressing systemic issues, advocating for policy changes, and implementing impactful initiatives to create a more inclusive and belonging environment, then the CoP series is for you!

This series is every Third Wednesday of the month, from 11:00am – 12:30pm PT. We will not be meeting on June 19th as that day is Juneteenth, and will see you again for Community of Practice on July 17th, 2024.

We are currently troubleshooting our hosting platform for this event series and will provide links for registration through our Community of Practice newsletter when we have ironed out all the issues. Updates should be coming soon!

[For more information and to register to this event, subscribe to our Community of Practice newsletter at the link here.](#)



Office Updates



Office Updates

It's already almost the third quarter of 2024; wow! Time really does fly by!

During these last few months, the Office of Equity welcomed five new individuals to our team. First, **Vito Valero (they/them)** joined the Communications Team as the new Communications Specialist. They bring a wealth of experience, ideas, and perspectives that we are excited to tap into. The office then hired two Advisory Board Program Managers: **Kara Chung (she/her)** and **Logan Drummond (he/him)**. **Kara** and **Logan**'s interaction with agencies and the community will be a

tremendous asset to the office. Last but not least, the Equity and Belonging Team has two new employees: **Onya Robertson (she/her)** and **Will Waverly (he/him)** as Pro-Equity Consultants. The Office of Equity is thrilled to have more capable and qualified people to help us advance the work of making Washington a true equitable and belonging state for all!

If you've been at events throughout the state, you may have run into one or two of our amazing team members! We've been so busy that we can't just highlight ONE person or event, so here's a collage of some smiling faces and highlights of the year so far:



Equity & Belonging Bench

The Shared Power team has been diligently preparing for their closing keynote session at the upcoming annual [DEI Empowerment Conference on June 12th, 2024 at 3pm](#). Their presentation, titled "Normalizing Shared Power as a Tool to

Disrupt Policies, Practices, and Processes (The 3 Ps)", will delve into the transformative potential of shared power in dismantling traditional frameworks and fostering inclusivity. It's a testament to their impactful work and dedication to driving meaningful change.

Be sure to sign up to attend the conference!

*Register for WA State
DEI Empowerment Conference 2024!*



Operations Bench

On Friday, May 3, the Office of Equity hosted contracting and procurement professionals from across the state enterprise to discuss ways to improve the state's supplier diversity in contracting. Supporting diverse suppliers, including small, diverse, and veteran-owned businesses, helps stimulate our local economy, creates jobs, and contributes to the economic stability of the communities we serve.

The goal of the meeting was to support equity in state contracting, as ordered by [Executive Order 22-02](#), through effective policy and process change to substantially increase diverse spending with Minority, Women, Veteran-Owned and Small Businesses within the State of Washington. The discussion was an opportunity to share information, best practices, and resources to help the state meet supplier diversity goals in procurement and contracting. Topics included direct buys, OMWBE certification for small, diverse businesses, and the statewide contracting process. EQUITY will continue to focus on improving the state's supplier diversity spending strategy and working with key state agencies on improving the contracting process for small businesses. Our statewide supplier diversity strategy is an essential component of our commitment to inclusivity and belonging.

For more information on contracting with state agencies, [click here](#).



Communications Bench

Thank you to everyone who has reached out to congratulate us about our rebrand! Now that we've mostly moved through that process, we're looking at the rest of the year!

The Communications bench has been hard at work prepping new and established video series, building internal team processes, and launching large statewide events! Our team is also working on various parts of the Digital Equity Forum work that the Office of Equity has taken over from Department of Commerce, making contracts with community and working on digital marketing to increase awareness for all Washingtonians. We're especially excited to continue growing in centering accessibility and have been troubleshooting a lot of different pieces of our website and event hosting platforms.

The Communications team is a small team of about 5 people and this past month we've welcomed a new team member, **Vito Valera (they/them)**, which means our team is now a whopping 6 people! Here's a little about Vito:



Hola! My name is **Vito Valera** and I lived my whole life as a **they/them** before the world knew to name us. I was born and raised in the southwest of France in an immigrant Spanish family and came to the United States in my late 20s on a solo adventure that never really ended. I am a trilingual interdisciplinary, a multimedia artist, designer and activist who reveres everything our magical Earth has to offer. I have worked for over 2 decades in multimedia production in alternative, mainstream and educational spaces. I have produced, recorded and performed music and multimedia shows around the world. I am delighted to be producing content, for the Office of Equity and weave accountability, humanness and mutual care practices in the fabric of our State's endeavors using design, art, creativity and inclusive communication techniques.



Community Advisory Board



Community Advisory Board

Everyone has been waiting in suspense for our new Community Advisory Board Managers, after the role has been sadly vacant for a few months. We are so

beyond excited to announce **Kara Chung (she/her)** and **Logan Drummond (he/him)** as our new Community Board Managers. We wanted to share their bios in this newsletter as a welcome to the team and to showcase these amazing humans who get to lead some steward work:



“Logan Drummond (he/him) is coming to us from the City of Seattle, where he has worked in multiple departments, working on Redistricting for the Department of Neighborhoods, the Boards and Commissions Program in the City Clerk's office, and most recently as an Office Manager at the Office of City Auditor. Logan is originally from rural Michigan and studied at the University of Michigan where he studied Psychology and Community Action and Social Change and the University of Michigan School of Social Work where he studied Social Policy Evaluation and Community Social Systems. Logan is passionate about advocating for equity and his fur baby Tippy (pictured below), and likes to listen to Audiobooks and go to the gym in his spare time. The Office of Equity is a dream organization of his and he is very much excited about the opportunity to support their work. “



"My name is **Kara Chung**, I use **she/her** pronouns, and I am an advisory board program manager. I come to this work because I love my community and I believe in the possibility of re-imagining a system that honors our cultures, strengths, and values.

I have my doctorate in education and organizational leadership and completed my dissertation on how peer mentorship can aid in re-entry for justice-impacted women. My experience working in community-led, prison abolition spaces ignited a passion in me for racial and social equity. I have seen and experienced the harm that current systems have caused to individuals and communities at large and I believe it is my life calling to be part of the movement for change.

In my free time, I love to hike, camp, and travel. I am also proud to be a mother to a daughter and have found healing in the bond that I share with her."

We're so excited to have all our new team members on board!

Thank You!



Thank You!

Thank you for taking the time to delve into this update from Washington State’s Office of Equity.

If you would like to stay plugged in with us, [subscribe to one of our Office Newsletters](#): like Daily Flow, which brings you a powerful start to your workday. Find the links below to follow us on social media and walk alongside us as we work together to make Washington a Belonging State.

Connect now so you don't miss anything. 😊



WASHINGTON for ALL

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