



“Not seeing race does little to deconstruct racist structures or materially improve the conditions which people of colour are subject to daily. In order to dismantle unjust, racist structures, we must see race. We must see who benefits from their race, who is disproportionately impacted by negative stereotypes about their race, and to who power and privilege is bestowed upon – earned or not – because of their race, their class, and their gender. Seeing race is essential to changing the system.” - Reni Eddo-Lodge

We cannot cease in confronting our country's history and relationship to identity. It is time for us to take a closer look at the inequities that are deeply rooted in our systems and institutions and work together to create an America where every individual has the opportunity to succeed, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, religion, and identity. Over the next 21 days, we will explore difficult topics, like structural racism, segregation, and privilege, to open up dialogue on how we can be champions of equity in our personal and professional lives.

Before you get started, if you haven't done so already, please fill out this [pre-event survey](#) to set your intentions and share your goals for the challenge with us. We also encourage you to download your [Challenge Activity Log](#) – a tool to ensure you are taking full advantage of what the challenge has to offer.

We want to thank the United Way of the Greater Capital Region for helping develop this version of the challenge. The challenge is adapted from an exercise from [Dr. Eddie Moore and Debby Irving's book](#) into the interactive 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge, which they launched in 2014.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

How do you think about your racial identity and its relevance to your work/volunteerism/studies? Identity matters. Who we think we are and who others think we are can have an influence on all aspects of our lives. Think about the first time you became aware of your racial identity. What comes up for you?

Option 1: Listen to this podcast featuring Eddie Moore, Jr. discussing [how to create space for people to have “tough conversations.”](#)

Option 2: Reference this document to view how people of color [develop their racial identity.](#)

Option 3: Watch one or more of the [short videos and reflections from the New York Times](#) on racial identity in America.

ACTION STEP:

What is one small thing you can do to apply or practice your new awareness? Do it before the end of the week?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- When did you first become aware of your racial identity?
- What messages did you learn about race from your school and family? Did they align with what you've seen in your life?
- When has how others perceived your racial identity affected how they treat you?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- Share the link to a resource from today's topic on social media using the hashtag #CRAntiracist to inspire others to reflect on their racial identity as well.
- Connect with others that are taking part in the challenge for regular discussion at our Facebook Group. [Join here.](#)
- Do you have a resource that we should know about? [Let us know.](#)
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“Worse than being less than you, is if you are perceived as a threat” - [john a. powell](#)

[We all have bias](#). But often, we are not aware of the biases that we subconsciously hold. Research shows that years of structural and cultural constructs have deeply embedded stereotypes into our culture, and consequently into our own subconscious. For example, [according to a recent study](#), companies are more than twice as likely to call minority applicants for interviews if they submit whitened resumes than candidates who reveal their race.

But, [research also shows](#) that we can actively rewire these neural associations by being more intentional about acknowledging our biases. Today’s focus is on personal reflection - taking the time to uncover some of our own biases and reflecting on how we take control of these unconscious constructs.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

OPTION 1: Go deeper and take [Project Implicit's Hidden Bias tests](#), created by psychologists at top universities, to uncover some of your own unconscious biases. Remember, having biases doesn't make you a bad person—it only makes you human. After, read about the [21 Racial Microaggressions You Hear on a Daily Basis](#) to better understand how these biases actively cause harm to others, making them “racist abuse” in the words of Ibram X. Kendi.

TIP: Proceed as a guest to access their library of tests and find out your implicit associations about race, gender, sexual orientation, skin tone, and other topics.

OPTION 2: Read one or more of the compelling personal stories featured in the Speak Up Handbook by the Southern Poverty Law Center. We would like to point you to page 19 titled ["What Can I do About My Own Bias?"](#) but feel free to use the table of contents on page 2 to explore other topics that interest you. You can also check out the [nine tactics to ensure your actions line up with your intentions](#).

OPTION 3: Watch [What Would You Do?: Bicycle Thief Episode](#), from ABC’s popular show What Would You Do, as it explores the impact of racial and gender bias and prejudice at a family friendly park. Before this video, would you have anticipated this differential treatment?

ACTION STEP:

Who can you call to have a deeper conversation about your first experience with Race? Try to call someone who was present during the first encounter. If not, just someone who can help.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

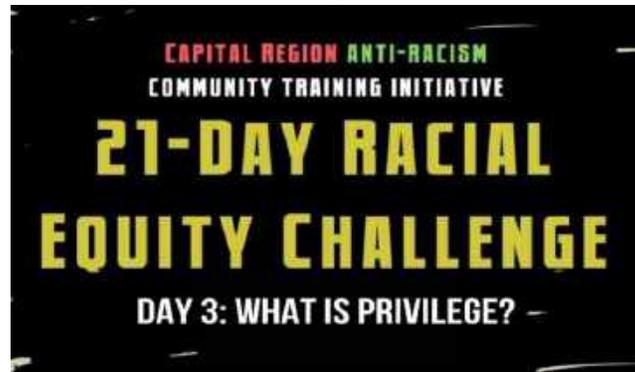
- Reflect on your life experiences, your childhood and family upbringing; toys you played with; the neighborhoods in which you've lived; elements of your career path; media messages; your family and peer networks; etc. How might these experiences have shaped your biases, with or without your conscious awareness?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Encourage your friends and family to take one of the Implicit Bias tests and share the video** from today's challenge by sharing on your social media. Don't forget to use the hashtag #CRAntiracist.
- Connect with others that are taking part in the challenge for regular discussion at our Facebook Group. [Join here.](#)
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*“For those of us called white, whiteness simply is. Whiteness becomes, for us, the unspoken, uninterrogated norm, taken for granted, much as water can be taken for granted by a fish.” — [Tim Wise](#), *White Like Me**

[Privilege](#) is the unearned social, political, economic, and psychological benefits of membership in a group that has institutional and structural power ([YWCA of Cleveland](#)) There are many types of privilege that different groups have in the US. We commonly hear about privilege because of race or gender, but privilege also exists for different groups based on religion, sexuality, ability, class, education level. Read more about [5 common types of privilege](#).

Having privilege can give you advantages in life, but having privilege is not a guarantee of success, and it does not [“imply that any form of privilege is exactly the same as another, or that people lacking in one area of privilege understand what it’s like to be lacking in other areas”](#).

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

OPTION 1: Take this eye-opening [privilege self-assessment](#) by BuzzFeed to discover where you are on the spectrum.

OPTION 2: Watch this short, powerful BuzzFeed [video featuring a privilege walk](#). See how privilege shows up differently for this group of co-workers. *Note: this video may be triggering for some people of color.*

OPTION 3: Watch this [video from Robin DiAngelo, author of White Fragility](#) about how racism isn't only individual acts of discrimination, it is a deeply embedded system that impacts all of our lives.

ACTION STEP:

Do something where you use your privilege to help someone who does not have your privilege?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- How do you experience privilege and marginalization?
- What did you notice about your personal reactions while reading and viewing the above material? What do these reactions tell you about your experiences?
- Looking at the community you grew up in or are currently in, what do you notice about how privilege and marginalization have shaped the community and your opportunities?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share the link** to the **privilege self-assessment** or **privilege walk video** with your friends and family. Engage in honest conversations with them about your results. Feel free to share your reflections or the link to the assessment on social media using the hashtag #CRAntiRacist.
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Have you heard of the term “White Fragility?” For white people, “White Fragility” refers to their discomfort and avoidance of racially charged stress, which perpetuates racial inequity. Many people of color, multiracial, and Indigenous people are familiar with this concept, but may not be familiar with the term.

[Dr. Robin DiAngelo](#) describes white fragility as a state of being for white people in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves can include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors shut down conversations, and inhibit actions which, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

OPTION 1: [Take a quick quiz](#) from the publisher of “White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism,” Robin DiAngelo, PhD, to see if you exhibit “White Fragility” traits. Want to dive in further? Read a [short article by Dr. DiAngelo](#) that unpacks how we continue to reproduce racist outcomes and live segregated lives.

OPTION 2: Review this list of [28 common racist attitudes](#) and behaviors that indicate a detour or wrong turn into white guilt, denial or defensiveness.

OPTION 3: Listen to Scene On Radio’s podcast series [Seeing White](#) which aims to discuss racism by looking into the history of how the concept of ‘whiteness’ came to be.

OPTION 4: Watch [Confronting ‘intergroup anxiety’: Can you try too hard to be fair?](#) as it explores why we may get tongue tied and blunder when we encounter people from groups unfamiliar to us.

ACTION STEP:

Talk to your White family member or colleague about White Fragility. Do it before the end of the week?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

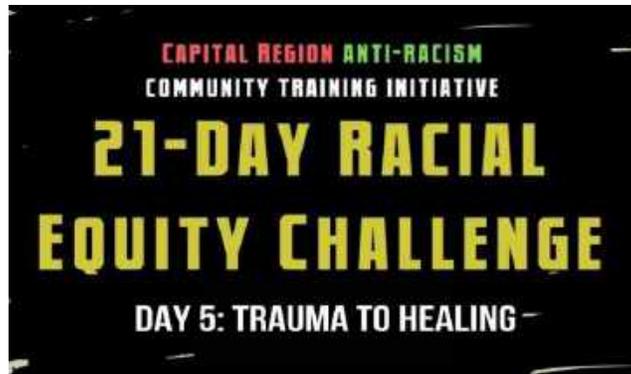
- What are your previous experiences discussing race and racism?
- What thoughts and feelings came up for you during today's challenge?
- How do you view your role in talking about race and racism with your family? With your friends? With your co-workers? With your community?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share the podcast Seeing White** on social media using the hashtag #CRAntiracist to inspire friends, family, and colleagues to explore and reflect on the concept of "whiteness."
- Connect with others that are taking part in the challenge for regular discussion at our Facebook Group. [Join here.](#)
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“Here is what I would like for you to know: In America, it is traditional to destroy the black body—it is heritage. Enslavement was not merely the antiseptic borrowing of labor—it is not so easy to get a human being to commit their body against its own elemental interest. And so enslavement must be casual wrath and random manglings, the gashing of heads and brains blown out over the river as the body seeks to escape. It must be rape so regular as to be industrial. There is no uplifting way to say this. I have no praise anthems, nor old Negro spirituals. The spirit and soul are the body and brain, which are destructible—that is precisely why they are so precious. And the soul did not escape. The spirit did not steal away on gospel wings. The soul was the body that fed the tobacco, and the spirit was the blood that watered the cotton, and these created the first fruits of the American garden. And the fruits were secured through the bashing of children with stovewood, through hot iron peeling skin away like husk from corn.” - Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*

We hear a lot about trauma related to combat veterans, those who’ve been in significant accidents, and those who’ve been the victim of violence. Racism is also trauma and many Americans are subject to racism in both overt and covert ways every day, including the youngest among us.

In [#racialtraumaisreal](#), Jernigan and colleagues state, “Similar to survivors of other types of trauma (e.g., sexual assault survivors), people of Color often experience fear and hypervigilance, headaches, insomnia, body aches, memory difficulty, self-blame, confusion, shame, and guilt after experiencing racism. When the experiences of racism are more frequent, the consequences tend to be more acute and deleterious. And, these racism experiences never exist in isolation; racial trauma is a cumulative experience, where every personal or vicarious encounter with racism contributes to a more insidious, chronic stress.” While the ultimate goal is to prevent this form of trauma altogether, we know that this is not our current reality. Therefore, the authors also offer a Racism Recovery Plan with steps toward recovering from and healing trauma.

Looking for a **safe space to talk and heal**? Check out [Root3d](#) in Albany, a wellness center that focuses on liberation, healing, and power of BIPOC.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

OPTION 1: Watch [Growing Roses in Concrete](#) by Jeff Duncan-Andrade in his TEDx Talk (13 minutes). Here, he describes the impact of ongoing, recurring complex PTSD in urban youth,

who are twice as likely to get PTSD than a soldier returning from Iraq. He also offers a model for schools as the center of community health to create and support ongoing safety, security, and growth.

OPTION 2: Read [Racism is Trauma](#) by Judith Sandalow, Executive Director of The Children's Law Center in DC, where she addresses racism as trauma and offers ways to talk with youth to raise antiracist children.

ACTION STEP:

Call your local school and ask them about their policies around trauma and how they are working to eliminate race-based trauma at school. Ask them how you can be supportive to people who have experienced trauma based on racism. Do it before the end of the week?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- Have you experienced trauma because of your race or the color of your skin?
- What feelings come up for you as you read about the destructive nature of racism on the human psyche?
- What steps can you take to foster a more supportive environment at work, at school, in the community?

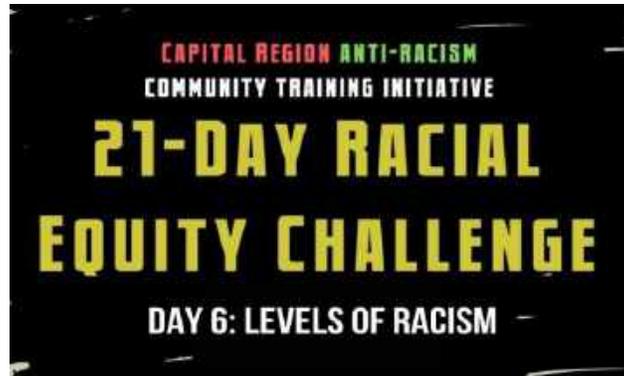
JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share the resources in Racism is Trauma** on social media to inspire friends, family, and colleagues to participate in raising antiracist children. Use the hashtag [#CRAntiracist](#)
- Connect with others that are taking part in the challenge for regular discussion at our Facebook Group. [Join here.](#)
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“Americans believe in the reality of ‘race’ as a defined, indubitable feature of the natural world. Racism—the need to ascribe bone-deep features to people and then humiliate, reduce, and destroy them—inevitably follows from this inalterable condition. In this way, racism is rendered as the innocent daughter of Mother Nature, and one is left to deplore the Middle Passage or Trail of Tears the way one deplores an earthquake, a tornado, or any other phenomenon that can be cast as beyond the handiwork of men. But race is the child of racism, not the father.” - [Ta-Nehisi Coates](#)

As our first week comes to an end, we hope you have taken the opportunity to look inside yourself and expand your mind through the different challenges offered. As we move into week two, prepare to shift your focus from the personal reflection that we have been exploring to a broader view of racial equity and social justice.

Are you seeing and addressing how racism operates at different levels? [Dr. Camara Jones](#), Senior Fellow at the Morehouse School of Medicine, says that in order to address racism effectively, we have to understand how it operates at multiple levels. Often what people think of first and foremost is interpersonal racism. Only seeing this level means that we fail to see the full picture that keeps the system of racism in place. The graphic below illustrates all [the domains in which racism operates](#).



TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

OPTION 1: Watch Dr. Jones' TED talk on the "[Allegories on Race and Racism](#)" where she shares four short stories to help us understand privilege and racism.

OPTION 2: Read a [blog post by Cynthia Silva Parker](#), which gives an overview of four levels of racism and the need for a systemic approach to seeing and addressing oppression.

OPTION 3: Check out this [short video from Race Forward](#) about the levels and the importance of looking at systemic, not simply individual, racism.

OPTION 4: Review the [Talking About Race Toolkit](#) from the Center for Social Inclusion because how we talk about race matters and impacts our ability to work against systemic inequities.

ACTION STEP:

Identify one of the levels of racism you have engaged in personally. Create a 10-day plan for how you will address it within 10 days. Start small. Do it before the end of the week?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- Identify a feeling you had while interacting with one of the resources today. What does the feeling tell you about your own internalized racist belief/s? Can you track the impact of that belief on the following levels: Interpersonal, Institutional, and Systemic?
- How have you noticed different levels of racism at the institutions to which you belong?
- Where are three places that you see systemic racism in the communities around you? Consider talking about these with a friend, family member, or colleagues.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Send to at least three friends a link or a graphic regarding the levels of racism.** Use the hashtag #CRAntiracist when sharing on social media!
- Connect with others that are taking part in the challenge for regular discussion at our Facebook Group. [Join here.](#)
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Of New York State’s 7.3 million households, over 1 million (14%) households earned below the Federal Poverty Line and 2.2 million (31%) were ALICE. These households are struggling to afford basic necessities like housing, child care, food, transportation, and technology, according to the [2020 ALICE Report](#) by the United Way of New York State. These households, also known as ALICE – Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but not enough to cover the basic cost of living, called the ALICE threshold, in their counties. This means that a parent within an ALICE household may have to make trade-offs between necessities like rent or stocking the refrigerator or going without healthcare as a parent to ensure that a child has access to preschool.

In the Capital Region of New York, these numbers are just as concerning ([2020 ALICE Report](#)).

COUNTY	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	% ALICE & POVERTY
Albany	126,578	40%
Columbia	25,243	36%
Greene	17,117	51%
Rensselaer	64,614	34%
Saratoga	94,156	33%
Schenectady	55,262	45%
Schoharie	12,559	45%

We know that where you live and where children are raised can have a strong influence on opportunity. We also know that when these factors are combined with race, people of color are disproportionately impacted. Over the next few days, we will be exploring how ALICE, race, and other factors impact a person’s housing, health, education, financial stability, and more.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Read the [ALICE Report](#) for New York State. Want more information on ALICE and the Capital Region? Check our site [here](#). To learn more about how you can get involved in advocating and creating change for ALICE in New York, click [here](#).

Option 2: Read this [NY Times article](#) debunking widely held beliefs about income inequality and exploring the disproportionate impact race has on black boys.

Option 3: Read about [Raj Chetty](#), a Harvard economist committed to showing how zip code shapes opportunity. Dive into his research through the [Equality of Opportunity Project](#).

ACTION STEP:

Go and share this at your board of education or town board meeting by the end of the month? Advocate for policies to support changes that will minimize inequities.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- What feelings came up for you as you explored the ALICE data? What do those feelings tell you about yourself and your beliefs?
- Are you surprised to see so many in your community with less than they need?
- Did your beliefs about race and poverty change? Why or why not?
- How did the data and stories in today's challenge compares with the commonly told story that the United States is a land of opportunity?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- Surprised by the data and information found on ALICE? **Spread awareness of ALICE to inform others by sharing on your** social media. Use the hashtag #CRAntiracist.
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Institutional Racism is defined as “the systematic distribution of resources, power and opportunity in our society to the benefit of people who are white and the exclusion of people of color.” -- [Solid Ground](#)

When you hear the word segregation, what do you think of? Many of us think back to the Civil Rights Movement. Yet, American cities continue to be highly segregated, and a [report found that New York public schools are some of the most segregated schools](#), including those located in Albany. [Racial divides in access to health, nutritional, and educational opportunities](#) is often a reality for kids living in urban areas across the nation, including the Capital Region.

Present-day racism was built on a long history of racially distributed resources and ideas that shape our view of ourselves and others. It is a hierarchical system that comes with a broad range of policies and institutions that keep it in place. Policies shaped by institutional racism that enforce segregation include redlining, predatory lending, the exclusion of black veterans from the G.I. bill, the subsidization of the federal highway system and suburbs, and the forced segregation of neighborhoods by the Federal Housing Authority. As a result of institutional racism, racial stratification and inequities persist in employment, housing, education, healthcare, government and other sectors ([Solid Ground](#)). Cities didn't become segregated by accident; it wasn't simply a matter of certain families choosing to live in certain neighborhoods. To learn more about how federal, state and local governments segregated every major metropolitan area in America through law and policy, watch this short video "[Segregated By Design](#)".

Did you know that UAlbany was ranked 27th in the nation for advancing social mobility for its students? Read more about their commitment to creating pathways to success for all students by clicking [here](#)!

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Explore the [Racial Dot Map](#) created by the University of Virginia, which uses colored dots to visualize how racial segregation appears in our communities. We encourage you to zoom into New York and the Capital Region to see how it plays out in our backyard. Read more about the methodology [here](#).

Option 2: Why are cities still so segregated? Watch this [quick video where NPR's Code Switch](#) looks at the factors contributing to modern day segregation.

Option 3: Nearly sixty years after Martin Luther King's death, our nation is still divided. [Read more from The Economist about how segregation](#) exists today in cities across America and the costly impact it has on the future of our communities.

ACTION STEP:

Go and share this at your board of education, town board and place of worship meeting by the end of the month? Advocate for policies to support changes in segregation.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- Were you surprised at how segregated your community is?
- In what ways does segregation continue to play a role in your community?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share the Racial Dot Map** exercise on your social media and encourage others to examine the racial segregation in our communities. Use the hashtag #CRAntiracist.
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You may be wondering what housing has to do with racial equity. The reality is that housing affordability and who experiences homelessness is largely influenced by our country's history of racism, and the Capital Region is no exception. In fact, [27 U.S. mayors recently published a letter](#) saying that if our goal is to dismantle systemic racism, we must start with housing.

Home ownership is often considered a pillar of the American Dream, but [many low income communities have been excluded from that part of the Dream](#), mainly tied to reasons of financial constraint. A stark racial contrast exists in homeownership in the Albany, Schenectady, and Troy metropolitan area, where [Black home ownership rate is 27%, compared to 69% of White home ownership](#). Housing is a major expense, leaving many to struggle to afford stable housing. [One-third of Capital Region households are cost-burdened](#), with Greene County having the highest rates of cost-burdened households. In fact, each week you would have to work [95 hours at minimum wage just to afford a one-bedroom apartment](#) anywhere in the Capital Region.

Research has also indicated that there is a racial divide in almost every major metropolitan area across the country, highlighting that where a child grows up plays a key role in future opportunities. Most White children live in neighborhoods with more opportunity than their Black and Hispanic counterparts, who often live in neighborhoods with low opportunity. A podcast by [NPR highlights neighborhoods in Albany, N.Y., where the disparity is among the widest in the country](#).

Have you heard of **redlining**? For decades, the federal government discriminated against Black families by denying them access to the same kind of federal housing subsidies that white families received to purchase a home — a practice known as “redlining.” Insurance companies and mortgage lenders would refuse to approve sales in predominantly Black neighborhoods. Although it has been deemed illegal by the 1968 [Fair Housing Act](#) and the 1977 [Community Reinvestment Act](#), [redlining continues to persist](#), according to housing advocates and lawyers. On July 23, [the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development terminated the 2015 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule](#), effectively ensuring continued housing discrimination.

For more information, check out this article by [The Washington Post that further discusses the concept of redlining and gentrification](#) or watch this short video from [NPR](#).

Do you know someone that needs housing assistance? Check out some resources below:

- [United Tenants of Albany](#) - tenant advocacy and assistance
- [Habitat for Humanity Capital District](#) - affordable homeownership opportunities

- [Affordable Homeownership Program](#) - homebuyer education and counseling, foreclosure prevention
- [Troy Rehabilitation & Improvement Program](#) - homebuyer education and counseling, quality rental apartments, community development

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Find out if your neighborhood was “redlined” by looking up your address on [The Mapping Inequality](#) website. Want to learn more about housing discrimination in the Capital Region? Watch [this video](#) from the Albany Public Library to learn how to research your home’s history.

Option 2: Check out a [graphic on national data](#), that shows that even when controlling for poverty, African Americans are dramatically more likely than whites to become homeless.

Option 3: Watch this 5-minute [video from the Urban Institute exposing how housing discrimination](#) against racial and ethnic minorities occurs today.

ACTION STEP:

Call up your local real estate agents and town board to discuss what policies they have in place to prevent housing discrimination. Advocate for policies to support changes in housing inequities.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- How has decades of housing discrimination impacted your community?
- Consider your past and current neighborhoods, were the communities racially integrated or segregated? How did it end up that way? What role does the federal government have in addressing the legacy of systemic housing discrimination and segregation?
- How have property values and demographics in that community changed over time? How does this history of land ownership affect your economic situation?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

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You may have heard about the wealth gap, but have you heard about the wealth-health gap? According to the NY Times 1619 Project, “[racial health disparities are foundational as democracy itself](#).” Socioeconomic status and institutional racism lead to disparities across living conditions, limit access to quality health care, and contribute to chronic stress. The factors lead to shorter life spans and higher likelihood of adverse health outcomes for people living in poverty and people of color.

[Social Determinants of Health](#) are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age that shape health. They include economic stability, neighborhood and physical environment, education, food, community and social context, and the healthcare system. Understanding [how social determinants of health influence overall health outcomes](#) is critical to improving health care and reducing health disparities.

Race and income are two factors that can disproportionality impact individuals’ health, but studies illustrate that this is **not** a result of individual choices, but rather institutional racism:

- Published in the journal, Nature, a recent study found that [millions of black people have been affected by racial bias in health-care algorithms used by many U.S. hospitals](#), resulting in black people being less likely than white people who were equally sick being referred to programs.
- A study by the American Bar Association notes that “[the poverty in which black people disproportionately live cannot account for the fact that black people are sicker and have shorter life spans than their white complements](#) . . . racial and ethnic minorities receive lower-quality health care than white people—even when insurance status, income, age, and severity of conditions are comparable.”

Click [here](#) to explore the data and learn more about the Capital Region’s Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by the [Healthy Capital District Initiative](#).

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: [Watch David R Williams, a public health sociologist, on the TED stage](#) discuss why race and deep-rooted systemic racism have such a profound impact on health.

Option 2: Read this article from the CDC regarding [Disparities in Maternal Mortality Rates](#) and visit [BirthNet's site](#) to learn how this local non-profit is eliminating the inequities in birth outcomes for all childbearing people.

Option 3: Hear Dr. Camara Phyllis Jones explain social determinants of health through her [analogy of the “cliff of good health”](#) in a video collaboration with the Urban Institute.

Option 4: Check out this [Fact Sheet from the American Psychological Association](#) exploring the compounding impact of socioeconomic status and race on health.

Option 5: [Hear the story of Henrietta Lacks](#), an African American woman whose cells have been used to test the effects of radiation and poisons, to study the human genome, to learn more about how viruses work, and played a crucial role in the development of the polio vaccine.

ACTION STEP:

Discuss this information with your medical provider and ask them what they can do to lend support.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

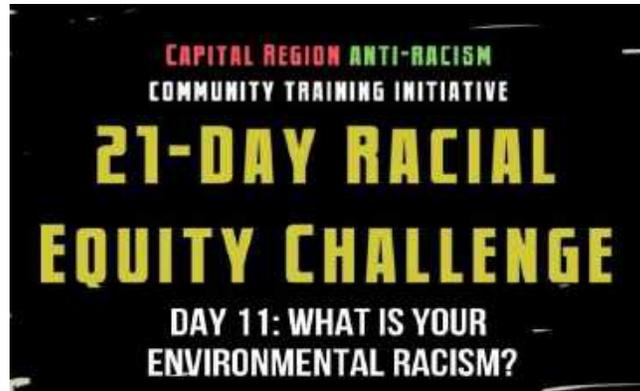
- Reflect on the access to healthcare in your community. Is it easy and affordable to visit the doctors? If not, what barriers prevent people in your community from receiving the healthcare that they need?
- Have you ever struggled to get the health care you needed? What would it be like for you to need healthcare, but not receive it?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

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Despite wanting the best for their families, people with limited means are often less geographically mobile and have fewer affordable choices when deciding where to live. This has led to residents with low incomes, and often also people of color, [living in areas with high rates of air and water pollution](#), such as in industrial areas, near highways, or in close proximity to toxic waste sites.

Even if the concept of environmental racism is new to you, remember that it is a form of [systemic discrimination that has been happening in the Capital District](#) for a long time.

Did you know that residents and organizations in the community are already working to address environmental racism, disparities, and sustainability? Check out the links to the [Radix Ecological Sustainability Center](#) and [Soul Fire Farm](#) to learn more!

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Read [The Atlantic's coverage](#) of the EPA National Center for Environmental Assessment's 2018 report that showed how people of color are more likely to experience exposure to pollutants.

Option 2: [Have you heard of environmental racism? Watch this 3-minute video](#) on how numerous systemic issues contribute to differences in exposure to potentially harmful environmental conditions.

Option 3: Check out the [Principles of Environmental Justice](#) developed at the National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit.

ACTION STEP:

Look up the industries in your local minoritized communities. Investigate how harmful or helpful they are to that community. Write a letter on how they can better support the community.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- What issues of environmental injustice exist in your community?
- What steps do you think you can take to begin addressing environmental injustice?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

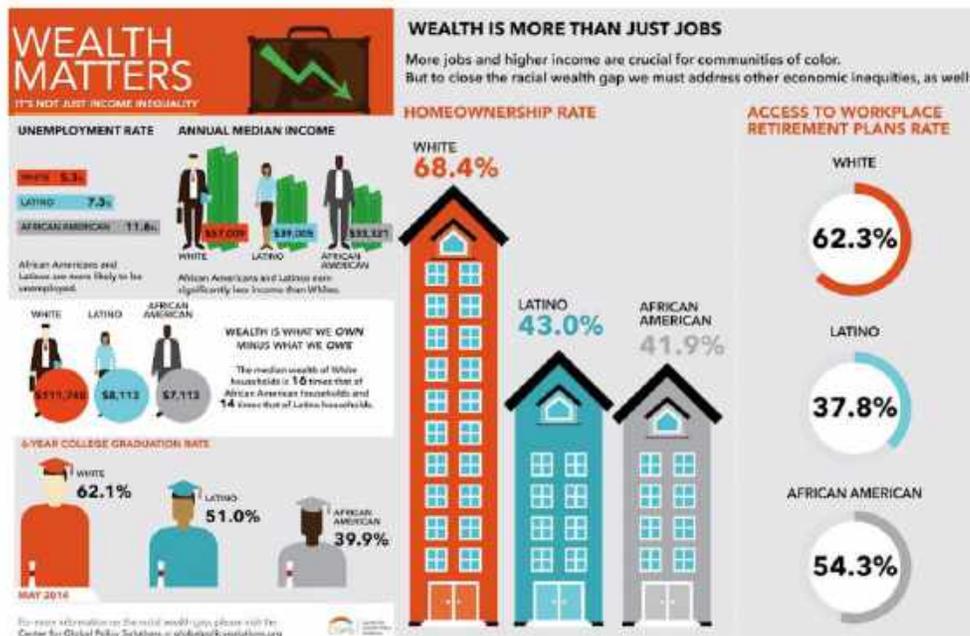
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Income inequality exists in nearly every city and every state, and the Capital Region is no exception. [Median income in Albany County](#) for Black households is \$31.7K, compared to \$36.8K for Hispanic and \$66.4K for White households. As the [income gap](#) continues to grow in America, working households are struggling to meet their daily needs and find it difficult to build wealth through savings, investments, or home ownership.



Did You Know? Beside the large gap in income inequality, the gap in wealth (savings and assets) is even greater. According to a 2018 report by the Economic Policy Institute, New York ranked number 1 of all 50 states in income inequality, with the top 1% earning 44 times more than the bottom 99% ([New York State ALICE Report 2020](#)). The primary way that white families have grown their wealth is through homeownership -- an opportunity that has been denied to Black and brown families.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Look at the [Debt in America](#) map and search for New York State to visualize differences in the weight of debt across geographies and between white and non-white residents.

Option 2: Hear from Ruth, an immigrant from Honduras, on how the ‘toxic stress’ of poverty and financial insecurity is impacting her and her children in this [10-minute PBS News Hour special](#).

Option 3: Listen to this [30-minute interview with Dr. Donna Beegle](#) on how she broke the cycle of generational poverty in her family and is now working to help others do the same through the consulting firm she founded.

Option 4: Journal on you and your family’s experiences of work and money. What career do you have? What did your parents have? Do you or they work in a historically segregated industry? If so, how was that segregation maintained? How does that affect your families earning power?

ACTION STEP:

Ask your human resources officer to put a policy in place to hire more people of color ASAP. Do this by the end of the month?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- What did today’s graphic on wealth bring up for you?
- How did your family perceive their success/lack of success?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share the Wealth Matters graphic** on your social media using the hashtag #CRAntiracist. Encourage your friends and family to learn more about the racial wealth gap by tagging them, too.
- Connect with others that are taking part in the challenge for regular discussion at our Facebook Group. [Join here](#).
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“We must acknowledge the broader diversity in and of the African American experience and celebrate that all Black children are born geniuses. Black students continue to pursue educational excellence despite the many unnecessary obstacles they face due to constructions and perceptions of race, class, gender, and sexual orientations in America.” — [David J. Johns](#)

From infancy through high school, children's educational outcomes are dependent on the quality of their learning experience. Quality [early childhood education \(ECE\)](#), in particular, has been shown to have a significant positive effect on future success, because brain circuits are developing actively then. In fact, 85% of the brain's development happens before a child enters kindergarten. We know how important ECE is, however, segregation in ECE can [affect students' success in school and beyond](#), and research has found that it is [often more segregated than any other school level](#).

Social and emotional health are also key to children's development, we know that poverty, trauma and other [adverse childhood experiences \(ACES\)](#) can have sustained, negative impacts on children's ability to succeed. [Dr. Roy Wade](#) notes that “We see higher levels of childhood adversity among minority populations, but we need to acknowledge the role that historical inequities and disenfranchisement play in creating the environment in which such traumatic experiences are more likely to occur.”

Did you know? In New York, [infant care for one child takes up roughly 22% of a median family's income](#). Childcare for two children costs nearly 40% of a median family's income. Childcare is out of reach for many low-wage workers. Reflect back on Day 12 and consider how the high cost of care acts as a barrier to a family living in poverty's access to high quality programs for their children.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Read this [U.S. News article](#) on how 'Education Inequality Starts Early' for children in households with low incomes.

Option 2: Watch this [2-minute CBS News report](#) on how systemic racism persists in early childhood education, where black preschool students are disproportionately facing harsh punishments, like suspension.

Option 3: Have children? Check out some of the [resources for talking about race and racism with your children](#).

ACTION STEP:

Discuss this with your local daycare and schools to make sure they are aware of this and advocate to put policies in place to address it.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

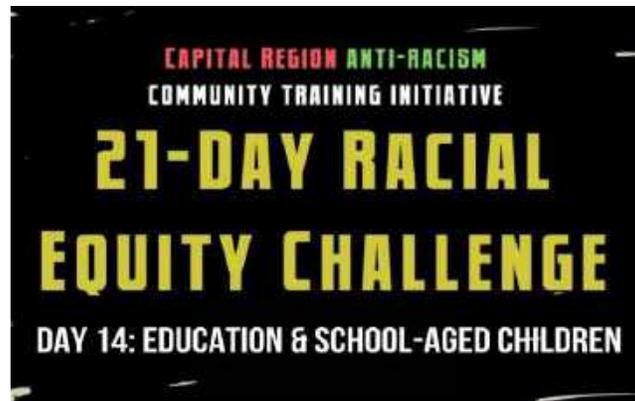
- What does the school district in your neighborhood do to mitigate the effect of early childhood education inequities?
- What do you think about Option 1's mention of racism in the response of more affluent, white families to attempts at building equity and the "zero sum game"?

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Earlier this week, we explored how segregation persists in American communities. Our economically and racially divided neighborhoods are leading to inequitable educational environments and adverse academic outcomes for our youth. [Studies show that children from families with low incomes](#) enter high school with literacy skills 5 years behind and are over 4 times more likely to drop out than those from high-income families. A quality education that leads to a job that pays well is one of the building blocks for a good life, yet many children in the Capital Region come from homes and neighborhoods where they face serious obstacles. [Research has indicated](#) that 46% of children are not ready to succeed in school by the age of 5, and children who aren't reading proficiently by 4th grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school.

Students of color, who are more likely to attend under resourced schools than their white counterparts, suffer because of teachers working in under resourced school environments and large classes sizes, which when controlling for socioeconomic status, almost entirely explain [disparities in academic achievement](#) according to Brookings. Often, [funding of schools is the root cause for differences in opportunity and access](#) for children of color, with a direct relationship between inadequate funding and lack of opportunities. Furthermore, Black children are also criminalized and targeted by discriminatory practices in schools that suspend and expel them, which further contributes to the ["school-to-prison pipeline."](#)

Did you know? Inequities in education start early with lifelong impacts on children and communities. This gap in opportunity is not due to individual actions, but rather on present social and economic conditions. Unfortunately, [nearly half \(44%\) of study respondents](#) believe that educational opportunity gaps **are not** related to discrimination and injustices.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Watch [Boston teacher Kandice Sumner on the TED stage](#) discuss the disparities she sees in her classroom every day because of segregation in our school systems.

Option 2: Listen to the [This American Life two-part podcast special](#) about the role of integration in addressing unequal access to educational opportunities, and read [Choosing a School for My Daughter in a Segregated City](#) from the New York Times.

Option 3: Watch this 3-minute video of what it can feel like to be [The Only Black Kid in Class](#).

Option 4: Check out [ProPublica's Miseducation interactive tool](#) to locate data on racial inequity at local school districts in the Capital Region.

ACTION STEP:

Discuss this with your board of education to make sure they are aware of this and advocate for them to put policies in place to address it.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- When was the first time you had a teacher who was not the same race as you? Have you ever?
- What did you learn about slavery and racism in your American history books?
- What school traditions do you remember participating in that you now understand were racist?
- What messages were taught about race? How did those messages compare to what you saw around you?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

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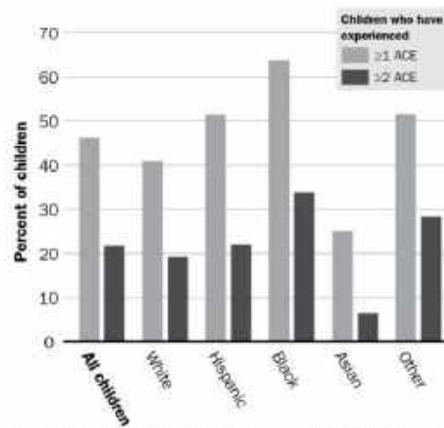
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In order for children to meet developmental milestones, learn, grow and lead productive lives, it is critical that they be healthy. Good social-emotional and mental health is a key component of children’s healthy development. [Poverty, trauma, and inadequate treatment are three factors](#) that have been shown to have a sustained, negative impact on children’s social, emotional and mental health. Unfortunately, racism is now recognized as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) - a toxic source of stress with the potential to disrupt a child’s ability to learn, relate, grow, play, communicate, and problem-solve. [ACEs disproportionately impact children of color](#). This is a downstream impact of the toxic environments created by institutions and systems that shape our lived experience here in the Capital Region.

Adverse Childhood Experiences show race/ethnicity disparity

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) happen most frequently among black children, according to The Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative.



Source: THE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH MEASUREMENT INITIATIVE ZECHANG FU/Missourian

Source: *Missourian*; Original Data from *The Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative*

Healthy school, community and home environments are critical to preventing children from experiencing ACEs and appropriately supporting students living with chronic stress, so that it does not get in the way of them achieving their aspirations.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Go deeper and [assess your ACEs score](#) to see how childhood trauma may be impacting your life. Then, assess your resilience score and explore resources on how to support yourself and others by [building resilience](#).

Option 2: View this [info-graphic that explains how ACEs affect our lives](#) and society and summarizes findings from a landmark Kaiser study that looks at the link between ACEs and long-term well-being.

Option 3: Need a place to start caring for a child who has experienced trauma? [Here are a few simple Everyday Gestures to help a child heal](#).

Option 4: [On the TED stage, Pediatrician Nadine Burke Harris](#) explains that the repeated stress of abuse, neglect and parents struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues has real, tangible effects on the development of the brain.

ACTION STEP:

Have a discussion with at least one institution that supports children that you believe increases the ACE score for them.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- After taking the ACEs test and seeing your score, were you surprised by the results?
- After reading the questions in the ACEs test, what did you feel as you recognized children go through all of these events in some quantity?
- Reflecting back on day 5 about trauma, what are your thoughts about how racism contributes to ACEs?

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Imagine not feeling accepted at home, in your community or at school because of your gender identity or sexual orientation. Like race and socioeconomic status, inequities for people identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ+) can be seen across many dimensions, including healthcare, education, and in the workplace. Research from the [American Progress Institute](#) shows that LGBTQ+ individuals experience widespread discrimination, often manifesting itself as getting passed over for promotions, being bullied in schools, being refused healthcare, or being denied equal treatment at a store or hotel.

The [intersectionality](#) of race and sexual orientation and gender identity also has compounding effects on individuals' well-being: [black transgender and gender non-conforming individuals experience some of the highest levels of discrimination](#) and threats on their personal safety.

Check out some agencies located in the Capital Region that provide support and services to the LGBTQ community!

- [In Our Own Voices](#)
- [Pride Center of the Capital Region](#)
- [Rainbow Access Initiative](#)
- [GLSEN Upstate NY](#)

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Watch this quick [video to learn why normalizing and actively using a person's pronouns is so important](#). Add your pronouns to your [email signature](#), to show your advocacy for LGBTQ+ individuals.

Option 2: Watch Ashlee Marie Preston on the [TEDx stage discuss effective allyship](#) and intersectionality from her perspective as a black transgender woman. She discusses when and how to speak up, and what it truly means to be an ally.

Option 3: Read this article exploring [how schools are struggling to support LGBTQ+ students](#) and how we can work to create safe spaces for youth to thrive. How are schools in NYS working to ensure LGBTQ+ K-12 youth are supported, empowered, and protected in their schools? Check out [GLSEN School Climate Survey New York Snapshot](#).

ACTION STEP:

Invite a LGBTQ individual or organization to speak to your family or organization about their experiences and how you can be a support to them.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- After learning about intersectionality, how does your understanding of the complex nature of marginalization change? What does this mean for growth in equity and inclusion?
- What is your personal experience with intersectionality and how it shapes your own experience?
- Explore your own experience of feeling safe or unsafe based on your sexual orientation and gender identity.
- If you are getting married, can you easily find someone to officiate your wedding? Can you hold hands or kiss in public? Can you find clothes that match your gender identity and body type? Can you openly display photos or talk about your spouse at work?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share a link to a LGBTQ+ community resource** from today's challenge on social media using the hashtag #CRAntiracist.
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“And I saw that what divided me from the world was not anything intrinsic to us, but the actual injury done by people intent on naming us, intent on believing that what they have named us matters more than anything we could ever actually do.” - [Ta-Nahesi Coates](#).

Every day in the workplace, individuals face challenges being their authentic selves. As leaders and colleagues, we each have a role to play in creating inclusive workspaces. Diverse perspectives enrich our workplaces, and [studies are showing](#) that involving diverse voices improves performance, problem solving and decision making. Yet, [people of color and women are underrepresented](#) in C-Suite, upper management, and Board roles compared to their representation in the overall working population. The culture of an organization provides insight into the racial dynamics and racial equity/parity within the organization. Today we will focus on how you can create a race equity culture at work.

Check out [Race, Work and Leadership: New Perspectives from the Black Experience](#), a collection of essays on how race impacts people’s work and leadership experiences.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

OPTION 1: Read the Building a Race Equity Culture in the Social Sector [2-pager](#).

OPTION 2: Listen to this podcast featuring Harvard Business Review co-hosts Alison Beard and Dan McGinn responding to some [common challenges faced by businesses in promoting diversity and inclusion](#) in their workplace (transcript included).

Option 3: Explore more about embracing multiple identities by reading about [the impact of racism on immigration](#) and listening to [the podcast about Racial Imposter Syndrome](#).

Option 4: Watch this [3-minute video](#) shedding light on common struggles people face bringing their authentic selves to the workplace.

ACTION STEP:

Change one belief, policy and practice in your family or organization that builds an equity culture.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- What is your workplace doing to build a race equity culture?
- Consider the phrases, “diversity training” and “equity and inclusion training”. What is different about these two phrases? How is equity and inclusion a better measure of a race equity culture?
- What did you feel when watching the video in option 4?

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“The Circle of Human Concern should include everyone, including those with whom we disagree,” he said. “We are all a part of each other. We don’t like it, but we’re connected.” - [john a. powell](#)

In a time when it feels like the world is becoming increasingly polarizing, john a. powell asks, “How can we build bridges?” In his keynote at the [Othering & Belonging Conference](#), he says “We must hear other people’s suffering and stories. Compassion means to suffer with others.”

What does it mean to be an ally? An ally seeks to understand what it feels like for another person or group to be oppressed, and despite knowing you will never fully understand how it feels, is committed to valuing and supporting people who are marginalized.

Remember, being an ally is not an identity, it is a continual process – something that you have to work at, be intentional about, and commit to day in and day out. Explore what active support looks like as an ally in Race Equity Tools’ [Guidelines for Being a Strong White Ally](#).

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Read the [Do’s and Don’ts](#) of Allyship that are important to know as you practice and evolve your role in supporting equity and inclusion.

Option 2: Listen to NPR’s Code Switch explore the complexities of allyship on this [30-minute podcast](#).

Option 3: Read about how to be a better [ally in the workplace](#). Looking for a place to start? Take time to really listen to the experiences of those around you.

Option 4: Listen to this podcast discussing the [Allyship Continuum](#) and how you can go from unaware to accomplice.

ACTION STEP:

Support the work of an organization led by people of color by the end of the week; either with money, services or promoting their work.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- How can you be a better ally? Write out at least three concrete ways that you can put into practice in your daily life.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share on social media how you are an ally!** Use the hashtag #CRAntiracist.
- Connect with others that are taking part in the challenge for regular discussion at our Facebook Group. [Join here.](#)
- Do you have a resource that we should know about? [Let us know.](#)
- Feel free to forward this email to your friends, family and colleagues and encourage them to join you and sign up for the 21-Day challenge [here.](#)

ABOUT:

In collaboration with the United Way of the Greater Capital Region, this challenge is designed to further understanding of power, privilege, supremacy, oppression, and equity. Developed by Dr. Eddie Moore, Jr., Debby Irving and Dr. Marguerite Penick-Parks, the 21-Day Challenge has been adapted by organizations across the country. It is designed to create dedicated time and space to build more effective social justice habits. It is a program of the Capital Region Antiracism Training Initiative of the Junior League of Schenectady & Saratoga Counties, Samaritan Counseling, Proctors Collaborative, the United Way of the Greater Capital Region, and Schenectady County Public Library along with more than 20 community partners.



Over the past 19 days, we have learned how racial inequities permeate our communities on individual, institutional and systemic levels. We are all impacted by the system of racism in our country and therefore all responsible for dismantling the structures that allow it to persist. Change is possible and there are many tools we can employ as individuals and organizations to drive individual and community transformation. We will highlight a few of these tools below, but encourage you to explore [Racial Equity Tools](#), a comprehensive site of resources designed to support learning, planning, acting, and evaluating efforts to achieve racial equity.

Creating equitable outcomes also requires that we change the way we talk about members of our community, focusing on their aspirations rather than their challenges. In practice, this is called asset-framing and uses narratives to change the unconscious associations ingrained in our society. The opposite practice of deficit-framing, or defining people by their challenges, encourages continued stigmatization of groups of individuals.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Read this [Beginner's Guide to Asset Framing](#), to learn more about why how we communicate impacts our ability to achieve racial equity.

Option 2: One of the best ways to continue to build empathy and learn about race is to start a conversation. Read Race Forward's [10 Ways to Start a Conversation About Race](#) to learn more about how to start a conversation with friends, at school, at work, and more.

ACTION STEP:

Create a plan to use each one of these tools before the end of the month with your family, friends or colleagues.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

- As we've learned in previous days, white supremacy is a foundational piece of America's narrative. Many of our beliefs about ourselves are connected to these beliefs, regardless of our race. Think now about your own narrative. How much of it is connected to beliefs that are not true? How can you reconsider your own narrative to include the beneficial or detrimental impact of systemic racism?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share a resource from Racial Equity Tools** using the hashtag #CRAntiracist.
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Today's challenge is to take time to reflect on your experience. Research shows that a critical component to learning is taking time to reflect or being intentional about processing the lessons being taught by your experiences.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. What are my identities and in what ways have my identities impacted my life? Are there identities of mine that have provided me higher social capital or privilege in certain environments, or vice versa?
2. What were some of my assumptions about race and racial inequity before I started this 21-day challenge? In what ways have these assumptions been challenged? In what ways have they been reinforced?
3. Where have I seen evidence of inequities and systemic and structural racism in my community?
4. What two to three shifts, changes or actions, can I take to create a more inclusive and equitable environment in my home, workplace, and community?

As you prepare to complete the 21-Day Equity Challenge, we encourage you to **write down a goal** you have moving forward. Research shows that when you write down your goals, you are more likely to commit to them and achieve them.

ACTION STEP:

Share your reflection on a social media platform and encourage others to take the challenge.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share your reflections** on today's topic on social media using the hashtag #CRAntiracist.
- Connect with others that are taking part in the challenge for regular discussion at our Facebook Group. [Join here.](#)
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Congratulations on completing the United Way of the Greater Capital Region Equity Challenge. We are incredibly thankful you have come along this journey with us and made time to learn and reflect on topics of equity within the Capital Region. We know these conversations and the feelings they evoke are not always easy, but making more space for brave and vulnerable dialogue is one of many steps we can take toward achieving equity in our community and across the world.

I challenge each of you to share a reflection on your experience with a family member, friend or co-worker to continue the momentum from this challenge.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

Option 1: Sign up to volunteer in our community at [UnitedtoVolunteer.org](https://www.unitedtovolunteer.org). Find a volunteer opportunity that fits your schedule or interests or browse agencies that need support.

Option 2: Next time you are running errands or heading to the grocery store, if you typically travel by car, challenge yourself by taking the CDTA bus. [Click here to find a route to your destination.](#)

Option 3: Shift the way you talk about others. Creating equitable outcomes requires that we change the way we talk about members of our community, focusing on their aspirations rather than their challenges- this is called asset-framing. [Watch videos from Trabian Shorters, founder and CEO of BMe Community, discuss how to put asset-framing into practice.](#)

Option 4: Do better. Many white people do not get involved in the work of racial justice because they do not know where to begin or how to use their voice to promote equity. Please read and challenge yourself to take a few of the actions in this article from Medium, "[97 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice](#)". **It is going to take all of us to dismantle racism. Today, make the choice to use your voice in support of those who are rarely heard.**

As a reminder, the Allyship Institute will launch a series of trainings aimed furthering the topics presented throughout this Racial Equity Challenge. You can learn more at proctors.org/antiracism

Inspired by what you did throughout this challenge and are eager to learn more? Check out these resources to further your knowledge and remain active participants in the fight against racial injustice:

- Read the book [Me and White Supremacy: A 28-Day Challenge to Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor](#) by Layla F. Saad
- Check out this monthly self-paced syllabi [The Great Unlearn](#) from Rachel Cargle
- Participate in the [Black History Bootcamp: A 21 Day Walking Meditation](#) by GirlTrek

ACTION STEP:

Discuss with your organization, local businesses and your family how you all can engage in Anti-racism work. Take at least 3 actions that ensure anti-racism in your circles.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION:

- **Share on social media how you will remain committed to advancing equity in the Capital Region** using the hashtag #CRAntiracist.
- Connect with others that are taking part in the challenge for regular discussion at our Facebook Group. [Join here.](#)
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