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Title of Project: United to End Racism - Building Sustainable Change on Campus

Amount Awarded: \$3000

Select the key priority areas of the Forum for which the proposal intended to address:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff (AFSCME) | <input type="checkbox"/> PT Employees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with Disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Students - Phila |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> People of Color/Non White | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women | <input type="checkbox"/> Intern'l Students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQA | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Trad Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Assault Policies and Procedures | |

Brief description and goals and outcomes of your project:

United to End Racism-WCU (UER-WCU) fills in identified gaps in anti-racism coalition work at WCU. Rather than focusing primarily on giving new information (which many programs and groups effectively do already), this model focuses on using ongoing peer support strategies to help individuals process experiences related to racism and become more effective in their efforts to interrupt racism and promote a positive campus climate both interpersonally and structurally. The initiative was in its third year in 2017-2018. We requested funds to deepen the capacities of leaders who are part of the UER-WCU group to use these tools to affect the campus more broadly, including: faculty, staff, and student leaders meeting over the course of the fall and spring semesters to learn and practice the tools and strategies of the UER model, participating an in-depth one-day workshop by an outside facilitator, obtaining more training in how to use these tools with and teach others these tools, recruit a new cohort to be introduced to these tools, and provide two all-campus introductory workshops/events using the model. We intended to build toward a sustainable campus-wide transformative platform to share this resource in our community widely. As we describe below, we met our goals for this project and continue to be excited about its possibilities for this new academic year.

Description of procedures, steps, timeline:

Summer 2017: Ascertained ongoing commitments of previously trained individuals (primarily faculty and staff, and one student leader), and deepened leadership capacities of new leaders. Included 12 individuals who recommitted to participation in the group in 2017-2018; 2 were staff, 1 was a student, 9 were faculty; 8 were People of the Global Majority.

September 2017: Recruited a new group of interested participants, primarily students, through one-on-one contacts, outreach to groups, and one open on campus event (on 9/15/17) introducing these tools. Approximately 43 people attended the open campus event—we were gratified and frankly surprised by the numbers, which far exceeded our expectations, demonstrating the interest in this kind of programming; while we did not ask for anyone's racial identifications at such an event, it was an evidently very mixed group racially, with a strong representation of students from the Global Majority (Black and Latino students). We eventually accepted to the new group for learning fundamentals 8 students, one staff person, plus the continuing student leader, alongside a faculty leader.

Fall 2017-Spring 2018: Facilitated 12 meetings of the new group learning fundamentals of the model and gaining the supports provided in the model, and 7 meetings of the ongoing group deepening their knowledge of the model and gaining the supports of the model; several of these meetings brought the groups together for part of the time as well. Additionally, between each meeting of the groups, meetings of pairs/groups of three got together to practice the tools and use the supports of the model. Finally, intensive training was provided through day-long or weekend-long workshops in the following ways:

- July 20-23, 2017: Black Liberation and Community Development Conference. Three (3) participants attended.

- December 1-3, 2017: Brandywine Fall Regional Workshop. 7 individuals from the group attended this workshop, 4 supported in large part by grant monies and 3 using personal/other funds.
- March 2, 2018: Day-Long WCU United to End Racism Workshop. Eighteen (18) group participants attended a full-day workshop facilitated by Apryl Walker, an outside facilitator trained in this model; the facilitator brought two others who are trained in this model to participate and assist, one of whom is a WCU graduate. Of those participants, 9 were faculty, 7 were students, 2 were staff; 14 were People of the Global Majority; 4 were White.
- March 23, 2018: Brandywine Spring Regional Workshop. 6 individuals from the group attended this workshop, 3 supported in large part by grant monies and 3 using personal/other funds.
- June 22-25, 2018: Re-Evaluation Counseling Workshop for College and University Faculty in the United States and Canada. 6 individuals from the group attended this workshop, 3 supported in large part by grant monies and 3 using personal/other funds.

Lastly, we held an open event meant to be responsive to campus climate and also to pilot one model for bringing this tool to the campus in a broader way, in addition to integrating the model authentically into ongoing initiatives as needed, as will be described below. On April 20th, 2018, we sponsored a race-conscious and politically open “listening project” around the topic of gun violence, in coordination with other groups sponsoring an event that day in response to the tragic school shooting in Parkland and many others across the country.

Analysis of the success of the project and results achieved:

The work of UER is directly in response to the University Forum overall objective: to “identify sustainable initiatives to provide faculty, staff, and students with the skills to engage in dialogues related to sensitive subjects, in a civil and respectful manner and provide safe venues for these discussions; develop a pool of individuals who are well equipped to facilitate these discussions.” While much positive work is being done to educate and create coalitions, now, more than ever, White supremacy and its toxic effects are daily realities at WCU, regionally, and nationally, from microaggressions to threats of violence to racially-inflected attacks on physical structures (such as places of worship or schools), individuals, laws, and institutions. Our campus continues to need this type of sustainable intervention that will create spaces that are more than safe—but are healing—and help recruit and retain students, faculty and staff of color and their allies.

Quantitatively, we met all the objectives we set out to meet in terms of recruitment of participants, meetings, sending participants to day-long or weekend-long workshops, and events. Like any project of this nature, there was attrition, so that two of our newer participants stopped attending meetings after the fall semester, but most attended regularly, in particular through the intensive workshop led by Apryl Walker in March. Returning individuals attended regularly though some did miss meetings; that being said, of the 12 individuals who returned last year, 3 continued and returned as leaders, 1 moved into a leadership position, 4 are continuing as full group members, and 3 others are interested in remaining connected with the group as “affiliate” members of the network, though for various personal or professional reasons cannot commit to regular participation. In addition to their interest in continuing and deepening their connection to the group (they also assisted in recruiting the new cohort of individuals learning the model this year), we surveyed participants with positive results as well. We asked five survey questions and had a 50% response rate. Questions were on a Likert scale.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree
UER has promoted understanding of diversity and greater cultural awareness.	80%	20%	0%
UER focuses on the needs and experiences of the diverse groups that make up the WCU community	90%	0%	10%
Being a part of UER this year made me feel more ready to make a positive change toward ending racism at WCU.	70%	30%	0%
Being a part of UER this year made me feel more part of a WCU community.	70%	20%	10%

UER is helpful for those of us already taking leadership around ending racism	70%	20%	10%
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*(No answers at all were “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”)

In terms of budget, we spent \$2978 of our \$3000 grant, which included sending multiple participants to various workshops, as indicated above (\$2407), in addition to \$513 on the day-long workshop held on campus, and \$57 for literature on the model’s theory and practice for participants.

Qualitatively, we see that when committees and initiatives on campus that focus on diversity or ending racism include at least one person trained in this model, aspects of it start to become integrated. For example, two of our leaders named on this grant were the faculty advisor and past president to Black Men United; they started teaching and using some of the support and healing skills to that key constituency of students on an ad hoc basis. As another example, a group of high school students was brought to campus as part of a college access initiative led by one of our members; when some challenging experiences happened, parts of this process were used to have productive and healing conversations. As a final example, one of our members has used these tools to raise awareness within Ethnic Studies and the Latino Communities Conference. These tools are being integrated into various spaces on campus, from courses to committee meetings. This growing network of people serves as a buffer for now and a change agent in the long term with reference to the high, even toxic, costs of racism and intersecting oppressions paid on a daily basis especially by People of the Global Majority, as well as White people. United to End Racism is pleased to be continuing its work in 2018-2019.