



# Building Power for Racial & Health Equity in California

NASEM Workshop: Exploring Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and HE  
commitments and approaches by Health Care Organizations

October 5, 2023

Sandra Witt, Dr.PH

Managing Director of Power Infrastructure  
The California Endowment

# Overview

1. TCE Powerbuilding Framework for Health & Racial Equity
2. Governing for Racial Equity
3. TCE's Advancing Racial Justice Journey
4. Enabling Factors & Challenges



# Power

Transforming health and communities  
with People Power

Our vision for the next 10 years and beyond

## We Envision a California...

- with a robust, intergenerational power-building ecosystem for advancing health, justice and racial equity
- where historically excluded people have voice, agency, and power in decision-making to close health equity gaps and eliminate structural racism
- where health destiny is not determined by a person's zipcode, but by an intersectional, intergenerational movement of people power driving transformative change in pursuit of health and wellness for all
- where most impacted communities are empowered to lead the nation as a beacon for wellness, equity, and justice



# BECOMING AN ANTI-RACIST HEALTH FOUNDATION



Dr. Robert Ross, CEO/President, CEO



Lauren Padilla-Valverde,  
Managing Director,  
Racial Equity, Culture &  
Practice



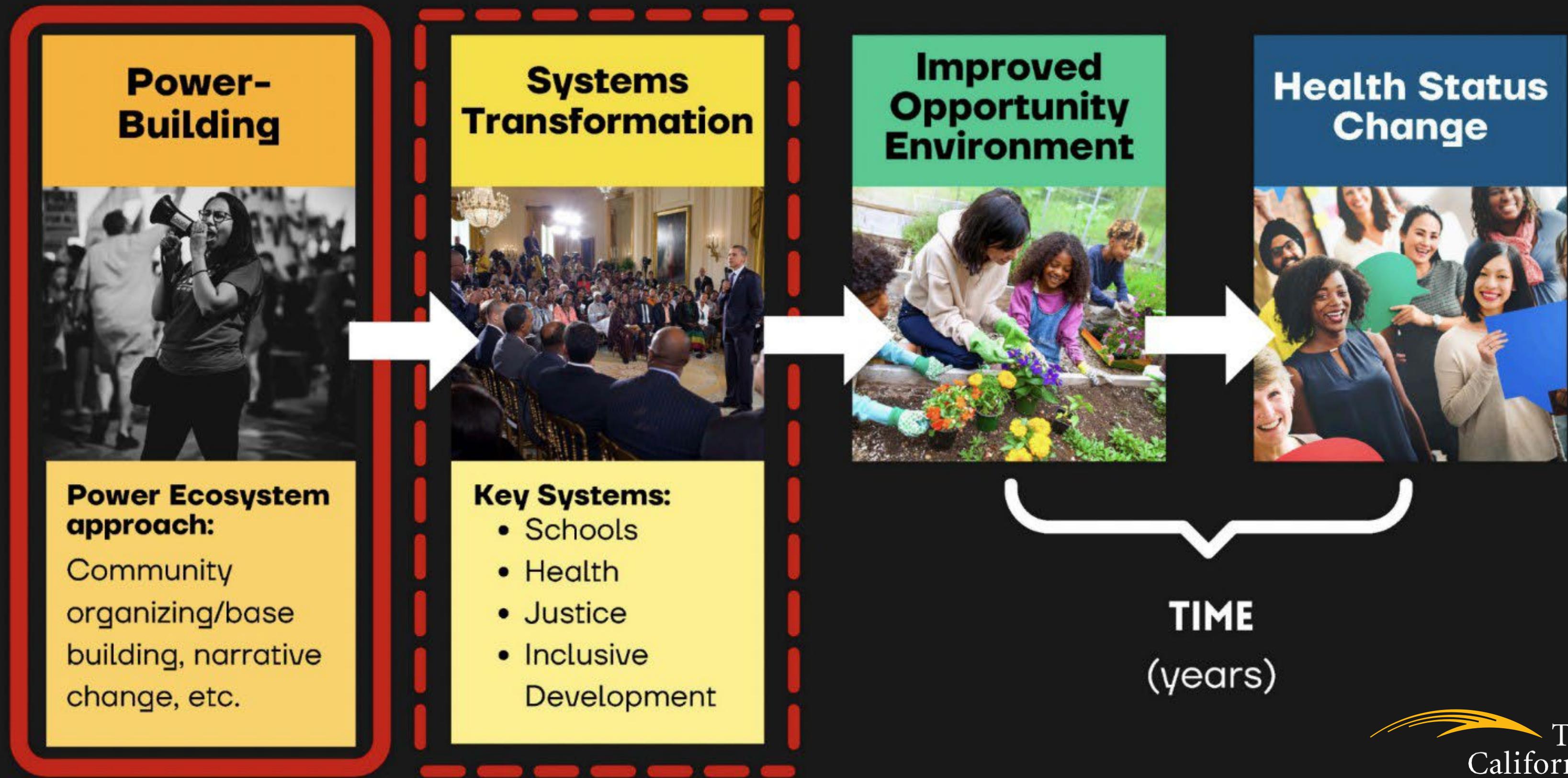
Kate Kendall, Chief of Staff, TCE





# TCE POWER- BUILDING FRAMEWORK

# THEORY OF CHANGE





# BUILDING POWER ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

TCE's Theory of Change asserts that:

a robust **intergenerational power-building ecosystem**--one that centers an organizing approach, includes critical partnerships & is aligned around a shared analysis of racial justice

is critical to advance health equity and long term systemic transformation for a **racially just California**



# POWER GOAL STATEMENT

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**BY 2030, CALIFORNIA HAS A STRONG, INTERGENERATIONAL POWER-BUILDING ECOSYSTEM FOR ADVANCING HEALTH, JUSTICE, AND RACIAL EQUITY BY:**

- **Expanding the community-led advancement of systemic changes** across the public and private sectors to promote racial equity, racial healing, and eliminate structural racism at local and statewide levels;
- **Supporting community organizing as a central approach**, that build a strong base for advancing transformative changes in political, economic, and cultural power.
- **Growing a movement** that supports the leadership and healing of young people and adults engaged in the fight for health equity and racial justice; and,
- **Building the capacity of grassroots leaders and organizations**, and the broader ecosystem, to create enduring narratives that reflect the experiences of people whose lives are most impacted by injustice

# Governing for Racial Equity

## Leading with Race because:

- Racial inequities are structural
- Leading with an institutional and structural approach on race makes room for an intersectional approach

### *Capital Cohort on Race and Equity*

community of California state government leaders integrating racial equity into institutional culture, policies, and practices

**500+ in 50**

state departments, agencies, offices, boards, and commissions

### *Government Alliance on Race & Equity*

network of governments working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all

**98**

members

**44**

cities

**23**

counties

**11**

state departments

**STATE OF EQUITY**

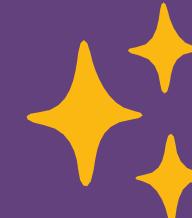
LOCAL AND REGIONAL  
GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON  
RACE & EQUITY

**race forward**

haas institute  
FOR A FAIR AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY



# MODEL PRACTICES



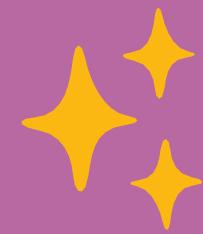
A racial equity curriculum that builds on the field of practice  
- cohort model

Peer-to-peer strategizing and problem-solving through cohorts

Racial Equity Tool to be used in policy, practice, program, and budget decisions

Provides example policies and practices that help advance racial equity

Racial Equity Action Plan



# OUTCOMES\*

**Racial Equity Structures:**  
Racial Equity working groups and action teams; equity dashboard; Racial Equity Commission

**Budget, Staff Positions, & Program Priorities:** Chief Equity Officers; Office of Equity; Racial Equity Resource Hub; equity budget tools and supported projects to advance their racial equity work.

**Executive Engagement:**  
briefings and public discussions of California State government leadership for racial equity.

**Public Accountability for Racial Equity:** publicly posted racial equity commitments and invited community accountability

CA jurisdictions are expanding efforts for public participation. ARPA funding was a boost for this practice to ensure that those experiencing racial disparities are embedded in government processes.

\*with support from State of Equity

DESIGNED TO  
DESTROY US

HOW DO WE BUILD

TRANSFORMATIVE PRO  
REPARATIVE

CULTURE?

CREATE SPACES TO  
HOLD & HONOR  
RADICAL ANGER

KNOW & NAME  
YOUR ROLE

RADICAL SELF  
CARE: STAY IN  
OUR BODIES &  
THIS WORK

BUILD & TELL  
OUR STORIES

EXPAND OUR  
COLLECTIVE  
IMAGINATION

BUILD A  
BIGGER  
WE

EMBED  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
FROM THE  
BEGINNING

LOWER BARRIERS  
TO  
COMMUNITY  
PARTICIPATION

PAY  
FOLKS FOR  
PARTICIPATION.

TRUST TAKES TIME  
MOVE @ THE SPEED OF  
TRUST

GET COMFORTABLE  
HOLDING COMPLEXITY

BURN IT  
DOWN

BUILD  
NEW

OUR  
CULTURE  
HAS TO BE OWNED & RUN

SYSTEMS &  
STRUCTURE  
THESE

# TCE's Advancing Racial Equity Journey:



# THE FIVE ELEMENTS TO A THRIVING ANTI-RACIST HEALTH FOUNDATION

MUTUALLY REINFORCING,  
INTERDEPENDENT CAPACITIES  
TO CREATE CONDITIONS  
FOR TRANSFORMATION

Field building,  
philanthropy's  
right role in  
systems  
transformation

Cultivating embodied  
capacity to metabolize  
White Body Supremacy

I  
Board Learning  
Journey

Board learning supports  
staff and organization's  
success toward anti-  
racism.

V  
Learning & Self-  
Study

I  
Staff Leadership &  
Capacity-Building

Building a  
leaderful  
organization with  
deeper anti-racist  
capacity

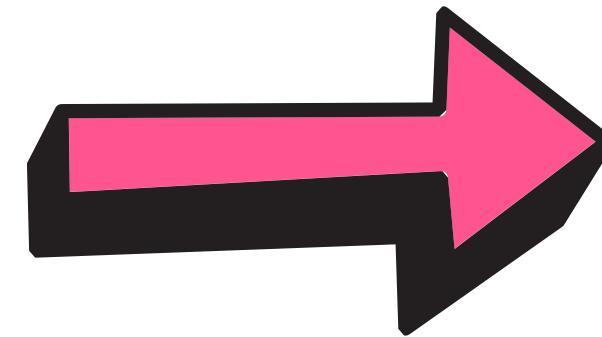
CONDITIONS FOR  
TRANSFORMATION  
(FROM THE  
EMBODIED TO THE  
STRUCTURAL)

I  
Healing Informed  
Practices - Somatic  
Abolitionism

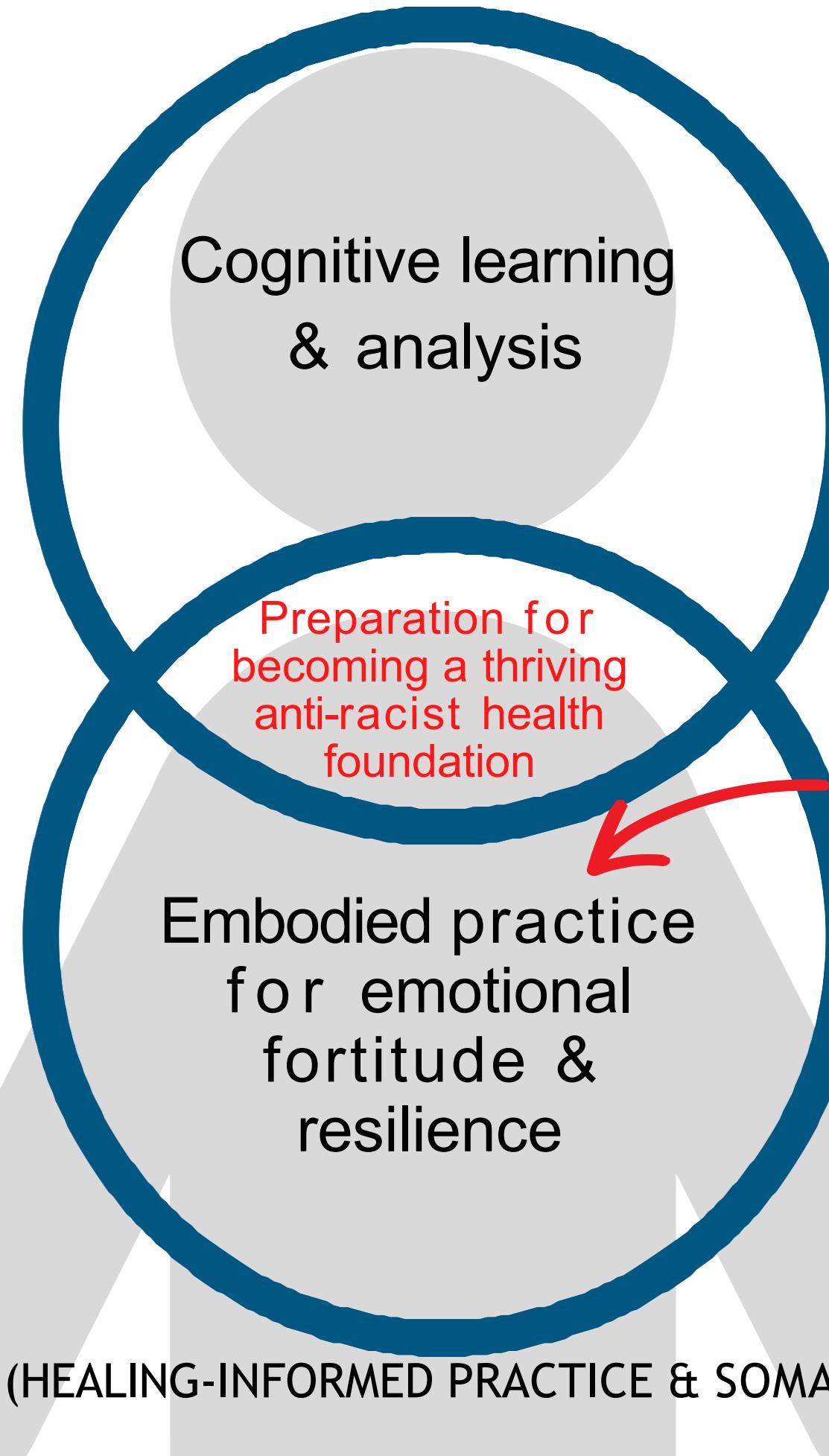
II  
Operationalizing  
A.R.E.  
Framework

Translating principles,  
values into durable  
practice

## ELEMENT II (STAFF LEADERSHIP & CAPACITY-BUILDING)



Ongoing learning for all staff on **systemic racism** rooted in anti-Blackness, native erasure, and **root cause analysis**



## ELEMENT IV (HEALING-INFORMED PRACTICE & SOMATIC ABOLITIONISM)

Building Embodied Leadership to withstand the discomfort & prevent harm that comes with anti-racist work

**Practice of Somatic Abolitionism** through reading *My Grandmother's Hands* & working with **Resmaa Menakem** & **Carlin Quinn**



SLIM: SEVERAL STAFF URGE CENTERING RACIAL JUSTICE AT TCE  
APRIL 5-6, 2018

TCE ALL STAFF LEARNING SESSION: BHC/GOVERNING  
FOR RACIAL EQUITY & SYSTEMS CHANGE  
MAY 29TH, 2018

CULTIVATING  
THE  
COMMITMENT



TOWARD A RACIALLY EQUITABLE HEALTH FOUNDATION (TREHF) WORKING GROUP FORMS  
MAY - AUG, 2018

ALL STAFF ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESOLUTION & INTERNAL COMMITMENT FOR ARE  
JAN 2019

PRE-SURVEY SUMMARY OF FINDINGS REPORT  
MARCH 2019

ARE ALL STAFF LAUNCH AUG 8TH, 2019

JOHN POWELL WEBINAR  
LANDS WORK SESSIONS WITH ALL STAFF  
DEC 10, 11, 12, 2019

ALL-STAFF SESSION -IBRAM X. KENDI & ALICIA GARZA  
JULY 2020

FIVE ELEMENTS TO A THRIVING ANTI-RACIST HEALTH FOUNDATION  
PRESENTED TO E-TEAM, ALL STAFF & BOARD  
JAN-FEB 2021

ONGOING ARE STAFF & BOARD UPDATES 2021-23

FOUNDATIONS IN RACIAL EQUITY & RACIAL  
JUSTICE FALL 2022 - SESSIONS I & II

ARE COUNCIL CHAIRS MEET  
WITH BOARD ARE COMMITTEE - JAN 2023  
3RD 11-MEMBER ARE LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL SEATED  
FEB 2023

ARE COUNCIL ANNUAL RETREAT JUNE 2023

WORKSHOPPING ARE  
FRAMEWORK WITH  
DEPARTMENTS BY COHORTS  
2023-24

DEPTS FINALIZE ACTION PLANS &  
FORMALLY ADOPT FRAMEWORK  
2024-25

BUILDING  
FOUNDATIONAL  
KNOWLEDGE &  
EMBODIED ANTI-  
RACIST CULTURE



ALIGNING ON  
LONG-TERM  
PRINCIPLES &  
PRACTICES



OPERATIONALIZING  
A.R.E. & SHARING  
THE STORY

WE ARE  
HERE!

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESOLUTION ON RACIAL EQUITY  
& JUSTICE  
AUG 15TH, 2018

INAUGURAL 13 MEMBER ARE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL SEATED  
FEB 2019

GOAL PAPERS COMPLETED & APPROVED JULY 2019

ALL STAFF COMPLETE EDGAR VILLANUEVA'S DECOLONIZING WEALTH READING  
AND STUDY GUIDE FOLLOWED BY FACILITATED TEAM-BASED INQUIRIES  
SEPT - NOV 2019

TCE ISSUES A PUBLIC STATEMENT ON RACE & RACISM  
JUNE 20, 2020

ARE-LC PAUSES ACTIVITIES FOR POST-2020 PLANNING & ORG REALIGNMENT  
MARCH 2020

APPOINTMENT OF INAUGURAL DIRECTOR, RACIAL EQUITY PRACTICE &  
CULTURE & INAUGURAL CHIEF OF STAFF  
OCT 2020 & MAY 2021

2ND 19-MEMBER ARE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL SEATED  
AUG 2021

19 STAFF COMPLETE YEAR-LONG SOMATIC ABOLITIONISM  
CONSULTATION - JAN - DEC 2021

BEYOND 2020 STRATEGIC PLANNING WITH  
COMMUNITY PARTNERS -2021-2022

ALL STAFF READ MY GRANDMOTHERS HANDS 2022

LAUNCH SOMATIC ABOLITIONISM  
CONSULTATIONS W/ RESMAA  
MENAKEM SEPTEMBER 2022

2023 YEAR-LONG SOMATIC ABOLITIONISM  
COHORT WITH RESMAA & CARLIN

BEYOND 2020 STRATEGIC GRANTMAKING PLAN  
FINALIZED - APRIL 2023

UNPACK ARE FRAMEWORK TO E-TEAM, DIRECTORS  
& STAFF - SPRING & SUMMER 2023

A.R.E. CASE STUDY SHARED AT  
CONFERENCES AND KEY OUTLETS  
2024

# Challenges of Racial Equity Journeys

- Rarely resourced in a robust way.
- Chief equity officers often face isolation and backlash in their role
- Continuous emergence of DEI approaches that focus on attempting to only change the way people think vs. changing institutional processes & practices
- Often white bodies get centered in this work in ways that cause harm to black and brown bodies
- Shifting an institution's culture, practices and impact is life-long work

# Enabling Factors for Racial Equity Journeys



Public or External Accountability



Growing Numbers of Racial Justice Practitioners and Leaders *within* Institutions



Staff Organizing and Executive leadership Being on Board

# Enabling Factors for Racial Equity Journeys



**Increased Use of Racial  
Equity Frameworks &  
Tools**



**Building the Container to  
Process and Metabolize the  
Discomfort that comes from  
doing Anti-Racist work  
(Somatic Abolitionism)**



The California We Want.

