

# News & Views

## Not in my government:

*Dr. Eddie Moore, Jr. and Debby Irving on how supremacy, privilege and historical oppression impact our best intentions*

Nichole Fromm, Madison Public Library

“The system isn’t broken.” We often hear that the opposite is true, that well intentioned people working for positive social change are fixing a broken system. To Dr. Eddie Moore, Jr. and Debby Irving, such systems are working just fine at what they were built to do - that is, perpetuate institutional racism. On March 28, an audience of more than 60 City of Madison employees engaged with this idea at the “Not in my government: power, privilege and leadership” workshop.

The workshop explored two major themes: first, that each of us ought to dismantle our own biases; and second, that institutions are biased and that being part of them can change us for the worse.

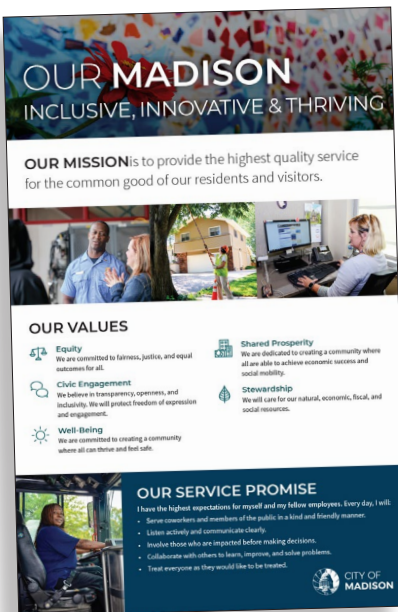
*Continued on page 3*

## Where the Vision Comes to Life:

*Performance Excellence and RESJI in Practice*

by Lindsey Bessick, Organizational Development

You may have seen the colorful Our Madison: Inclusive, Innovative, and Thriving posters around. Maybe you completed the Employee Voice Survey in November 2018. Perhaps you participated in a training session or have had a team meeting to talk about how the City’s mission and values guide your team. In the coming months, you’ll be hearing even more about Performance Excellence. If you’re connected to the Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) in any way, you’re already living out the most important aspects of Performance Excellence. If you’ve used the Comprehensive Tool, for example, you’ve taken a step back from day to day practices and made an effort to take an objective look at how you impact the most



*Continued on page 3*

## When and How to Interrupt Racist Behavior

We all overhear comments or conversations and later wish we had known how to respond, interrupt, or seize the moment to call out inappropriate behavior.

Kimberly Barrett, Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion and Associate Dean of faculty at Lawrence University in Appleton, shared the following tips on a recent NPR podcast:

**Use humor.** Sometimes humor can be effective. It won't work in every situation and is most appropriate when there is a comfort level with those involved.

**Intervene and redirect.** For a situation that could be headed towards conflict, you can often diffuse it by changing the subject.

**Something is better than nothing.** Even if it's something mild, you are still calling attention to an injustice and supporting another person.

**Use “I” statements.** “You may not have intended this, but I felt ...” don't assume that you know another person's motives.

**Stay safe.** Sometimes you need to call the police. Always put safety (of yourself and others) first.

“It (the training) is one of the things we try to do to make our campus more inclusive,” Barrett told NPR. She said that research shows that it really does help to change behavior by calling it out. You don't want to shame that person—sometimes it's a loved one—you really just want to raise awareness.

<https://www.wpr.org/listen/1434386>



## Madison Parks

# A Focus on Access and Inclusion

Rebecca Below, Department of Civil Rights

When Terrence Thompson started with the City of Madison in October 2017, he hit the ground running. As Warner Park Facility Manager and Team Lead for the Parks Racial Equity Team, Terrence has been involved in several achievements that have made a difference in access and inclusion for the community he serves. He sees great value in advocating for change and helping to dismantle institutional racism.

Terrence and his team have tackled equity from many different directions, specifically at the Warner Park Community Recreation Center, historically regarded as a place for seniors. First on the task list was to meet with community leaders to get feedback on what could be done better. Terrence soon learned that the community needed a safe place for teens, and that young folks were a segment of the community not being served by the Center. It became clear that some policies were creating obstacles. One such barrier was fees. Once fees were removed for the gym and the game room, the Center became accessible on a daily basis for teens and youth after school.

This one change produced measurable success. The Center saw an increase from an average of 350 youth access scans per month to 750 youth access scans per month. The Center also added a youth dance team, 3 ON 3 Teen Night basketball tournaments, and daily open gyms. These changes have helped create a fundamental shift in culture for teens in some of the highest need neighborhoods in the City, including Vera Court and Kennedy Heights on the north side of Madison. Some now see the Center as a second home, and go daily.

Despite the growing list of accomplishments, Terrence and the Parks Racial Equity Team are not slowing down! In the future, Terrence says he would like to focus on expanding the work of and participation in the Parks Racial Equity Team. The Team is already using the RESJI hiring and comprehensive tools, but would like to expand their action plan to include budgeting, employment, health and safety, public participation and strategic planning. He hopes to have enough participant involvement to have “change teams” for each focus area. Terrence

## Friday Nights at Warner

In partnership with several community based organizations, and with grant assistance from the Northside Safe and Thriving initiative, the Warner Park Community Recreation Center hosts various events monthly on Friday nights including Family Fun Night, Teen Night, and Increase the Peace. The Center has hosted the Madison Public Library Bubbler program, and in the summer, hosts MSCR summer camps.

*Photo courtesy of Madison Parks*

would like to ensure that the workforce in Parks aligns with the demographics of the City, that the internal culture respects diversity and inclusion, and that systems are developed to make sure that the work of Parks is being done through a racial equity lens. To that end, he and his team are in the process of developing a plan, with the hopes of rolling it out by 2020, to make sure resources are being prioritized in areas with the most need. 🇺🇸

# Where the Vision Comes to Life:

## Continued

vulnerable in our community, as well as your coworkers, and the city as a whole.

### WHAT IS PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE?

Performance Excellence is a way of organizing and understanding our work and connecting to our purpose. It allows us to be our best selves for everyone we come in contact with by encouraging us to consider the mission, vision, values, and service promise in our day-to-day public service. Performance Excellence aligns our work and provides tools like the Employee Voice Survey and Process Improvement Toolkits to strengthen our operations and service delivery.

Like RESJI, Performance Excellence is a set of decision-making tools, working methods, AND an outcome. When our city performs with excellence, we and all of our customers thrive. We achieve Performance Excellence when we follow the City of Madison Service Promise:

I have the highest expectations for myself and my fellow employees. Every day, I will:

- Serve coworkers and the public in a kind and friendly manner.
- Listen actively and communicate clearly.
- Involve those who are impacted before making decisions.
- Collaborate with others to learn, improve, and solve problems.
- Treat everyone as they would like to be treated.

Racial Equity and Social Justice practices show up in many ways in Performance Excellence; as a value; as a core element of our services; as a way to ensure people's voices are heard; and as a measuring tool. When we infuse our processes with racial equity and social justice principles, we set the bar higher for how the City of Madison performs.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE. Departments have an ever-increasing amount of work, but the need to support citywide initiatives for our growing and changing community is also increasing, while resources are limited. As we strive to meet the needs of our residents now and in the future, we need to work efficiently and effectively. Performance Excellence provides us with the tools to be strategic in our work, become more agile when responding to change, better prioritize our resources, and align our work and programs -- such as Employee Engagement, Results Madison, Imagine Madison/ Comprehensive Plan Update, Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative, and Neighborhood Resource Teams -- to our strategic vision.

PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE BENEFITS EVERYONE. Both Performance Excellence and RESJI are focused on deep, systematic, organizational change. When Performance Excellence and RESJI are aligned, they co-inform each other and provide best practices that institutionalize more effective, ethical, and inclusive decision-making benefitting the common good. By being intentional in the ways we organize, name, and distribute power, we live up to the performance excellence vision in our daily work.

FROM PROCESS TO PRACTICE. RESJI informs myriad Performance Excellence activities, from an Equity Analysis on the Performance Excellence team structure, to the development of inclusive team Collaboration Standards, to the incorporation of Equity Plans and RESJI tool use within the Employee Voice Survey Action Plans being developed in Spring 2019. Policy makers will have a road map to better understand how their decisions impact our community, operations, employees, budget, and decision-making. Managers will be


## “What's your test score”

Through vivid personal examples and verified research findings, Debby Irving illustrated that the ideas we are exposed to before age five become the foundation on which our lifelong opinions are built. She also stressed that bias includes flawed belief systems - for example, believing that hard work is always rewarded with success. Therefore, it's up to everyone, particularly well-meaning people with power, to do the work of examining their own biases before wielding that power in a destructive, inequitable way.

## “Good people do some jacked-up stuff”

Dr. Moore used an interactive “We the People” exercise to demonstrate the ways in which our government was created by a narrowly-defined “we.” This “we” claimed superiority for white, male, wealthy, heterosexual, professed Christian persons, and over centuries has remained largely unchallenged. The result is that we in government today cannot accurately say that our work is to prevent racism from entering our systems. Racism is already here, and “the best friend hate has is silence.” Furthermore, good people working in flawed systems can't help but become more like the system, unless we keep a commitment to lifelong growth, learning, and action.

## Attendees left with these action steps:

- Take the 21-day racial equity habit building challenge individually or with a group: [www.eddiemoorej.com/21-day-challenge](http://www.eddiemoorej.com/21-day-challenge) or [www.debbyirving.com/21-day-challenge/](http://www.debbyirving.com/21-day-challenge/)
- Test yourself at Harvard's Project Implicit <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- Learn more with the resources given in the presentation slides <https://prezi.com/vujrzxdtyrni/nimg2019-cityofmadison/> 

Continued on page 4

## NEWS & VIEWS

Thanks for reading! We hope you enjoyed these stories and we want to hear your feedback for future issues. The newsletter will be published quarterly; the next issue is July 2019. The deadline is May 15, 2019.

We'd like to hear from you regarding racial equity and social justice in your work.

**Contact** newsletter editor Donna Collingwood at [dcollingwood@cityofmadison.com](mailto:dcollingwood@cityofmadison.com)



Racial Equity & Social Justice Initiative

*Continued from page 3*

in tune with their staff and be given the tools to enhance employee engagement and well-being. Employees will also be able to improve processes, feel more clarity about City of Madison initiatives and their work, have the support from managers, and access the systems needed to get the best results.

Employees will be more engaged and understand how their work contributes to fair and just inclusion in public processes and decisions, by the entire Madison community. Where RESJI and Performance Excellence meet, we bring the vision to life.

Performance Excellence thanks the following contributors to this piece: Alia Stevenson, Erin Hillson, Mike Miller, Kym Woodly, Karl van Lith, Donna Collingwood, and Thomas Lund.

We all do better when we **ALL** do better.

The Department of Civil Rights was honored by a visit from Monica Caldwell and Deanna Wright. Caldwell is the author of a children's book about civil rights activist Reverend James C. Wright and his work in Madison. Deanna Wright is the reverend's daughter.

Kids at Wright Middle School contributed to the book in various ways. Sixth graders helped researching Reverend Wright the man, seventh graders researched his work, and eighth graders researched his legacy. Some students contributed illustrations to the book.



Monica Caldwell, Norman Davis, and Deanna Wright

Caldwell and Wright donated a copy of the book for the Department of Civil Rights' archive. They also donated books to Wright Middle School.

## Calendar of Opportunities

**5/9/2019**

Screening of "13th" at Madison Public Library, 6-9pm.

**5/14/2019**

**Ripple Mapping:** 9am-12pm, MMB Room 206. Contact Tori Pettaway if interested in giving your thoughts about RESJI's impact.

**5/17/2019**

**Madison Region's Economic Development & Diversity Summit**

Sarah Treuhaft, managing director at PolicyLink will speak at the 6th Annual Summit on Friday, May 17 at Monona Terrace. The day-long Summit will engage, educate, and empower attendees around issues related to economic, workforce, and community development.

**5/20/2019**

**Speaker Series: "Lessons Learned,"** Jordan Bingham, independent consultant, 1-2 pm. Lessons learned and emerging best practices for community outreach and engagement.

We encourage your **participation!**

For more information, contact **Toriana Pettaway** at (608) 267-4915 or [tpettaway@cityofmadison.com](mailto:tpettaway@cityofmadison.com).

**6/12/2019**

RESJI Part 3, 1pm-4pm MMB 153  
**Transformative Leadership & Communication**

**6/17/2019**

**Speaker Series: "Imagine Madison,"** Kirstie Laatsch and Brian Grady, Planning, 1-2 pm. Presentation on the engagement process used for the comprehensive plan.

**6/21/2019 - 6/23/2019**

**All-America City Awards & Conference,** by the National Civic League. The All-America City Award recognizes communities that leverage civic engagement, collaboration, inclusiveness and innovation to successfully address local issues.

Impossible is just a big word thrown around by [people] who find it easier to live in the world they've been given than to explore the power they have to change it."

~Muhammad Ali