

Memorandum

To: All Staff

From: Chrichton Stewart, MSW, Social Work Supervisor and Racial Justice Workgroup Member

Date: December 24, 2013

Subject: Statewide Racial Justice Workgroup Updates

At the December 11, 2013 meeting Workgroup members provided updates on racial justice specific developments and activities facilitated through their respective Area Office Diversity Action Teams (DAT). Members shared how they have worked to recruit staff and encourage racial justice discussions in their sites. Workgroup members used many strategies to prompt these discussions. These included, but were not limited to, reviewing Area Office decision point data which revealed disparity and disproportionality in our system\* and the Walk of Privilege and M&Ms exercises with staff. Several Area Offices are considering dividing their DATs into subcommittees to focus on specific areas such as racial justice and the promotion of cultural difference events.

Additional areas of discussion included the importance of encouraging staff diversity amongst the DATs. The Workgroup recognized that racial justice practice is but one of ten performance expectations established by Commissioner Katz for calendar year 2014. Nonetheless, it is the priority for the Racial Justice Workgroup. Moving forward, each Region will develop a strategy to further promote racial justice at their respective sites.

Each workgroup member participated in a computer generated activity called "*Sorting People*". This activity instructed us to sort people into different racial/ethnic groups based on their appearance. This exercise is designed to illustrate how inaccurate assumptions and myths play a role in everyday life. \*\*

The meeting concluded with members separating into their respective subcommittees (Disproportionality and Disparities, Workforce, Purchasing and Procurement, and Community Engagement), to develop statewide Racial Justice Agency goals for 2014 and prepare presentations for the Senior Management meeting on January 8, 2014. If you have any questions regarding the work of the Racial Justice Workgroup, do not hesitate to contact your DAT Regional/Area Office liaisons.

\* DCF Area Office Statewide [Disproportionality and Disparity Data](#)

\*\* *Sorting People*: [http://www.pbs.org/race/002\\_SortingPeople/002\\_00-home.htm](http://www.pbs.org/race/002_SortingPeople/002_00-home.htm)

