

Acknowledgements

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“Building community partnerships through collaborations, research, and advocacy”

Edited by:

Ernest Nene Khalema, Research Coordinator
Centre for Race and Culture
formerly Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations
41, 9912-106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 1C5

Fax: 780-425-6244

Email: ekhalema@ualberta.ca

Web site: <http://www.cfrac.com>

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About the Handbook

This handbook presents the proceedings of the forum entitled “*Research Plenum on Race Relations: Alberta Experiences and Prospects for Change*” held on June 13-14, 2003 at Grant MacEwan College, Edmonton, Alberta. The first section of the handbook presents an executive summary of the forum activities, detailing all the major events for both days of the forum. The second section of the handbook compiles all the presentations presented at the forum: from workshop, poster, story, and paper presentations to discussion group summaries to panel discussions summaries. All pictures appearing in this handbook are properties of Frostbyte Development
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Executive Summary

Forum Objectives

The purpose of this forum was to assemble researchers, policy makers, and practitioners who are doing academic and grassroots level research with a common interest on practical ways to eliminate racism. Specifically, the forum aimed at providing diversity practitioners, researchers, policymakers, managers, youth, and anti-racism frontline workers with an opportunity to share their research outcomes, experiences, action plans, and skills, and describe lessons learned and obstacles to overcome in race-relations research and advocacy.

The theme of the forum was “*Building community partnerships through collaborations, research, and advocacy*”. This theme integrated several sub-themes which included:

- Developing a frame of reference on race relations within the Alberta context and examining Alberta’ commitment to racial and ethnic equality, anti-racism, and diversity
- Examining the forms of discrimination experienced by Indigenous peoples, visible minorities, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including multiple discriminations
- Providing researchers and practitioners an arena to share their research with stakeholders and community members, moving beyond analyzing racism to concrete plans for action
- Identifying existing research and advocacy areas and priorities for both policy reforms and institutional practice in the struggle to foster equity and eliminate racial discrimination
- Investigating the implementation strategies, barriers to implementation, and how to overcome them

It was the vision of the organizing body (CRC) that participants of the forum strategize ways to move beyond exchanging ideas about the effects of racism, but identify ways their research, could be used or disseminated to the general public. As a result, CRC envisioned a forum in which participants networked and developed long-term strategies aimed at increasing collaboration and partnerships.

Forum Opening, Friday June 13, 2003

The forum began on Friday afternoon on June 13 with a painting exhibit, video presentations, and table displays from several organizations in Alberta. Eight organizations displayed their programs on tables. These included: Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission, Aboriginal Youth and Family Wellbeing and Education Society, Millwoods Multicultural Education Foundation, Southern Alberta Racial and Community Harmony Society, Canadian Race Relations Foundation, Edmonton Center

for Equal Justice, and the Centre for Race and Culture (formerly Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations). The painting exhibit was entitled: “*Images of Internment*” and was organized by the Edmonton Japanese Canadian Association and displayed at the MacEwan Room of the Grant MacEwan College. The exhibit presented a collection of paintings commemorating some of the images of the internment experience of Japanese Canadians. The exhibit showcased the artistic recollection of a young Nikkei (person of Japanese ancestry - Dr. Henry Shimizu) who lived through the bittersweet experience as a young teenager in the New Denver internment camp between 1942 and 1946, which became the administrative center for over 12,000 internees located in several camps in the Slokan Valley of British Columbia. Dr. Shimizu was present at the exhibit and gave a personal tour.

In addition to the table displays and the exhibit, winning videos of the 2003 “*March 21 Video Youth Challenge*”, were presented to the delegates. This is a national video competition held across Canada commemorating the *International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*. Youth are encouraged to submit videos on how to combat racism. As part of their submission, youth are encouraged to create the scenarios, write the scripts, direct, shoot, and edit a one-minute video story that expresses their feelings about racism. The top ten videos are chosen from across Canada, edited, and broadcast nationally on television. Several winners of the 2003 competition were from Alberta.

The official opening of the forum began with an electrifying musical rendition by the nationally renowned Edmonton-based group: Wajjo Drummers. Wajjo’ fusion of powerful African drumming and chanting with a blend of Irish accordion and bagpipes mesmerized the audience and set the mood for the entire forum. Ms. Cynthia R. Cato, a student at the University of Alberta took the reigns of director of ceremony. Dr. Ahmad Sabetghadam, an instructor Department of Comparative Literature, Religion, and Film/Media Studies at the University of Alberta gave a passionate opening prayer by reciting an ancient poem for peace and human interconnectedness by a Muslim divine figure, Sheikh Saadi (Sa-dee). Thereafter, Alberta’ talented singer/ songwriter, Ms. Georgina Williams sang the Canadian national anthem with zeal and passion.

The opening presentations began with an array of welcome statements from CRC (Dr. Celia Smyth), the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (Dr. Karen Mock, in absentia) and the government of Alberta (Honourable Gene Zwozdesky, Minister of Community Development). Dr. Celia Smyth, CRC chairperson welcomed the delegates on behalf of the CRC board and members and wished the forum participants a successful experience. Ms Sonia Bitar, the executive director of *Changing Together...A Center for Immigrant Women* introduced Minister Gene Zwozdesky, who gave a passionate plea for community input and participation in diversity related issues. Honourable Zwozdesky promised his continued support for multicultural programs and indicated his government’ commitment to building a more tolerant and equitable society by funding programs and projects such as the forum. Minister Zwozdesky also presented awards to two Albertans who have been instrumental in fostering equity and respect for all. The recipient of the Commemorative Medal for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II’ Golden Jubilee were Mr.

Arthur Clark, a community advocate and civic leader based in Edmonton, whose contribution to community development is exceptional, and Ms. Charlene Hay, CRC program manager for her contribution to diversity related issues and for her involvement with the Centre for Race and Culture (formerly Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations).

Keynote Address

Dr. Jennifer Kelly of the University of Alberta's department of Educational Policy Studies introduced Dr. George Sefa Dei, professor and chair of the Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education at the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE). Dr. Dei delivered a passionate keynote address entitled "*The Perils and Desires of Anti-oppression Work*." Dr. Dei began his talk by thanking the organizers for inviting him to the forum and delved deeply into the theme of the forum, setting the tone for future discussions and deliberations. A question and answer session followed Dr. Dei's address and thereafter a local youth dance group: "Pillars of Peace" gave a closing performance. The dances the group performed corresponded with the theme of the conference and included dramatised reflections on the elimination of racial and other types of discrimination. The dances were also symbolic and thematic with a sole purpose of encouraging reflection and building community ties. The Friday opening event adjourned with a harmony reception and a revisit to the art exhibit, display tables, and video presentations. This gave the delegates a chance to network.

On Saturday, June 14, the forum featured a full day of paper presentations, concurrent sessions, informal conversations, roundtables, workshops, panels, and poster presentations. Topics of discussion included and were not limited to: anti-racism organizing at the grassroots and rural level; intersection of race, gender, class, ability, and sexuality; hate and hate crimes; racism & environmental justice; employment equity; diversity training in the private or public sector; racism and health status; challenging racism through drama, music, and the arts; racism and the schooling process; and methodological dilemmas in race relations research.

Opening Plenary Session, Saturday June 14, 2003

The Saturday session was officially opened by Elders Linda Bull and Duane Goodstriker. Ms. Bull, a peace educator and human rights advocate originally from Saddle Lake and Goodfish Lake (Cree) First Nation, Treaty Six Territory in Alberta, reflected on the notion of community involvement as a necessary ingredient in capacity building and empowerment. Bull mentioned that in order to challenge racism and other ills of society, grassroots peoples, community groups, and governments must be action-oriented. Mr. Goodstriker prayed through his traditional faith for peace in the world and harmony in Canada. He mentioned that as most people rediscover their identity, culture, and spirituality, an environment that nourishes togetherness must be created in Canada. He cautioned that while Canada values itself as "the best country to live in", critical questions of what that means for First Nations and Metis people need to be asked.

The first plenary session entitled “*Charting the Course of Diversity and Anti-Racism Work: Concepts, Research Dilemmas, Successes and Future Prospects*” was chaired by Dr. Jennifer Kelly and presented a critical synopsis of issues, dilemmas, and successes in diversity and anti-racism research and advocacy work. Ms. Hilda Andresen of the Canadian Human Rights Commission began the section by addressing “*Racism as a Human Rights Issue*”. She presented a review of Canada’ impressive array of human rights initiatives that have contributed significantly to the evolution of Canadian law including provisions enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and other statutes. Andresen then reviewed several legal cases in which victims of discrimination have used available resources to successfully argue their cases. Ms. Andresen’ point was that because Canada has recognized racism as a human rights issue, Canadians can turn for help to human rights commissions or tribunals in every province in dealing with such areas as systemic discrimination, pay equity, and the dissemination of hate propaganda. The challenge, according to Andresen, was educating the masses about how to access resources and what their rights were under the laws of the country.

With this background in place, the next three speakers (Mr. Ernest Khalema, Mr. Oliver Kamau, Dr. Sandra Lambertus, and Prof. Randy Haluza-DeLay) focused their presentations on the research issues and dilemmas in race relations research. Ernest Khalema’ paper “*The Terrain of Race Relations Research: Interrogating the Superficialities of Difference*” examined the manner in which "race" is conceptualized in social justice research and how that conceptualization complicates and problematizes a deeper understanding of human relations. Acknowledging the existence of "racism" as a byproduct in the "racialization" process, Khalema argued that researchers in this area will benefit immensely by adopting a critical frame that encompasses a multiplex of analyses and concepts that have varieties of implications and applications, depending upon particular research problems, questions, and situations that studies engage in. Mr. Khalema also suggested a process of reflective practice whereby diversity and anti-racism researchers not only question the concepts they use in research but also how such concepts undermine their work and perpetuate racist hierarchies.

Arguing along similar lines, Mr. Oliver Kamau’ paper entitled: “*The Portrait of Racial Paparazzis: The Anti-Racism Crusaders*” examined the complex proposition encountered by most associations, individuals, or organizations whose mission is eradicating racial discrimination. His critique of the “anti-racism crusader” was that at times diversity and anti-racism workers benefit from their anti-racism work in many ways. He cautioned that in most cases anti-racism activists undermine their goals of eliminating racism by being obsessed with a racist discourse. Thus, practitioners fail to recognize that racism, xenophobia, and intolerance can take many forms - affecting groups or individuals because of their “race”, but also because of related grounds such as religion, national or ethnic origin, language, or gender.

Dr. Sandra Lambertus supported this point when she examined “*Methodological Dilemmas in Diversity Research*”. Her presentation included a series of case studies of research in First Nations and Aboriginal communities. She argued for a need for greater contextual understandings of diversity, and the study of systemic discrimination within public

institutions. She also argued that when factors of gender, age, physical ability, religion, socio-economic status, and urban/rural residence are brought into the mix, researching diversity and racism becomes complicated due to the multiple disadvantages that most people experience based on their social positioning. Her recommendation was for greater involvement and representation of community grassroots groups in the research process as producers of knowledge.

The last speaker of the panel, Prof. Randy Haluza-DeLay presented a success story of a case study of a coalition of community organizations and municipal agencies on race relations in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Haluza-Delay's presentation, entitled "*Social Capital and Contested Community: A Case in Anti-racism Advocacy*", focused on the aftermath of the release of a research report on racism in the community, commissioned by the coalition. The report addressed the impacts of racialization on social cohesion that, according to Prof. Haluza-Delay, increased community cohesion and awareness about diversity issues. Partnerships were forged with ethno-cultural and First Nations groups, community committees set up with a sole purpose of educating against racism and tapping into the enormous social capital that existed in Thunder Bay. After the formal presentations by all the speakers, Dr. George Sefa Dei, moderated and summarized points brought forth by the panel highlighting specific key points and perspectives.

Saturday Morning Concurrent Sessions

There were 3 workshop sessions and 1 paper session in the morning. The paper session entitled: "*Racialized and Minoritized Identities and the Schooling Process*" was chaired by Dr. Malinda Smith (Athabasca University) with Dr. George Sefa Dei (University of Toronto) as a discussant. The first presenter for this session was Dr. Joe Wu of the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta. Dr. Wu's presentation focused on the empowerment of minority language students in Alberta. The presentation introduced models of bilingual education and presented data collected during semi-structured individual interviews with 14 grade 6 children in one bilingual program in Western Canada. According to Dr. Wu, seven themes emerged from his research: perceived second language ability, negative and positive experiences of speaking Chinese, understanding of Multiculturalism, feelings of belonging, feelings of ethnic identity, the role of bilingual education in forming their thinking, and reasons for being enrolled in the bilingual programs. Dr. Wu also indicated that minority language students face many barriers in the schools and that due to several restructuring actions by school boards and governments. Programs that benefit second language learners no longer exist and students struggle as a result.

Ms. Carol Wong and Dr. Lloyd Wong (University of Calgary) presented a research paper entitled: "*From the Technical Desks Below: Chinese Canadian Engineers' Views and Experiences of the Glass Ceiling*", which examined the perceptions and experiences of this group. According to the authors, Chinese-Canadian engineers are under-represented in managerial positions and this is a result of artificial barriers; obstacles that are extraneous to the official qualifications of individuals and often taking place at the level of social interaction. The authors also indicated that although the glass ceiling is certainly

perceived to exist amongst Chinese engineers, these perceptions and experiences vary by nativity, length of residency in Canada, age, and gender. Thus, they indicated a multi-layered signification of the glass ceiling phenomenon with specific themes and conceptualizations.

In addition to the morning paper session, 3 workshops were presented. Mr. Oliver Kamau presented on the Edmonton-based *Youth Anti-racism Project (YAP)*, a project of CRC. Kamau's workshop was entitled: "*Exposing Racism Through Process Drama*", which introduced participants to a style that explores racial attitudes and behaviour through various dramatic techniques.

Mr. Cameron May and Ms. Tracy Pickup of the Calgary-based *Reach Out Against Racism (ROAR)*. This workshop focused on both individual and systemic racism. The workshop provided some insight into the causes of racism and included a variety of activities and tools for participants to affect positive social change.

The last workshop focused on "*Institutional Partnerships*" and was led by Ms. Pamela Dos Ramos (Alberta Civil Liberties Research Center) and Ms. Shirley Voyna-Watson (University of Calgary). The session was titled: "*MAGIC: Footprints for Change*". The MAGIC model illustrates a process for and the value of building coalitions in an environment of fiscal restraint. It describes the initiation, evolution, and impact of a grass roots anti-racism initiative at the University of Calgary (the Stop Racism/March 21st Committee), which effectively connects faculty, staff, and students, and members of the external community through a common vision and a respect for the value of the contributions made by all members.

Lunch Roundtable Panel

The lunch roundtable session was inaugurated by Ms. Trang Nguyen's violin melodies, which set the mood for the discussion. The lunch session entitled: "*Exposing Acclimatized Racism in Alberta: Aboriginal Voices*", was chaired by Dr. Cora Weber-Pillwax (University of Alberta) and included presentations by Mr. Terry Lusty, Mr. Arthur Knibbs, Ms. Margo Pariseau, and Ms. Angele Alook. Weber-Pillwax began the session by pointing out that due to structural realities and racism, many Aboriginal persons, families, and communities live under conditions of severe poverty. She argued that these factors and many others have affected the quality of life and the mental, physical, and emotional well-being of many Aboriginal peoples in the province of Alberta. Her recommendations included increased awareness on Aboriginal issues in academia, and because First Nations and Aboriginal peoples have long been "subjects" of the rituals of research culture; yet have been excluded as knowledge producers. Progress in race relations research involves both questioning the growth of an 'audit' culture and resisting replication of existing colonial defined research strategies. As such, Aboriginal stakeholder participation and engagement within the research process and deliberation, and the recognition of the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing in research methodologies is a necessity for people doing research on Aboriginal issues.

Building upon Weber-Pillwax' arguments, Ms. Margo Pariseau highlighted several issues facing First Nations and Aboriginal communities including socio-economic struggles, the blossoming youth population and the potential challenges this will bring, the schooling experiences of First Nations and Metis youth; empowerment of Aboriginal women; the politics of First Nations self-government, and how to foster capacity building in Aboriginal communities in urban and rural settings. Pointing to the limitations of research and lack of government implementations of the 1995 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Pariseau indicated that studies can do little to address the material wellbeing of people. What is needed, according to Pariseau, is the political will to actually put research findings and recommendations into practice.

The third speaker was Ms. Angele Alook, a graduate student in the department of Sociology at the University of Alberta. Alook began her talk by reflecting on the issues facing Aboriginal youth including teenage pregnancy, abusive relationships, joys and pains of growing up Aboriginal, family struggles of poverty, and struggles with identity. She concluded her presentation by highlighting a sense of hope that most Aboriginal and First Nations have in overcoming the struggles.

Mr. Terry Lusty discussed the issue of social exclusion as it relates to Aboriginal peoples in urban areas. As a journalist and writer, Lusty reflected on his experiences with mainstream media and the struggles he encountered trying to provide an Aboriginal perspective on several issues. He argued that institutions like the media, schools, and professional associations exclude Aboriginal ways of knowing and still refuse to work with Aboriginal peoples in equal partnership. In Lusty's opinion, anti-Aboriginal racism must be exposed in Alberta and in doing so "experiences that are so tangible in peoples' lives" will help in reacquainting the public with the socially endemic existence of racism and revalidate anti-racist activism.

The final speaker for the session was Mr. Arthur Knibbs. Knibbs reflected on his own career as an educator, stressing the pleasures to be drawn from time devoted to teaching and from advocacy work with First Nations communities. Mr. Knibbs also uncovered success stories demonstrating the commitment of many Aboriginal educators, parents, and students to the work that they do. He advocated for partnerships within diverse communities dealing with similar situations and problems.

Saturday Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

In the afternoon, 10 papers (including the story sessions) and 3 workshops were presented concurrently. The first session was entitled: *Integration and Culture* and featured presentations by Ms. Susan Jensen of the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Center. Ms. Jensen presented a video entitled "*Hopes and Dreams: Stories from Young Refugees*", which is an Alberta made film about a group of young people who were forced to give up everything and flee their home countries. The youth talked about the barriers they faced including starting school not knowing any English, making friends, and finding a job. Many refugees encounter discrimination daily, and in this video the youth also talk about

these experiences. These young people shared their personal experiences with hope that their experiences will foster a greater understanding of the plight of the refugee.

Ms. Sylvia So and Dr. Edward Makwarimba presented the results of a multi-site national study (Edmonton, Toronto, and Vancouver) on the experiences of Somali and Chinese refugees and immigrants. According to the presenters, participants in this study concurred on the major challenges faced by newcomers in Canada: language, employment, and discrimination. The study also highlighted the impact of discrimination and employment inequity on the well-being of newcomers in Alberta. Some recommendations from stakeholders were presented as means of fostering better integration.

Ms. Heather Baum and Ms. Heather Spence presented a paper entitled: “*Youth Cultural Ambassador Training (YCAT)*” that highlighted the results of a research project commissioned by the South-Eastern Alberta Racial and Community Harmony Society (SEARCH) in Medicine Hat, Alberta. The presentation described the results of an informal need assessment conducted in Medicine Hat to recruit youth from diverse backgrounds who would be willing to be trained as Youth Cultural Ambassadors. According to the results, most youth in Medicine Hat responded positively to the training project and were willing to learn about racism, cultural diversity, human rights issues, conflict resolution, and working with the media. This project also motivated the community and parents to be involved in human rights issues.

The session entitled: “*The Role of Institutions*” was chaired by Mr. Emil van der Poorten, chairperson of Edmonton Neighbourhoods Community Planning Association. Dr. Jenny Wannas-Jones (University of Alberta) presented a paper entitled: “*Defusing Multicultural Myths: An Examination of Global Media Perspectives and their Divisive Impact on Canadian Society*”. She examined the role of the media in fostering understanding, especially during the times of uncertainty.

Ms. Genevieve Balogun (Alberta Association for Multicultural Education) presented a hands-on, interactive presentation, in which participants contributed their ideas in answering the question: “*What’s the school suppose to do?*” Balogun’s presentation challenged schools and educational institutions to do more in fostering equity for all learners. She pointed out that equitable learning not only includes an inclusive curriculum, but also an acknowledgement that racism and racialization is a reality in schools.

Constable Dave Huggins presented an example of successful initiative by the Edmonton Police Service aimed at mobilizing the community in dealing with hate crimes. According to Huggins, too often people do not have a place to go to report hate-related crime and due to the Unit’s mandate of monitoring hate crimes, they have been able to keep track of hate mongers and racist groups that target youth. The Edmonton Hate Crime and Bias Unit’ mandate therefore was to enhance the capacity of the Edmonton Police Service, making it more proactive and better able to respond to incidents of hate and bias crime in Edmonton. The presentation topics included (a) history of how the Service arrived at this point, (b) definition of hate/bias crime, (c) research conducted,

(d) explanation of why there is a need for change, (e) Edmonton Police Service statistics, (f) comparison with other jurisdictions, (g) the service' current centralized strategy, (h) impact of hate/bias crime on our society, and (i) resolution and future challenges for the service. As a result of the events of September 11, 2001, the unit has been working in partnership with other organizations to deliver educational programs about citizen' rights. This process according to Constable Huggins has potential to bring the community much closer together.

The next session entitled "*Narratives of Resistance and Survival*" was chaired by Ms. Jean Moore and featured presentations from Dr. Chinyere G. Okafor, (University of Kansans), Dr. Henry Shimizu (Edmonton Japanese Community Association), and Dr. Caridad Bernardino (Edmonton Immigrant Services Association). The session began with Ms. Etty Cameron, a local Edmonton poet, reading several poems "of resistance and triumph" to set the mood for the story-tellers. Okafor' story entitled: "*African in a Women's Studies Class*" introduced a story about her experiences as a black professor in a predominantly white setting. It begins with her affliction by a disease that was harsh and had no cure. This disease that ravaged her body became a reference point that not only punctuated her feeling of loneliness and rejection, but also aggravated that feeling. The disease began to ease off mysteriously as she began to come to terms with her situation and appreciate the difficulty of many of her students who had very minimal experience of racial diversity in their background.

Dr. Henry Shimizu reflected on the experience of Japanese-Canadian internment and shared several moving stories about his experiences living through the bittersweet experience as a young teenager in the New Denver internment camp between 1942 and 1946. He reflected on those experiences and how governments invoked the slogan of "National Security" to justify their actions. The provincial government of British Columbia in collusion with the government of Canada branded all Canadian citizens with Japanese ancestry as "Enemy Aliens". Under this designation all persons of Japanese ancestry could be sent to interment camps legally and without recourse. He cautioned that sadly, after 9/11 in the United States, this familiar scenario rippled forth again to impact Muslim and Arab communities.

Dr. Caridad Bernardino told a series of stories entitled: "*A Proposed Journey of Victory Over Racism*" which presented the stories of how the day-to-day struggles over racism has equipped minority youth to triumph and break out of the mould of victimhood and challenge racism head-on. According to Dr. Bernardino, a significant number of youth in her program have successfully defied the odds and overcome the barriers erected by racism in a feat that has left others in awe. Not only have the youth stood out in their communities, they have carved their mark in the global arena as well. This presentation tracked these small pockets of victory and packaged them into a training tool that builds on the inherent capacities of racial minority youth to help them engage in various forms of active non-violent resistance and construct creative strategies to deal proactively with racism. Through collaboration and working in the spirit of solidarity, racial minority youth learn to challenge their oppressed situations without the fears, frustration, and uncertainties that render them vulnerable to the temptation of giving up the struggle when

acting alone. This presentation also offered a training tool and the different phases in guiding racial minority youth through a journey of reflection, re-examination, transformation, and finally, a celebration of a shared vision of victory over racism.

In addition to the paper and story sessions, 3 workshops were presented and these included 2 presentations on the “*Role of Institutions and Policies*”: a presentation by Ms. Sushila Samy entitled: “*Employment Equity: Myth and Reality*” and a presentation by Mr. Nicholas Ameyaw entitled: “*Human Rights in the Workplace*”. Ameyaw’s workshop provided information on the role of the Alberta Human Rights Commission’s public education program aimed at fostering equality and reducing discrimination in the workplace. The session also provided an overview of the six modules of *Human Rights in the Workplace* workshop that were being offered across Alberta. Ms. Sushila Samy described the elements of the Canadian Employment Equity Program and problematized why it was misunderstood. Ms. Samy also examined the historical roots of the employment equity policy, recent changes to it, the effectiveness of Employment Equity Programs as applied in institutions and strategies for individuals and organizations to help strengthen the program.

The third workshop session was titled: “*Representing Difference*” and was lead by Ms. Helen Rusich of the Millwoods Welcome Center for Newcomers. Ms. Rusich presented a workshop entitled “*Understanding Personality Differences in Relations to Racism*”. This workshop introduced three tools that allowed delegates to determine how racism exists at an individual level. Participants completed a *Thinking Preference Survey* that demonstrated their preferred way of gathering information, how they make decisions, where they get their energy from, and how they orient themselves to specific social situations. Thereafter, the discussion aimed at understanding that when individuals recognize differences in others they can begin to understand how racism and other forms of discrimination occur.

At this time, the original plan was to gather in small groups to address a list of questions. The day was full and organizers were too ambitious in their plans. The afternoon sessions described above took longer than anticipated and a decision was made to go directly to the final panel.

Final Panel Session

The discussion around funding was the most challenging session of the forum. The panel was entitled: “*Funding Diversity, Anti-racism, and Multiculturalism Work: Moving Beyond the Rhetoric*” and it focused on the complex issue of funding diversity and anti-racism projects and the challenges involved. The panellists discussed issues such as funding diversity and anti-racism work in the province; who gets funded and why; government priorities and the need for accountability; community and non-for-profit struggles; and challenges in accessing dollars.

Speakers included non-for profit agencies, program funders, and community group leaders. Mr. Jim Gurnett, director of the Edmonton Mennonite Center for Newcomers

talked about difficulties in funding short-term projects, implementation and outcomes of projects, and what organizations are going through in terms getting dollars to do worthwhile work. On his discussion about the difficulty of securing funding and the implications of short-term projects, Gurnett indicated that sustainable and ongoing funding should be a priority or an option for funders if some good work with exceptional outcomes is being done.

Ms. Lan Chan-Marples, of the City of Edmonton Community Services department talked about the need to reorient non-for-profit organizations into the new guidelines or rules for funding. Speaking from her previous experience working from both sides of the spectrum (as a funder and a non-for-profit leader), she indicated that rules change and guidelines are modified by funding agencies as they strive for accountability. Ms. Lan Chan-Marples' solution was a more transparent system where funders and fund seekers are aware of and clear on the rules. She also pointed out that on a macro-level, diversity and anti-racism projects tends to be low priority for funders, especially in the mainstream. What is needed, according to Chan-Marples was to convince governments and other funders that this kind of work is as important to social cohesion and stability of the province as is economic vitality.

Community presenters argued that because of competing agendas and lack of representation of ethno-cultural communities within mainstream service organizations; funding priorities must be redirected to grassroots organizations that do the work in the first place. Mr. Luketa M'Pindou of Alliance Jeunesse-Famille de L'Alberta spoke of how community groups struggle in accessing dollars to do valuable work. M'Pindou spoke of the struggles of the French immigrant minority groups in seeking funding. He advocated for a case-to-case funding mechanism that recognized the uniqueness of communities. Mr. M'Pindou gave an example of the French African minority within a minority French population. He indicated that the unique position that such groups find themselves (i.e. as both racialized and linguistic minorities) calls for recognition of issues that can no longer be ignored. He stated that although governments and funders are responding positively to such situations, more funding for projects in such communities is needed in order to ensure better integration.

Ms. Nora Abou-Absi of the Canadian Arab Friendship Association reiterated and expanded on M'Pindou' argument about the need for community-based funding. Abou-Absi spoke of the dilemma of funding "mainstream" non-for-profit organizations for doing the work "on behalf" of ethno-cultural/religious community groups and the challenges that brings. Ms. Abou-Absi argued that grassroots community groups who understand the specific needs and contexts of specific communities are doing incredible work on behalf of their communities and funding such groups could assist the province in moving forward in the fight against discrimination and intolerance. Ms. Abou-Absi also pointed out that we must examine how funding priorities are directed and control research priorities. Better dialogue with funding agencies, and other organizations, according to Abou-Absi, is needed in order to avoid duplication and to increase partnerships.

Mr. Nicholas Ameyaw of the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship, and Multiculturalism Education Fund gave the final presentation in which he outlined its funding priorities. According to Ameyaw the Education Fund provides financial assistance to community organizations that are undertaking human rights and diversity initiatives that lead to change. These resources are used to assist all kinds of educational activities that help foster equality, promote fairness, and encourage access for all Albertans. He advised fund seekers to familiarize themselves with the priorities of funders.

Conclusion

The plenum provided a rich opportunity for practitioners and researchers to reflect and share their research outcomes, experiences, action plans, skills, and ways to overcome barriers to implementation. All in all, 136 delegates attended the forum, representing all sectors of society from government personnel, business, youth, non-for-profit organizations, institutions, and community group representatives. In addition, 29 presentations that included workshops, papers, posters, and panel presentations, were presented and delegates were presented an opportunity to explore how research can be applied. The sessions were weaved together to provide opportunities for delegates to develop long-term strategies for increasing collaboration and cooperation. This process began with the address by keynote speaker, Dr. George Sefa Dei, who described the major issues, challenges, and possibilities facing anti-racism and diversity researchers and advocates as they do their work.

Additionally, several presenters outlined the critical issues in race relations research; funding for diversity and anti-racism projects; Aboriginal & First Nations Issues; schooling process and racism; equity issues; intersection of race, class, sexuality, and gender; immigrant integration; and the role of institutions and policy. One critical theme highlighted in all the presentations was the importance of community partnerships and collaborative efforts in addressing racism at all levels. Collaborative relationships have the potential of providing researchers and practitioner's great strength to advocate for changes within their organizations or place of work. This had particular benefits when researchers from postsecondary institutions and community-based researchers collaborate and share ideas. At the community level, collaboration and partnerships were seen as very important.