

LANE COUNTY ESTABLISHES EQUITY BOARD

With a spate of hateful graffiti in the Whiteaker and anti-immigrant rhetoric on the national level, Lane County's timing in establishing its Equity and Access Advisory Board is fortuitous.

The 15-member commission — which still has four spots open — is tasked with guiding and advising County Administrator Steve Mokrohisky on policies and practices surrounding equity, inclusion and access both within the county government and around Lane County itself, Mokrohisky says.

The county has hired Mo Young as equity and access coordinator. Mokrohisky says the county heard from the public that people don't just want to see it "create an advisory board and call it good." Ironically, he says, the new board was not created with the current climate in mind.

Young herself says she is the daughter of two public

defenders and was raised to believe "We do what we can to help others." Young has previously worked for the county as well as at the human rights group Community Alliance of Lane County.

Lane County had a Human Rights Advisory Board from 1992 to 2012. Commissioner Pete Sorenson voted against its disbanding and agitated for its reinstatement. In 2014, the county says, community members also requested the board be re-established. The city of Eugene's Human Rights Commission has been a key element in pushing the city on issues such as Indigenous People's Day and becoming a sanctuary city.

After engaging community stakeholders on what people wanted, three priorities emerged, according to county documents: Improving recruitment retention and advancement for diverse people in county government itself; establishing a culture in Lane County that asks tough questions,

gets at real issues and addresses moral, ethical and professional commitment to equity; and finally creating a culture that engages in "courageous conversations."

Young says one challenge of the Equity Board is getting diversity on the board itself. The board can have from nine to 15 members, and at least 51 percent of the members must be "individuals who identify with underrepresented communities, or are a part of an underrepresented community." One-third of the advisory board will be made up of people from outside of the Eugene/Springfield metro area.

Current board members lean heavily towards the 97401 South Eugene zip code, but members are also listed as living in Florence and Junction City. — *Camilla Mortensen*

Those interested in participating on Lane County's new Equity and Access Advisory Board can go to lanecounty.org/government and select "advisory boards and committees."

ACTIVISM 101

"Nonviolent direct action": This bit of political jargon might sound like some kind of anarchist crap, but it's probably what you've been doing since the inauguration if you're newly politically active.

Those rallies you've attended, phone calls to senators, and petitions you've signed are all non-violent direct actions — actions taken by a group with the aim of revealing a problem, highlighting an alternative or demonstrating a solution to an issue. On Feb. 4, 350 Eugene put on a daylong series of training sessions attended by about 150 people to introduce new activists to the frontlines of making change.

Bonnie McKinlay with the Climate Action Coalition in Portland taught her workshop, "Action Design," at the Saturday training. According to McKinlay, effective actions require a lot of planning in advance, and they attempt to change a very specific aspect of the larger cause. "We really want to make sure that the actions we design are effective, that we have a definite plan, that we're aware of who our allies are and we respect them, and that we know where our opposition is coming from," McKinlay said.

Direct actions are not always in the streets. They can be in the courts or in the form of letters or sit-ins. In an article provided by McKinlay at her workshop, political scientist Erica Chenoweth points out that flexible, innovative and peaceful movements are the most successful. "Movements that rely too much on single methods — such as protests, petitions or rallies — are less likely to win in the end." So be creative with your movement and direct your campaign with multiple different tactics aimed toward the same goal.

If you have a cause you care about, start by finding a point of intervention that disrupts the current status quo, McKinlay said. "Points of intervention" are various aspects of a system that may be disrupted to great effect, such as a forest that's being logged, a mill processing the wood or a store selling the goods.

In the case of making Eugene a sanctuary city, the point of decision may be the best option. In other words, target decision-makers with the action. "This decision-maker could be an individual, it could be a body like the Eugene City Council, or it could be the public," McKinlay says.

She suggested seeing whether politicians have made promises in the past that you can repeat back to them, or

seeing whether they have personal or financial influences that you can reach out to. Act as a member of the public to change their mind. McKinlay says you can call as a voter, form a protest where they work, or contact the media to pitch stories that may influence that decision-maker or the public.

"You should start with a letter. You should always be open to negotiation with the other side," McKinlay said. Starting small gives a movement room to build pressure. "Always escalate, continue negotiations, and continue your presence before the public and before the opposition."

Perhaps most important, McKinlay said: Be prepared. A good movement is a pre-planned movement. In any case, she says, be active. "Find an organization or some friends and start your own." — *Kelly Kenoyer*

Even though you missed the 350 Eugene training, plenty of other organizations put them on as well. On Tuesday, Feb. 28 Oregon Wild will host an event at Claim 52 Brewing from 6:30-8:30 pm to help new activists plug in. RSVP at oregonwild.org/events. Eugene-Springfield Solidarity Network is hosting a series of four workshops on non-violent direct action on the UO campus, Lawrence Hall room 115 from 3-5 pm on Saturdays, Feb. 18, Feb. 25, March 4 and March 11. Also keep an eye out for future trainings with the Civil Liberties Defense Center and 350 Eugene.

POLLUTION UPDATE

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality recently sent a warning letter to **Dirk & Colleen Brainerd** in Springfield for operating the wastewater treatment system without a permit at the **Country Inn** on County Farm Road in Eugene. DEQ classified this violation as a "Class I" violation (the most serious class of violations), and noted the human health and environmental problems that can be presented by human sewage. DEQ's inspection also appeared to indicate a lack of maintenance of the treatment system.

— *Doug Quirke/Oregon Clean Water Action Project*



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