

Understanding Social Equity for Recycling & Sustainability Programs

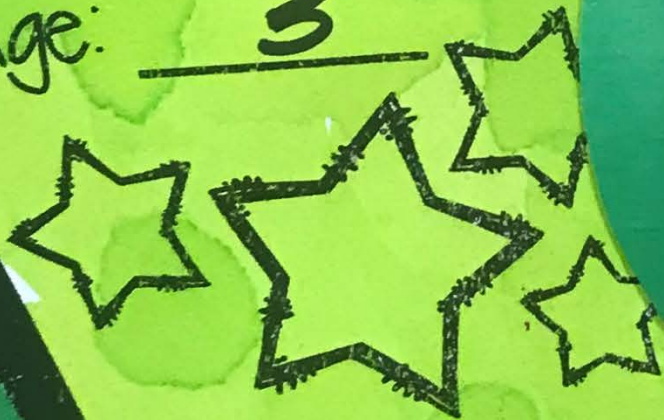
Michigan Recycling Coalition Annual Conference

May 15, 2019



Birthday: 11.30.11

Age: 3



MY FAVORITES!

● Food: BANANAS

● Color: BLACK

Animal: MOOSE

WHEN I GROW UP I WANT
TO BE: _____

GARBAGE

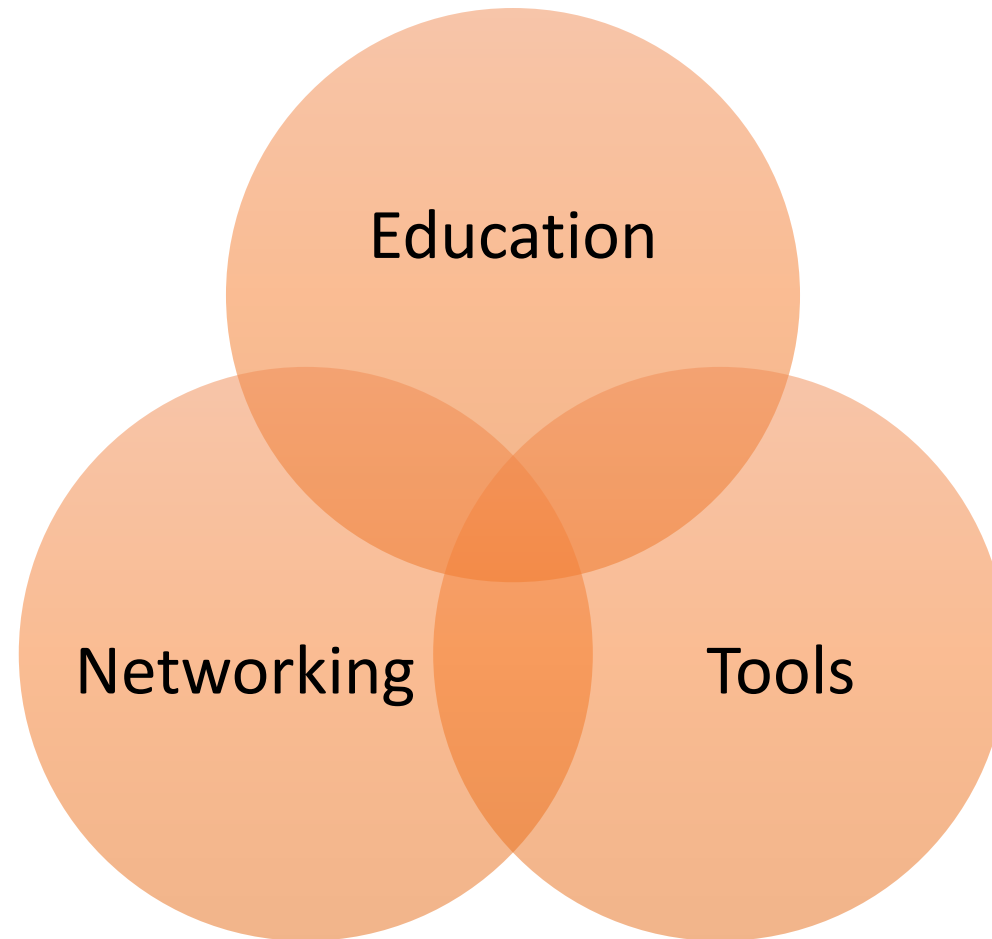
MAN



West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum promotes business practices that demonstrate environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social responsibility through education and collaboration.



Education & Collaboration





SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS



CIRCULAR ECONOMY



CLIMATE CHANGE



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY





Working Groups



- Equitable Sustainability
- CSR Roundtable
- Waste Task Force
- Food Recovery Council
- Sustainable Events
- Green Team User Group
- Climate Leadership
- Stormwater Task Force
- Adaptation Council
- Wellness Committee
- Regional Leadership

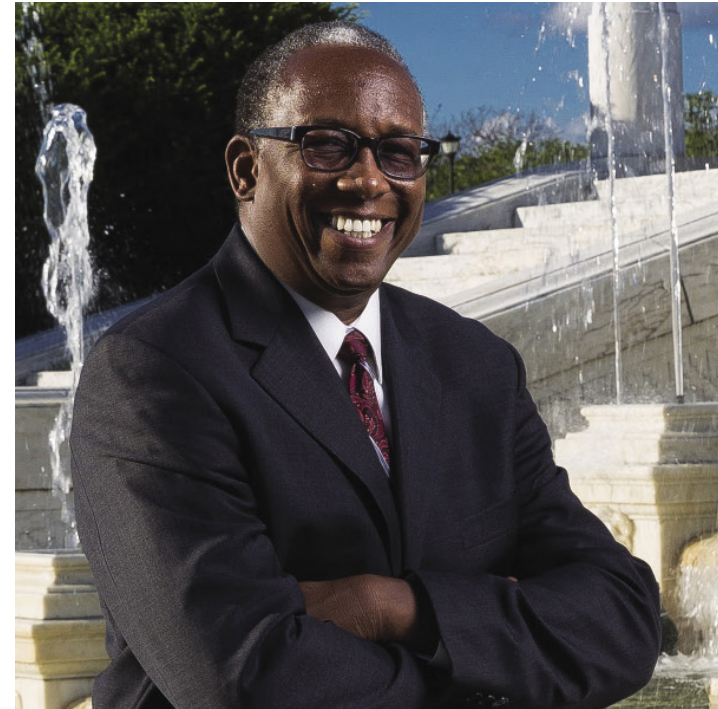
Muskegon May: Environmental Justice



May 21, 12 pm – 1:30 pm

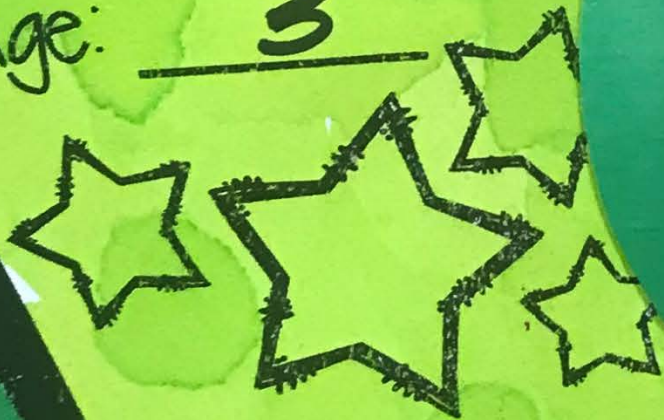
Guy Williams, DWEJ

Annis Water Resources @ GVSU



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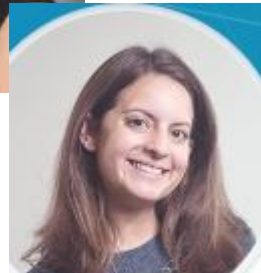
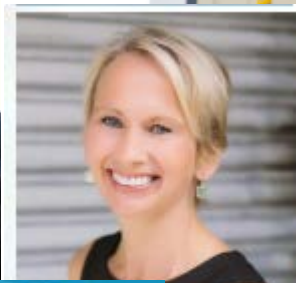
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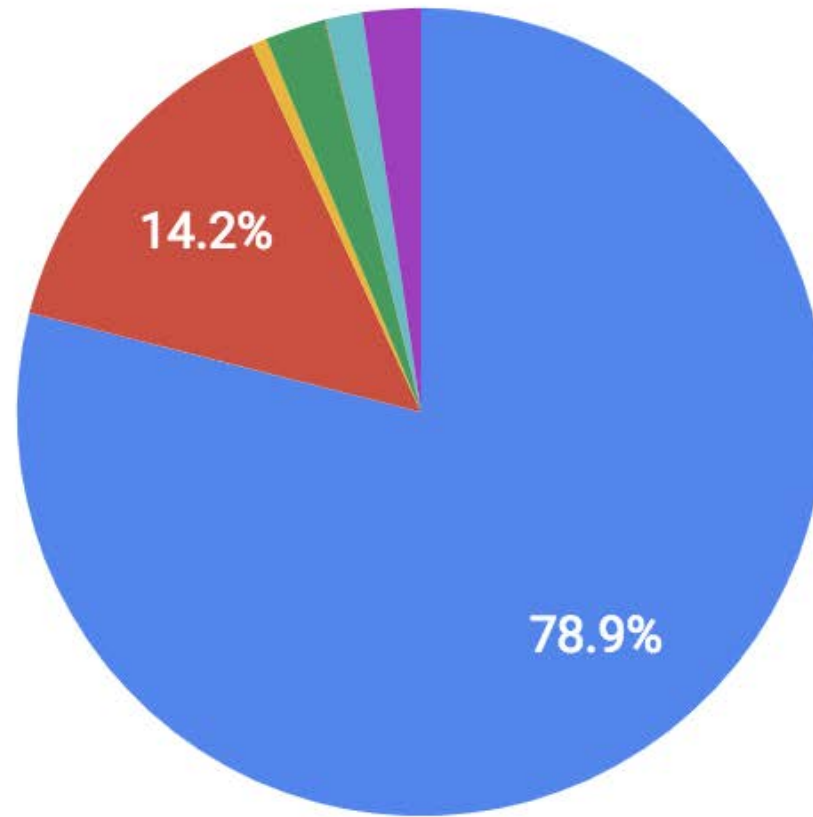


Definitions and Major Concepts



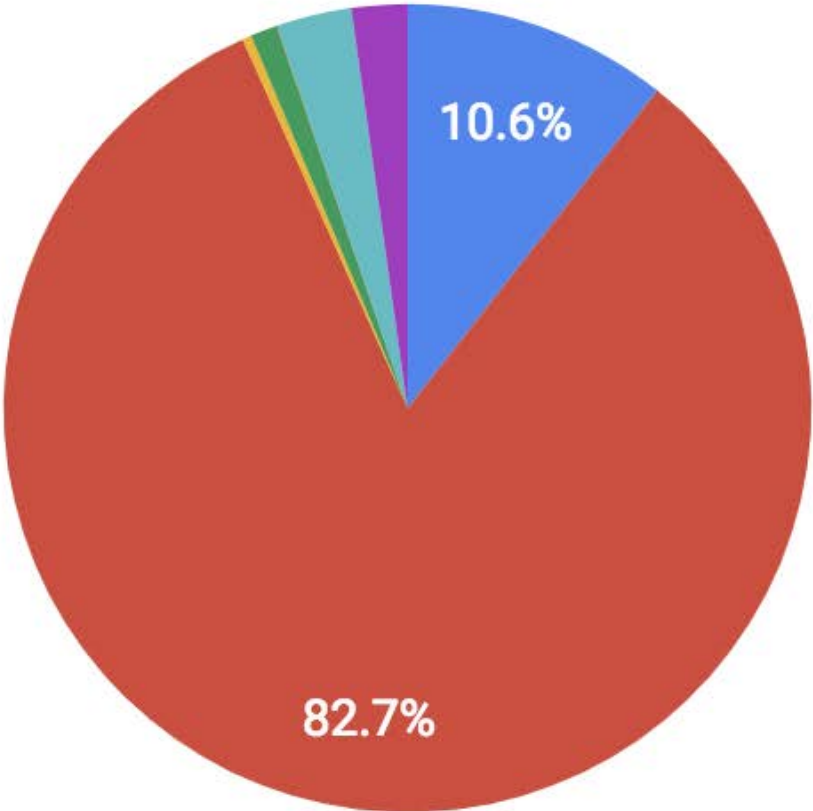
Diversity: The wide range of national, ethnic, racial and other backgrounds of U.S. residents and immigrants as social groupings, co-existing in American culture.

Michigan's Racial Demographics 2010



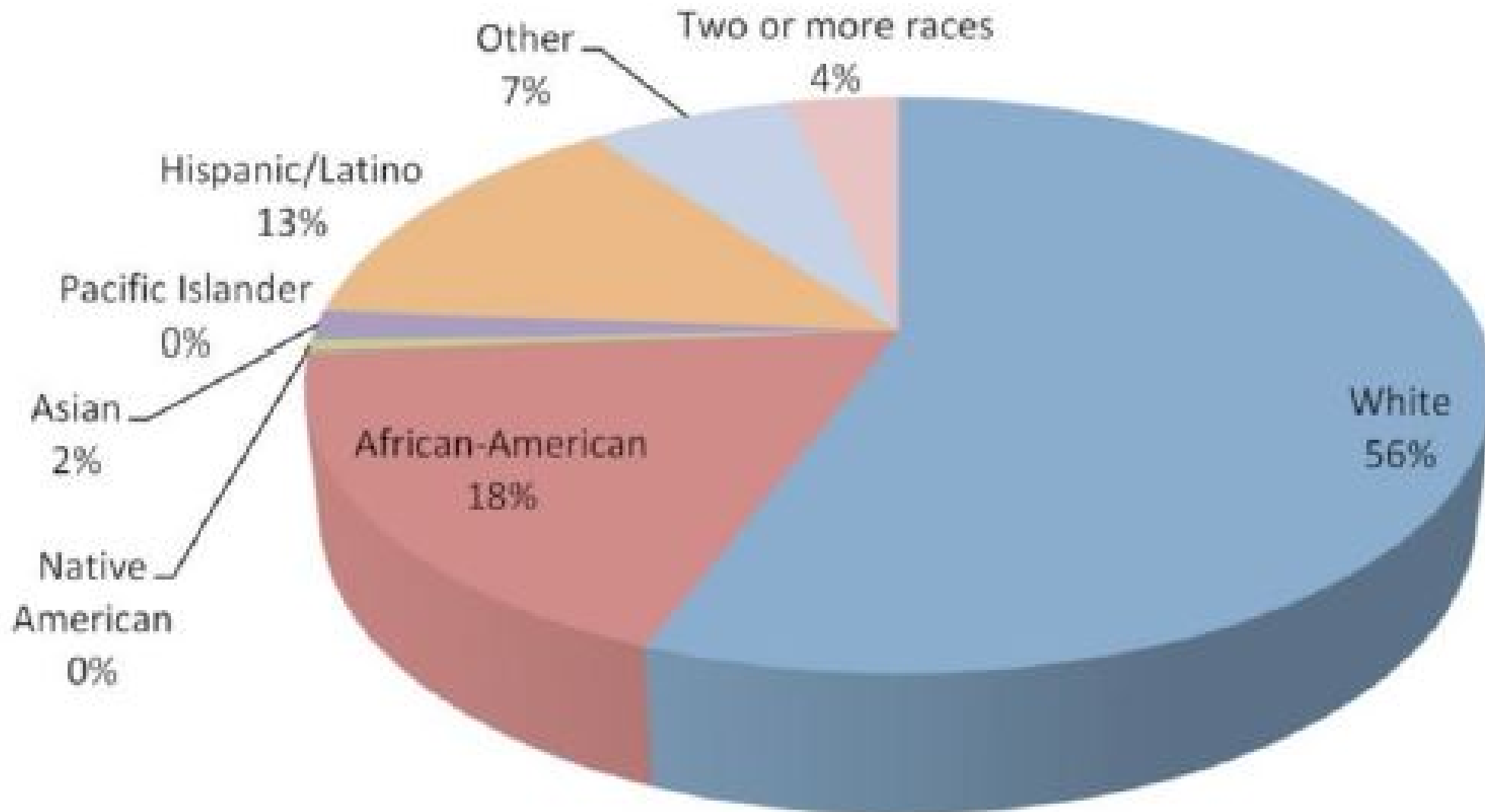
- White
- Black
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Some other race
- Two or more races

Detroit's Racial Demographics 2010



- White
- Black
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Some other race
- Two or more races

City of Grand Rapids: Demographic Overview



Culture: Behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, values, norms and hidden rules reflected in language and behavior.

Cultural Orientations Indicator- COI



Best Practice



- Adapting to cultural preferences
- Close to zero-based program design
- Expecting patience and conflict
- Sensitivity: Refuse Packing Operator

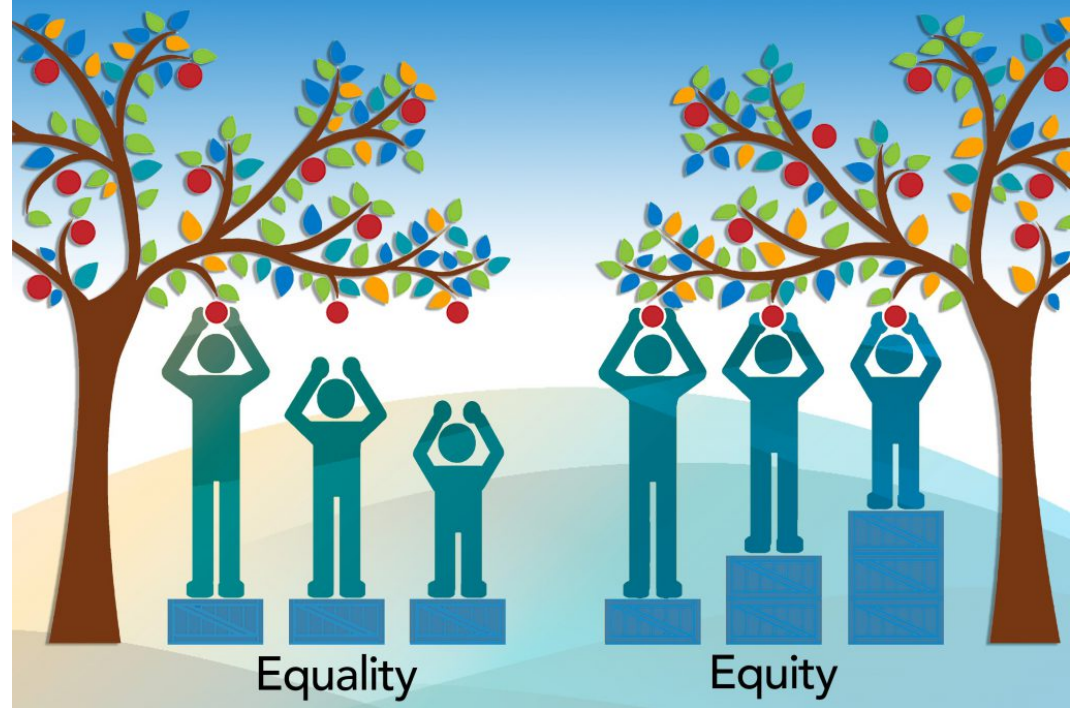
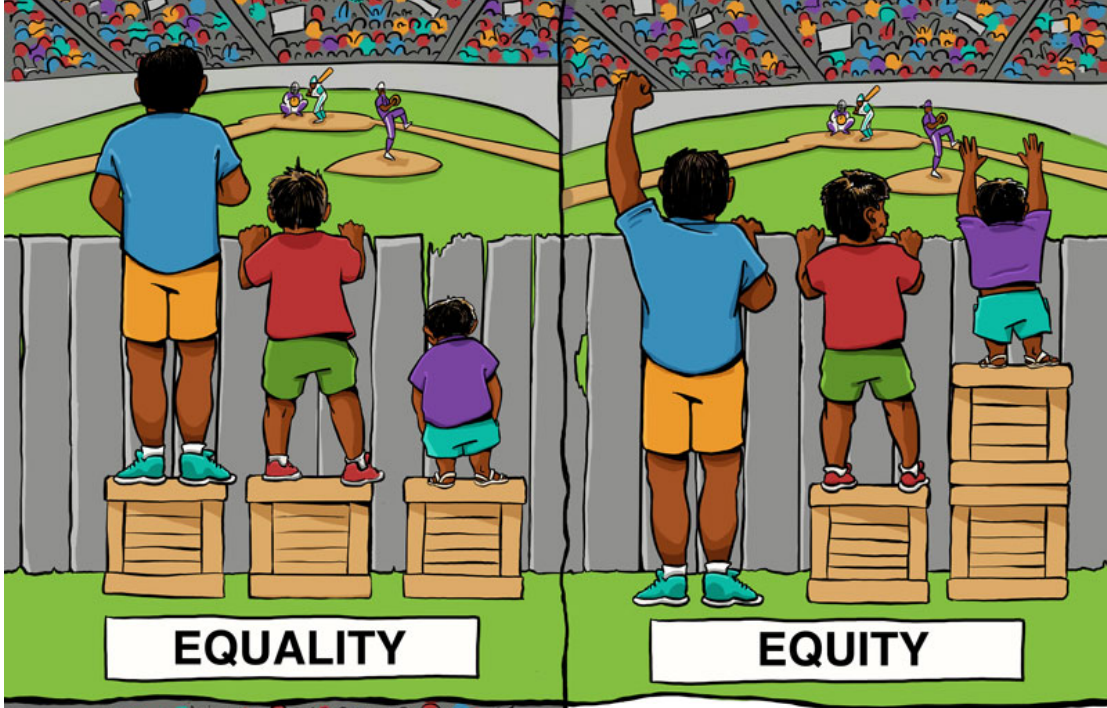
Inclusion: authentically brings traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making.



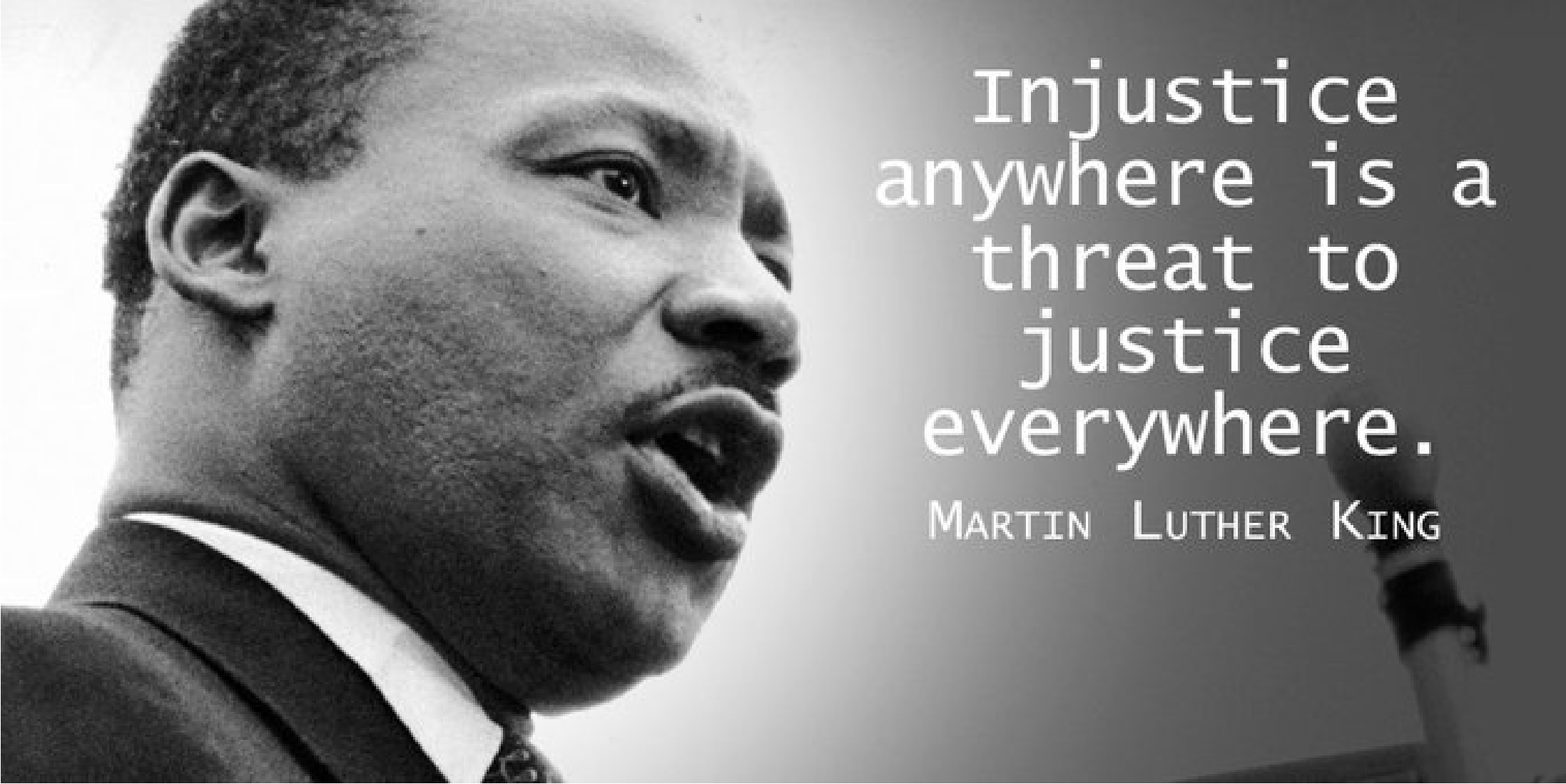
"DIVERSITY IS BEING INVITED TO THE PARTY;
INCLUSION IS BEING ASKED TO DANCE."

VERNA MYERS, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EXPERT

Social equity: fair access to livelihood, education, and resources; full participation in the political and cultural life of the community; and self-determination in meeting fundamental needs.



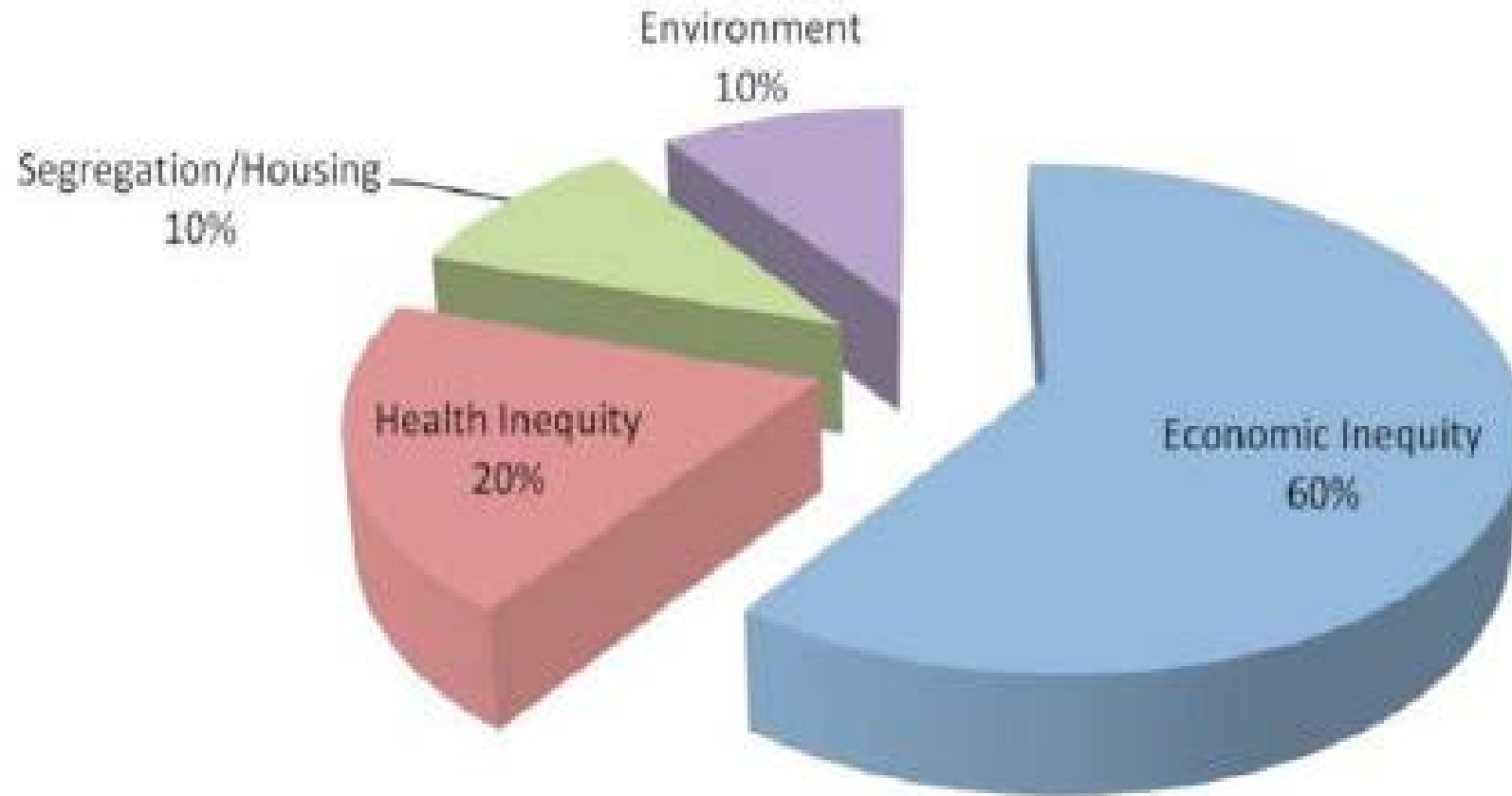
Justice: fair and just relations between the individual and society. This is measured by the explicit and tacit terms for the distribution of wealth, opportunities for personal activity, and social privileges.

A black and white profile photograph of Martin Luther King Jr. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark suit jacket, a white collared shirt, and a patterned tie. His mouth is open as if he is speaking, and a microphone is visible in the lower right corner of the frame. The background is a plain, light color.

Injustice
anywhere is a
threat to
justice
everywhere.

MARTIN LUTHER KING

Conditions of Exclusion [10 years]: Grand Rapids/West Michigan



Corporate Social Responsibility: Business values, practices, programs and activities that are market and non-compliance-oriented areas of social involvement and responses to issues of the public interest important to the communities and environment where our members conduct their business.

CSR vs. Sustainability

- CSR = Protect Now
- Sustainability = Protect the Future



White Supremacy (w/o white supremacists): A political or socioeconomic system, in which white people enjoy a structural advantage (privilege) over other ethnic groups, on both a collective and individual level.

White privilege is a structural approach, it argues against a discrete-action approach, and it allows us to move into the area of thinking of **racism as an ideology that is embedded in the landscape and economic systems.** A lot of our landscapes of environmental injustice are created through white privilege.



White Ally: Actively supports racial equality by using their privilege to speak out, stand up, and create change.

VALUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

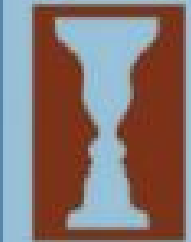
- Don't assume. We are all *diverse* and *complex*.
- Listen to (hear) and *believe* the experiences of people of color.
- The work begins with us. See and call white privilege.
- Every system is *perfectly designed to produce* the results it achieves.
- Reflect, be *vulnerable*, listen and learn. If I'm *comfortable*, who is *not*?



1. Are all racial/ethnic groups likely to be affected at the table?



2. How will the proposed policy or decision affect each group?



3. How will the proposed policy be perceived by each group?

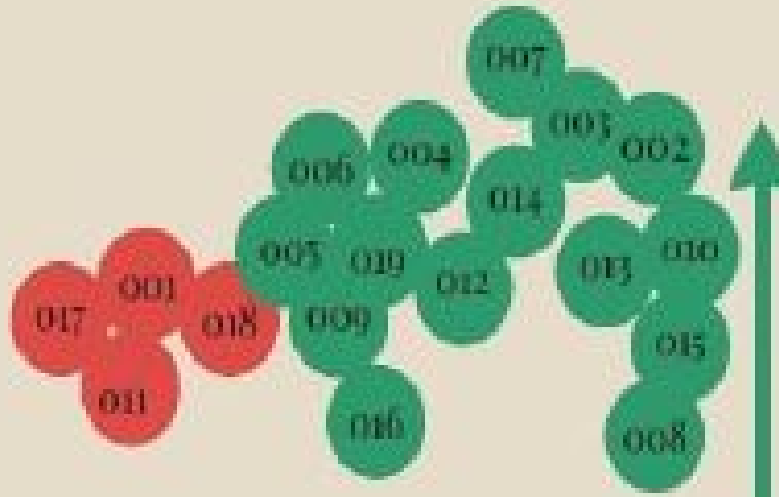


4. Does the policy worsen or ignore existing disparities?



5. Based on the aforementioned, what revisions are needed in the policy or decision?

Minimization: 3rd and final ethnocentrism stage



Acceptance: 4th overall stage and first enculturation stage

Denial



Defense



Minimization

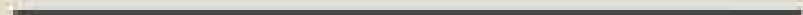
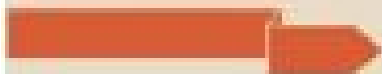
Acceptance



Adaptation



Integration



Importance of understanding to recycling



“it's not surprising for us not to care so much about sustainability, since the word 'sustainability' basically doesn't exist”



Contamination

- Cultural/language barriers
- Economic drivers
- Difficulties addressing bad actors



Participation

- Growing demographic
- Population centers
- Equitable service



Environmental Justice & Recycling



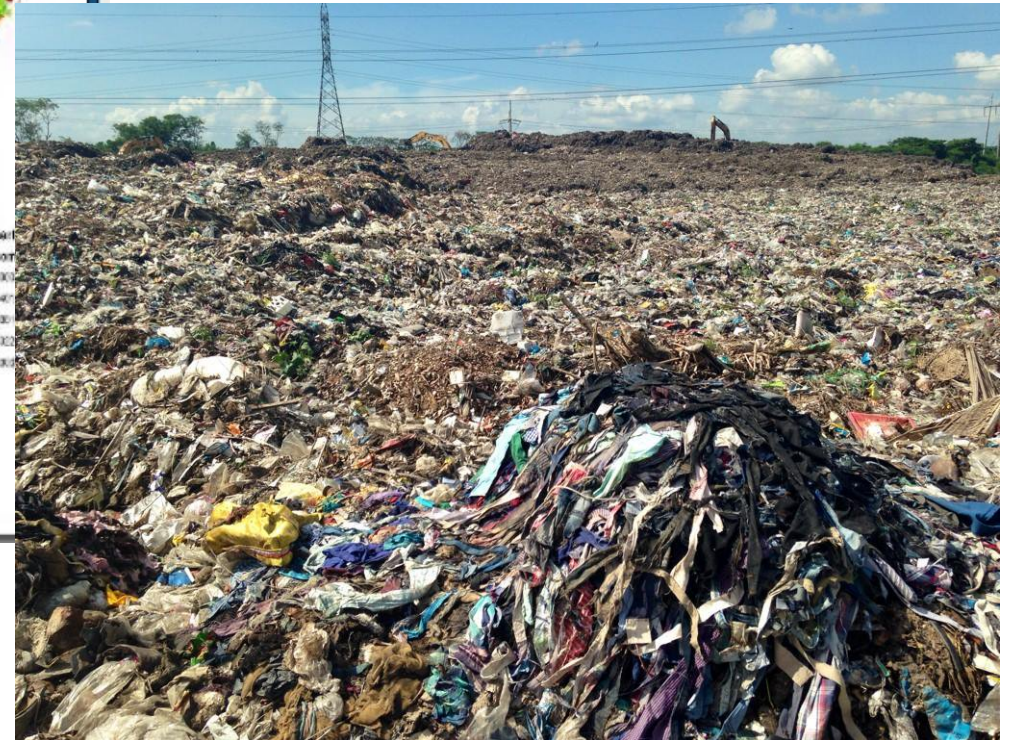
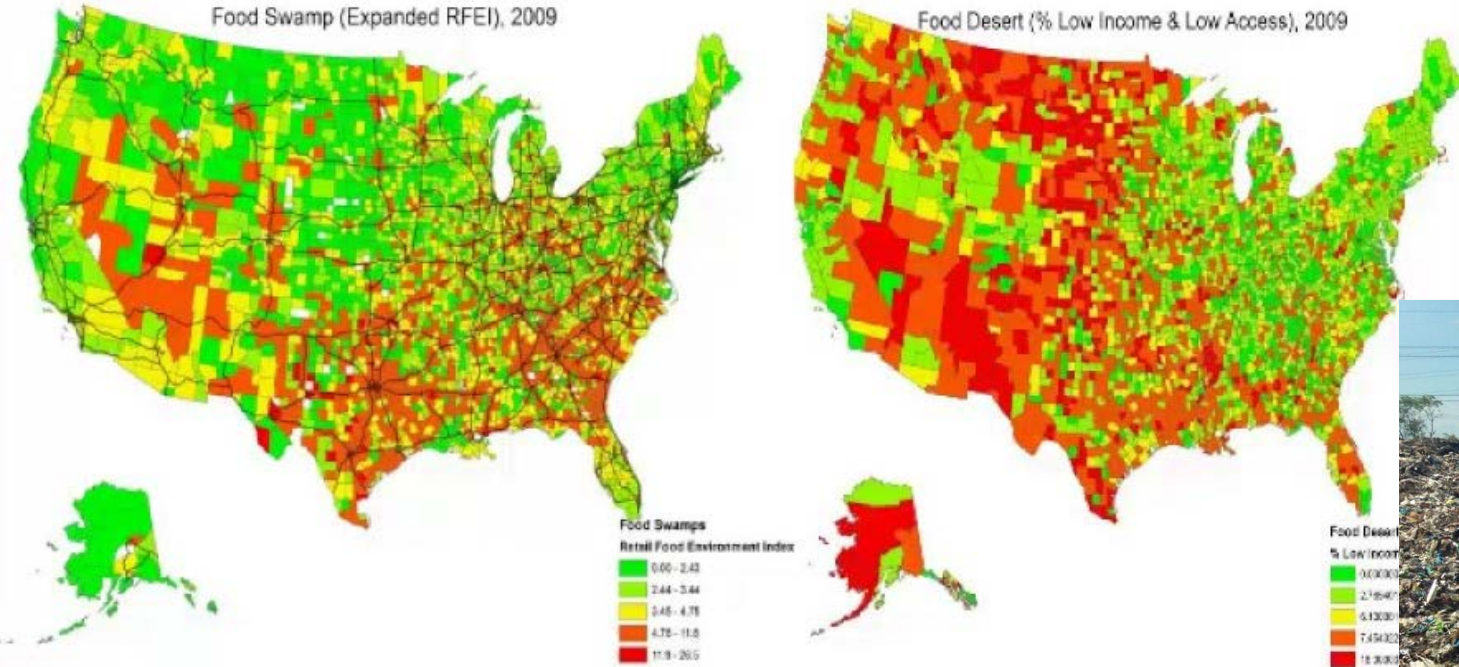
- Disadvantaged communities are more likely to be impacted by environmental issues
 - See: Flint, Mich.
- Unintended consequences
 - See: Food Waste, China sword, clothing exports



Food Swamps vs. Food Deserts

Food Swamp (Expanded RFEI), 2009

Food Desert (% Low Income & Low Access), 2009



New Funding



Social justice is more attractive to funders than waste management

- Diversity training
- Translation
- Community outreach / partnership development
- Address inequities / justice
- Economic development
- K12 Education



Equitable Sustainability



- Make Sustainable Business Relevant to All Audiences
- Improve Diversity
- Promote a Justice-Centered Model



Intersectionality of solid waste management/recycling and environmental justice and how improved waste diversion and recycling can improve the well-being of vulnerable populations

Galen Hardy, MPA

Zero Waste Detroit



Zero Waste Detroit

A coalition for recycling and an end to waste incineration

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is often referred to as the equitable treatment of diverse races and classes with respect to “development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies”

Tenets of Environmental Justice

- The two basic tenets of Environmental Justice are that no group of people — whatever their race, color, national origin, or income — should disproportionately bear negative environmental impacts.
- Environmental Justice also holds that people should have meaningful voices in decisions that impact their environment and health

The Path of Least Resistance

- Industry disproportionately targets poor and minority communities
- Born out of the white middle class NIMBY Movement of the 70's
- It stereotyped poor and minority communities as uncaring about the environment
- Impacted communities have fewer resources and political clout to oppose the siting of unwanted facilities

The Path of Least Resistance

- Landfills, hazardous waste sites, and other industrial facilities are most often located in communities of color.(1)
- A report titled “Toxic Waste and Race at Twenty” reviewed data collected over a 20-year time period and found that more than half of the people who live within 1.86 miles of toxic waste facilities in the United States are people of color. (1)

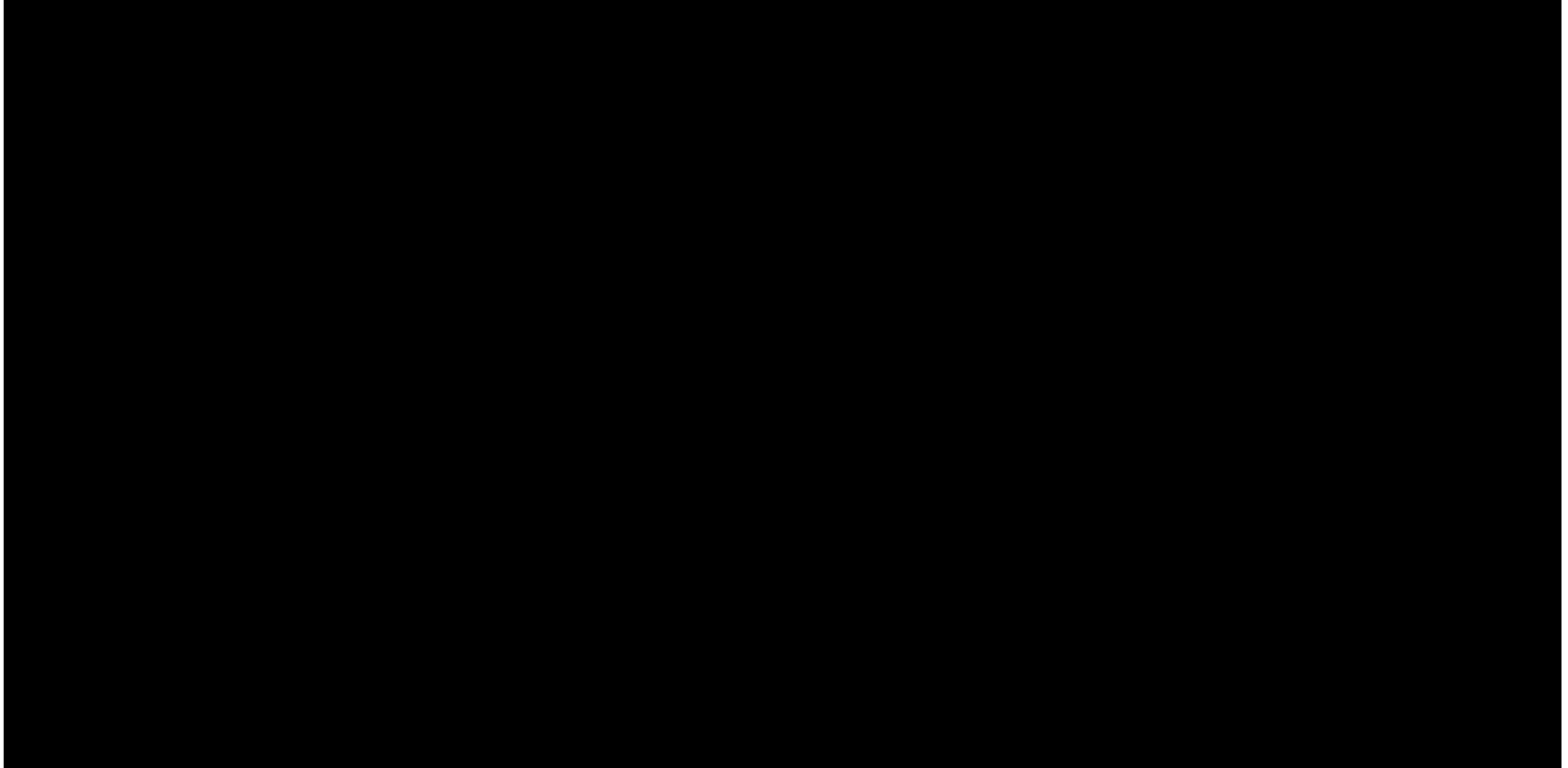
Fence Line Communities

- Fence-line communities are communities that are next to a company, industrial, or service facility and are directly affected in some way by the facility's operation (e.g. noise, odor, traffic, and chemical emissions) (2)

Fence Line Communities

- Most fence-line communities in the United States are low-income individuals and communities of color who experience systemic oppression such as environmental racism (2)

Environmental Racism in Michigan



Environmental Justice issues in Detroit

- Path of Least Resistance (communities of color)
- Prevalence of TSDFs (transfer, storage and disposal facilities) in communities of color
- Detroit is the epicenter of childhood asthma in the State of Michigan
- 48217 is the most polluted zip code in Michigan

Fostering Healthy Neighborhoods by Recycling

- Some of the many benefits of recycling are the prevention of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and supporting local economies by creating jobs and tax revenue.



Fostering Healthy Neighborhoods by Recycling

- Recycling programs can also help to improve water and air quality and are building blocks for sustainable growing communities.



Recycling as an indicator of a creative economy

- Creative economies attract alternative, sustainable industries to the areas
- A community's commitment to a cleaner environment is often considered to reflect its commitment to a higher quality of living



Improved Water Quality a By-Product of Recycling

- Recycling can reduce a range of pollutants from entering the rivers, streams, and other waters of our state by reducing discharges to the environment.
- Recycling a ton of paper saves as much as 7,000 gallons of water and eliminates the wastes that would typically be generated during manufacturing from virgin pulp

Recycling in Detroit

- Currently we are at 27.5% participation rate
- Recycling program started in 2014
- 55,000 out of 217,000 residents have a recycling cart
- 4% diversion rate in the City of Detroit including yard waste
- Multifamily and Commercial properties serviced by City Hauler are being considered for recycling services in 2019
- Many residents still don't know how to receive a recycling container

Recycling in Detroit: opportunities

- Opting-out instead of opting into curbside recycling
- Creating City Ordinances mandating recycling in multifamily housing and commercial –**which is still optional**
- Mandating recycling in businesses
- Beginning enforcement or consequences for improper recycling
- Increased government messaging on how to recycle
- Required recycling in new developments to qualify for tax rebates

Climate Change and recycling making the connection in Detroit

- Effects of climate change will hit hardest on EJ communities
- Recycling is one personal action everyone can take
- Relative silence in Detroit, on the connection of these two issues begs these questions:
 - a) Is there unconscious bias that people of color and the poor don't care about the environment?
 - b) Is there assumption that Detroit, as a community of color, cannot achieve high levels of waste reduction and diversion?
 - c) How do we invest in a new model of managing solid waste and ramp up efforts to reduce GHGs?

Contact Information

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www.zerowastedetroit.org

Sources

1. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2016/04/25/136361/5-things-to-know-about-communities-of-color-and-environmental-justice>
2. http://www.naacp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Fumes-Across-the-Fence-Line_NAACP_CATF.pdf