



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION NEWSLETTER

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How Can I Be an Ally?

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How Can I Be An Ally to the Black & Visible Minority Community?

How can I be an ally is a question that many people are asking these days. Although the term ally is not new, the term is being broadly used when it relates to racism and understanding the plight of people who do not look or sound like you. First, let's define the term ally. An ally is any person who supports, empowers, or stands up for another person or a group of people. How can I become an ally?

Educate Yourself

One must be willing to learn. If you want a better understanding of a particular culture, immerse yourself in history via classes, articles, stories, film and blogs. Just make sure documentation is from a reliable source. In the year 2020, many people had never heard of Juneteenth or the Black Wall Street. These events are part of the Black culture and Juneteenth has been celebrated for years. These two events are not mentioned in the history books that taught in K-12, therefore you must educate yourself.

Acknowledge Privilege

Before you can be an ally, you must understand there are certain things in life you may never experience or may never have to think about just because of who you are. It does not mean you have had an easy life and have not struggled. Understanding the rights you have and others do not, is critical for growth.

Listen & Speak Up

There is a reason why we have two ears and one mouth. How can you learn if you do not listen? Remember, it is not about you. How many times have you thought "it doesn't apply or affect me?" Sometimes it is not what we do, it is what we do not do that defines us. Speaking up takes courage and emotional fortitude. It is easy to sit on the sidelines and watch. Find your voice and use it for the betterment of society.

Examine Your Own Prejudices/Biases

The willingness to examine and understand your own possible prejudices or biases is very important for growth. Biases may be hidden or implicit and when people have a conscious commitment to change, they may be willing to confront and correct them. In summary, there are many more meaningful ways to become an ally. These are only a few suggestions and wherever you are in this journey, I encourage you to keep it going.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Against All Odds: The Fight For a Black Middle Class

When it comes to daily headlines, the black middle class is nearly invisible. The news tends to focus on dysfunction in poor black neighborhoods, confrontations with police, disappointing achievements in urban schools. There's a lot missing from that narrative. To find out more, watch the documentary "Against All Odds: The Fight for a Black Middle Class."

"Have black Americans had a fair shot at the American dream?" acclaimed journalist Bob Herbert asks. He probes the harsh and often brutal discrimination that has made it extremely difficult for African-Americans to establish a middle-class standard of living, while also exploring the often heroic efforts of Black families to pursue the American Dream in the face of unrelenting barriers.

<https://www.pbs.org/wnet/chasing-the-dream/stories/odds-full-film/>

