



# Social Justice & Racial Equity

First Quarter Update  
(January–March 2020)



CITY OF IOWA CITY : SOCIAL JUSTICE & RACIAL EQUITY

# Accountability

January—March, Parks and Recreation staff worked extensively alongside students and staff of the pilot Iowa City Community School District 'Seal of Bi-literacy' program to plan, implement and translate special event materials in order to **encourage diverse groups to attend Parks and Recreation events, programs and facilities**. How to address common barriers, including language and accessibility, was a common topic of discussion.

January 23—Equity & Human Rights issued **Guidance on Public Assistance Source of Income** protection for area landlords, to assist them in treating tenants who receive public funds fairly.



February—Pronoun pins are now available for City staff members or volunteers who wish to **display their preferred pronouns**. Why is this important? Using a person's chosen pronouns is not only a basic courtesy, but a necessity of self-respect and identity. Allowing a person to self-identify their pronouns in the workplace instead of being perceived to belong to a particular pronoun removes embarrassment and hurt feelings over being misgendered.

February 29—Equity & Human Rights staff attended the **LGBTQ Career Expo**, held at Kirkwood Community College. The event was a safe space for college students to meet with representatives from employers and educational institutions committed to providing supportive environments for LGBTQ people.

February 29—Equity & Human Rights provided **financial support for PrideCon**, United Action for Youth's summit for LGBTQ+ youth and parents. Sadie McDowell, of the Iowa City Fire Department, was a presenter.

March and throughout 2020—Five new City departments will be joining those already using a **racial equity toolkit** to guide their policies and procedures. They are Public Works and Engineering, Transportation, the Center, Communications, and the City Clerk's Office.



March 4—Equity & Human Rights staff attended the **Inclusive ICR Iowa**. A quarterly coalition of local employers and organizations working together to support and grow diversity and inclusion in the workforce.



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# Outreach

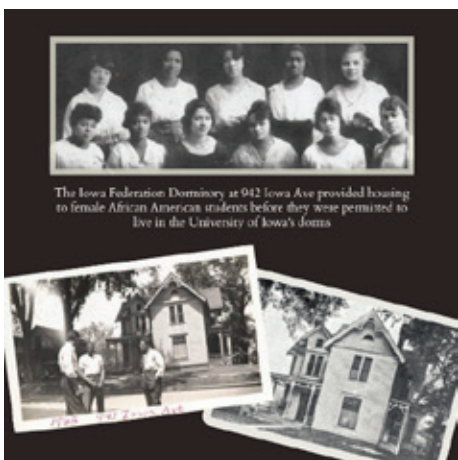


During the week of January 16-22, Parks and Recreation partnered with a number of Iowa City area groups and organizations to provide opportunities to **highlight and celebrate the life and legacy of the Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.** Parks and Recreation staff spearheaded the collaboration, which consisted of a variety of inclusive, multigenerational events and activities. Attendance reached over 400 and provided entertainment, activities and service projects. Service projects were planned with a focus on serving some of Iowa City's most vulnerable populations. Transit also provided free bus service to and from the celebration.



February – Parks and Recreation was a host site for the African American mobile museum and displayed information that highlighted **historical moments in African American history**. These displays were used as part of a scavenger hunt for students who participated in Teen Dynamics. Topics from the displays encouraged the students to do more extensive research on individuals of color who have impacted the world of sports, science and inventions.

February 5—In partnership with Johnson County, Equity & Human Rights and the Iowa City Public Library presented **"Preserving Black History in Iowa City: Tate Arms and the Iowa Federation Home."** Jessica Bristow, Historic Preservationist for the City, detailed the rich history of these two buildings, which provided homes for African American students who were admitted to the University of Iowa, but denied the opportunity to reside on campus from 1847 to the 1950's.



February 6 – The Center, in partnership with Humanities Iowa, presented a program titled **"Beyond Race, Celebrating the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and Iowa's African-American History."** Created by Humanities Iowa Speaker's Bureau member, Hal Chase, on the 200th anniversary of the Missouri compromise, this program focused on the impact of the Compromise on Iowa's African American History.

February 7 – The Center presented a program on **Iowa City in the Civil War**. When the call for war came in 1861, Iowans overwhelmingly agreed to serve as soldiers and in other capacities. Two training camps were situated on the outskirts of Iowa City and one regiment was comprised of mostly Johnson County soldiers. Participants learned about what made Iowa unique among all the states, both Union and Confederate, and how its troops served the Union cause.



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# Outreach



February 11— In partnership with the African-American Museum of Iowa and Johnson County, Equity and Human Rights and the Iowa City Public Library presented **"More than Just a Game,"** tracing the history of African American athletes' struggle to be treated fairly both on and off the field.

February 18— In partnership with Johnson County, Equity & Human Rights and the Iowa City Public Library presented a showing of **"Still Rising"** a documentary by City Channel 4's Jack Brooks. The documentary celebrates 10 years of the Iowa City Civil Rights Tour started by Henri Harper. The presentation was followed by a discussion led by Johnson County Supervisor Royceann Porter and former Council member Rockne Cole.



February 20— Retired UI Theatre Professor Tisch Jones gave a talk at The Center tracing her **personal journey as a Black girl coming to Iowa City in 1964**, the year of the passing of the Civil Rights Act. Her presentation was based on a chapter from her memoir in progress, titled *I'm No Accident*. In the national struggle for civil rights, Tisch was arrested seven times, and this experience helped shape her commitment to theatre as a venue for social justice.

February 21— The Center presented a program titled, **"A Tale of Despair in Africa, 1885-1960 and Beyond."** In the late 19th century, there was a "Scramble for Africa," in which European nations divided various regions of Africa for occupation and exploitation. This presentation explored the history of the Congo and its colonization by Belgium, telling a tale of great woe and pillage that has ramifications to this day.



February 21— Parks and Recreation hosted the **Black History Trivia Night**. Participants were challenged in a variety of categories in a trivia game that highlighted the many contributions of African American men and women. Participants reported that they were unaware of many of the featured contributions. Staff plan to continue hosting trivia nights to highlight other cultures and areas of interest in the future.

February 28— Tom Schulein presented **"The Underground Railroad in Iowa and Iowa City"** at the Center. Escaping from slavery to freedom in the movement known as the "Underground Railroad," many brave individuals found their way across Iowa. Mr. Schulein told the story of both the oppressed and their helpers, and explored Iowa's role in this effort, with information specific to Iowa City included.





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# Outreach

February – The Center displayed the traveling exhibit **"Products of a Creative Mind,"** courtesy of the African American Museum of Iowa, in its lobby for the month of February. The exhibit educated viewers on African American inventors and innovators who have impacted the ways we eat, move, live, and stay healthy.

Feb-March – Parks and Recreation sponsored 70 children from Grant Wood Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County (50) and Fifth Ward Saints (20) for **5 weeks of American Red Cross swim lessons.** Grant Wood children participated in lessons 3 days per week and Fifth Ward Saints children participated in lessons once per week. Scholarship funds were used to cover the cost of staffing and incidentals such as suits and towels for students that needed them. A donation from the John Geerdes Memorial Fund covered \$3,000 in transportation costs for Grant Wood to participate at the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center. Fifth Ward Saints was able to provide their own transportation. Parks and Recreation was scheduled to repeat this lesson and transportation arrangement for a second five-week session at the end of March but had to postpone due to facility closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



March 1—Equity & Human Rights provided **"Know Your Rights" brochures** to the University of Iowa Pride Alliance Center, to serve as resource materials for students.

March 5—Equity & Human Rights and Parks and Recreation, together with Iowa Rehabilitation Services and Iowa Works, hosted a **Youth Job Fair**, at which employers offered opportunities specifically for job seekers between the ages of 16 and 21.



February –April – The Center, in partnership with AARP, offered its annual **free tax-preparation program**, targeting low- to moderate-income and older adult taxpayers.



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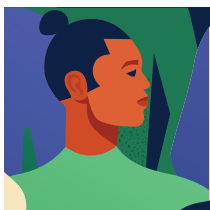
## Justice

February 18 – The City Council approved **seven applications for funding** through the Social Justice and Racial Equity Grants, which provide financial assistance to local organizations for building capacity to address social justice and racial equity concerns in the Iowa City area.

March 3 – The Center, in partnership with Humanities Iowa, hosted a talk by Drake University Political Science Professor Debra L. DeLaet, titled **"Human Rights in the Everyday."** Professor DeLaet discussed how human rights, and the fight to bring the same rights to everyone in the world, is something we all engage with every day. The talk sought to broaden the vision of what constitutes human rights and social justice.



February - For Black History Month in Iowa City, Transit saved a seat on each of its 27 buses **in honor of Mrs. Parks**, who was born on Tuesday, Feb. 4, 1913. Other cities that have done similar transit-related initiatives include Dallas, Milwaukee, and Lexington, Kentucky.



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## Conversations

February 8 – Parks and Recreation held a **Youth Summit**, which provided opportunities for students to share their thoughts on the current climate of our world. Participants discussed ways to improve upon current conditions and were provided opportunities to discuss injustices, policies, and practices that may be beneficial to some, but burdensome to others.



February—Black community leaders were asked to reflect on what **Black History Month** means to them. Their comments were published on the Equity and Human Rights Instagram page @ichumanrights to remind all that Black history is not just a month, but all year long.



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# Iowa City Public Library

## ADULT SERVICES

- Teen Center display—**Celebrating Black History Month**
- Three events with the City of Iowa City Equity and Human Rights Department:
  - **More Than Just A Game**—African American Athletes in Iowa
  - **Still Rising:** Celebrating 10 Years of the Iowa City Civil Rights Trip
  - **Preserving Black History in Iowa City:** Tate Arms and the Iowa Federation Home
- Black History month **Film Screening** of the film Toni Morrison, The Pieces I Am
- January display about **Martin Luther King, Jr.**
- February display about **Black History Month**

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENT

- **Black History Month** Display
- **Outreach storytimes** at public school sites and Head Start sites with high population of free/reduced lunch qualifying students
- **Special Access Browsing** (Winter Fun)
- **Storytime:** Snowy Day
- Black History **Family Storytime**
- Black History **Short Film Fest**
- **More than Just a Game** (African American Athlete Program)
- **Women's History Month** Display
- Family Night: **Champagne Irish Dance Performance**

## COMMUNITY & ACCESS SERVICES

- **Fairweather Lodge book group** met and decided on a book to read for a meeting the end of February. The Book Group gives an opportunity for FWL residents to find some escapism in their routine as they try and navigate society with new perspective and promotes the joy of reading
- **Urban Conservation display** helped educate the community on responsible building practices as well as the importance of proper drainage and integrity of "clean" runoff
- **World religion day display** and list helped introduce people to different spiritual traditions or deepen their own practice
- **Tales & Travels** visited Bickford and Oaknoll Health Ctr talking about New Year's traditions
- **Tech Help at Legacy** educated residents on how to solve various technology related gripes in their lives
- Delivered ICPL information to **local international grocers**
- Picked up and set up **"Behind the Beat" Pop-Up Exhibit for Black History Month** from the African American Museum of Iowa which informed and displayed the importance of African American influence on music. A nearby book display featured books written by African Americans.
- **A-5 Project** (Awesome, Autism, Art, Awareness, Acceptance) displayed art from the neuroatypical community
- **Women's History Month** exhibited five different displays: fiction by women authors; women musicians; strong female characters on film; nonfiction works by women; a display commemorating the life of Katherine Jackson, a NASA mathematician, an African American woman who made huge contributions to the field of astrophysics and space travel.

## BOOKMOBILE

- The Bookmobile visited **Atrium Village Retirement Living Facility** to connect with community members who experience mobility limitations. During the Spring 2020 schedule period, the ICPL Bookmobile will visit this location monthly.
- The Bookmobile continued regularly scheduled stops at **Grant Wood Elementary, Alexander Elementary, Breckenridge Estates, and Mark Twain Elementary** to serve children from diverse backgrounds.
- Pre-School storytime and Bookmobile targeted visit to **Pheasant Ridge Pre-School** continued.
- The Bookmobile began weekly stops at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church to provide services for children participating in **Fifth Ward Saints North After School Program**, which serves at risk youth in our community.



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# Iowa City Police

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

*Documentation of participation in any event, attended or presented, by a Department member to a community member or organization.*

**34 officers and COA attended 104 events in the first quarter of 2020 for a total of 110.5 hours of involvement.** Events included school visits, attending festivities on MLK Day, reading at the library with K9 Luke, Diversity Networking Night at UI, pizza lunches with Officer Neeld and K9 Luke, International Women's Day, Book Madness, Coffee with a Cop, and Citizens Police Academy. More events are highlighted on our Facebook, Twitter and Newsletter ICPD Newsfeed!

## COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

*Documentation of any participation in a community presentation by a Department member.*

**10 officers and COA participated in 35 community presentations in the first quarter of 2020, totaling 57 hours of involvement.** Presentations included the following topics/groups:

- De-escalation
- Crisis Intervention
- Refugee and Migration Issues in the Indo-Pacific with CIVIC
- Police Careers – University of Iowa Center for Diversity & Enrichment
- ALICE – various locations
- Human Trafficking
- K-9 Presentations
- Dignitary Protection to Council for International Visitors to Iowa City
- Family Violence
- Culture Competence and Mental Health
- Underaged Drinking
- How to Identify Fraud – Senior Center
- Law Enforcement Career and Duties to 5th Ward Saints



Officers had the opportunity to serve food and mingle at the **Soul Food dinner** at the Robert A Lee. Rec Center back in January.



Officer Neeld and COA Torres introduced themselves to community members at the **Sudanese Community Center** in hopes to partner on future events.



Officer Jay got to read a story and lead a poem at **Reading on the Rug**, a program the UI Museum of Natural History puts on once a month. We were their first guests of the decade!



Officer Neeld and Officer Nicholson from Coralville PD brought **Coffee with a Cop** to the residents of Bickford Cottage.





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# Iowa City Police

## CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING

*Documentation of any training received by a Department member involving cultural competency. Cultural competency training refers to training directed at the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures, ethnicity and socio-economic backgrounds.*

- 5 Officers/COA attended **Unconscious Bias Training**
- 2 officer/COA attended a screening on **Cracking the Code in Social Justice**
- All members of the ICPD completed an **online legal and law update** on Substance Use and Behavior
- Officers Schmerbach and Neeld participated in a circle group discussion about **police interactions and relationships** with West High School Students

## PUBLIC EDUCATION EFFORTS ON RIGHTS

*Documentation of any participation at an event, attended or presented by a Department member, to a community member or organization where the focus is education on an individual's rights.*

There was no activity this quarter

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

*Documentation of any partnership between the Department and another community organization.*

The Department worked with community partners that led to attendance at 28 events by 8 officers and COA who spent 49.5 hours engaging with community members. Below are some highlights and noteworthy outcomes from those partnerships.

- Downtown Liaison Officer Fowler is a member of the Local Homeless Coordinating Board which celebrated the **opening of Cross Park Place** that provides housing to the chronically homeless.
- DLO Fowler is also on the Winter Extreme Temperature (WET) Shelter sub-committee. This shelter provides an option for the homeless who are intoxicated or otherwise ineligible to receive housing at Shelter House during the winter months. **The WET shelter opened in December and closed in March.**
- COA Torres continues to work with the **Friendship Community Project** in assisting with class activities while answering questions they may have about local law enforcement.



Officer Neeld got an aerial view of the crowd before they head out to lead the **MLK march** kicking off the activities for MLK Day.



Sgt. Stevens, Victim Services Coordinator Ann Thompson and COA Torres attended the **UI's Social Work Practicum Fair** to search for our new VSC. Whoever we choose next will have some big shoes to fill!



Captain Brotherton and COA Torres attended the Refugee and Immigrant Association's first **International Women's Day** event. We ate delicious food and made a small friend pictured in the gray hat.



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# Iowa City Police

- The ICPD continues to collaborate with the Iowa City Bike Library to **repurpose abandoned bicycles impounded by the Department.** Instead of being auctioned or recycled as scrap metal, the Iowa City Bike Library refurbishes some of the bicycles which are then lent out through their organization. The remaining bicycles are collected by Working Bikes. Working Bikes is a non-profit that rescues discarded bicycles and gives them new life by redistributing them in global communities. **120 bikes went to these two organizations.** The Downtown Liaison worked with staff and the City Manager to amend City Code and worked towards repurposing unclaimed bicycles by turning them over with disadvantaged youth and adults. During the 1st quarter, a total of 3 abandoned bicycles were turned over to the homeless.
- The Nighttime Downtown Liaison Officer, Andy Farrell, continues to work with the **Partnership on Alcohol Safety group** to increase education efforts and outreach.
- Community Outreach Officer Neeld continued to provide ICPD presence in planning the **Citizens Police Academy.** A program that has members from Ulowa PD, Coralville PD, North Liberty PD and the Johnson County Sheriff's Office. The program had 34 participants this year that learned the ins and outs of what our local law enforcement officers do every day.
- Additional activities, meetings and events took place within the following **community partnerships:** NAACP, FBI, US Attorney's Office, Johnson County Attorney's Office, Johnson County Disproportionate Minority Contact Committee, City Manager's Diversity Roundtable, Iowa City Downtown District, Iowa City Community School District, University of Iowa Off Campus Advisory Board, Special Olympics of Iowa, Safety Village, Elder Abuse Task Force, Johnson County Human Trafficking Coalition, United Way Social Services Work Group, 4 Oakes Youth Shelter, Johnson County Drug Task Force, Sexual Assault Investigation Team, The Dream Center, Broadway Neighborhood Center, Domestic Violence Intervention Program, Johnson County Suicide Prevention, United Way Social Services Work Group, Prevent Child Abuse-Johnson County and Emergency Services Camp for youth.

The Department continues to provide extra patrol at citizen's requests and foot patrols where criminal activity or safety concerns have been identified. These patrols have resulted in over **1,000 documented citizen contacts.** The Evening Watch conducted **187 documented foot and extra patrols,** the Day Watch conducted **106 extra patrols,** and the Late Night Watch conducted **38 foot patrols** in the Downtown, including making multiple bar checks resulting in contact with hundreds of people in the Downtown district. The ICPD Community Outreach Officer spent 2 hours on foot and extra patrols. The Daytime Downtown Liaison Officer was on bike/foot patrol during 57 days of this quarter, totaling **230 hours and conducting 133 business checks.** The Nighttime Downtown Liaison Officer conducted **57 foot patrols and 25 business checks** during the 1st quarter of 2020.



UIPD invited us to present to CIVIV on how we handle the **protection of dignitaries and political figures** when they come into town.



Our **Citizens Police Academy** had 34 participants this year. The jointly organized program teaches community members the ins and out of law enforcement. Here they're learning how to dust for fingerprints.



Officer Faulkcon gave a K9 presentation to a **pre-law UI rhetoric class.** K9 Rakker taught them some cool stuff they can't learn from a textbook.



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# Training

February 6 and March 12 – Staff of Equity & Human Rights presented **"Iowa's Civil Rights History"** to a University of Iowa Introduction to Human Rights Course and Introduction to Legal Careers respectively. The office offers Know Your Rights, Fair Housing, and Civil Rights History presentations to the community as part of its educational outreach. To request a presentation email [humanrights@iowa-city.org](mailto:humanrights@iowa-city.org) or call 319-356-5022.

February 25 – Staff of Equity & Human Rights, Human Resources, Parks and Recreation, Communications, Neighborhood and Development Services, City Manager's Office participated in **"Overcoming Unconscious Bias and Creating a Fearless Organization"** sponsored by Johnson County. How do you overcome unconscious bias at your organization? Here are three tips 1. Frame Your Bias (own-it!) 2. Challenge Your Bias (see if it is true) 3. Set It Aside (look through a new frame). Success comes in CANS not CANNOTS!

February 26—Shanté Weston, Civil Rights Specialist from the City of Dubuque, spent a day with Equity and Human Rights. Ms. Weston, a former Federal investigator, was particularly interested in **how parties to a discrimination complaint required different interviewing techniques** than those involved in security-clearance background checks.

February 27- Staff of Equity & Human Rights participated in the **Human Rights Campaign webinar** on Municipality as an employer.

March 26 – Staff of Equity & Human Rights participated in the **Human Rights Campaign** webinar on Municipal Services.



January 15 –Equity and Human Rights participated in **"Race: The Power of an Illusion"** in a learning exchange that brought together professionals, volunteers, and community members to have conversations about the intersections of race, equity and child welfare. The purpose was to build capacity to reduce disproportionality and disparity by providing participants with a safe environment in which to explore and challenge their own beliefs and attitudes about race, to practice better ways of talking to one another about sensitive topics, and to begin to have courageous conversations with one another about how the notion of race affects our attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. The event was sponsored by the City of North Liberty.