



Inclusive Leader Insights

Antiracism in Action

Just over a week ago, we all heard about a heinous act of racism with the massacre of 10 persons murdered solely because they were Black in Buffalo, NY. On that same weekend, there was a [video](#) released that has since gone viral that highlighted an act of anti-racism from a Lyft driver in Pennsylvania. In the video, a woman gets into the driver's car and comments "you're like a white guy." The driver asks her to repeat, and she says, "you're like, a normal guy", and goes on to ask if he speaks English. At that point, the driver tells her that he's canceling the ride and to get out of his car because what she said was inappropriate. He continues by saying "if somebody was not white, sitting in the seat, what would be the difference?" The woman's companion, who was still outside the car shouted obscenities at the driver, threatened him with physical violence, and finally shared that the driver was an "[N-word] lover."

What is Antiracism?

The Webster dictionary describes racism as "the systemic oppression of a racial group to the social, economic, and political advantage of another." Antiracism is often described as taking actionable steps to eradicate racism on a personal, institutional and structural level by actively changing attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate racist ideologies.

Why is it important?

Systemic racism is everywhere. It is in our schools, neighborhoods, judicial system, health care system, and government. Undoing it will take more than switching it off. For many, they are unaware that they are the beneficiaries of racist policies and practices. Someone who gets a great apartment is probably not aware that the landlord did not offer the apartment to someone because of their race. A person might not be aware that their medical provider's bias is preventing them from receiving care that might provide them with a better quality of life. A prospective home-owner might not be aware that the realtor is suggesting certain neighborhoods based on perceptions.



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Actionable steps that you can take

- Hold friends and family accountable. The Lyft driver scenario was a good example of holding someone accountable. The prospective passenger was neither friend or family member, yet the driver felt compelled to let her know that her comments were not appropriate, and that it should not matter who was sitting in the driver's seat. He could have remained silent, yet he chose to confront a stranger on their behavior.
- Utilize campus and online resources to learn about racism, examine your own biases, and develop a deeper understanding about the disparities and inequities in healthcare, education, the judicial system and education.
- Learn the terminology. BIPOC, privilege, racial trauma, implicit bias, and microaggressions among others are words used in discussing issues related to race.
- Have deliberate and intentional conversations with colleagues, friends and peers that go beyond surface-level. Before having these conversations, it is important to examine your own biases and become comfortable knowing that you will be uncomfortable.

The Lyft driver makes a valid point when posting about the experience on Facebook, "This is the way it should be everywhere, every time. I shouldn't be 'the guy' who did it or said it ... we should all be that person. Speak up if you're uncomfortable with it because it makes them uncomfortable, as they should be. F— racism."

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