



Roanoke Change Academy Session Notes and Resources



We'll also post these notes and resources so that you can always go back to them:
www.bookcityroanoke.com/change.

Session 4 – The Antiracist City

This session focused on the role of the City in our shaping antiracism policies. Dr. Susan Gooden, interim dean and professor of public administration at the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University. She was joined in conversation by City Manager Bob Cowell.

39 people attended via Zoom

Some notes:

From Dr. Gooden's Remarks:

- When considering a policy, ask: for whom is this policy good?
 - Think also about things that seem race neutral. Ask: what might be the racial impacts of this policy?
- Public administrators are responsible for executing the policies created by legislation, courts, etc.
- Multiple factors contribute to a “saturation of racial inequities” that have intergenerational and global effects
- As an organization, aim to normalize discussions on race and social equity
- Seattle has had a Race and Social Justice Initiative for 16 years, with a focus on 5 realms of life. Because this work was already embedded, Seattle has not seen the level of racial disparity in COVID-19 cases that other places have experienced
- Look up: Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and notice how few cities in the historic South are members. <https://www.racialequityalliance.org/>

From the Panel Discussion:

- A local example of examining policy through equity: the City has tried to focus the allocation of CARES Act funding to minority and women-owned businesses and in particular ZIP codes. Ads about the funding were strategically placed in the Tribune and in Spanish. Once funding has been allocated, we will be able to see if this effort was successful.
- Equity is a strength we possess, not a problem to overcome
- Consider what's a problem (which can be solved) and a condition (which can be tolerated). Historically high levels of Black unemployment, for example, are a problem that can be solved, but we have incorrectly come to think of it as a condition instead.
- When considering your own activism, the answer is often “Yes and.” Think about the outcome you'd like to achieve and think backwards from there. What needs to happen to achieve that goal for everyone?

Actions People Can Take:

- Know what city government is and does
- Actively engage in the shaping of policies. Insist that the candidates you elect do the things they intended to do
- Set the example. Be the change and others will follow.
- Remember that conversations are not an end to themselves. Follow talk with action.

We added another Group to the list of partners. As you continue these action-oriented conversations, [consider being listed as a partner:](#)

[American Association of University Women \(AAUW\) Roanoke Valley Branch](#)

Black Girls Matter

[Book No Further](#)

Central Church of the Brethren Race Education Team

[City of Roanoke](#)

Councilmember Bill Bestpitch

Councilmember Joe Cobb

[Diversity Serves](#)

[Hollins University's Eleanor D. Wilson Museum](#)

[Roanoke Arts Commission](#)

[Roanoke Valley Points of Diversity](#)

Log-in information for the wrap-up session on Monday, 10/12, at 6:30 PM:

Topic: Roanoke Change Academy Wrap-Up

Time: Oct 12, 2020 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89681346502?pwd=L0cxdUtFUG05TnlSeTdNcm1SeDFVZz09>

Meeting ID: 896 8134 6502

Passcode: 791366

One tap mobile

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