**Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Campus Center @ Rutgers University – Newark**

**2018 TRHT Campus Center Action Plan**

**VISION STATEMENT:** The TRHT Campus Center at Rutgers University – Newark (RU-N) will foster and strengthen the collective knowledge and wisdom of the diverse communities in and of the City of Newark. Drawing on the methodologies and strategies of the humanities and the arts, RU-N and our community partners will engage in an arc of interactive programming designed to change the narrative about race and race relations in Newark and beyond. The Center will also leverage and support new and existing RU-N and city-wide initiatives to effectively respond to economic and social disparities in our communities

**Mission Statement:** The Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Campus Center at Rutgers University pursues community engagement as its primary endeavor focused on changing the dominant narrative/perception of Newark:

* By connecting our partner network through programming that leverages sophisticated communication approaches that anticipate the need for crisis communication management
* Leading to visible outcomes reflected in substantive measures

**Organizational/Administrative**

***Goal: Create TRHT @ RU-N working group/advisory committee with cross-disciplinary, cross-function capacity***

* **Purpose**: To engage multiple stakeholders across the institution and with our TRHT and non-TRHT community partners in the planning and execution of the TRHT Center initiatives
* **Outcome**: The RU-N advisory committee is comprised of representatives from the Chancellor’s Office, Office of Communications, the RU-N LGBTQ & Intercultural Resource Center, Rutgers School of Public Affairs & Administration, Rutgers Law School, the Honors Living Learning Community @ RU-N, Mayor’s Office, City of Newark, the Newark Public Library, the NJ Institute for Social Justice, and the NJ Performing Arts Center (NJPAC).
* **Engagement Plan:** Hired website and social media developer
* **Status**: Completed.

**Narrative Change about Newark**

***Goal: Increase Positive Narratives about Newark***

* **Theme:**  My Racial Healing Looks Like…
* **Purpose:** Highlight positive narratives of Newark through a collaboration with our TRHT community partner, the Newark Public Library (“telling and retelling Newark’s story)
* **Intended Outcomes:** Cast/Recast the city of Newark in the public narrative with asset-based (not deficit-based) language
* **Activities/Action Steps:**

1. Develop classroom project around media narratives in Newark for Fall 2018 (YMS students)
2. Creation of collaborative arts projects in and around Newark (faculty, students, community partners)
3. Create safe spaces in Newark Public Library branches throughout city (stagger over next 3 years)
4. Panel presentations with residents relocated from city after 1967 Rebellion

* **Evaluation Strategy:** quantity and quality of in-person and digital participation; number of shares, retweets, and hashtags; recording and preserving of individual participant reflections (surveys, anonymous reflection cards, etc.); scale survey on self-perception of city residents as a priority or access for the City of Newark; comparative study of Newark narratives in traditional and social media
* **Communication:** Solicit faculty members for art projects; Abbott Leadership Institute high school and college students to work with elder residents videotaping narrative about 1967 Newark Rebellion; utilizing faculty and community relationships to work with designated selected group of individuals
* **Engagement Plan:** After each activity event, follow-up with audience members with email survey in multiple languages; have high school students follow-up with elder residents; utilize social media, website, and networks to maintain engagement
* **Sustainability:** Engage other community partners (i.e Barat Foundation); conduct annual needs assessment for NPL branches
* **Barriers to Accomplishment**: low participation turnout, distrust, no diversity amongst participants, transportation, language

**Narrative Change about Rutgers University – Newark**

***Goals: Increase engagement, attendant, and positive perceptions of RU-N amongst faculty, staff, and students***

* **Theme:** “Mirror, Mirror”
* **Purpose:** Conduct self-study of the institution climate in correlation to highlighting the positive narratives of the city
* **Intended Outcomes:** Increase knowledge, awareness, engagement, attendance, and perception of Rutgers University - Newark for faculty, staff, and students; create a sense of pride about RU-N and the surrounding city of Newark
* **Activities/Action Steps:**

1. Year 1: Campus Climate Assessment (in collaboration with Commission on Diversity)
2. Year 2: Institutional Equity Self-Study
3. Institutional Social Media Campaigns
4. Create artistic piece documenting historical landscape; create musical theme for campus center

* **Evaluation Strategy:**

1. Measure racial healing perception about RU-N from faculty, staff, and students
2. Measure racial healing perception about the city of Newark from faculty, staff, and students
3. Measure number of Newark engagement activities and events that RU-N faculty and staff participate and or attend
4. Measure number of volunteer hours faculty and staff participate in

* **Communication:** Institutional email server to all faculty, staff, and students; executive administration communicate to Deans/Directors/Administrators; Information sessions; Staff Meetings
* **Engagement Plan**: Campaigns: Arts, Culture, Media; Podcast; University wide Book Reading (Scarlet & Black)
* **Sustainability:** Create programming to maintain annual engagement (staff appreciation day, faculty meetings)
* **Barriers to Accomplishment**: administration, faculty, staff, and students don’t know RU-N history, campus culture of operating in silos; unwillingness to do this type of work; limited resources; creating buy-in amongst all constituents and stakeholders

**Racial Healing and Relationship Building: Programming**

***Goal: Initiate/Foster ongoing on and off-campus activities utilizing dialogue and dialogic techniques around issues of truth and racial healing***

* **Theme**: “My Racial Healing Looks Like”
* **Purpose**: To center dialogic technique as a conversation catalyst and healing tool for narrative change
* **Intended Outcomes**: Increased campus and community engagement around the power of dialogue
* **Activities/Action Steps**:

1. We have co-hosted two dialogues around racial justice and belonging:

1. Sept. 13, 2017: A Conversation, ‘After Charlottesville’ – A campus dialogue about public memorials honoring racial violence and exclusion
2. Oct. 26, 2017: A Conversation on Mass Incarceration and Over-Policing – A campus dialogue on dialogue among community organizers, artists, faith leaders, entrepreneurs, designers, and lawyers on how communities affected by violence conceive of public safety and how our local policies and budgets can reflect community-driven solutions that look beyond policing and incarceration.
3. We hosted a daylong commemoration of the National Day of Racial Healing (Jan. 16, 2018)
   * 1. Interactive poster board sessions: “My Racial Healing Looks Like”
     2. Social Media Campaign
     3. “A Night of Speaking Truth Through Poetry, Prose, and Music,” featuring multi-generational and multi-ethnic artists
4. In collaboration with the RU-N P3 Collaboratory for Pedagogy, Professional Development, and Publicly-Engaged Scholarship, we have established a “Difficult Dialogues” learning community for faculty and graduate student instructors to use dialogue to bridge difference in the classroom for maximum pedagogical impact
5. Healing Circles: We are incorporating healing circles into event planning

* **Status**: Ongoing
* **Evaluation Strategy**: quantity and quality of in-person and digital participation; number of shares, retweets, and hashtags; recording and preserving of individual participant reflections (surveys, anonymous reflection cards, etc.)
* **Communication:** Collaborate with other community partners to support programming activities, and events to foster dialogue of racial healing and dispel the myth of hierarchy of human value (Leadership Newark – policy seminars with LN fellows, NJPAC – intergenerational dialogue w/Pearls of Wisdom activity)
* **Engagement Plan:** solicit annual calendar of events to coordinate activities and events
* **Sustainability:**  Full-time staffing will be required
* **Barriers to Accomplishment:** staffing coordination; language; low participation

**Economy: Poverty Reduction & Economic Development**

***Goal: Decrease separation and increase access and equity at RU-N for Newark Residents to “reduce poverty and unemployment and strengthen the city's economy by the beginning of the next decade.”[[1]](#footnote-1)***

* **Theme:** Access & Equity for Newark
* **Purpose:** Provide economic mobility for Newark residents and greater Newark area
* **Activities/Action Steps**

1. Increase Newark resident college participation at RU-N and our partner institutions

a. Honors Living Learning Community

b. RUN to the Top

1. Increase rates of employment in Newark of Newark residents
2. Increase university procurement $$ spent with Newark suppliers

a. RU-N has committed to increase procurement of Newark-based suppliers by 20% by 2025

1. Participate in planning for 50-year-commemoration of the “Conklin Hall Takeover” & the founding of the Minority Students Program at Rutgers Law School
2. Engagement with UndocuRutgers initiative (for undocumented community members)
3. Broad and continued marketing of such initiatives with greater Newark community

* **Intended Outcomes:** Provide equitable access to educational and employment opportunities for Newark residents
* **Evaluation Strategy:** Measure number of Newark residents’ attendance in commemoration events; measure number of students since inception of programs and evaluate processes (HLLC, RU-N to the Top, Dreamers);

comparative study of pre-TRHT economic outcomes and post-launch economic outcomes

* **Communication:** Admission office, financial aid, and HLLC personnel facilitate info sessions to Newark high school students; students not admitted into HLLC are contacted immediately about the admission to RU-N with preliminary financial aid award letters; collaborations with Newark City Learning Collaborative (NCLC) at RU-N working with local post-secondary institutions to create college going pipeline for Newark and greater Newark residents; working with City of Newark Mayor’s Office as anchor institution to hire more Newark residents, support institution purchasing of local Newark businesses, and coordinate with other anchor institutions to promote employees to live in city of Newark
* **Engagement Plan:** Residential facility for HLLC students scheduled to open Fall 2019; maintain communication with participants involved in Conklin Hall Takeover to conduct panel presentations and/or video documentaries discussing the narrative 50 years later
* **Sustainability**: Executive leadership participate in fundraising activities
* **Barriers to Accomplishment**: Parental support, application completion obstacle, financial aid documentation, Trust, Language Barrier

**Racial Healing & Relationship Building: Law**

**Goal:** Change legislative policy to reinstate individuals voting rights on parole, probation, and/or have criminal convictions

* **Theme: 1844 – No More**
* **Purpose:** To highlight the state’s voting ban on people in prison, and on probation and parole, has a disparate impact on Black residents, a result of linking the right to vote with a criminal justice system infected with racial discrimination
* **Activities/Actions Steps:**

1. Voting Rights Clinics held in diverse locations for individuals on parole or probation (partner with non-profit organizations)
2. Racial Healing Circles for Mountainview students
3. Interview and select Mountainview students to monitor, track, and assist reinstatement of their voting rights
4. Restorative Justice Implementation and Reentry Healing Circles

* **Intended Outcomes:** Increase number of individuals on parole, probation, and with criminal convictions to reinstate voting rights; Change the policy on reinstating voting rights; Create and evaluate expedient process to have voting rights restored for Mountainview students
* **Evaluation Strategy:** Length of time it takes to have voting rights reinstated; Measure number of individuals whose status change for them to vote; Utilize restorative
* **Communication:** Protests/Rallies; Social Media Campaigns; Engage Youth to reinstate voting rights; Research briefs to educate communities and stakeholders
* **Sustainability and Engagement Plan:** Collaborate and coordinate with other nonprofit organizations with a focus on prison reentry; Offer information sessions by RU-N law school clinics
* **Barriers:** State Legislation, public opinion, documentation process, lack of awareness; limited internet access; changing of mindset; Resources for Mountainview program; Approval of IRB certification for Mountaview students

**Sustainability of TRHT Campus Center @ RU-N**

***Goal: To embed TRHT framework into the ethos, culture, and environment of anchor institutions and other community-based organizations***

* **Theme:** No Place Like Home
* **Purpose:** Involve faculty and students in data gathering and analysis around racial healing and access
* **Actions Steps/Activities**

1. Increase resources in library and other community partners
2. Collaborate on submission of ALA grant application
3. Newark Public Library will conduct a needs assessment for its branches
4. Invest in research collaborations at RU-N around racial healing
5. The Initiative for Humanities, Arts, And Social Sciences Research Teams (IHASSRT) at RU-N has announced a $50K grant tosupport research/scholarship focusing on addressing challenges emerging and intensifying locally, nationally, and internationally related to intergroup animus, especially instances of race-based hatred (“Racial Healing and Equal Economic and Educational Opportunity: Achieving Transformational and Sustainable Change”)
6. Chancellor’s Matching Grant ($30K)
7. External Corporate / Grant Funding
8. Physical Space for TRHT Center (both on and off-campus)

* **Intended Outcomes**: To serve as a convener for other institutions/organizations to utilize TRHT framework to dispel myth of racial hierarchy based on ethnicity or race
* **Evaluation Strategy:** Quantity of resources; increased number of TRHT collaborations with other organizations; mutually beneficial equitable relationships; quantity and quality of in-person and digital participation; number of shares, retweets, and hashtags on social media; recording and preserving of individual participant reflections (surveys, anonymous reflection cards, etc.)
* **Engagement Plan & Communication Strategy**: website, social media listening tool, info sessions for practitioners incl. website; social media listening)
* **Barriers to Accomplishment:** Low turnout to events; Resentment of university / university initiatives; Generational divide (divergent values and priorities); professional development

1. “A 2020 Vision of Newark: Rutgers-Newark Joins Other Anchors Making Hire.Buy.Live.Newark Commitments,” July 5, 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)