

# Working Toward a More Equitable and Inclusive ABQ

Mayor Tim Keller established the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) and the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) in March 2018 to implement his vision of Albuquerque as a safe, innovative, and inclusive community for all of us. Mayor Keller charged the office with inspiring and equipping all city departments with the knowledge and tools to embrace and implement equity as a guiding principle in all areas of public life.

The Divisions of OEI include: Native American, African American, Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, as well as the Culture Change training division, Race Equity Data



specialist and communications.

OEI promotes high impact strategies to change population-level outcomes, focusing on who we hire as a city, who we do business with as a city, where we invest capital dollars, and how we serve all populations of our city, including people who speak languages other than English. OEI works closely with its sister office of Civil Rights, and with the City's ADA coordinator, both of whom are charged with leading enforcement of civil rights laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act.



The Office defines inequities as disparities in health, mental health, economic well being, or other social indicators that are systemic and avoidable, and therefore, are considered unjust and unfair. OEI believes that inequities hold the city back and that closing gaps in economic opportunity and outcomes are key to Albuquerque's future.

OEI provides leadership, training and technical assistance to departments to build their capacity to be more inclusive and equitable, using tools and data to inform decisions. The staff of the office demonstrate OEI's values by being engaged in continuous dialogue with communities most impacted by inequity.

## MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 01 Helped guide our city's Emergency Response and Recovery to ensure timely information in languages people understand. Directed resources to the most vulnerable in our community who have the hardest time surviving the pandemic and its economic consequences.



“Even though the pandemic has hit them hardest, underserved communities in our City have been left to fend for themselves—until now. Immigrants are a vital part of our economy and social fabric, and we are taking direct action to get them the assistance they need.”

—Mayor Tim Keller

- 02** Broadened and deepened our relationships and collaboration with the community, including immigrants, refugees, and BIPOC community. Led with anti-racism.
- 03** Introduced 1,500 employees to racial equity concepts and practices so far, cultivating a culture change in city government and nurturing seeds of justice in the form of equity champions.
- 04** Passed landmark legislation that embeds equity and social justice into city policy and mandates racial equity impact assessments, goal setting and action planning, data analysis, focus on high impact strategies and training.
- 05** Passed the CROWN ACT, which protects race-related hairstyles, such as braids, afros, tight coils, bantu knots and twists. It also protects cultural headdresses including burkas, hijabs, head wraps, headscarves, and other headdresses used as someone's personal cultural or religious beliefs.
- 06** Awarded \$3.95 million in COVID-19 Health Literacy Grants to improve public health equity, reduce barriers to access
- 07** CABQ and Native American Leaders hosted the Albuquerque Indian School Cemetery Acknowledgement. The City made an acknowledgement and apology as a step towards reconciliation. They also received community recommendations.
- 08** Alongside Economic Development department, directed \$6.5 million in federal funds to families who were previously excluded from federal stimulus aid through the "Community Impact Fund."

## CITY POLICIES THAT FOCUS ON EQUITY AND INCLUSION

- R-20-75 Strengthening the City's Commitment to Racial Equity and Social Justice
- R-20-85 Adding a Racial Equity Criterion to the City's Capital Improvement Process
- Amended Human Rights Ordinance, adding hair/grooming protections to the ordinance
- R-18-7 Strengthening the City's Immigrant Friendly City Status
- O-18-45 Establishing the Commission on American Indian/Alaska Native Affairs

### The goals of the Office of Equity and Inclusion are to:

- Develop a city workforce that is representative at all levels of the demographics of the city.
- Increase local purchasing and doing business with companies owned by people of color.
- Invest in areas of the city that have been under invested.
- Ensure that the city delivers city services in an equitable and inclusive manner.

### Our Core Values:

- We all do better when we all do better.
- Strategies should be based on the lived experiences of those least served by existing structures, systems, and institutions.
- Use an intersectionality lens.

### Areas of Responsibility

The Office of Equity and Inclusion has five major areas of responsibility:

- Continuing to serve, as it has since 1974 under a different name, as a local civil and human rights advocacy resource dedicated to ensuring equal access and equitable opportunities for all people.
- Dismantling systemic barriers to racial, gender, health ,and socio-economic equality.
- Supporting immigrant, refugee and other vulnerable communities to promote public safety, quality of life and human rights.
- Acknowledging the original inhabitants of our region and coordinating with tribes and native communities to cultivate equity in the lives of Native Americans living in Albuquerque.
- Equipping and inspiring our city workforce to embrace the diverse cultures that make Albuquerque the best place to live.



**“ Racial discrimination doesn't end with the color of someone's skin. We've seen people in our community discriminated against because of their hair. Hair and cultural headdresses are tightly linked to the proud histories and cultures of people of color. We should celebrate people's hairstyles, not discriminate against them. The CROWN Act Ordinance will further strengthen our city's discrimination laws and we proudly champion this bill.**

—Torri Jacobus, *Director of the Office of Civil Rights and Managing Assistant City Attorney*