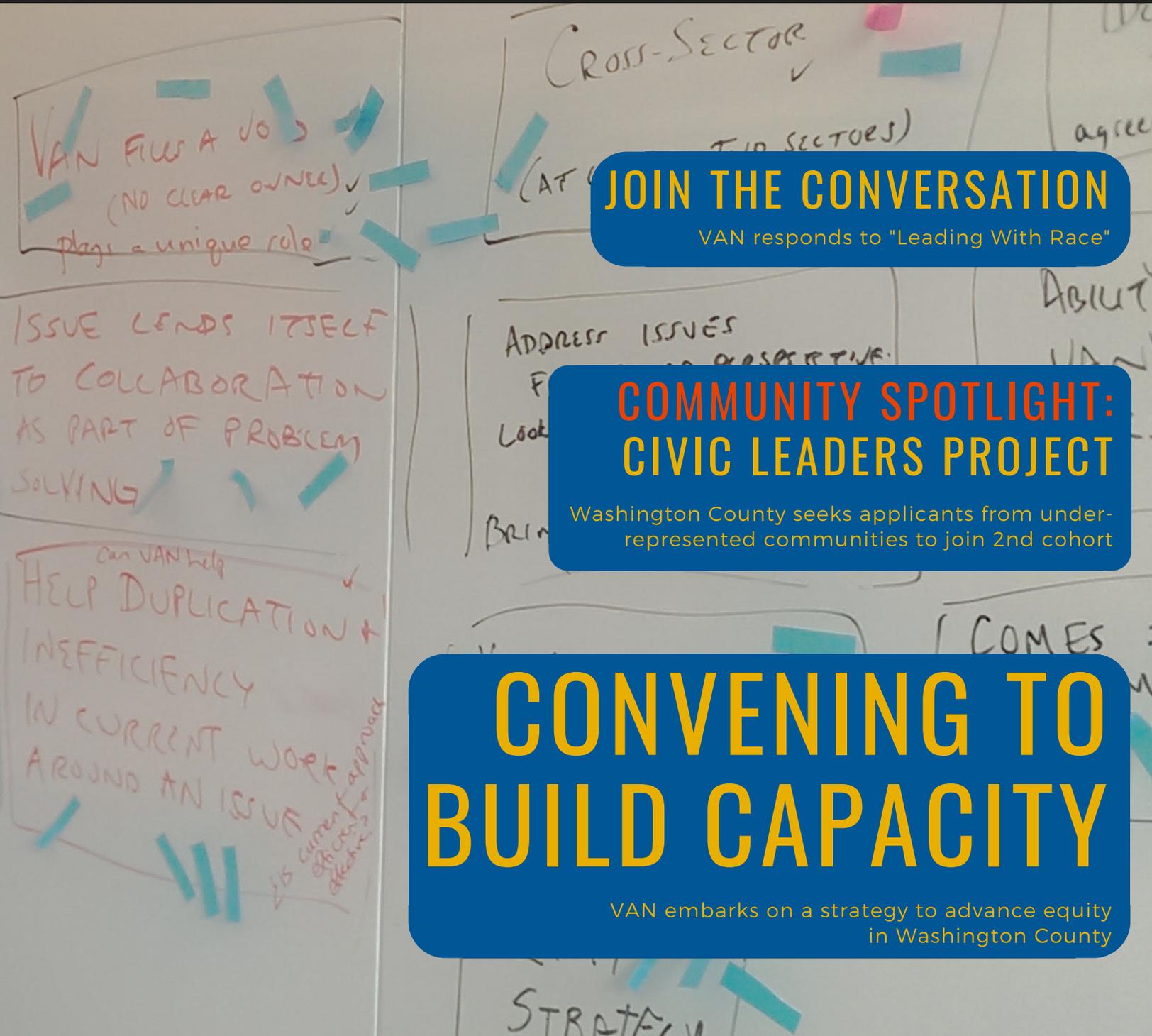


THE CATALYST

INSPIRING COLLABORATION IN WASHINGTON COUNTY



JOIN THE CONVERSATION
VAN responds to "Leading With Race"

**COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT:
CIVIC LEADERS PROJECT**
Washington County seeks applicants from under-represented communities to join 2nd cohort

**CONVENING TO
BUILD CAPACITY**
VAN embarks on a strategy to advance equity in Washington County

Director's Corner



Glenn Montgomery
Executive Director

“Action expresses priorities.” I recently came across this quote attributed to Gandhi, and it's simplicity really resonated with me. Another more familiar quote: “Actions speak louder than words,” the origins of which date back hundreds of years, is found in an address by Abraham Lincoln. As an impartial convener in Washington County, I am frequently reminded that the best of ideas fade into obscurity without action. The finest speech is reduced to rhetoric without action. Intentions have no impact without action. Action matters. Those who founded VAN felt strongly enough to include it in our name. Vision Action Network.

So it may come as a surprise to hear that VAN intends to spend the next several months in listening mode. Where's the action in that? Well, to quote my friends at Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue, "Slow is smooth, and smooth is fast." The urgency to act must be tempered by slow, smooth progress. The act of listening is, in fact, an integral part of VAN's work. It helps us determine where we might focus our limited resources.

And this reminded me of a conversation over coffee months ago with Hillsboro's Mayor Callaway. At some point, the subject shifted to how we might best respond to community priorities, and I quipped, "It depends upon whom you're listening to." Dangling prepositions aside, I've reflected on these words and sought ways to listen to the conversations on the margins of our community that are drowned out by those taking place at center stage.

In a world that appears increasingly more divided by race, class, age, and political affiliation, my goal is to find the common ground, bridge the gap between these two conversations, and work collaboratively towards the common good. This is a priority for me. May it be expressed by my actions!

Enjoy the contents of this "new and improved" bi-monthly newsletter. I hope it inspires you to take action of your own and collaborate with others in Washington County!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn Montgomery". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Convening to Build Capacity

VAN Develops Strategy to Advance Equity

About 10 years ago, VAN created the Washington County Nonprofit Network, aka WCNN, to help build the capacity of the nonprofit sector as recommended by the Philanthropy Exploration study we commissioned in 2008. We created opportunities for smaller organizations to network and learn in a supportive environment, and the community we served grew larger each year which was one way to measure success. At the same time, we looked for ways to improve our impact and advance equity while staying true to VAN's role as a convener of cross-sector collaboration. Fast forward to March 2017 when VAN was awarded a 2-year grant from Meyer Memorial Trust to do just that.



During the past 18 months, VAN has leveraged grant funds to engage its staff and Board in equity training, to conduct an evaluation of WCNN, and to work with a diverse strategic planning team on recommendations that would guide a 3-year plan towards accomplishing our goals. The process has helped us reaffirm VAN's mission and refine our focus.

In July, VAN's Board approved the recommendations which encompass the following. VAN will:

- continue to connect, engage, partner with, and leverage nonprofits as a key constituent to advance VAN's mission in Washington County
- address emergent nonprofit themes, such as fundraising capacity and market visibility, in ways consistent with VAN's mission
- enhance its convenings, such as Meet the Funders and its Executive Director network, to include cross-sector representation from government, business, education, etc.
- transition "technical" training to other providers whose mission supports such activities
- discontinue the WCNN "brand" and consolidate under VAN for consistency and clarity's sake

The bottom line is this. We believe that by acting on these recommendations, VAN will more effectively strengthen the nonprofit sector and advance equity in Washington County. During the final phase of our grant-funded project, we hope to partner with community stakeholders to develop a road map toward these ends. Stay tuned as our progress unfolds!

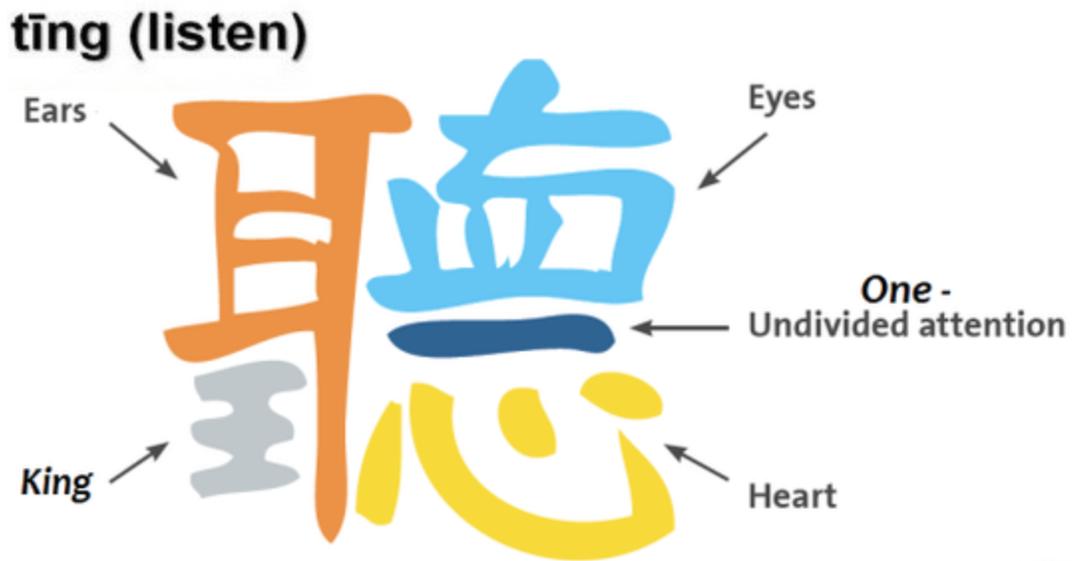
Reflections on DEI

Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Fernanda Wilent
Director of Community Engagement

The Chinese character *ting* is one of my favorite illustrations often presented in cross-cultural communication and management trainings to symbolize the importance of being a good listener.



Ting means “to listen,” and the character consists of six "radicals" that give us a lot of insight on *empathic* listening. It reminds us that to truly listen to someone, we must give the other person our full respect and undivided attention. Empathic listening encompasses the heart, body, and mind to understand the words, intent and feelings behind what a person says. As VAN engages in this work, we want to make sure our community’s voice is heard and that you have our undivided attention. Please engage with us and share your story. We want to hear your words, acknowledge your intentions, and validate your feelings. Your story matters because it's an integral step towards advancing equity!

Learn about VAN's plans to listen and respond to community priorities in our **Initiative Updates** below.

Convenings

Success at Meet the Funders

Al-Madinah Hall at the Muslim Educational Trust was abuzz with chatter on Sept. 12 as about a hundred people, including representatives from 17 private foundations and corporations, gathered to cultivate relationships and explore potential partnerships in Washington County. VAN's Meet the Funders is a popular annual convening among nonprofits and funders where a little networking, a little knowledge transfer, and a little speed dating occur in the span of a few hours.

One funder commented that this is her favorite event to attend each year, and she was amazed at how many new people she met who are doing great work! And while it came as no surprise that nonprofits wanted more time with funders, feedback was very positive. Words from one attendee, **"Absolutely loved it. You knocked it out of the park."**



Meyer Memorial Trust's Matt Morton (center R) gets a laugh during a "round robin."

Meet the Funders Survey Response

-  Nonprofits that identified new opportunities to collaborate **89%**
-  Nonprofits that strengthened their network of support **93%**
-  Funders who are optimistic about partnering with nonprofits they met **94%**
-  Funders who plan to follow up with nonprofits they met **75%**

Convenings

Operationalizing Equity: Beyond Talk



Members of Cohort 3 dive deep into diversity, equity, and inclusion at City of Tigard's cozy Fanno Creek Farmhouse.

With grant support from the Emily Georges Gottfried Fund, VAN gathered three cohorts of nonprofit and public sector leaders to explore ways of integrating the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into their respective organizations. Each group met for a day and a half of facilitated dialogue and will reconvene a couple of months later to share their progress and challenges of implementation.

"I have specific ideas that I plan to implement with regard to DEI."

Agree - 55%

Strongly agree - 32%

Community Spotlight

Washington County Civic Leaders Cohort



Adelante Mujeres leads the second annual Washington County Civic Leaders Project in partnership with Washington County, the project's sole sponsor. Members from communities of color and other under-represented communities are invited to apply to the Civic Leaders Cohort which will receive hands-on leadership training and be equipped with knowledge and tools to actively participate in the civic life of the county. Applications for the 2018-2019 Cohort are being accepted through Nov. 12.

The Washington County Civic Leaders Project was created with the goal to increase civic engagement among people from underrepresented communities at the county level, and the hope is that this will ultimately lead to greater diversity among our elected officials. Last year's pilot cohort was a big success with 20 graduates who are now actively engaged in their communities.

The Civic Leaders Project covers various topics, such as County Government Services, Civil Rights and Responsibilities, Power Analysis, Civic Engagement & Advocacy, and Running for Elected Office. All of the sessions are presented using the Popular Education teaching methodology, a standard for Adelante Mujeres' education programs. To participate, community members must be residents of Washington County, have an interest in civic engagement, and identify as a member of a community of color or other underrepresented community.

The training is completely underwritten by Washington County and offered at no cost to community members. Childcare, Trimet passes, and translation/interpretation services are also available.

If you or someone you know would like to learn more and apply, visit the [Civic Leaders Project](#). Remember, the deadline to apply is Nov. 12!



Civic Leader graduate Madeline Roosevelt-Defuria (center) is now an applicant for Emerge Oregon which inspires women to run for public office.

Community Spotlight

What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?

Washington County has long been Oregon's "economic engine," and it continues to grow and diversify. That growth brings a lot of good things – more jobs and new cultural opportunities, for example. But it also contributes to some things that are less positive, like longer commute times and rising rents.

Clean Water Services is the convener of a public/private partnership that is currently conducting research to learn how people experience these changes, and you can help by taking part in their anonymous and confidential [Growing Up Survey](#).^{*} The **deadline is November 15!**

Make your voice heard and share what kind of community you'd like for Washington County. It should take no more than 10–15 minutes of your time, and your feedback will inform future decision making.

Take the [Growing Up Survey](#) and enter your name to be included in a confidential drawing for one of ten \$150 Visa cash cards!



^{*} The survey is administered by DHM Research and hosted by West Side Voices, an engagement tool to help local organizations and government agencies best serve the community. Names of survey respondents will not be associated with any of their responses, and no contact information will be used for any other purpose.

Initiative Updates

VAN to Hold Community Conversations

Over the next several months, VAN will embark on an outreach campaign aimed at Washington County residents, especially people of color whose voices are underrepresented in community affairs. We hope to work with our culturally specific partners to hold community conversations that will help inform VAN's efforts to advance equity in the county.

This endeavor is, in part, VAN's response to the Call to Action of ***Leading With Race***, a Washington County community research report produced by the Coalition of Communities of Color. As a steering committee member of this 2-year research project, VAN will use its convening role to focus on the Call to Action and identify the common ground among people of color, community leaders, and stakeholders across sectors in Washington County.

For more information, please contact Fernanda Wilent, VAN's Director of Community Engagement.



VAN's Annual
Key Leaders Forum

Responding to the Call

January 31, 2019
Noon - 4pm

Village Baptist Church

Mark your calendar!

(And look for an invitation soon!)

Initiative Updates



Collaborative Endorses Measures 26-199 and 102

With Election Day approaching fast, members of Washington County Thrives met in Beaverton on September 26 to receive updates from Metro and local jurisdictions about their implementation plans, should Measure 26-199, or the Metro Affordable Housing Bonds, be approved by voters in the tri-county area. Since the early stages of development, Thrives strongly endorsed Measure 26-199 as a crucial step towards housing stability for thousands of vulnerable people in Washington County. In addition, a yes vote for Measure 102 would extend the reach of the bond from 7,500 to an estimated 12,000 people by amending the Constitution to allow government housing authorities to partner with private/nonprofit developers on affordable housing projects.

VAN and Community Action have co-convended Thrives since its inception in 2012.



Metro's Jes Larson provides an update on the implementation plan pending voter approval of Measure 26-199.



Vision Action Network

VAN engage stakeholders across sectors to collaboratively address critical issues in Washington County.

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Mike Duyck (Chair)

Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue

Renée Bruce

Community Action

Sr. Adele-Marie Altenhofen (Vice-Chair)

Sisters of St. Mary's of Oregon

Maria Caballero-Rubio

Centro Cultural

Dick Stenson (Past Chair)

Tuality Healthcare (retired)

Roy Kim

Central Bethany Development

Nancy Roberts (Secretary)

Providence St. Vincent Med Center

Sherilyn Lombos

City of Tualatin

Mark Ankeny (Treasurer)

Pacific University

Andrew McGough

WorkSystems, Inc.

Bob Davis (At-large)

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