

JULY 2019

VISION ACTION NETWORK

THE CATALYST

INSPIRING COLLABORATION IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

10TH ANNUAL MEET THE FUNDERS

Building relationships and capacity in Washington County

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

News and noteworthy opportunities

MOVING IDEAS INTO ACTION

Critical Conversations on
Advancing Racial Equity



Director's Corner



Glenn Montgomery
Executive Director

I love languages. I've dabbled in German, Swedish, Russian, Spanish, and even a little Japanese. During the early years of my professional life, I wrote software in several languages, and while some are still used today, I have only my daughter - a recent computer science grad - to remind me how language is ever evolving.

I've discovered some striking parallels between learning a "foreign" language and the language of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). At first, I struggled just to gain some technical proficiency, and while I might understand 20% of what a fluent speaker says to me, I'm often incapable of offering a coherent reply. I make a lot of mistakes, and sometimes I'm afraid to say anything at all.

Beyond the language itself is a culture that surrounds it which may take years of immersion to feel comfortable operating in. When it comes to DEI, I'm not certain I will ever get there, but I'm compelled to try because, unlike English or Arabic or HTML, I believe the language of *DEI is fundamentally essential* to who we are as humans on this planet.

This is why VAN has invested in partnerships with culturally-specific organizations in Washington County. With their help, VAN gains fluency on issues of equity and learns to listen and respond in appropriate and effective ways, as reflected in our recent [work to advance racial equity](#).

Read on to learn more about these convenings, as well as upcoming gatherings including our wildly popular **Meet the Funders** in its 10th year - a touchstone for nonprofits and the funding community. This year's event takes place on Thursday, Oct. 17, so mark your calendar!.

I hope you find some useful information in this issue of *The Catalyst*, and perhaps a little inspiration to carry you through the day.

In service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn Montgomery". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Reflections on DEI

Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Fernanda Wilent
Director of Community Engagement

The Equity Dilemma

Dear friends,

VAN recently hosted a second Collaborative Community Forum around what it means to advance racial equity in Washington County, and how we might do just that. It seems wherever I look, navigating this conversation is both challenging and inspiring. Locally, it is no different, but I am inspired because VAN is encountering a spirit of collaboration and readiness across sectors despite the difficulties the nature of this work presents. All are ready to "roll up our sleeves" and work together towards equity. At the same time, I am challenged because, as it has been noted before, often the very things that create disadvantage – poverty, lack of educational opportunity, poor health, and poor transport links – also create barriers to bringing about the empowerment that is one of the key ingredients for real change.

A clear example, and one that hit home for me, was our state legislature wrestling with this dilemma on the debate of measure HB 2015, Driver License for All. The ability to drive – whether to work, school, the grocery store, or church – is a basic need. Yet we have learned in conversation with community members that the barrier to gaining a license to drive legally creates serious problems for many of the people we are so eager to empower. I'm pleased that the bill passed this time around!

So how do we create a culture of readiness for equity that helps us navigate these conversations?

[Click here to learn more](#) and to access some great tools that will help your organization on its journey.

Kind regards,

Maria F. Wilent

Convenings

Moving Ideas Into Action

VAN hosted its second Collaborative Community Forum focused on advancing racial equity in Washington County. A lively crowd of nearly 200 people gathered in the auditorium of Sunrise Church for three hours on a sunny April afternoon. With presentations from community partners Adelante Mujeres, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), Bienestar, and Coalition of Communities of Color, participants were asked to imagine their community as if the "big ideas" that were generated from the January forum had already been accomplished, and then to consider what it would take to make that happen. [A recap of our activities and findings can be found here.](#)



Collaborative Community Forum

Advancing Racial Equity in Washington County



County Commissioner Pam Treece chats over dinner with Maribel De Leon and Hector Hinojosa at *Moving Ideas Into Action*.

"Thank you for continuing to convene government agencies, CBO's and community members... you hold us accountable to our communities and encourage us to continue work toward racial equity."

- Forum participant

Initial feedback has been very positive based on survey responses, but given the gravity of the subject, events such as this are bound to affect people in different ways. Not everyone felt empowered, and some were rather overwhelmed by the conversations. It's a sobering reminder of the care in which matters of equity must be addressed, particular by those of us steeped in the ways of the dominant culture.

VAN commits to work alongside its community partners, building on the progress we've made, to improve outcomes for racial equity.

Got VAN?

OUR mission is to bring people together across sectors to address complex issues for the benefit of the Washington County community.

[Need a convener or value-added facilitator?](#)



Contact Glenn Montgomery, Executive Director
glenn@visionactionnetwork.org or 503-846-5792

Convenings

Save the Date! Meet the Funders 2019

For the past 10 years, VAN has been holding space for nonprofits and funders to cultivate relationships and explore partnerships that address critical needs in Washington County.

Meet the Funders continues to deliver results based on feedback from nonprofits and funders alike. One funder was thrilled to meet so many new people and organizations that inspired her, even in her third year attending MTF. *"It's my favorite event!"*

Registration opens in September.



Meet the Funders

Thursday, October 17, 2019

8:30am - 12:30pm

Village Church, Beaverton

Scholarships available

[More Info](#)



Community Spotlight

Celebrate Hillsboro in its 15th year!

VAN will have a table at the city's annual [Celebrate Hillsboro](#) event on Saturday, July 20 from 9-4pm. Drop by to say hello and enjoy the food, music, free health screenings, plus an after hours concert in the Plaza!



Centro Cultural hosts its 2nd annual Taquiza on August 16 at 5:30pm at their center, 1110 N. Adair in Cornelius. Free tacos & family activities for all, and opportunities to engage with local planning projects and public initiatives. All are welcome!

More Happenings in Washington County

Tigard hosts its Annual Community Preparedness Fair. Participants will enjoy music, food and fun while learning to create a disaster plan, build an emergency preparedness kit, and get involved in Tigard's emergency preparedness and resiliency activities. July 19 from 6-9pm at Cook Park. Free! [More info.](#)

Not to be outdone, **Tualatin** will also offer training on disaster preparedness. Join the Community Emergency Response Team by attending sessions Sept. 5 - Oct. 17. Limited to 25 participants. Free! E-mail info@tualatincert.org for info.

Enjoy the [5th Annual Beaverton Night Markets](#) on July 20 and August 17. Volunteer? [Sign up here!](#)

Congratulations to the **City of Cornelius** for its designation by the National Civic League as an [All-American City](#) - one of only ten in the nation!

Oregon

Humanities

White Allyship in Close Communities

What does it mean to be a white ally? And what does it mean to have the support of white allies? What is needed from white people in our communities to move the conversation about racism—both statewide and nationally—forward in a productive and respectful way? In this facilitated conversation, participants will have the chance to explore their identities, learn how to acknowledge different lived experiences without alienating friends and neighbors, and move toward action in their own communities.

Facilitated by educator and activist Alexis James Here's [additional information](#) to learn more.

Initiative Updates



After They're Built, Then What?

With the passage of the regional affordable housing bond last November, over \$650 million will be invested to increase the supply of affordable housing in the tri-county area including over 1,300 units in Washington County. The Thrives Collaborative supported the bond effort, and though it hasn't had a public gathering for a number of months, a lot is going on behind the scenes

In April, VAN hosted a large group of housing and service providers, along with Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington and Commissioner Pam Treece, to address the issue of supportive services which are needed by the most vulnerable residents of regulated housing. As a follow-up, VAN will convene an ad hoc work group in July and August to develop a proposed model for supportive services. The question still remains as to how these services will be scaled to meet the ever-growing need in our communities.

For more info:

[Metro's Affordable Housing Site](#)

[Beaverton Local Implementation Strategy \(LIS\)](#)

[Hillsboro LIS](#)

[Washington County LIS](#)



The Barcelona provides regulated affordable housing in downtown Beaverton.



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

VAN Welcomes New Board Members!

VAN is thrilled to have three outstanding women join its Board in May. Alexis Ball, Annie Herbert, and Tara Pedersen offer a diversity of talent, experience, and heritage adding to an already stellar cast of characters. We look forward to including their voices to help set direction and shape policy in the future!



Alexis Ball
Equity and Inclusion Manager
City of Beaverton



Annie Herbert
Gov't and Community Relations
Kaiser Permanente



Tara Pedersen
AVP Commercial Banking
Relationship Officer
Columbia Bank

Interested in what we do? Want to be more engaged in VAN's work? Contact us to share your interests and to explore the possibilities.

We're always looking for collaborative partners!

The logo for Vision Action Network features a stylized white graphic on a blue square background. The graphic consists of several overlapping, curved lines that form a central, upward-pointing shape resembling a flame or a star.

Vision Action Network

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

Congratulations to VAN Board Chair!



Mike Duyck, former Chief of Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, celebrated his retirement on June 27 after more than 30 years in the fire service. He began his career at Washington County Fire District #2, later working for Lake Oswego before joining TVF&R in 1995. Mike became Fire Chief in 2010 until his retirement last month.

A huge crowd of colleagues, friends, and family enjoyed the ceremony and some gentle roasting, including testimony from his two daughters who agreed with his occasional reminder to them that he was "kind of a big deal."

In his 6th year on VAN's Board, we're pleased to have Mike complete his term as Chair through June 2020. His thoughtfulness, calm demeanor, and sense of humor make him a big deal to us!

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Vision Action Network

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Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Mike Duyck (Chair)

Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (retired)

Sr. Adele-Marie Altenhofen (Vice-Chair)

Sisters of St. Mary's of Oregon

Dick Stenson (Past Chair)

Tuality Healthcare (retired)

Nancy Roberts (Secretary)

Providence St. Vincent Medical Center

Mark Ankeny (Treasurer)

Pacific University

Bob Davis (At-large)

Washington County Administration

Alexis Ball

City of Beaverton

Renée Bruce

Community Action

Maria Caballero-Rubio

Centro Cultural

Annie Herbert

Kaiser Permanente

Roy Kim

Central Bethany Development

Sherilyn Lombos

City of Tualatin

Andrew McGough

WorkSystems, Inc.

Mary Monnat

LifeWorks NW

Tara Pedersen

Columbia Bank

Chris Villa

PCC Rock Creek

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