



**Visioneering Wichita
Racial Diversity, Opportunity & Harmony
Alliance**

**Meeting Notes
April 19, 2007
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Self-Help Network**

Mission of RDOH Alliance:

“To create a culture that promotes and celebrates racial, diversity, opportunities & harmony within the Wichita MSA.”

Leadership Team: Brian Black, Doug Hye, Lavonta Williams, Deann Smith, Susan Leiker, Gail Finney, Sue Castile, Sandra Harrison

Attendance: Vicki Bergkamp, Irene Hart, Lavonta Williams, Barbara Chamberlin, Sue Castile, Brenda Dietzman, Kelly Snyder, Kendall Heier, Maria Bias, Tommy Fulcher, Lindsy Fulcher, Susan Leiker, Terri Moses

Leadership Team member Susan Leiker welcomed participants and shared the purposes of the meeting:

- Report / update on clergy meeting
- Report / update in info gathering re: Educational Resources
- Presentation by Workforce / Alliance Arbor
- Identify other potential presenters
- Next steps on “opportunities” website
- Determine other next steps

Participants approved and adopted minutes from the March 8, 2007 Racial Diversity, Opportunity and Harmony Alliance meeting.

Ecumenical Forum/Focus Group Update

Diane Longfellow and Maaskelah Thomas provided an update on the follow-up Clergy Luncheon. For complete notes from that meeting, please see notes posted at Visioneering website.

Those present at the luncheon included:

Deann Smith, Rabbi Davis, Gail Finney, Martha Sanchez, Carol Meredith, Peggy Elliott, Melinda Walker, John Beehler, René Tario

The purpose of the RDOH Alliance Clergy meeting was to seek faith-based guidance and assistance on what role the faith community can play in advancing

positive race relations in the Wichita region. Participants were asked and discussed:

- What role the faith community can play in advancing positive race relations in Wichita?
- What are some opportunities to dialogue that already exist within the faith community?

They were also provided some materials to help promote dialogue [i.e. Study Circles, NCCJ's Denouncing Racism];

Participants then generated next steps and 'actionable' items.

Next Steps generated by participants: Members agree to the following:

- Provide opportunities for the faith community to get together
- Build relationships among all faiths
- Networking among members of all faiths
- Form short term "task force" for identifying faith-based responses to RDOH, including:
 - Convening a meeting of women for dialogue this summer [June/July]
 - Engage seniors and youth in activities and dialogue
 - Encouraging intentional planning and implementation of interracial, interfaith activities across congregations and faiths.

At the next meeting, the group agreed to continue to identify specific tasks to be completed and to identify who, what and by when the tasks are to be completed.

Next Meeting: June 19th, 11 am-1 pm. The location will be determined later.

Next steps for Alliance regarding clergy engagement:

- Members of alliance can encourage clergy to participate
- Seek Muslim (or other faiths) representatives (make effort)
- The following people agreed to contact members of clergy to invite and involve:
 - YR Shourbagi (Susan)
 - Brenda D. will identify Buddhist faith representative
 - Liz Owens – Susan
 - Mohan Kambampati – Barbara
 - Rich Handley – Sue
 - Joe Neil – Maria

Information was shared by Lindsy Fulcher regarding educational resources available in the Wichita/MSA that might be tapped to support improved academic achievement. The Alliance agreed that there needs to be a mechanism to increase awareness of available resources, especially to disadvantaged and minority communities. The group discussed the feasibility of links from the Visioning Wichita website; however, it was also acknowledged that not

everyone has access to the Internet, especially many of those in the communities where the information is most needed.

Kelly Snyder from Arbor/Workforce Alliance shared information about the resources available through the Workforce Alliance, and how those resources might be accessed.

Alliance members discussed possible other presenters/organizational representatives to invite to share at upcoming alliance meetings.

They include:

- Communities in Schools
- Mentoring Alliance
- Community Identity Alliance
- Urban League – Brian Black

Alliance members also discussed the future direction of the alliance and its work. It was suggested that the alliance develop a “strategic plan” for how it will continue to share the information from the survey and work on the other benchmark. Alliance members agreed that strategic planning will be helpful for its ongoing work.

Next Steps For Alliance:

- Workforce center can act as hub for information
 - Info would be provided by alliance members to link to workforce center
- Strategic planning around addressing the issues that will help close the gaps identified by the survey (clergy, video, income/education, employment)
- Place info & links from resources in common areas
 - Look for the “unusual” places
- Identify funding resources to provide jobs/training for youth

Next meeting scheduled for:

Leadership: May 2nd, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., The Chamber

Alliance: May 10, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m., Self-Help Network