

THE ILLUMINATION PROJECT OF PCC SYLVANIA...

is a student leadership and education program designed to address issues of oppression through classroom and community presentations utilizing interactive theater.

The Illumination Project has the dual purpose of providing participating students with an opportunity to develop skills as educators, activists, and leaders and to educate student, staff, faculty, and community audiences on social justice issues.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
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**WHAT YOU CAN
DO TO END
OPPRESSION**

**THE ILLUMINATION PROJECT
ALLY HANDBOOK**

WHO'S THAT HELPING?

Hmm? Oh, that's an Ally.

Now what's an Ally you ask?

Well, the simplest definition of what an Ally could be is: someone who cares, and acts on that caring. But that doesn't really explain much of anything.

To begin with, an Ally is someone who is part of a privileged group. In the United States this would include such groups as male, white, middle or upper class, physically able and fit, mentally sound, heterosexual, and middle aged. Even being in just one category gives the potential for becoming an Ally. Of course, who and what is privileged differs from place to place. This privilege is used by the Ally to help those who are oppressed.

What else is required though, is the willingness to confront and/or oppose oppression. And of course actually doing it. An Ally is mostly defined by what they do. Their existence is based around action. Being actively engaged in something. There are no "armchair" Allies.

So what is it an Ally does and you can do as well? I'm glad you asked.

Take a look on the next page there...

STATISTICS

On Homophobia:

97% of students in public high schools report regularly hearing homophobic remarks from their peers.

53% of students report hearing homophobic comments made by school staff.

11.5% of gay and lesbian youth report being physically attacked by family members.

45% of gale males and 20% of lesbians report having experienced verbal harassment and/or physical violence as a result of their sexual orientation during high school.

42% of adolescent lesbians and 34% of adolescent gay males who have suffered physical attack also attempt suicide.

A survey of 191 employees revealed that 18% would fire, 27% would refuse to hire and 26% would refuse to promote a person they perceived to be a lesbian, gay or bisexual.

In an anonymous survey 24% of community college students had verbally harassed and another 10% had committed physical violence or threats of violence against presumed gay men or lesbians.

On Racism:

Of the 7,459 single-bias incidents in 2002, racial bias accounted for 48.8%, religious bias motivated 19.1% of incidents, sexual-orientation bias provoked 16.7%, and bias against an ethnicity or national origin caused 14.8%.

Compared to 22% of White adults, only 11% of African American adults and 9% each of Native American and Hispanic adults have earned post-secondary degrees.

Of 1,390 reported religiously motivated hate crimes, 1,081 were against Jews.

Black professors hold less than 5% of the faculty positions. Less than 5% of the K-12 teaching force is black

There are more black men in jail than in college.

Bias incidents on campus interfere with students' ability to fully focus on their academic work.

College campuses are the 3rd most likely place for hate crimes to occur.

WHO CAN HELP YOU • WHO YOU CAN HELP

RESOURCES:

Sisters in Action for Power . 503-331-1244

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs . 503-731-4002 ext. 312 . www.ocba.state.or.us

Portland Neighborhood Crime Prevention Center . 503-823-4519

Metropolitan Human Rights Center . www.co.multnomah.or.us/dss/budget/Nondepartmental/MHRCNar.htm

Centro Hispano / Hispanic Access Center . 503-236-9760

Middle East Women's Empowerment & Resource Center . 503-778-8333

Asian Family Center . 503-235-9396

Oregon Students of Color Coalition . 503-286-0477 . www.orstudents.org

National Council of La Raza . www.nclr.org

Oregon Affirmative Action . 503-373-1224 ext. 26 . 503-373-1224 ext. 22

Basic Rights Oregon . 503-222-6151 . www.basicrights.org

Visions In Action . www.visionsinaction.org

Survivor Project: Support/Crisis Line for Intersex & Trans . 503-288-3191

Parents, Family, & Friends of Lesbians & Gays . www.pflag.org

Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation . www.gladd.org

Sexual Minorities Youth Recreation Center . 503-872-9664

The Oregon Safe Schools & Community Coalition . 503-260-5792 . www.oregonsafeschools.org

Northwest Gender Alliance . 503-533-8787 . www.nwgapdx.com

DEFINITIONS:

Anti-bias:

An active commitment to challenging prejudice, stereotyping, and all forms of discrimination.

Bias:

An inclination or preference either for or against an individual or group that interferes with impartial judgment.

Bigotry:

An unreasonable or irrational attachment to negative stereotypes and prejudice.

Culture:

The patterns of daily life learned consciously and unconsciously by a group of people. These patterns can be seen in arts and customs, to name a few examples.

Discrimination:

The behavior that can follow prejudicial thinking. It is the denial of justice and fair treatment in many arenas, including employment, housing and political rights.

Diversity:

It is who we are! The populations of the United States is made up of people from diverse age, class, disability, ethnicity, language, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation.

Heterosexism:

The assumption that everyone is heterosexual and if they are not they should be. It is the belief that heterosexuality is natural and universal. This belief is enforced through society's institutions. Heterosexism is prejudice or discrimination against people who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Homophobia:

The irrational fear of people who are believed to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Institutional Oppression:

Power + Prejudice + Privilege = Oppression
A system where the working of a society's basic social institutions create, reinforce and reproduce inequality for a subordinate group and access and privilege for a dominant group. This inequality leads to a different system of socioeconomic and cultural rewards like status and prestige.

Internalized Oppression:

Believing supremacist views about yourself and your own group, resulting self-inflicted hurt, distrusting and/or devaluing your own group.

Multiculturalism:

It is what we are! It is a quantitative, demographic measure reflecting how we interact with each other. It is an evolving process that includes learning more about one another's cultures and perspectives.

Oppression:

The social act of placing severe restrictions on an individual, group, or institution including suppression of the natural self-expression and emotion of others.

Power:

To have control over people or things by maintaining access to resources and information.

Privilege:

An unearned advantage with access to opportunities; sometimes invisible.

Prejudice:

To prejudice based on a stereotype.

Racial Profiling:

A practice most commonly seen within the criminal justice system where the race of an individual is used as a basis for their arrest or detention. This usually results in people of color being convicted more often and given stronger sentences than white people.

Racism:

The systematic mistreatment of people based on their membership in a specific racial group. An imbalance of institutional power that systematically oppresses people of color and benefits white people.

Reverse Discrimination:

Does not exist. Discrimination requires the abuse of power by a person in position of privilege.

Stereotype:

An oversimplified generalization about an entire group of people without regard for individual differences. Even positive stereotype, such as "Asians are good at math and computers" have a negative impact.

Transphobia:

The discrimination against and belief that people who don't fit into and/or present themselves within the binary gender system (two genders: men and women) are inferior.

INTERESTED IN BEING AN ALLY?

Good, but I won't lie to you.

Being an Ally isn't easy or glamorous. There is no absolute way to be an Ally. There is no official guidebook, or rules and regulations. Every person finds their own way to be an Ally.

Some activities could include:

- Educating yourself on oppression, and then educating others (See the back for some resources)
- Being aware of the world around you and situations in which you could act as an Ally
- Standing up in those situations and acting for positive change
- Really listening to the experiences of oppressed people
- Being respectful and supportive
- Being accepting in general
- Keeping an open mind by not judging someone based on his/her race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
- Being familiar and comfortable, but not resorting to jokes as a way to express understanding.
- Taking responsibility for unlearning oppressive behavior.

Go ahead and think about it. Ask questions if you have any. Sleep on it, even. Hopefully, though, you'll choose to start taking the steps to be an Ally.

PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS OF PCC STUDENTS WITH RACISM/HOMOPHOBIA:

When I was in high school, a close friend of mine was closeted to everyone about being gay, except to me. Knowing that I was openly gay, he would be openly hostile towards me in public, at school, and in front of his other friends. He acted homophobic as a way of showing others that he wasn't in fact gay.

- Anonymous

Growing up alone as a Native American in all white communities was difficult and painful. The names the other kids called me didn't hurt as much as the rocks they threw at me when I got off the bus.

-Deb Clayton

A few years ago my mother and I were walking downtown on our way to an event we were working on at Nordstrom. We were partially dressed in Indian clothes, as it was appropriate for the event we were attending. 2 white men in their mid-20's slowed down by us and yelled "Go back to your country!" I was in shock but more so I was angry. My initial thought? "How about you come with something more original asshole, I know you're not Native American." Here we were, on our way to an event showcasing Indian culture, and I had two obviously insensitive individuals telling me I wasn't invited in their community. The anger turned into pain, hatred, assessing every possibly racist issue I ran into and when I let myself realize that only THEY didn't welcome me in their community, I saw a different way of responding to this: "I would gladly go back to my country if you would buy me a ticket. I haven't seen my grandmother in quite some time and she'd love a visit."

-Pooja Kishore

Everyday we would walk down the hall holding hands. We would arrive at her classroom first. I would kiss her goodbye and slip into my class right as the bell rang. We'd get the usual looks, sometimes someone would walk by muttering "dykes" and we would hold hands a second longer, safe together. I kissed her quickly, just a peck really, and put my headphones up. I never heard any shouts, no insult to warn me. I just felt the first shove pushing my left side into the wall. "Do you think that's ok to do here? In public?" I said yes and took a step forward, shaking. The second push banged my head against the wall. "You're disgusting, you're gonna burn in hell!" I told him to get his hands off me, leave me alone. I acted angry instead of scared, it's worked before. He spit in my face before he walked away. No one stopped him. In a crowded hall no one asked if I was ok.

-Anonymous

The man who pumped my gas yesterday greeted me in Spanish. I answered him in Spanish. He looked surprised and said that nobody had ever answered him before. He asked where I learned Spanish. We had a 15 minute conversation about his life in Peru. He used to be a University Literature professor at the University in Quito, and now he's pumping gas on Terwilliger Boulevard. His manager came by and interrupted the conversation and told him to get back to work. The manager rolled his eyes and said, "sorry" to me. I asked, "What for?" I waved goodbye to Alonzo and left. The thing that struck me most about our conversation was that he said that I was the first person who'd spoken to him at work. "Most of the time," he said, "I feel invisible."

-Sara Keilholtz