



All Welcome Here Rural BIPOC Association
1280 County Road 7, RR4
Picton, ON, K0K 2T0

info@allwelcomehere.ca
<https://allwelcomehere.ca>

August 25, 2022

Hello Council and School Board Candidate!

Congratulations on your choice to run for office. Our community is already improved by engagement of our residents.

We are writing to you to request your responses to some questions to understand your positions on issues of inclusion, diversity and anti-racism. As a result of your responses, and those of the other candidates, All Welcome Here will be issuing public endorsements of individual candidates.

There are only four questions in our survey but if you would like to share other thoughts and observations, please feel free to do so.

Please note that your responses may be publicized as we believe it is critically important to be transparent, and to help people understand why we will endorse particular candidates.

Questionnaire responses will be considered consent to have your responses publicized.

You can send your answers, other comments and any questions to info@allwelcomehere.ca by September 15, 2022.

Thank you for your willingness to run and thank you, in advance, for taking the time to respond!

Fern Dias (she/her), Board President
All Welcome Here

All Welcome Here is a BIPOC-led non-profit organization focusing on anti-racism in a consciously intersectional way in Prince Edward County, Ontario. (BIPOC: Black, Indigenous and People of Colour) We strive to link people of colour in our rural community in order to provide social connections, business assistance, support and help in building that critical rural network. We work in our wider community in anti-racist advocacy with a focus on education, access & representation, anti-racist actions and events, policing and migrant workers' issues.

1. What does diversity, equity, inclusion and Indigeneity (DEII) mean to you?

In terms of the definitions of those words specifically in this context, but defined broadly for application to communities and systems. Ideally, these definitions would set by BIPOC people.

Diversity as the condition in which constituents represent of a wide range of backgrounds and characteristics.

Equity is the perceived condition by which environments attempt to address under-representation of diverse constituents by creating equal access to resources and decisions.

Inclusion is the condition by which there is intentional effort to include a wide range of backgrounds and characteristics on a permanent basis with varying means of access suitable to people's needs and characteristics.

Indigeneity is characteristic of original inhabitants of a land, in Canada as First Nation, Inuit, Metis groups in Canada (and other groups globally), which describes not only person's cultural and resident affiliation to any given group, but also, laws, values, and effects of colonialization.

2. What have you done personally or professionally to develop your own understanding of anti-racism?

As a white person, I aim to be continually reflexive and call on my own lived experience to help my understanding of anti-racism action. I have intentionally integrated my experience, living in diverse settings with diverse people, to better understand how systemic structures including racism affect people's health and liberty. I have been fortunate enough to participate in workplace anti-racism education and advocacy with several different organizations, providing the opportunity to learn from various perspectives. Beyond that, and my own world view, I continually seek out information sources and subject matter experts through discourse, media, books and social media to challenge my own conditioned racist thought and oppression and find ways to counter it in my day-to-day life through my own conduct.

3. What DEII, anti-oppression and/or cultural competence training have you received and how will you apply what you learned as a councillor/trustee?

My training in this area occurred in the evolution of AR/AO training over thirty years through the organizations I have managed or worked for, all organizations with anti-oppression purpose or to support primary stakeholders who have been marginalized or historically oppressed. In addition, I have participated in AO/AR policy development, organizational frameworks, and training, including:

- Writing AO/AR policies in largely dominant culture organizations
- Working alongside BIPOC co-workers to update AO/AR workplace policy, training, and organizational effectiveness at St. Stephen's Community House (now the Neighbourhood Group) in 2016/2017
- Being part of a team of consultants, including BIPOC people, to develop and deliver cultural competency training for County staff in 2021



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As a Councillor, I will apply an Anti-Oppressive and DEII lens when representing my ward and sitting at Council. This includes promoting education of Councillors and Staff, identifying and seeking consequences for racist and oppressive behaviour and remarks, promoting inclusive civic engagement and ensuring Council by-laws and policies are reviewed from this perspective.

4. How will you work to ensure that every resident in our community is included?

In my role as County Councillor, it will be my responsibility to ensure community engagement occurs through all demographics and abilities. I would expect my efforts to include promoting more inclusive membership and less barriers to County Advisory Committees and Boards and improving civic education and participation by making information and means of input more accessible. Locally, I will have multiple means of engaging with residents including digitally, phone calls, monthly town halls and home visits.