Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 00:16
Hello, and welcome to the third season of toward a more just future, a podcast from Rutgers School of Social Work. My name is Thomas Benjamin, and I'm a research project assistant at the Center for Research on ending violence at Rutgers School of Social Work. I'm also a member of the school's inclusion, intersectionality, diversity, equity and advancement committee, also known as the IIDEA committee. This season, I'm speaking with some of my fellow IIDEA committee members about critical topics related to inclusion, intersectionality, diversity, equity, and advancement. Today, I'll be speaking with DuWayne battle, teaching professor, director of the Baccalaureate program at Rutgers School of Social Work on the Camden and New Brunswick campuses, and newly appointed assistant dean of bachelors programs. Under his leadership as director, the BA in Social Work program at Rutgers School of Social Work was ranked by college factual, as highly as second in the nation. Dr. Battle's teaching focuses on anti-racism, diversity and oppression, social justice, child welfare, and spirituality in social work. He created the confronting anti-black racism course and leads the diversity and oppression and introduction to social work and social justice courses. As a researcher, he has developed and published a scale on measuring student learning about diversity and oppression. He is also published in the Journal of Teaching in Social Work on challenging anti-black racism in Social Work curriculum. Dr. Battle has served as the Camden campus coordinator at Rutgers School of Social Work, and is the campus coordinator of the Baccalaureate Child Welfare education program, a consortium of seven undergraduate social work programs in New Jersey, that partner with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. He has also served as president of several educational social work organizations, such as the association of baccalaureate Social Work program directors, the Southwestern Social Work Association, and the New Jersey Baccalaureate Social Work Education Association. He was the first black president of the New Jersey chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Additionally, he serves on the Atlantic Cape Community College Human Services Advisory Board, and People Acting to help at 1919 Community Hub board, a Philadelphia human services provider. Further supporting students, Dr. Battle founded two scholarships and Rutgers, the Phi Alpha Honor Society Scholarship Fund, for BA in social work and MSW students, and the Crystal Skinner Memorial Scholarship Fund. To date, he has raised more than $180,000 for these funds. He is also a recipient of the Clement A Price Human Dignity award, one that honors extraordinary achievement and commitment to the promotion and practice of diversity, inclusion and equity within Rutgers University. Before starting his career in social work, Dr. Battle served as senior pastor in both North Carolina and New Jersey, and has a distinguished educational background in ministry, divinity and religion holding a doctoral degree in the field in addition to social work. DuWayne, thank you so much for for joining us today. Certainly a pleasure. Could you share a little bit about your background?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 04:17
Sure. Great. Before I do that, I want to thank you, Thomas, for all the good work that you're doing and for allowing me to be a part of this podcast series. I'm really excited. I also want to thank Laurie Zazinski, Catie Buttner, those who are working behind the scenes, and of course Associate Dean Antoinette Farmer, and the members of her IIDEA committee, particularly the staff, the students and the faculty. So I'm a part of the IIDEA committee and so I really, really take great pride in being a part of

this effort. So it terms on my background, lets see, what would I say? It's, there's a lot to say. So I'll just get the narrowed in. I was asked earlier this morning by someone, where are you from? And I had to say to them, I'm from the, the, you know, the US, USA, I grew up in Washington, DC, I lived in Maryland and North Carolina before making my home in New Jersey. And during that time, I was in, in training early on in life. Fourth grader, I knew what I wanted to be in life teacher said, "What do you want to be" to the whole class, and I said, I want to be a dentist. And I was in a pre dental program, and had a transition from Dentistry to ministry, and was I matriculated at HBCU Howard University great school, and was later moved on, and became a religion and philosophy major with a history minor, from there into theological studies, earning a master of divinity and a Doctor of Ministry, both of those degrees and started in congregational work. And that's something Thomas, a lot of people don't know about my, my journey. But I started there serving churches in North Carolina, later in New Jersey, and New York. And but I, I am from a family that has found great value in family and family support each other, and glad to be in social work, I transitioned to social work after coming to New Jersey. And I suppose we might get into that a little bit more later. But I am really, really happy and proud to be celebrating 22 years of being at Rutgers School of Social Work, and serving, along with colleagues and serving students and families, and communities that they serve. So I think that's, that's enough about me for the beginning.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 07:07
Well, excellent. I mean, that's an interesting background and interesting journey. And so I'm quite sure, along that journey, you have noted some pressing issues about diversity, equity, and inclusion. And so what do you believe are some of the most pressing diversity, equity and inclusion issues right now? What is the what is the starting point for addressing some of those issues?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 07:39
That's a very good question. Great question, in fact. So I, I think that the, the way I frame it is I look at just as you described it, diversity, equity and inclusion. And I think that what's really important, just in that, that listing of terms is, is equity. And because whatever the particular issue is, we really need to be about equity and liberation, and in our own work through the idea committee into liberatory consciousness. So there are obviously so many different issues along the continuum of isms, you know, whether it's racism, sexism, you know, people who have issues around inclusion of gender identity, sexual orientation, people at various levels of ability, I think the driving theme through all of that is really the issue of equity. Yeah, that's what I think.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 08:52
And what do you think is the starting point for addressing equity?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 08:57
Right, thank you again, for the question. And I'm going to really place a lot of a lot of my thinking has been strengthened by our use of the liberatory consciousness framework. So the starting place for me would be people really becoming aware, taking notice of what's happening within their individual selves, how they identify and their views, their, their biases that they have. That's like so like it's a it's a real honest self awareness, but then looking not just within but looking around and becoming aware of the biases and the prejudice, that results in discrimination, you know, across the spectrum and and just really being honest about what they see. Because we are socialized and, and in some ways, cause not to see, you know, what's what's really there. And so looking within and looking around and then looking beyond, not just at what, what is, but the potential of how things can be so much better. I think awareness is really and truly the starting place.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 10:26
So you mentioned the importance of being honest. And so in conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion, one prevailing thing that I noticed you've talked about in the past, is what's called an honest assessment. What do you think are some things that may prevent communicating an honest assessment? About one social environment?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 10:56
Wow, excellent. These questions. These are great questions. So what I think what prevents, you know, honest assessments is, well, in the simplest language, I know, is being dishonest, and having our blinders on, I can give you what I believe might be an example of this, if we roll back nine years ago, so I think it was 2014 when Michael Brown was murdered, August I believe, August 9, that year, and our school came together, as we often do great credit to the School of Social Work, to have conversations, support for students, and conversations about acknowledging what took place, honestly, acknowledging what took place, and, and, you know, being providing a space where people could express their, their concerns their rage. And, and, and to think about what can we do to create, you know, a more just future. And in that space, I remember, a student standing up, and, in my opinion, seeking to redirect the energy in the room, that was a packed out audience, but to redirect the energy in the room to talk about, or try to see things through the lens, and the, the eye of the, the police officer who shot and killed Michael Brown. And I thought that as even if it was, you know, you know, well, intentioned that it was, it was, it was denying the reason for coming together, we were not coming together, to just see things through that particular lens, or even to see things through that particular lens, but to talk about what really took place. And, and, and in an honest way to tell the truth, and, and the truth of what took place was that an innocent 18 year old, recent high school graduate, was shot and killed, and his body was left for hours in the hot August sun, the way that in our history, black men, women and children were, were lynched and allowed to hang from trees. And so to be able to see that connection with the history of oppression is an honest assessment, to try to redirect that, to look at things through the eyes of the oppressor, the perpetrator, I think is dishonest. So that's like, an explanation of how I see that being applied.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 14:07
So Dr. Battle, you have an extensive background in religion, theology, and divinity. And you've also pastored a church. How did these experiences impact your work in diversity, equity and inclusion?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 14:23
Great, great, thank you. So the way I the way I look at it is that from the history of social work, most of us realize that before there was a profession of social work, most of the social relief that individuals and families needed came through their family systems or extended family systems, the larger community, and really and truly houses of worship. And so in my own work in In the church, in particular, I will speak about in New Jersey, we had in the area of about 34, affinity programs, ministries outreach efforts in the community, we were doing things and just give you an example, we had an outreach program to people who were homeless or unhoused. And we had a feeding program for people who were, you know, experiencing, you know, food insecurity. And we provided a clothing, and this was not just done, you know, at the seasons, holiday seasons, whatnot, this was done, you know, on a regular basis, we had an outreach program to people who were faced with back then HIV/AIDS. And we were very intentional about accepting people and providing connections for resources. The list goes on and on and on after school program, a summer camp program, we started a community development program, all of these things, and what I realized at some point, Thomas was that I was doing social work, but had never been trained to do social work. And so that was when I came to Rutgers got accepted into the MSW program, and learned a lot about the ways in which we can engage in policy practice, you know, management, macro practice, and, and also, of course, you know, more frontline direct practice. And so I was, I was doing it, but I needed to develop the toolkit and the skill set to be more effective. And, and so that's how I became involved in, you know, doing social work, and then was allowed to ask to join the faculty for Rutgers School of Social Work, I did so. And I was primarily teaching classes, while maintaining the other work that I was doing. And then at some point that shifted, and I became full time in the university setting and engaged in, in social work, my focus was on administration, policy and planning, that was the macro track that we had back then now its, management and policy, that was my focus at the MSW level. And then when I pressed on into the PhD program, at Rutgers, the, the the intersection of religion, spirituality, social work became even more apparent, because my research was looking at the effects of religion and spirituality, on depression, or depressed mood for people who are seriously ill, or bereaved. And the shorter version of that is, "Does religion matter", is really what it was about. And the results of the the data analysis was that religion matters the most, for those who need it the most, it matters for everyone, but there was statistical significance for people, black people, people of color, who were either seriously ill or are bereaved, it really helped to mitigate the effects of Depression. And so that's been my journey of trying to connect the two. There's lots more, you know, related to that, and be delighted to talk, You know, more about that. But one of the things that I should mention is that I was asked to help to create a course entitled, "Spirituality and Social Work", so that we would be able to more effectively help students to think about their own spirituality, as well as finding value in the spirituality and religious practices, again, of the clients and families that we would serve and that was before our accrediting body required all

schools of social work to engage in instruction and practice opportunities for students to develop spiritual competency.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 20:11
And so you've conducted quite a few presentations on racism and racial bias. And you're also educated and trained in theology in divinity. Do you think of racism as a spiritual issue?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 20:28
Good question. So, racism is so complicated. When I talk about the, the work that I do in the church, I'm clearly aware of the history of racism, in, in religion, and religious practices, in, you know, many, many really horrible things have been done, the history of the church, that that has promoted racism, and oppression. And that really disturbs me and it disappoints me. And it's been done by all religions, not just any, you know, to call out any particular religious practice. And so, that's, that's disturbing. And so, you know, racism is multifaceted. Certainly, it has mental aspects to it. I really think that in some ways, we are mentally unwell, when we allow ourselves to, to take on the, the, the racist ideas that result in, then you know, actions. So I think that then beliefs get transferred into behaviors, and racist beliefs, have a mental component to them have a spiritual component to them out of the practice that I operate, I'm a Christian. And in the teachings of Jesus Christ, he speaks about loving one's neighbor. And many of the stories in the New Testament relate to the way that different groups the group that Jesus identified with he was, he was Jewish. And in many of his stories, he identified people who were non Jewish, and the way that they should relate to each other. And it was a way that would demonstrate, you know, the higher teachings of love and acceptance, the opposite the total opposite of racism. So I do think that there are, again, mental aspects to racism, spiritual aspects, that it gets manifested, obviously, in very horrific physical realities, political realities. But I think I would, I would lean on the side of saying, Yes, I think that there is a spiritual, unfortunately, a spiritual aspect to to racism and racist behaviors.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 23:33
So you have a knack for leading difficult conversations about diversity, equity and inclusion in spaces like academia, agency settings and other professional realms. You're also an expert on liturgics and homiletics homiletics being the practice of preaching and sermon delivery. Does this help you lead difficult conversations on issues like identity based bias?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 24:03
Wow, man, these questions are jewels. Yes, um, you know, some of them like some of the people that I have, have seen and have admired their readings, their writings, their the work that they've done, people like the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or Bishop Desmond Tutu. They these are individuals who were very much involved in their, the their faith and practice of their faith, and they engage people in really important conversations. Everyone's familiar with Dr. King's "I Have a Dream speech". And it's

known that much of that speech was extemporaneous that he had his prepared notes, but at a point in speaking, August 28, 1963, I think it was, he just spoke out of his, you know, his oratorical gifts, as it were, as being a minister, a pastor, preacher, now social reformer, or civil rights leader, he spoke out of that. And these these, he spoke about as a visionary, being able to see something that would allow this great nation to realize her greatest, you know, ideals, you know, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and, and in the language that we use today intersectionality, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and advancement, he was trying to help us, you know, to find some fulfillment of the American dream. Bishop Tutu talks about, I think, in his book, "Hope and Suffering" about God allowing us to be co creators with them. As you know, as though we were able to help to create a better again, a more just, you know, society a more just future for, for his people suffering, you know, under oppression, under apartheid in South Africa, but also people globally, you know, around the world. So, I do think that my, my work, you know, in, in the in the church has helped me to care, you know more about the people, then just the conversation, which enables, an honest conversation. There are examples I have of how that has taken place over the years, this may, this may amuse you, I was looking one day, for images, Thomas that relate to social justice, and, you know, scanning through, you know, images that came up, there was an image that came up of, it was a side profile of, of myself, and I was in a classroom setting with a group of middle schoolers, as I remember it, and I stare at that image for a long time trying to remember, first of all, to make sure I, I thought it was really, you know, yours truly, but also to remember the context of that. And as it as it occurs, to me, the context was a very unfortunate experience in the community, where there was someone who killed some people, caused the end of life, and the schools, public schools within the community, were trying to help the students through that experience. So they were calling for social workers, counselors, others to volunteer to come into the schools, and help in those conversations. And I remember being with these middle schoolers, and talking about violence in the community, and something that struck me that day that they've always remembered, I probably will never forget it, that there was, you know, being young people, some of them were less attentive than others. And there was this one young student who seemed to be more interested in, in kidding around with, you know, some of the members of his cohort classmates that were there, then, you know, paying attention, but he raised his hand, he raised his hand, because I asked them all you know, about why do you suppose there's so much violence in society. And so this young man raised his hand, and I had no idea what he was going to say. But he, he spoke up and said, that violence is a form of communication. And it really caused me to think and I thanked him for his answer. And we started to talk about the fact that if people have good communication skills, like like, actively listening to people, and you know, allowing others to speak and then sharing your honest, you know, thoughts and opinions, then it can be a way of de-escalating, um, very tense situations. But when people lack those communications skills that sometimes it can escalate very quickly. And the result of which is allowing violence to be their, you know, only form or default form of communication, which I thought was just brilliant that this student shared that. So, being able to be in that space, have that difficult conversation has emerged from my part of who I am my, my, my experiences of trying to listen, listen actively to people, if you permit me one more example, I was in a conversation with a rabbi, in our community, when there was someone who was invited into the community to speak. And there were concerns about whether or not this person was anti semitic. And as a result, we ended up for several years, the rabbi and I bringing our congregations together, so that we could learn more about each other's communities, our faith practices, our concerns, and just like the way that we view and see

life, and we were able to bring in a number of different speakers, we had social activities together on a regular basis. And we did this for years. And two of the speakers that we brought in, as I remember, one was James McBride. And James McBride is the author of a number of books, some of some of which have actually become movies, several of them I know. But there's his first book was entitled, "The Color of Water". James McBride's mother, was Jewish, white, Jewish, his father, a black clergyman, and a minister. And so he was like the right person for our discussions. And he came in spoke about that book, "The Color of Water". And interestingly, the title came from an answer to a question he raised for his mother, he asked his mother, "what color is God?" The response of his mother, "the color of water", what a great answer. Great question too incidentally. But she, she gave a great answer. And he came and spoke to us about that, and allowed us to have our own conversations, which was really, really beautiful. And then one of the other speakers that came to join us was Cornel West. And he came and had a great conversation with us, members of our congregations, I think we may have even open it up to members of the community to come and to talk. So that's a way of using, you know, skills that we have in our congregations or in our faith that will help us to engage in these really difficult, challenging conversations.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 33:33
Considering difficult, challenging conversations. Are there any specific communication tactics that you think work best? For an audience's understanding of sensitive issues?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 33:48
Yeah, good. Good question. So, um, I should say that, you know, this work is really risky. And so building a sense of trust, and respect. For people who are engaged in the conversation, not having hidden agendas. It's almost like I say to people, you can't you can't have other people being open and honest. And you are, you get your hands under the table, you know, you are holding all your cards close to yourself. That's not that's, you know, it's different from active listening. It's, um, it's allowing others to be vulnerable and not engaging, you know, in the conversation. It takes more time for some than others, but creating spaces and being intentional about creating spaces so everyone can, you know, find their voices. In larger settings, when trying to hold these conversations, I will try to create brief exercises where people can talk, you know, one on one, or, you know, three people together, because it's our people, many people feel more comfortable in those spaces, they may not raise their hands, to speak out loud, when they're, you know, a lot of a lot of people in the conversation. So finding a way to intentionally draw people in, and, and not, you know, being so charged, when people say things that you might disagree with, allow them to say it and think about, and then even allow yourself the possibility of hearing things differently and thinking about them differently. When I do this at agencies, I think about one agency that I worked with for several, over the course of a couple of weeks, and, you know, meeting with groups of 30 people, you know, a couple of times a day for a couple of weeks. So, you know, after meeting with first several groups, they were telling other people what they could expect. And so I had to be creative, and be able to mix it up some, so that they did not assume that they knew exactly where I was going with it. And at the end of the training, you know, the person who invited me and thanked me for the training. And speaking about the evaluations, she said, they either

love you or they hate you. And I said sounds like my family, given, you know, a particular day of the week or a particular, you know, experience, you know, I take it, you know, I don't internalize the fact that some people may not be as open to, you know, to the conversation, and the fact that sometimes I do, I actually may do better than at other times, but always trying to keep in front of me, the concern for people. And it goes back to what we were talking about earlier, but having honest conversations, allowing oneself to be vulnerable in those spaces. Practicing you know, you know, active, listening again, and, and then just pausing, you know hit the pause button sometimes, and, and just think about what somebody said, rather than having my first you know, emotional response. Just think about it. So I encourage people something to just think about it, just just just sit with it. And and then maybe even sometimes having people to write out their thoughts, you know, doing a little intentional journaling. It's amazing when people practice reflection, that their perspective can be enlarged, or in some ways altered and new growth can take place.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 38:13
So you talked about leading trainings as well as leading conversations about sensitive issues. Could you tell us a little bit about your diversity and oppression course?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 38:25
Yes, love to. So the diversity and oppression course is, for those who may be listening to this, it's a part of the required curriculum for all schools of social work. In our particular case, we require the diversity and oppression course of all undergraduate Social Work majors, as well as all MSW students. It's one of the first classes that our MSW students take. And it's one of the required classes in the undergraduate program that's a part of the foundation year of the MSW program. So that course, is really it's 14, 15 modules depending upon the student's status as an undergraduate or graduate student. And it really begins with a series of, of, of learnings aimed at getting the student again to look within. So to understand one's individual personal bias or where the student finds themselves on the continuum of privilege and oppression. The notion of which is that all of us have some form of privilege and all of us experience some form of oppression. So being able to see that and we talked about in the early modules about cultural humility, about human rights, things like that. And one of the, one of the early assignments for that class is an assignment where students, they are able to watch a PBS special or read a book that's entitled "Slavery by Another Name". The goal of that assignment is to get students to think about what they have learned about the history of slavery in this country, over against the truth about what really took place. And that assignment is it's a, it's a, it's an assignment that causes reflection. Students watch the video and or read the book, and they also respond to several questions, we give them 10 questions, I think they respond to four or so of the questions, just respond to the questions, talking about hidden histories as an example. And why it's important to talk about things that have been hidden from us the way that people tried to whitewash or reconstruct historical accuracy. And so we progress from that, to getting students to do a personal background paper, the purpose of background paper is where students interview an older family member, and gain more understanding about their own personal background, again, on the privilege of oppression and privilege. And that's really, you know, really an assignment where students come back and say, you

know, I learned so many things about my, my family that I didn't know about, or I do certain things not understanding why do certain things or believe in certain ways, but it's what's been passed on to me from my family. Going back to something that we spoke about earlier, Thomas, with respect to racism, whether racism, you know, is spiritual. Racism is something that is, that's historical. And so, oh, it's part of the family history that is passed on, so that people who have certain beliefs and have certain behaviors come to discover that those are things that will pass on to the family, as well as notions about privilege and oppression. The course continues with students engaging in their group or class presentations, around a series of different topics, there are five topics. And this is where students are actually read articles create a case study about populations that we will be working with. And then being able to lead a discussion, you know, with the class, whether it's in person or online, the students are leading the discussion. The final two assignments are, one is an interview, literature review paper, which I really like this assignment, because students are asked to identify someone who's of a different race, and another intersection of difference. So someone who may along the continuum of different ways that we identify someone who's of a different gender, someone who's of a different sexual orientation, someone who's of a different level of how they identified their ability, their religion, their faith, you know, a whole list of things. So students identified someone that they want to interview could be, you know, a co-worker or classmate, someone in the community, someone at the gym, someone that they've met along the way. And an interesting part of that assignment is that students are encouraged to engage in a social activity with that person, where that person is in the majority. So, if you are, you know, interviewing someone who is a Muslim that you might go to, you know, masjid or if they're Jewish, be invited to the temple. And, or if they are of a different sexual orientation, you might end up going to a gay bar or to, you know, cultural event that represents a different population, and you're in the minority in that space, so you have to demonstrate cultural humility be put in a space of perhaps some disorientation or discomfort. And then you, you know, interview the person, you look at a couple of articles, several articles, I think five, or more five, or so at least five, that relate to that person's identity. And you then integrate it and talk about what resonates with the person's experience, what's different, and how it applies to social work. And then quickly, the last one is the, the assignment where students have to engage in an activity that promotes social, racial, economic or environmental justice. So this is taking it up another level. So it's not just about knowledge. We want to impact your knowledge, your values, and your skills. So engage in an activity that you create, or that you participate in, that helps to promote, you know, a more just future. So that's the course you know, and how it's described. And it's, it's a, it's a, I think it's a very, it's a great course, it's interesting, it constantly evolves so that we are looking at, you know, racial justice, social justice as an umbrella, but racial justice, economic justice, environmental justice, political justice, a range of topics, does that does that kind of explain it?

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence
Rutgers School of Social Work 46:46
Excellent explanation, very thorough and good to know that there is some application or a little bit of application involved in that.

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 46:58
Right. Thank you.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 47:00
And so you have developed and published a diversity and depression scale? How can organizations use the scale to tackle their issues regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 47:18
Okay, great. So years ago, Dr. Lilly Windsor, who was at Rutgers, and another colleague that she knew from the University of Texas, at Austin, and myself, we work together to, to evaluate students learnings, really relates to what we just talking about, to the diversity and oppression course, to really see if there's some change in, you know, students, you know, learning in that course. And so I think what's important is for organizations to find a way, whether it's what we refer to as the DOS scale, the diversity and oppression scale, some way to measure their success in creating diversity, equity and inclusion, some, some some, some metrics, some way of getting feedback, to see where their efforts are working, where their efforts are not working, and ways that they can, you know, improve those, those efforts. So it might not just be using the obviously just using our scale, which was intended for students, but finding a way to quantify and qualify, looking at quantitative and qualitative analysis of their best efforts to see if they are working. There's a lot of research out there that suggests that what we do a lot of the DEI work is a little more than window dressing. So the real it goes back to our first question, the real evidence for me is whether or not there is equity. And being able to determine that in measurable ways.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 49:23
Well, that's important because, you know, it's difficult to manage what you can't measure.

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 49:29
If you can't measure it, how you gonna manage it. Exactly.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 49:34
And so, why is it important to challenge anti black racism in Social Work curriculum?

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 49:45
Wow. Yes, again, the, the, the questions are important. So you know, part of the work that I've been involved in now for 15 years, in an organized way, is through, the National Association of Social Work in the New Jersey chapter, and in the work that I became involved in, and a shout out to Bill Waldman,

who was the president, at that time, a President of NASW-NJ, and a member of our faculty, he asked me to become involved in the efforts of NASW-NJ, around responding to institutional racism. That were actually, at the state level, the regional level was initiated at the national level, the president at that time of NASW national, Betsy Clark, she along with other you know, social work organizations issued a call to action. And the call to action was for social workers to address institutional racism within social work organizations. And so I became involved in that work. And I want to say, you know, not even parenthetically, because I think it's important, but as a result of getting involved, I became the first black president of NASW-NJ. And that's important to me, because it has little to do with, you know, with, with me as an individual, but a lot to do with the fact that I'm in a state as diverse as New Jersey, that it took that long for us to have to be able to recognize leadership out of the Black and Brown communities, in a very important and significant way. And so I became involved in that work around institutional racism. We partnered with Rutgers University, and created a leadership certificate program that was entitled...it had to do with institutionalizing diversity. And it was like leadership through a new lens, and diversity being the lens. Now fast forward from from from that experience, we were we were still going through the things that I referenced about Michael Brown, certainly. Others from that period forward, Trayvon Martin, Breanna Taylor, in this particular area, Eric Gardner, and of course, you know, on a, on a, on a much more well-known scale, what took place on March 25, in 2020. We know the nation was galvanized around the death of George Floyd. And not just his death, but his murder, his public murder. And efforts were realized, around the need to engage in anti-racism. And this was largely, Ibram Kendi got a lot of attention for the work that he was doing. He was the first person to identify anti racism, and others who were involved in the work before him, Were doing it, even if they were not calling it anti racism, it was work that was designed to bring an end to, you know, to racism, so taking a stand. And so during the time, around that time, at our school, I chaired the undergraduate curriculum committee, our curriculum committee had been discussing a way to distinguish our school and our work from the other great schools of social work in the state and beyond, as particularly underway undergraduate level, and we discuss in a number of different frameworks that we might choose, and we chose an anti-racist framework as the core of our efforts. So it was embedded in our curriculum, embedded in our, our, you know, goals, our course goals, program goals, etc. And I joined with, you know, the effort, or I led the effort actually, of creating a course "confronting anti-black racism". And one of our recent PhD students, Alicia Menendez, she provided a lot of work and support, as did other colleagues in that effort. And that course has now been taught for the last couple of years. And the focus of the course, is again, on not just understanding, but really taking action. So students who take the course as an elective, there are many of them are non-social work, students who choose to take this course, some of them actually end up coming into the major as a result of the course. But they go through a series of modules, discussions, activities, assignments, that the goal of which is to confront anti-black racism. And, and the reason for the focus, specifically on anti-black racism is because the reality in this country is that racism is has a history of being manifested at an institutional level against Black and Brown citizens. But African women, men, children, who were brought to this country and made slaves, and that's what the Course identifies, and students are able to learn more about and, and take action against. I'm sorry, I should, if I can, I should just add to the fact that again, cuz I think Rutgers is like at the at the leading edge of a lot of things that are happening. We were doing that before our accrediting body, the Council on Social Work Education, instituted in less than a year ago last summer, to part of the discussion, the requirement for all schools of social work, to engage in

not just diversity, equity, inclusion, but ADEI, anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion. Again, that's going to be the educational policy, accreditation standard for all sorts of social work. And we were at the vanguard of that, as well as the fact that in July of 2020, the "12 Grand Challenges of Social Work" a 10 year plan for, for the social work profession to respond to grand challenges, during that summer of the murder of George Floyd, the death of Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, sadly, there was a another grand challenge that was added, which is the challenge to eliminate racism. And so I think that's why anti racism and anti black racism is so important to schools of social work, the profession of social work, and to becoming a more just future in this nation and beyond.

Thomas Benjamin, Research Project Assistant, Center for Research on Ending Violence Rutgers School of Social Work 58:13
Great. Well, thank you, Dr. Battle. From you, we certainly get a holistic insight and perspective on both the training and academic and professional aspects of not only social work, but diversity, inclusion, and equity. So thank you again, we do very much so appreciate you sharing your time and journey with us as well as you serving in the many capacities that you do at Rutgers School of Social Work. So thank you. Thanks a lot.

DuWayne Battle, Assistant Dean of Bachelor's Programs, Director, BASW Program New Brunswick Teaching Professor 58:50
Thank you so much. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to be with you