



# OPENING DOORS

## Diversity Project

The Research Foundation of SUNY

### **Mission**

To provide quality leadership, technical assistance, training and education that supports all dimensions of diversity. Our partnership approach is distinguished by its vision, research base and its safe and expansive learning opportunities.

### **Vision**

We envision an abundant world of integrated, diverse communities founded in the inherent goodness and human dignity of each person.

### **Approach**

The Opening Doors Diversity Project approach incorporates current research on successful organizational development and personal behavioral change. Together these valuable bodies of knowledge bring strategies and vision to the practical application of making change.

The research base includes:

1. Theories of organizational development which focus on system structures and management practices that create a healthy diverse organizational climate. It is the process through which an organization develops the internal capacity to be the most effective it can be in its mission's work.
2. The personal development work includes oppression theory, which focuses on group identity relative to power, privilege and difference, highlighting our inherited divisions and their current impact. Social identity development theory is used as a strategic process for personal movement.



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## **Phases of the Opening Doors Diversity Project's organizational development approach:**

### **1. Developing understanding and commitment**

Members of the organization define partnership collectively. The following parameters guide the evolving definition: conscious inclusion of all dimensions of diversity, equivalent outcome across difference, and ongoing learning opportunities for staff and leadership. Implementation addresses system structures, management practices, professional development and resource selection connected to service delivery.

### **2. Building knowledge and skills**

Maintaining a balance in professional development between building knowledge and increasing skills is critical to creating partnership. Workshops that focus on building knowledge through education expand individual awareness and provide the philosophy that guides day-to-day decision-making. Training provides the expanded skills people need to be successful across a broad array of needs

### **3. Establishing partnership as a process of continual reflection, planning and growth**

Once established as an operating philosophy, adjusting system structures, engaging in on-going learning and updating programs become a matter of course. No longer does "change" seem like an extra-ordinary effort, or is "change" seen as a departure from how things are done. Change is an evolving way of doing business that meets the needs at hand.