



CMC News

December 2013

President
Gina Davis

Executive Director
Eugene Dumas

Treasurer
Nodee McNeal

Board of Directors
Glen Barwegan
Ruby Donahue
Micheal Mireles
Cynthia Pryor
Monica Regan
Melisa Watson

The Center for
Multicultural Communities
202 S. Halsted
Chicago Heights, IL
60411
708-709-3797
cmcdirect@gmail.com

Message from the Director

We have been engaged in various antidiscrimination activities in recent days and months. We continue to partner with Diversity Inc., serving as its educational arm. Our activities have included showing the rationale for advocating affirmative fair housing in an effort to eradicate racism in housing, post-racial survey, held a forum on "Coping Skills for a Multicultural Society", helped to host two forums with Prairie State College with Dr. James Meredith as the keynote speaker, speech to federal employees, and finally we conducted a workshop for preschool teachers on "Understanding and Respecting Individual Differences".

~ Eugene Dumas

Fair Housing Workshop

CMC conducted workshops on "The History of Race and its Significance in the United States" for Diversity Inc. Our audience consisted of local and federal governmental officials, along with local civic organizations. We explained the genesis of race and its significance. Until the early 1700s, race was not a factor in organized societies. But, in the American colonies, the discovery of a coalition between black and white indentured servants challenged the social order. Planters reacted by formulating a divide-and-conquer strategy based on race. White indentured servants would be made full citizens, and given white-person privileges, once their time of indenture ended. Black indentured servants would become slaves for life. In the workshop we also showed the hurt that resulted when the "melting pot" concept was considered the ideal.

Survey on the "Post-Racial" Concept

CMC conducted a survey to determine whether we are now a post-racial society. We were assisted by five volunteers from Prairie State College: Jaisha Mwinyi, Mailani Schaeffer, Celeste Garcia, Danielle Garcia, Connor Ryan and other PSC students. We wanted to know if a majority of people feel we are now a post-racial society now that we have certain high-profile minorities in public office, such as President Barack Obama, Attorney General Eric Holder, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and others. The survey was representative of our increasingly diverse society.

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The responses of participants led us to the conclusion that race still matters. Most respondents believe we are not yet a post-racial society, but progress is being made.

Forum at Prairie State College

At our Prairie State College forum on “Coping Skills for a Multicultural Society”, we illustrated with videos and lectures how some Americans still are troubled by diversity. We provided some strategies for successful navigation of our increasingly diverse society.

Two Forums with Dr. James Meredith

On Nov. 4, CMC co-hosted two forums with Prairie State College featuring Dr. James Meredith. Dr. Meredith first received national attention when he became the first African American to enter the University of Mississippi. Later, he led a one-man march against fear, during which he was shot. A panel that included college faculty and Executive Director Eugene Dumas discussed with Dr. Meredith a range of issues facing Black Americans and their fellow citizens. Mr. Dumas asked specifically about ways to facilitate continuous improvement of racial and cultural harmony. Dr. Meredith spent time offering possible solutions for problems in race relations and education. The forums were well attended and provide free publicity and outreach opportunities for CMC.

Introducing Donors to Community Shares

On nine occasions CMC spoke to federal employees, encouraging them to donate to Community Shares of Illinois. The CMC is a member, and receives funding from this coordinated fund-raising organization. The responses were positive.

Workshop with Harvey Teachers

CMC hosted a workshop for Harvey preschool teachers on Dec. 6 to explain principles, techniques and practices for understanding and respecting individual differences. Participants were led through actual real-life situations in order to formulate effective techniques for dealing successfully with a diverse school population.

Upcoming Events

- January 2014 – Three forums with Senior Companions of Rich Township, dealing with the eradication of racism.

Quote of the Month

“We no longer see hoses and dogs being set on people. Now a lot of this happens beneath the surface in areas such as hiring, housing, contract procurement, and access to capital, which makes it that much harder to deal with.”

– Carol Clark, from the book
Steps Toward an Inclusive Community