

Intersectionality

The Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) conducted a Community of Practice on Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Developmental Disabilities. In the final year of the project, the NCCC responded to interests and needs of the CoP state teams that asked for a focus on racial equity in intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) by creating a Racial Equity Learning Community. The NCCC team identified two terms — disability justice and intersectionality — and in partnership with persons with IDD, created a set of materials to define these terms and share what they mean within the context of their lived experience.

Kimberlé Crenshaw, a lawyer and civil rights advocate, introduced us to the term intersectionality in 1991. She wrote about how a person who because of their membership in multiple social groups may experience discrimination, oppression, and marginalization. Her work focused on Black women.

Since 1991, the term intersectionality is used in multiple ways by many in health, mental health, and human services. Sometimes those who use the term intersectionality confuse it with multiple cultural identities and omit the important defining factors of discrimination, marginalization, and oppression.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. Stanford Law Review, Vol. 43, No. 6 (Jul., 1991), pp. 1241-1299.



LEROY MOORE is a Black disabled author, poet, founder of Krip-Hop Nation, consultant on race and disability, former co/founder & community relations director of Sins Invalid, UCLA Ph.D. student in Linguistic Anthropology, and co-contributor to the disability justice framework. Leroy shared his thoughts on intersectionality with the NCCC.

“Intersectionality, the discrimination and unequal treatment of people based on their identities, has been around for a very long time. To me, the effects of intersectionality could be reduced or even eliminated if federal and state laws were actually enforced. Our country has not fully funded or successfully implemented basic civil rights laws, the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 504, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and other programs, which would allow more equity for diverse people with disabilities. Until we support affordable, accessible housing, access to employment, transportation and education opportunities, society will continue to marginalize and oppress people with disabilities based on race, language, sexual orientation and other identities.”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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