

# Moving From Awareness to Action

As Vanderbilt seeks to be a place of inclusion, belonging, and equity, our campus is not immune to the injustices that exist in the lives of many members of our community. In order for the work of justice to be lived out, the full and equal participation of all student leaders must be enacted. To disrupt and dismantle all forms of injustice, we must collectively work together and do our part.

## Tips to Doing Your Part

- **Educate Your Members About Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** If you're going to be a student organization that takes action, you must start by educating yourself about the current issues and how you play a part. Reaching out to offices such as the [Student Center for Social Justice & Identity \(SCSJI\)](#) or the [Office of LGBTQI Life](#) is a great place to start!
- **Assess the Current Environment of Your Organization:** What's working? Where are there internal opportunities for change and improvement? What are the blind spots? How is your organization connected to a history of inequality and racism? What additional support and information does your organization need to be successful when engaging in anti-racist work? If you want to do an organization assessment, the following resources could offer insights:
  - Ibram Kendi's [How to Be An Antiracist](#)
  - Peggy McIntosh's ["White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"](#)
  - The ["How to Create An Inclusive Environment"](#) Training from SCSJI
- **Collaborate with, Partner with, and Support Multiple Multicultural Student Org Events.** A great way to connect with other orgs is by attending events they host or by attending events during the various heritage months, such as Hispanic Heritage Month, the Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, Native American Heritage Month, and Black History Month. You could also host programs with multicultural student orgs as well. Some organizations to consider are:
  - The Multicultural Leadership Council
  - The International Student Council
  - The National Pan-Hellenic Council
- **Assess your recruitment and officer elections.** Diversifying your membership can be tough, even though you may be very open to it. Well, if you're going to do it, you have to be [color brave](#), or you can check out SCSJI's "Diversifying Your Membership" training.
- **Respond and Hold Others Accountable.** What would you do if someone in your organization says an oppressive remark and violates the expectations of community? Check out the [cycle of liberation](#) and [social change model](#) for ways to develop an approach and response.

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- **Evaluate, Shift, and Diversify Who You Spend Time With In Your Organization.** Be intentional with who you are spending your time with. Check out Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Ted Talk "[The Danger of A Single Story](#)" for great tips!
- **Advertise, Participate, and Organize With your Group.** There's so much that you can do as an organization. Here are just a few ideas:
  - Join a community protest/demonstration, such as the [Black Lives Matter Movement](#).
  - Commit to coming together as an organization and exercise your right to vote!
  - Connect with the [Vanderbilt Office of Active Citizenship and Service](#) about service opportunities and service trips.
  - Connect with Nashville organizations that are focused on doing the work of justice. Some to check out are:
    - [The Equity Alliance](#)
    - [Nashville Organized for Action and Hope \(NOAH\)](#)
    - [Conexión Américas](#)
    - [Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition \(TIRRC\)](#)
- **Speak Up!** Check out this great [Anti-racist resources](#) for how to speak up and out when you see injustice. You can also check out the [Code Switch](#) podcast for stories about activism and education about social movements.
- **\$\$\$ Talks!** Use your student services fees or fundraise and donate to financially support organizations that are committed to working towards racial justice. Additionally, your organization can always support vendors of color. Check out this list of [Nashville black-owned businesses](#).
- **Don't Just Create...Commit!** Don't just talk about being inclusive...do something! Try creating a diversity and inclusion strategy in your organization and commit to doing it! Utilize the Student Org Impact Plan to discuss and plan.

This is a living document—do you have ideas to share that have been helpful to your student organization to create a more inclusive environment through the lens of your organization? Email [studentorganizations@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:studentorganizations@vanderbilt.edu) or [scsji@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:scsji@vanderbilt.edu)