

“Citizens Creating Racial Equity” in education, policing, and leadership

In 2006, racial tensions rose to a tipping point in Stratford, Conn., following the arrest of two African Americans – a teenager and a town councilman. The city used this as a springboard to improve community-police relations, and to address other issues related to racial equity.



Representatives from C.A.R.E.

To launch community-wide dialogue and action on racism, they formed “Citizens Addressing Racial Equity” (C.A.R.E.). Initiated by a Democratic mayor, C.A.R.E. transcends political identification, and now receives the support of the new Republican mayor. “C.A.R.E. serves an important purpose, uniting our town across racial and economic lines in pursuit of building a better community,” says Mayor John Harkins. “They have my full support.”



Learn more by visiting
http://bit.ly/ccre_stratford

Stratford became one of nine sites across the country involved in the “Communities Creating Racial Equity” (CCRE) initiative launched by Everyday Democracy. This has allowed people to share lessons and tools for racial equity work and to create a network of communities addressing similar issues.

“In the beginning, C.A.R.E.’s work felt reactive,” says Tamara Trojanowski, C.A.R.E.’s Project Coordinator for the CCRE initiative. “Now our effort feels organized and intentional as we work to strengthen the community.”

Dialogue participants identified three action teams on racial equity in policing, education, and town leadership. Here are some of their accomplishments to date:

- A Juvenile Review Board was established to divert young, first-time, non-violent offenders from the Juvenile Justice System.
- Planning is in place to launch a Citizen’s Police Academy.
- The city’s public schools established an annual job fair to recruit people of color, earning them a “Friend of Education” award for their success.
- The Board of Education renewed its Affirmative Action Policy and Minority Teacher Recruitment Plan.
- More people of color are being hired to fill leadership positions, including the first black police chief and new members of Stratford Town Hall.

About Everyday Democracy

A national leader in the field of civic participation and community change, Everyday Democracy helps people of different backgrounds and views talk and work together to create communities that work for everyone.

www.everyday-democracy.org