

ORGANIZATIONAL RACE EQUITY
REPORT + RECOMMENDATIONS
MARIANIST SOCIAL JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE

JUNE 2025

AUTHORED BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	4
Report Authors	5
Introduction	6
Section One: Report on the Race Equity Assessment	9
• A Note About Numbers for Non-Statisticians	10
• Current & Active Stakeholders	11
○ Demographics	11
○ Perception of Diversity + Commitment to Race Equity	16
○ External Communication	21
○ Internal Communication	24
○ Recruiting + Retention	27
○ Applying an Anti-Racist Lens	30
○ Creating Space for Equity	33
○ Accountability to Race Equity Goals + Principles	36
○ Impact of Race on...	37
Individual Experience + Success	37
Relationship with MSJC Staff, Volunteers, Steering Committee	37
Relationship with Communities Served	38
○ Targeted with Racist Remark + Behavior	39
○ Witnessed a Racist Remark + Behavior	40
○ Bias at the Intersections	41
○ Being Called in for Your Own Racist Remarks + Behavior	42
○ Personal Efforts to Promote Racial Equity	42
○ Reflections on Sign of the Times	43
• Past Stakeholder Perspectives	44
Section Two: Report on the Focus Groups	49
Section Three: Our Observations	52
Section Four: Recommendations for Next Steps	63

PREFACE

Just Roots Consulting, LLC is a certified LGBTQ-owned business and social enterprise that provides transformative consulting services to help individuals and organizations become the anti-racist and anti-oppression leaders we need and deserve. Personally, I am a white Lebanese queer transgender person and civil rights attorney licensed in New York State with a lifelong passion for equity and justice, and over 20 years of professional experience educating people about their legal rights, leadership development, and breaking down systems of oppression through mindfulness, inclusion, affirmation, and celebration of historically marginalized identities.

As the founder and CEO of Just Roots Consulting, it was my honor and privilege to work with your organization on this project. I hope that this report and the rest of our planned work together serve as foundational resources in your ongoing efforts to institutionalize equity and inclusion throughout all you do, both within the organization and throughout the communities you serve. Please consider us a partner in this critical work, and a resource to your organizational efforts toward justice and equity in the future.

Sincerely,



Milo Primeaux, Esq. (he/they)

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REPORT AUTHORS



YALÇIN AÇIKGÖZ, PHD

Yalçın (he/him) is an industrial-organizational psychologist specializing in the application of psychological science to workplace cultures, and currently serves as an Associate Professor of Psychology at Appalachian State University. As a Turkish immigrant, he appreciates the importance and gravity of working toward equity in all aspects of life, including but certainly not limited to the workplace. For this project, Yalçın co-created the Assessment questions, provided the masterful statistical and intersectional analysis of the raw data we obtained through the Assessment, and co-authored this report.



JESSICA RODRIGUEZ BECKER

Jessica (she/her) is an educator and consultant who specializes in adult learning around issues of justice and equity. Jessica is a keen observer and brings her intuition and insight with her to each panel she moderates or workshop she facilitates. As an educator and consultant, Jessica is passionate about bringing a liberation and equity lens to modern life, particularly workplace and organizational life. She believes that creating more just and equitable workplaces and organizations requires a deep understanding of systemic oppression and a commitment to dismantling it at every level. This work requires both individual and collective action, and Jessica is committed to supporting individuals and organizations on this journey. Born and raised in NYC, Jessica is a Nuyorican (of Afro-Caribbean, Indigena descent) and her parents were born in Puerto Rico (the island originally called Borinquen). She feels most at home near the equator and loves her Blackness, her Caribbean-ness, her womanhood, her queerness, her sisterhood, her mothering-heart, and her intuitive insight. For this project, Jessica facilitated the focus groups and co-authored the focus group, observations, and recommendations portions of this report.



MILO PRIMEAUX, ESQ

Milo (he/they) is a white Lebanese queer transgender person, civil rights attorney licensed in New York, and founder and CEO of Just Roots Consulting. Milo brings over 20 years of professional experience educating people about their legal rights, developing new leadership, and fostering critical awareness rooted in anti-oppression principles and cultural humility. He is a compassionate space holder, change maker, and facilitator who strives to be a good ancestor. He is a graduate of the Ohio State University and the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law. For this project, Milo co-created the Assessment questions and co-authored this report, especially the observations and recommendations.

INTRODUCTION

In Spring 2025, Just Roots Consulting, LLC conducted an Organizational Race Equity Assessment to help the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative (MSJC) get a clear snapshot of how it is doing today in terms of equity and inclusion, and to recommend how most effectively and authentically to move forward from here. Our work together focused explicitly on race equity, but not exclusively so. We utilized an intersectional framework to consider many ways the organization could positively impact and include people with other historically marginalized identities and experiences, too.

This report contains the following components:

- A report of our findings from the **Organizational Race Equity Assessment**
- A summary of **focus groups** feedback
- Our **observations** about these findings and **recommendations** on prioritizing your resources and efforts toward race equity moving forward.

What is reflected in the report is a collection of your candid, clear, courageous responses to challenging questions about your personal perceptions, experiences, hopes, and fears around race equity at MSJC. You all painted a very vivid picture of how you want to be in community with one another: how you want to trust, respect, treat, support, and encourage each other, and the kinds of structural, policy, and power changes that need to happen to get you all there.

It is our fervent hope that you will find encouragement, support, and solidarity in these pages, and that MSJC will utilize this report and its recommendations to change its culture through policies, practices, and the composition of staff and leadership as needed. We also hope that you will use this as baseline data to help you accurately measure the success of any attempts made to shift the organizational culture. We strongly encourage your organization to regularly assess progress being made on the recommendations laid out in this document and any others we provided as part of this project. Without frequent scheduled check-ins, there can be no accountability and thus no meaningful change to an inequitable status quo.



Before we jump in, we want to share some of the anti-oppression tenets that we center in all our work and teachings, so you know where we are coming from in our approach to this report.

1. Assume the worst of systemic oppression.

Left undisturbed by self-reflection or institutional policies to the contrary, even the most well-meaning person will err on the side of maintaining their own power and privilege. So often, our best intentions still have a harmful impact. We will continue to benefit from systems and institutions of power and privilege at the expense of others unless something, someone, or a new mindfulness interrupts our trajectory. *It is not enough to have good intentions. To be anti-racist, we must do more.* We must create cultures of accountability to make meaningful interpersonal and systemic change.

2. White supremacy hurts everyone and has a deleterious effect on the health and wellness of its targets and its beneficiaries.

As Black lesbian feminist, civil rights activist, and poet Audre Lorde wrote, “We have all been programmed to respond to the human differences between us with *fear and loathing* and to handle that difference in one of three ways: *ignore it*, and if that is not possible, *copy it* if we think it is dominant, or *destroy it* if we think it is subordinate. But we have no patterns for relating across our human differences as equals.” This beautifully summarizes the violent, exclusionary, and inequitable conditioning of white supremacy to which we are all subject and by which we are all harmed. Reclaiming our own personal agency from the grip of this conditioning is a powerful and necessary step in the process toward our collective liberation.

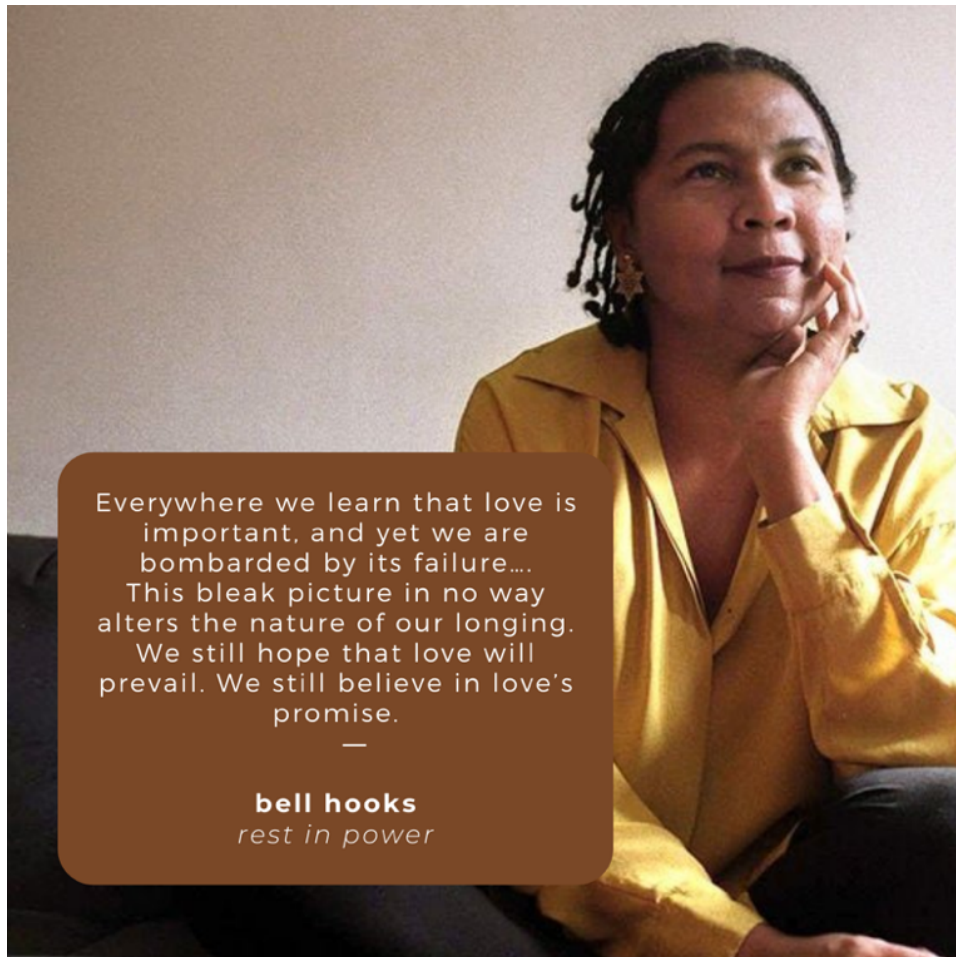
3. Personal prejudices can flow in many directions, but systemic oppression only flows in one direction.

All the *systems and institutions* that exist today were built out of the assumption that whiteness is normal, ideal, and inherently deserving of the most respect, deference, and power. If something negative happens to a white person, *it is not because of* systemic racism against white people – such a thing, often called “reverse racism,” does not exist. It was made up by white people to deflect and distract from the violence inflicted on Black, indigenous, and other people of color based on their race. This is an especially cruel twist, as the concept of “race” itself was birthed from feelings of superiority by white Europeans as a tool for distinguishing and ranking the inferior humanity of other people based on their geographic origin and color of their skin. As such, “racism” and the prejudices that come with it can be used as both a sword and shield by those with the most power and privilege to protect, as well as by those who are closer than others to *whiteness* (*i.e.*, light-skinned and/or culturally aligned with white dominant values, norms, and fears).

People without systemic privilege must endure categorical lumping all the time. People of color cannot easily escape generalized racial stereotypes that are defined and perpetuated by white people and are often considered “exceptional” when defying such stereotypes. They lose the option of being an individual. By contrast, people with racial privilege enjoy individuality, are not accustomed to involuntary racial lumping, and do not have to endure racial discomfort unless they choose to do so. When a white person does something racist, their actions are often dismissed as one-off flaws of one person and not attributed to white people, whiteness, or white supremacy as a whole. *Fragility*

arises as defensiveness and resentment when someone's privileged status is pointed out, even in a neutral way. White fragility or white violence, for example, may arise when someone is accused of doing or saying something racist, or even just when a person of color points out white people's systemic privilege, generally. Similar fragility may arise when the same thing happens for a person of color who experiences comparably more privilege than other people of color.

Anti-racism work requires that we all acknowledge our various and intersecting forms of power and privilege, resist the temptation to become defensive when we talk about it, take action to undo inequitable systems of power – and then do it again, and again. **It is an iterative, ongoing, lifelong pursuit.**



Everywhere we learn that love is important, and yet we are bombarded by its failure.... This bleak picture in no way alters the nature of our longing. We still hope that love will prevail. We still believe in love's promise.

—
bell hooks
rest in power

SECTION ONE

REPORT ON THE RACE EQUITY ASSESSMENT

From March – April 2025, Just Roots opened a comprehensive online Organizational Race Equity Assessment via SurveyMonkey to current and past stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, Steering Committee members, program participants, donors, and community partners. We asked 35-37 questions regarding respondents' demographic information, perceptions about MSJC's commitment to race equity, and their individual experiences working with and supporting MSJC.

Our goal was to paint a clear picture of where the organization stands today in terms of internal race equity and inclusion. Although focused on race equity, we included questions and analyzed the data we received to gauge whether people also experienced other forms of systemic bias to capture ways in which intersecting forms of oppression impact the respondents.

In total, 2 current staff, 8 current steering committee members, 29 current volunteers, 2 recent community partners, 14 recent donors, 6 recent program participants, and 10 former stakeholders participated in the survey.

To get candid responses from the participants, we promised anonymity in our reporting of the results. We honor that promise here in the following ways:

- We have done our best to remove identifying information or indicators in the graphs and narrative summaries. For example, if necessary, we utilize gender-neutral pronouns *they*, *them*, and *their* when referring to a specific respondent's point of view, regardless of that person's gender identity, in case use of actual pronouns would unwittingly disclose their identity in any way.
- We intentionally did not share direct quotes from any respondents, just in case doing so would inadvertently expose an individual's identity through their manner of speaking or writing or the content of their statements. Instead, we offer several summaries of sentiments and theme highlights we saw in comments and open-ended questions throughout the survey in a way that protects everyone's anonymity while still conveying the important themes we observed.

As you read, please try to set aside fear, ego, and pride, resist the temptation of figuring out *who said what*, and focus on the messages being conveyed.

There is a lot to learn from this report, and we ask that you try to stay present with what is offered here even when it is difficult or uncomfortable. We urge you to hold compassion and curiosity for yourselves and each other and work to create spaces for you all to unpack this and strategize around it together.

A NOTE ABOUT NUMBERS FOR NON-STATISTICIANS

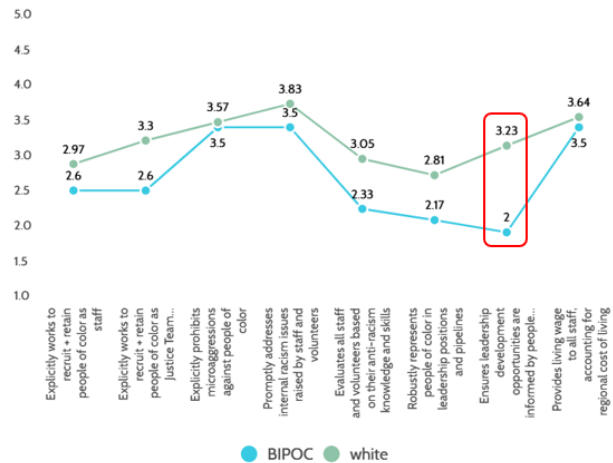
What the Data Can and Cannot Tell Us

The dataset is large enough to spot **trends, predictors,** and **possible correlations.** However, the survey methodology does **not** allow us to establish **causation** – for example, that one’s race is a necessary *causal link* to their experience with the organization, or that they definitely experience something within the organization directly *because of race.* Nevertheless, we can confidently say that the trends discussed in this report are extremely unlikely to be just “flukes” or “random noise,” but should instead be taken seriously as accurately illustrative of the current reality of the organization.

What “Statistical Significance” Means

Statistical significance is an index of the level of confidence we have in the findings. A significant finding is less likely to change if we were to collect additional data. When the sample size of a group is small, relatively large differences in **mean values (average scores)** may not reach statistical significance. This does not mean that a difference does not exist, but it means we need more data to have a higher level of confidence.

To illustrate, we asked for participants’ perceptions of how MSJC prioritizes race equity in recruiting and retention. First, we calculated the *mean values* from all responses to see how the organization scored across the board. But then, we broke down the mean values into groups based on participants’ race, age, gender, and role so we could spot any important trends or major perception gaps between different groups. To the right, you can see a comparison of *mean values* from white stakeholders (green line) versus BIPOC stakeholders (blue line), with one area we asked about reaching statistical significance highlighted with **a red box.** This tells us that white stakeholders have a much more positive perception of the organization’s efforts in this area, *and* there is a large enough difference of opinion to make us reasonably confident that if we could survey more people about it, we’d get the same result. Findings in other areas that don’t reach statistical significance are still important to pay attention to.



Pay Attention to Low Scores and High Ambivalence

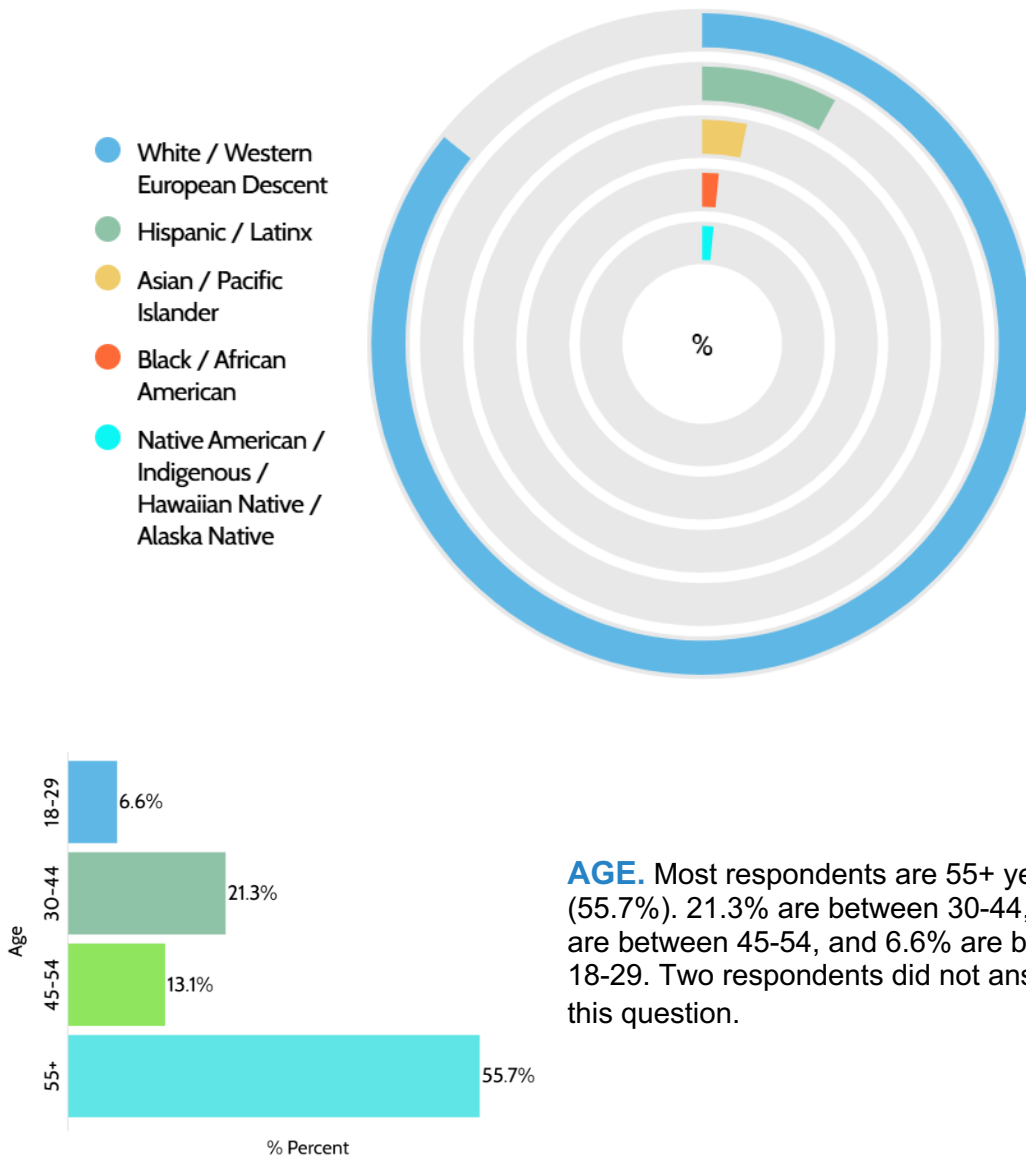
For many questions, we asked whether participants agreed or disagreed with statements about the organization’s commitment to race equity. In this report, we use a mix of bubble and bar graphs to illustrate the responses we received. For these, take special notice where (a) most respondents expressed disagreement / scored the organization poorly, or (b) there is no clear consensus on how the organization is doing (*i.e.*, high rate of “neither agree nor disagree”, “I don’t know”, or there is an equal spread of scores) – those are opportunities for substantive or communication improvement in these areas.

CURRENT & ACTIVE STAKEHOLDERS

DEMOGRAPHICS

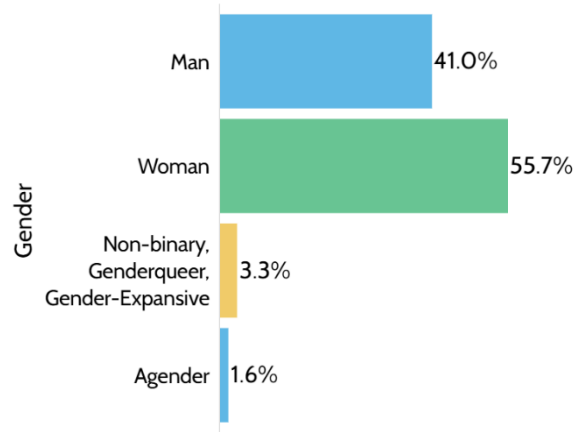
The following demographic information pertains to 61 respondents, including current and active employees, Steering Committee members, volunteers, recent donors, recent community partners, and recent program participants who responded to the survey.

RACE. Fifty-four respondents (88.5%) identify as white / Western European descent; five respondents (8.2%) identify as Hispanic / Latinx; two respondents (3.3%) identify as Asian / Pacific Islander, one respondent (1.6%) identify as Black / African American, and one respondent (1.6%) identify as Native American / Indigenous / Hawaiian Native / Alaska Native. The total is over 100% because several respondents reported multiple identities.



AGE. Most respondents are 55+ years old (55.7%). 21.3% are between 30-44, 13.1% are between 45-54, and 6.6% are between 18-29. Two respondents did not answer this question.

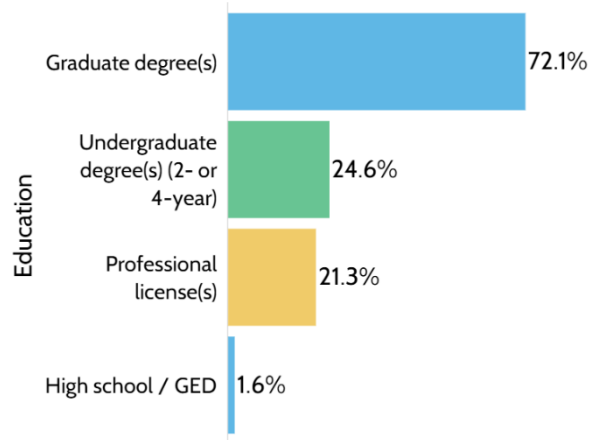
GENDER. Thirty-four participants identify as women (55.7%), 25 (41%) identify as men, two (3.3%) identify as “Non-binary, Genderqueer, Gender-Expansive”, and one participant (1.6%) identify as Agender. Seven respondents report being cisgender and one participant report being transgender.



PRONOUNS. 52.5% of the respondents use she/her/hers pronouns, 41% use he/him/his pronouns, and 4.9% use they/them/their pronouns. Four respondents who chose “Other” responded as “any pronouns”, “Bro.”, “Sya”, and “still discerning”.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION. 72.1% identify as straight or heterosexual, 18% as lesbian or gay, four respondents (6.6%) as queer, two respondents (3.3%) as asexual, one respondent as bisexual or pansexual, and one respondent as “open”.

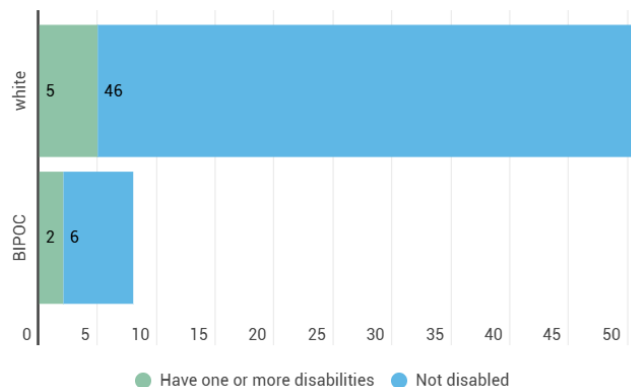
EDUCATION. 72.1% have a graduate degree, 24.6% have an undergraduate degree, 21.3% have a professional license, one respondent has a high school / GED degree, and four respondents have other education levels (juris doctor, PhD or postdoctoral work in progress, or working toward a professional certificate). The total is over 100% because most respondents with professional licenses also reported having other degrees.



DISABILITIES. Seven (11.5%) reported having one or more disabilities, while fifty-two respondents (85.2%) reported not being disabled. Two participants did not respond.

RACE x DISABILITY

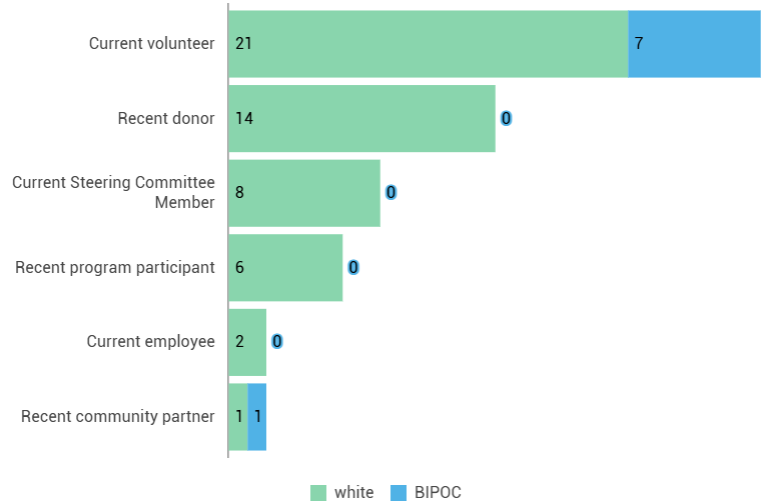
BIPOC respondents are more likely than their white counterparts to report having one or more disabilities (25% vs. 9.8%).



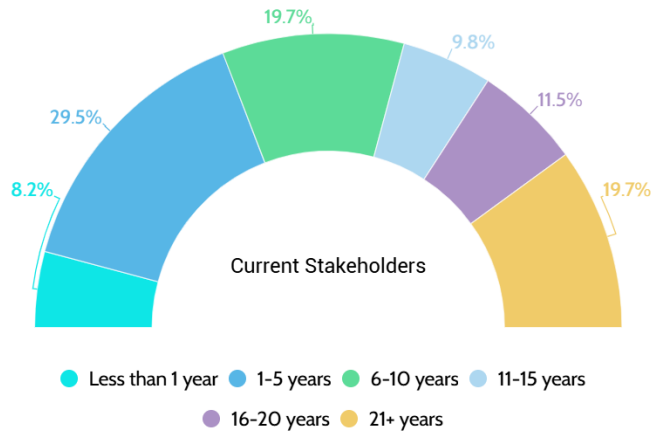
ROLE IN ORGANIZATION. Among the respondents, 47.5% are current volunteers, 23% are recent donors, 13.1% are current steering committee members, 9.8% are recent program participants, 3.3% (two individuals) are current employees, and two individuals are recent community partners.

RACE x ROLE

Looking at the relative percentages of white and BIPOC respondents in different organizational roles, people of color are only represented as volunteers (25%) and one of two community partners who responded. There are only white people represented in all other role categories.

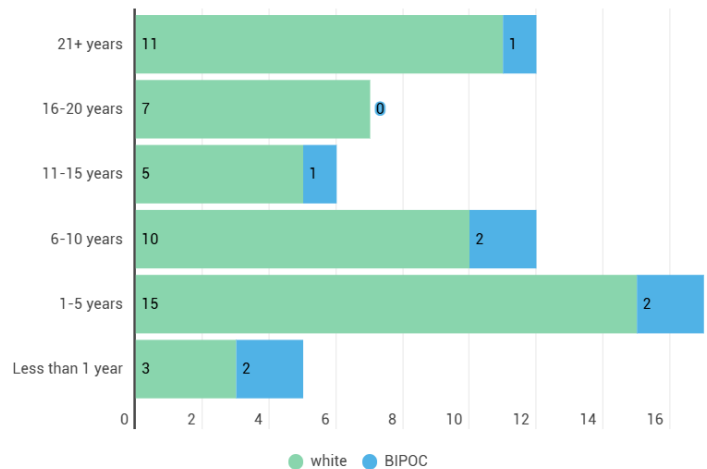


TENURE. Five stakeholders (8.2%) have been associated with MSJC for less than a year, eighteen stakeholders (29.5%) have a tenure of 1-5 years, 12 stakeholders (19.7%) 6-10 years, six people (9.8%) 11-15 years, seven people (11.5%) 16-20 years, and 12 people (19.7%) for 21+ years.



RACE x TENURE

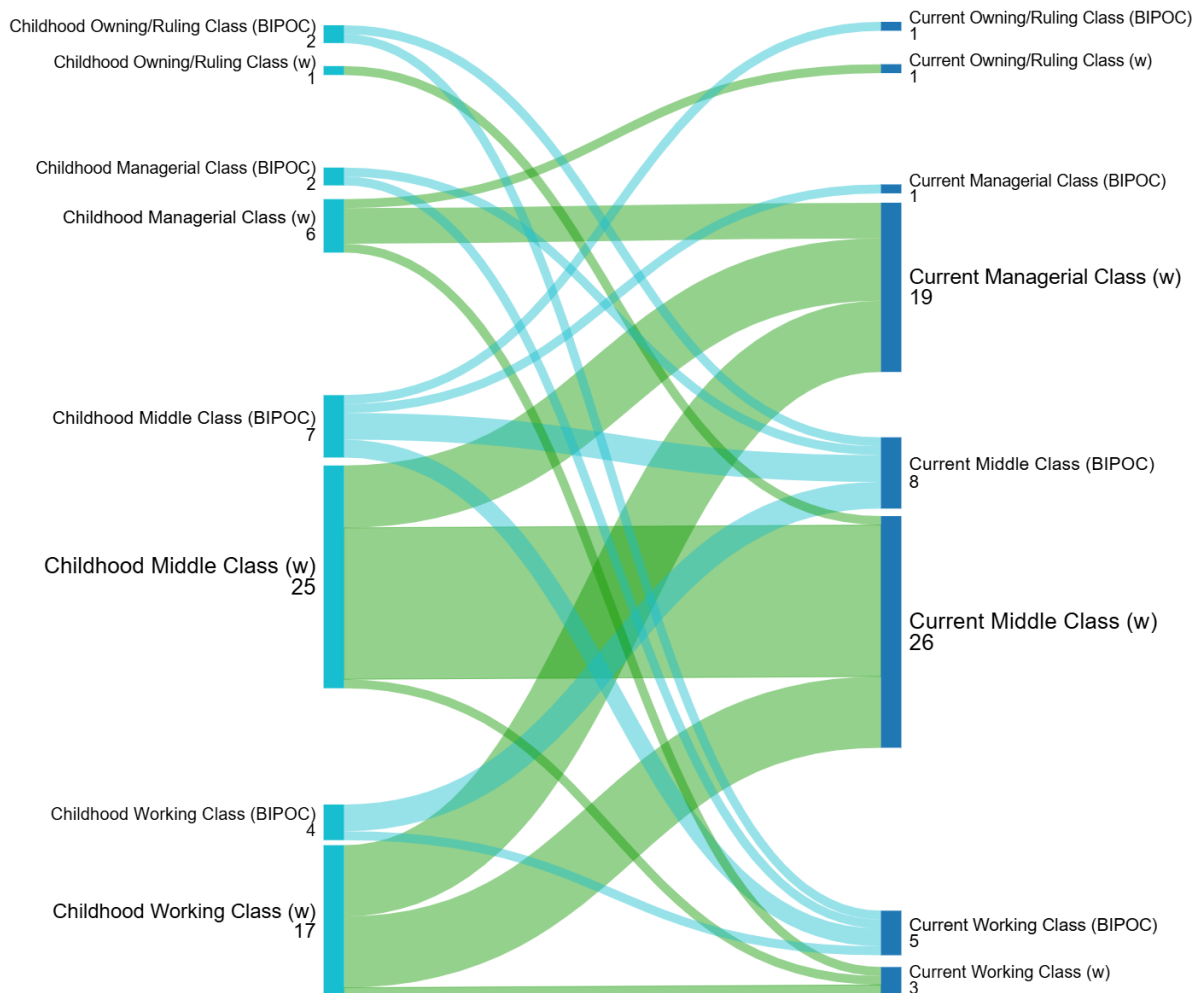
Looking at the relative length of tenure across white and BIPOC respondents, we find that BIPOC respondents are more likely to have shorter tenures than white respondents.



CLASS. Participants were asked to describe their class position growing up and as it is today, considering factors such as family background, education, access to wealth / debt, and privilege. For reference, they were offered a hyperlink to a resource created by the Catalyst Project that describes class characteristics in some detail.

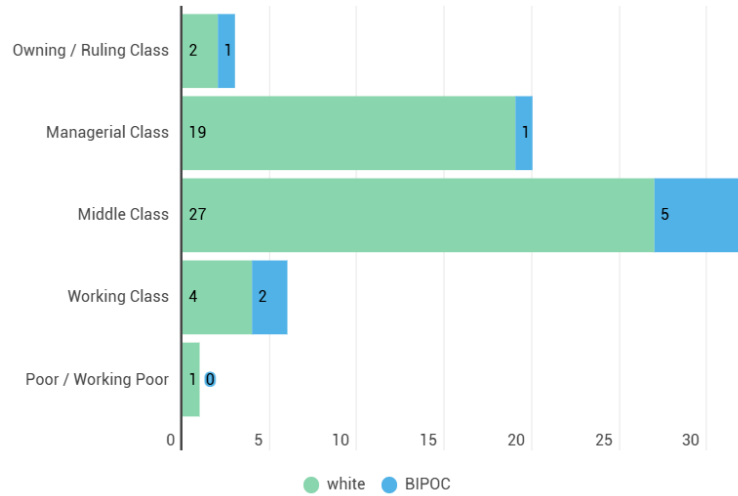
The chart below shows how many respondents identify with each class category in early life (on the left) versus today (on the right), with BIPOC people represented in blue and white people represented in green. Following the lines from left to right, you can appreciate any economic mobility that has taken place for folks across time. A few individuals selected more than one option for each period of time (e.g., both working class and middle class in childhood).

For example, only two out of 21 respondents reported being working class their whole lives, while no one who grew up in the owning / ruling class still identifies that way.



RACE x CLASS

Examining the interaction of class and race, there is no clear pattern showing a difference between BIPOC and white participants in terms of their current class status.



RELIGION. Among the respondents who shared about their religious or spiritual practice, most reported being Catholic (23 respondents) or Roman Catholic (22 respondents). Other reported religious affiliations are depicted in the chart below, with the word size corresponding to the frequency reported.



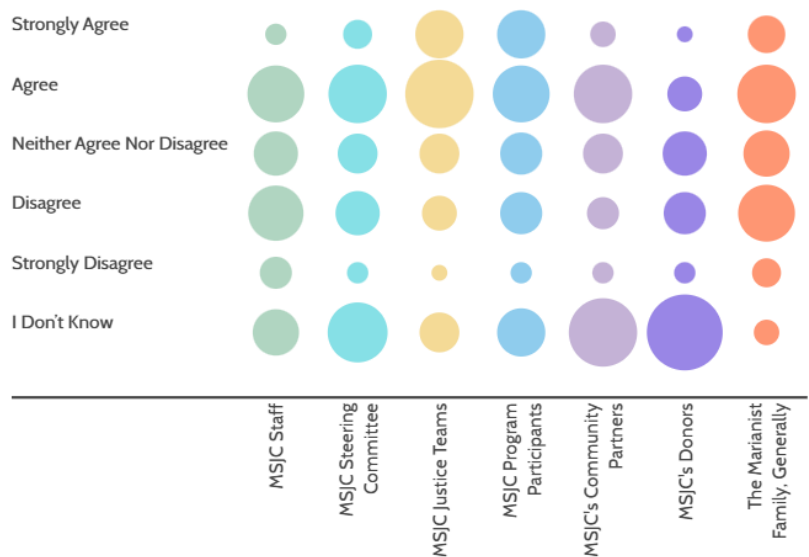
PERCEPTION OF DIVERSITY + COMMITMENT TO RACE EQUITY

We asked a few questions to measure (1) people’s perceptions of organizational diversity based on their own knowledge and experience, and (2) how well they think different groups within the organization understand the impact of racial inequity and the importance of addressing it in the workplace.

To do this, we offered an affirmative statement and asked participants to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with that statement, as it pertained to different groups within the organization. The bubble graphs below illustrate the responses we received, with larger circles indicating more responses along the scale. This data can help MSJC address perceived gaps in diversity and inclusion as well as opportunities to develop initiatives to communicate its race equity efforts to stakeholders more effectively.

We asked how much participants agreed or disagreed with the following:

“Each of the groups listed below is diverse in terms of demographics, lived experiences, and perspectives.”



KEY TAKE-AWAYS.

- For MSJC Staff, folks are equally split between “Agree” (28%) and “Disagree” (28%), with 18% responding as “I don’t know” and 16% as “Neither Agree nor Disagree”.
- About one third (31%) don’t know about the Steering Committee’s diversity, while 36% “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that this group is diverse.
- Most respondents agree that MSJC Justice Teams and program participants are diverse, with 62% and 48% (respectively) choosing “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”.
- The diversity of MSJC community partners and donors is not well-known, with 41% and 53% choosing “I don’t know” for these groups, respectively.
- Finally, there are divided perceptions regarding the diversity of the Marianist Family, with 28% choosing “Disagree” and 30% choosing “Agree”.

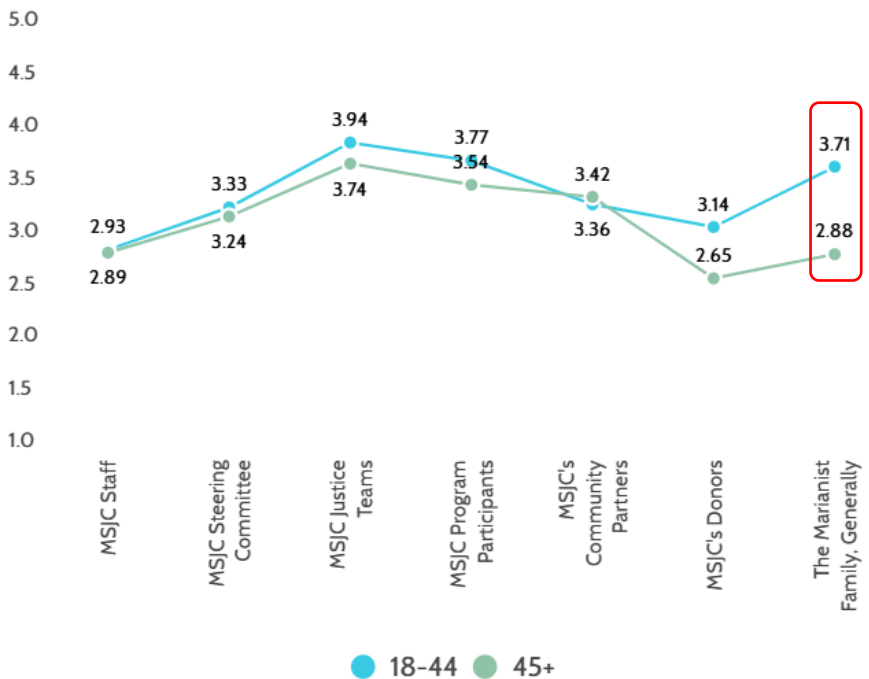
GROUP COMPARISONS.

We measured how different groups perceived MSJC's diversity in terms of demographics, lived experiences, and perspectives across participants' race (BIPOC versus white), age (<45 years old versus 45+), gender (women versus men), and role (internal versus external). To do this, we computed the average diversity ratings for each group. Statistically significant differences are shown in **red rectangles** – see p. 10 for notes on how to read these numbers and graphs for non-statisticians.

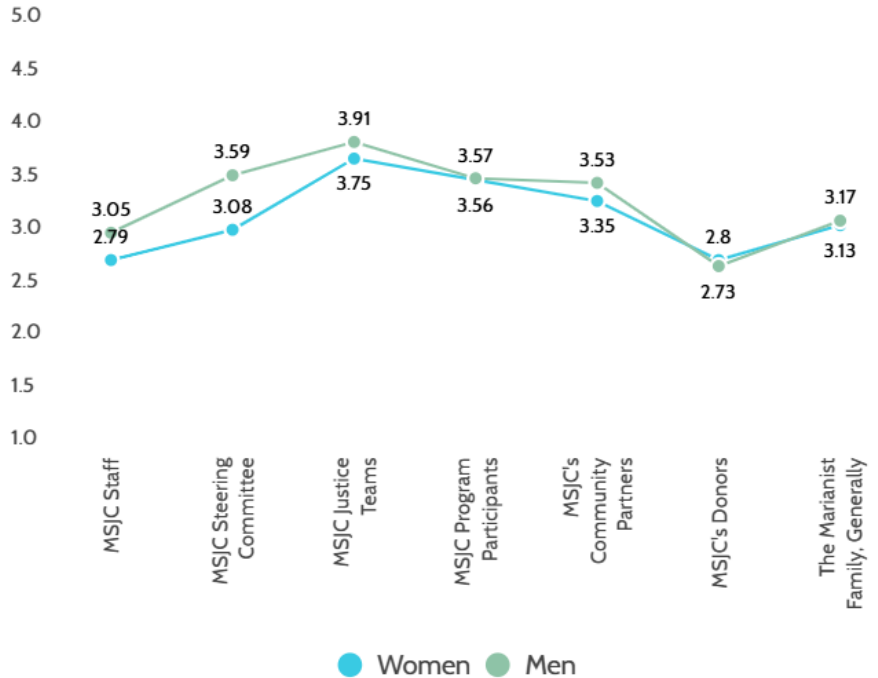
RACE. This graph shows BIPOC respondents in blue and white respondents in green. While BIPOC and white respondents have similar perceptions about the diversity of the program participants and community partners, BIPOC respondents find all the other groups less diverse, with the difference reaching statistical significance for MSJC Justice Teams.



AGE. This graph shows respondents aged 18-44 in blue and respondents age 45+ in green. Overall, while younger respondents have more positive perceptions of MSJC's diversity, the difference is only statistically significant regarding the Marianist Family.

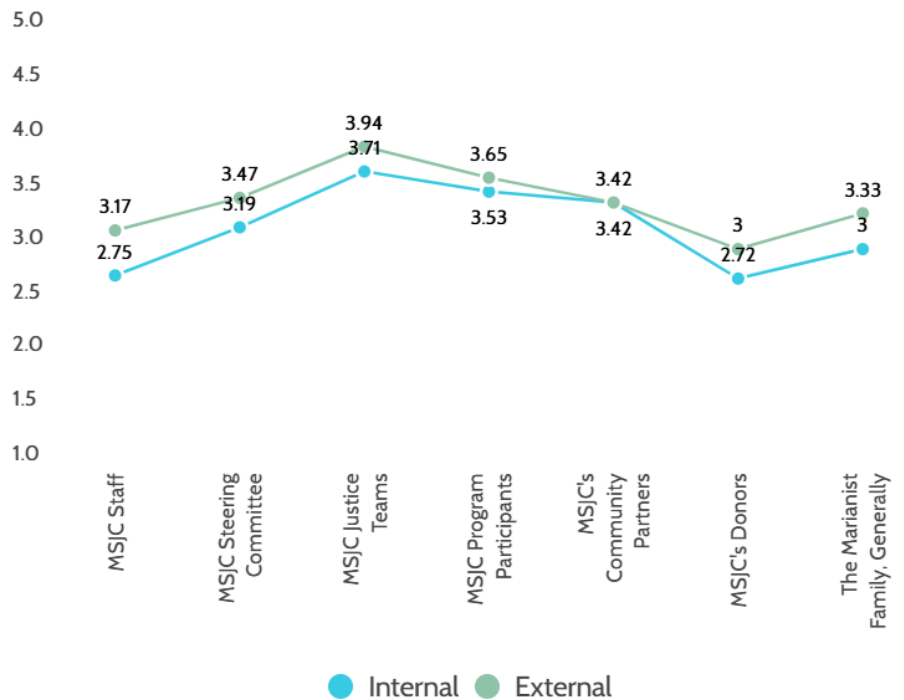


GENDER. This graph shows female-identified respondents in blue and male-identified respondents in green. Men have slightly more positive views of diversity of MSJC staff, Steering Committee, and Justice Teams, but the differences do not reach statistical significance.



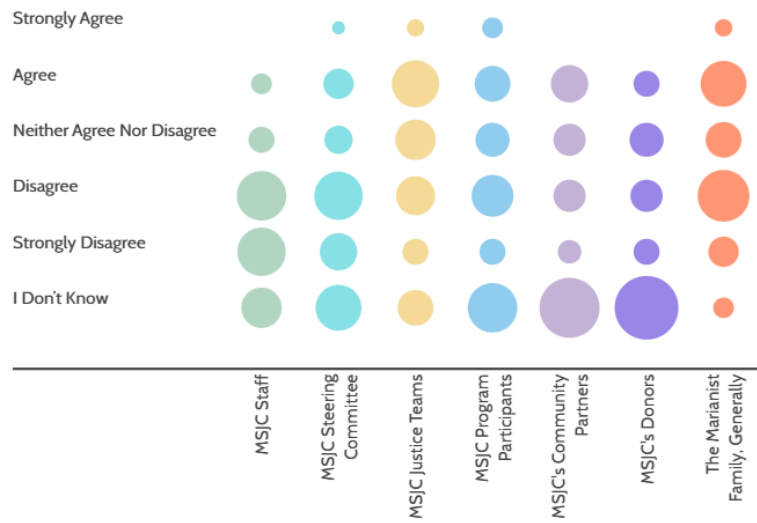
INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS.

This graph shows internal stakeholders (current employees, volunteers, and steering committee members) in blue and external stakeholders (recent donors, community partners, and program participants) in green. Although external stakeholders have slightly more positive views of diversity of MSJC, the differences do not reach statistical significance.



We asked how much participants agreed or disagreed with the following:

“Each of the groups listed below is racially diverse.”

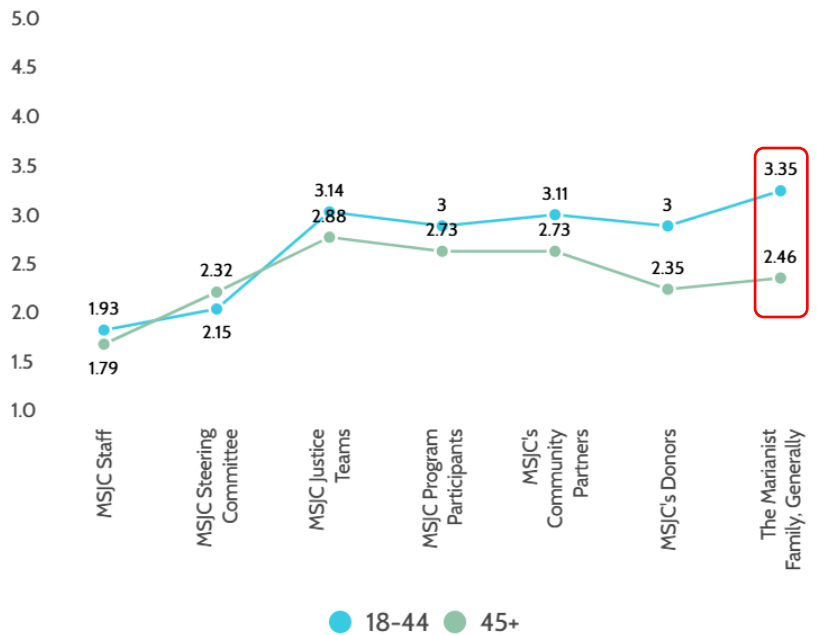


KEY TAKE-AWAYS.

- Most do not find racial diversity among MSJC Staff (65% “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree”) or the Steering Committee (49% “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree”).
- MSJC Justice Teams are considered to have relatively higher racial diversity, with 33% choosing “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” and 22% choosing the neutral option.
- Most respondents don’t know the racial diversity of MSJC program participants, community partners, and donors.
- Finally, the opinion is split for the Marianist family, with a slightly higher percentage disagreeing with the statement.

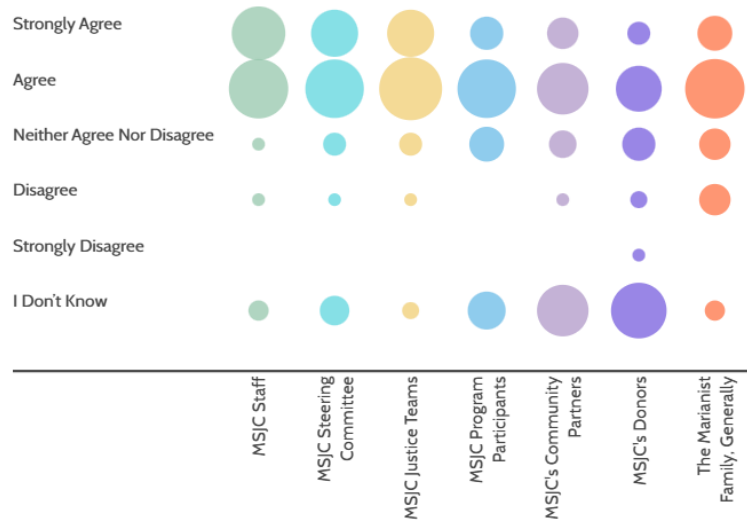
GROUP COMPARISONS.

We compared perceptions of **racial diversity** across participants’ race (BIPOC versus white), age (<45 years old versus 45+), gender (women versus men), and role (internal versus external). Even though we observed no significant differences in race, gender, and role comparisons, we found that older participants had statistically significant lower perceptions of racial diversity of the Marianist Family compared to younger participants (marked by a red box).



We asked how much participants agreed or disagreed with the following:

“Each of the groups listed below understands the impact of racial inequity in our society and religious communities.”

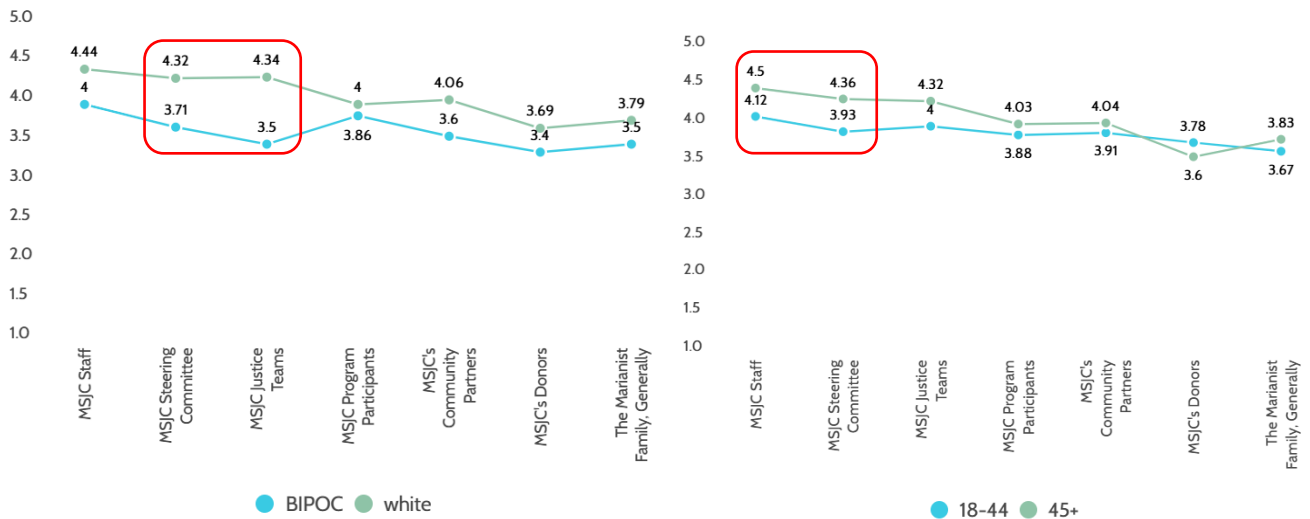


KEY TAKE-AWAYS.

- The responses were generally positive (“Agree” or “Strongly Agree”) MSJC Staff (92%), MSJC Steering Committee (80%), MSJC Justice Teams (89%), MSJC program participants (64%), and the Marianist family (68%).
- The responses for MSJC’s community partners and donors were also positive, with 50% and 36% (respectively) choosing “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” for these groups, but 38% chose “I don’t know” for community partners and 44% chose “I don’t know” for donors, indicating a lack of communication regarding these individuals.

GROUP COMPARISONS.

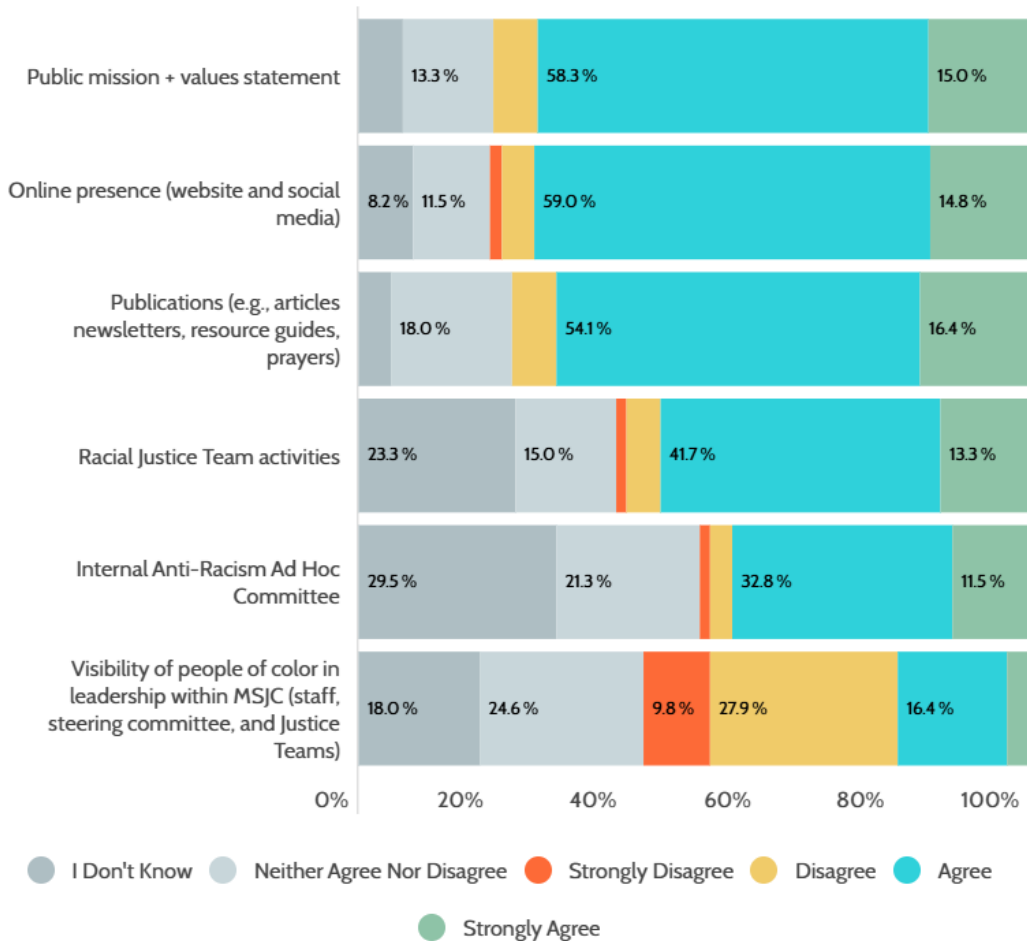
Finally, we explored group differences in **understanding the impact of racial inequity**. Even though we observed no significant differences in gender and role comparisons, white participants rated MSJC Steering Committee and MSJC Justice Teams more positively than BIPOC participants, and older participants rated MSJC staff and MSJC Steering Committee more positively than younger participants (marked with red boxes).



EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

We asked questions to measure how well MSJC communicates its commitment to race equity with **external stakeholders** – anyone outside the organization, such as potential volunteers, community partners, donors, and the larger Marianist Family.

The following are the responses we received from current stakeholders. We have presented them in order from **most favorably rated to the least favorably rated**, so that you can easily identify and prioritize those areas that would benefit from timely review and improvement.

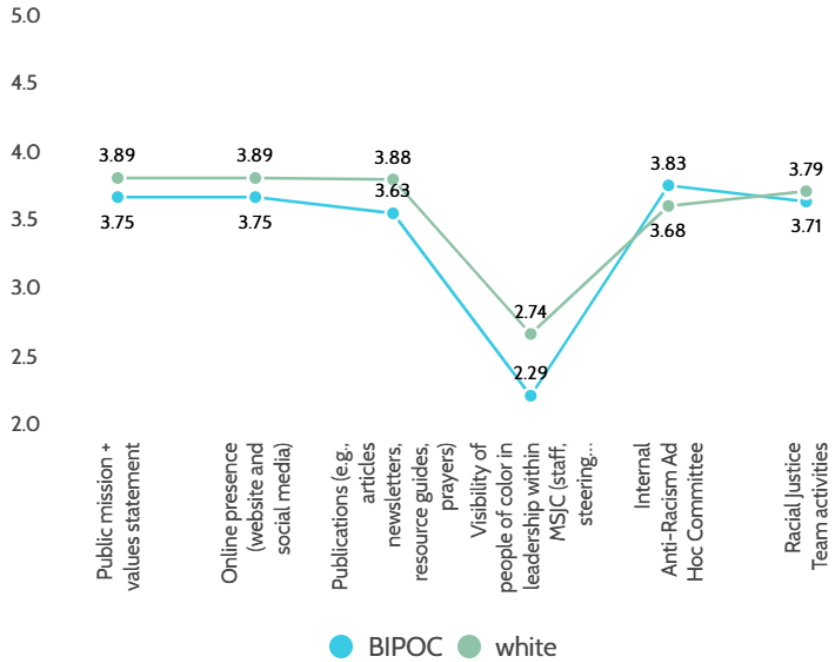


KEY TAKE-AWAYS. Overall, current stakeholders believe MSJC is generally successful in communicating its commitment to race equity in most of the areas we asked about, especially regarding public mission and values statement, online presence, and publications (over 70% agreement each). Around a quarter of the respondent’s chose “I don’t know” regarding Racial Justice Team activities and internal Anti-Racism Ad-Hoc Committee. Finally, over a third (37.7%) of respondents had low opinions about how MSJC communicates its commitment to race equity through the visibility of people of color in leadership.

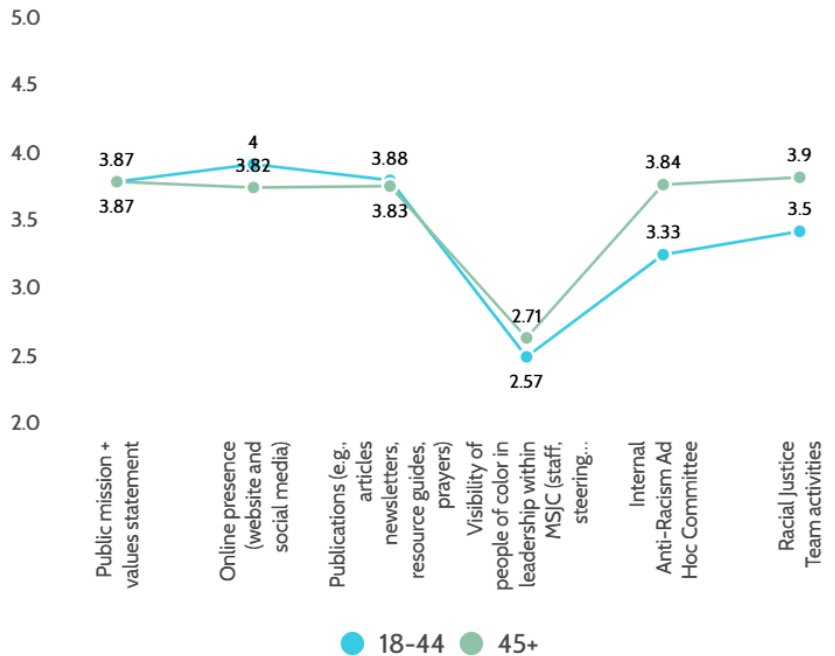
GROUP COMPARISONS.

We measured how different groups perceived MSJC’s communication of its commitment to race equity to external stakeholders across participants’ race (BIPOC versus white), age (<45 years old versus 45+), gender (women versus men), and role (internal versus external). To do this, we computed the average ratings for each group. Statistically significant differences are shown in red rectangles – see p. 10 for notes on how to read these numbers and graphs for non-statisticians.

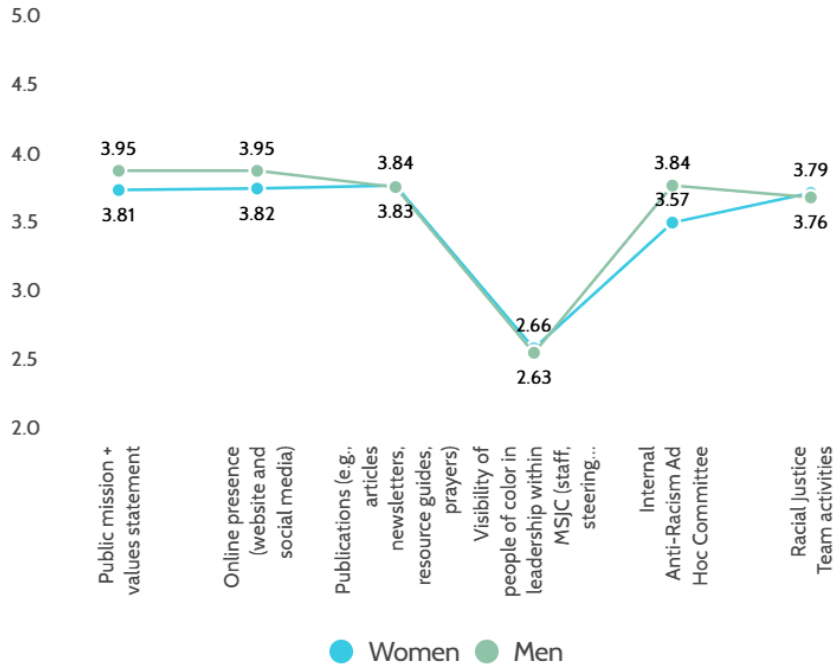
RACE. This graph shows BIPOC respondents in blue and white respondents in green. BIPOC respondents had less favorable opinions for all areas except for “Internal Anti-Racism Ad-Hoc Committee”, but the differences were not statistically significant.



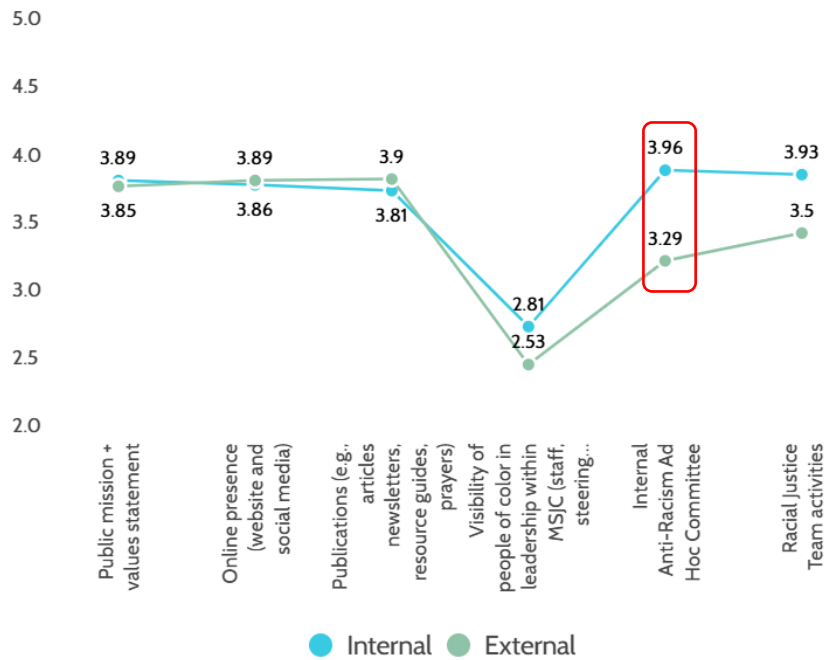
AGE. This graph shows respondents aged 18-44 in blue and respondents age 45+ in green. Younger stakeholders have less positive perceptions of MSJC’s communications regarding the “Internal Anti-Racism Ad-Hoc Committee” and “Racial Justice Team Activities”, but the differences do not reach statistical significance.



GENDER. This graph shows female-identified respondents in blue and male-identified respondents in green. The only area with a notable gap is the Internal Anti-Racism Ad-Hoc Committee, which is rated higher by men, but the difference is not statistically significant.



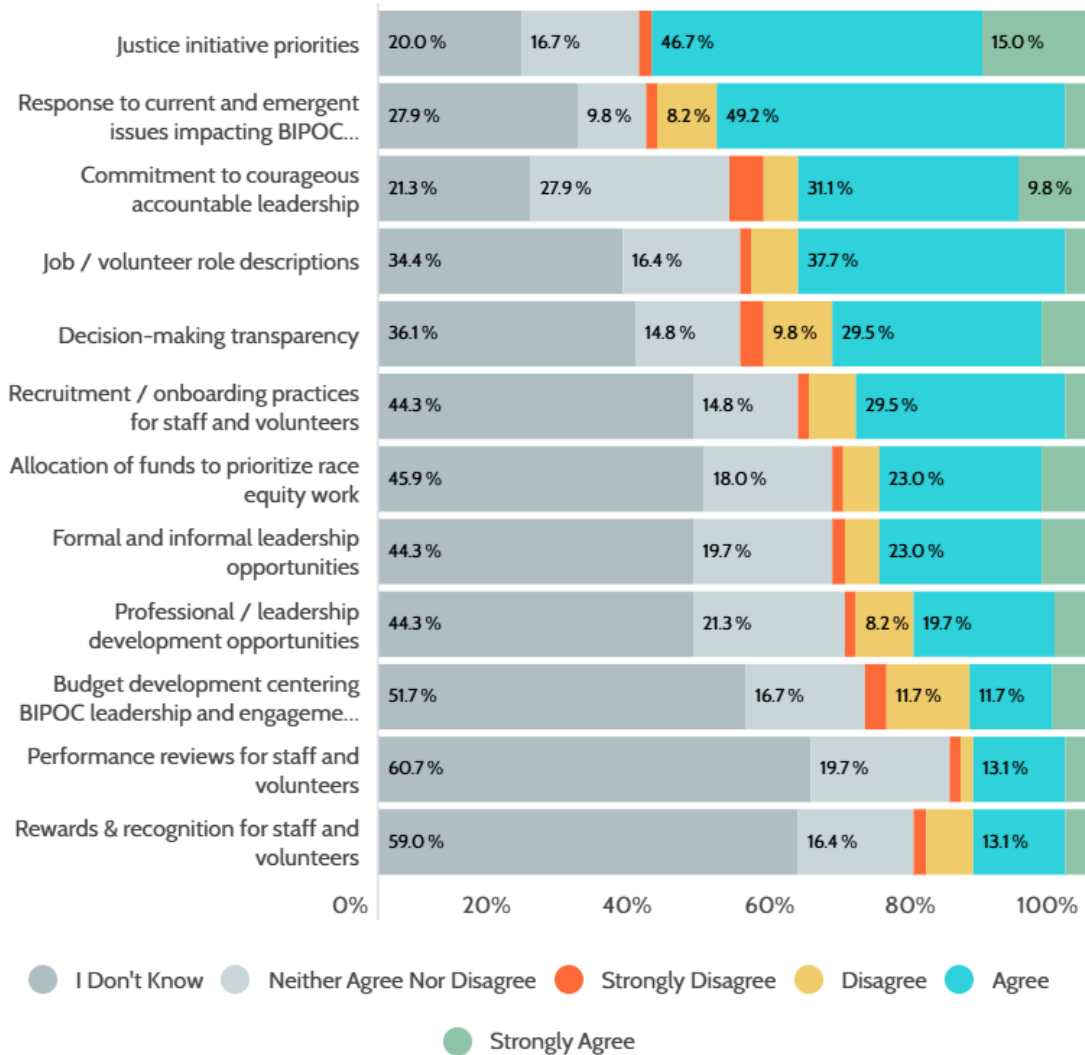
ROLE. This graph shows internal stakeholders in blue and external stakeholders in green. External stakeholders rate MSJC's communication lower in "Visibility of POC in Leadership within MSJC", "Internal Anti-Racism Ad-Hoc Committee", (statistically significant), and "Racial Justice Team Activities" compared to internal stakeholders.



INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

We asked questions to measure how well MSJC successfully communicates its commitment to race equity to **internal stakeholders** (staff, volunteers, and steering committee).

The following are the responses we received from current stakeholders. We have presented them in order from **most favorably rated to least favorably rated**, so that you can easily identify and prioritize those areas that would benefit from timely review and improvement.

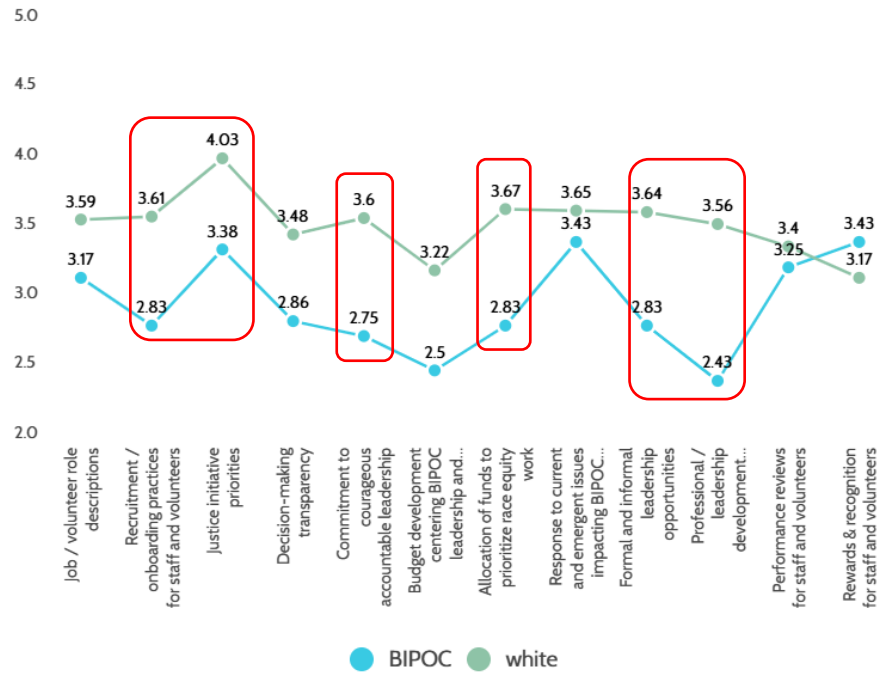


KEY TAKE-AWAYS. While the sentiment is more positive than negative in all areas we assessed, there is a relatively larger proportion of negative sentiment in “budget development centering BIPOC leadership and engagement at all levels” and “rewards & recognition for staff and volunteers”. These two areas, along with “performance reviews for staff and volunteers”, also receive the highest percentage of “I don’t know” response from the current stakeholders. In fact, at least one third of respondents chose “I don’t know” for most areas, indicating a lack of communication.

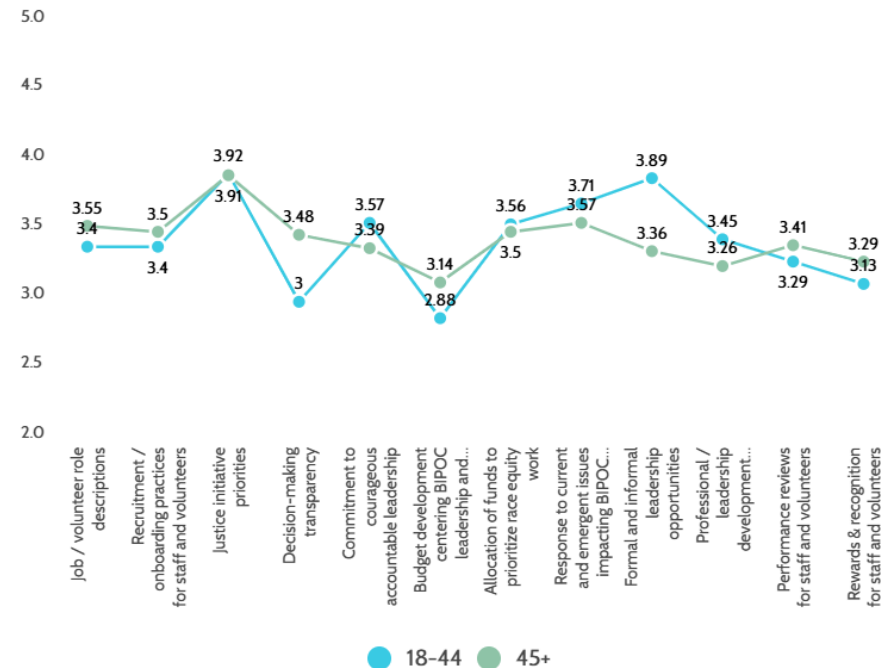
GROUP COMPARISONS.

We measured how different groups perceived MSJC’s communication of its commitment to race equity to internal stakeholders across participants’ race (BIPOC versus white), age (<45 years old versus 45+), gender (women versus men), and role (internal versus external). To do this, we computed the average ratings for each group. Statistically significant differences are shown in red rectangles – see p. 10 for notes on how to read these numbers and graphs for non-statisticians.

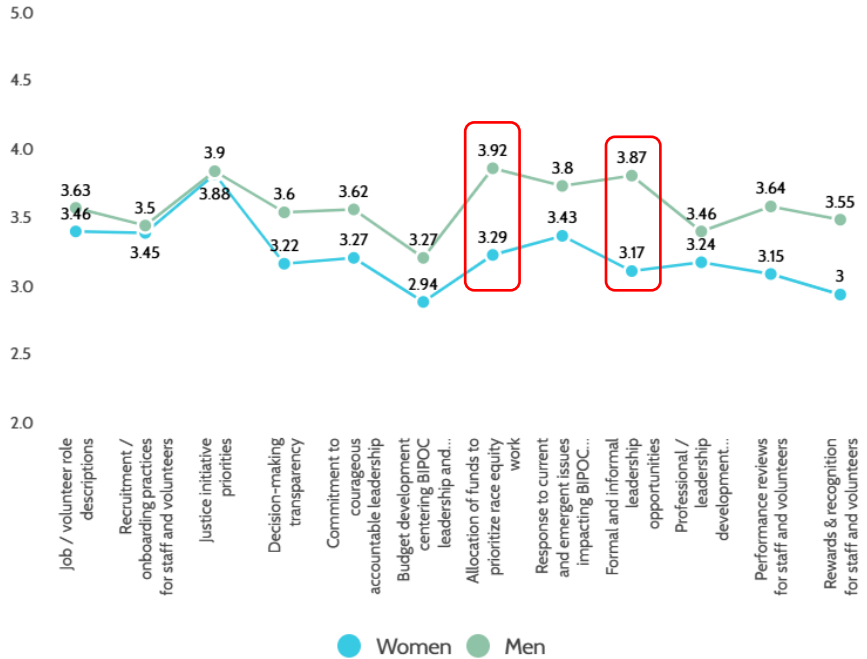
RACE. This graph shows BIPOC respondents in blue and white respondents in green. BIPOC respondents rate MSJC lower compared to white respondents in all areas but “Rewards and recognition for staff and volunteers”, and the differences reach statistical significance in several areas.



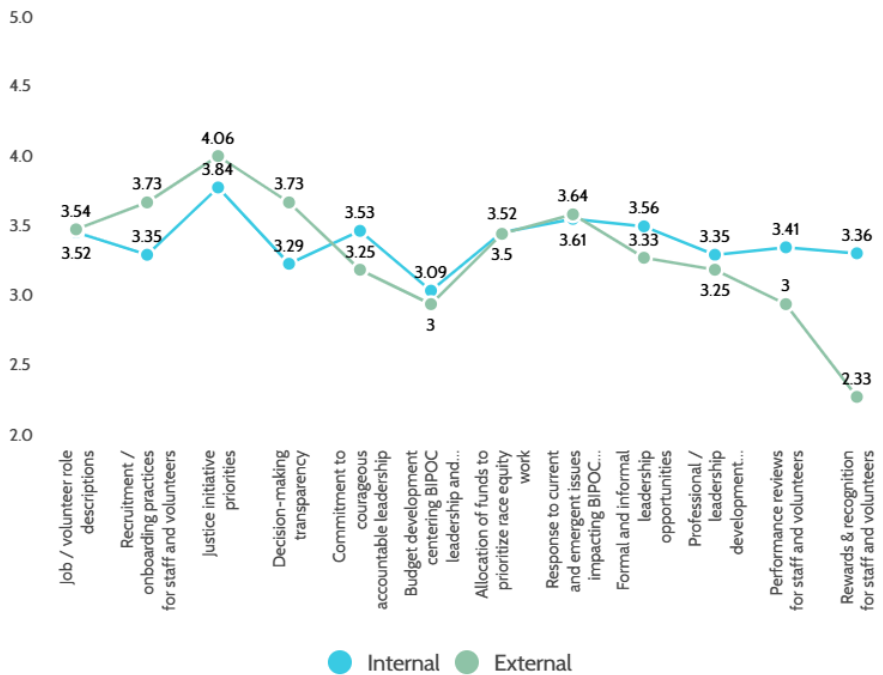
AGE. This graph shows respondents aged 18-44 in blue and respondents age 45+ in green. This shows that there are no noteworthy perception differences in most areas, except for “Decision-making transparency” (younger respondents rate lower) and “Formal and informal leadership opportunities” (older stakeholders rate lower).



GENDER. This graph shows female-identified respondents in blue and male-identified respondents in green. Across most categories, women rated MSJC’s internal communication lower than men, and this difference reached statistical significance for “Allocation of funds to prioritize race equity work” and “Formal and informal leadership opportunities”.

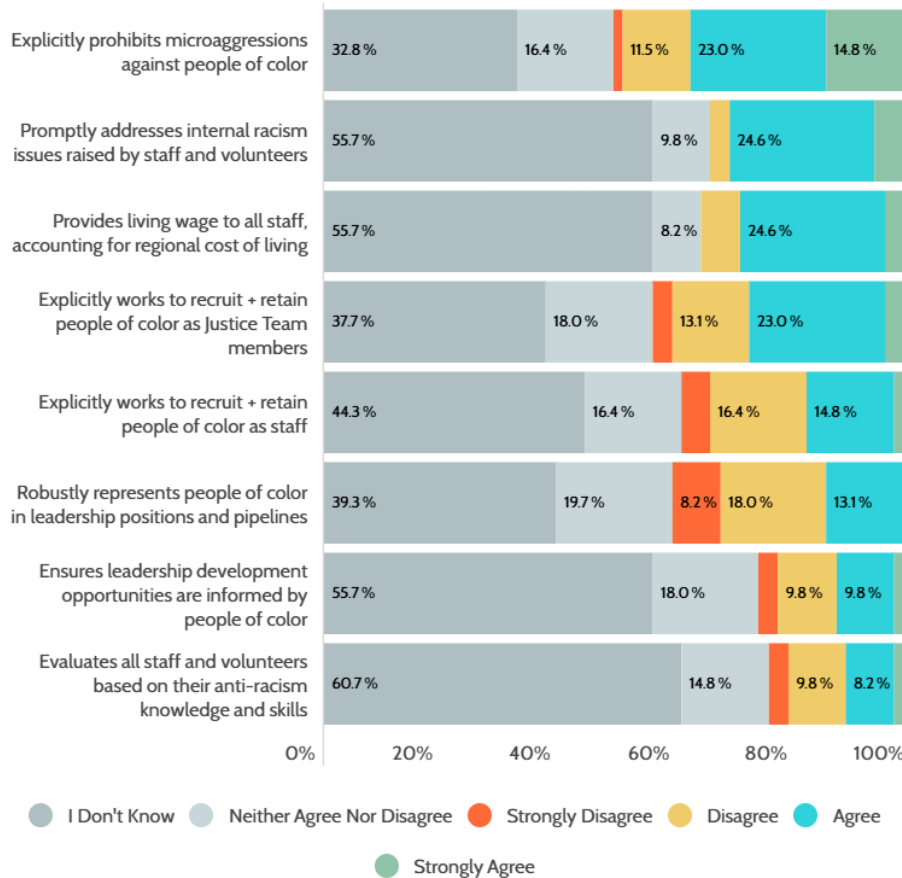


ROLE. This graph shows internal stakeholders in blue and external stakeholders in green. Although none of the differences reach statistical significance, internal stakeholders rate MSJC lower in “Recruitment / onboarding practices for staff and volunteers”, “Justice initiative priorities”, and “Decision-making transparency”, while external stakeholders provide lower ratings in “Performance reviews for staff and volunteers” and “Rewards & recognition for staff and volunteers”.



RECRUITING + RETENTION

We asked respondents for their opinion about how MSJC prioritizes racial equity in recruitment and retention practices. The following are the responses we received from current stakeholders. We have presented them in order from **most favorably rated to least favorably rated**, so that you can easily identify and prioritize those areas that would benefit from timely review and improvement.



KEY TAKE-AWAYS.

- In all the areas we assessed, less than 40% of the participants “agree” or “strongly agree” that MSJC is prioritizing racial equity in recruiting and retention.
- Areas with relatively higher agreement include “Explicitly prohibits microaggressions against people of color”, “Promptly addresses internal racism issues raised by staff and volunteers”, “Provides living wage to all staff, accounting for regional cost of living”, and “Explicitly works to recruit + retain people of color as Justice Team members”.
- There is a significantly high percentage of respondents who chose “I don’t know” in every area we assessed, indicating a lack of communication regarding MSJC’s efforts in these areas.

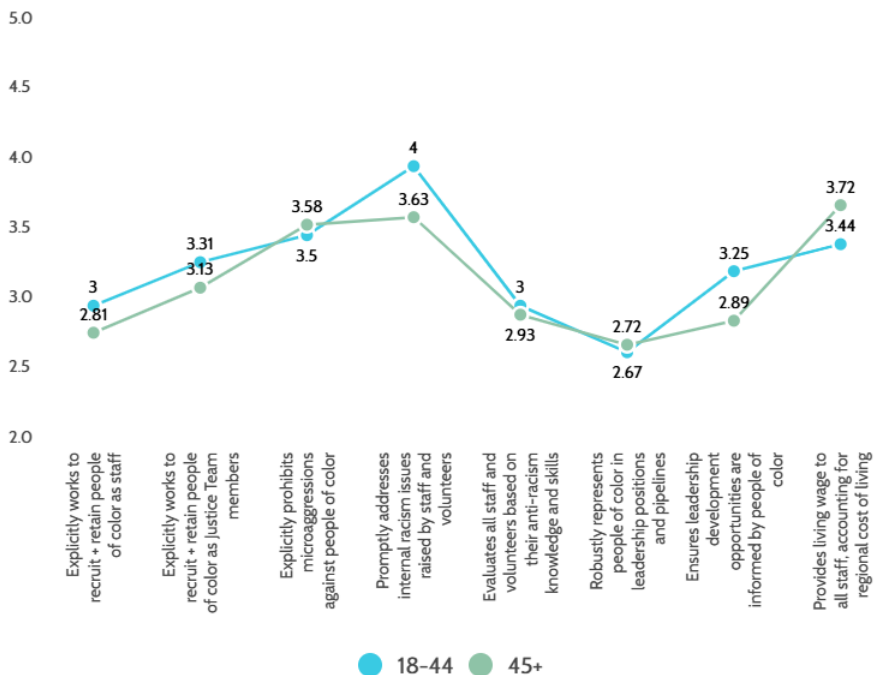
GROUP COMPARISONS.

We measured how different groups perceived how MSJC prioritizes race equity in recruiting and retention across participants' race (BIPOC versus white), age (<45 years old versus 45+), gender (women versus men), and role (internal versus external). To do this, we computed the average ratings for each group. Statistically significant differences are shown in red rectangles – see p. 10 for notes on how to read these numbers and graphs for non-statisticians.

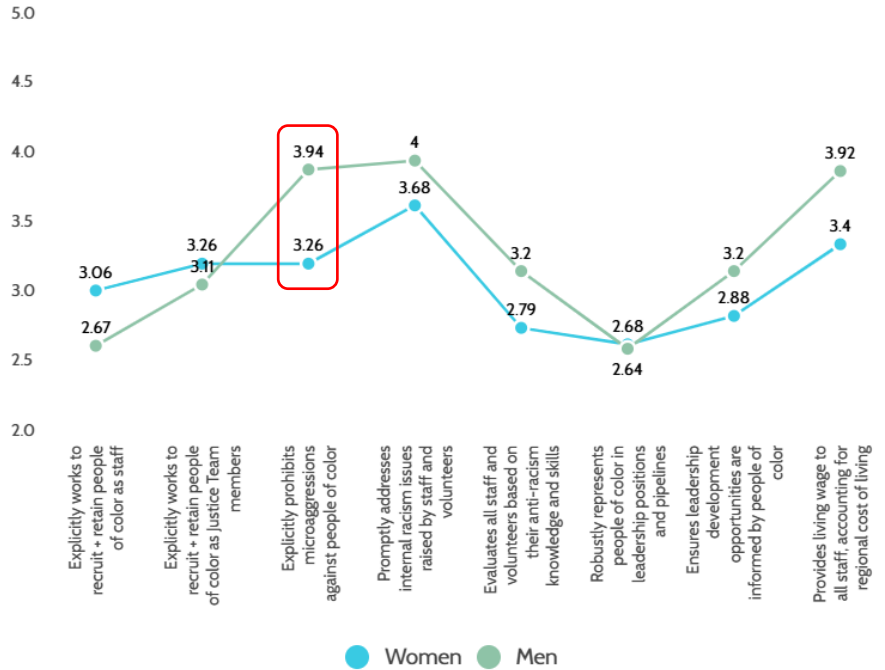
RACE. This graph shows BIPOC respondents in blue and white respondents in green. Ratings by BIPOC respondents are lower than those by white respondents in all areas, and the difference is statistically significant in “Ensures leadership development opportunities are informed by people of color”.



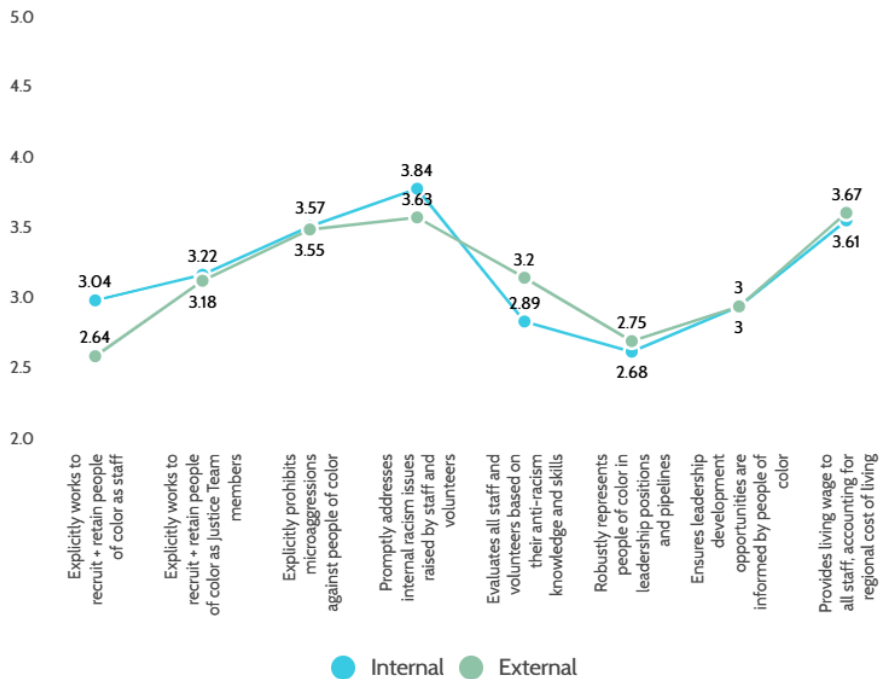
AGE. This graph shows respondents aged 18-44 in blue and respondents age 45+ in green. While there is not a consistent pattern, younger respondents rate MSJC higher in “Promptly addresses internal racism issues raised by staff and volunteers” and “Ensures leadership development opportunities are informed by people of color”, while older participants provide higher ratings in “Provides living wage to all staff, accounting for regional cost of living”.



GENDER. This graph shows female-identified respondents in blue and male-identified respondents in green. In most areas, ratings by women are lower, and the difference reaches statistical significance in “Explicitly prohibits microaggressions against people of color”. Men rate MSJC lower in “Explicitly works to recruit + retain people of color as staff” and “Explicitly works to recruit + retain people of color as Justice Team members”.



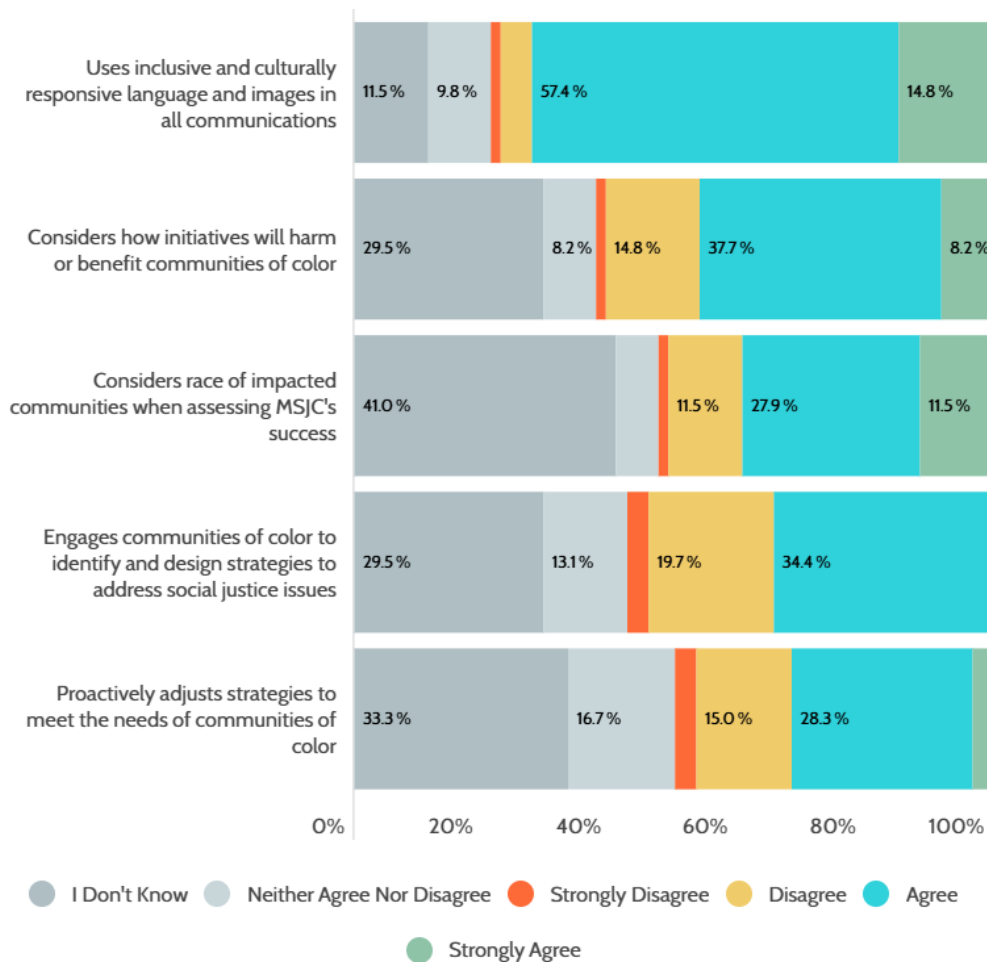
ROLE. This graph shows internal stakeholders in blue and external stakeholders in green. While the differences do not reach statistical significance, external stakeholders provide lower ratings in “Explicitly works to recruit + retain people of color as staff” and “Promptly addresses internal racism issues raised by staff and volunteers”, while internal stakeholders rate MSJC lower in “Evaluates all staff and volunteers based on their anti-racism knowledge and skills”.



APPLYING AN ANTI-RACIST LENS

Applying an anti-racist lens helps an organization consider how its programs, policies, and practices actively and deliberately work to combat and dismantle racism. We asked participants how they felt MSJC is doing in this area.

The following are the responses we received from current stakeholders. We have presented them in order from **most favorably rated to the least favorably rated**, so that you can easily identify and prioritize those areas that would benefit from timely review and improvement.



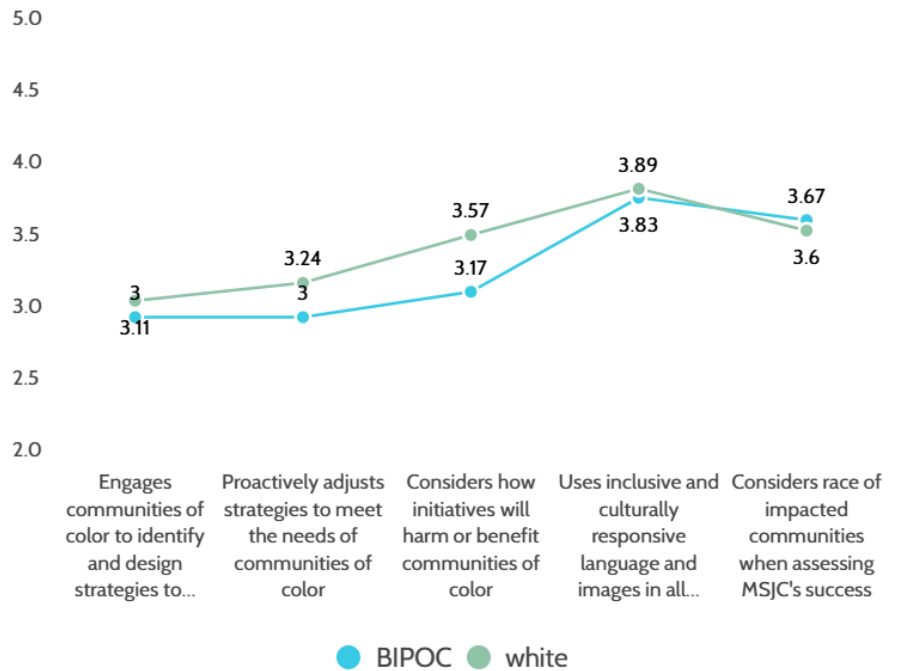
KEY TAKE-AWAYS.

The ratings of all statements in this area are more positive than negative. Over 70% “agree” or “strongly agree” that MSJC “uses inclusive and culturally responsive language and images in all communications”. However, around one-third of respondents chose “I don’t know” regarding the other statements, indicating a lack of communication with stakeholders in MSJC’s anti-racism efforts.

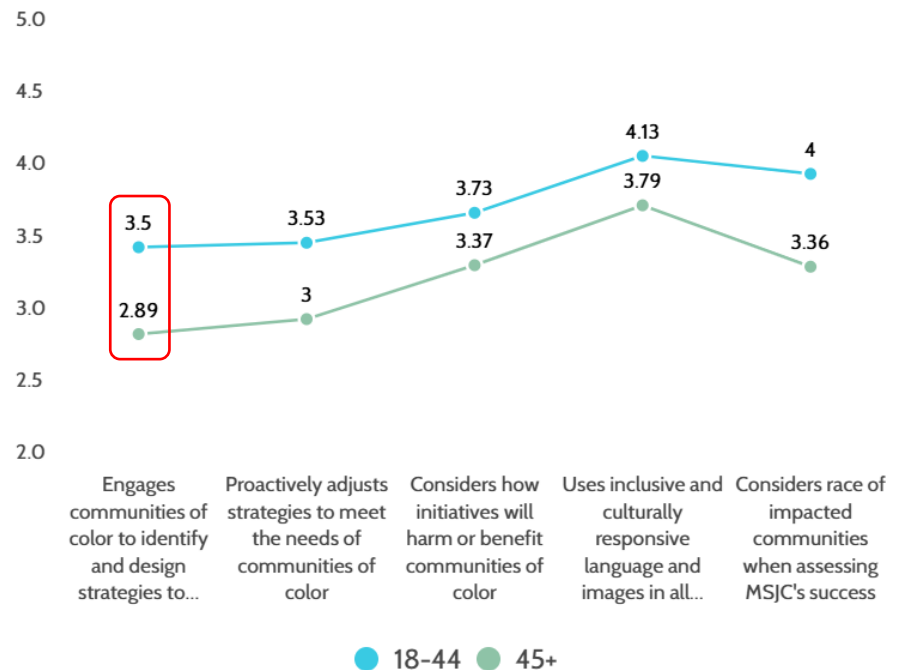
GROUP COMPARISONS.

We measured how different groups perceived MSJC’s use of an anti-racist lens across participants’ race (BIPOC versus white), age (<45 years old versus 45+), gender (women versus men), and role (internal versus external). To do this, we computed the average ratings for each group. Statistically significant differences are shown in red rectangles - see p. 10 for notes on how to read these numbers and graphs for non-statisticians.

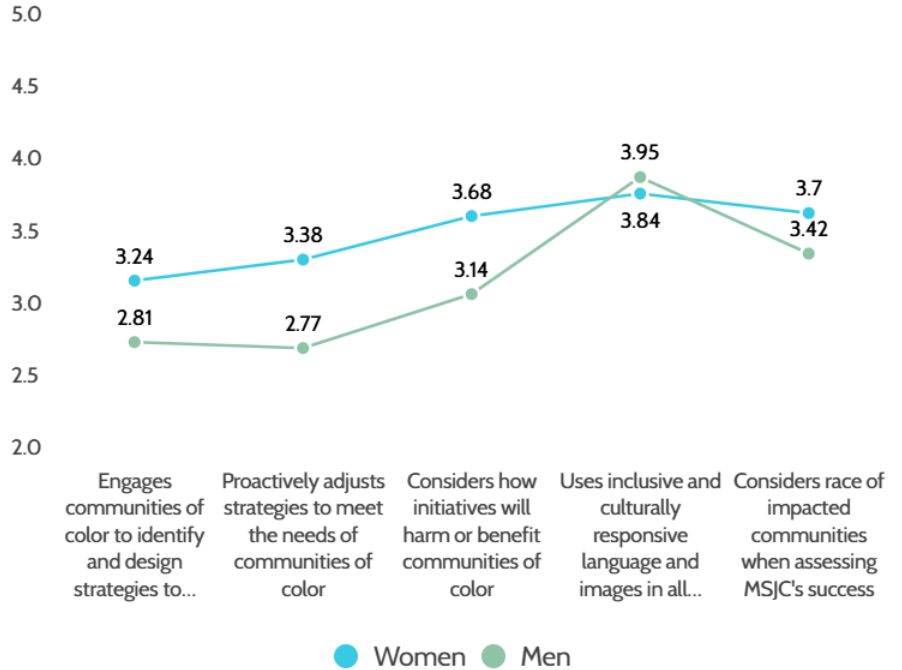
RACE. This graph shows BIPOC respondents in blue and white respondents in green. Although not statistically significant, there are notable gaps in two areas, “Proactively adjusts strategies to meet the needs of communities of color” and “Considers how initiatives will harm or benefit communities of color”, which are rated lower by BIPOC respondents.



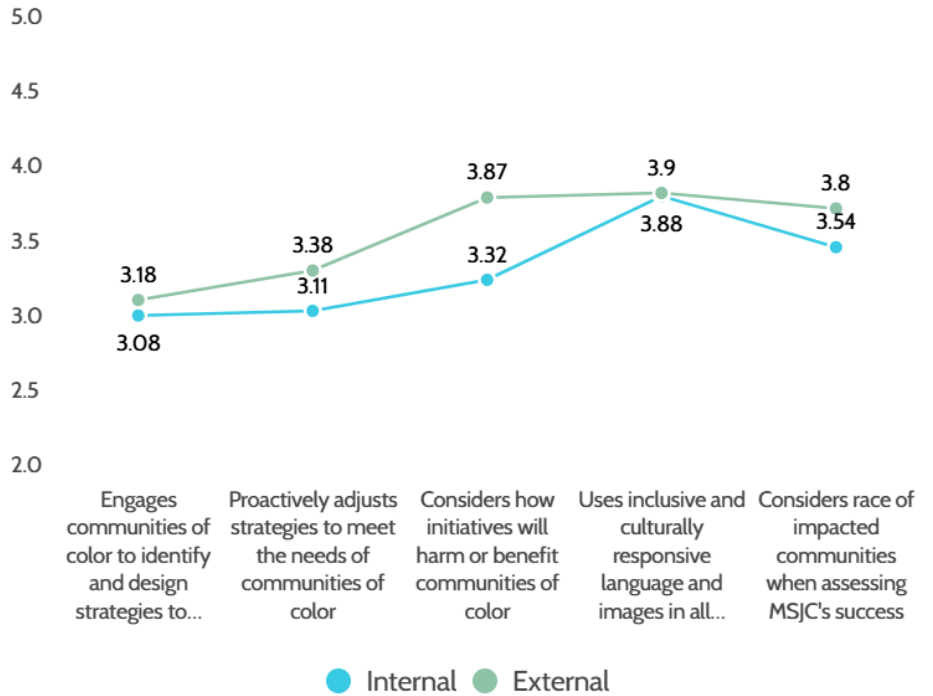
AGE. This graph shows respondents aged 18-44 in blue and respondents age 45+ in green. Ratings by older stakeholders are lower in all areas, and the difference is statistically significant in “Engages communities of color to identify and design strategies to address social justice issues”.



GENDER. This graph shows female-identified respondents in blue and male-identified respondents in green. Although the differences are not statistically significant, women rate MSJC higher in all areas except for “Uses inclusive and culturally responsive language and images in all communications”.

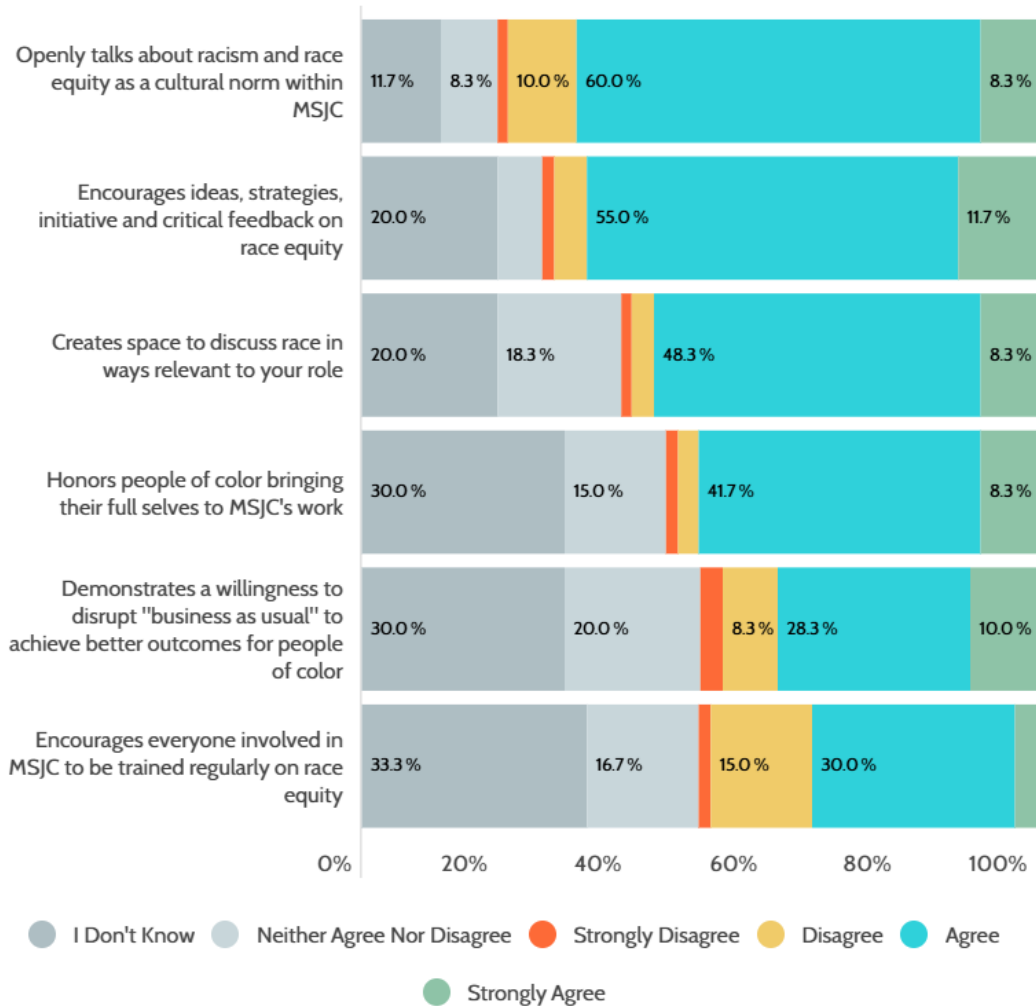


ROLE. This graph shows external stakeholders in green and internal stakeholders in blue. External stakeholders rate MSJC higher in “Proactively adjusts strategies to meet the needs of communities of color”, “Considers how initiatives will harm or benefit communities of color”, and “Considers race of impacted communities when assessing MSJC's success”, although none of these differences is statistically significant.



CREATING SPACE FOR RACE EQUITY

We asked participants the extent to which they agreed with several statements related to how MSJC creates a space for race equity in their work. The following are the responses we received from current stakeholders. We have presented them in order from **most favorably rated to the least favorably rated**, so that you can easily identify and prioritize those areas that would benefit from timely review and improvement.



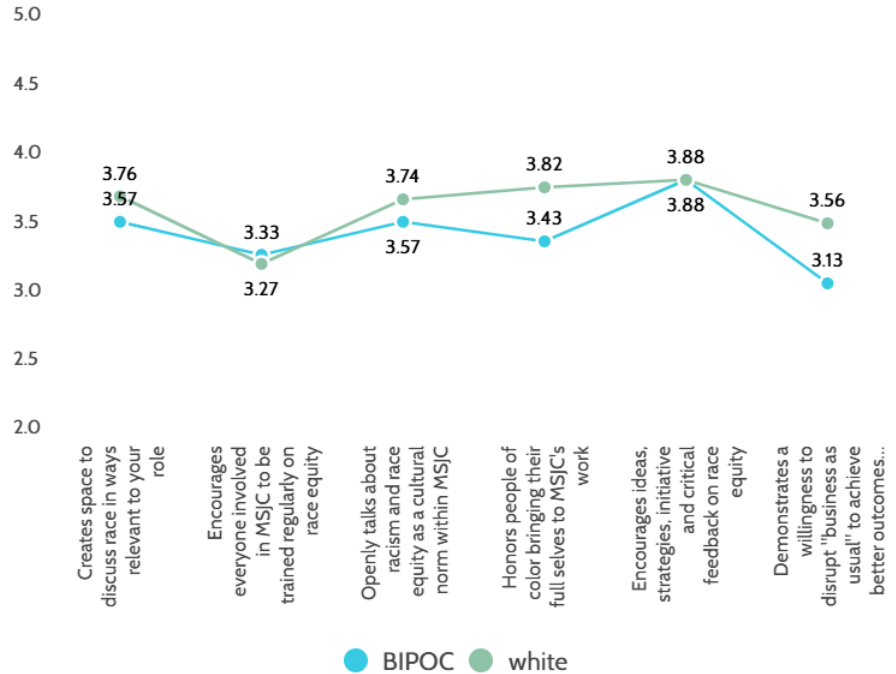
KEY TAKE-AWAYS.

- The ratings are more positive than negative in all areas regarding creating space for race equity.
- Around two-third of all respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that MSJC “openly talks about racism and race equity as a cultural norm within MSJC” and “encourages ideas, strategies, initiative and critical feedback on race equity”.
- The statement that received the lowest percentage of agreement is “encourages everyone involved in MSJC to be trained regularly on race equity”.

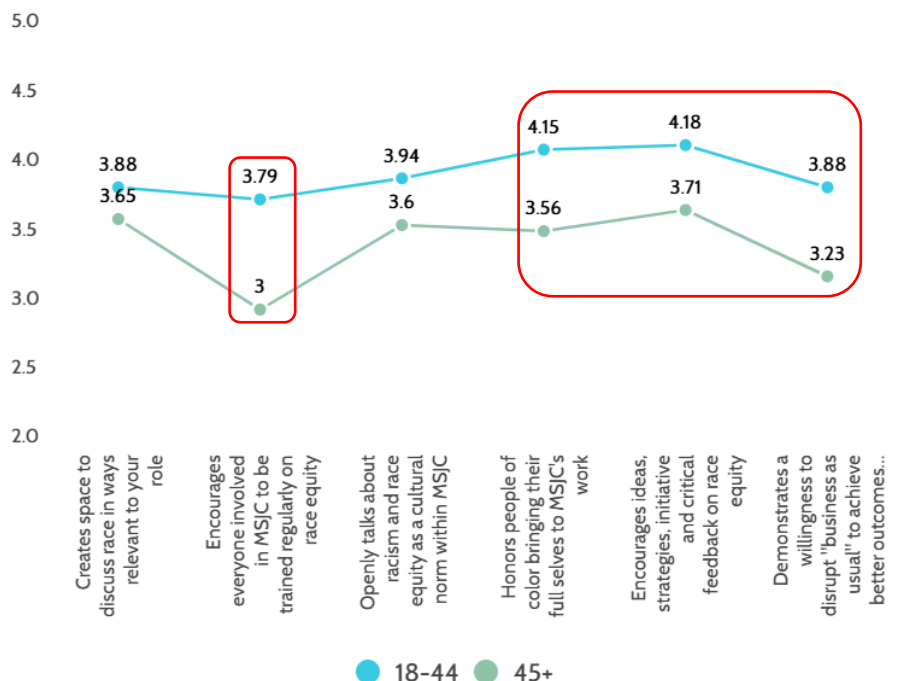
GROUP COMPARISONS.

We measured how different groups perceived MSJC’s efforts to create space for race equity across participants’ race (BIPOC versus white), age (<45 years old versus 45+), gender (women versus men), and role (internal versus external). To do this, we computed the average ratings for each group. Statistically significant differences are shown in red rectangles – see p. 10 for notes on how to read these numbers and graphs for non-statisticians.

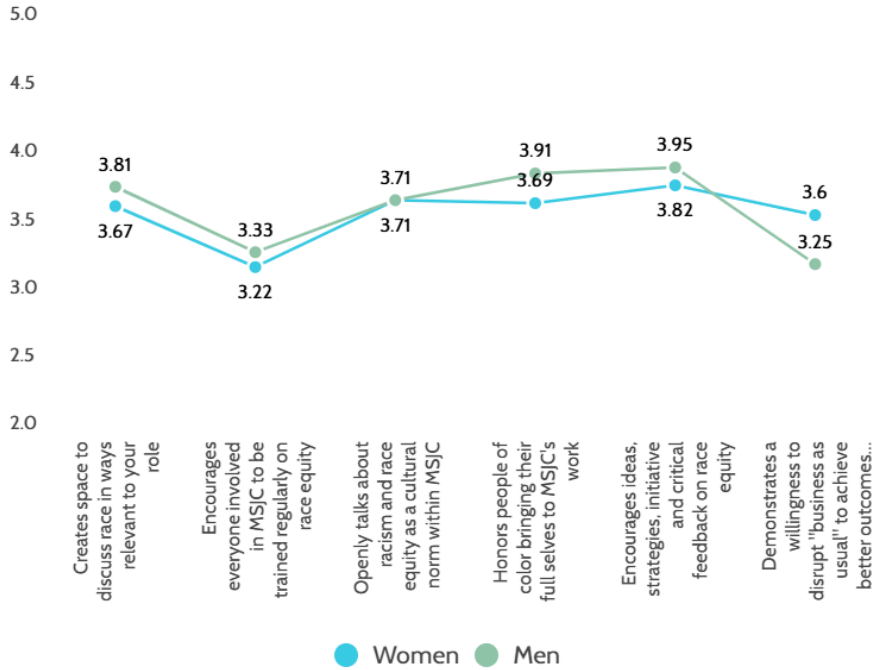
RACE. This graph shows BIPOC respondents in blue and white respondents in green. BIPOC respondents provide lower ratings than white counterparts in “Honors people of color bringing their full selves to MSJC’s work” and “Demonstrates a willingness to disrupt “business as usual” to achieve better outcomes for people of color”, but these differences are not statistically significant.



AGE. This graph shows respondents aged 18-44 in blue and respondents age 45+ in green. Older respondents rate MSJC lower in all areas, with statistically significant differences in “Encourages everyone to be trained regularly on race equity”, “Honors POC bringing their full selves to MSJC’s work”, “Encourages ideas, strategies, initiative and critical feedback on race equity”, and “Demonstrates a willingness to disrupt “business as usual...”.



GENDER. This graph shows female-identified respondents in blue and male-identified respondents in green. While there are no statistically significant differences, ratings by men are slightly higher in all areas except for “Openly talks about racism and race equity as a cultural norm within MSJC”, in which ratings are equal, and “Demonstrates a willingness to disrupt ‘business as usual’ to achieve better outcomes for people of color”, which is rated higher by women.



ROLE. This graph shows external stakeholders in green and internal stakeholders in blue. Ratings by internal stakeholders are lower in “Creates space to discuss race in ways relevant to your role”, “Encourages everyone involved in MSJC to be trained regularly on race equity”, and “Openly talks about racism and race equity as a cultural norm within MSJC”, albeit not statistically significant.



ACCOUNTABILITY TO RACE EQUITY GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

We asked: “**In your opinion, what does it mean for an organization like MSJC to become accountable to its race equity goals and principles?**” Below is a summary of what we learned from 43 respondents (6 BIPOC, 37 white):

- Regular reporting, clear communication, and transparency in sharing race equity goals and progress. (8 white)
- Proactive action (going beyond words), partnerships, outreach to communities of color, and strong commitment beyond statements. (1 BIPOC, 6 white)
- Listening to and incorporating feedback from people of color and affected communities to ensure accountability. (1 BIPOC, 5 white)
- Re-evaluating leadership structures and institutional frameworks to become more inclusive and decolonized. (2 BIPOC, 3 white)
- Using measurable goals, metrics, and assessment tools (e.g., annual reports, scorecards, surveys) to track progress. (1 BIPOC, 4 white)
- Increasing racial diversity in leadership positions and Justice Teams. (1 BIPOC, 4 white)
- Achieving full accountability is difficult given the existing structures and racial composition of the broader Marianist community. (1 BIPOC, 2 white)
- Race equity being linked to other justice concerns, such as mass incarceration, climate justice, and income inequality. (2 white)

IMPACT OF RACE ON INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE + SUCCESS

We asked: “**How do you feel race impacts your individual experience and success at MSJC, if at all?**” Below is a summary of what we learned from 45 respondents (5 BIPOC, 40 white):

- Race has “no impact” on their experience at MSJC, which taken in context implicitly means no perceived negative impact. (3 BIPOC, 19 white)
- Lack of diversity has a negative impact on MSJC's success and their experience at MSJC. (11 white)
- Their race affords them privileges that others may not have. (5 white)
- Positive impact through enrichment of the viewpoints in their work. (2 BIPOC, 2 white)
- Need for greater engagement with people of color. (4 white)
- Tokenization and other challenges because of their race. (2 BIPOC)






RELATIONSHIP WITH MSJC STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & STEERING COMMITTEE

We asked: “**How do you feel race impacts your relationship with MSJC staff, volunteers, and steering committee members, if at all??**” Below is a summary of what we learned from 45 respondents (6 BIPOC, 39 white):

- Race has “no impact” on their relationships, which taken in context implicitly means no perceived negative impact. (3 BIPOC, 26 white)
- The lack of racial diversity in leadership and participation negatively impacts their relationships. (6 white)
- Race has a positive impact because they are among the majority group. (5 white)
- Race makes it more difficult to connect with BIPOC individuals at times. (1 white)
- Race has a negative impact because they are one of very few minority individuals and perceive a lack of support. (1 BIPOC)

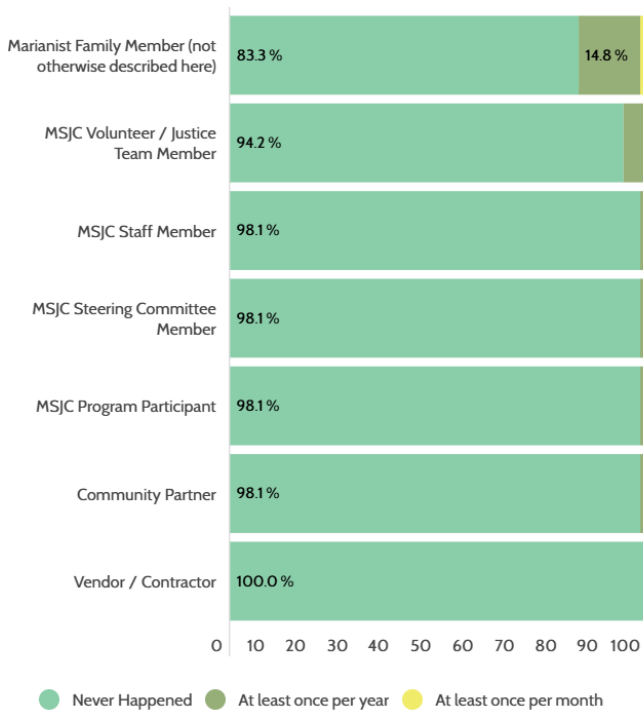
RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMUNITIES SERVED

We asked: "**How do you feel race impacts your relationship with the communities you serve at MSJC, if at all?**" Below is a summary of what we learned from 30 respondents (4 BIPOC, 26 white):

-  Race has "no impact" on their relationships with communities served, which taken in context implicitly means no perceived negative impact. (4 BIPOC, 12 white)
-  Race makes it hard to build trust and empathize with communities of color. (11 white)
-  Having the privilege of being a primarily white organization means MSJC can help others. (3 white)
-  Most communities we serve are also white so it is easy to connect. (1 white)
-  The impact depends on the location and the community we serve. (1 white)

TARGETED WITH RACIST REMARK + BEHAVIOR

We asked participants to tell us whether they had been *targeted with* a racist remark or behavior by a variety of stakeholders in the last five years. We offered a five-point frequency scale, from “Never happened” to “At least once per day.” We received 52 responses, summarized below in the order of **most to least frequent**:



KEY TAKE-AWAYS.

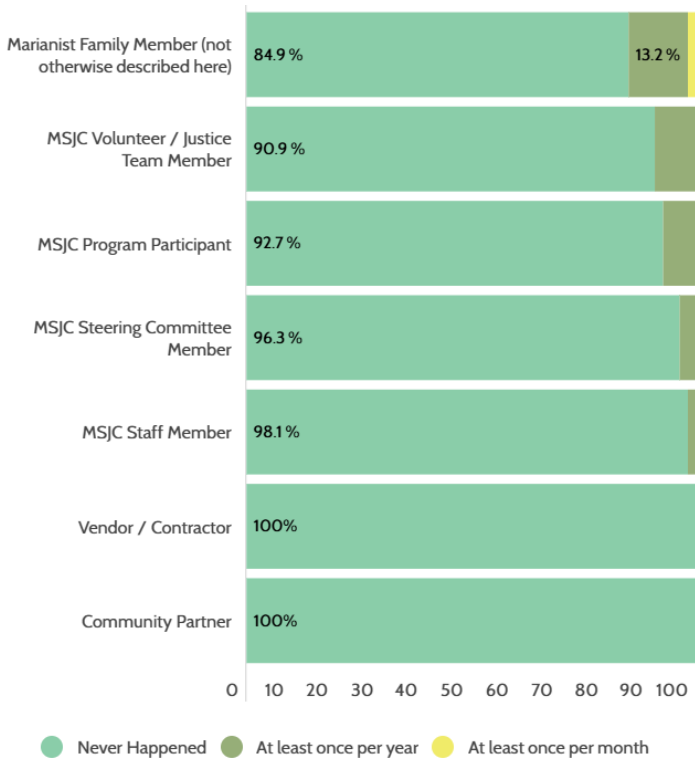
- Respondents were most frequently targeted by racist remarks or behaviors coming from Marianist Family members not otherwise listed. 14.8% (8 participants) responded that this happened at least once per year, and 1.9% (1 participant) responded that this happened at least once per month.
- Three respondents (5.8%) noted that they were targeted by a MSJC volunteer or Justice Team member at least once per year, and one person of color experienced things like **performative inclusion** and being tokenized from a MSJC staff person, steering committee member, program participant, or community partner annually.
- The other groups were not identified as notable sources of racist remarks and behaviors by the participants.

Performative Inclusion

An inauthentic show of making something appear “inclusive” through visible diversity of people involved, but without hallmarks of actual inclusion such as earnest welcome, heeding and actuating diverse ideas, sharing leadership and decision-making power, and being accountable to those impacted by decisions.

WITNESSED A RACIST REMARK + BEHAVIOR

We asked participants to tell us whether they had *witnessed* a racist remark or behavior by a variety of stakeholders in the last five years. We offered a five-point frequency scale, from “Never happened” to “At least once per day”. We received 54 responses, summarized below in the order of **most to least frequent**:



KEY TAKE-AWAYS.

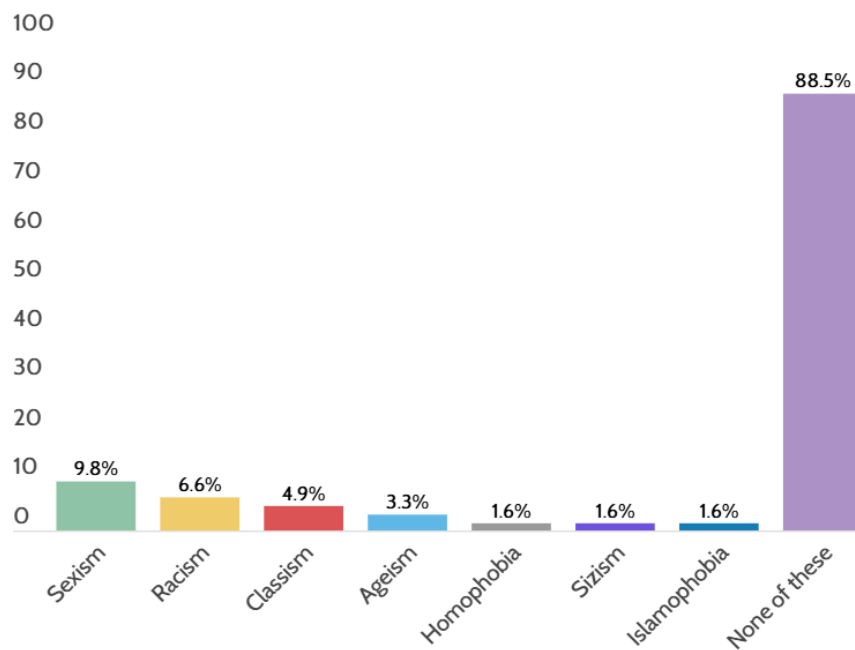
- Respondents most frequently witnessed racist remarks or behaviors coming from Marianist family members not listed in one of the categories. 13.2% (7 participants) responded that this happened at least once per year, and 1.9% (1 participant) responded that this happened at least once per month in the last five years.
- Five respondents (9.1%) noted that they witnessed racism by a MSJC volunteer or Justice Team member at least once per year.
- Four respondents (7.3%) reported witnessing racism by a MSJC program participant at least once per year.
- Two respondents (3.7%) reported witnessing racism by a MSJC steering committee member at least once per year.
- The other groups were not identified as notable sources of racist remarks and behaviors by the participants.

BIAS AT THE INTERSECTIONS

Recognizing that people can experience multiple forms of bias and oppression simultaneously, we asked participants to tell us whether they had experienced or been negatively impacted in their work at MSJC by racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, Islamophobia, sizeism, xenophobia, and/or something else.

We received 49 responses to this question – 42 respondents marked down that they had not experienced any bias, and 7 marked or wrote in at least one kind of bias they have experienced at MSJC. For the purposes of the graph below, we assume that the 12 respondents who skipped this question altogether have not experienced any of these forms of bias and felt like the question did not apply to them.

The chart below shows percentages of respondents reporting each type of bias out of everyone who participated in the survey (assuming as many as 54 respondents did not experience bias). For example, six respondents reported experiencing sexism, and out of 61 total respondents this means 9.8% experienced this bias.



Respondents reported a variety of biases with the most common being sexism, racism, classism, and ageism. One person wrote in that they experience culturally othering through geographic bias against non-Midwesterners. It is important to consider how these numbers relate to the demographics of this organization. For example, even though one person experiencing homophobia out of the total number of participants is a relatively small percentage (1.6%), it represents a higher percentage among participants who identify as LGBTQIA2S+. Of course, it is also possible that someone who is not gay can be targeted with homophobia, just as someone who is not disabled can be targeted with ableism, etc.

BEING CALLED IN FOR YOUR OWN RACIST REMARKS + BEHAVIOR

We asked participants to share if they had personally ever made a remark or behavior while engaging with MSJC that you were told or later learned was racist, how they responded at the time, and their reflections on the event looking back now. Below is a summary of what we learned from 38 respondents (4 BIPOC, 34 white):

- Most respondents indicated that they had never been called in for a racist remark or behavior of theirs while engaging with MSJC. (4 BIPOC, 30 white)
- One white respondent recalled instances of their own racist comments / behaviors. They noticed that their comment was insensitive and reflected on the event later but was not called out at the time.
- One white respondent may have engaged in “some microaggression and/or racist remark” without their awareness but was not called out for doing so.
- Two white respondents were called out before, but not while at MSJC.

PERSONAL EFFORTS TO PROMOTE RACIAL EQUITY

We asked participants to share if they had worked to promote race equity in MSJC or within the larger Marianist Family, how their efforts were met by others, and what resources they needed to support them, and if they have not worked, the reason why they did not. Below is a summary of what we learned from 41 respondents (4 BIPOC, 37 white):

- Many have *not* worked to promote racial equity. (2 BIPOC, 12 white)
- Some worked to promote racial equity and felt supported. (2 BIPOC, 7 white)
- Two BIPOC respondents noted how few white Marianists have meaningful relationships with BIPOC people and therefore don't understand challenges BIPOC Marianists and people of color face. They feel like they are not taken seriously and feel burned out in their efforts.
- Several are part of conversations and feel encouraged in their efforts. (8 white)
- Others joined the anti-racist committee (2 white) or work to recruit minorities into MSJC roles and as programming participants (4 white).
- Some are cognizant of their speech, bring an intersectional lens, facilitate Justice Team offerings, and/or depict Mary as a person of color in the banner prepared for a retreat. (4 white)

SIGN OF THE TIMES

We asked participants the following question: *In the spirit of the Marianist founders and the call to respond to the signs of the times, what do you think is important for MSJC to keep in mind right now as they work towards greater racial equity?*



PAST STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

We created a separate assessment tool specifically for former MSJC stakeholders that included a few extra questions about individuals' timing and reasons for leaving or ending their engagement with MSJC. We cast a wide net and only received **ten (10) responses**. While this is too small a sample for meaningful statistical analysis, we think their responses are still worth capturing in this report to compare with current stakeholder experiences and for inspiration in shaping the organization's policies, practices, and culture moving forward.

DEMOGRAPHICS

RACE. Nine respondents identify as white / European descent, and one respondent did not answer this question.

GENDER + PRONOUNS. Five respondents identify as women and four identify as men. Five respondents use she/her pronouns, four use he/him pronouns, and one uses they/them pronouns.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION. Eight respondents are straight/heterosexual, two are lesbian or gay, and one is queer.

AGE. One respondent is between 30-44 years old; eight people were 55 or older. One respondent did not answer this question.

ROLE IN ORGANIZATION. Nine respondents answered:

- Past program participants (3)
- Former steering committee members (2)
- Past volunteer (1)
- Members of the Marianist Family not otherwise described (3)

TENURE. Nine respondents answered how long they'd worked with MSJC:

- Less than a year (1)
- 1-5 years (3)
- 6-10 years (1)
- 11-15 years (2)
- 16-20 years (1)
- More than 20 years (1)

YEAR OF DEPARTURE. Nine respondents answered when they parted ways with MSJC:

- "A long time ago" (1)
- 2008 - 2011 (1)
- After 2016 (7)

EDUCATION. One respondent has a high school / GED degree, two have undergraduate degrees, eight have graduate degrees, and four have professional licenses.

CLASS. Growing up, seven were working class and four were middle class. Currently, seven are middle class and three are managerial class.

DISABILITY. None of the participants reported having a disability.

PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY

Former stakeholders who responded had generally more positive than negative perceptions regarding diversity of MSJC Justice Teams, the Marianist Family, program participants, and the Steering Committee. They did not know much about the diversity of donors and community partners and had neutral perceptions of diversity of MSJC staff.

In terms of racial diversity, the only groups that received positive ratings were MSJC Justice Teams and program participants, most respondents did not know about the racial diversity of community partners and donors, and the remaining groups were not perceived as diverse.

In terms of understanding the impact of racial inequity, all the groups received overwhelmingly positive ratings except for donors and community partners, as most participants did not know about these groups.

INTERNAL & EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION OF COMMITMENT TO RACE EQUITY

Former stakeholders who responded rated many areas as average or above average. However, most respondents rated MSJC low in terms of the “visibility of people of color in leadership within MSJC”. The following areas received “I don’t know” or “Neither agree nor disagree” ratings from most participants (percentages in parentheses):

- Recruitment / onboarding practices for staff and volunteers (100%)
- Performance reviews for staff and volunteers (89%)
- Racial diversity of community partners (67%)
- Budget development centering BIPOC leadership and engagement at all levels (67%)
- Professional / leadership development opportunities (67%)
- Rewards & recognition for staff and volunteers (67%)
- Engagement with BIPOC communities to identify and design MSJC public programming (67%)
- Accessible timing of public programs (67%)
- Online presence (website and social media) (56%)
- Job / volunteer role descriptions (56%)
- Decision-making transparency (56%)

RECRUITING + RETENTION

Former stakeholders generally rated MSJC more positively than negatively in most areas. However, MSJC received low ratings in “Robustly represents people of color in leadership positions and pipelines”. The following areas received “I don’t know” or “Neither agree nor disagree” ratings from most participants (percentages in parentheses):

- Evaluates all staff and volunteers based on anti-racism knowledge and skills (88%)
- Explicitly works to recruit + retain people of color as staff (78%)
- Promptly addresses internal racism issues raised by staff and volunteers (78%)

APPLYING AN ANTI-RACIST LENS

Former stakeholders who responded either did not know or rated MSJC positively in terms of applying an anti-racist lens to its programs, policies, and practices. Respondents knew relatively less about the following areas:

- Engages communities of color to identify and design strategies to address social justice issues
- Proactively adjusts strategies to meet the needs of communities of color
- Considers how initiatives will harm or benefit communities of color
- Considers race of impacted communities when assessing MSJC's success

CREATING SPACE FOR RACE EQUITY

Former stakeholders who responded either did not know or rated MSJC positively in all areas we assessed in terms of creating space for race equity. Respondents knew relatively less about the following areas:

- Demonstrates a willingness to disrupt "business as usual" to achieve better outcomes for people of color
- Encourages everyone involved in MSJC to be trained regularly on race equity

ACCOUNTABILITY TO RACE EQUITY GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

When asked what it means for an organization to become accountable to its race equity goals and principles, eight former stakeholders who responded emphasized the following:

- Engaging in action, not just words
- Having goals, evaluating individuals and the whole organization based on these goals, and adapting based on results
- Responding in a meaningful way when called out for coming short in achieving these goals
- Having diversity among leaders
- Asking people of color how they're impacted by MSJC programs

IMPACT OF RACE ON

INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE + SUCCESS

When asked how they felt race impacted their individual experience and success at the organization (if at all), eight people shared the following:

- There was no impact (presumably, no negative impact)
- Experiencing BIPOC women in leadership was powerful
- Having diversity of viewpoints improved the programming
- MSJC helped them “see people of color as true/valuable folks”, “equal”
- While serving on the LGBTQ+ Initiative team they came to understand how race is another dimension of identity and racism another form of oppression

RELATIONSHIP WITH MSJC STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & STEERING COMMITTEE

When asked how they felt race impacted their relationships with MSJC staff, volunteers, and/or steering committee members, three of six respondents noted no impact (presumably, no negative impact); among the remaining, most noted the positive impact of connecting with people who had diverse experiences and getting to know them better.

RELATIONSHIP WITH SERVED COMMUNITIES

When asked how they felt race impacted their relationships with communities they served at MSJC, eight former stakeholders noted the following:

- Positive impact from being able to partner with diverse communities
- MSJC showed up as a group that acts to address issues of racial injustice
- Welcomed all dialogue and concerns from impacted communities
- Some participants at a past program felt let down by leaders, speakers, and planners being predominantly white and prioritizing white comfort

TARGETED WITH OR WITNESSED RACIST REMARKS + BEHAVIORS

Nine former stakeholders shared that they were never witnessed or were targeted with any racist remarks or behaviors by any of the groups listed. One respondent shared that they felt targeted with a racist remark or behavior at least once per year by someone in the Marianist Family, generally. One respondent witnessed racist remarks or behaviors from community partners at least once per year, and two respondents witnessed racist remarks or behaviors from members of the Marianist Family “at least once per year”.

BIAS AT THE INTERSECTIONS

We asked former stakeholders if they ever experienced or were impacted negatively by any of the listed forms of bias. Only sexism and ageism were reported by one person each, and seven respondents reported not experiencing any of the listed forms of bias.

THE ROLE OF BIAS IN LEAVING MSJC

We asked former staff members whether racial inequity and/or other forms of bias played any role in their decision to leave MSJC. All nine participants who responded indicated that it did not play a role in their decision.

SECTION TWO

REPORT ON THE FOCUS GROUPS

This section synthesizes insights from five (5) stakeholder focus groups conducted by Just Roots to assess MSJC's progress and challenges in achieving racial equity. Each session was facilitated virtually via Zoom for 90 minutes by Jessica Rodriguez Becker (she/her), and included up to eight (8) voluntary participants broken up into the following groups:

- Past Program Participants
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
- LGBTQIA2S+ People
- Latinx and Hispanic People
- Residents of Hawaii and Texas

We started each session with the following questions, and made space for additional questions to emerge organically based on the responses we received:

- ***Visions of a Racially Equitable Future:*** Imagine MSJC were a truly racially equitable organization. What would that look like? What would be different from what you've experienced so far?
- ***Obstacles & Challenges:*** What do you think will be the biggest obstacles or challenges the organization might face in working toward racial equity? What might be standing in the way of achieving this vision?
- ***Personal Motivation for Involvement:*** What excites you about being personally involved in helping the organization move toward a racially equitable future? What inspires you to take part in this work?
- ***Deterrents & Concerns:*** What might make you hesitant to get involved or support the organization's racial equity efforts? Are there any concerns that would stop you from wanting to participate in this process?

In total, we met with 15 people in the focus groups. Participants across all groups expressed commitment to MSJC's mission and the Marianist Charism, while also identifying key shortcomings that undermine its aspirations.

The following are the key themes that emerged from our conversations:

- Lack of racial and cultural diversity and representation in MSJC's leadership and decision-making roles
- Disconnects between MSJC's stated values and lived practices, resulting in at least sometimes performative equity
- Over-reliance on and dominance of white Midwestern norms to the exclusion of regional, racial, and cultural diversity and difference
- Emotional and cultural burdens placed on people of color and other historically marginalized people to lead change without necessary support or deputization
- Discomfort and resistance to accountability expressed by white leaders and other members in light of critical feedback, which impairs sustainable and meaningful growth and transformation.

Below we have summarized the responses that came out of these sessions to give you a sense of the most prevalent feelings and concerns across MSJC's stakeholders.

OUR IDEAL RACIALLY EQUITABLE MSJC

MSJC'S MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Lack of widespread awareness of MSJC's existence across MF

Lack of visibility and follow-through in racially diverse MF communities

Post-2020 efforts lack depth and continuity

Racial, cultural, and geographic exclusivity in actions and event planning

Diverse leadership reflecting communities we want to serve in each region we operate in

Rooted in mutuality, not charity or saviorism

Geographically inclusive, decentering white Midwest dominance

Relationally oriented with emphasis on listening and learning, not metrics

MSJC'S BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING RACIAL EQUITY

BIPOC isolation and tokenization in white-dominant spaces

Areas of unacknowledged bias especially among white leaders and members

Short-lived or superficial post-2020 DEI efforts

Resistance and defensive reactions to critical feedback

RECOMMENDATIONS

Be more present, active, visible, vocal in all areas that Marianists touch

Prioritize geographic decentralization with greater regional accessibility, leadership development, and grassroots organizing

Open regionally diverse MSJC offices

Invest in long-term BIPOC leadership pathways

Culturally representative iconography

Need deliberate effort to integrate and sustain formation, connecting our understanding of justice to the Marianist charism, deepening personal and collective spirituality

Tools for white members to examine and challenge supremacist socialization

Regular practice of reflection, feedback & accountability

WHAT INSPIRES YOUR PERSONAL PARTICIPATION IN MSJC'S WORK

Belief in MSJC's mission

Hope that MSJC will live into its ideals

A desire to reconcile spirituality & justice

MSJC is where folks can put their Marianists' commitment to social justice into action

Feeling energized by intergenerational collaboration

Historically, the burden of adaptation often falls on newcomers and those with marginalized identities. Newcomers don't stay new as time passes, but marginalized people remain marginalized without undergoing *assimilation* (abandonment of their own cultural norms and identities). People from the dominant-culture rarely adjust their norms to share power in meaningful ways, but that's the only path to real change.

ROLE OF FORMATION IN OVERCOMING BARRIERS

WHO BEARS THE BURDEN OF CHANGE

SECTION THREE

OUR OBSERVATIONS

MSJC's stakeholders are starting this journey from different places. You must work to meet everyone where they are with a clear and consistent invitation and expectation to participate in training, conversations, culture (re)building, and collective actions toward positive change.

There is still substantial work to do, and the time to start is now.

The following are our overarching observations about MSJC based on the race equity assessment results and focus group feedback. This summary is not intended to replace or eclipse the wealth of detail provided in earlier sections, but rather only to highlight the issues that stand out the most as outsiders of your organization.



Marianist Charism + Formation. MSJC has made a strong beginning in efforts to address a wide range of the social justice challenges of our time. Stakeholders who responded to the survey and participated in focus groups expressed deep passion for MSJC's important mission, but many historically marginalized people – specifically, people of color, LGBTQIA2S+ people, and immigrants – also expressed strong feelings of disconnection and burnout. There is a deep and pervasive desire across the board for more diversity, more genuine inclusion, more engagement with communities on the ground, and more opportunities for leadership.

As MSJC works to address these issues, many stakeholders strongly encourage the organization to explore the untapped potential in the Marianist Charism to inspire and drive the work. Stakeholders find that the core pillars of the Marianist Charism – Faith, Community, Mission, Mary, especially the Magnificat and the Discipleship of Equals – offer powerful spiritual and theological groundings for deep equity and justice work. However, these connections are not always explicitly or consistently articulated or lived out in relation to dismantling systemic racism and other forms of oppression. Stakeholders desire a shared, unified, dynamic understanding of their “why” in pursuing social justice that is grounded in these core pillars and as a living enactment of their faith. The lack of clarity and solidarity of purpose leaves folks feeling listless, confused, disconnected or unengaged, burnt out, or resentful, all of which negatively impacts the efficacy of MSJC's efforts. Regrounding in the core pillars, as well as inviting more engaged creativity about how to apply them to historical and emergent social justice issues alike as a proactive component of Marianist formation is central to MSJC's future success.

➤ **Predominantly White Organization and Leadership.** Across MSJC, particularly at the levels of leadership, there is a visible predominance of white people. As we discuss further below, this demographic reality directly shapes and influences decision-making, priority setting, and the overall cultural norms and lens of the organization. Focus group participants from all sessions desired more racially diverse representation in positions of genuine influence and power, especially folks from the historically marginalized communities MSJC says you want to serve.

➤ **Geographic Challenges: Midwestern-Centrism.** While Marianists hail from all over the US and other parts of the world, MSJC's operations and influence appear most heavily centered in the Midwest. MSJC's stakeholders expressed a strong desire for more active engagement, opportunities, and resource allocation in areas outside the Midwest to better reflect the Marianist Family's full geographic diversity.

➤ **Prevalence of White Midwestern Dominant Cultural Norms¹.**

Related to the note above, a significant observation is the pervasiveness of cultural norms at MSJC described by stakeholders as “white Midwestern” – an ethos that normalizes and gives preference to homogeneity of certain communication styles, meeting structures, expressions of faith and spirituality (e.g., liturgical practices) and what is otherwise considered appropriate or comfortable according to a white Midwestern taste, etiquette, sensibility, and respectability. Gone unchecked, this creates an environment where *assimilation* towards these norms is implicitly or explicitly expected, alienating those from different racial, ethnic, geographic, and/or cultural backgrounds.

Assimilation

An expectation imposed by the dominant culture (“over-culture”) that one lets go of some of who they are (e.g., how they talk or express emotions, dress, cook, gather, celebrate, worship) in order to become more aligned with the over-culture's values, norms, and fears, all on the promise of getting access to some social, political, and economic benefits as a result.

One way this shows up in the survey data is how most white people responded to questions about how race impacts their experience at MSJC or relationships. While a few white people acknowledged positive impacts stemming from the fact that much of their work through MSJC is with similarly privileged white people (i.e., there is an ease when working with people who are racially similar), most of the white respondents expressed that race has “no impact” on their experiences and relationships. Given the context of the rest of their individual responses, it's clear most of these folks implicitly mean that they experienced no *negative* impact *because of their race*. Still other white people responded to these questions by noting how they are negatively impacted by the lack of exposure to racial diversity across MSJC.

Along the same lines, most white respondents strongly believe that both the majority-white MSJC Steering Committee and MSJC Justice Teams understand

¹ “(divorcing) White Supremacy Culture: Coming Home to Who We Really Are,” by Dr. Tema Okun (2022), available at <https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/>.

“the impact of racial inequity in our society and religious communities”, while most respondents of color expressed negative or neutral opinions about the same.

These responses all suggest that many or most white people involved in MSJC are (probably unwittingly) operating from norms and assumptions that support and sustain white supremacy and white centrality. This is a framework we’ve all been deeply conditioned into and regularly act within unless we make a deliberate and consistent effort to resist it.

The following statements illustrate some of the beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors that operate within a white supremacy and white-centric framework, which together create a throughline of illogic that underlies some the themes that came to light in this assessment:

- ✘ Whiteness is the best and is therefore the default against which everyone else is measured, valued, and understood.
- ✘ Whiteness is protected as the norm by proactively and forcibly demarcating everyone else as racialized *others*.
- ✘ Black and brown people have race and are racialized, while white people are not.
- ✘ If Black and brown people are not present in an otherwise white space, then race, racial dynamics, and racism are not present.
- ✘ The term “race” has a negative connotation, such that any questions inquiring about how it impacts one’s experience and relationships is assumed to mean something negative or harmful.
- ✘ Talking about white as a racial identity or whiteness as racial is ignored or defensively dismissed as “racist” or “reverse racism”.

Without a critical framework and accountable practice, majority-white groups unconsciously recreate and maintain these hegemonic norms within any and all spaces they create. This an excellent opportunity to get curious, lean into embodied learning, imperfect practice, and accountable relationships with one another and other similarly situated and dedicated communities.

It’s also important to note here that this isn’t just a numbers game – that is, a white dominant culture (Midwestern or otherwise) cannot be solved simply by engaging more people of color in your work. Yes, it is true that MSJC is overwhelmingly white; and it is also true that simply inviting in more people of color does not immediately and inherently change the white dominant cultural norms of the organization. Indeed, without deliberate and consistent efforts to the contrary, white dominant cultural norms are so ubiquitous that they even pervade organizations founded and run entirely by people of color when no white people are present at all.

In the Recommendations section, we offer some specific suggestions and examples about how to ask yourselves bigger, better, harder questions about tackling your white dominant culture through a dispersive geographic lens as an effort to decenter whiteness and combat white supremacy norms at MSJC.



Bridging Knowledge Gaps. In the survey itself, we asked stakeholders to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with statements about MSJC’s race equity efforts. For all of these, they could alternatively select “Neither Agree Nor Disagree” if they knew something about what was being asked but didn’t have a strong opinion about it, or “I don’t know” if they had no current knowledge about what was being asked. According to the survey responses, significant numbers of stakeholders selected these last two options across the board, several with additional comments about not knowing what else happens at MSJC outside their particular focus area, Justice Team work, or programming.

For example, more than one-third (33%) of survey respondents didn’t have enough or any information to form an opinion about the following areas:

- Diversity of MSJC’s Steering Committee, community partners, or donors
- Racial diversity of program participants, community partners, or donors
- How well MSJC’s donors understand the impact of racial inequity in our society and religious communities
- The Racial Justice Team’s activities
- MSJC’s internal Anti-Racism Ad Hoc Committee
- Visibility of people of color in leadership within MSJC, including its staff, steering committee, and Justice Teams
- *All areas we asked about regarding how MSJC communicates its commitment to race equity to internal stakeholders, with the least known about performance reviews for staff and volunteers (80.4%), rewards and recognitions for staff and volunteers (75.4%), and budget development centering BIPOC leadership and engagement at all levels (68.4%)*
- *All the areas we asked about regarding how MSJC prioritizes racial equity in recruitment and retention practices, with the least known about how MSJC evaluates all staff and volunteers based on their anti-racism knowledge and skills (75.5%), ensures leadership development opportunities are informed by people of color (73.7%), and promptly addressing internal racism issues raised by staff and volunteers (65.5%)*
- *Almost all the areas we asked about regarding how MSJC does in terms of applying an anti-racist lens in its programs, policies, and practices, with the least known about how MSJC proactively adjusts its strategies to meet the needs of communities of color (50%), considers the race of impacted communities when assessing MSJC’s success (48%), and engages communities of color to identify and design strategies to address social justice issues (42.6%).*
- *Most of the areas we asked about regarding how MSJC creates space for race equity in their work, with the least known about how MSJC*

demonstrates a willingness to disrupt “business as usual” to achieve better outcomes for people of color (50%), encourages everyone involved in MSJC to be trained regularly on race equity (50%), and honors people of color bringing their full selves to MSJC’s work (45%).

These stark numbers suggest ample opportunities for MSJC to assess and improve its communication about its past, current, emergent, and future efforts to address race equity in thoughtful and strategic ways so that more stakeholders can stay informed and, hopefully, feel more invested and engaged.



BIPOC Stakeholders, Generally.

Notably, BIPOC stakeholders scored the organization *lower* than their white colleagues in many aspects of our questions about MSJC’s external and internal communications of its commitment to race equity, its internal policies and practices around recruiting and retention, applying an anti-racism, and creating space for race equity.

For each of the areas below, the difference of opinions between current BIPOC stakeholders and white stakeholders reached statistical significance (*i.e.*, the difference in scores is big enough that even if more folks filled out the survey, we are reasonably confident that the results would remain the same). Each of these areas represent opportunities to bridge equity gaps across these groups. These are listed in order of most to least in need of review for improvement based on the scores they received, with the difference between average scores in parentheses:

- Ensures leadership development opportunities are informed by people of color (-1.23) and availability of professional and leadership development opportunities, generally (-1.13). Of all the areas we asked about in the survey, these received two of the lowest average ratings by BIPOC stakeholders and represent the largest perception gaps between white and BIPOC respondents. (The other lowest rated area among BIPOC stakeholders was about visibility of people of color in leadership within MSJC’s staff, steering committee, and Justice Teams – a sentiment that white stakeholders largely agreed with)
- Commitment to courageous accountable leadership (-0.85)
- Allocation of funds to prioritize race equity work (-0.84)
- Formal and informal leadership opportunities (-0.81)
- Recruitment and onboarding practices for staff and volunteers (-0.78)
- Perceptions of diversity of MSJC’s Justice Teams (-0.77)
- Perceptions of MSJC Justice Teams (-0.84) and the MSJC Steering Committee (-0.61) understanding the impact of racial inequity in our

society and religious communities

- Justice initiative priorities (-0.65)

In written responses and focus group discussions, many stakeholders of color expressed the need for specific changes that would usher in a culture shift toward a more inclusive and racially equitable organization, like:

- ✓ Racially diverse leadership across the organization
- ✓ Emphasis on recruiting and retaining staff and volunteers of color by providing any of the below
- ✓ Leveraging the organization's positional authority to support more and authentic cultural diversity throughout Marianist spaces
- ✓ Freedom to authentically express themselves in dress, hairstyle, affect, music, food, etc., even and especially if it is misaligned with **respectability politics** as defined by white Midwestern dominant culture and paternalistically and arbitrarily enforced by individuals in a given space
- ✓ Courageous, agile leadership that is willing to try new things, make changes, make mistakes, learn from them, and try again
- ✓ Fair access to mentorship, professional development, and opportunities for leadership in the organization
- ✓ Intentional spaces for gathering in solidarity, sharing, grieving, healing, and organizing around their experiences and work at the organization
- ✓ Reconsider organizational structure and programming that centers regional and cultural experiences and priorities
- ✓ Targeted training on resisting white dominant culture and promoting self-care (both in and outside of MSJC)
- ✓ Being thought of first for leadership opportunities (e.g., training and development, committee appointments, presenting at important meetings on behalf of their teams or the organization, etc.)
- ✓ Having their voices and leadership centered in policy changes, program development, etc., and being duly compensated for the extra work and emotional labor that is required to do so.

Respectability Politics

Performing in a way that pleases institutions of the dominant culture but is inauthentic to you and your non-dominant culture; a specific form of assimilation or erasure for the purpose of acceptance and survival.



White Stakeholders, Generally. Among the organization's white stakeholders who participated, most are explicitly committed to race equity and creating inclusive environments for everyone, while a few were not sure whether racism is even a problem within MSJC or the Marianist Family. Many identified as having and benefiting from white privilege but were not sure what to do about it or what their role might be in faith-based race equity and DEI efforts. Of those who did have an idea of their role, the most common responses were (in descending order of frequency): to listen, not take up too much space, and interrupt bias when they see something.

As already discussed more fully in a note above, white stakeholders were less likely to identify any impact of race on their experience and success at MSJC or on their relationships with others involved in the organization. Taken in context, their responses implicitly mean they don't notice a *negative impact*, in particular. They generally did not recognize how easefully operating within the status quo or being treated with deference or reverence are impacts of race, albeit positive ones.

White stakeholders were far more likely than their BIPOC counterparts to express a desire for more data, training, and practical applications for race equity in their daily lives. Those who desired training mostly wanted to learn more about people of color's experiences; only a couple people noted a desire to learn more about themselves as white people who are in a white supremacist society.

All of this indicates two important points:

- A lack of awareness among white stakeholders about the racialization of whiteness as something that must be examined, unpacked, learned from, and healed from separately and in addition to learning about and being in solidarity with people of color (*i.e.*, to take ownership of being actors with their own character arcs in the story of white supremacy, and to let go of the idea of being passive audience members watching a show unfold safely from a distance); and
- A lack of embodied understanding by white stakeholders about the emotional, psychological, and economic impacts of MSJC's white dominant culture on stakeholders of color (*i.e.*, if white folks resisted the conditioning of white supremacy and really permitted themselves to feel the emotions and physical sensations in response to injustices, violence, and atrocities inflicted on Black, Indigenous, and people of color, they would not be able to tolerate allowing it to continue, which also threatens everything they've known and benefited from to date).

Especially because white stakeholders make up the majority of MSJC's (and, presumably, the Marianist Family's) membership and occupy most positions of seniority and leadership, there is an immediate and critical need for training and support for this subset of folks so to mitigate current and ongoing harms

and to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to usher in changes conducive to race equity at MSJC.



Generational Differences. Survey data and focus group responses suggest potential generational divides in perspectives, opinions, and experiences.

There are many areas in which stakeholders aged 45+ have lower / less favorable opinions than their younger counterparts aged 18-44. This includes all areas we asked about regarding Applying an Anti-Racist Lens and Creating Space for Race Equity. The following are the areas where older stakeholders had lower opinions than younger stakeholders, and the gap between them was large enough to reach statistical significance (*i.e.*, the difference in scores is big enough that even if more folks filled out the survey, we are reasonably confident that the results would remain the same). They are listed in order from the biggest to smallest gaps in opinions between the age groups, with the difference between average scores in parentheses:

- Perception of the larger Marianist Family's racial diversity (-0.89)
- Perception of the larger Marianist Family's diversity in terms of demographics, lived experiences, and perspectives (-0.83)
- How MSJC encourages everyone involved in MSJC to be trained regularly on race equity issues (-0.79)
- How MSJC demonstrates a willingness to disrupt "business as usual to achieve better outcomes for people of color (-0.65)
- How MSJC engages communities of color to identify and design strategies to address social justice issues (-0.61)
- How MSJC honors people of color bringing their full selves to MSJC's work (-0.59)
- How MSJC encourages ideas, strategies, initiative, and critical feedback on race equity (-0.47)

By comparison, the following are the only areas where younger stakeholders had lower opinions than older stakeholders and that gap of opinion was large enough to reach statistical significance (*i.e.*, even if we asked more people, we'd likely get the same result). They are listed in order from the biggest to smallest gaps in opinions between the age groups, with the difference between average scores in parentheses:

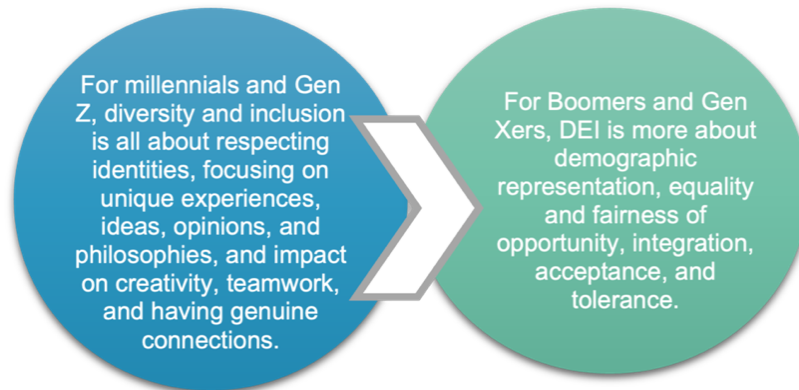
- How the MSJC Steering Committee understands the impact of racial inequity (-0.43)
- How the MSJC Staff understands the impact of racial inequity (-0.38)

For most other areas we asked about, the age groups' opinions did not differ as much, and the graphic representation of their opinions actually appear to dance closely with each other across the pages of this report.

Consider what could be contributing to the areas with the largest perception gaps noted above. Typically, such gaps boil down to a combination of two things:

- (1) *Generational differences in values, views, critical frameworks, and perspectives given respective length of tenure (on earth and in the Marianist Family, respectively), and*
- (2) *Communication messaging, methods, modes, frequency, and relevance.*

It's worth noting that for the first time in history, we have more generations actively working for and within our organizations. The impact is extraordinary, as each generation inevitably influences and transforms the whole team's culture with their respective values and outlooks on life. For example:



We challenge you to think about how this dimension of diversity, taken into context with other intersecting forms of rank and status within MSJC and the larger Marianist Family, informs and impacts how your stakeholders experience, perceive, learn about, engage with, and lead your race equity efforts.

Here are some questions to start:

- To the best of your knowledge, which group's opinions are most closely aligned with the quantifiable (measurable) and/or lived (attested) reality of things at MSJC and the larger Marianist Family? How do you know? For example, older stakeholders perceive the larger Marianist Family's as much less diverse generally and racially diverse than younger stakeholders. Is demographic data available that accurately measures the diversity of the Marianist Family?
- How does MSJC or the Marianist Family communicate about these things to their members and stakeholders? Is it possible to diversify communication methods to reach broader audiences across age groups?
- What are the potential generational divides in how Marianist Charism is understood and applied to contemporary social justice issues?



Hurdles for LGBTQIA2S+ Folks. Survey data and focus group responses indicate that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and Two-Spirit (LGBTQIA2S+) people feel like they experience additional hurdles and scrutiny compared to others working within MSJC and the larger Marianist Family. Specifically, folks who have served on the LGBTQ+ Initiative felt like they had less agency and autonomy in their efforts and faced more

cumbersome approval processes for programming and publications than other MSJC Justice Teams. This suggests an inconsistent application of support and trust by MSJC leadership that is potentially rooted in fear or lack of understanding.



Perceptions of Internal vs. External Stakeholders. We broke down the survey responses to find any notable differences in perception between MSJC's internal stakeholders (*i.e.*, people more actively engaged in the inner workings of the organization, including current staff, volunteers, and Steering Committee members) and external stakeholders (*i.e.*, recent donors, community partners, and program participants). While we realize that many folks could easily identify in more than one of these categories, we asked survey respondents to select only one role that they spend most of their time in right now. Using that self-identification metric, we heard from 38 internal stakeholders and 22 external stakeholders.

Interestingly, internal and external stakeholders share strikingly similar perceptions about how MSJC is doing in terms of diversity and race equity work. Although some gaps in perception exist between these groups, *only one* of them reached statistical significance (*i.e.*, where the difference in scores is big enough that even if more folks filled out the survey, we are reasonably confident that the results would remain the same) – and that was about perceptions of MSJC's internal Anti-Racism Ad Hoc Committee. This finding suggests that perception of MSJC is not significantly impacted for the better or worse if the person being asked is closer to or less intimately engaged with the organization. Because we had a good sample size, we are confident that if there was a difference we would have found it.

Nevertheless, it might be helpful to point out the areas in which there were gaps in opinion, even if they didn't reach statistical significance. Each of these areas represent opportunities to bridge gaps in communication and experience across these groups. These are listed in order of most to least in need of review for improvement based on the scores they received, with the difference between average scores in parentheses:

Where Internal Stakeholders Scored MSJC Higher Than External Stakeholders (opportunities to improve communication and experience for external stakeholders)

- Rewards and recognitions for staff and volunteers (-1.03)
- How MSJC communicates about its internal Anti-Racism Ad Hoc Committee (-0.67)
- How MSJC communicates about its Racial Justice Team Initiatives (-0.43)
- Performance reviews for staff and volunteers (-0.41)
- Explicitly works to recruit and retain people of color as staff (-0.40)

Where External Stakeholders Scored MSJC Higher Than Internal Stakeholders (opportunities to improve communication and experience for internal stakeholders)

- Considers how initiatives will harm or benefit communities of color (-0.55)
- Creates space to discuss race in ways relevant to your role (-0.39)
- Encourages everyone involved in MSJC to be trained regularly on race equity (-0.38)
- Openly talks about racism and race equity as a MSJC cultural norm (-0.34)
- Evaluates all staff and volunteers based on their anti-racism knowledge and skills (-0.31)

- Proactively adjusts strategies to meet needs of communities of color (-0.27)
- Considers race of impacted communities when assessing MSJC's success (-0.26)



Good White People Cause Harm, Too. Through this process, we learned about several actual and potential instances of harm caused to people of color that went unaddressed or inadequately addressed by Marianists involved in some way with MSJC. Some of these involved words or phrases that were culturally insensitive or racially offensive. Some involved *tokenization* (inviting people of color to be part of something primarily for diversity optics as opposed to meaningful inclusion) or inappropriate settings of Marianist events (e.g., offensive artwork present at a rented venue). In most instances, efforts to give feedback or to interrupt the harm were met with denial, defensiveness, and dismissiveness by white Marianists who were often also described as being well-meaning and good-hearted.

This is a very common situation – where the comfort and reputation of good white people who are committed to doing good work systematically supersedes the health, wellness, belonging, celebration, and success of people of color. Racial equity is impossible whenever and wherever white comfort is centered.

Decentering white comfort requires that we question the assumptions underlying our conditioned impulse to save white people from taking responsibility for harms caused, including an interrogation of our relationships to perfectionism and making mistakes, to a scarcity mindset, and to accountability itself. Check out the Recommendations section of this report for ideas around this.



Desire to Connect. Most stakeholders expressed a desire to have a warm, friendly, welcoming, and respectful environment in which to work and grow together. A strong theme emerged across all the focus groups around a desire to collaborate more with one another, to learn about what others are working on, and to support one another. Folks also overwhelmingly expressed desires to get more connected to local communities and be part of programming that is more regionally and culturally relevant to them. Several people specifically wanted more social opportunities in and outside of work to connect to and build rapport with others involved in MSJC, to feel like this is an organization where people come alive in their common faith and works.



Building Capacity to More Greatly Effect Circles of Influence. MSJC has significant access to and influence in so many spaces, institutions, and organizations both within and beyond the Marianist Family, including but not limited to schools, universities, parishes, and lay communities. This is especially true as a predominantly white organization that can wield the collective power, resources, and social capital of its many members to affect change in places and ways that predominantly BIPOC organizations may not be able to. Stakeholders strongly desire that MSJC utilizes and expands its power and influence strategically and consistently to maximize its advocacy efforts toward systemic equity across these institutions. This may include conducting widespread outreach, developing extensive and regionally relevant programming, and providing support to regional leaders across all its justice areas. However, stakeholders also recognize how MSJC's small staff size limits its capacity to do so at this time.

SECTION FOUR

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

This is a pivotal moment for MSJC. Insights from focus groups and survey observations reveal a deep desire across stakeholders for MSJC to fully embody its mission of “building a more just world and church through authentic, inclusive and diverse community.” Folks voiced a consistent hope that MSJC not only transform its own operations but also to actively shape and propel the entire Marianist Family toward greater racial equity. MSJC’s unique strength lies in its presence, influence, and connections across all three branches of the Marianist Family. These recommendations are designed to leverage this power, fostering a more equitable, responsive, and impactful MSJC that serves as a catalyst for broader systemic change.

We strongly encourage you to consider the following recommendations as immediate and long-term next steps for MSJC. We consider all these recommendations important, and do not provide them in any order of priority.



Turn the Organizational Triangle Upside-Down: Decentralize Decision-Making and Regionalize Leadership & Engagement.

MSJC’s current centralized structure resembles an upright triangle – the small and mighty staff are on top trying to orchestrate many things at once, including operationalizing the mostly volunteer-led Justice Teams who are tasked with learning about and tackling issues that arise across prioritized social justice areas. Data and focus group feedback from our assessment reveals that this setup presents real and possibly fatal limitations for MSJC’s overall capacity, the scope of issues that could be championed and addressed, the breadth and depth of relationships and collaborations that could be forged, the diversity of leadership that could be internally developed, and the cultural responsiveness to communities outside its Midwestern homebase that could be possible.

In our experience, anti-racist organizations must make an explicit and courageous commitment to shifting power within themselves to achieve racial equity. That power shift should include some or all systemized forms of the following elements (what we at Just Roots refer to as 5 D’s of Anti-Racism Leadership):

- ✓ Decentering whiteness
- ✓ Decentralizing decision-making
- ✓ Delegating responsibility
- ✓ Deputizing authority
- ✓ (re)Defining “accountability” through a decolonization lens

Each one begets the other, and all are necessary to see tangible, meaningful, and sustainable impacts for all involved in your work.

For MSJC, a fundamental shift towards decentralization and local empowerment is crucial for immediate effectiveness as the social justice and anti-racist arm of the Marianist Family, as well as for long-term impact and sustainability. Doing so will support your success in pursuing the other D's as well.

The following is one way to go about doing this, though it is certainly not the only way:

We recommend that MSJC transition to an organizational model that resembles an upside-down triangle instead, one that places Local / Regional Hubs on top and the main MSJC office at the bottom in a keystone supporting and advocacy role.



The Local / Regional Hubs (perhaps called something like “equity cells” or “justice circles”) would be started in areas with existing Marianist presence. Ultimately, these hubs will be the primary drivers of local engagement, programming and community-building, empowered to:

- Identify and respond to immediate local needs and justice opportunities
- Make decisions regarding priorities and budgeting for their fellowship, programming, outreach, and other work on the local level
- Develop culturally and regionally relevant outreach and programming
- Build strong relational partnerships with local community members, organizations (including BIPOC-led or LGBTQIA2S+ Catholic ministries, and immigrant communities), and other Marianist entities
- Cultivate diverse grassroots leadership across the Marianist Family, prioritizing, amplifying, and celebrating people who are most impacted by the challenges they seek to address
- Organically inspire more engagement and growth at local community levels.

MSJC would provide some initial guidance in terms of suggested structure, processes, decision-making models, etc. for these Hubs, as well as mentorship programs or other technical assistance that might be necessary to support their success.

Justice Teams would be comprised of representatives of the Local / Regional Hubs so that their work is directly informed and directed by people who are most impacted by the issues and challenges they address. Justice Teams would provide an opportunity for members of Local / Regional Hubs to share their long-term and emergent challenges, strategies, successes, and lessons learned across a broader swath of the Marianist Family. They would also be empowered to create resources and develop programming birthed from this cross-pollination, and direct MSJC's main office about how to best support their efforts or advocate around identified issues on a national or larger level.

The MSJC Office would be redefined as a central support for the network of Local / Regional Hubs and the offerings and advocacy items brought forth by the Justice Teams. Staff would be dedicated to:

- Supporting the efforts of this expansive and expanding network of engaged social justice activists of the Marianist tradition
- Providing written, financial, and logistical resources as needed
- Facilitating inter-Hub communications to inform broader advocacy
- Advocating on behalf of the Hubs and Justice Teams with the larger Marianist Family and/or other larger, national, or international entities as appropriate
- Being accountable to the Hubs as the primary public-facing, relationship-building, informed, and active component of the organization
- Holding Hubs and Justice Teams accountable to MSJC's core mission and anti-racism commitments while empowering their local and regional autonomy.

Finally, the Steering Committee would serve to support the organization as a whole, and in particular to build and maintain the fiscal capacity and political capital of the MSJC Office through fundraising and networking.

In summary, the upright-triangle model for MSJC places limitations on your organization's impact potential. Having a centralized leadership and programming that is limited by the number and lived experiences of a few people is like working against the pull of gravity – you are always “reaching down” to “pull up” or solicit time, energy, ideas, and input from folks “below” in ways both inefficient and lacking in agency for those most impacted by the outcome of those contributions. Conversely, turning the organizational triangle upside-down helps you work with the natural flow of gravity. It decentralizes decision-making, programming, and community-building, placing agency and authority into the hands of the people most energized around the work and most impacted by the result. Local / Regional Hubs can be more agile and responsive to immediate needs and support, can create spaces and programming that are more culturally relevant to themselves and the folks they're serving, will be more relational to local community members and partners, deepens personal connection of social justice work to spiritual formation and development, and supports development of more diverse leadership

on local levels. Their work, energy, and needs will naturally drop down into the work of the Justice Teams, which in turn can easily seek support from the MSJC Office and Steering Committee for the larger or more technical pieces of the work. Thus situated, the MSJC Office would be able to focus its resources to the support Hubs and Justice Teams in their efforts on the local, grassroots, and regional levels, as well as using its position and resources to infiltrate and advocate upward and outward throughout its circles of influence, at the direction of the Hubs and Justice Teams. Accountability would be redefined through mutuality and generative relationship-building that centers love and justice in place of the punishment and shame so often associated with the term (more on this below).

We will refer back to this suggestion throughout the recommendations that follow, to illustrate how they tie into this vision for MSJC. Regardless of the approach you elect to take, we strongly encourage MSJC to get creative and courageous with how you respond to the stakeholder feedback offered in this Report and move into this next chapter of your existence and work.



Don't Wait on Diversity: What Would a Majority White Anti-Racist Organization Do?

Both the hard data and anecdotal feedback we received make a couple of things clear: there is an overrepresentation of white people involved in MSJC and – from what respondents expressed – across the larger Marianist Family, too. People of color who responded expressed different levels of comfort, discomfort, frustration, patience, and sadness with that reality, while many white people bemoaned the lack of racial diversity as inherently problematic and depriving the organization of perspectives that are necessary for MSJC's work. There were repeated calls for greater racial diversity at every level of MSJC as well as the whole Marianist Family. Many folks suggested that MSJC more proactively seek out and invite people of color to participate and engage, while others recommended MSJC members go be in the spaces where communities of color already gather and do work together there. Either way, the desire is clear: folks wish for MSJC (and the Marianist Family) to be more racially diverse.

And while we agree that diversity is critically important in all aspects of nature (including but not limited to human relations), it is also only one piece of a much larger puzzle of equity and justice. Before you pursue it any further, we urge you to interrogate two things:

First, discover and share your honest and earnest “why” for seeking diversity within MSJC, and make sure that “why” is aligned with anti-racist values, principles, and practices. There are lots of ways to explore this more deeply within yourself and others at MSJC, asking questions like:

- What exactly is it you want to diversify *from*? Can you name the norm from which you seek to diversify, and why that is important to you?

- Is the desire to diversify just about having more people of color present for the sake of optics (tokenization)?
- Is it about interrupting the status quo of white Midwestern dominant cultural norms to diversify what it even means to belong to the MSJC community or the larger Marianist Family (inclusion)?
- Is it about a desire to be in deep community, allyship, and accompliceship with people who have different racial and ethnic identities, experiences, and corresponding challenges within our racist and xenophobic society (solidarity)?
- Are you, as a member of the MSJC community, willing to deliberately and consistently work to make changes to MSJC's dominant culture? What are you willing to risk? What are you willing to lose? What do you all stand to gain if you try?
- To help you answer those questions above, consider this reframe that helps to decenter whiteness – what would happen if you stopped asking “How do we get more people of color to join?” or “Why don't people of color seem to stick around?”, and instead asked “What is it about MSJC or the Marianist Family that attracts and retains so many white people?”

And second, ask yourselves: “In the meantime, what would a majority white anti-racist organization do?”

This is incredibly important!

Whiteness (the cultural and hegemonic norms of white body supremacy over all others) has conditioned us to believe that majority white groups, spaces, and institutions cannot talk about or effectively do any work around race, racism, or anti-racism without people of color present, because it is people of color who provide the necessary element of race. This illogic conveniently serves the interests of white supremacy – because most spaces and institutions in the US are majority white as a result of racism, that means we are all perpetually off the hook for ever doing anti-racist work. That is why so many organizations get stuck here on “the diversity problem” and never progress beyond it.

But there's good news – MSJC as-is with its white majority does *not* need to wait for more people of color to be present to get started in meaningful and impactful anti-racism work. And you do *not* need to pretend that you are something you are not – there is no need to hide or inflate your demographics to make yourselves appear more diverse than you are. Indeed, it is boldly and powerfully countercultural for MSJC to explore how it can be anti-racist *right now* as a majority-white religious social justice organization.

To get started, consider the following questions:

- What does it mean and look like for a majority-white organization to become anti-racist? What values must you center? How and when do you act on those values?
- What must an anti-racist majority-white organization be willing to risk and lose? What must you be intent on gaining?
- How would MSJC as a majority-white anti-racist organization be uniquely positioned to influence white people and other majority-white organizations that are not yet anti-racist (including but not limited to the larger Marianist Family)?
- What would it mean for MSJC to own your current status as a majority-white or white-overrepresented organization? What feelings arise for you individually and collectively around that level of honesty and transparency? How can you move through those feelings together to get to a place of action?
- What is an anti-racist majority-white organization's relationship to accountability? To whom must you be accountable? (more on the topic of accountability below)



Maximize MSJC's Circles of Influence.

MSJC is uniquely positioned to leverage and utilize your positionality and political capital impact many circles of influence. Consider the following:

- ✓ Develop and share a training curriculum with concrete guidance about anti-racism's natural fit with the Marianist charism and Catholic formation. MSJC, through its Local / Regional Hubs and Justice Teams, can partner in this effort with communities already doing similar justice work, including BIPOC-led Catholic spaces, immigrant communities, and LGBTQIA2S+ Catholic ministries to develop this curriculum, which builds new powerful relationships and alliances while also creating a tangible tool for Marianists to utilize in these troubling times.
- ✓ Advocate within the Marianist family (schools, parishes, religious communities) for equity-centered leadership development, cultural representation and support of local MSJC hubs' involvement in local Catholic life.
- ✓ Equip Local / Regional Hubs to challenge inequities in their local Marianist spaces, supported by MSJC credibility and resources.
- ✓ Re-articulate racial justice work as a natural expression of Marianist pillars, especially the call to prophetic witness, Discipleship of Equals, and embodying the Magnificat.
- ✓ Strengthen Local / Regional Hubs through grassroots leadership development.



Reimagining and Redefining Accountability at MSJC

In your commitment to educate, network, and provide community reflection and support in service of your work toward justice, MSJC operates within a tradition that is familiar with accountability. Often non-profits, community organizations, and faith-based groups are accustomed to hierarchical accountability owed to institutional leadership, funders, and internal governing bodies. This “upward” accountability has its place. However, the pursuit of true justice – particularly through the lens of Marianist spirituality – invites a profound exploration: “To whom are we most accountable, and how does this accountability shape our integrity and impact?”

Below we offer reflections, questions, and insights to help you explore what it means to approach a more holistic and perhaps more challenging model of accountability: one that is lateral to partners and peers, but also crucially, radially outwards to the local marginalized communities you accompany and serve. We believe it is essential for MSJC to explore how anchoring this expanded vision of accountability in the Marianist Charism, particularly through the disruptive and liberating spirit of Mary’s Magnificat, can lead to a more authentic and transformative justice ministry.

Getting the Lay of the Land. Here are some questions to help you consider your current accountability landscape:

- How does MSJC define accountability? If you don’t have a ready definition handy, consider how accountability is practiced through the questions below, and try to draft an initial definition from there.
- To whom is MSJC as an organization most accountable? To whom are MSJC’s individual members accountable?
- What are existing formal and informal mechanisms for accountability within MSJC? Who defines “success” or “impact” for MSJC initiatives? Whose voices are most prominent in these types of evaluations, if they exist?
- How do current accountability structures reflect or reinforce existing power dynamics within MSJC, the broader Marianist Family, and society? Consider who has the power to call MSJC to account, and whose critiques or feedback carry the most weight.
- Where does MSJC feel most *comfortable* in its accountability relationships? Where does it feel most challenged or even resistant? What might these feelings reveal about underlying assumptions or fears?
- How do your responses to these questions align with MSJC’s stated race equity values? What elements, dynamics, etc. are missing from your current understanding of and relationship to accountability that you want to add?

The Prophetic Call to Lateral Accountability. True justice, especially within a faith tradition that champions the dignity of all, cannot thrive if accountability only flows in one direction. Consider what would happen if MSJC were in conversation and mutual responsibility with and answerable to mission-aligned community partners, peer organizations, and other branches of the Marianist Family. This would foster deep transparency and vulnerability, shared learning, and a nurturing and healing collective impact. Imagine what would happen if MSJC were also in conversation with and answerable to the communities you seek to serve, particularly those most impacted by injustice and marginalization. This means that these communities are not merely recipients of service or objects of advocacy but active agents in defining their own needs, shaping strategies, and evaluating outcomes.

Accountability Grounded in Marianist Faith. For any Marianist organization, the figure of Mary – and particularly her powerful song, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) – offers a rich spiritual touchstone for considering the nature of accountability in justice work. Arguably, the Magnificat proclaims a divine action that reorders societal structures:

*He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.*

With this powerfully anchoring text in mind, consider the following:

- How does the Magnificat's depiction of God's justice, which actively "lifts up the lowly", inform MSJC's understanding of your own allegiances and to whom you should be primarily accountable in your mission?
- If MSJC's efforts are undertaken "in the spirit of Mary bringing Christ to the world", what might it look like for the "lowly" and "hungry" to be central in defining and measuring the success of MSJC's work? What does accountability for "filling the hungry with good things" mean when those "good things" are identified by the communities themselves?
- The Marianist call to "prophetic witness" and to "respond to the signs of the times" suggests an MSJC posture of deep listening. Given that prophetic insight often emerges from the margins, how can MSJC's structures of accountability be shaped to more intentionally hear, honor, and respond to the critiques and wisdom offered by marginalized communities?
- Mary's "yes" was an act of profound alignment with and submission to God's liberating will. What might a courageous "yes" look like for MSJC today, in terms of reorienting your accountability structures to more fully reflect the justice proclaimed in the Magnificat?

Practical Applications of Redefining Accountability. The following questions build on those above, inviting you to go deeper into this crucial inquiry:

- How might MSJC's work change if your primary accountability was to the BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, Latinx and other historically marginalized communities you engage with and wish to serve?
- If MSJC embraces a decentralized model with Local / Regional Hubs as recommended above, how will accountability flow? How will prioritizing the resourcing of local communities change the role of organizational leadership and the Steering Committee?
- What concrete structures can MSJC implement to ensure genuine accountability? (e.g., community advisory boards with decisions-making power, program participant evaluations processes)
- How will MSJC ensure that the voices of the most impacted are not just "consulted" but are central to defining MSJC's priorities, shaping your strategies, and determining your measures of success?
- What mechanisms will be established for receiving, processing, and transparently responding to critical feedback from these communities?
- What fears, resistance, or cultural habits within MSJC (and the broader Marianist Family) might hinder a shift towards a greater accountability to marginalized communities? How can these be addressed?
- How can MSJC cultivate an organizational culture where feedback is not viewed as a threat but as a sacred gift that guides the organization closer to your mission and to the heart of the gospel?

Reimagining and restructuring accountability that flows towards and from the margins will not be a simple task. It may be a powerful and meaningful spiritual and organizational journey, which will require introspection, humility, courage and a willingness to be transformed. For MSJC, anchoring this journey in the radical spirit of Mary's Magnificat offers a compass that this empowered by spiritual alignment.

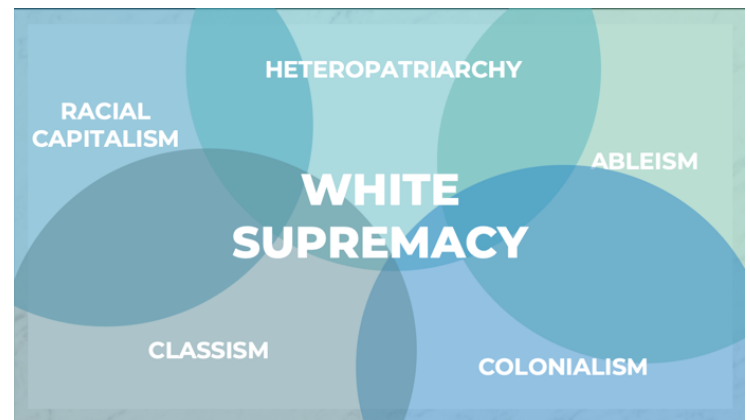


Center race equity explicitly, but not exclusively.

Racism is at the heart of most (if not all) economic, social, and political disparities in this country, and it should take centerstage in all efforts to make the organization more inclusive and equitable. In all you do, center race equity explicitly (formally, proactively, outspokenly), *and* apply an intersectional lens to your work to ensure you are grappling with other forms of systemic oppression at the same time.

For example, if the data we received in this assessment is any indication, MSJC is an organization with more women than men but significantly more white stakeholders than people of color. The findings reflect that white men generally rate MSJC’s culture, practices, and policies generally more favorably than women, people of color generally, and women of color especially. At the same time, we heard from several people of color – especially women of color – that they have not felt meaningfully listened to, included, or integrated into positions of power, including more senior decision-making roles. Taken together, this illustrates the enduring power and influence of the patriarchal, hierarchical, white supremacist, and capitalist structures and systems we’ve inherited, even within groups of people explicitly formed to combat oppressive culture and practices.

Most organizations seeking to address such disparities in perceptions and experiences will make the mistake of focusing exclusively on race, or gender, or age, or some other category of difference, as though these identities are siloed and not interconnected. This whack-a-mole approach is both inefficient and ineffective and won’t do anything to address the underlying and intersecting dominant cultural norms.



An anti-racist organization creates policies, practices, and cultural norms that seek to welcome and affirm multiply-marginalized people rather than focusing on one attribute. When addressing any equity issues, bear in mind the people who would be most negatively impacted by continuing the existing dominant cultural norms – such as gay Black men, disabled Black transgender women, or non-binary immigrants of color for whom English is not their first language. An organization that supports, affirms, and celebrates these individuals in any position but especially in leadership roles will also necessarily be more safe, welcoming, and affirming for people with fewer marginalized identities in all positions.



Communicate that race equity is a top organizational priority now and always, in words, action, and investment.

MSJC must continue to demonstrate your commitment to genuine and sustained race equity efforts through **words** such as a formal, publicly available statement, regular internal messaging to all stakeholders, community partners, and the public through the organization's website, published resources, etc., **as well as concrete actions**, like:

- ✓ Equitable hiring for open staff positions, and equitable professional and leadership development opportunities for staff and volunteers
- ✓ Investment in *mandatory and ongoing* training for all MSJC staff, Steering Committee members, and volunteers on the history of racism, white supremacy, racial capitalism, and the non-profit industrial complex; implicit bias (*i.e.*, internalized white supremacy), intersectionality, microaggressions, and upstander / bystander intervention; interrupting white dominant cultural norms, values, and fears in our organizations and communities; navigating conversations about race; and repairing relationships damaged by racism and other bias
- ✓ Training and/or other facilitated support spaces for BIPOC members on navigating and dismantling these harmful systems – all the while tending well to themselves and each other in the process – are unique and deserve resources separate and apart from training for white stakeholders
- ✓ Equitable policy development and changes
- ✓ Regular celebration of your existing cultural diversity
- ✓ Formalized rewards and recognition for talent and dedication across the organization.

These are some essential first steps to creating a welcoming and inclusive organization that attracts and keeps extraordinary people of every race and ethnicity deeply engaged and invested in what you are building together. It is important to note that a “welcoming” work environment is not the same as an “inclusive” one. *Welcoming* is about inviting others in but does not necessarily mean that all those who are invited are treated respectfully, are given trust and shared power, or are made to feel like they belong as equal members of the team. This critically important distinction must be named, acknowledged, and reviewed systematically in the organization's efforts moving forward.



Fostering equity by reclaiming control of your organization's cultural norms.

Trainings and changes to organizational policies and practices are important, but any anti-racist organization must **normalize** discussions about race, racism, white supremacy, and race equity *in every aspect* of your work. To do this, MSJC must first name and address the white dominant cultural norms already in place (often but not always unintentionally and implicitly) that might be holding back these efforts.

For example, many stakeholders noted apprehension and tension around discussing racism, and concern that many other stakeholders lack the skills needed to hold space for these challenging, painful, and necessary conversations. Common norms of white supremacy culture² underlying these concerns include **fear of open conflict** (*i.e.*, valuing politeness and comfort over honesty, especially as it centers white and light-skin fragility, and scapegoating anyone who brings up things that cause discomfort), **defensiveness** (*i.e.*, focus on protecting power instead of addressing harms), and **perfectionism** (*i.e.*, if we can't do it perfectly, there is no point in trying, and mistakes made will reflect badly on anyone who does try). Some alternatives to these norms might include a commitment to giving and receiving direct and constructive feedback, expressing and honoring vulnerability, proactively embracing imperfection (and all that comes with it), and redefining your collective ideas about "accountability" to center healing, growth, and creativity in place of punishment or shaming when mistakes or harms arise along the way.

Other common white dominant cultural norms that we observed in different ways at MSJC and many other similarly situated non-profit organizations include **scarcity mindset** (*e.g.*, there are always limited resources to go around, so you taking some means I automatically get less), **either/or thinking** (*i.e.*, an erroneous binary mindset where things are clearly one of two extremes, like all or nothing, black or white, good or bad, racist or not racist, a problem or a solution, etc.), and **changing the subject away from the role of race** (*i.e.*, seeing difference as bad and talking about racial, ethnic, or cultural difference as unnecessarily risky because of the discomfort it causes white people and people who enjoy more privilege in proximity to whiteness). Some alternatives to these white dominant cultural norms include adopting an abundance mindset that acknowledges room and resources enough for all of our experiences and needs to be met, systems thinking that centers the complexity of our intersecting identities and experiences within a white supremacist society, and embracing a compassionate curiosity about how race, cultural differences, and racial bias may be at play in any and all aspects of how we relate and work together.

These norms are described as "white dominant cultural norms" because they promote behavior that reflects and supports values, norms, and fears of white-

² "(divorcing) White Supremacy Culture: Coming Home to Who We Really Are," by Dr. Tema Okun (2022), available at <https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/>.

dominant and supremacist culture that were brought over and installed by white settler colonialists to assert power and supremacy over Indigenous North American, African, and other people of color, cultures and traditions, religions, lands, natural resources, and time itself.

We can guess that no one ever held a vote to formally adopt any of white dominant cultural norms at MSJC, and they usually don't appear explicitly in any organizational policies. But all organizations and institutions in the U.S. – including non-profits and even those led and run by Indigenous, Black, and/or people of color – inherit these by design. Without critical and honest self-reflection, these and many other harmful norms will quietly continue to oppress, repress, and erase subjugated peoples and cultures within and outside your organization, and ultimately undermine equity efforts in favor of maintaining the status quo. With thoughtful and intentional anti-racist and anti-oppression norms in place, there can be more room for creativity, exploration, healing, and growth together toward something different and equitable.



Develop written policies, practices, and guidance for MSJC staff, Steering Committee members, Justice Teams, and all volunteers involved at every level of the organization.

At this stage of development, MSJC would benefit from some written policies, practices, and guidance about how you wish to operationalize your anti-racist and anti-oppression values. In many cases, this may simply involve formalizing existing practices that are tested and true to the organization's ideals. In other cases, this may require a bigger lift to research and gather information about what informal practices are already in place throughout the organization, reviewing them through a critical anti-racist lens and equity lens, then formalizing corrected or corrective versions into written policies.

For this process, we recommend that you assemble and deputize a diverse committee to perform an equity policy audit for MSJC – a formal, systematic, and periodic review and update of the organization's policies and practices, including but not limited to recruitment and retention practices and complaint and grievance policies to make them radically inclusive, equitable, and accessible (read more about each further below).

An equity policy audit process requires taking a radically honest look at how existing, often-informal policies work in practice in ways that nurture or detract from equity. For example, if a complaint process about anti-Black or anti-Hispanic harassment necessarily gets the program director or Steering Committee chair involved, and those individuals are most likely white people (based on MSJC's majority-white history), it is worth considering how that reality impacts the likelihood of a person of color actually trusting and utilizing the available process, what can be done to support the existing process or reshape it to be more equitable and effective, and how to define and measure the success of the policy moving forward.

While many resources for this kind of process exist, Just Roots offers additional training and policy equity rubrics for committees or other teams of people who seek to undertake this endeavor, if desired.



Recruit and retain racially diverse staff and volunteers at every level of the organization.

There's a need for more racial diversity across MSJC, especially in paid positions and positions of volunteer leadership. Racial diversity benefits the organization by bringing the richness and creativity of different perspectives to all aspects of the work, as well as possibility for more equitable treatment of volunteers of color with less positional power and authority.

To do this, MSJC must critically review, acknowledge, and fix inequitable staff and volunteer recruitment, retention, and promotion policies and practices (both formal and informal, written and unwritten) that may favor people with historically privileged identities over others. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

- ✓ Gather and review recruitment, retention, and promotion policies and practices for paid staff positions as well as volunteer recruitment. If no written policies exist, conduct interviews with individuals involved in informal recruitment and retention to examine informal practices for explicit and implicit bias. Consider writing guidance for future recruitment and retention practices that Justice Teams or Local / Regional Hubs can use.
- ✓ Update job or volunteer descriptions to be expressly anti-racist, which will attract more candidates with diverse identities and lived experiences while repelling people who are not aligned with race equity values.
- ✓ Update job or volunteer descriptions to include characteristics and traits that you desire in your future team members that will support the culture shift you're working toward at MSJC (e.g., demonstrates skill in understanding and honoring cultural difference, demonstrates capacity to give and receive critical feedback, supports collaborative and creative problem-solving and teamwork, demonstrates the capacity to sit within and work through conflict with others). This moves away from the white dominant cultural norm of determining whether someone is a "culture fit" and toward one that seeks someone who is a "culture add."
- ✓ We know that MSJC's staff is and has always been small. Nevertheless, it's helpful to plan for a future where more hiring needs to happen so that you're ready for it when it arrives. When hiring new paid staff, always utilize hiring teams and require implicit bias training for all involved. The hiring process should include a verbal review of established hiring criteria at the outset of every meeting, a group reflection about potential biases, and group agreements about how

they will engage with each other to name and address possible biases as they arise. This is a best practice for recruiting new volunteers as well, but we recognize that it may not always be possible due to limited time and resources among the volunteers involved.

- ✓ Offer a strong paid internship program for historically marginalized undergrad or graduate students whose studies align with your values and work. This will bring you into closer relationship to colleges, universities, and their student spiritual communities, as well as build relationships with students who may later serve as staff or volunteers for MSJC.
- ✓ Create formal growth, leadership development, and mentorship opportunities for all roles, especially those occupied by people of color within MSJC, with official follow-up and monitoring for quality and ongoing support.
- ✓ Institutionalize succession planning that centers race equity as a key consideration in preparing the organization's next generation of leaders.
- ✓ Conduct exit interviews for staff and volunteers who leave or step back from MSJC, utilizing an ad hoc working group or a neutral third party who are trained to consider things through a race equity lens.
- ✓ Center BIPOC leadership and vision in the development and implementation of all these suggested efforts.



All MSJC stakeholders – and especially people of color – must feel safe and confident informally addressing or formally complaining about bias they experience within MSJC.

In the assessment and focus groups, several stakeholders recounted specific stories about their lived experiences navigating or witnessing coded language, explicitly racist comments and behavior, and unequal treatment by Justice Team members, Steering Committee members, as well as program participants. Of these, relatively few said they tried to correct the offensive speaker or to address it formally or informally with anyone else. Most felt like their issue was unresolved.

This is a very common issue at most organizations. We know bias happens, so it's critical to explore why people of color and other historically marginalized people may not be utilizing formal or informal avenues of addressing their experiences and concerns.

Here are some questions and ideas to help you explore how to approach this issue at MSJC:

- ✓ Do you have any written grievance or complaint policies or processes for staff, steering committee members, and/or volunteers to use if needed? If so, when was the last time they were reviewed for efficacy, and how can they be made more readily available to all who might need them?
- ✓ If you don't have written policies or processes yet, consider the following best practices as you work to shape them:
 - Gather a diverse team of people work on developing the new policy to ensure multiple perspectives and interests are considered.
 - Require implicit bias training for all people involved in this process.
 - Be sure that the policy includes explicit definitions of prohibited discrimination and harassment.
 - Specifically name and define microaggressions as prohibited behavior. Microaggressions are inherently less overt but potent reminders that someone is not welcomed or valued because of their actual or perceived race or other historically marginalized status or identity. Without explicitly prohibiting microaggressions in the policy, the harmed person may worry whether their complaint will be taken seriously or dismissed out of hand because the kind of harm they experienced is not explicitly covered.
 - Create methods for people to submit anonymous complaints, such as hotlines or online forms that do not track IP addresses.
 - Ensure that there is racial diversity among the people to whom reports can be made and/or who will be involved in any investigation, discipline, or reparative process.

For example, many generic non-discrimination and non-harassment policies list managers, executive directors, or board chairs as recipients of complaints. However, given the current and historical makeup of MSJC's leadership, the harmed person may very well end up being the only or one of the only people of color involved in that entire generic process. Without a great deal of intentionality, guidance, and accountability, even a well-meaning mostly white bodied / passing team of people with positional power overseeing a complaint about racism will inevitably operate from a place of some unexplored implicit biases, white fragility, desire to protect white comfort, and other manifestations of white supremacy cultural norms.

To this end, consider creating a racially diverse committee or working group composed of individuals at various levels across

the organization who are trained in restorative or transformative justice practices and who are tasked with (a) developing recommendations about how to resolve complaints regarding racial bias in the organization, generally, and/or (b) actually fielding, investigating, and making recommendations about how to resolve individual complaints that come in, thus decentralizing the process and centering the importance of healing alongside accountability.

If it's not possible to ensure racial diversity within the complaint review process, MSJC's new policy must at least acknowledge the possibility outlined above and offer assurances about how it will be addressed within the policy itself. This level of honesty, transparency, and accountability increases the likelihood that the harmed person will feel more safe or confident entering this process.

- Offer a timeline for how long the process will take, and what kind of communication a harmed person can expect to receive along the way.
 - Consider including an array of measures and remedies that address the harm, such as facilitated mediation or transformative repair, which might be more desirable in each situation. Without more details about what to expect as an end-result of the complaint process, the ultimate outcome may feel and be arbitrary, incomplete, and unhelpful to address the individual's situation.
 - Finally, make sure the policy offers protection from and recourse for overt retaliation as well as for less obvious negative consequences of filing their complaint, like being personally dismissed or minimized, gaslit, or given less trust, credibility, or support by others at MSJC.
- ✓ Even before such a policy exists, MSJC should always consistently communicate and demonstrate a willingness and eagerness to take seriously the experiences and complaints of racism and other forms of unlawful bias that happen in the course of MSJC's work.

In all, equitable and anti-racist anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies are directly informed by all parties most impacted by it and incorporates measures for clarity, transparency, and accountability. They encourage confidence among people who are harmed and acceptance among those who may be subject to repercussions following investigation. The policy should be one that explicitly levels the playing fields of power, such that those who are harmed feel empowered and entitled to justice (not fearful of wrath and recourse), those who investigate and address the harms feel prepared to do so responsibly and accountably, and those who cause harm feel prepared to accept responsibility and are even grateful for the opportunity

to repair the relationships they harmed and restore balance to the shared environment.

This presents an opportunity to reflect on how effective and equitable any existing non-discrimination and non-harassment policies, practices, and complaint processes are (whether written or unwritten), and to consider ways to become more proactive about and responsive to these issues.

Until these changes happen, don't assume everything must be fine if no one is actively complaining about harms that occur. Instead, err on the side of assuming that "silence equals status quo" – meaning that microaggressions, harassment, and/or discrimination are likely happening in one way or another and are simply going unreported and unaddressed.



Create space for race equity & divest financially and energetically from white supremacy norms.

Among other things, this work will take a lot of time and money – two incredibly precious things in this capitalist society, and perhaps even more so at a small non-profit project. Be critical and creative about how you utilize both in the iterative, cyclical, and potentially never-ending process of dismantling white supremacy within your organization and the Marianist Family. There are a lot of ideas contained in this section about internal investments you can make to support your existing staff and volunteers, as well as the efficacy and sustainability of your race equity efforts. But also consider outward-facing investments, such as:

- ✓ Surveying all your active contractors and vendors to learn about their own race equity / DEI values, principles, and practices, if any.
- ✓ Prioritizing contractors and vendors for all aspects of your organizational operations and programming who are Black-owned, minority-owned, women-owned, LGBTQ-owned, etc., or who are otherwise aligned with your race equity / DEI values, principles, and practices.
- ✓ Selecting meeting places for MSJC staff, volunteers, program participants, and other stakeholders that are, in themselves, aligned with your race equity values, considering for example the explicit politics of the city or state in which you meet (*e.g.*, are they a sanctuary city for immigrants and transgender people, or have they made efforts for reparation with local Black communities?), the décor on the walls or music played in the venues you use (*e.g.*, is there offensive art depicting Black people, Indigenous people, or women in stereotyping or dehumanized positions?), etc.
- ✓ Ensuring that any MSJC-sponsored or endorsed events, partnerships, or programs reflect your equity commitment in the speakers, content, and planning process (*i.e.*, who is involved in ideation and decision-

making?). This may mean being more deeply involved in fewer collaborations and/or training Local / Regional Hub leadership toward these goals. Make collaborations contingent on clearly defined equity criteria.

- ✓ Normalizing images of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous Saints, as well as images of Mary and Jesus in non-European depictions and culturally diverse spiritual art. This could be in the form of launching a visual justice campaign promoting equity in spiritual imagery within Marianist-connected spaces.
- ✓ Leveraging your relationships with long-time funders to resist funding or grant restrictions that are racist on their face or in their application (e.g., restricted by citizenship status), that attempt to place flimsy bandages on gaping social and economic wounds that you know are caused by white supremacy, or that would impose more deliverables on you such that your commitment to race equity work directly suffers.
- ✓ Fearlessly saying “no” to funders or partners who don’t fit your anti-racism values, principles, and practices.
- ✓ Divesting from the “do more with less” mentality and decline funding that would impose more deliverables on your staff and volunteers than they have actual capacity to handle based on measurable performance data.
- ✓ Working in close collaboration with other similarly situated organizations to bravely and loudly advocate for more race equity-conscious funding priorities and practices by all funders – you are stronger together!



Create or update a long-term race equity action plan.

With this Report and recommendations in hand, we strongly encourage you to create or revisit your long-term race equity action plans. To do this, assemble a truly cross-sectional and racially diverse team of staff and volunteers who are informed by the needs and hopes of the Local / Regional Hubs and the work of the Justice Teams, and are tasked with articulating organizational race equity objectives and goals along a 3-month, 6-month, 1-year, 3-year, and 5-year timeline. The team should identify realistic, practical, and effective criteria, protocols, and steps needed to achieve and assess success of their objectives and goals. The same or different teams can be deputized to execute those steps, frequently meeting to measure progress and challenges, and pivot as needed, to keep moving toward race equity. Recognize that the significant work involved should be valued with compensation for volunteers and/or adjustments to workloads for paid staff.

The group’s work product – a racial equity action plan (REAP) – is usually a brief document that (1) memorializes the organization’s anti-oppression and anti-racist principles, (2) lends structure, direction, and accountability to the

organization's efforts to create a race equitable culture, and (3) informs the organization's efforts to provide programming, training, outreach, and other services across geographic regions, all through a critical racial justice lens.

Ultimately the length, depth, and breadth of the REAP do not matter as much as its *usefulness*. There is no point in writing a comprehensive tome if no one will ever read it, and a one-pager with a few abstract ideas and platitudes might be pretty but also pretty useless. A good REAP aims for something in the middle – clear, instructive, concise, and easily referenced by staff members, committees, managers, and board members while making decisions about cases to bring, strategies to try, programs to develop, applying for funds, hiring / promoting people, etc.

Although ultimately the REAP's content is entirely up to the working group or committee to decide, and would recommend including all or most of the recommendations in this report, the following components of organizational structure and functioning are worth consideration:

- ✓ Elements of decentering whiteness, decentralizing decision-making, delegating responsibility, deputizing authority, & decolonization / redefining “accountability”
- ✓ Securing organizational and leadership commitment
- ✓ Creating a more equitable organizational culture
- ✓ Recruiting and retaining a diverse staff and volunteer base
- ✓ Developing accountability to and partnership with communities of color
- ✓ Applying an anti-racist analysis for programs, advocacy and decision-making

For additional information, consider the following resources:

- [“REJI Organizational Race Equity Toolkit – 2nd”](#) by JustLead Washington and Washington Race Equity & Justice Initiative
- [“Racial Justice Action Plan”](#) by NLADA (Oct. 2018)
- [“Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan”](#) by Legal Services NYC (May 2017)
- [“Transforming Culture – An Examination of Workplace Values Through the Frame of White Dominant Culture,”](#) by Merf Ehman (MIE, Spring 2018)



Create mutual relationships with local communities of color and BIPOC-led organizations in your service regions.

MSJC's stakeholders expressed a clear desire for broader and deeper connections to communities of color, especially in all the areas where Marianists are present. Consider ways to improve MSJC's engagement with communities of color that foster genuine understanding of community needs and build strong, lasting, trusting relationships. Remember: mutual relationships are two-way streets that require reciprocating support and consistently showing up for one another over time. Here are some suggestions to start:

- ✓ Offer “volunteer days” and/or “activism days” as additional paid time

off to be used by staff to support community organizations of their choice

- ✓ Invite staff, Steering Committee members, and Justice Team members to present on local community-led organizations on a rotating basis as a regular meeting agenda item, which encourages research into, contact with, and some first-hand knowledge of these organizations in preparation
- ✓ Consider carefully the commitments MSJC members make to community organizations and show up consistently for them, which may mean redistributing or reducing other work so staff and volunteers can make good on these commitments
- ✓ Proactively ask community partners what is needed and be agile and responsive to their actual requests for support
- ✓ Promote the work of community partners with your existing funders who may want to support their work directly or your work together collectively
- ✓ Regularly invite community partners to join problem-solving and decision-making tables that MSJC has access to due to your positional privilege and amplify their voices and expertise at those tables, making this a standard operating procedure, not an afterthought
- ✓ Introduce BIPOC-led organizations and community-based groups that MSJC is in relationship with to new MSJC staff and volunteers as part of their regular onboarding / orientation process

A mixture of compulsory and voluntary engagement with local community organizations and leaders as well as institutional mutual aid will foster a culture of community contact and accountability that benefits all involved in the short and long run. MSJC will be able to better address the needs of multiply marginalized people and also have a partner to help hold you accountable in your pursuit of race equity in everything you do.















Conflict is inevitable; how we navigate it means everything.

We encourage MSJC to make space for any active conflicts as well as new ones that will arise – an inevitability that cannot be avoided. Take the time to identify values, community norms, and practices for addressing conflict *when* (not *if*) it arises – especially around racial tension and racialized harm.

There is so much to be said about navigating and resolving conflict. We want to offer some critical questions you can ask yourselves around how staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders of your organization hold conflict, followed by some suggestions for navigating conflict in real-time when issues arise in meeting settings (which can be adapted and adopted for other scenarios).

Critical Questions to Ask Yourself:

-  How do we *normalize* conflict? What do we do when conflict arises? How can we learn from these experiences, and pivot our intentional practices based on what we learn?
-  When things get “hot” (painful, tight, constricted), how do we hold conflict in ways that don’t leave people feeling alone and unsupported?
-  What is the role of a facilitator in meetings where conflict arises? How do we equip and support these facilitators to hold space when conflict arises? How does this increase transparency and accountability?
-  How do we create norms that invite all voices while making space for personal boundaries, self-protection, to move through conflict, and work together toward healing and repair?
-  How do we release the need for perfectionism in being together, engaging, and intervening?
-  Examine the founding story of your organization / program through a critical race lens. What is our narrative about ourselves, and how is it rooted in white supremacist norms values and myths? How does our narrative help us or hinder us from dealing with conflict when it arises?
-  Whose voices are encouraged, heard, and believed, and whose are discouraged, disbelieved, and silenced? Who silences themselves, and why? How do we address silence and erasure?
-  What does it mean for us to invite feedback on our values, norms, actions (and inactions), etc. – from whom, and how, and to what end?
-  In what ways are we overly comfortable with deference to white leadership? How does this show up in our conversations, dynamics, and questions to one another? What would it look like to name and disrupt that? What feelings, emotions, and sensations come up for us when we try to imagine that possibility?
-  In what ways do generational differences impact how we work together? What proactive changes can we make to create a more age-inclusive and -dynamic culture for our organization and all its parts?
-  How can we build flexibility into our values, norms, and community agreements so that we can pivot and change as times require, as language and frameworks evolve, as new needs arise among the communities we serve, and as issues emerge among us?
-  In terms of perfectionism versus mediocrity, how can we be mindful of the double standards of excellence imposed on people differently along the lines of race, ethnicity, gender, and so on? Who gets to take risks and who doesn’t, based on real and tangible financial consequences that come with perceived

success or failure? How are these dynamics feeding into how we hold and manage conflict?



How do we define accountability as an organization? To whom are we accountable? How do we adopt a living breathing definition of accountability that we can turn to regularly for guidance and support in our ongoing practice to become more accountable to each other, the organization, and the communities this organization serves?



How can we systematically create more time and space to talk about and work on these things?

Suggestions for Holding Conflict in Meeting Settings:

- ✓ When conflict and tension arise in a meeting, invite space to pause, to take quiet, long, and deep breaths among all people involved, and to *somatically* reflect on what is happening for individuals in the moment (*i.e.*, to name what sensations arise in your body as well as your emotions and feelings). This kind of pause can offer just enough time and space for folks to move out of a “fight, freeze, flee, or fawn” mindset to a calmer, centered, reasoned mindset where they can assess and name what is happening for them and others in the meeting.
- ✓ Acknowledge what is happening, or if it’s still too soon to say exactly what has happened. We cannot always understand perfectly everything that happens in real time – sometimes we need time and space to gain perspective about it. Embracing the limitations and imperfection of our own capacities invites others to do so, too.
- ✓ Invite folks to express their experience of harm. Listen somatically, paying attention to what comes up in your body and emotions as you do, noting them to yourself and breathing through them, and resisting the temptation to interrupt or to respond with justifications, rationalizations, denials, or attempts to shift blame to others.
- ✓ Acknowledge the harmed person’s perspective, thank them for sharing it, apologize for your part in causing the harm, and commit to reflecting further about how you can behave or speak differently in the future.
- ✓ Remember that harms are not mutually exclusive – more than one person can and may very well experience harm or trauma in any given situation. We do not need to discount one person’s experience in order to acknowledge another’s. White supremacy and attenuated systems of oppression are persistent, baffling, and powerful – finding ways to hold the complexity of harms inflicted within us and between us is one of the greatest challenges. Doing this well takes a tremendous amount of practice and is extraordinarily rewarding.
- ✓ Be OK with non-closure and non-resolution. We may not get to resolve all conflicts in real-time, in one sitting, or possibly ever. Consider whether the

ultimate goal is to reach a sort of “finish line” with conflict, or if it could be creating a process and container for holding complex conflict in a way that brings us closer together rather than eroding our relationships and tearing us apart.

- ✓ Intentionally create spaces and opportunities for continued conversations about the conflict, inviting those directly involved and any others who wish to support the process. *Together we know a lot.* Even if we don’t have professional mediation experience, as a collective we can come together to work through conflict when we lead with humility, courage, trust, and a desire for accountability to our shared values and goals.

There is so much we can learn from these efforts, both when they go well and when they don’t. We encourage you to try them, expect discomfort in the learning process, view challenges along the way as learning opportunities rather than failures, and begin to trust each other enough to grow and change together through the conflict.



Schedule frequent, regular check-ins now so you can hold yourselves accountable for progress made along the way.

You must be prepared to give this the time, energy, and resources that it deserves. To that end, monitoring the impact of trainings and other initiatives you try is critically important. Without periodic assessment, you will never know if they were effective and where you should be allocating your time and resources next. Periodic assessments also allow for MSJC to address challenges and course correct in real-time. Don’t delay – put check-in meetings and follow-up surveys on the calendar now and protect them from being postponed unless necessary. The long-term health and growth of the organization depends on it!

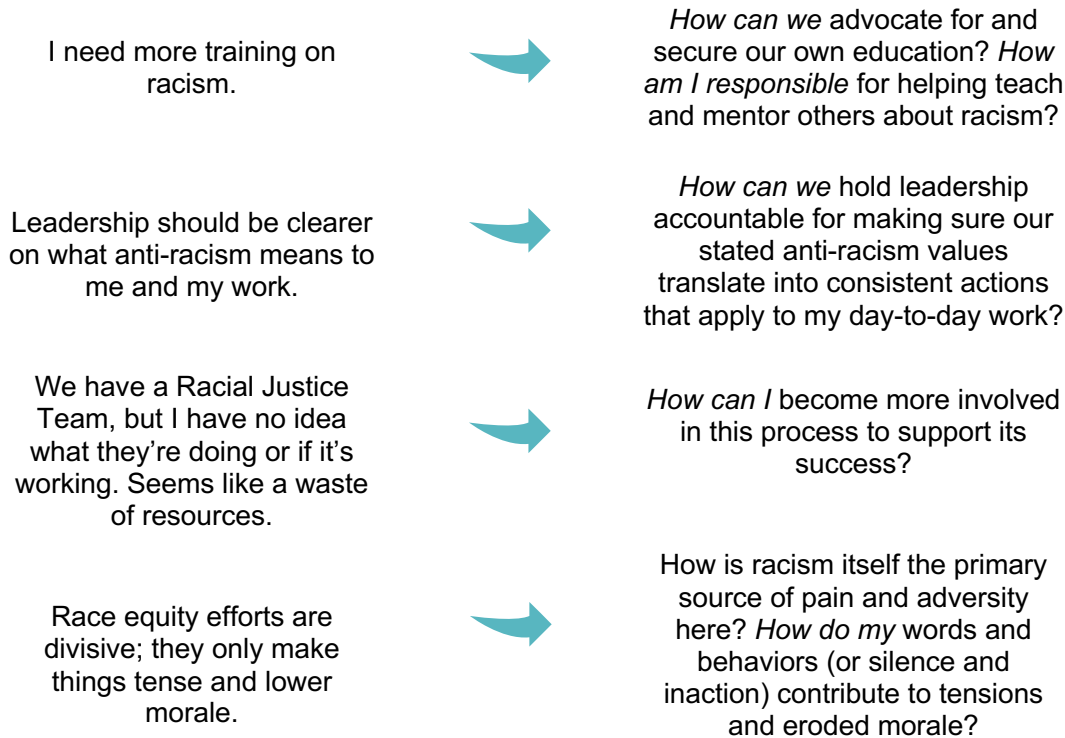


Emphasize personal ownership of anti-racism at MSJC.

Every single person involved with MSJC must feel personally involved and invested in the outcome of your race equity work. MSJC must be intentional about framing this work as something that is happening *because of, with, and for* its stakeholders – rather than something that is happening *to* them against their wish or will. When someone feels as though race equity is being thrust upon them involuntarily, all they will see are costs, sacrifices, and unwanted changes to a comfortable status quo. From this perspective, anti-racist values and practices of honesty, vulnerability, taking responsibility, transparency, accountability, and willingness to right wrongs and repair relationships are considered unreasonable “solutions in search of a problem.”

A great challenge is helping each person appreciate that racial inequity is a problem in the world, the larger Marianist Family, and within MSJC, that race equity benefits *everyone*, and the invitation is always open for each person’s participation and buy-in. Imagine a paradigm shift where *every* person at

MSJC moves from the role of passive audience members to intentional actors in anti-racism work, individually and collectively. For example:



We encourage all MSJC's stakeholders to work together on how to become more personally invested and active in this process. *Teamwork makes the dream work* – and that has never been so true as it is in our collective fight against white supremacy.



Trust the Process!

As Dr. Michelle Majors discusses in her book by the same title, anti-racism work is a long-term iterative process that is never complete. Nevertheless, there is a process for keeping the ball moving forward, and in her work leading the race equity efforts at another non-profit organization, she found the following elements to be key to success:

- ✓ Know your “why” – what is your purpose in seeking race equity, and how will you keep your eyes on that prize through adversity and strife?
- ✓ Express vulnerability – know when you don't know something or reach your growing edge, and seek the support and resources you need
- ✓ Radical transparency and accountability – to yourself, your colleagues, your employees, and most importantly, to the people who are most directly impacted by the race equity work you're doing.

With these keys in place, anything is possible!