SOUTH COAST
HEALTH EQUITY
COALITION
Serving Coos & Curry Counties

Rooted in Community: Advancing Health Equity Through Trust, Collaboration, and Action

THIS PRESENTATION EXPLORES HOW THE SOUTH COAST HEALTH EQUITY COALITION (SCHEC) ADVANCES HEALTH EQUITY IN RURAL SPACES THROUGH DEEP RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING, CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING, AND SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY.

FOCUSING ON THE VOICES OF BLACK, INDIGENOUS, COMMUNITIES OF COLOR, 2SLGBTQIA, AND RURAL RESIDENTS, SCHEC՚S WORK BRIDGES GAPS IN HEALTHCARE ACCESS AND BUILDS A SENSE OF BELONGING ACROSS COOS AND CURRY COUNTIES.

ATTENDEES WILL LEARN ABOUT KEY COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES, INCLUDING COMUNIDAD CURRY AND SOUL FOOD SUNDAY, AND GAIN ACTIONABLE TOOLS FOR CO-CREATING CHANGE WITH COMMUNITY.

CAROLINA RIOS, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR

ZARIA HAMILTON REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE ADVOCATE

Jayden

DIRECTOR OF SOUTH COAST HEALTH EQUITY COALITION

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JESS HOWELL, JEDIA COORDINATOR

JAYDEN (SHE/HER) WAS RAISED IN ROBERTA, GEORGIA, SURROUNDED BY PEACHES AND THE WISDOM OF THE CARETAKERS IN HER FAMILY—GREAT GRANDMOTHER FLOSSY, GRANDMOTHER LIZZIE, MOM MUNILLA, AUNTIE MANTILLA, AND BIG MAMA, MRS. TIT. THEY WERE THE KEEPERS OF HISTORY, THE TEACHERS OF LAUGHTER, AND THE EMBODIMENT OF LOVE, SHOWING HER HOW TO MOVE THROUGH THE WORLD WITH BOTH STRENGTH AND GRACE.

A LOVER OF CONTEXT AND CHALLENGER OF SYSTEMS, JAYDEN IS COMMITTED TO DISRUPTING THE STATUS QUO IN PURSUIT OF JUSTICE. FOR THE PAST EIGHT YEARS, SHE HAS WORKED ALONGSIDE COMMUNITIES OF COLOR AND 2SLGBTQIA+ COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT OREGON, ADVOCATING FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE, FOOD, AND DIGNITY. HER APPROACH IS DEEPLY ROOTED IN CENTERING COMMUNITY VOICES AND LIVED EXPERIENCES, ENSURING THAT THOSE MOST IMPACTED LEAD THE SOLUTIONS.

JAYDEN BELIEVES IN THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE CARE, TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE, AND RADICAL IMAGINATION. SHE CONTINUES TO BUILD, DISRUPT, AND CO-CREATE SPACES WHERE COMMUNITY IS SEEN, HEARD, AND VALUED.

BEFORE WE DIVE IN, LET'S TAKE A MOMENT TO ESTABLISH A BRAVE SPACE FOR OPEN AND RESPECTFUL DISCUSSION. HERE ARE A FEW COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS TO GUIDE US:

1. Be willing to be uncomfortable
2. Be present
3. Make "I" statements…from YOUR lived experiences
4. Make space, take space … extrovert, introvert, ambivert
5. Listen to understand with empathy and compassion not to respond with judgement
6. Challenge your own prejudices, stereotypes, biases
7. Acknowledge intent and take responsibility – own the impact
8. Honor and respect vulnerability, especially when it requires us to say "I don't know"
9. Engage in dialogue, not debate, we don't have to agree
10. Closure is not guaranteed, you may leave with as many questions as answers

Anything else?

GROUNDING:

ANCHOR

BREATH

3 OR MORE (TAKE UP SPACE)

- **Understand Strategies for Advancing Health Equity in Rural Communities.**
  - **Learn how intentional collaboration, allyship, and accountability can mitigate healthcare access barriers and foster inclusivity for marginalized groups.**
- **Explore Community-Centered Programs and Initiatives:**
  - **Discover how SCHEC's initiatives—including Comunidad Curry and Soul Food Sunday—elevate community wisdom and support culturally responsive practices.**
- **Apply Culturally Responsive Solutions for Systemic Change**
  - **Identify practical steps to co-create equity-focused solutions with communities to address systemic health inequities and promote long-term transformation.**

SHARED LANGUAGE

DIVERSITY

Sex, Disability, Age, Ethnicity, Nationality, socio-economic status, Gender Identity, Veteran Status, Gender Expression, Faith Orientation, Sexual Orientation, Geography, Political Ideology

-Bensimon

EQUALITY

Treating everyone the same or giving everyone the same regardless of their individual/group attributes. It is an erasure of differences. Equality assumes neutrality, colorblindness, and denies the negative on-going impacts of historical 'isms' and 'phobias' in U.S. systems.

-Bensimon

EQUITY

Accounting for differences in individual/group attributes and experiences within U.S. systems for the purposes of achieving equal outcomes. It is accessing what else needs to be implemented, thought about, and/or stopped. It is color conscious, views the impacts of inequities and power imbalances on access to opportunities, access to resources, and outcomes. It questions patterns in context of historical exclusion and discrimination.

-Bensimon

INCLUSION

"Equity is the intentional inclusion of everyone in society. Equity is achieved when systemic, institutional, and historical barriers based on race, gender, sexual orientation, and other identities are dismantled and no longer predict socioeconomic, education, and health outcomes." -

United Way Worldwide

Embedding diversity and equity into personnel decisions, policies, procedures, protocols, practices, and priorities.

BELONGING

"Belonging is the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group [individual/communities with the lived experience]. It is when an individual [community] can bring their authentic self to work and not feel like they're a different person at the workplace than at home.

An environment that creates intentional connections, building trusting relationships, inviting perspectives and engaging in purposeful storytelling.

-Cornell University

JUSTICE

"Directly dismantling barriers to resources and opportunities in society so that all individuals in communities can live a full and dignified life."

-Avarna Group

Justice and equity have to do with policies, procedures and systems.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN CULTURAL HUMILITY and CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Cultural humility recognizes process, relationship, and the many layers to these.

Cultural competence implies that one is all knowing and all powerful.

PROGRAMS ROOTED IN COMMUNITY, LED WITH INTENTION

Comunidad Curry
By and for the Hispanic/Latinx community in Brookings
Wellness, language justice, and leadership development
Reflects needs identified through culturally responsive engagement

Soul Food Sunday
Black-led space for healing, joy, and rest
Affirms Black cultural identity in rural Oregon
Builds intergenerational community and emotional safety

Black Student Unions
Active BSUs at Marshfield and Brookings Harbor High Schools
Student-led spaces for cultural pride, activism, and leadership
Mentorship, advocacy, and organizing support provided by SCHEC

Trans and Gender Expansive Support Group
Affirming space for trans, nonbinary, and gender-expansive community members
Facilitated by and for community
Prioritizes mental health, safety, and social connection

Reproductive Justice Project
Grounded in bodily autonomy, access, and racial justice
Supports education and advocacy through a reproductive justice lens
Centered on the needs of rural BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and low-income community members

Health Equity Trainings
Culturally responsive professional development
REALD & SOGI, trauma-informed care, data justice
Delivered with a racial equity and community-accountability lens

Community Listening Sessions
Ongoing space for truth-telling and power-shifting
Shapes program direction and policy advocacy
Ensures community voice drives decisions at every level

OUR PROGRAMS ARE MORE THAN SERVICES—THEY ARE STRATEGIES FOR TRANSFORMING SYSTEMS. EACH INITIATIVE IS A REFLECTION OF OUR COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY FOR EQUITY, GROUNDED IN LIVED EXPERIENCE AND DESIGNED TO SHIFT POWER AT THE LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATEWIDE LEVELS.

OUR APPROACH

Centering community wisdom
- Honor lived experience as expertise
- Co-create solutions with, not for, communities
- Invest in leadership from within historically marginalized populations

Bridging barriers to healthcare
- Address systemic and structural barriers (e.g., language, transportation, access to insurance, discrimination)
- Collaborate with providers to ensure care is culturally responsive and trauma-informed
- Use REALD & SOGI data practices ethically to understand and address gaps

Fostering belonging and trust
- Create welcoming spaces where all identities are affirmed
- Lead with transparency, accountability, and relationship-building
- Recognize historical and ongoing harm, and work toward repair through consistent action

REALD & SOGI

REALD
Race, Ethnicity, Language, and Disability

REALD is a standardized approach to collecting data that helps institutions identify and address health inequities. It includes:

Race and Ethnicity: Moving beyond broad categories to allow people to self-identify more specifically.

Language: Asking about preferred spoken and written languages to improve communication and access.

Disability Status: Capturing data on physical, cognitive, and sensory disabilities to ensure inclusive services.

SOGI
Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

SOGI data collection focuses on:

Sexual Orientation: How someone identifies in terms of their romantic or sexual attraction (e.g., lesbian, bisexual, straight, queer).

Gender Identity: A person's internal sense of their gender (e.g., woman, man, nonbinary, trans).

Sex Assigned at Birth: Acknowledges that a person's gender identity may differ from what was assigned at birth.

This data helps agencies identify disparities in care and target resources where they are most needed—while respecting individuals' identities and choices.

SOGI data helps ensure that LGBTQ+ individuals are visible in data, can receive affirming care, and that their unique health and social needs are addressed.

When collected poorly, it can reinforce harm or distrust, especially for communities who have experienced surveillance, stigma, or discrimination.

KEY STRATEGIES

Intentional collaboration

- Build authentic partnerships across sectors
- Center community voices from the start, not after the fact
- Share power, resources, and decision-making

Understanding true allyship

- Move beyond performative gestures
- Show up consistently, especially when it's hard
- Listen with humility, act with accountability

Accountability and deep equity

- Create systems to measure progress and impact
- Be transparent about mistakes and lessons learned
- Align actions with values—even when it challenges the status quo

Capacity building and leadership development

- Invest in leadership within priority populations
- Support community-based organizations with tools and training
- Cultivate environments where equity work is sustainable, not extractive

DISCUSSION QUESTION

How are the programs or initiatives in your work or community being used not only to meet immediate needs, but to influence long-term systems or policy change—and whose leadership is centered in that process?

ACCOUNTABILITY IN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- **Our Role as a Bridge:**
  - SCHEC builds trust between communities and institutions by:
    - **Centering lived experience**
    - **Facilitating dialogue across power differences**
    - **Navigating tensions with transparency and care**
- **Shared Goals, Shared Responsibility:**
  - **Advance equity through aligned values and commitments**
  - **Co-create strategies rooted in mutual accountability**
  - **Build long-term, trust-based relationships—not transactions**
- **Acknowledging Conflict & Repairing Harm:**
  - **Conflict is part of deep equity work**
  - **We hold space for discomfort and truth-telling**
  - **When harm occurs, we move toward accountability and repair, not avoidance**

DISCUSSION QUESTION

How do you or your organization practice accountability when harm occurs in community partnerships—and what might it look like to deepen that practice?

CENTERING COMMUNITY DATA & DATA JUSTICE

- **Community Ownership of Data:**
  - **Data is gathered with, not on, our communities**
  - **We prioritize informed consent, transparency, and shared purpose**
- **Practicing Data Justice:**
  - **Use REALD & SOGI data collection in ways that are trauma-informed and community-driven**
  - **Question what's collected, who interprets it, and how it's used**
  - **Protect the dignity and privacy of our communities at every step**
- **Feedback as a Cycle, Not a Checkbox:**
  - **Ongoing listening through surveys, focus groups, and community advisory input**
  - **Share back results and how they influence action**
  - **Publish annual equity reports informed by what communities say matters**

WE INVITE YOU TO REFLECT ON WHAT PERSPECTIVES, EXPERIENCES, OR TRUTHS MAY HAVE BEEN MISSED TODAY.

- WHOSE VOICES OR STORIES WEREN'T INCLUDED IN THIS CONVERSATION?
- WHAT TOPICS OR CONCERNS DIDN'T GET ENOUGH ATTENTION?
- WHAT QUESTIONS ARE STILL SITTING WITH YOU—OR LEFT UNANSWERED?
- WHERE MIGHT DISCOMFORT, DISAGREEMENT, OR COMPLEXITY EXIST?
- HOW CAN WE STAY ACCOUNTABLE TO WHAT WE DIDN'T NAME TODAY?

WHO IS INVISIBLE?

Power & Privilege. When is the last time you checked yourself?

Look at the composition of your workforce and the composition of whom you serve.

Be open to things difficult to hear and see …consistent reminders of privilege.

Show up for communities outside of yours. Embrace being exposed.
-Charlotte Chang

Answer questions by:
Savita Kumari Malik

Who I am?
Where I stand?
What my voice means in the world?
What my privilege means?

CITATIONS & RESOURCES

REALD & SOGI Data Collection

Oregon Health Authority. (2023). REALD and SOGI Data Standards. Retrieved from: https://www.oregon.gov/oha

National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center. (2022). Collecting Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Data. Retrieved from: https://www.lgbtqiahealtheducation.org

Data Justice & Equity

Taylor, L. (2017). What is Data Justice? The London School of Economics and Political Science.

D'Ignazio, C., & Klein, L. F. (2020). Data Feminism. MIT Press.

Black Student Unions

Rhoads, R. A. (1998). Freedom's Web: Student Activism in an Age of Cultural Diversity.

Williamson-Lott, J. A. (2018). Jim Crow Campus: Higher Education and the Struggle for a New Southern Social Order.

Health Equity & Community-Led Change

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2017). Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

Powell, J. A., Menendian, S., & Ake, W. (2019). Targeted Universalism: Policy & Practice. Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley.

Reproductive Justice

SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective. (2022). What is Reproductive Justice? Retrieved from: https://www.sistersong.net

SCHEC Materials & Community Knowledge

South Coast Health Equity Coalition. (2022–2024). Community Listening Sessions, Program Reports, and Equity Trainings (Internal Documents).

Community Leaders and Advisory Members, Coos and Curry Counties (2023).

Thank you to the 2025 Forum partners!