**A White Man’s Thoughts & Addressing Diversity: Are We Doing Enough?**

**Wilton McMillian & Arlene Gunderson**

**Presentation Notes**

Before presentation – Wilton talked about how many student life employees feel like second or even third class citizens.

Arlene asked Wilton how will he feel if the title of his workshop is, “A White Man’s Thoughts.” Wilton says yes. Many times Wilton attends conference – he becomes a lot more knowledgeable of what is happening around ,e For example, last Friday when he arrived at the SL conference – he looked around and see how many people of color were in attendance.

Wilton was born in 1954 – the year when the court announced segregation. The year next – Rosa Parks was born and is Wilton’s hero.

IWE need to use history to be sure we don’t become the deaf rosa parks in the back of the bus.

Wilton attended NCSD in year if 1959 – When I was a little white boy – I learned there is a dirt road because all black people lived on that road. All white people’s roads are paved.

Racism still exists. When I see people use nigger, I will confront. ;When people do nothing – they are racists.

I entered school without language. NCSD was the only deaf school in the state. Then eastern NCSD was estaliched then when I was in HS – central NCSD was built. But no one knew there was on emore school – for black people.

NC was one of ht elast few states to stop segregation. Second year of HS, I was told there will be a HUGE change. In the fall – black school in Raleigh was vclosed so all black students cmae to NCSD.

Tehre were 5 ehite players on the basketball team – four whites were kicked out to allow 4 black on the team. Wilton was appointed captain The team became known as oreo team. NCSD did a POOOORRRR job preparing NCSD for the black students leading to numerous racial situations.

Are we doing a good job addressing diversity today? IWilton thinks we are at a lukewarm level.

When I entered Gally – I looked around, we had about 800 students. Only few black students. Anfrew Foster was the first black stdeutns.

I worked at MSSD for 18 years before I went to Kentucky. It was decided by the adminateation that it is time to do zerious diversity and cultural training.

Microcosm committee of 26 people were formed. Mike Desinger , a wonderful man hired 3 consultants – black woman, white deaf woman and one lesbian woman.

The committee worked for 4 years – they met every 6 weeks for one full day. They agreed on 5 main areas – white/people of color, deaf/hearing, gender, homophobia and student life/instruction.

It is wrong to say white and black people as we have many variety of different minority groups.

Good work was done for the white/people of color area.

But hell broke loose when they addressed the deaf/hearing area. At one point – deaf people walked out to a room across hallways because they feel they were not being heard. Consultant got involved and asked the hearing people to LISTEN to deaf people without saying anything. A lot of pain, blood, sweat and tears.

Then gender area was addressed. People still felt it was white man’s world.

Next, homophobia issues and it went ok.

Lastly – student life/instruction area BUT it was not addressed because 4 years has passed and time ran out for this fifth group. Contract with consultation was expired. This group was never addressed and Wilton do not see any big changes in this area – Student life is still looked down and not valued as equally as education.

CEASD had outreach (NOC) group part of their conference. QWilton have had several discussions with Joe – trying to get student life involved with CEASD. This is the time and opportunity – that student life needs a coalition to have CEASD recognize student life as professionals.

Student Life, education and outreach are ONE. How can we hget people to view Student life as an IMPORTASNT component of CEASD.

The microcosm was done by students next for 3 years and Wilton felt the students did far much better than adults because adults had too much baggage and experience.

Wilton had 7 years of experience of diversity committee work.

Wilton’s leader ship team at Kentucky – are reading the Mask of Benevolence book. They will read and discuss every month. Harlan Lane wrote that book – I want to disuccs the word, MASK.

Wilton challenged us if we still have mask when are are working with diversity?

Look at the conference participants – we do not have a lot of people of color.

Wilton strongly feels all school need sensitive and cultural training.

Wilton showed a sign – Historic Sire of Kendall School Dvision for Negroes. Wilton never saw the sign until this morning. The sign is placed inside the fence – why not the sign be placed in front.

Vivinne Schroeder talked about the importance of recognizing our privledges. IT is not about owning a car. Prvielegs is internal ability to go our in the public an dhave reasonable expectations that you will be treated fairly in most situations.

People wont assume you are in that position because you are a token.

Vivi is a person of color but I have priveleges of white person – people do not assume that I got my job because I am a PR. During the activity – you are not a racist intentionally but it is inherited. Do not defend – just accept and listen.

Addressing Diversity – are we doing enough?

Arlene – my family moved to America from Puerto Rico. I never analyzed myself – got BA in Social work. I never really asked myself why I chose that major. I became deaf after 19 months.

I went back to NY after Gallaudet – I worked with 90 clients. Most of the clients are grassroots and knew my parents. I met many people – grew to more clients.

I taught drop out students. I decided to o back to school and get my Masters in deaf education.

I felt identified as hard of hearing. I always talked for my parents and talked on phone for m parents. Parents always said I was intelligent because I could speak.

After graduate studies – I ha da baby boy then I married a white man. My first son was dark. I was not dark but my sister was dark.

I worked and started to climb the career ladder.

When I go y my job as GURC director in Austin – I met many people through network – conferences. I see more more white people than people of color.

I had to meet the required number of recruitment – I had a hard time entering mainstreamed programs. I decided to develop youth training – to talk about culure and community,

I realize it was a challenge to discuss culture and identity with youth. NAD said YLC but it was too expensive for many youth

confidence center curriculum – I decided to buy it.

I thought about what is SL doing to embrace diversity.

I realized I was comfortable enough to ask Wilton to co present diversity with me. I would not be comfortable asking most white men.

Wilton born during baby boomer generation and I was born during x generation. I was a student at mssd when wilton was dean of students.

In my field of work – DIUSA was formed because 18 and under have jr nad and over 18 did not have opportunity. After graduating college – that age do not have an organization. NAD does not have organization or youth who can’t affor such registration fees. DIUSA is a conference but it is a camp based so it is more affordable.

We are lacking of future leaders – we are running out of current leaders who will retire soon. Who are the replacements.

Today s youth – focused on social justice but the group between soon to retire leaders and current youth very weak

Many youth do not have confidence because not enough opportunities.

We need to pull young people to co present – give opportunities

Wilton say there is a 24 year gap between him and Arlene but he views both as equals

Arlene says the between group have “everything” because the older group fought so much for our rights and laws.

Are we waiting for someone to take that away from us – NO!!

Small deaf and big deaf – why is it a sensitive issue. Because it measures who the person is

What makes u a deaf diverse and collective community?

Experience, school background, families, communication at home, signing style, deaf or hearing parents, mainstreamed or deaf schools, cochlear implants, socio economic etc

What makes us unique?

Are we embracing all??? Are we mentoring people who are different from each other?

Wilton remembered the old cafeteria where orals, big deaf, frats and black sat together. And it is still the same now – why?

Arlene has been asking NAD to have a conference with all ethnic groups together instead of their own conferences but each group need their own time.

Wilton decided to invite the community to watch sound of fury movie – wow, stirred a lot of emotions. Led to many discussions. Wilton reminded everyone of reality – kids with CI are still deaf.

We deal with diversity and process it or we don’t.

Arlene used to teach an interpreter training program – they want to know how they serve the community. WE often teach hearing about deaf culture in depth and they ended up knowing more than deaf people.

Arlene explained that intersectionality – means I have several labels as women, deaf, OR and which do I place first? Why do I have to pick? I prefer to embrace all identities than picking one. We need to stop asking questions – which is more important – best to embrace all identities.

Arlene mentioned deaf kids are expected to learn academic ASL straight from social ASL. So many kids struggle with English.

When I taught class – I asked which is more important asl or English. Students keep say English is more important. Arlene tried to teach students that both are equally important.

Deaf kids need the confidence that bilingual is awesome. And how to deliver information in ASL.

Arlene did a training with deaf youth latinos, all were shocked when Arlene said she has been the breadwinner for the past ten years.

Arlene gives three lessons – first on individual then culture then community.

Arlene watched workshops on point system – where it did not exist back then. Arlene realizes point system pulls students up to a different level but often trainings are needed to pull students to next level.

When Wilton did his training with students on sensitivity – many students could sense adults’ true feelings on diversity.

Arlene discussed the principle of buildership – students need character then competence then ????

Lindsay Darnall shared in his workshop that one negative a person hears – will need 3 positives to make up

Self worth, belonging, competence and purpose are very important for deaf youth

Students couldn’t prioritize qualities of a leader – it was a struggle for them.

What makes you a good leader? The audience threw in - years of experience, deaf gamily, delegating, open minded, sharing wisdom, god listener, patience, passion, and fair.

Arlene asked everyone to write one adjective under each ethnic group on easel papers posted on the walls.