

RJIOK Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access statement

We believe and teach different ways that individuals of all ages, ethnicities, classes, experience and backgrounds can include and learn from each other. We affirm the uniqueness of each individual and value individual ways of existing in the world. We are committed to understanding how personal, cultural, and historic aspects of identity contribute to and enrich our community. *We do not believe or teach that individuals should face discrimination or adverse treatment because of any part of their identity.*

We believe and teach people how to recognize stereotypes, think critically and mitigate the impact and harm of stereotypes and bias. When harm occurs, we affirm our mutual humanity and relationships with one another. *We do not believe or teach that racial, gender, or other stereotypes should be practiced or reinforced in the ways we treat others.*

We provide an environment that encourages expression of our differences in ways that invite dialogue and education rather than cause alienation. We encourage curiosity and inquiry so that we can learn from a diverse range of experiences and points of view. We believe and teach people skills to integrate feelings of discomfort when they occur. *We do not believe or teach that participants should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress because of their race, sex, or other identities.*

We believe and teach skills and strategies for respecting others' political, religious and other beliefs and practices and for navigating conflict around these and other subjects. *We do not believe or teach any specific political, religious, or economic belief system.*

We teach individuals to question their cultural viewpoints and assumptions and to modify them when appropriate. We are committed to exploring the shape of RJIOK culture to better understand the experiences of those from diverse backgrounds as well as to challenge our own practices. We examine and revise our curriculum and teaching practices as necessary to ensure that we are effective in reaching everyone. We train our facilitators to recognize and accommodate the range of needs, goals, and learning styles among our diverse participants, and to hone their skills in building and sustaining an inclusive setting.

We believe that harm is transformed to justice when the process is victim centered and opportunities for dialogue regarding the harm are supported. We believe that no one should be defined solely by the worst thing they have ever done or the worst thing that has ever happened to them.

We use the above practices to instill a consciousness of social justice, an ethic of citizenship, and a commitment to service. We teach and practice responsibility towards and engagement in our larger community and the world. We are transparent in our communications as we practice and model respectful, holistic, and empathetic modes of engaging with and serving the community.