



Vermont Partnership

FOR FAIRNESS AND DIVERSITY

Capability Statement

Vermont Partnership for Fairness & Diversity is a division of the CRJ Consulting Group, L3C whose vision is a Vermont recognized as the national model on the practice of inclusive and equitable business and institutional practices. Vermont Partnership is a relationship-oriented training and consulting service with the social mission of making Vermont a desirable destination for all, particularly outdoor enthusiasts, tourists, conventioners, college students, entrepreneurs, and venture capitalists of color.

Our parent company is a low-profit limited liability corporation (L3C) that works to strengthen inclusive and equitable practices in Vermont businesses, state and municipal government, school districts, and communities-at-large as a means to eliminate prejudice and discrimination of all kinds. Vermont Partnership is a proven, effective resource that leaders turn to for support related to inclusion, diversity, and equity in the public sphere.

We are a relationship-oriented consulting service with a two-decade track record providing expert training and coaching to Vermont, New Hampshire, and upstate New York leaders. We currently serve state and municipal government agencies; business and civic organizations; state, county and local law enforcement agencies; supervisory unions and professional associations; and non-profits and faith communities. Our partners are changing institutional policies and practices to respond more effectively to Vermont's changing cultural landscape and economic opportunities in the broader multicultural marketplace.

Vermont Partnership has been awarded and successfully and independently managed over 100 grants and contracts for institutional clients throughout Vermont and upstate New York. Our public sector clients include the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, Vermont State Police, Vermont Department of Human Resources, the Town of Brattleboro, the City of Burlington, the City of Rutland, the Agency of Education as well as numerous supervisory unions and sheriff's departments. The Endowment for Health, Seventh Generation, Church Street Marketplace, and the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce are representative of our private sector clients.

In March 2009 the Vermont Legislature passed Concurrent House Resolution H.C.R. 82 to honor Vermont Partnership and others in Brattleboro who responded to a critical incident of racial and ethnic intolerance by the *Nigger Hanging Redneck Association (NHRA)*. Vermont Partnership organized a broad based community response that included community forums, strategic planning conferences, and community-wide celebrations of diversity in Southeastern Vermont. In January 2007 the Burlington Multicultural Resource Center awarded Vermont Partnership a Dr. Martin Luther King Service Award for our anti-racism work throughout the state. Vermont Partnership was a 2010 Agency Nominee for a Burlington School District Champions of Diversity & Equity award.

At the request of state legislative committees and the Vermont Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, we have provided expert testimony on a variety of subjects including school based harassment/bullying, cyber-bullying, racial profiling, traffic stop data collection and analysis, the implementation of anti-harassment and anti-discrimination statutes, and minority health issues including health care affordability. In recognition of twenty years serving the people of Vermont, Gov. Peter Shumlin issued in June 2016 an official Proclamation stating Vermont Partnership "... has made the Green Mountain State a much better place for all of us."

In addition to conducting cultural enrichment and anti-harassment/bullying compliance training for schools, Vermont Partnership manages three statewide initiatives: *Vermont Vision for a Multicultural Future*, the *Vermont African American Heritage Trail*, and *I am a Vermonter*.

The *Vermont Vision for a Multicultural Future Initiative* has been increasing the number of Vermont institutions working in practical ways to acquire skills to function more effectively in more diverse environments and build inclusive, equitable communities. We nurture a network of practitioners with proven success achieving goals of multicultural populations and decision-makers in search of new ways to manage and operate in Vermont's rapidly changing social environment. We convene an annual conference for our partners to share proven strategies that strengthen business/institutional essential diversity, inclusion, and equity practices. This participant-driven conference is designed for cabinet-, executive-, and legislative-level leadership.

The Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing in collaboration with Vermont Partnership launched the *Vermont African American Heritage Trail* in January 2013. We created this initiative to expand Vermont's economy through attracting tourists from the rapidly growing multicultural marketplace; and to teach Vermont students about the important role and contributions of Vermonters of African heritage since before the founding of the state though more contemporary times. Vermont Partnership maintains an online portal at www.vtafricanamericanheritage.net for educators to learn more about this important history and download lesson plans. Gov. Phil Scott declared through a gubernatorial proclamation February 2017 as *Vermont African American Heritage Trail Month*.

I am a Vermonter through its online portal (www.iamavermonter.org) serves as a resource for persons of color considering relocation to Vermont for school, work, or retirement. The portal contains unedited testimonials of Vermonters of color on the inherent challenges (e.g. the occasional race-clueless co-worker, locating beauty salon/barber) and benefits (e.g. healthy lifestyles, safest state in the nation, civic engagement) of working and living in the Green Mountain State.

Vermont Partnership is a founding member of the Community Equity Collaborative (Brattleboro); member of the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Diversity Equity Committee; member of the Vermont Agency of Education Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council; member of the Vermont State Police Fair and Impartial Policing Committee; member of the Vermont Department of Health Minority and Tribal Health Advisory Committee; and member of the Vermont Legislative Study Group on Cyber-bullying and Harassment in Vermont Schools.

Curtiss Reed, Jr., our executive director, serves as Chair of the Vermont State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights and is a former member of the New England Board of Higher Education Blue Ribbon Task Force on the participation of under-represented minorities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); he is a founding member of Vermont Independent Media, publisher of the award-winning *Commons* newspaper, and the Brattleboro Community Restorative Justice Center. In May 2015 the School for International Training Graduate Institute conferred upon Reed an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters for his work strengthening Vermont as an inclusive and equitable destination for all.