

Recap of the East Town Business Partnership Business Forum
Thursday, November 15, 2018, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
FINNOvation Lab | Impact Hub MSP, 817 5th Avenue South, 4th Floor
Elliot Park Neighborhood of Minneapolis

I. Welcome and Announcements

Dan Collison, Executive Director of the East Town Business Partnership, welcomed the audience to the collaborative social enterprise space of FINNOVATION Lab | Impact Hub MSP nestled within the full block development by Kraus-Anderson. He thanked Jacquie Berglund, CEO of FL (<https://finnegans.org/finnovationlab/>), and Ixchel McKinnie, CEO of IH (<https://www.impacthubmsp.com/>), for hosting and providing lunch.

For the uninitiated, he explained the ETBP has been in existence since 1979, initially as the Elliot Park Business and Professional Association (EPBPA), then as its constituency grew and development occurred northerly towards the riverfront, in 1999 it was renamed the East Downtown Council. As investment and redevelopment continued – tagged to be \$3 billion by 2019 – and to avoid having the stadium dominate the district, in 2015 a rebranding effort was undertaken to bring this diverse and dynamic community together under a specific brand. This effort culminated in the district being rebranded *East Town, a vibrant, multifaceted and connected community* and the organization rebranded East Town Business Partnership.

Collison encouraged the audience to attend and bring a colleague to the 10 monthly forums which occur September through June; they're properly designed to inform on timely and relevant topics with industry experts. Four of these forums are conducted jointly with the Minneapolis Downtown Council.

The ETBP is comprised of 21 members representing the businesses and neighborhood organizations within the district and there are committees – Board Development, Business Forum, East Town Development, Membership Marketing and Communication – that function to help it execute its strategic goals.

Membership is affordable and super flexible. Entry can be as cheap as a bottle of wine all the way up to a junk car; this price range is so that we can be a more inclusive association. Then Collison highlighted the following events occurring throughout downtown (listed chronologically):

- November 9-18: Performances of *The Miracle Worker* at North Central University (<https://www.northcentral.edu/events/the-miracle-worker/>);
- November 19-January 16, 5:00-8:00 pm: Minnesota Indoor Stadium Running at U.S. Bank Stadium (<https://runmdra.org/programs/indoor-stadium-running/>);
- November 23-December 23: *Holidazzle 2018* in Lording Park (<https://www.holidazzle.com/>);
- Wednesdays, November 27-December 19, 5:00-6:00 p.m. Coffee with Ward 3 Council Member Steve Fletcher at various coffeehouses in downtown, the next being at Spyhouse West in the North Loop;
- November 30th-December 2nd: Performances of *Songs of the Season* at North Central University (<https://www.northcentral.edu/events/songs-of-the-season/>);
- Friday, December 7, 6:00-10:00 p.m.: Hennepin Healthcare's Light up the Night at The Armory, 500 South 6th Street (<https://www.hennepinhealthcare.org/hennepin-healthcare-foundation/light-up-the-night/>);
- Tuesday, December 18, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Joint ETBP and MDC forum on *Downtown Demographics: Who Are We Becoming?* at the Elliot Hotel (<https://easttownmpls.org/joint-etbp-mdc-business-forum-on-december-18-at-the-elliott-park-hotel/>);
- Wednesday, December 19, 7:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.: Good Morning with Ward 3 Council Member Steve Fletcher, 2018 Year in Review at Kramarczuk's (<https://northloop.org/event/good-morning-ward-3-council-member-steve-fletcher/>);
- To learn more about and attend the neighborhood organizations' meetings:
 - Visit <http://www.thedmna.org/> for the DMNA Land Use Committee and Board meetings; and
 - Visit <http://elliottparkneighborhood.org/> for EPNI Building, Land Use and Housing (BLUH) and Livability Task Force meetings.
- Need help navigating City Hall with your business question? Visit the new Minneapolis Business Portal (<https://business.minneapolismn.gov/>) designed to connect entrepreneurs and small business owners

to the information and resources needed to plan, launch and grow a business.

Then the audience was asked to introduce themselves, after which Collison extended a special gratitude to the platinum sponsors:

- Allied Parking
- American Academy of Neurology
- CenterPoint Energy
- Clear Channel Outdoor
- Community Housing Development Corporation
- Delta Dental
- ESG Architects
- Hennepin Healthcare
- House of Charity
- Kraus-Anderson
- Minnesota Vikings
- NRG Energy
- Padilla
- People Serving People
- Thrivent Financial
- U.S. Bank
- Sherman-Williams
- Wells Fargo

II. Presenting Sponsor: U.S. Bank

Collison expressed appreciation for U.S. Bank's sponsorship of today's forum, then introduced Ann Dyste, Assistant Vice President of LGBTQ / Multicultural Strategy at U.S. Bank (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/annkdyste>), who kicked off today's conversation we're all wrestling with, i.e., *What is the Difference Between Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?*; Collison had asked Dyste why should the marketplace be engaged in DEI.

Dyste provided an overview of her professional background, how she eventually "came out" and graduated into her current position. She also discussed the importance of being a LGBTQ ally in a leadership role (<https://www.usbank.com/lgbt/stories/what-it-means-to-be-an-lgbt-ally.html>).

III. Spotlight: BE MSP Workforce Toolkit

Collison introduced this segment by playing a 2:40 minute informational video Greater MSP produced explaining the free digital toolkit and why it was developed; it came out of the challenges the region is currently experiencing and projected to experience due to workforce shortages. Greater MSP is focusing on talent migration and how to better attract and retain talent to the region.

While using a slide presentation (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Toolkit-Make-It-MSP-Presentation.pdf>), Caroline Karanja (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/carolinekaranja>) advised there are different efforts being undertaken toward closing the workforce gap, but since there wasn't a comprehensive system for attracting and retaining talent, they decided to step in and function as a network-based platform for organizations to work together and learn about some of the challenges and come up with different solutions.

Partners in this initiative include Fortune 500 companies, universities, and community organizations that have a vested interest in attracting and retaining talent and/or creating more diverse and inclusive spaces. To better connect with their main audience – professionals of color in the region – and create a culture of belonging, this past summer they rolled out this new branding effort for the BE MSP team. When the team first began figuring out how to better retain professionals of color, they lacked the insights to create

effective solutions so decided to go directly to people and ask about their experiences living and working in the region. Hence, focus groups were conducted with 65 participants across ethnicities and used the themes that arose to survey over 1,200 people, the results of which have formed the foundation for strategies and solutions and basis for the toolkit.

The themes weren't new in terms of issues people are experiencing, but it gave the team a way to quantify personal experiences and stories in a way to empower organizations to take it to their executive leadership and have conversations around creating an inclusive culture.

When the team decided to turn the research into a toolkit, they didn't want to have just another ongoing conversation about data and analysis, but rather how to give companies the tools they needed in order to do something of substance in their organization. There were a couple key points to be made about the toolkit: the audience was decision makers, managers, supervisors who had the ability to make change whether in their team or organization; and, uniquely, the insights and research used were taken from professionals of color whose voices were incorporated differently than traditionally seen in these spaces.

As they went through the process of creating a toolkit, they invited people to workshops to provide feedback and held a session with employers to go through specific sections; they're looking for ongoing feedback from individuals, whether self employed or managers within an organization, in order to make the toolkit better.

Karanja guided the audience through the components of the toolkit and stressed the importance of employers having someone in to host or help them get started. There is a lot of content and different organizations will use it in different ways so she encouraged organizations to first familiarize themselves with it and figure out what parts will work best for them.

For more information on how to use it, she can be reached at hello@carolinekaranja.com.

IV. Panel Discussion: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

A. Team Dynamics. Trina Olson, Co-Founder (<https://www.teamdynamicsmn.com/bios>), a cross-race, cross-gender, queer training firm based here in Minnesota, explained the framework under which they operate is *Role, Goal, Soul* (<https://www.teamdynamicsmn.com/home/>).

Then she discussed her pet peeve, i.e., in her industry they are using these words interchangeably, although they are not, and using acronyms when words would be more powerful. When she hear people say they're looking for a diverse candidate or looking to diversify their board or diversity in the community they serve, she literally doesn't know what they mean so the next question should be in what way are they thinking about diversity because in her own case she's thinking about race, gender and age. In 2018, which may not be true for the rest of our entire lives, but right now in the U.S., in the workforce, race is a predictive factor in terms of how folks are being paid, treated, hired and promoted. So they need, as white people, to start getting more comfortable with we have a race also.

She also discussed the shift in the last few years from equality to equity, i.e., from the Gold Rule, treat others as one would like others to treat oneself, to the Platinum Rule, treat others the way they want to be treated. For TD that makes equity powerful as a framework; it acknowledges the systemic power imbalances we're born into. Right now in the U.S., all of us alive were not born onto a level plane so when we talk about equality; that is an accidental way to bring in the new school "pull yourself up by your boot straps" mentality into our organizations. If everyone tries really hard, they can really be successful, but the truth is there are predictive factors – e.g., race, gender, zip code where you were born – that can accurately predict some of your health outcomes. We don't want to think there are mystery, one size fits all solutions, so for Olson it feels like a radical invitation to get creative in thinking about multiple solutions for people. TD thinks about this work as Captain Planet; they want to get the best that everyone has to offer so we need to give them what they need to be successful.

There are limits to the English language and what inclusion is for people they keep hearing from is people are invited to the table. But it doesn't make a whole lot of difference if you're at the table if you're not powerful or a decision maker or willing to change the system to meet our needs. It's not just the presence of people for a great photo. Inclusion is five of us are in a room, she expresses a need she has in order to bring the best she has to offer to the workplace, there is a discussion and a decision is made that may involve money. You're thinking about who has power and decision making and how resources are being distributed. So when you hear people getting all fiddly with diversity, equity and inclusion, gently invite them into greater specificity.

B. University of Minnesota. Ixchel McKinnie explained she was asked to discuss what they do at Impact Hub MSP, but instead she invited Carolyn Liebler, Sociology Professor at the University of Minnesota (<https://cla.umn.edu/about/directory/profile/liebler>), to share her thoughts about this topic.

Liebler advised she's been a scholar in the field of race her entire career, but she was studying non white people. She thought she was doing a fine job, got a Ph.D., job with tenure, but recently her church, First Universalist Church of Minneapolis (<http://firstuniversalistchurch.org/>) has been turning towards bringing the whole upper middle class congregation into more awareness of whiteness. They've been challenged to read some books, have conversations, and get some training. She wants to give credit to the organization because they shifted her perspective. Liebler hears words and sees things happening, but don't understand how racism really works and the deep barbs segregation causes, so she felt the need to do some personal work so that she wasn't inadvertently compounding the situation. For those who are white and interested in soul searching/awakening she recommended:

1. *Waking Up White* by Debbie Irving (<http://www.debbyirving.com/the-book/>), also a well meaning white woman who tells her personal story about how she became an antiracist activist.
2. *White Like Me* by Tim Wise (<http://www.timwise.org/books-and-dvds/white-like-me/>) in which he relays how his whiteness got him where he is today.

Reflecting upon her own situation, although she wasn't a strong college student, she got into the No. 1 graduate school, her father who was a professor was the child of an German immigrant, they lived in a segregated part of Detroit in a house that gained value which became part of her inheritance.

You hear a lot about microaggression, but not about microprivilege. As a white, blond, still kind of young woman, she can see a lot of extra privilege she receives and when she can notice her microprivilege, then she can also notice microaggression.

3. *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo (<https://robindiangelo.com/publications/>) which discussed how white in North America live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress.

C. Ryan Companies. While using a slide presentation (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Ryan-ETBP-Presentation-11152018.pdf>), Elizabeth Campbell, Director of Emerging Business Inclusion (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/elizabeth-campbell-98487610>), described how her work prepared her for this role.

She is a 57 year old white woman, a resident of Minneapolis who went to Marshall-University High School (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall-University_High_School), which was 40% African American, for 6 years in the mid 1970s. There was no questioning about systems or whose values were in place, all they expected was that they'd integrate and get along. Her mother made an intentional choice to put her in that school, which required no bussing, as she was involved in making sure there was integration.

Upon graduation she went to the University of Minnesota, one block away, and found none of her classmates were there. This began her inquiry into racial identity vis-à-vis racism. At some point in her early 30s she went to People's Institute (<http://www.pisab.org/>) where she learned about white privilege which was confusing because it left her in a guilt spot.

Next she worked on her identify and went to Philips Cultural Awareness Center and learned about her cultural patterns that are different from those of nonwhites, so she now has cultural strength from which she does her work. Analysis of racism and cultural strengths helps to limit some of the guilt.

Campbell then shared a story from when she joined RC in 2004. She accompanied a consultant, another white woman who was negotiating the goals for the Midtown Exchange project, to a local minority trade association meeting comprised of African American males who were insulted by their presence because they were perceived as powerless and unable to make decisions. Campbell went back to the leadership at RC and they met with the National Association of Minority Contractors and walked through what NAMC needed from RC to succeed. As a consequence, RC now has a Quick Pay program for minority- and women-owned businesses on undisputed work within 4 days.

D. Hennepin County. Alex Tittle, Director of Disparity Reduction (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/alex-tittle-mhrm-b68abo8>), began by asking the audience to close their eyes and determine the ethnicity of the person sitting next to them. Upon opening their eyes he asked how many already knew the answer. He surmised everyone should have known because every time he, a black man in United States, walks into a room it's more than likely he's the only one and that he has to assimilate to the culture inherent to that room. He posed to the audience how often does that happen to them? Fast forward 23 years in the workplace and he's doing the very same thing at every level, i.e., from a young E-4 in the U.S. Army to a Captain in the U.S. Army to VP of Corporate Affairs and Business Connect for Super Bowl LII to Director of Civil Rights at MnDOT to his current position, he is the only in the room. Imagine if you're the only white man or woman in the room and how does that change your perspective?

Then he took this opportunity, on behalf of Hennepin County Administrator David Hough and Commissioners, two of which are people of color for the time in its history, to thank the audience for attending.

While using a slide presentation (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/EastTown-Discussion-Panel.Alex-Tittle.pdf>), he advised HC is proactive and forward thinking against a lot of places in the United States, but change is coming. After discovering there were few athletes or former athletes or parents of athletes in the audience who have jewelry or ribbons they would post on facebook, Tittle noted that Minnesota and HC are relatively 49th and 50th in just about every disparity as it relates to people of color and their white counterparts. It's nothing for which to be proud and because he doesn't like losing we should be thinking about how to change the environment and position ourselves for the future.

HC recognizes the adverse consequences of disparities and supports disparity reduction through seven domains/drivers, the key three being education, employment and income. But the hardest thing they had to do was come to grips with language. When you analyze the entire environment, the diaspora of people of color, veterans and LGBTQ, if they're lying on the ground bleeding profusely from the artery in the arm, you apply a tourniquet to stop the bleeding to protect the brain. People of color are bleeding profusely from the artery in the arm and if don't do anything about it we'll lose because the demographics are shifting.

In the work they do they focus on demographics and zip codes to identify where people are suffering and living in areas of high unemployment. Racial disparities result from one group having a disproportionate burden of negative life outcomes and we can forecast where someone will be over the next 2 to 10 years based on where they live.

Walter "Fritz" Mondale once told him that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the movement wouldn't have been successful if it weren't for people like him and Hubert H. Humphrey, people of color who had access. So as you close your eyes and remember who's sitting next to you, we need you to step in and fill the void. As demonstrative as Tittle is about these realities at meetings at MnDOT, HC and the U.S. capitol, he can't walk in and get their attention because they can't get past who he is. Either you know it, but choose to do nothing, or don't know it and haven't paying attention.

There are a lot of terms and we make acronyms, but to break it down, whatever the soup du jour is around these terms, change. In order to adopt these measures and approaches, we need to change the way we see each other. And if you want to know where a person's priorities are, look at where they spend their time, talent and resources. Are they with people of color? Minnesota is not the land of people of color so where do we find them? It will require changing.

Tittle is in the active process of disparity reduction, but he can't do it alone. He has a team of professionals and they're 9,300 strong; they need to make sure their clients, partners and everyone who works with HC weaves this into the work they do every day.

- V. **Closing Remarks.** Collison thanked FINNOVATION Lab | Impact Hub MSP for hosting, the panelists for their presentations which will be posted on the ETBP website, and the audience for attending. He advised those who wished to remain for one-on-one Q&A to feel free to do so, otherwise exchange business cards.