A Message from ALF Silicon Valley CEO Suzanne St. John-Crane

Over the past five years, ALF has been on a journey. Through dramatic shifts in our political and cultural landscape, to tragic healthcare, wealth gap and racial injustices laid bare before us, ALF has been pushed to more deeply examine how we live our core values of diversity, equity and inclusion. How might we as a leadership organization deepen our learning journey in this moment? Where are our blind spots? How might we best serve our network and community, in this time of disruption and transformation, to achieve our ultimate outcome of co-creating an equitable and thriving Silicon Valley?

While much of this has been an internal process, I hope our telling of this story will move other organizations to take the first step or continue their work in order to better serve their communities.

In 2016, ALF was going through a CEO transition. Our country was on the precipice of electing our first female president. Many of us (myself included) were blind to the burgeoning backlash of white nationalism in our country as we blissfully waltzed to Northern California polling places to cast our votes on November 8, 2016. I wore a white pants suit that day. (Talk about blissful ignorance.)

The next day, the world changed. And so did ALF.

At 9am, a sister organization out of central California was scheduled to use our office for a dialogue. The facilitators threw out the agenda and created space for a check in, which lasted for hours. Those who had voted for Donald Trump expressed fear of losing their farms and way of living. Those who worked with undocumented immigrants expressed deep concern for families, already hearing of kids not going to school anymore for fear their parents would be gone when they went home. I saw first hand how dialogue helps us mourn together and understand each other. But will we act together?

A group of ALF Senior Fellow Faith Leaders began meeting regularly as our first in house affinity group, setting a model for twenty other groups in the following years. They began to wrestle with racism, white supremacy, equity and inclusion, and how we might apply ALF principles of network leadership to make change.

Not long after, Senior Fellows Shiloh Ballard and Chris Wilder brought forward the idea of struggling together in how to center equity in their non-profit organizations as white leaders, still shell shocked from the unexpected election outcome. That idea gave birth to the first CEO
DIEL cohort at ALF, which over subsequent years, has grown to three cohorts with thirty non-profit leaders.

Over 200 ALF Senior Fellows and community leaders have helped shape the transformational DEI journey at ALF since 2016. As ALF’s CEO, I too was transformed by the dialogues, hidden histories of our region and country, and learnings from the network. As a white leader, my approach to leading and living has changed. With eyes wide open, I commit to using my voice, resources and networks to bridge narratives and center equity. I commit to being vulnerable and challenged as I move through this work. Our board and staff have been deep in this journey through curriculum sharing, learning groups and dialogues.

I want to take this moment to generously thank all of the Senior Fellows who have helped push our organization. Who’ve challenges us, brought questions, and helped lead dialogues. I want to thank the early leaders in this work – CEO DIEL Cohort #1 and Faith Leaders – for taking us on this journey with you. We have all learned so much, and we – as well as those we serve - are better for it.

In 2020, I began hosting monthly DEI dialogues with ALF National Board Members from across the country. There are so few spaces where we can show up as our whole selves to wrestle with these issues and push each other. At the end of one intense conversation during the trial of former Officer Derek Chauvin and following the murder of another black man by the hands of law enforcement, I asked my board members of color (a majority on the call) “What else can people who look like me (white) do?” Lyle, a 77 year old battle tested civil rights warrior and veteran from the Pacific Northwest gently said, “Well, I think you all need to ask yourselves – how far are you willing to go? What are you willing to risk for justice?”

I invite all of us to consider what kind of a world we want to leave our children and grandchildren. To walk into conversations on racism, our country’s untold history, and DEI with curiosity, empathy, and with eyes and hearts wide open. To be a part of realizing the unrealized – life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all.
ALF’s DEI Journey
2016-2021

Purpose of this report:
- Share with the network and community about what we have been/are doing
- Hold ourselves accountable to walk the talk including making public our plans and commitments

ALF’s DEI Vision Statement:

ALF recognizes that the social contract with communities of color has never been fulfilled. As an organization that is a “leader of leaders,” we commit to challenging ourselves, our network and our community to do the ongoing hard work of recognizing power dynamics and structures, blind spots and biases that perpetuate systemic racism and inequities. Using ALF strategies and leveraging the power of the ALF network, we will work to remedy the impact within our own organization, throughout the programs we offer and in communities we serve. In doing so, we move towards our ultimate outcome of creating a more equitable and thriving Silicon Valley – for all.

Where we began...
ALF’s DEI journey has happened alongside and been influenced by the hundreds of dialogues facilitated by and for Senior Fellows. As we’ve connected groups of leaders and guided them through courageous conversations, asking each other bold questions about diversity, equity, inclusion, justice and liberation, we as an organization have also been transformed by the perspectives and learnings. As such, we have made commitments and implemented changes, from the boardroom to the Fellows classroom, that move us towards our ultimate outcome.

Why DEI matters to ALF

American Leadership Forum was founded in 1980 on the premise that investing in diverse, cross-sector leaders and putting them in relationship with each other – to expand their perspectives and empathy of different experiences – could help create a better society. Our
founder, Joseph Jaworski, made dialogue across differences and appreciation of diverse experiences cornerstones of the curriculum from day one. He lays out this objective of ALF as follows:

“Build deep trust and respect among the group, and help each Fellow get beyond the devaluing prejudices that we all hold. Foster an experience of how a group of leaders, from many different sectors in a community, can coalesce around issues of shared concern and move to successful resolution.”

Today, ALF Silicon Valley’s mission is to join and strengthen diverse leaders, creating and supporting networks for good. Success looks like courageous, diverse networks of cross sector leaders working towards an equitable and thriving Silicon Valley.

Building on these foundational values and purpose, over time ALF SV has expanded our understanding and priorities for diversity, equity and inclusion. We seek to bring people together across differences of not only sector, gender, race, political perspective and cities throughout the region, but also across ethnicity, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, gender identity and sexual orientation, and other aspects of identity and experience that have been overlooked and under-valued.

In the region that has been a leader in promoting the idea of meritocracy, it is especially important for ALF SV to recognize the historic and current systems of inequity and to engage the power of our network to dismantle these systems and promote equity through the leadership and collaboration of Senior Fellows and partnerships with others in our organizations and communities.

Milestones on our Journey to Date

2016
- Fellows Program:
  - A commitment to diverse faculty
  - Integrate dialogues centered in DEI throughout the entire year
  - Commitment by Network Development Committee and CEO to increase Fellows class diversity
- Senior Fellows Offerings:
  - Faith Leaders Affinity Group
- Board / Staff:
  - ALF Board adds “building a diverse staff” as an evaluation metric of CEO
- CEO and Board Nominating / Governance Committee commit to seating a board that better reflects the demographics of the communities we serve, broadening diversity categories in matrix. (Public and NPO sectors, POC, ALF Class and political diversity.)
- **Mercury News OpEd: Respond to Hate with Love**, written by ALF Faith Leaders and ALF CEO

2017
- **Fellows Program:** Reading list for Fellows program overhauled to include DEI centric content
- **Senior Fellows Offerings:** First Nonprofit CEO Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Liberation (DIEL) cohort began. The work of this cohort was an acceleration point for the organization in developing its own DIEL journey, prioritizing this as a focus moving forward.

2018
- **Fellows Program:**
  - ALF’s Network Development Committee set a goal of 50% POC for every Fellows class moving forward. Goal surpassed in 2019, met in 2020 and 2021.
- **Senior Fellows Offerings:**
  - 2nd Nonprofit CEO DIEL cohort began
  - Facilitation within the community increases as do the requests for ALF to support challenging dialogues related to equity issues
- **Board / Staff:**
  - Commitment to diversify Executive Committee and board leadership pipeline

2019
- **Fellows Program:**
  - Refreshed ALF Fellows Class curriculum with a focus on equity. Shift from “race dialogue day” to race equity dialogues embedded throughout the year.
- **Senior Fellows Offerings:**
  - Seated and began dialogue between city staff and community leaders on equity and gentrification
- **Board / Staff:**
  - Staff and Board craft a Values Statement addressing ALF’s foundational commitment to DEI

2020
- **Fellows Program:**
  - Dialogues on race, racism and murders of black men and women by law enforcement throughout the Fellows year
  - Special additional sessions scheduled with *Decolonizing Wealth* Author Edgar Villaneuva; *Winners Take All* Author Anand Giridharadas; a history of racism with
Fellow Rick Banks, Author, Stanford Law Professor and Director of the new Stanford Center for Racial Justice.

- **Senior Fellows Offerings:**
  - 3rd Nonprofit CEO DIEL cohort began, 1st & 2nd cohorts continue. Curriculum for this work is finalized.
  - ALF Insights facilitation work formally launched with a focus on race equity as a centering principal in the approach.
  - Held large dialogue convenings with nationally-recognized leaders for equity:
    - We the People Democracy Initiative: Eric Liu, Anand Giridharadas, Eric Ward
    - ALF National & local partner events: Ibram X Kendi, Edgar Villanueva, Dr. Clayborne Carson
    - Produced and distributed podcasts *Money as Medicine: A Dialogue with Edgar Villanueva* and *We the People with Eric Ward: Building an Inclusive Democracy*
  - Political Perspectives Dialogue Circles brought together diverse Senior Fellows to practice and strengthen skills for dialogue across differences, including issues of equity and race, gender, immigration, etc.
  - Staff & Senior Fellows partnered to develop and lead new Affinity Groups focused on equity: Arts & Culture Leaders, Foundation Leaders, Re-Imagining Public Safety & Justice Systems
  - Staff & Senior Fellows partnered to develop and lead dialogue events focused on equity: COVID & Race, Policing, Immigration, Education Equity, Corporate Leadership and Board Leadership for Racial Equity, Film as a Pathway for Courageous Conversation with SV African American Film Festival.
  - Solicited Senior Fellow input on deepening ALF’s racial equity work through focus groups, 1:1 conversations, and a survey.
  - White Leaders Learning Circle began as a place to explore history and harms of white supremacy culture, challenge each other to learn and grow and to shift their mindset.
  - 3 BIPOC Racial Caucuses/Affinity Groups formed: AAPI, Black & Latino/a/x
    - AAPI Caucus members wrote OpEd: Asian Americans call for vaccine equity for Latinx & Black communities
    - La Comunidad for Justice, Equity & Inclusion wrote letters to Newsom and other state officials and met with State Senator re. vaccine equity
    - AAPI Caucus contributed to and signed-on to Joint Statement of Solidarity Condemning Anti-Asian Violence and wrote and spoke to Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
    - AAPI Caucus sent letters to Newsom and Biden about AAPI representation in appointments

- **Board / Staff:**
  - A message from the ALF Board of Directors - response to George Floyd murder.
  - Mercury News Op Ed: “By working together, we can build a better Silicon Valley” in response to George Floyd murder, call to action of white leaders.
- *Call Me In: The Intersection of Race, Privilege and Leadership* podcast produced with Founders of the original CEO DIEL cohort.

- Network Weaver asked to lead ongoing DEI journey for ALF staff

- Monthly staff development sessions on equity issues began

- CEO / Board Members co-create a Complicity Audit to be released as a part of The ALF Way brand / content (4th pillar - strategic plan.)

- June 2020: CEO / board engage in living our DEI values as an organization. Resulting in Vice Chair organizing board discussion and learning groups.

- ALFSV CEO begins ALF National Board DEI work, facilitating learning circles and creating BIPOC Caucus.

- ALFSV CEO wrote [Hashtags aren’t enough](#) blog post in response to resurging anti-Asian racism

- ALFSV CEO and Board member spoke on panel of allies at Tech for AAPI event

2021

- Added gender / ethnic diversity to Fellows program lead facilitation

- Seeking funding for three 20 person DIEL cross-sector learning circles

- Board staff retreat: Creating an organizational vision statement for ALF’s DEI work to be incorporated into our strategic plan pillars

- Developed a strategy screen to prioritize DIEL work

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**What DEI looks like within ALF, with ALF SF leadership, in our community.**

American Leadership Forum Silicon Valley commits to putting diversity, equity and inclusion at the foundation of our organization. When we assemble teams – whether they be staff, board members, Fellows classes or network gatherings – we design for maximum diversity. For ALF, achieving maximum diversity means not creating silos or “choirs,” but instead bringing leaders from divergent perspectives together to build bridges of understanding across difference through dialogue with deep listening and honest sharing. Leveraging ALF dialogue strategies and expertise in creating impactful convenings, we aim to curate the conditions for learning and empathy by engaging people with a wide variety of experiences and points of view through diversity in age, ethnicity, race, gender and sexual orientation, political orientation, religion, socioeconomic background, and sector. If we are creating and designing relationship building and problem-solving curriculum and containers for the “community,” then it is imperative that “community” be at the table. In addition, ALF believes that much opportunity lies within dialogues that embrace productive tension. It is only through staying at the table that we will realize the full potential of what this community can create together.
Our plans & commitments moving forward.
ALF Silicon Valley’s DEI journey is continuous and ongoing. As such, this is a living document, with details of our learnings and journey to be updated in real time.

Supporting documents:
- Values statement Fall 2019 from Board & staff retreat discussion
- DIEL Matrix Origin Story

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**ALF Board of Directors**

Jayne Battey, Class XXIV
Muhammed Chaudhry, Education XXVI
Mary Dent, Class XXV
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Tom Hicks, Class XXVII
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John Hollar, Board Chair, Class, XXIV
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Kim Rivera, Class XXXIII
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Richard Slavin, Class XIX
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David Yarnold, Class XII

**ALF Staff**

Akemi Flynn, Class XXVII
Jenny Niklaus, Class XXIV
Huong Nguyen
Suzanne St. John-Crane, XXV / XXXIV
Mark Tolley
Richard Vega

**CEO DIEL Cohorts**

**Cohort 1**
Tamara Alvarado
Shiloh Ballard, Class XXVII
Alison Brunner, Class XXIX
Camille Llanes-Fontanilla, Urbanism XXXVIII
Poncho Guevara, Class XXIII
Cayce Hill, Urbanism XL
Walter Moore, Class XXVII
Naomi Nakano Matsumoto, Class XXIV
Chris Wilder, Class XXI
Kevin Zwick, Class XXV

**Cohort 2**
Milan Balinton
Lesye Corsiglia
Megan Fluke
Veronica Goei
Greg Kepferle, Class XXII
Sarita Kohli, Class XXXV
Michele Lew, Class XXI
Dave Mineta, Class XXXIII
Tom Myers
Esther Peralez-Dieckmann

**Cohort 3**
Reymundo Espinoza, Class XX
Shawn Gerth, Class XXXV
Darcie Green, Class XXVIII
Anjee Helstrup-Alvarez, Class XXXVII
Shelene Huey-Booker
Kyra Kazantzis, Urbanism XXXVI
Ray Montgomery
Josh Selo
Pete Settlmayer
Wisa Uemura, Class XXXI
**Faith Leaders**

Melanie Aron, Class VIII  
Dana Bainbridge, Class XXXIV  
Zahra Billoo, Class XXXIII  
Sammie Evans  
Diane Fisher, Class XXXVII  
Dana Magat, Class XXIV  
Ray Montgomery  
Jeff Moore, Class XXVIII*  
Naomi Nakano-Matsumoto, Class XXIV  
Peter Pabst, Class XXXII  
Nancy Palmer Jones  
Jon Pedigo, Class XXIX  
Steve Pinkston, Class XXX  
Jason Reynolds, Class XXXIII  
Gerald Sakamoto, Class X  
Mark Teagle

**Arts & Culture Leaders**

Tommy Aguilar, Urbanism XXXVI  
Tamara Alvarado  
Demone Carter, Urbanism XXXVI  
Bruce Davis, Class XIV  
Moy Eng, Class XXV  
Chris Esparza, Class XXXIV  
Barbara Goldstein, Urbanism XXXVIII  
Anjee Helstrup-Alvarez, Class XXXVII  
Roy Hirabayashi, Class XVIII  
Connie Martinez, Class X  
Fil Maresca, Urbanism XXXVIII  
Chike Nwoffiah, Class XXI  
Jessica Paz-Cedillos, Class XL  
Brendan Rawson, Class XXXI  
James Williams, Class XXXIII  
Wisa Uemura, Class XXIX  
Alexandra Urbanowski, Class XI

**Re-Imagining Public Safety & Justice Systems Learning Community**

Zahra Billoo, Class XXXIII  
George Brown, Class XXV  
Shelyna Brown, Class XXIX  
Marc Buller, Class XXVII  
Salvador Bustamante, Class XVIII  
Teresa Castellanos, Class XXVI  
Maha Elgenaide, Class XVII  
David Epps, Class XXIX  
Christa Gannon, Class XXV  
James Gonzales, Class XXVII*  
Darcie Green, Class XXVIII  
Sparky Harlan, Class XII  
David Honda, Class XXVII  
Raj Jayadev, Class XXII  
David Mineta, Class XXXIII  
Ray Montgomery  
Esther Peralez-Dieckmann  
Rolanda Pierre Dixon, Class IX  
Steve Preminger, Class VIII  
Jason Reynolds, Class XXXIII  
Angel Rios, Class X

**Political Perspective Dialogue Circles**

Salvador Bustamante, Class XVIII  
Teresa Castellanos, Class XXVI  
Jim Cunneen, Class XIV  
Eddie Garcia, Class XVIII  
Darcie Green, Class XVIII  
Dotty Hayes, Class XIX  
Joe Head, Class VI  
Ken Hill, Urbanism XXXVIII  
Roy Hirabayashi, Class XVIII  
Ron Katz, Class XXIX  
Janikke Klem, Urbanism XXXIV  
Kyra Kazantzis, Urbanism XXXIV  
Becky Morgan, Class VI  
Steve Nakano, Urbanism XL  
Chris Norwood, Class XXVII  
Lynne Pederson, Class XXXVII  
Diane Savage, Class XVI*  
Quinn Tran, Class XV*  
Jane Williams, Class XVII  
Kirsten Wolberg, Class XXXIII  
Kathleen Yates, Class I
La Comunidad for Justice, Equity and Inclusion

Tommy Aguilar, Class XXXVI
Teresa Alvarado, Class XIX
Jaime Alvarado, Class XXII
Dolores Alvarado, Class XXVII
Elizabeth Alvarez, Class XXVI*
Chad Bojorquez, Class XXIV
Salvador Bustamante, Class XVIII
Lydia Bustamante, Class XXVI
Nora Campos, Class XV
Xavier Campos, Class XX
Teresa Castellanos, Class XXVI
Lori Castillo Martinez, Class XXXVII*
Gina Dalma, Class XXX*

Chris Esparza, Class XXXIV
Reymundo Espinoza, Class X
Frederick Ferrer, Class XI
Eddie Garcia, Class XVIII
Jossue Garcia, Class XXI
Jessica Garcia-Kohl, Class XXXIV
Tim Giles, Class XXXVII*
Ron Gonzales, Class III
Darcie Green, Class XXVIII
Poncho Guevara, Class XXIII
Lennies Gutierrez, Class XXXVI
Raul Loyeli, Class XXII
Rita Mancera, Class XXVIII

Miguel Marquez Class XXXIX
Raul Peralez, Class XXXI
Fernando Perez, Urbanism XL
Sal Pizarro, Class XXXV
Patricia Reguerin, Class XXVI
Sara Reyes, Class XXX
Kim Rivera, Class XXXIII
Louis Rocha, Class XIII
Omar Rodriguez, Urbanism XXXVIII
Robert Sapien, Jr., Class XXV
Fernando Zazueta, Class VII

Black@ALF

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Tony Alexander, Class XXVII
Harvey Anderson, Class XXXVII*
Paul Bains, Class XVI
Leon Beauchman, Class XX*
George Brown, Class XXV
Rick Callender, Class XIX
Andre Chapman, Class XXIII
Ken Coleman, Class III
Careatha Coleman, Class VIII*
Mark Dean, Class XVII
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Christie Hardwick, Class XIV
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Luther Jackson, Class X
Beverly Johnson, Class XXI
Lisa Jones, Class XXVI
Ronne Lott, Class XI
Aubrey Merriman, Class XXXVII
Hugh Molotsi, Class XXXII
Chris Norwood, Class XXVIII*

Anita Nunes, Class XXXV
Chike Nwoffiah, Class XI
Lynne Pederson, Class XXXVII
Jason Reynolds, Class XXXIII
Tim Russell, Class XXXV
Nicole Taylor, Class XXXIX
Tony Vanwinkle, Class XXXIX* 
Tony Williams, Class XI
Barry Williams, Class XX*
Rick Williams, Class XXXIII

AAPI Caucus

Margaret Abe-Koga, Class XXII
Suresh Bhat, Class XXXVII
Zahra Biloo, Class XXXIII
Melissa Cerezo, Urbanism XXXVIII
Michael Chang, Class XV
Hedy Chang, Class XIV
Muhammed Chaudhry, Education XXVI*
Porcia Chen Silverberg, Class XXIII*
Winnie Chu, Class V
Hien Do, Urbanism XXXVI
Jenny Do, Class XXII
Akemi Flynn, Class XXVII
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Paul Fong, Class XVII
PJ Hirabayashi, Class XXIX
Roy Hirabayashi, Class XVIII
Tiffany Ho, Class XIX

Wendy Ho, Urbanism XL
Michael Honda, Class I
David Honda, Class XXVII
Jimmy Hong, Class XXXIII
Aftab Jamil, Class XXVII
Rosemary Kamei, Class XXIX
Karen King, Class XXIV
Sarita Kohli, Class XXV
Vandana Kumar, Class XXXIX
Hsing Kung, Class XIII
Deepika Lalwani, Class XVII
Minh Le, Class XIV*
Otto Lee, Class XXIV
Michele Lew, Class XXI
Nancy Lue, Class XXXII
Grace Mah, Class XXXII
David Mineta, Class XXXII

Anna Mok, Class XXXI
Steve Nakano, Urbanism XL
Naomi Nakano-Matsumoto, Class XXIV
Quynh-Mai Nguyen, Urbanism XL
Marie Oh-Huber, Class XVII
Mahmood Panjwani, Class XXVII
Chester Te, Class XXXV
Buu Thai, Class XXVIII
Rose Tseng, Class III
Wisa Uemura, Class XXXI
Quyen Vuong, Class XX
Chester Wang, Class VI
Belle Wei, Class XXIII
Irene Wong, Class XVIII
Gordon Yamate, Class XIX
Erica Yew, Class XV
White Leader Learning Circle

David Bini, Class XXXIX
Dana Bunnett, Education XXVII
Lesyle Corsiglia
Stacy Cross
Debra Engel, Class VII
Dotty Hayes, Class XIX
Judy Heyboer, Class XVIII
Courtney Karnes, Class XXXVII
Nanci Klein, Class XXXVII
Maureen O’Connor, Class XXXIX
Brent Pearse, Urbanism XL
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Laurel Prevetti, Urbanism XXXIV
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Leah Toeniskotter, Class XXIV
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Blage Zelalich, Urbanism XXXIV

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Catherine Crystal Foster, Class Class XXXI
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Sid Espinosa, Class XXVII
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Susan Ford Dorsey, Class XI
Maria Garcia
Jessica Garcia-Kohl, Urbanism XXXIV
Deanna Gomby
Karen Grove
Claudia Harvey
Sandy Herz
Kathy Jackson, Class XXXI
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Siobhan Kenney, Class XXIV
Janikke Klem, Urbanism XXXIV
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Nicole Taylor, Class XXXIX
Lisa Van Dusen
Jessica Weare, Urbanism XL
Cole Wilbur, Class VIII
Chris Wilder, Class XXI
Mara Williams Low
Erica Wood, Class XXVII

Leaders of Dialogue Events

Harvey Anderson, Class XXXVII
Aparna Bawa, Class XXXIII
Dana Bunnett, Class XXVIII
Mary Ann Dewan, Class XXXIX
Chris Funk, Class XXVI
Taryn Ishida, Class XXVIII
Thanh Ngo, Class XXIV
Dan Siciliano, Class XXXI
Preston Smith, Class XXVIII
Frances Teso, Class XXXII

Group participants as of 3/31/2021

Names with a star (*) in the list above indicates leaders who have participated as planners, facilitators, and speakers for our dialogue events

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