

# ***Equity for All Arizonans***

## **EQUITY AND IDENTITY FUTURE LEADERS TOWN HALL**

### **October 18, 2023 – Phoenix, AZ**

#### **DEFINING EQUITY AND ITS IMPACT**

Equity is giving people what they need so they can be the best person they can be. It provides people with opportunity and gives those who need more what they need to succeed. It is finding that sweet spot where everyone has what they need to meet their full potential. Equity helps uplift people and can include providing Pell grants, food stamps or other resources that put people on the same playing field.

Equality by contrast is providing people with the basic rights that everyone deserves.

#### **OPTIMIZING EVERYONE'S POTENTIAL THROUGH EQUITABLE APPROACHES**

In a capitalist society it is challenging to be equitable. Nonetheless, an equitable approach is important to reach those who have the greatest needs and to make opportunities to succeed more fair. An equitable approach elevates all members of the community to a higher level. Without an equitable approach, people in need will crumble while those above will thrive.

An equitable approach is vital to our community, state, and country. An equitable approach helps society, changing one person at a time for the benefit of the community at large.

The people of our state have immense potential and we should choose to invest in our communities. This investment will propel us into the future of education innovation and a more ideal society.

#### **IMPROVING COMMUNITIES THROUGH EQUITY**

Equity in practice is giving people proper representation and voice, including in education, health care, employment services, housing and throughout local government. It provides opportunities to those who need it, including children and those who identify as LGBTQ+.

We can improve our community if we stop taking away the rights of those who identify as LGBTQ+. It is not only not equitable to take away their rights, but also not treating them equally. Equity means providing housing and resources to the LGBTQ+ youth as they often are kicked out of their homes because their parents do not support them. Instead of taking away people's rights, we should have compassion for them.

Phoenix is a diverse city and would be a great starting point for using equity as a principle whether for housing or through other methods. Phoenix can lead equity efforts and be an example for the rest of the state. Thrift shops, YWCAs, and food banks are all examples of places that are equity based and help improve communities by establishing communities that combine all these aspects.

We all have the opportunity to help our community using equity as an approach for doing so. We can find these opportunities at every level of our state. This starts with education, participating in democracy, and calling on our elected officials to legislate for the better good and purpose of equity.

#### **NEXT STEPS AND ACTIONS**

There are a multitude of actions that can be taken to address the issues we are facing--primarily it means focusing on equity as a whole. For example, we can advocate for an economic bill of rights

which would outline the basics of equity that every person deserves. Those in government should also acknowledge the importance of social justice as an important concept within governmental systems.

Our elected leaders have the power to address these issues and they work for us. We have the power to address these issues at the polls and by making our voices heard. Voting is very important—especially for people who care about people and everyone’s rights as opposed to those who are just in office for power. People are more important than power. We need to hold our state representatives accountable for advocating for marginalized communities. We should have them abolish bills that do not have integrity and that do not support marginalized communities who are targeted.

Providing testimony about firsthand experiences is important as is protesting. We need to all have conversations about the rights and needs of the LGBTQ+ community and be allies and supporters wherever we can.

Over policing has traumatized marginalized communities. Focusing on community services over policing is important and can promote more equitable communities. The government has historically favored those in power over everyone else. To make up for this, the government should provide additional housing and job opportunities for those who need it.

State and local government have the power to change communities on a micro scale. Cultural leaders also have immense power in our media heavy society.

We are the generation of the future. We are the government of the future. We are the future.

### **INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENTS TO ACTION**

Recognizing that the power to change the future begins with each individual, participants committed to take personal actions based on their experience and discussions during the Equity and Identity Future Leaders Town Hall. Below are individual actions that were shared.

#### ***I WILL...***

- Give platforms to marginalized groups.
- Turn my art into saleable pieces which will take a while, but I will do anything in my power to get to that kind of skill.
- Look at others in an equal way even if they are not like me. I will help and stand with them.
- Be kind and respectful every day.
- Do a good turn daily.
- Keep doing my best.
- Stand up for myself towards injustices, and even for my fellow minorities in order to make changes, even if it is on a minor level.
- Stand up for what is right and what I believe in. I will not give in to bigots.
- As a marginalized youth, speak out for those in the community like me that cannot speak for themselves.
- Help stand for those who are treated unjustly or those who cannot stand on their own.
- Connect with my community to provide ways to amplify our voices.
- Advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and equality.
- Stand up for myself and others around me.
- Be kind to all the best I can!

- Vote for the people who will help the community and want change, especially vote for the people who support LGBTQ+ rights.
- Vote for the right people, donate to LGBTQ programs, and unionize for LGBTQ rights in the workplace.
- Unionize my workplace.
- Continue to help those I need to.