

BETTER TOGETHER

150

# THINGS YOU CAN DO TO BUILD A Better Community



*Community capital is built through hundreds of little and big actions we take every day. We've gotten you started with a list of ideas, drawn from suggestions made by the citizens of Tallahassee following their participation in the October 2006 Summit on Race, Cultural and Human Relations and the Day of Dialogue held in January 2007.*

DOING TOGETHER

Mayor's Summit on Race, Culture and Human Relations

## PERSONAL ACTIONS

1. Involve seniors as EQUALS in community projects and activities to provide more energy, skills and wisdom.
2. Be kind to all people.
3. Take responsibility to learn about cultures, your own and others in our community.
4. Join or volunteer with groups that attract diverse people.
5. Boycott discriminatory businesses. Report illegal practices to responsible agencies.
6. Learn about the candidates for local, state and national elections and VOTE.
7. Support/attend FAMU, FSU and TCC entertainment, cultural and athletic events.
8. Talk to and trust people of other cultures and races.
9. Be patient and continue to be positive. Remember, change takes time.
10. Decide to challenge those behaviors that demonstrate disrespect to people who are different from you. Look for similarities in people and not differences.
11. Vow not to use racial slurs.
12. Be more tolerant of people in our community who are different from you.
13. Take the time to visit other neighborhoods.
14. Make friends with someone at the office that you may not know.
15. Introduce young children to the arts.
16. Provide resources for those less fortunate than others.
17. Learn about other cultures and apply that learning in your life.
18. Treat all people fairly.
19. Travel to other countries and experience the cultures first hand.
20. Attend religious services for different races and cultures.
21. Actively support businesses owned by people of color.
22. Confront stereotypes, both your own and others.

23. Become a spokesperson for breast cancer awareness.
24. If it is not your inclination to think about race, commit at least one day each month to thinking about how issues of racial prejudice and privilege might be affecting each person you come into contact with that day.
25. Make a point to raise your concerns about comments or actions that appear prejudicial, even if you are not the target of those actions.
26. Initiate a dialog on race within your workplace, school, neighborhood, or religious community.
27. Support institutions that promote racial inclusion
28. Participate in a community project to reduce racial disparities in opportunity and well-being.
29. Insist that institutions that teach us about our community accurately reflect the diversity of our nation.
30. Take a look at groups you can influence and examine how they can increase their commitment to reducing racial disparities, lessening discrimination, and improving race relations.
31. Start a cultural mentoring program that is not only job based.
32. Work with your local school board to ensure that the schools teach an American History curriculum that is balanced and presents an accurate, multi-cultural perspective of American History.
33. Organize a social gathering to welcome a neighbor who may be new to the country.
34. Attend town meetings and become involved in making policies that affect your community.
35. Start a community garden similar to the one FAMU sponsors and invite people from differing backgrounds to join the activity.
36. Speak at or host a monthly brown bag lunch series on diversity at your local library.
37. Join groups (e.g., arts, sports, religion) that have participants who are ethnically, racially and culturally diverse.
38. Host a potluck dinner of cultural foods.
39. Make sure the boards and committees of organizations in which you participate are diverse.
40. Be sensitive to others and forgive their mistakes.
41. Don't use language codes that keep others out and let others in.
42. Be sensitive to other's circumstances.
43. Initiate a community outreach program to get to know others.
44. Get to know people as individuals. Start in your neighborhood.

45. Give all generations a chance to participate in activities; learn from others and where they come from.
46. Hold public officials accountable.
47. Work towards quality dialogue, not necessarily quantity.
48. Work at grass root's level to close the digital divide; donate your used computer.
49. Speak the goal's of unity and equity out loud to gain the support of others.
50. Promote peace by starting respect for oneself and for individuals.
51. Host car washes or bake sales (raise money by whatever means) and provide for a needy family not just at holiday times but also throughout the year.
52. Provide a service that comes from your abilities for an individual or a family, i.e. babysitting, cooking a meal, or giving someone a ride to the doctor or work, etc.
53. Donate your used clothes, furniture, and other items to areas of town that are in need or churches that provide for the needy instead of giving these things to Goodwill.
54. Get to know someone you don't know, who is not in "your circle." Take them to dinner and a movie.
55. Pick someone up from the bus stop that you pass by everyday and give him or her a ride.
56. Give someone a present and don't let them know whom it is from.
57. Serve dinner at the homeless shelter.
58. Take a homeless person to dinner and sit with them and talk.
59. Buy a homeless person a new or give them a gently used coat.
60. Attend festivals sponsored by private groups such as the Greek Food Festival, the Hispanic Festival, the Middle Eastern Festival, etc. in order to learn of other cultures.
61. Encourage cultural groups to become more visible and active in the community.
62. Identify needs and start a fix it group willing to help clean, paint, garden, etc for those who are not physically able to do so.
63. Read.
64. Do no harm.
65. Invite a friend or just go to a cultural event that you would not normally attend.
66. Reconnect and reengage school dropouts.
67. Revive family ties and time.
68. Plan healthy meals.
69. Young people should challenge negative family views about race, culture and religion.

70. Audition for community theater or be an usher.

71. Support the whole child program.

### **Local Government**

72. Display World map pinpointing where employees are from to demonstrate diversity in your business.

73. Sponsor a cultural exchange with people of other nations.

74. Offer cultural exchanges of families and workers.

75. Offer activities in all forms at multiple locations throughout the city. Hold sessions in an accessible place and time to encourage participation.

76. Have large community, tax-financial events representative and appealing to the entire community.

77. Offer cultural events representative of all racial and ethnic groups.

78. Feature bands at City events attractive to multicultural audiences; i.e., African Americans (Jazz/Blues, R&B), Hispanic and Latino.

79. Promote more study circles at COT and community.

80. Create a community profile, demographics, schools and information, on government services and community activity.

81. Offer telecommuter option for as many jobs as possible.

82. Create and maintain cross-cultural committees establishing rules for hiring.

83. List community events on the City's website.

84. Have "pep" rallies downtown before ALL home football games for BOTH FAMU & FSU.

85. Combine the Caribbean and Asian Festivals to three days International Festival just like Jacksonville does. It will increase the cultural awareness and has major impact on local economy.

86. Encourage multi-cultural celebrations of all cultures.

87. Offer Art of Living centers in Tallahassee. Art of Living founded by Sri Sri Rabi Shankar.

88. Support affordable and accessible housing to expand housing opportunities for more residents.

89. Create a business friendly atmosphere to attract new and expanded private industry. In turn, a vibrant economy will retain educated professionals in our workforce.

90. Develop a youth center in Tallahassee. This is different from current recreation centers such as Dade Street.

91. Break the stereotypes against criminal offenders and accept them back into the community.

92. Support the Restoration of the civil rights of ex-offenders.

93. Support, expand and promote our drug courts.

94. Increase communication between all branches of government.
95. Have the local governments consider resolutions of support for national healthcare and insurance.
96. Expand Downtown Improvements boundaries.
97. Create task force to study and recommend action on illegal immigration in area.
98. Hold Day of Dialogue three times a year using the format of round table discussions.
99. Insure that economic development and financial opportunities are marketed to all ethnic, social and economic groups in our community.
100. Provide incentive to local businesses to add new positions to grow local economy.
101. Review local codes for minimum housing standards related to migrant worker housing.
102. Support coordination of human services programs.
103. Create a government education day for middle and high school students.
104. Create a citizens academy for college students.
105. Expand the International Student Reception to include high school students

for the purpose of information exchange about culture.

106. Offer seminars on nonviolence and peace and the teachings of Gandhi, King, and Iketa as a special event connected to the Summit.

*107. Offer diverse main concert performances that appeal to broad ethnic interest at the Celebrate America event.*

*108. Ask local government to confirm to the public that the emergency evacuation plans of the City, County and State are coordinated and effective in addressing the lessons learned from Katrina.*

109. Expand diversity of women and minorities in all segments of the Police and Fire departments.

110. Hold City and County Commission meetings twice a year at community locations.

111. Create task force to review state landlord/tenant laws and issues.

112. Put young people on community boards and councils.

### **RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS**

113. Participate in inter-denominational pulpit exchange as—religious leaders should visit (preach and share) in different religious churches/communities.

114. Make hospital chapels available to all religious groups.

115. Make religious facilities more accessible.

116. Religious leaders could develop a course on religious tolerance that could be taught as part of social studies in the school system and in their own congregations.

117. Christians could “adopt” a family from a Jewish temple; Buddhist could “adopt” a Christian family, etc. The purpose of the “adoption” would be to expose those families to cultures that they may not understand.

118. Create a brochure that would show the similarities between the various religious groups. The information could be the first step in erasing religious ignorance and building religious tolerance.

### **SCHOOL BOARD**

119. Rezone schools to balance diversity in each school.

120. Assign teachers and volunteers of different races to predominately one-race schools, i.e., Bond, Chiles, etc.

121. Know your school board members and participate in setting school policy.

122. Share oral history across race, culture and age.

123. Establish inter-school pen pal program focusing on diversity.

124. Schools should increase minority outreach to ensure completion/graduation.

125. Promote cross-district schooling.

126. Develop incentives for parental involvement in school activities.

### **CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE**

127. Hold joint meeting on economic development involving both chambers of Commerce.

128. Sponsor high school youth entrepreneur clubs at each high school.

129. Recruit university students into paid internship programs in their field of interest for a minimum of 6 months. Hire or advocate for hiring.

130. Create a diversity search committee for your organization or business.

131. Hire the RIGHT person, not just people that look like you; minority recruitment.

132. Ensure that employees recognize and respect diversity.

133. Encourage businesses to establish policies supporting parent involvement in school activities.

### **COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

134. Institute orientation program on cultural respect.

135. Expand college programs that provide middle school and high school students the opportunity to experience college life.

136. Invite the various colleges at FAMU, FSU and TCC to adopt a class and schedule mentoring days with the class.

This will help the students see higher education as a possibility.

137. Invite the local university presidents or designees to speak to students in elementary and middle school about the importance of good grades, good attendance and good test scores in being accepted in college.

138. FSU and FAMU bands should organize and participate in a joint community concert.

### **MEDIA ISSUES**

139. Utilize PSA's to promote the issues that may serve to bring the citizens of Tallahassee and the surrounding communities, closer together. This could include: community calendar, letters to the editors, billboards, announcements at public meetings and religious gathering.

140. Produce WCOT monthly 30-minute forum on youth issues in Tallahassee.

141. Start a "Friendly City" campaign. Celebrate the progress the city has made in this area. Use billboards, ads, and other local media to promote Tallahassee as a friendly, multi-racial, multi-cultural city. Let our citizens know that this is who we are and what we value. Friendliness and tolerance is contagious.

142. Listen to News and Notes on NPR (WFSU) weeknights at 8:00 to hear the

issues and politics facing the African American community.

143. Residents should inform the media of positive activities.

144. Media should highlight positive activities identified by the public.

145. Create a greater awareness for broadband value for all segments of the community.

### **OTHER ISSUES**

146. Increase monies to support technology education in all segments of the community.

147. Work with the homeless shelter to identify those individuals who are ready to reenter the workforce and pair them up with an adviser who can help them with the process.

148. Host a citywide swap meet where people can bring "working" items they no longer need and swap it for something they can use. This event could bring people together from all walks of life.

149. Lending institutions should expand the frequency and locations of their homebuyers' seminars.

150. Establish a living museum that would allow citizens to record their family history for all to share.