

## Growing Our Capacity for Racial Justice

As many of you know, we've been diligently working to lay a foundation that will prepare AS220 to engage in a formalized process that will support our growth into an anti-racist organization. Creating a solid structure from which to build was crucial and included racial justice training, developing goals, creating affinity groups, securing funding, cultivating partnerships, bringing new people onto the AS220 Board of Directors and designing a strategy for engaging our local community. Remaining open for iteration such as the BIPOC Demands, internalizing those demands and caring for those who have transitioned in and out of the organization was just as much a part of "preparing the soil" as anything else mentioned above.

This work takes a great deal of care, repair and inner work that can feel and be messy. I'm grateful for the emotional labor that y'all have done on behalf of AS220 and our community. To our BIPOC staff especially, thank you for using your experience, brilliance and magic to support this 35 year old organization's growth into the kind of place I think we all truly believe it desires to be. Your demands have been heard and will form the basis of this process moving forward.

So now that we have "prepared the soil" what happens next? How do we transform everything that we've learned over the past year into a choreographed process that will allow for more voices and creative solutions to shine through? Over the next 10 months, just about the time it takes to develop and birth a child, we will focus on 3 growth stages: 1) *Plant* 2) *Water* 3) *Grow* 4) *Harvest*

### **PLANT (January + February)**

- 1) Form committees starting with staff (*Community, Policy, Education*). Committees will meet biweekly starting the week of Jan 18th. Committees will be led by artist-organizers from the community who know AS220 well and are actively engaged in anti-racist organizing efforts.
- 2) During weekly staff meetings, all staff will explore the principles and elements of *Emergent Strategy* by adrienne maree brown. We will use this information to assist in our organizing efforts and recruitment of community members.
- 3) In our affinity groups, we will revisit the history of race in America and Caste systems around the world. Our anchor text will be *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson. We will cover parts 1-3 this winter.

### **WATER (March, April + May)**

- 1) Onboard Community + Board members by giving an overview of Racial Justice Initiative and providing a workshop on American Race History.
- 2) In our committees, we will explore the first 3 phases of the *Liberatory Design* process: Notice, Empathize + Define.
- 3) In our affinity groups, we will continue to read *Caste* parts 4-6 with a focus on learning how the caste system was constructed and what the consequences have been.

### **GROW (June, July + August)**

- 1) In our committees, we will turn our attention to designing antiracist solutions by utilizing the last 3 phases of the *Liberatory Design* Process: Ideate, Prototype and Test.
- 2) Present solutions to a variety of AS220 stakeholders including representatives of the board, staff, alumni and community with a focus on those who have decision making power and those who are most impacted by AS220's culture, policies and procedures.

3) Analyze and integrate feedback from stakeholders. Present final plans at the end of the summer.

**HARVEST (September, October + November)**

In the fall, a diverse group of stakeholders will draft our *multi-year strategic plan* with an associated timeline and proposed budget to implement the work. In December we will have a finalized plan.