

Our Equity & Anti-Racism Journey

OAK PARK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

OPPL.ORG/ANTI-RACISM



Stephen Jackson hired as library's first Director of Equity and Anti-Racism

Joining a handful of public libraries with similar equity-based leadership positions, Oak Park Public Library hired Stephen A. Jackson as the first Director of Equity and Anti-Racism this fall.

As a member of the library's leadership team, Jackson works under the direction of Executive Director David J. Seleb and in collaboration with the library's other directors.

The goal is to support the library's anti-racism journey by improving services, relationships, and opportunities through policies and practices that are equitable, inclusive, and anti-racist.

"Stephen's focus on building relationships, his commitment to serving the community, and his love of public libraries as hubs of learning and connection make him ideal for this role," said Seleb.

A library for everyone

As your public library, we are aware of how choosing to be anti-racist touches everything we do.

That's why we hired a new Director of Equity and Anti-Racism in September (see sidebar). And it's why our Board of Trustees adopted two new policies in October that put our values into action:

The Equity and Anti-Racism Statement commits the library to being equitable and anti-racist in all of our work. This includes our mission and vision, and how we allocate resources.

A Library for Everyone strives to support positive experiences for everyone using library spaces. It outlines guidelines and accountability, and it affirms that the library is committed to serving everyone, especially those who are vulnerable or marginalized, such as those experiencing homelessness or health and income challenges.

Equity and social justice are core values of the library profession, and our library's commitment to equity

has been at least eight years in the making.

Starting in 2013, an intentional process began driving all our work. We started asking Oak Parkers a simple question: What kind of community do you want to live in?

From our patrons, partners, and peers, we consistently heard how important it is that the library be a welcoming place for everyone.

We have a clear vision to empower every voice in our community. So we continue to ask, how can we change to better welcome and serve people who belong to groups that have historically been marginalized and oppressed?

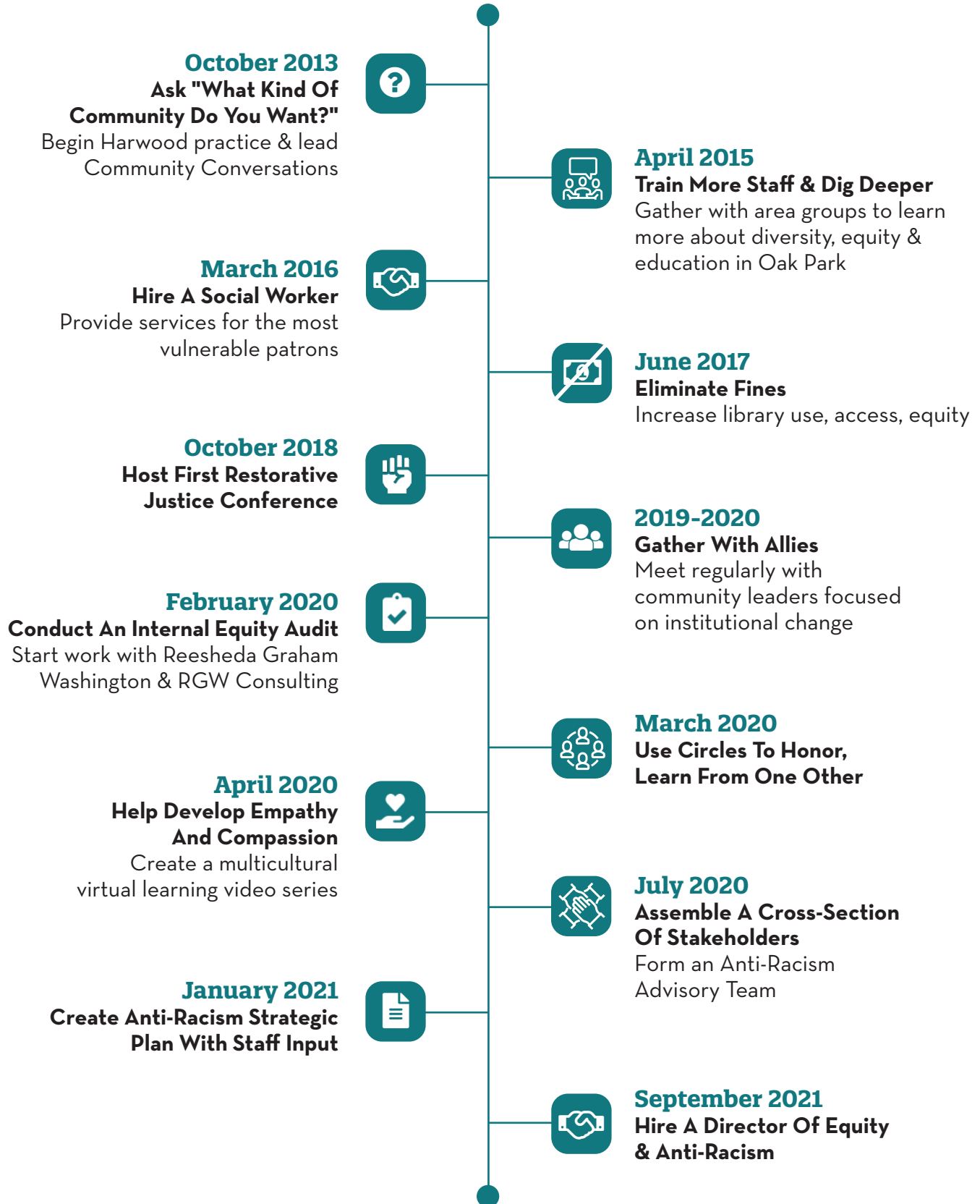
For more on the evolution of our library's journey, see a timeline on the other side and at oppl.org/timeline.

For questions, more information, and how we can work together, please contact Executive Director David J. Seleb (708.697.6911 or davids@oppl.org) and Director of Equity and Anti-Racism Stephen Jackson (stephenj@oppl.org).

Follow us



Milestones in our equity & anti-racism journey



Review more milestones of the library's equity and anti-racism journey and read more about why this work is library work at oppl.org/anti-racism.