



Mid-Year Report

2023



Mission

The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion ensures the city of Little Rock is an equitable place to live, work and play.

Vision

We are leaders in government and in our communities, working together to empower all people to live authentically.



Focus Areas



**Economic
Opportunity**



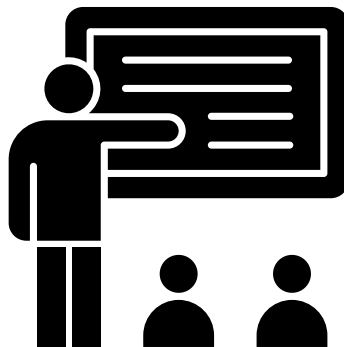
**Community
Engagement**



Leadership



Talent Pipeline



**Education &
Awareness of DEI**

We bridge access and opportunity.

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Message from our Chief Equity Officer



"The first five months of 2023 were full of challenges, opportunities, and growth for our office and our city."

Thank you for taking a moment to look back on the first half of 2023 with us. The first five months of the year were full of challenges, opportunities, and growth for our office and our city. Our team, together with our colleagues and community, hosted a small business development program for our Spanish-speaking residents, engaged in community dialogue, served hundreds of storm survivors, supported two City task forces, and more. We are prepared and excited to implement our plans for the remainder of the year, which will include policy development, programs, and events designed for and with our residents and fellow City employees. We invite you to join us as we continue to bridge access and opportunity.

Looking forward, Amber

Economic Opportunity

We hosted the Emprende Business Development Program in the spring. This cohort consisted of 45 participants with a total graduating class of 34--7 of which are already registered suppliers for the City. Emprende offers Little Rock's Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs a series of 8 free classes on establishing, operating, and growing a business. This one-of-a-kind comprehensive program provides the necessary knowledge, resources, and connections to ensure that our Spanish-speaking community is fully included in—and contributing to—Little Rock's economy. 96% of program participants have a sense of belonging here in Little Rock & 99% would recommend Emprende to other business owners.



In collaboration with 9 local banks, ODEI also hosted a Financial Services Fair designed for our Spanish-speaking community.



Community Engagement

In January, ODEI hosted an Equity Labs Neighborhood Mixer with the Axon Community Impact team at the Mosaic Church. Honing in on residents' top concern that emerged from the series of Equity Labs we led in 2021-22, we invited residents throughout the city to listen and engage with some of the city's youth and hear directly from the people who serve them.

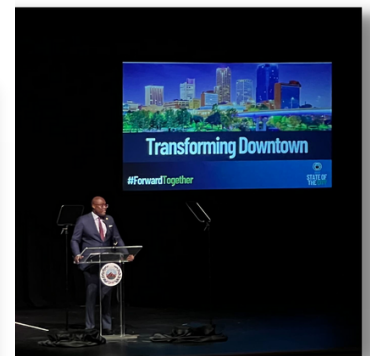


Community Engagement

Along with our communications team and the Little Rock School District, we coordinated the student video contest on “What Black History Month means to me.” The first and second place winners Artlanda Mallet and Bria Ellington hail from the Little Rock West High School of Innovation. Mayor Frank Scott, Jr. paid them a visit on May 26.



ODEI and the Racial and Cultural Diversity Commission supported Mayor's State of the City address with pre-recorded multicultural recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and Spanish language interpretation services.



Community Engagement

Our team collaborated with the UA Little Rock Bowen School of Law Business Innovations Clinic, the Mayor's Constituent Relations Liaison, and the City of Little Rock's Department of Housing & Neighborhood Programs to provide a Love Thy Neighbor workshop for Little Rock's neighborhood associations. The workshop, which is available for viewing on the City's website, provided participants with information about how to register their association as a 501c3 nonprofit, enabling them to gain access to various grant funding programs. The workshop is available for viewing on the City's website.



Emergency Services

Alongside Immanuel Baptist Church, Mayor's team, Community Programs team members, and community volunteers, the ODEI team coordinated two weeks of emergency relief services at the Family Assistance Center following the March 31 storm, serving over 1,500 storm survivors.



Community Engagement

The ODEI team operates the Little Rock Municipal ID program out of the Wakefield Neighborhood Resource Center. At the start of June 2023, ODEI had issued 669 Municipal IDs to residents of the city. Building upon a 2022 ODEI pilot project, our team also hosted 4 Mobile ID Clinics in collaboration with Chicot Elementary School, Mabelvale Middle School, the Southwest Little Rock Community and Business group, and the Mexican Consulate. These clinics allow us to meet people where they are.

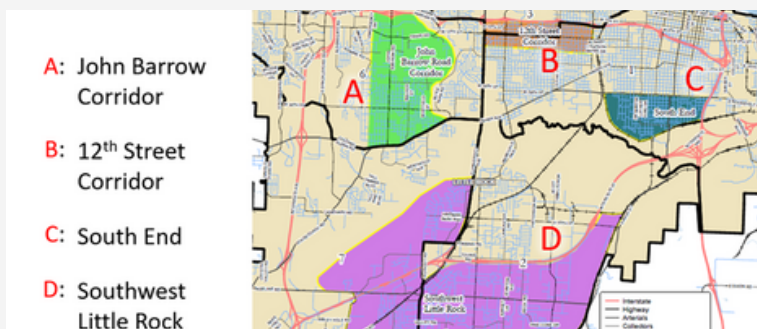


Leadership

Racial and Cultural Diversity Commission: We assisted with the onboarding process for 4 new Commissioners and lent support for the development of the Tales by the River storytelling video montage.



Targeted Community Development Initiative: This 7-member task force sought to address systemic inequality, enhance economic development, and improve the living conditions and overall appearance in areas of Wards 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7. The ODEI supported task force members with the development and presentation of 31 recommendations to the City of Little Rock Board of Directors.



Food Deserts Task Force: Our team supports task force members with survey design and distribution and Spanish language translation.



Photo: courtesy of KARK

Leadership

Awards:

- Mariana Abarca, Multicultural Liaison
2023 LRSD ViPS Volunteer of the Year
- Amber Jackson, Chief Equity Officer
2023 AR Single Parent Scholarship Fund Employer of the Year

Presentations:

- Spoke at the National Day of Racial Healing Press Conference
- Presented to a 40-member cohort of Eastern European Council on International Educational Exchange Fellows
- Presented 5 Ways to be Inclusive at two Community Programs events
- Presented to the Southeast Sustainability Directors Network

Memberships:

- Amber Jackson, Chief Equity Officer
Arkansas Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Network Member

Education:

- Mariana Abarca, Multicultural Liaison, graduated with her Associate's degree from UA Pulaski Technical College this spring. Both she and Juanenna Williams, Program Coordinator, are full-time students.



What's Next for ODEI



Workforce Equity Team

This cross-departmental team with more than 150 years' combined experience at the City will develop systemic, sustainable solutions and build an inclusive culture in the workplace.

Professional Development

In partnership with the City's Communications team and HR, ODEI is collaborating to offer professional development opportunities for City team members.

Emprende

ODEI will host the Emprende small business development program for Spanish-speaking residents again this fall.

Bloomberg Philanthropies

ODEI is serving on the City's data team to develop a theory of change for performance management

Our Team



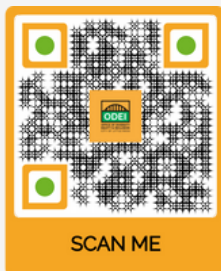
Amber D. Jackson, MPS
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Mariana Abarca
Multicultural Liaison

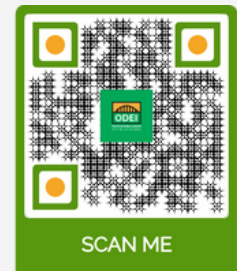
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