



**PEACE AND
JUSTICE INSTITUTE**
All People. All Voices. All Matter.

NEWS FROM CITY HALL

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The City of Sanford's Race, Equality, Equity and Inclusion (REEI) Advisory Committee Invites You to Sanford Speaks

The City of Sanford is committed to ensuring we are inclusive and accepting of all people, because the strength of our community is our diversity. Building on the national initiative to create more equitable communities the City of Sanford, in partnership with the Peace and Justice Institute at Valencia College, is hosting community conversations to identify inequities and develop strategies to address them called Sanford Speaks. Join us!

"As the Mayor of Sanford I know how important it is to hear from everyone as we work toward a more inclusive and accepting community. I encourage your participation in the Sanford Speaks events and look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we can strengthen Sanford to ensure we remain diverse, inclusive and accepting of all while denouncing all forms of hate, bigotry, and discrimination. It is when we work together that we do our best," said Mayor Art Woodruff.

The REEI committee is comprised of a diverse group of 16 local leaders and community volunteers, each recommended by the City Commission. The goals and objectives of the interactive community events, Sanford Speaks, are:

- Develop trust and sensitivity to support interactions with one another across cultural, ethnic, and racial lines.
- Strengthen interpersonal relationships through the sharing of personal stories and experiences.
- Increase awareness and understanding of embedded injustices in healthcare, education, housing, finance, law enforcement, criminal justice, community development, employment and other systems.
- Expand citizen engagement to allow for healing and reconciliation as a pathway to community resilience.

Following the three events, a written report will be submitted to the City Commission on its findings with recommendations and actionable steps to institutionalize equity and inclusion into the culture of the City of Sanford as an organization and the community at large.

"I was pleased and somewhat elated to learn that the City leaders saw the need for commitment to become a City of Equality, Equity, and Inclusion. Thus the creation of a Race, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee (REEI) began. The REEI committee quickly became cognizant of the fact that the most essential first step is community engagement. Therefore, the (3) three Sanford Speaks events have been planned to afford the citizens the opportunity to speak out regarding their concerns, opinions, needs, perceptions, and any other questions regarding equality, equity, and inclusion in the City of Sanford. Input from the citizens and the REEI Advisory Committee will be submitted to City leaders along with strategies to address the inequities. Yes, the city needs to hear and must accept open and honest conversation from the citizens as the cornerstone for success," said Dr. Velma H. Williams, REEI Committee Co-Chair

Public participation is critical to the end goal of the REEI. Your voice matters. Join us by registering for any of the three workshops:

March 24th -12:00 – 2:00 pm Virtual Event on ZOOM: [Register Here](#)

April 26th - 6:00 – 8:30 pm , free boxed dinner provided at 5:00 pm, Crooms Academy: [Register Here](#)

May 19th 6:00 – 8:30 pm , free boxed dinner provided at 5:00 pm, Sanford Civic Center: [Register Here](#)

For more information visit: <https://sanfordfl.gov/government/community-relations/race-equality-equity-and-inclusion-committee/>

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