

Northeast Network of Immigrant Farming Projects

PRESS RELEASE

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Additional background materials and photos are available at:
<http://www.nnifp.org>

Anti-Racism Training Hosted by NNIFP

24 Participants Attended Workshop Given by DRWorks

The Northeast Network of Immigrant Farming Projects ("NNIFP") hosted a "Dismantling Racism" training and workshop, on November 15th - November 17th, at the Mariandale Conference Center, in Ossining, New York.

The conference was designed to help groups develop a collective understanding of the dynamics of racism, power, privilege and oppression in the United States. The conference included a two-day training designed to help build understanding of racism, and the ways in which racism is manifested in the U.S. and in our organizations. The conference also included a one-day organizational development session in which attendees learned about the stages that organizations go through to become anti-racist. Individuals learned how to assess their organization's strengths and weaknesses, and how to assess the current organizational stage of their organizations.

A total of 24 individuals participated in the training, including 5 farmers. A total of 11 organizations were represented, from Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, and DC. Out of the 24 participants, there were 17 NNIFP members, and 7 non-members.

The training was given by DRworks, a team of community organizers based in Smyrna, Georgia. The trainers were Bree Carlson and Suzanne Plihcik. Ms. Carlson is a lead trainer with more than 10 years of organizing experience in community, labor, and electoral projects. She has provided training and facilitation to groups ranging from grassroots community organizations and state-wide coalitions to regional intermediaries and national organizations. Ms. Plihcik is a community organizer and facilitator for the Partnership Project, a collaboration working to strengthen neighborhood and institutional relationships through an increased understanding of systemic racism. She is past director of Project Greensboro, a community building organization working with Greensboro neighborhoods. Before joining Project Greensboro, she was executive director of the National alliance for Non-Violent Programming, a coalition of national organizations seeking to reduce violence in entertainment through media-literacy.

The DRworks training includes two days of follow-up work in which NNIFP members will work with DRworks to problem solve, strategize, plan and manage the change process.

The Northeast Network of Immigrant Farming Projects (NNIFP) was formed in 2002 with the intent of strengthening local Immigrant Farming Projects (IFP's) through sharing of information, strategies, resources, and building capacity of farmers and program partners. Collaboration between programs avoids "reinventing the wheel" and offers cost effective strategies projects can use to enhance services and programs to immigrants and other limited resource farmers. Priorities are to share lessons learned, visit each other's training farms, and develop ultra-regional strategies for marketing efforts, training programs, and policy initiatives.