

Pathways to Prosperity 2020 National Conference: Nov 25, 2020  
The Evolving Role of LIPs and RIFs in Responding to Crises and New Challenges

# See Me As I Am

#BeAnAlly



Presentation by Athanas Njerú

# The Idea

- In the Fall of 2019, an idea was brought forward at the Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT) meeting – a group of 18 volunteer immigrants and newcomers from across the globe. The group became passionate about finding a non-confrontational way to help local people stand in their shoes for a moment to understand their experience and barriers they faced following their arrival in the city in the hope that it would help locals see immigrants with different eyes and treat them more fairly and equitably.
- This idea organically grew into the ‘See Me As I Am’ video. The shoot took place in December 2019 and featured local immigrants and newcomers speaking for themselves. The video was created as a ‘why care?’ piece with the simple message that you can see newcomers as ‘people just like you’ if you take the time to see them as they *really* are.
- It was clear that this video would not be enough on its own to bring about the change we need which led to the creation of the ‘Be an Ally’ campaign which provides numerous answers to the question, ‘How can you help and support?’

While the ‘See Me As I Am’ video was in post-production, the world was affected by COVID-19 when community togetherness became more important than ever. We also saw the explosion of unrest in the U.S. and across the globe in the wake of George Floyd’s death that has led to anti-racism protests and calls for inclusion of black people. Locally, several thousand people of every race, ethnicity and background took to the streets of Saskatoon to show their support.

The ideas about assumptions, misperceptions, prejudices and harmful inequalities that were being highlighted in these protests had already been contemplated in ‘See Me As I Am’ and solutions proposed in the ‘Be an Ally’ campaign. This meant that this work took on extra meaning for the makers and participants even before post-production ended.

# Objectives

## The Campaign

**The overall objective is to increase awareness of the benefits of newcomers to Saskatoon, build support for and understanding of newcomers as an integral part of an inclusive, diverse workforce and a welcoming community.**

Other objectives are:

- To highlight the work of the Partnership Council, IAT and Working Groups
- Disseminate to the community our strategic plan
- Community engagement: (a) seek input to create a resource on ideas on how to be an ally in Saskatoon and (b) share their “Allyship Stories”.
- Offer Tips on how to Be An Ally to newcomers

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# Outcome(s)

**Offer opportunities for newcomers, mainstream residents, indigenous and Metis peoples, ethnocultural and Faith groups, to celebrate, share diversity, challenges and connect cross-culturally**

Create urgency for collaborative ways to make Saskatoon more welcoming

Create opportunities for language acquisition for newcomers in the community and reduce isolation

As Saskatchewan is reopening, encourage employers to recruit newcomers to help rebuild the economy.

## What's one thing everyone in Saskatoon can do to make newcomers welcome?

# Be An Ally!

### TIPS TO BECOMING AN ALLY: Theoretical backgrounds

Campaign duration: 4 months

Longer term residents, it's really pretty simple, but we don't do it enough – actions that almost anyone can do without having to call for a meeting. And for newcomers, a genuine welcome – at a school, workplace, really anywhere, makes all the difference. We don't endorse ideas or authors, but the resources below are a good place to start:

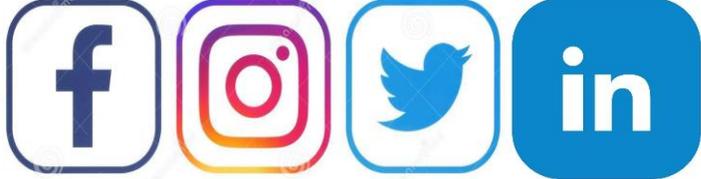
- Ways to be an Ally: Lessons from Covid-19
- Being an Ally at work
- Guidelines for being strong white Ally
- White Allyship 101: Resources to get to Work
- Becoming an Ally and Practising Allyship
- Allyship and equity



“Allies are people who do the work to examine and question their own privilege... Being an ally means willing to be uncomfortable, being willing to be wrong (and, unfortunately, *doing that ish* frequently) and trying again, over and over. It's not so much about being right as it is about being unwilling to allow wrongs to persist unchallenged”. Nadira Adeye. “Being an ally versus Being a nice Person”. *Daughters of Eve*. March 1, 2013.

“Allies are people who recognize the unearned privilege they receive from society's patterns of injustice and take responsibility for changing these patterns. Allies include men who work to end sexism, white people who work to end racism, heterosexual people who work to end heterosexism, able-bodied people who work to end ableism, and so on. Part of becoming an ally is also recognizing one's own experience of oppression. " Anne Bishop. *On Becoming An Ally: Breaking the Cycle of Oppression in People* (Fernwood Publishing, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 2001, Second Edition).

# The Strategy (methodology – campaign elements, Platforms, messaging)

ONLINE		
SOCIAL MEDIA		WEBSITE
POSTS 		 <a href="http://www.ipsk.ca">www.ipsk.ca</a>
EDUCATIONAL	PROMOTIONAL	HOME BASE FOR ALL CONTENT & ACTIVITIES
<b>#BeAnAlly CAMPAIGN</b>		
VIDEOS 	PODCASTS  	
SEE ME AS IAM	INTERVIEWS	VIDEOS 
#BeAnAlly	Ideas from residents	Share your “Being An Ally” Story
Why Be an Ally to Immigrants?		

OFFLINE	
EDUCATIONAL/PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS	
MOVIE THEATRES	STICKERS
	I Support <b>#BeAnAlly.</b> <a href="http://Ipsk.ca">Ipsk.ca</a>
<p><b>MESSAGING</b> – from <b>#BeAnAlly Campaign</b> - throughout the city of Saskatoon to increase awareness of the benefits of newcomers, build support for and understanding of newcomers as an integral part of an inclusive, diverse workforce and a welcoming community</p>	
<b>EVENTS</b>	
LAUNCH OF #BeAnAlly – See Me As I Am August 26, 2020	OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS
   	<i>“Take Advantage”</i>

## Spokespersons

1. Margot Orr – Co-Chair
2. Ali Abukar – Co-Chair

## Partner responsibilities/expectations

1. Publicly support the #BeAnAlly Campaign
2. Share and amplify campaign with their network and generate broad citizen participation



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