



# the western new york **21-DAY RACIAL EQUITY CHALLENGE**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the Western New York 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge?**

Originally developed by racial justice educators Dr. Eddie Moore Jr., Dr. Marguerite Penick-Parks and Debby Irving, this renowned program has been embraced by a coalition of local leaders, and is being adapted for the Western New York region. In the words of Dr. Penick-Parks, “The 21-day challenge is an opportunity to engage in growth in racial awareness, issues of social justice, power, privilege and systemic inequities. The challenge requires people to read, watch, notice, engage, connect and act daily in a variety of learning opportunities.”

Over the course of 21 days, participants will receive emails prompting self-directed learning opportunities that encourage a deeper understanding of race, power, privilege and leadership.

### **Why is the Challenge 21 days?**

Originally titled the “21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge,” the Challenge spans this length of time because research suggests it takes 21 days to build a new habit.

### **How does the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge work?**

Participants will receive a daily email with a brief explanation of the day’s racial equity related topic, and links to educational content (in the form of articles, podcasts or videos). Participants commit to exploring at least one of the content options, each of which will require only 10-15 minutes of time. The daily emails will also include additional opportunities for reflection or taking action.

### **Where does the content for each day of the Challenge come from? Who selected the articles and videos?**

Localized versions of the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge have been implemented in dozens of markets across the country. To localize the content and ensure it relates to our community, more than 60 community partners – including leaders in diversity, equity and inclusion; community leaders; and human service organizations – proposed, vetted, and selected the content that will be used in our regional Challenge.

Content criteria included:

- Resources from trusted and non-biased educational and DEI institutions and sources.
- Each piece of content should take no longer than 10-15 minutes to consume.
- Both local and national content.
- Available online via a direct link.
- Freely accessible online (no paid subscription required).

## **How do I sign up?**

Choose one of two ways to get involved in the Challenge:

1. Visit [uwbec.org/21daychallenge](http://uwbec.org/21daychallenge) to register as an individual.
2. Nominate a friend, coworker, peer, etc... to lead the Challenge by signing up and then forwarding the daily email.

## **What happens after I sign up?**

Individuals who sign up will receive a pre-challenge email from [racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org](mailto:racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org). To ensure emails are received regularly, participants are encouraged to flag this email address as “approved” to ensure emails don’t end up in spam folders.

## **How do I unsubscribe from the challenge?**

Participants can unsubscribe from the 21-Day Challenge by clicking on the “unsubscribe” link at the bottom of any of the daily emails they receive.

## **Can I start the Challenge at any time?**

Yes! The Challenge materials are available beginning on June 21st but the content is evergreen and will be available for the foreseeable future. An individual can begin the 21 day journey at a time that works best for them.

## **I have signed up and the Challenge has launched, but I haven’t received any emails yet. Why not?**

Some email systems have security measures that categorize mass emails as “spam” or “junk.” To ensure the Challenge emails get through any blocking software, flag the [racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org](mailto:racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org) email address as “approved” in your junk/spam folders.

If spam/junk email boxes aren’t the problem, please email [racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org](mailto:racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org). We may ask you to re-register to ensure your information is accurately reflected in the daily email lists.

## **What happens if I can’t do the daily prompts?**

Challenge content has been thoughtfully curated to limit the daily time requirement to 10-15 minutes, in an effort to make the daily effort easy and habitual. However, if you miss any day for any reason, the content will remain available.

### **How do we/I provide feedback on the Challenge?**

Email [racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org](mailto:racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org) at any time to provide feedback or ask questions. Please allow Challenge organizers 24-48 hours to get back to you (and perhaps longer over the weekend), as the volume of requests and questions has been significant given the number of participating individuals and workplaces.

### **How do I invite others to join the Challenge?**

Direct friends, family members and colleagues to sign up at [uwbec.org/21daychallenge](http://uwbec.org/21daychallenge). Or share the official “I’m participating” badge to announce your support of the Challenge in social media.

### **I am coordinating my organization’s participation in the Challenge. What do I have to do?**

A sincere thanks to everyone who is leading their employees and colleagues through the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge! First, determine how your workplace will sign up your team members. There are two ways to sign up:

1. Direct your staff to [uwbec.org/21daychallenge](http://uwbec.org/21daychallenge) to register as individuals.
2. Have a team member lead the Challenge internally by forwarding the daily email or by sharing with staff via the intranet or other employee relations system.

Whichever way you choose to participate, send your logo to [racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org](mailto:racialequitychallenge@uwbec.org) to be included in the list of participating workplaces on the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge web page.

### **How do I alert my employees that we are participating in the Challenge?**

All-staff meetings, departmental/team meetings, all-staff emails, and intranets are all great ways to share the news that your organization is participating in the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge.

### **What do I have to do in the office in addition to sharing the emails?**

The 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge was designed as a self-directed learning opportunity that will enable participants to establish a deeper understanding of race, power, privilege and leadership. It can be one part of a coordinated DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) initiative, but it is also a meaningful first step for employers to begin a discussion of equity in the workplace.

There are no obligations to employers who want to engage their teams. However, some organizations are planning additional activities within their workplaces during the 21 days, including:

- lunch-and-learn conversations for employees to share “a-ha” moments and new learnings;
- deeper discussions of 21-Day Challenge topics during all-staff meetings;

- guest speakers from local DEI organizations to share additional information and insights on key topics;
- assembling small groups to watch short videos and facilitating discussions; and
- other team, departmental, or organization-wide conversations.

**My organization has employees outside of Western New York. Can I share the Challenge with them?**

Everyone in any geography is welcome to participate in our region's Racial Equity Challenge. Although the Challenge will include some Western New York-focused content and local actions, much of the resources are national/global in nature.