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Community Leadership in Action

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COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

By Christian Boyd
and Kathy Thornhill



Equity Arcata, established in 2017, is a partnership between the City of Arcata, local community members, business leaders, and Humboldt State University. Equity Arcata formed as a joint effort to make Arcata a more inclusive and welcoming community for people of color.

Students can get involved by joining one of Equity Arcata's [working groups](#) through the City of Arcata. These working groups bring together community members and students to work on specific issues, including housing, bias reporting, arts, diversity and inclusion learning, and welcoming businesses. Several of these working groups focus directly on inclusive practices for HSU students, including the "Home away from Home" group which hosts community-led potlucks for students, and the police and student safety group, led by the Arcata Chief of Police, Brian Ahearn. That group is developing a *Know Your Rights* campaign for students so they have the tools they need to understand their rights in certain situations with law enforcement. Students who participate in any of Equity Arcata's groups work closely with staff from both the City of Arcata and HSU's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Students may also enroll in Political Science 381S - Community Leadership in Action, a Service Learning class. PSCI 381S is taught by Meridith Oram, the Community Development Specialist in HSU's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Her role seeks to facilitate equity and inclusion at HSU and in the community by creating systemic change. The class affords the

opportunity for students to be part of that change and get involved with Equity Arcata. According to the HSU Catalog, the class will "promote civic engagement, work towards racial equity in health, housing, education, and employment, and participate in creating a welcoming, safe, and inclusive campus and community for all."

Students who enroll in the class attend Equity Arcata's working groups and get involved with community efforts that support change and growth. Students are able to make great connections with leaders of institutions, organizations, and businesses in our local community who are committed to creating lasting change.

Equity Arcata and the Service Learning students strive to work together to create solutions that will be effective and durable over time. The members of Equity Arcata recognize and acknowledge the pain and trauma that has occurred for many communities of color at individual and institutional levels. In the face of these challenges, they believe it necessary to take a resiliency-building approach to enhance the strength of individuals and systems to be successful for the long-term. They stand in solidarity with one another while advancing the solutions they design, and remain forward-looking at what they can do next to meet these goals.

The members of Equity Arcata believe this work is bigger than any one of them, and approach it with both deference and determination to transform systems towards racial equity. To make real change, they know they need to build the community's strength together and that HSU students are integral to this process.

Christian Boyd
Equity Arcata Intern
Previously an intern through PSCI 482



Students share
their highlights

Lisa Borallo
Community Leadership in Action
PSCI 381S and PSCI 482

