

# CULTURAL COMPETENCY CORNER

March 2021  
Edition 2, Volume 1

## Dear Rise Employee:

In March 2021 we shared the first edition of **Cultural Competency Corner**. We hope you enjoy the newsletter. This month's edition will further define **cultural competency** and introduce our **Cultural Competency Ambassadors**.

**Cultural Competency** is needed to build meaningful and lasting relationships in the workplace. **Cultural Competency** allows us to do more than simply co-exist, it allows us to thrive!



**Cultural Competency** offers many benefits to an organization. **Culturally competent** organizations foster inclusive environments where:

- dignity and respect are valued
- collaboration is marked by trust, empathy, and truthfulness
- all members are encouraged to share their ideas, perspectives, and experiences
- organizational growth results from understanding the cultures represented in your workforce and consumer base

Employees from at least four generations participated in Rise Services' **Cultural Competency Assessment** (2020). The four generations are Baby Boomers(1946-1964), Generation X(1965-1980), Millennials(1981-1996), and Generation Z(1997-2012).

Each generation contributes to the culture of Rise Services, Inc. Recognizing the uniqueness of each generation increases **cultural competence**. The most important thing to remember is all employees want to work where they are treated with dignity and respect.

Following is an example of practical implication in the workplace. Each generation exhibits different preferences in communication styles. Baby Boomers prefer face-to-face meetings, phone calls, voice mail, and formal documents (memos, letters).

Generation X prefer email, texts, and instant messaging. Millennials prefer virtual meetings, texts, and social media messaging. Generation Z is relatively new in the workplace and their preferences are still being defined. All indications are that they will be more technically inclined than previous generations.

*Different Life Experiences*  
UNDERSTANDING Sensitivity **Cultural Competency** Non-Verbals Wisdom  
Values Awareness Backgrounds  
Interpersonal Communication

Understanding the make up and preferences of a team allows the teams' leaders and members to create an effective communication system and process. The goals of the communication system should be to allow each team member to feel included and to increase collaboration.

Since 1980, March has been designated *Women's History Month*, by annual presidential proclamations. These proclamations celebrate contributions of American women like Abigail Adams, Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth and Rosa Parks. Like Black History Month, Women's History Month grew out of week long celebrations dedicated to contributions to culture, history and society.

# Meet our Cultural Competency Ambassadors

A **Cultural Competency** Ambassador is an individual from a diverse group that can aid RISE in:

- selecting **culturally competent** programming
- assessing **culturally competent** programming for its effectiveness
- sharing relevant experiences that increase understanding and empathy between members of the organization

The role of the Cultural Competency Ambassador is voluntary. Each is chosen because of their commitment to RISE and to their desire to see RISE grow in **cultural competence**.

Meet our 2021 Cultural Competency Ambassadors!

**Roberta Jones** - RISE Regional Director for the Navajo Nation. I live in the Northeastern part of AZ in the Navajo Nation. RISE provides services across the Nation with 140 consumers with 150 DSP. RISE has been around for over 30+ years. We employ 100% Navajo employees who know our culture/traditions and most importantly our language. I have been with RISE for 27 years, I started in the group home in Mesa and transferred home to help my people in serving our special members.

**Jordan Carter** - Director of Employment Services - Oregon - I have been at RISE for almost 2 years. My ethnic makeup is White and Native American. I belong to the Millennial generation.

**Nikkita White** - Executive Director of RISE of Idaho. I am a member of Generation X. I am an African American woman and I love everything about who I am. I have been employed by RISE for one year. RISE acquired CPI/Community Partnership of Idaho in 2020 where I was employed for 7 years. As a military spouse I have had the opportunity to work within Idaho for 8 years and now call Idaho home.

**Jessa Wood** - Lead Services Coordinator for the Eugene Region in Oregon. I have been with Rise for the last 2 and a half years. I am a Millennial and a Sicilian American.



### **Recommended Readings:**

Brzezinski, M. (2018). Know Your Value: Women, Money and Getting What You are Worth. NY:NY, Hachette Book Group.

Howe, L., Foerster, J. E., & Harjo, J. (2020). When the Light of the World Was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through: A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry (1st ed.). W. W. Norton & Company.

**Correction from the first edition:**  
*Black History Month was officially recognized by President Gerald Ford in 1976, not 1796.*

**Steven Hunter, Diversity Officer**  
 Rise Services, Inc.  
 Email: [steveh@riservicesinc.org](mailto:steveh@riservicesinc.org)  
 Phone: 480.799.6765

*This newsletter is designed with you in mind. If you have content ideas, cultural events, or cultural celebrations to share, please forward them to Steven Hunter for consideration.*