"Together, Unequal"

Racism and Inequity in the South Orange Maplewood School District

By Carson Cummins

December 9th, 2020
The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to practice leadership through action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women’s Leadership’s website at http://iwl.rutgers.edu.
01 The Problem
My Hometown

Essex County

SOMA or MAPSO

Liberal/Progressive

Diverse
A Suburb Believed in Liberal Ideals. Then Came a New Busing Plan.

A school district confronts its segregated school system.
Student Population

White: 52%
Black: 33%
Asian/Latinx/Mixed Race: 15%

Source: Propublica
The Reality

**5.3x**
Times more likely Black students are to be suspended than white students

**64%**
Percentage of AP students who are white

**3**
Number of grades, on average, Black students are behind white students academically

Source: Propublica
The Project
Objectives

Better understand the problem
Why are our schools so inequitable?

Inspire other activists
You can fix your schools, too.

Develop podcasting/journalistic skills
How can I prepare for a career in audio journalism?
**Project Timeline**

- **Prep**: April - June
- **Connect**: May - July
- **Interview**: July - October
- **Edit**: October - December
Interviewees were Men...

MID-PROJECT CRISIS
01 Interview Rhea Beck

Rhea is the founder of PARES, Parents in Partnership for Respect and Equity in SOMA Schools.

02 Research and Highlight Women’s Leadership in Podcast

Alinskian Leadership?

Feminist, Women-Centered Leadership?

Source: Stall and Stoecker
The Final Product

Figure 7: Logo Design by David Dizdari

- 5 people interviewed
- 10+ hours of audio
- 1 published episode, 3 forthcoming
- Fostered community connections

Skills I developed:
- recording
- editing
- interviewing
- narration
- writing
- communication
- creativity
- critical thinking
- marketing
- tech proficiency
Looking Ahead

In My Work:
- More Episodes
- Radio Stations
- Activist’s Toolkit Printout
- Accessibility

For Future Scholars:
- Adapt to their hometown/school system
- Highlight another type of inequity
- Use as a general reference for podcasts on other subjects

Figure 8: Together, Unequal Website


Green, Ben. (2015). *Podcast Master.* Self-Published Online.


Thanks!

Stay tuned for more episodes!

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