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For immediate use

Project READY releases online racial equity curriculum for youth services librarians

(Chapel Hill, N.C.— June 19, 2019) – After three years of collaboration, investigation, and development, researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science (UNC SILS) have released a free online curriculum to help youth services library staff create more inclusive and equitable programming. Accessible at ready.web.unc.edu, the curriculum is the culmination of [Project READY](#) (Reimagining Equity and Access for Diverse Youth) and represents the work of more than 40 scholars, library and school practitioners, and youth from a wide variety of racial and cultural backgrounds.

UNC SILS Professor Sandra Hughes-Hassell and Teaching Assistant Professor Casey Rawson led Project READY as Principal Investigator and Co-PI and developed the online curriculum with UNC SILS doctoral student Kimberly Hirsh. The team will be at **Booth 2650** at the ALA Annual Conference to share information about the program.

SILS, the School of Library and Information Sciences at North Carolina Central University, and the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) received a grant from the [Institute of Museum and Library Services \(IMLS\)](#) for Project READY in 2016. The project aimed to create new professional development opportunities that could enable youth services librarians to better serve their increasingly diverse populations. While the majority of students in U.S. public schools are now Black youth, Indigenous youth, and Youth of Color, research has shown that only a small percentage of librarians have received formal training that addressed race and racism, implicit bias and microaggressions, cultural competence and culturally sustaining pedagogy, and equity and social justice.

The online curriculum consists of 27 modules, designed to be worked through by individuals or small groups. While it can be beneficial for colleagues to work through the program together, the curriculum team advises against using it as a short-term organizational workshop or viewing it as a “train the trainer” opportunity.

“This isn’t content that you can drop on people in five days and have them know what to do next,” said Hirsh. “That’s one of the reasons that the online program is so expansive. You have to walk people through the process of their own growth and what to do next; how to take the abstract concepts that they’re learning about and apply them in their own professional environments.”

The curriculum includes several actions that can help participants as they progress, such as collecting data on their library’s current environment, setting a series of short-term and longer-term goals to make their programming and space more equitable and inclusive, and “images of practice,” video and written examples of how other practitioners have implemented these concepts.

About the UNC School of Information and Library Science

The UNC School of Information and Library Science (SILS) offers undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degrees. The American Library Association (ALA) accredits our Master of Science in Information Science (MSIS) and Master of Science in Library Science (MSLS) degrees. Consistently ranked as one of the top schools of library and information studies by *U.S. News & World Report*, SILS is a transformational leader in the areas of digital curation, health informatics, information interaction and impact, and librarianship in the 21st Century. SILS is an integral part of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a global higher education leader known for innovative teaching, research and public service.

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