

Listen to the differences

BY ROOPA RAKSHIT

THE City of Thunder Bay Anti-Racism and Equity Advisory Committee in partnership with Diversity Thunder Bay and the Chronicle-Journal are committed to address various issues of racism through the monthly column, One City, Many Voices, which first began in February 2012. The column celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2023.

To thrive and evolve, communities must actively seek out, listen to, and value the myriad voices that make them unique. You are invited to the One City Many Voices gathering on Wednesday, Nov. 15, from 4 to 6:30 p.m. at the Oliver Road Community Centre. Participate and learn about Thunder Bay's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, an Anti-Racism and Inclusion Accord, hear settlement journeys from community members.

Be part of an informed community.

Hearing diverse voices — is it a choice, or a necessity? Communities give us the shared human experiences, where we come together to live, work, and thrive. In these collective spaces, the importance of hearing diverse voices cannot be overstated. Diverse voices bring a tapestry of understandings, backgrounds, and perspectives, enriching the community's fabric and propelling it towards progress. I share compelling reasons why we should actively embrace and listen to diverse voices in a community.

We're all better when diverse voices are considered and appreciated



ONE CITY,
MANY VOICES

The Thunder Bay Anti-Racism and Equity Advisory Committee and Diversity Thunder Bay produce this monthly column to promote greater understanding of race relations in Northwestern Ontario.

One of them is to promote inclusivity and equity. Every individual, regardless of their identity, is an active voice with a stake in our community. By seeking out and valuing diverse voices, a community ensures that all its members are heard and considered. This contributes to a sense of belonging and fairness and fosters a harmonious and equitable environment.

Diversity engenders a multiplicity of viewpoints providing an opportunity to broaden its horizons. Different worldviews allow for a more comprehensive understanding of complex issues translating into creative problem-solving and innovative thinking, providing a more holistic approach to addressing community challenges.

With a limited set of voices, bias and stereotypes persist and

deepen. Diverse voices are a powerful counterforce to these prejudices. They challenge preconceived notions and break down stereotypes. By dismantling these biases, communities can progress towards a more inclusive and empathetic coexistence.

Communities become vibrant when they embrace and celebrate cultural diversity. Diverse voices bring with them a treasure trove of traditions, languages, and customs enriching the community's cultural landscape. It promotes cross-cultural understanding and deepens the community's collective identity.

Throughout history, diverse voices have been the catalyst for profound social and political changes. Movements for civil rights, gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, and other important causes have relied on the power of diverse voices coming together to demand change. Communities that actively listen to these voices become engines of social progress and justice.

I also invite to you to connect with me as the column's co-ordinator and write for the column. To see past columns please visit the Diversity Thunder Bay website at www.diversitythunderbay.ca. Send an email to roopalovesnature@gmail.com to reach me.

Roopa Rakshit is the co-ordinator of the One City, Many Voices column. The views and opinions expressed in this column are those of the author.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ON DIVERSITY

Join the city's Many Voices on Wednesday, Nov. 15 at the Oliver Road Community Centre from 4 to 6:30 p.m.