

Patrick Mitchell
CCA Board of Directors, District B
Report on CTA Equity and Human Rights Conference
March 3-5, 2017

I recently attended the CTA Equity and Human Rights Conference in San Jose. It was my first time attending this conference. I attended the following workshops:

1. White Privilege: What Does it Mean?, presented by Sonya Lowe and Jolene Tripp. This workshop began with a discussion of Peggy McIntosh's article "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." Sonya and Jolene led the presentation and there was much discussion among the participants about their experiences with white privilege. One powerful moment was a video describing an incident where bias against an African-American customer in a store was stopped by a woman who was perceived to be white. This led to the idea that white people need to take an active role in lessening the effects of white privilege. This was the topic of a subsequent workshop led by Sonya and Jolene, which I attended the next day.
2. Internalized Homophobia is So Gay!, presented by C. Scott Miller. This workshop began with a questionnaire to gauge participants' level of homophobia, and featured several videos. There was a discussion of the TLC reality show "My Husband is Not Gay." There was lively discussion about how to prevent homophobic attitudes in others and in oneself.
3. White People Talking to White People, presented by Sonya Lowe and Jolene Tripp. This workshop was a continuation of Sonya and Jolene's earlier workshop, and focused on what white people specifically can do to challenge the privileged attitudes of their white friends. As with their previous workshop, there was excellent discussion. A couple of us commented that this could easily be the topic of a full day or two-day workshop.

On Friday evening, there was also an excellent keynote speech by photographer and documentarian Matika Wilbur, who gave a riveting speech on acknowledging the contributions and sacrifices of indigenous Americans. We were also treated to speeches throughout the weekend from all three CTA officers, and the Human Rights awards were presented on Saturday at lunch.