

**CTA Region 4 Unconscious Bias Training**

**May 6-7, 2015**

**CTA Orange RRC**

*Dorothy Reina*

I was fortunate to attend the intense 2 day Unconscious Bias Training workshop led by Lisa Adams and Reena Doyle, CTA Staff.

There were approximately 40 attendees from Region 3 and Region 4. I was the only higher education attendee, but the issues discussed had to do with us, as individuals, and so it mattered little what age group we taught. What did emerge in our discussion was a discussion of how we interact with, try to understand our diverse student populations and how our own personal biases might impact or enhance our interaction with our students.

We explored the following topics, utilizing articles, discussions, and media presentations on the topic

- 1) How does the media (advertisers, in particular) affect our perceptions of different races/ethnic groups?
- 2) Social Geography – where did we grow up and who did we interact with?
- 3) Skin tone and qualities we associate with skin tone
- 4) Is bias innate or learned?

I personally was able to apply what I experienced in my drive home from class last night. I listened to a retired training police officer give his impressions of what is currently being discussed: Are police officers more aggressive towards people of color or are people of color more aggressive, which warrants more use of force by police officers. In listening to the retired officer speak, I heard a decided bias on his part. He, in effect, "Blamed the victim" for their deaths/assaults by police officers, because, in the words of this man, "These people have a sense of entitlement. They feel they can do whatever they want and not suffer the consequences." I was appalled! However, this short discussion reconfirmed the unconscious biases we discussed in the two day session I attended.

A follow up to the two day session is tentatively scheduled for September 24, 2015. I do hope I am able to attend.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Dorothy M. Reina**