"We are all in this together..." is a common sentiment expressed during the 33 Listen, Talk, Learn sessions we have hosted since August 9, 2014.

These powerful words have inspired us to reflect on questions like how are we all in this together, and how can we bridge the barriers that divide people in our community? Diversity Awareness Partnership has had an incredible year of bringing people together while increasing exposure to topics focused on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability and age. We are fortunate to have these conversations with our community to ensure that St. Louis understands the importance of inclusion as we move forward.

In 2014, DAP experienced tremendous growth. More and more, individuals and companies looked to our organization to convene meetings on diversity and inclusion best practices, help deepen their understanding around diverse identities, and network and build partnerships to improve our community. DAP has continued to offer more services to support efforts that make our workplaces, schools, households, and places of worship in our region more inclusive.

Throughout 2014, we emphasized diversity and inclusion on a personal level. I am certain that individuals cannot grow if they do not interact with people who look different, sound different and have different lived experiences. Through our DAP Connect Program, we have brought over 100 community members together and expanded their networks through events designed to connect people around a common goal of personal and professional development in diversity and inclusion. Thank you to all of our DAP Connect Supporters that make this possible!

We know that strengthening diversity and inclusion efforts in St. Louis is exceedingly important in light of racially-divisive events in our city and our efforts have relevance to communities beyond our region. Our Board of Directors approved a comprehensive plan to grow the organization by launching a new office in Columbia, Missouri. This exciting work means we are continuing to make progress toward the vision of our DAP founders, "to be a model that could be replicated across the country." DAP Columbia will offer networking programs, trainings, and a youth program. We will share more on our progress within the coming year and we thank those that have supported us through this journey of expansion.

Finally, we believe that our message remains compelling because of the number of companies and individuals that have reached out to us in the wake of Ferguson. We are proud that we have exposed more than 900 people to the need of Dialogue over Debate as we rebuild our community together. DAP is committed to strengthening our community by facilitating important and difficult discussions around diversity and inclusion. We understand that no single organization, government entity, or corporation can address the issues that have divided our community. Our hope is that our community rebuilds by listening to the strengths of diverse perspectives, talking to one another through honest and productive dialogue, and learning more about the value of diversity through awareness and education. In 2015, I am excited to see continued partnerships around diversity and inclusion exemplify the powerful words, "we are all in this together."

Diversity Awareness Partnership is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion around issues of race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity.

DAP achieves its mission through three pillars of impact: education and training, youth engagement, and awareness initiatives.

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Shary Rose
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Stevie Hill
Microsoft Corporation
Amanda Andrade
Veterans United
Home Loans

As of March 1, 2015
With substantial growth of the DAP Connect Membership Program since its launch in 2012, we decided to expand our program benefits in late 2014.

Expanding our membership levels and offerings allowed for us to increase engagement and professional networking opportunities for our members. Members are now able to fully utilize the DAP Connect Membership Program for professional and personal growth within the diversity and inclusion field.

The DAP Connect Program is a great way to diversity and expand your network. It’s worthwhile and has been facilitative in connecting with like-minded people, who are committed to a better region.

To honor our former board chair, co-founder of Diversity Awareness Partnership and continuing advocate, we named our highest membership level (ever!) after Frieda E. Smith.

I have gotten so much out of Give Respect, Get Respect and was really glad I did it. I learned about respectful language and how to express yourself without offending someone. I hope I can use this new knowledge to give some light to people around me.

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