Fostering Authentic Belonging: Implicit Bias, The Brain and Applied Intersectionality

"*There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives."*
-Audre Lorde

There is a silent, yet very powerful and sinister bias that looms in the perspectives of all human beings. Implicit bias is often subconscious and shifts the way in which we interact with the world around us. The predisposition of bias creates a foundation from which we interpret experience to include the many scripts we use to manifest our views and judgements about violence.

The manner in which victims experience the criminal justice and other response systems is unquestionably and often negatively impacted of bias. Thus, analyzing "justice" through the lens of implicit or explicit bias will help better understand how victims are impacted by prejudice and how that impact often carries tangible results that can be explained by neuroscience.

Further, this presentation will go beyond the typical analysis of "Gender Bias" or "Racial Bias" to assert that the, both, gender and racial experiences are inherently intertwined with class, sexual orientation, nation status, geographic location, health status, religion, etc... We are a complicated collection of human experiences and identities situated in a complex society rich with privilege and fueled by stereotype.

It simply is not possible to have a holistic conversation about "Gender" or about "Race" or about "Orientation" without considering the intersections of many other identities. The predominant societal cultural driven attitude often educates and clouds the lens in which we view the humans we work with and often negatively impact services we deliver.

It is essential that we explore ways in to dismantle systematic prejudice and discrimination in a compassionate and empathetic manner. These conversations are often fraught with emotion, pain, fear, stereotypes, assumptions, rhetoric, and defensiveness which can very difficult to overcome. The presenter will explain how to begin difficult and critical conversations at the individual and agency level around these complicated and sensitive issues. Finally, this presentation will address some tangible solutions that can be implemented to begin reducing secondary victimization.

Learning Objectives:
- Participants will be able to define and apply the theory of Intersectionality beyond the Gender or Racial Lens.
- Participants will learn about implicit bias and the human nature of prejudice.
- Participants will be able to recognize how intersectional identities (Race, Class, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Geographic Location, HIV Status, Nation Status, Religion, Etc.) impact the experience of victims of interpersonal violence (domestic and sexual violence, stalking, child abuse and trafficking)
- Participants will learn how to discuss and have critical conversations about these and other complicated and activated topics that are often wrought with emotion.
- Participants will learn about (5) key considerations for adopting and mainstreaming Intersectionality in practice and being able to articulate services beyond the traditional Gender construct.