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Educause

ARIA Series: Anti-Racism in Academia:

A Learning Journey - Reflection

Friday, February 11, 2021

2:00PM – 3:00PM Eastern

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>> TONYA BENNETT: Hi everyone. Welcome to the ARiA reflections seminar. I am happy that you are here and you are able to join us. I am just going to give a minute or two just so we could have a few join us. But those who are here now, if you wouldn't mind just maybe typing in the chat where you are joining us from, what institution and what the weather is like where you are. I know it is really snowy here where I am in south Jersey. I call it the dirty Jersey snow. We are at the point where it has been shoveled and plowed so it doesn't look so pretty. But we are here and that's what we have. I'm just going to give it like one more minute and then we're just going to keep to the time of this programming. And so, I guess I will just get started so we can make sure we use our time appropriately. And so, thank you all for joining us for the ARiA reflection webinar. I am happy that you are all here and you can join us and I am Tonya Bennett from the University of Pennsylvania. And I will be the moderator for this discussion. We have a great panel for you today. And also we have the ARiA team who are going to be in the chat. And they are going to be able to answer questions and they will be interacting with you as well. If you can see on this slide right here, there are a bunch of hashtags. So, if you are joining us from social media, please feel free to use the hashtags if you are willing. This session is being recorded. For those who couldn't join us or if you just want to go back and reflect --  
   
 >> Recording in progress.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: There you go. This will be available on the site later on as well as a transcript. So, anything that you put in the general chat will be a part of the transcript. I want you to keep that in mind as well. With that being said, I am going to go ahead and introduce the ARiA team. And so, this is the ARiA team who I mentioned is in the chat today. So, you can talk to them there. As well as we have an email address that is ARiA.coordinators@Gmail.com. And without further ado, we have Tina Pappas from Rutgers University, Jonathan Hardy from University of Georgia, Desiree White from Rutgers University, system from University of Delaware, myself from the University of Pennsylvania, and Tracy Weber from the University of Notre Dame. Again, they will be in the chat and able to interact with you and if you have any questions or comments or anything of that nature, you don't get all your questions answered today, you can feel free to reach out to us at any time at the email address. And also contact us on Twitter. Our handles are there as well. So, feel free to reach out to us and check out our website for more information and more resources as well. I am just going to share quickly about the formation of ARiA and how it formed. And it was a small group of us who are close colleagues. And it started with Tina and Jonathan and then Sowmya and Tracy and I got involved. And it grew from there. But it really grew from an honest discussion and thoughts of turning words into action because with all the current events and things that were going on, there were a lot of statements and a lot of words, but not really actions. And so, it grew from there and it grew out of a place to make safe spaces and that we could share and learn and grow. And then it turned into the program that we are providing today with everyone. So, that's really the origin of ARiA. So, it is small in grassroots and it just grew from the desire to do something. And so, I wanted to share a bit about how the programming is structured and delivered. It generally starts with -- it started back in live and we started with orienting facilitators on how to deliver the content. That generally starts with providing them a full toolkit and logistical support on how to have a small group or how to facilitate a small group discussion. This is all volunteer led and all higher ed employees. And we kick off and introduce the topic of the month and during that month we have the individual small group breakout sessions. And those are more of an intimate conversation. So, that's basically the structure. And then we will get into how the different things. So, the different themes are retch out, listen, learn, active, persist. That is where RLLAP came from. We focus on the what, why, and how to reach out and listen, learn, act and persist. And it is a journey. It is definitely a learning journey and we understand that everyone is joining at different parts in their journey. And it does provide a transparent and safe space to have those discussions. And there are ground rules set so that we maintain the safety of that space and also set it up to be an understanding and inviting environment for those who are participating in the program. By the numbers, you can see here just the number of how popular it got over time. So, when we started, we nearly in some instances doubled and tripled the amounts of attendees and facilitators and participants for these sessions. And we have some of them here to speak to you today. And some of you I know are in the audience and we thank you for all of your support and really being a part of our ARiA and helping the program to grow. So, you can see where we are. And then we will have more information about what happens in this webinar today. So, I just wanted to again spotlight the different themes of ARiA. So, the reach out, these are bolded and they are really the powerful action words for each of these didn't themes. So, retch out is proactively and respectfully engaging and listen is intentionally giving effort and attention in understanding. If you take anything away from the program, take away the bolds words from these topics. Learn is gaining deeper understanding and critical thinking and self-analysis. And act is intentional attitudes and policies. And persist is intentional, deliberate and being consistent. And changes these attitudes that currently exist. With that, we are going to introduce -- well, I am going to turn it over to our candidates. Our panelists to introduce themselves and at this point, I am going to stop sharing and we are going to go more into a discussion mode. And so, our first panelist that I would like to introduce himself is Brian. So, Brian, if you go ahead and introduce yourself and I will stop sharing and you will take it from there.  
   
 >> BRIAN EPSTEIN: Sure. Thank you, Tonya. My name is Brian Epstein. I'm the I.T. manager for network and security at the institute For Advance Study. We are a small institution in Princeton, New Jersey. And I am also president of my local synagogue. And I am very happy to be here. So, thank you for having this, and thank you for running this program, which has been fantastic.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. Ana, would you like to go ahead?  
   
 >> ANA FIERRO: Yes. Hi everyone. I'm Ana Fierro, I'm an instructional designer at the University of Arizona.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you for introducing yourself and also for being here today. José, would you like to introduce yourself?  
   
 >> JOSE RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Tonya. Yes. Hi everyone. Jose Rodriguez. I'm the CIO at Rhodes College in Memphis where we are ice right now, which is not our thing. But we are surviving. I think one of the questions for us was also what our role was in ARiA and I had the opportunity to be a facilitator for both the listen and the learn months. And learned a lot. I really believe in this program. So, happy to be here.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. And we are happy to have you here. And so, now we will just start our discussion. And so, one of the questions that I wanted to ask the panel was what drew you to ARiA? We are going to start with Brian since we are going in order.  
   
 >> BRIAN EPSTEIN: Sure. So, what drew me -- and to follow José, I acted as a participant throughout. I was not a facilitator. But what drew me to participate in ARiA is, you know, my life growing up in a place where racism was rampant. And knowing that throughout high school I was definitely one of the people who said, you know, I am color blind and there's no difference and everybody has an equal chance to -- you know, going to college and sort of growing up and being on my own journey and learning about how wrong those things were and those statements were. And knowing that as I grow as an individual throughout life that there's always more to learn and there's always more, you know, people to reflect off of and to talk about. And to talk about their experiences. And from all of that, learning and becoming a better person and making a difference. Making a difference in the world which is really point. So, that's what drew me to participate in ARiA.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. And can you share what was the most impactful part?  
   
 >> BRIAN EPSTEIN: Sure. Yeah. So, I think for me one of the most impactful -- I mean, there were so many impactful parts about ARiA and the journey and all of the webinars -- or sort of get-togethers that we had. I think one of the most impactful exercises that we did was for the persist unit, the last meeting that we all had together was an exercise called network analysis exercise. And what this exercise entailed was thinking about the ten most influential people in your life. Your closest relationships. The people that you trust and would talk to. From both your professional and personal life and just list those ten people. And then after you list those ten people, take a look at their race and ethnicity and their gender and their age. And I thought that that was very impactful for myself because although I had a very good balance between men and women and people of different ages, they were all white. They all looked like me, which really made me sit to reflect about why that is and why it is in my life that I am not surrounded by more people of color from different aspects of life. And so, that was very impactful for me. That even after all these years of self-reflection and of trying to do the right thing and, you know, working in a faith community of people along with professional and other things, that I still have a lot to learn and a lot to grow on this journey. So, I am very happy I participated in this program so that I could see those things and it has made an impact.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you for sharing. And thank you for telling us about -- giving us the feedback about that activity. It was one of the pre-work activities and I am glad you found value in it. That's really important. Ana, would you like to share with us what inspired you to participate in ARiA?  
   
 >> ANA FIERRO: Yes. I mean just the statement, anti-racism in academia was so powerful and it speaks to my experience as well. I am an offspring of immigrants and I have been, you know, in college and graduate school and now as an employee. So, I know that racism exists in academia. I know that it is evident and I wanted to be part of the solution. How to become active in participating and having these discussions about race and knowing how to act when it comes to facing racism.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. Thank you for sharing. And José, would you like to share with us about what has been the most impactful part for you and what inspired you to participate?  
   
 >> JOSE RODRIGUEZ: Sure. I mean, the inspiration really was very simple. I just really wanted to be, you know, part of the solution and not part of the problem. And what I mean by problem is I didn't -- I want to be moving more towards anti-racist actions as opposed to just passively non-racist and passive inaction. So, that was really my main interest. I also feel like -- I mean, I owe it to my community and to my staff to continue to learn and grow. Of course, it is a personal journey for myself. But it is -- I don't exist in a vacuum. So, it is what I feel I need to do for those around me as well. And to help them grow too. And then as far as impact, I think being able to listen to some of the very personal stories in a small group of people that felt safe and comfortable doing so was very impactful because we often speak of anti-racism or diversity and inclusion in a very sort of broad or systemic or institutional terms. But it is when you really hear personal stories. Both of racism against someone, but also of growth that it puts a real face on it. And so, I don't think that those personal stories could have come about if it hadn't been for the ARiA coordinators, the way they have set up the program so that there are rules of engagement. We explain these as facilitators at the beginning of every session. And we're empowered to, you know, have -- kick people out of sessions if they become belligerent or highly confrontational. So, I think everyone who was there really did feel very comfortable to be able to share personally. It wasn't a requirement. It just -- you know, the environment was such that people felt like they could. And I respected that very much and learned from individual stories.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. Thank you for sharing that. And there is a lot of value in safe spaces and I'm happy that the program is structured in a way that it maintains the integrity of those safe spaces. That is really one of the hallmarks of it. So, thank you for sharing that. So, I am going to mix up the order a little bit and I will start with you, Ana. What surprised you the most about ARiA?  
   
 >> ANA FIERRO: Um, yeah. What surprised me the most about ARiA was the connections that I was able to build with others. I was an attendee and I was also a facilitator. So, speaking to what José just mentioned, creating those safe spaces where everyone is invited to share and grow as well. And I think it is very powerful to know that I have allies in other parts of the country. The east coast, for example. Somewhere where I have never been, but being able to build connections with people there and knowing that others are in their own journey, they're learning as well. And that together we can build community and really face racism and really acknowledge it so that once again, we become a part of the solution and not the problem. And be able to have these conversations that are very much necessary.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you for sharing. Yes. There is definitely value in having those conversations and also finding other people who are interested in going on this journey and finding allies in this journey is also very key. So, Brian, would you like to talk about what surprised you the most about ARiA?  
   
 >> BRIAN EPSTEIN: Sure. Absolutely. I think there were so many good things through this program. One of which was a book recommendation called "White Fragility". I was surprised at some of the things I learned from the book about microaggressions and about other things that I do see people, you know, not necessarily in my immediate surroundings, but people from where I grew up, you know, saying and doing those things. And just not being aware of the negative impacts of those types of things. And it was surprising to me to know that, you know, other people are not ready. They are not ready on their journeys to sort of address these things or to really think about those things, which for me, I am always looking to grow. So, that was definitely a little surprising. The other thing that surprised me was how wonderful it was to talk to people from all over the U.S., from all different places and to hear about their stories. It was really surprising to hear how different areas treat people differently and I think that that was really surprising for me to just hear about those kinds of differences. And also how comfortable I felt speaking to everybody. It was really a wonderful safe place to talk and engage on.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you for sharing that. And thank you, and yes. It is good to have allies all over and it is good to find that comfort. You said something key which was very interesting is you realized other people weren't ready and that can be eye-opening too. José, would you like to share about what surprised you the most about ARiA?  
   
 >> JOSE RODRIGUEZ: Sure. Mine is kind of a programmatic comment. My big surprise was just how organized the whole framework was. Being kind of new to facilitation, at least in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion was a little nervous about how I would garner in conversation and keep it going. But the ARiA group was so good about giving us some scaffolding for that, the tools that we needed. They have an amazing website with a lot of resources. And it was just a great experience in terms of the coordination and organization of it. That was a big surprised for me. I just didn't expect it to kind of flow as well as it did and for the conversations, it seemed like we just started talking and the hour and a half was up. And so, we could have maybe used more sessions or more time or something. But it certainly -- the conversation certainly could have kept going.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you for sharing that. That is also very good feedback and information and we are glad that you appreciated the logistical support and the toolkits from the group. And so, I wanted to go on to the next question which is, it is going to be for Ana. And that is why would you recommend ARiA to others and how would you go about doing it?  
   
 >> ANA FIERRO: So, I think it is important to acknowledge that racism is embedded in society. That it not only exists within academia. And therefore I am very grateful for, you know, ARiA for creating these spaces. For allowing for people to come together and have these discussions. And I think that a part of it as well. Making sure that it is not just a one-time thing. That we continue to have these conversations. That we become comfortable. And that it is okay to be uncomfortable. I think that is also part of the process as well, right. That it is not easy to have these conversations. But that they are important. And so, ARiA inspires me to have those conversations within my own institution to make sure I am creating those spaces as well. And that's what I definitely would like to see more of. People engaging in dialogue. Even though it is uncomfortable, just knowing that everyone is on their own journey. It is a learning process that is unique to everyone. But regardless, if we really want to address this issue, that we really need to have the courage to persevere, right. To continue.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. Thank you for sharing that. And there is a lot around being uncomfortable, being comfortable being uncomfortable. So, I'm glad you brought that up. Brian, would you like to tackle that question? It was why would you recommend ARiA to others and how are you going to do it?  
   
 >> BRIAN EPSTEIN: Sure. Definitely, you know, recommend the program to anybody who can join in. You know, I think that self-reflection is hard and challenging yourself is point. And we have said it over and over. Everybody is in a different place in their journey. So, as far as how am I going to recommend it is I need to actively listen and talk to people and understand where they are in their journey. Maybe they are not ready for a program like ARiA. And maybe they are. So, you know, just trying to understand that because, yeah, being in an uncomfortable situation, you know, and being more comfortable doing that I think is important. And one of the ways that we can act is to understand that. But also recognizing that some people aren't just at that place where they can recommend a program like this. So, in the meantime doing little things. Saying things like, you know, hey, I'm uncomfortable when you say words like that or when you say statements like that. Little things just to sort of get people into the mind frame of changing their behavior and getting to the point of being able to participate in a program. Maybe just a book recommendation or just an article or something of that nature. And then also recognizing that there's more than just work. There's a lot of other places that I have influence in. So, the places I volunteer or in church or synagogue. And lots of places. At the school and PTA meetings. There's lots and lots of places where influence can be made and just recognizing that, you know, I can't sit by and just let these things happen because then I'm not part of the solution. So, when there's that inappropriate post on Facebook, I'm not going to be confrontational. But I may say something like this is making me uncomfortable. And so, therefore it makes other people uncomfortable too. That is how I would recommend a program like this.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you for sharing that. And it is very interesting you mention all the places where you have influence like at schools and other places that we go. Not even just in our own institution. And just calling things out in baby steps. Book recommendations and every little bit counts and it helps. So, I'm glad you brought that up. José, would you like to answer the question?  
   
 >> JOSE RODRIGUEZ: Sure. I mean, I would reiterate both what Ana and Brian said. We do need to challenge ourselves if we believe in this goal. It is something that we need to kind of get into these conversations and maybe get a little bit uncomfortable. For me it is more about getting into other people's shoes. The best way to understand for me someone else's main or their happiness is to get into their shoes. Hear how they feel about these situations. And so, I would encourage participation in the program and in various aspects of the program. Because listen is didn't from learn, is different from persist. And, in fact, next time I want to do more participation as well as the facilitation because I enjoyed that as well. As far as what I will do, like a lot of schools, we are working on new DEI initiatives that will trickle down to everyone at the college through all the academic and administrative units. And I know that one of the things I plan to do is weave this into our DEI tasks for my team, information services. There's a variety of ways to approach diversity and inclusion work. And so, conversation social security one. Reading and learning is another. Being part of an active project. And so, I do want to encourage my staff to not only participate, but to encourage their other colleagues to as well.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: That is wonderful to hear that you are going to include it in your DEI initiative at your institution. That is awesome. And that we challenge ourselves and others and we put ourselves in other's shoes is also very important. And I am glad you are vowing to do more participation. We heard it here first. Thanks for sharing that and your desire to do so is also great. So, I want to go on to the next question. This is for you, José. You could start us off with this one and it is how would you build on the foundation that ARiA has set and what would you like to see going forward?  
   
 >> JOSE RODRIGUEZ: So, I had heard the ARiA coordinators talk about the possibility of maybe thinking about cohorts at a future time. So, I can't take credit for that idea. But I wanted to mention it because I think it is such a good idea and I would like to see that myself. In addition to being able to, you know, go one by one to some of these sessions, to maybe plan for some grouped cohorts that can have continuity and do the program in an overarching way to learn kind of from the beginning pieces all the way through persist and action. And that to me sounds like an exciting evolution of the program. And if you all embark on that, I'm happy to help with that. It sounds like a great next step.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. And we have heard that before too, that same feedback about the cohorts. I'm glad that you're sharing that here as well. And so now we go to Brian. Would you like to answer the question, it is how can we build on the foundation that ARiA has set and what would you like to see going forward?  
   
 >> BRIAN EPSTEIN: Sure. Yeah. I mean, I think that the content that ARiA has created and taking a very difficult conversation about racism and splitting it up into these didn't sections for RLLAP was a phenomenal way to think about this. And so, I believe the core set of topics is really fantastic. I love the idea of cohorts. Of mentorship. Of reaching out to my colleagues that I have talked to in these spaces, in these safe places and continue to have those conversations about ideas and things that we can do at the places that we work and things to learn. I would like to see continued challenges. Like the network analysis exercise. And things that might be really sort of enlightening to sort of think about and to do. You know, we had talked about before about the idea of like a book club or something like that. And I am seeing in the chat like a lot of great book recommendations and things of that nature. So, from here I think that there's so much more we can do and built on the foundation that ARiA has built would be absolutely phenomenal. And continuing to offer this as something that educators and others can participate in. I have had a number of people from my personal life say, well, how can I participate? I think that these are some great ideas. And the ideas that the ARiA coordinators have said in the meetings that we have had have been phenomenal as well.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. And I just wanted to reiterate some of the things you said that were just phenomenal with the continuing to challenge ourselves. And that brings us back to that activity where we are really doing some reflection on ourselves and our networks and our circles of influence and who is in them and who is not. And that's really important. And so, I'm glad that you brought that up. Again, it is something that we should really think about going forward. And also just book recommendations, there are a lot of good resources on the ARiA site. But, yeah, the more the merrier. And just spreading the participation and getting more of those colleagues involved and others involved as well. So, thank you for that. And then, I'm going to turn the floor over to Ana who will give us our last response before we open things up to questions and answers. So, Ana, would you like to answer the question about how would you build on the foundation that ARiA has set and what would you like to see going forward?  
   
 >> ANA FIERRO: Definitely. I thought about this because just seeing right now for example all of us coming together, I think that is really the point. The importance of community building and that is what ARiA has done and that is something I would like to continue to do. Continue to build a community so I know who my allies are, people I can speak to and create a larger movement to address this. And I think that is what drew me to ARiA and that is what I hope to continue as well. Something that I hope to engage in as well within my own institution as a professional. But also in my own personal relationships, making sure I have those dialogues, those point conversations.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you for sharing that as well. And I think that throughout your responses, some of the running themes were safe spaces, a group of professional -- a professional network of -- in higher ed you could reach across and be able to have conversations with and be able to be safe within having those conversations and others who are on this journey as well and just the reflection that it involves. And just the prep work from the ARiA team and those resources that were provided were also things that ran through your answers. And it came up being uncomfortable -- being comfortable being uncomfortable. Say that five times fast. But that came up as well. And just examining our circles and reaching out and being able to connect and being actually vulnerable and willing to share these stories just by way of being in these very nurturing environments. And that's something that is really great and I am happy that it came up here. And I'm happy to just reshare that with the audience that that's very impactful and valuable out of the program. So, I did want to -- there's not many questions in the chat. Most of the questions from the audience have been answered. But what I did want to do is just share one of the questions that one of the ARiA coordinators can probably answer for us. And it is can students get involved or participate? And did we have any students join the conversations and breakout sessions? And I was just going to lob that over to Sowmya or Tina.  
   
 >> TINA PAPPAS: Hello everyone. First. To reiterate what I wrote in the chat, we targeted the ARiA programming communications mainly to -- we say faculty and staff. But our main methods of promotion were via mailing lists through professional associations and within our own host institution. For me, Desiree and I we sent those emails to Rutgers folks both within I.T. and outside of it. So, in that way we didn't really directly reach out to students. But we did not really screen students out. So, if we happened to notice that someone identified as a student during the registration process, we didn't necessarily stop them from participating but there were a few numbers just because of the way we promoted ARiA. We had grad students. We may have had undergrads. Sowmya may remember more than I do in the couple of months. We have always believed in ARiA being available and open to everyone and anyone. And so, being higher ed focused is important because you want to have some kind of focus so you could develop quality programming. So, our parameter is higher ed. Given it was grassroots and it was an idea hey, we are going to do this thing. Who knows how great it is going to be but we did it. And it has been wildly successful. And I think we are at this stage now, this transitional, quote, stage where we have to think about who do we say our audiences are? We say higher ed but how do we become more inclusive of students and of faculty because we can't continue to be for higher ed but not really letting students know that this is a thing they can participate in or not reaching faculty more closely or more directly. So, yeah, we haven't stopped students is the short answer. But we also haven't promoted heavily so we haven't had a very strong presence of students. I hope that answers the question.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. Thanks, Tina. And we did have another question from the chat as well. And that was directed more to us ARiA folks. So, if you would like to stay unmuted and take this one as well. The question was is there a way to leverage the new EDUCAUSE mentoring groups for support of ARiA? There's not really a meta tag but maybe including ARiA or something in the profiles will let people know that we might be open to a challenging conversation as part of mentoring activities.  
   
 >> TINA PAPPAS: Yeah. Is there a way to leverage? Conceptually, yeah, sure. We are privileged and humbled to have EDUCAUSE as a partner. Similarly, we have worked with other associations like NERCOMP. So, we are grateful for those partnerships. In fact, to go one level higher, one of the EDUCAUSE's own Catherine Yang has been a facilitator and participant in ARiA. So, thinking about that, how we could make a direct connection is available to us. And what -- I don't know if this is sort of a sneak peek, but what we are doing now that we have had this event, February was kind of in honors of Black history month this is what we call our initial rollout sprint. So, that is reaching out, listening, learning, acting and persisting, five topics over five months. Now that we have concluded that, we hope to do another one of those sprints some time over the summer ideally. We are going to spend the time between now and then thinking about what opportunities we have, what we want to focus on, what we change or don't change about doing another sprint. So, David, that exact question is the kind of thing we are going mull over and figure out how to take further steps on in these coming months.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. Thank you, Tina. And so, I am just checking through to see if there are any other questions from the audience. If there aren't, I would like to invite the ARiA team to share some of their feedback and reflections from how the program went. I don't see any questions. So, I wanted to ask Sowmya if she would share some reflections about the ARiA program from a coordinator.  
   
 >> SOWMYA SHANKAR: Hey, everybody. Thank you for being here. So, I speak on behalf of the ARiA team and for myself too. What a journey. We started in July as a team. And we grew. We included Desiree. She wasn't part of the July team but we added her because we came to know immediately we were having to address accessibility in this journey ourselves. And I probably have mentioned this to the rest of the ARiA team. I think one of the strengths, the core team's strength has been the team itself. How well we have got along. How well we support each other. And because of the strength that the core ARiA team has in being able to, you know, challenge each other and provide solutions where there are roadblocks, I think that has been one of my biggest take-aways as a person and as a part of the ARiA coordinator team. Thank you for everybody, but especially thank you to the team. It has been an amazing journey.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you, Sowmya. And thank you for sharing. And I can definitely echo a lot of the things that you said as well. And thank you for Desiree for providing us with the accessibility guidelines and the support because that is very, very important. In a lot of the things I see nowadays that is one of the things often overlooked. But we are privileged to have Desiree on the team and she definitely keeps us on track with that and provides us that guidance. And that is really important as far as delivering content that is for everyone. So, right now if there aren't any questions -- hold on one second. If there aren't any questions from the audience -- there is. What kind of -- this question is for Desiree. What kind of accessibility problems did you solve or work through?  
   
 >> DESIREE WHITE: That is a really big question. So because ARiA is such a multi-faceted thing, we kind of had to think everyone. For example, different accessibility needs function differently on various tell conferencing platforms. Same thing for different file types. So, one of the things I did early on shortly after I joined the team was I started thinking through the options that most people might have depending on their universities and what supreme court ecosystem they are working in to try to -- sort of ecosystem they are working in. We give our facilitators a little bit of free reign over tweaking the content so they could get better conversations out of the breakout sessions. We gave them feedback about how to create accessible content so hopefully, if a person were to join one of the sessions, they would be covered from the beginning.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you. Thank you for sharing that information with us. And for being here and for sharing it with the audience. Hold on one second. We have a question from the audience and that is for the ARiA team and it is do you share with the community?  
   
 >> That was. That was in reference to Desiree. This is Rebecca and I keep asking questions. I appreciate all the information and you are doing a great job, Tonya. I was wondering if you could share about the accessibility of content and how you trained the facilitators in that regard and if not, can I reach out because I am just curious.  
   
 >> DESIREE WHITE: You are always welcome to reach out to me. If anybody needs it, send an email and that will be probably the fastest way to get in touch. We can definitely share the guides we put together for the facilitators. We haven't actually shared those files publicly anywhere because they are kind of broad. Nor did we do any specific training. It wasn't like I sat down and said hello. You are facilitating and I will show you how to use header and files. We give you a packet of supplies and it has everything from guides on content to awesome communication templates that Jennifer -- I am blanking on the name. We had a woman work with us as a communications manager. We have continued to borrow from that work. But they get packets with things to help them as they move through the breakout session process. That is where those guides are.  
   
 >> TONYA BENNETT: Thank you, Desiree. Are there any additional questions? I haven't seen anything come through in the chat. As far as questions about the program, about the future of ARiA. About anything. If you do have questions and you think of something later, just feel free to email the ARiA coordinators or check out the ARiA website because there are some self-help resources that you could go and poke around and grab for yourself. There's also a crowdsourcing document where you can add resources that you know of as well to kind of share with the higher ed community who are also interested in being anti-racist and joining a journey in order to be anti-racist and joining ARiA and participating. So, thank you to EDUCAUSE for partnering with us and providing this forum for us to have this webinar and logistics. And thank you to everyone who is here and is invested in making a change and being part of the solution. You heard our panelists all say they did this work and joined us to be part of the solution. And everyone by being here, taking these steps, we appreciate you also being part of the solution with us. And there's no destination. We are going to keep at it. Wherever you are, there's no shame in being in the learning mode in getting started. Start somewhere. Just start somewhere. Just jump in and there's no judgment. And these are safe spaces. And we do have a learn, grow, lead model. So, if you are at the beginning of your journey or at the middle or further along in your journey, everyone is accepted here. Everyone is respected here and everyone -- you are among friends. I think that is another thing that was also echoed throughout our panelists that they shared. That these are truly indeed safe spaces and you are among friends. And you can rest assured that everyone is valued and everyone is able to -- everyone has a story and they can share those stories and be respected. And also have others who are on this journey right along with them. We are on this journey right along with you. We are being comfortable being uncomfortable as well and just know that we are here to grow right alongside of you and learn right alongside of you. And I think that is also one of the beauties of ARiA is it is grassroots. We haven't arrived and we know we haven't arrived. And we know we are learning right along with you and we are on this journey right along with you. And I think that is one of the beauties of this is we are doing this together. So, I don't know if there are any other remarks from anyone from the ARiA team. But we do humbly thank you all for all that you do also to make ARiA a success and to be here. I see ARiA 2.0 trending. Hashtag that. You heard it here. Look for more great things to come. We will be communicating with everyone as we have been in the past about what is new and upcoming. So just be on the lookout for that and I thank you all again. If there's nothing else from the group, no last reflections, I think we can -- going once. Going twice. Sold. Thank you all for being here on this Friday. We will give you five minutes back. Thank you.