**Report on Themes: Justice and Development under the Decade for People of African Descent**

This report outlines various initiatives and collaborations undertaken to advance the themes of Justice and Development as part of the Decade for People of African Descent:

1. **Canadian Institute for People of African Descent Feasibility Study:** Collaborated on the successful completion of a feasibility study to support the articulation of a national body – the Canadian Institute for People of African Descent. This study aimed to assess the feasibility and potential impact of establishing a national institute dedicated to addressing the needs and advancing the rights of people of African descent across Canada. This institute is moving toward operations that has discussions with the federal government of Canada. There is discussion to support a name refresh and operations launch.
2. **Atlantic Black Policy Conference:** Collaborated on the delivery of an Atlantic Black Policy Conference, providing a platform for dialogue, policy development, and advocacy on issues affecting Black communities in the Atlantic region. This conference brought together stakeholders from government, academia, civil society, and grassroots organizations to discuss strategies for addressing systemic inequalities and promoting social and economic justice. This conference influenced DBDLI’s input toward Attendance and Engagement policies within the public school system in Nova Scotia. It was also informed by and informed the actualization of governance and organizational structuring.
3. **Africentric Recognition Prior Learning (RPL) Framework:** Launched the Africentric Recognition Prior Learning (RPL) phase one initiative to articulate a framework aimed at recognizing and validating the knowledge, skills, and experiences of individuals from African descent backgrounds. This initiative seeks to address barriers to educational and economic advancement by providing pathways for credential recognition and professional development. This framework which uniquely includes trauma response and aftercare support academic and economic trajectories.
4. **Enhancing Hairstylist Policy – Inclusive Cosmetology:** Worked on enhancing hairstylist policy to promote inclusive cosmetology practices. This initiative focused on addressing discrimination and bias within the cosmetology industry, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of race or ethnicity, have equal access to training, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities. The value-added beyond influencing industry policy and practices was exposure to community of structures/streams that exist that support quality delivery and also intersect with employment opportunities.
5. **African Canadian Studies ALP 4 – Curriculum Review:** Conducted a comprehensive review of the African Canadian Studies ALP 4 curriculum to ensure its relevance, accuracy, and cultural sensitivity. This review aimed to strengthen the curriculum's alignment with Africentric perspectives and experiences, thereby promoting a more inclusive and equitable education system. This learning impacted public school system and post-secondary education. Our organization, recognizing gaps, moved to develop a teaching resource in response to what evidenced during the work. Also, professional development offerings were expanded in terms of content and accessibility of offering (such as via the DBDLI E-Learning Platform).
6. **Africentric Publishing Partnership and Resources:** Established partnerships and resources for Africentric publishing, with the goal of promoting the production and dissemination of educational materials that reflect the diversity and richness of African heritage and culture. These initiatives aim to address the lack of representation and inclusion of African perspectives in mainstream publishing and educational materials.
7. **Africentric Hub – Scholarship Resource:** Developed an Africentric hub as a central collaborative community hub which shares a scholarship resource, provides access to research, literature, and resources that center African perspectives and experiences. This initiative aims to support scholarship, knowledge production, and critical inquiry within Africentric frameworks, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of African heritage and contributions. It draws networks under an umbrella of knowledge pods: Education, Health, Entrepreneurship and so on.
8. **Black Films That Teach:** Collaborated with a local service provider, Eastlink Television. We curated a series of black films that teach, showcasing cinematic works that explore themes of social justice, resilience, and empowerment within Black communities. This initiative serves as a platform for education, dialogue, and cultural enrichment, promoting awareness and understanding of the diverse experiences and narratives of people of African descent.
9. **Africentric Accountability and Governance Model:** Explored the development of an Africentric governance model, aiming to establish frameworks and practices that prioritize equity, representation, and community engagement within organizational structures and decision-making processes. This initiative seeks to address systemic barriers and power imbalances, fostering more inclusive and participatory forms of governance. Once finalized it will provide an opportunity template for Black-led, Black-Mandated and Black-Run organizations.
10. **Viola Desmond Docu-Series:** Produced a docu-series on Viola Desmond, a pioneering Black Canadian activist and entrepreneur, highlighting her contributions to civil rights and social justice. This initiative aims to raise awareness of Desmond's legacy and inspire dialogue on issues of racial equality, economic empowerment, and human rights. This also served as another reference point to the contributions of African Nova Scotians as a distinct people who because of our centuries of longevity in Nova Scotia/Canada have unique contribution and needs. It amplified the recognition points of Viola Desmond, such as naming’s: schools, ferries, social justice work spaces, street lanes and most notably the ten ($10 ) dollar bill in Canada.
11. **Black History Learning Series – Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia:** Collaborated on the development and delivery of a Black History Learning Series in partnership with the Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia. This series provided educational workshops, resources, and events that explore the history, culture, and contributions of Black Canadians, promoting greater understanding and appreciation of Black heritage and experiences.
12. **Public Policy Training Institute:** Established a Public Policy Training Institute to provide education and capacity-building opportunities for individuals and organizations working on policy development and advocacy within Black communities and broadly. This institute aims to empower community leaders and advocates with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to drive meaningful change and advance social justice goals. We have embraced an initiative that came out our first offering (we are currently in our second), -Africentric School and Program.
13. **African Nova Scotian History Challenges – 17 years:** Addressed challenges related to the inclusion and accurate representation of African Nova Scotian history within educational curricula and public discourse for over 17 years. This ongoing initiative seeks to raise awareness of the rich and diverse history of African Nova Scotians, challenging stereotypes and fostering pride and empowerment within the community. As aspect of its uniqueness is that was developed in connection with rich history/heritage resources: Times of African Nova Scotians: Vol 1 & 2. It continues to draw from locally developed resources as well as having teachers lead project develop with individual students and groups of students.
14. **Africentric Conference - Africentric Praxis to Affective Transformation: The Way to Make Change Felt:** Organized an Africentric conference focused on exploring Africentric praxis as a means of achieving affective transformation and making change felt within Black communities. This conference brought together scholars, practitioners, and community members to discuss strategies for centering Africentric perspectives and experiences in social, political, and economic contexts, with the aim of promoting justice, equity, and development for people of African descent. There was empowerment and much good work that was happening was strengthened and expanded. We are currently collaborating to hold a follow up conference in South Africa building with our commitment to reciprocity and Ubuntu. We also see the need to share with our family in the continent what we have been able to advance and Canada and have them share what they have been able to advance. We then collectively can address the gaps.

These initiatives and collaborations demonstrate a commitment to advancing justice, equity, and development for people of African descent, contributing to the goals and objectives of the Decade for People of African Descent. Through strategic partnerships, innovative programming, and community engagement, these efforts aim to address systemic inequalities, celebrate cultural heritage, and promote social and economic empowerment within Black communities across Canada.

Respectfully

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