From: Sneed Collard
To: Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject: I support JEDI funding
Date: Sunday, August 8, 2021 12:21:19 PM

August 8, 2021

Dear Missoula City Council,

I am writing to endorse the City's commitment to a Just, Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive (JEDI) Missoula, including support for funding and resources. Although few of us in Missoula think of ourselves as racist or prejudiced, all of us have been affected by the cultural and educational biases we have grown up with. This is not necessarily something to be ashamed of since much of it is out of our control, but we do share a responsibility to become aware of and try to eliminate these biases so that they do not harm our fellow citizens.

Over and over again, Missoula citizens have voted to provide funding for projects that improve our community, whether they be new bridges and sports facilities or open space and parks. The benefits of these projects are easy to see, as anyone who drops off their children at the new soccer fields or library can attest. It is more difficult to see the results of our investment in people, and yet the results are even more dramatic. People who are now largely disenfranchised because of the color of their skin, their sexual orientation, or other largely superficial differences impact our economy, public health, and social support systems at every level. Working to give these people basic resources and a fair shot at jobs, education, safety, and services strengthens our economy, safety, and public health.

If you have any doubts about the wisdom of these efforts just ask yourself, "How would I feel if I or one of my family members were discriminated against for something over which we have no control?" It's a no-brainer that 99% of us would be outraged and work to correct that wrong. And yet a large number of our citizens experience senseless prejudice and discrimination on a daily basis. Correcting this destructive situation will take patience and hard work, but JEDI is an important step in righting this wrong and strengthening our economy, society, and entire community.

Sincerely,

Sneed Collard

Missoula