

Inequity in our Community with Dow Constantine, Maud Daudon and Tony Mestres

Totem Report October 26, 2016

By Dann Mead Smith

Inequity Panel

President Cathy introduced our member Allison Parker, Director of Philanthropic Partnerships at the Seattle Foundation and thanked her for organizing today's program that featured:

Maud Daudon, President/CEO, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Tony Mestres, Present/CEO, The Seattle Foundation

Dow Constantine, King County Executive

What can we do to be part of the solution to address the inequities in our community?

Allison Parker: We see all this prosperity in our area but when you "peel the onion back, some members are not doing as well."

Maud Daudon as the moderator also asked, "How do you define equity?" Both Tony and Dow agreed that "equity is what each person needs to be successful. And we need to make investments to allow every person to shine through."

Dow mentioned King County's Best Start for Kids program that voters passed last year that "addresses those early inequities," the importance of access to health care and how the number of uninsured in King County has been reduced, and mobility which is being addressed by the Orca Lift program as ways that King County government is trying to address inequity.

Maud mentioned the Chamber's Triple Bottom Line: strong economy, healthy environment, and focusing on not letting people get left behind which includes access to a great education.



Why should we care about equity?

Tony Mestres: in order for us to remain one of the top globally competitive cities, we need a stronger middle class and to reduce the number of underemployed and unemployed. We need

to “excite the private sector to ensure we have a stronger community for all. This opportunity will not be around forever; we have the assets now” to address this problem.

Maud Daudon: we need to rewrite the playbook for our region to have economic inclusion; “it’s right, fair, and leads to profitability and competitiveness.”

Dow Constantine: when he talks to employers, the issue he hears about is the need for more workers. “Inequities drive us all down. We are not getting enough out of our economy and it can’t all be done by government. And the Chamber is taking the lead on this through their Seattle Regional Partnership program.”

Maud asked the audience, how many times have you heard that we don’t want to become like San Francisco? She said we now have an opportunity to do something about it. Some are prospering like crazy and some are getting left behind. We still have middle-income jobs in the Puget Sound area that not all regions do...

Tony concluded the discussion with a call to action:

“We have untold value to unearth with our economy that other regions do not have.” He encouraged us to be a “model for people in your company that is community focused and socially conscious and build these connections now. Each company needs to find its own strengths and see what they can do more of and we need to build connections now.”

President Cathy concluded the meeting with, “we have heard a call to action today, so as Rotarians, let’s get to work and do our part.”



David Woodward recited a haiku in honor of our special guests from Japan to kick off the meeting. **Don Murphy** accompanied by **Trish Bostrom** led us in the “Star Spangled Banner” and then **Don Kraft** reflected on our member, **Paul Cressman, Sr.** who recently passed away. Paul was a prominent attorney and a 67 year member of Rotary, 29 at our Club. He is survived by his son, **Paul Jr.** who is a member of our club.

We welcomed two new members: **Joel Paget** introduced us to **Matt Albertson**, major gifts officer at KUOW radio, and **Rob Lobosco** introduced **Johnny Lau** who founded the Institute

for Pacific Exchange and splits his time between living in Seattle and China.

President Cathy welcomed both of them and presented them with their Rotary pin that “unites you with 1.2 million Rotary members worldwide.”

President Cathy called for a vote on our amended bylaws which passed unanimously. She reminded us that the board has reviewed the bylaws and recommended updating and streamlining them which the club approved on September 29th. This vote was to approve the actual amended bylaws.



President Cathy thanked **Ken Hamm** as the club’s media sponsor, as well as **Nick Anderson of Pacific Continental Bank** for being the Media Day Sponsor for this program that enables us to record the meeting for viewing on our website.

We celebrated some impressive member milestones with balloons at the meeting including:

John Blackman – 55 years in Rotary with 26 of those as a member of our club!

John Durbin – 45 years in our club

Terry Zerngast – 37 years

Karl Ege – 24 years

President Cathy also announced that this is the 30th Anniversary of women being part of Rotary and we have two members who are celebrating this milestone, **Cynthia Chirot** who is celebrating 30 years and **Nancy Osborne** celebrating 27 years!

President Cathy highlighted the recent *Seattle Times* op-ed by **Ralph Munro, Ezra Teshome and Steve Crane**, “A Polio-Free World is Within Reach”:

<http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/a-polio-free-world-is-within-reach/>



Our short program featured former Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki who talked about the “Walk in U.S., Talk on Japan” delegation. Ambassador Fujisaki, who actually went to grade school here in Seattle in 1960, retired after 43 years in international diplomacy including serving as the Japanese Ambassador to the U.S. from 2008-2012. He joked that when he retired after this long career he told his wife, “now I can say anything.” His wife replied, “But no one cares anymore.”

He said the greatest challenge of his time as ambassador was the 2011 earthquake, “thank you very much from the bottom of my heart” to the American people for all the help that we provided for that disaster.

He concluded his remarks talking about the importance of having the U.S. as a stable partner in the Asia Pacific region and encouraged the U.S. to complete the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement. He then introduced his colleagues that were travelling with him as part of this tour around the United States.