



This DR Diversity Committee's Spotlight involves a nominated resource by Dr. Federico Waitoller, an Associate Professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Waitoller's research focuses on urban inclusive education and racial inequities for students with disabilities. With his submission, Dr. Waitoller describes the significance of participatory action research for students of color with disabilities.



Racial inequities in special education are as old as special education itself and continue to be a contested and controversial topic. Researchers continue to debate whether students of color are over- or under-represented in special education or whether or not students of color with disabilities received more severe disciplinary sanctions and are placed in more restrictive environments than their White peers. Researchers also continue to discuss if frameworks such as Response to Intervention or School Wide Positive support plan has any positive impact on students of color with disabilities. Hidden behind the noise of these critical debates and the words of hundreds of research papers there is a profound silence: the voices of students of color with disabilities.

The work of Dr. Taicia González at the University of Arizona and colleagues, addresses such problematic absence.

In the following EquiLearn Virtual Roundtable organized by the Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center, Dr. González shares a project based on participatory action research with Latinx and Hmong students with and without disabilities. This virtual roundtable will provide you with ideas and inspiration to involve youth of color with disabilities not just as participants but as essential members of the research team. The project centers the experiences and cultural repertoires of youth of color with disabilities to create more equitable and inclusive learning spaces. I encourage you to check it out!
~Dr. Federico Waitoller



González, T., Hafner, M., & Hong, J. (2019) *Advancing inclusive education using equity by design for students of color with learning disabilities*, EquiLearn Virtual Roundtable. <https://greatlakesequity.org/resource/equilearn-virtual-roundtable-advancing-inclusive-education-using-equity-design-students>