

# DLF Active Bystander Orientation

Presented by the Committee on Equity and Inclusion  
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# Introduction

## Who we are:

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## 2019 Team

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The University of Massachusetts Amherst acknowledges that it was founded and built on the unceded homelands of the Pocumtuc Nation on the land of the Norrwutuck community, and is a Land Grant University. As part of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, Tribal lands from 82 Native Nations west of the Mississippi were sold to provide the resources to found and build this university.

The University of Nebraska is a public, land-grant institution with campuses and programs across the State that reside on the past, present, and future homelands of the Pawnee, Ponca, Oto-Missouria, Omaha, Dakota, Lakota, Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Kaw Peoples, as well as the relocated Ho Chunk (Winnebago), Iowa, and Sac and Fox Peoples.

Livingstone College in North Carolina is sited on colonized land traditionally belonging to the Catawba, Cheraw, Sugeree, Wateree, and Waxhaw Peoples.

Pennsylvania, site of Temple University, is the land of the Erielhonan (Erie), Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), Lenni-Lenape, Shawnee, Susquehannock, and Tuscarora nations, and the Honniasont, Saluda, Saponi, Tutelo, and Wenrohronon tribes.

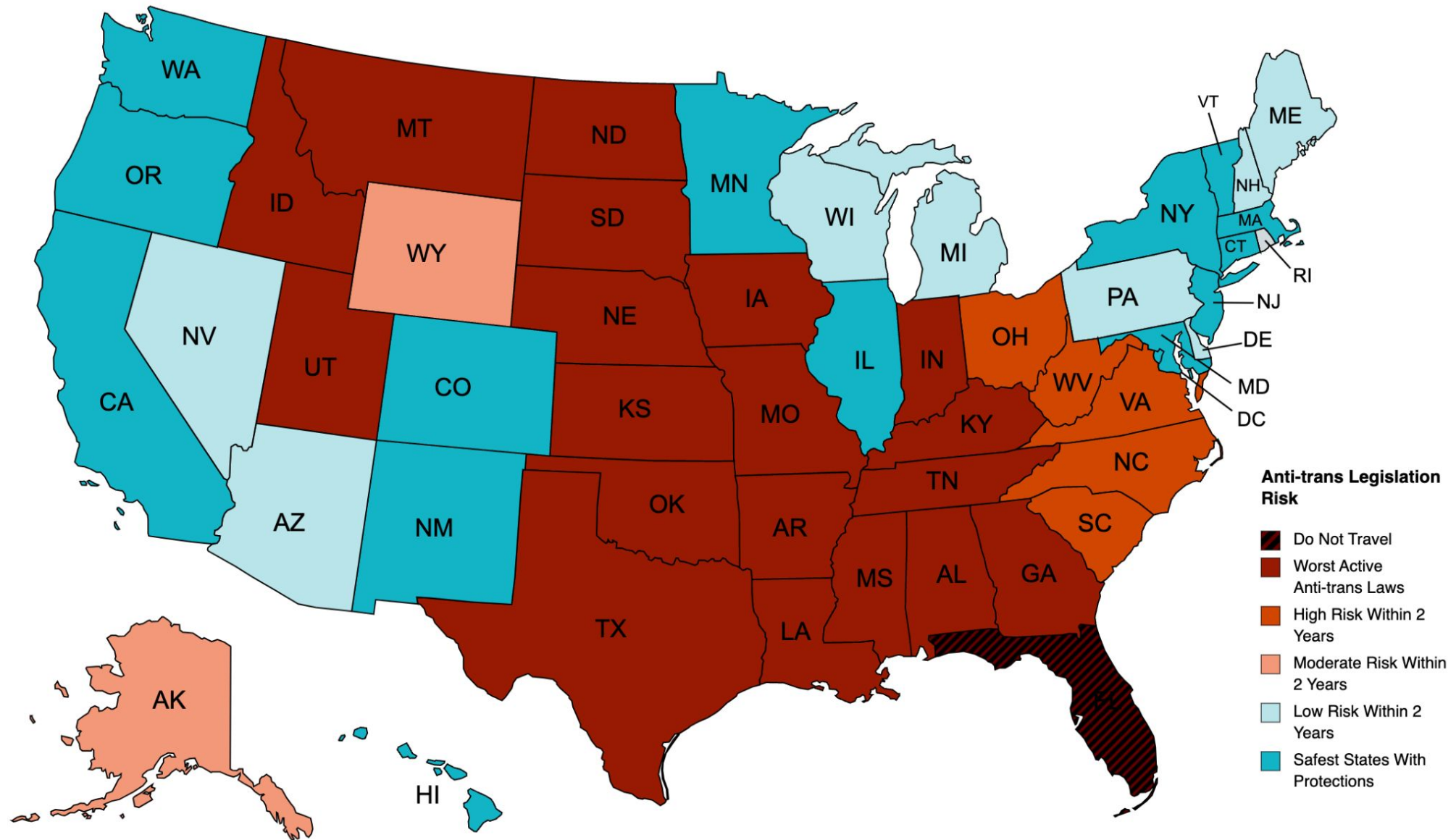
To learn more about the specific role of the Morrill Act in dispossessing Indigenous people to establish public universities, visit Land Grab Universities: <https://www.landgrabu.org/>



# Agenda

- Why this session?
- Introduction to Active Bystander Concepts
- Fears and risks related to being an active bystander
- Encounters in professional contexts
- “Boundaries” as a rubric for responding
- Strategies for Bystanders: The Five Ds
- Communication Recovery Model
- Discussion and Scenarios





Source: Erin in the Morning, <https://www.erininthemorning.com/p/june-anti-trans-legislative-risk>

# Cultivating optimism

Would I be helped? Cross-national CCTV footage shows that intervention is the norm in public conflicts.

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Philpot, R., Liebst, L. S., Levine, M., Bernasco, W., & Lindegaard, M. R. (2020). Would I be helped? Cross-national CCTV footage shows that intervention is the norm in public conflicts. *American Psychologist*, 75(1), 66–75. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000469>

Half a century of research on bystander behavior concludes that individuals are less likely to intervene during an emergency when in the presence of others than when alone. By contrast, little is known regarding the aggregated likelihood that at least someone present at an emergency will do something to help. The importance of establishing this aggregated intervention baseline is not only of scholarly interest but is also the most pressing question for actual public victims—will I receive help if needed? The current article describes the largest systematic study of real-life bystander intervention in actual public conflicts captured by surveillance cameras. Using a unique cross-national video dataset from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and South Africa (N = 219), we show that in 9 of 10 public conflicts, at least 1 bystander, but typically several, will do something to help. We record similar likelihoods of intervention across the 3 national contexts, which differ greatly in levels of perceived public safety. Finally, we find that increased bystander presence is related to a greater likelihood that someone will intervene. Taken together these findings allay the widespread fear that bystanders rarely intervene to help. We argue that it is time for psychology to change the narrative away from an absence of help and toward a new understanding of what makes intervention successful or unsuccessful. (PsycInfo Database Record (c) 2020 APA, all rights reserved)

- We can be part of making DLF forum as vibrant as ever
- Grow comfortable with small, skillful interventions
- Even when we feel alone, we can make a difference



# a disclaimer!

We cannot give legal advice or tell people whether or how they should intervene.

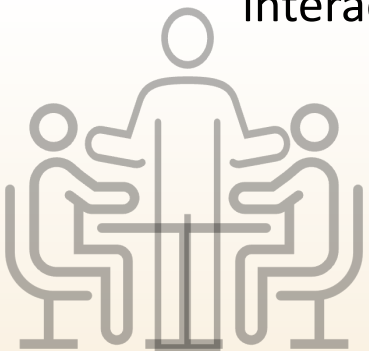
Strategies for “active bystander intervention” relate to nonviolent communication, self-defense, personal safety, and other skillsets that we are not experts in. The purpose of this orientation is to provide an introduction to these ideas for personal reflection and empowerment. We cannot endorse any specific course of action, but we can provide a space to talk through some scenarios and apply principles to them. Just like using your GPS for driving, always do a reality check before taking any unmarked roads!





# Our goals for this session

- Introduce the concept of being an active bystander to empower people to reflect on their personal philosophies and preparedness to intervene.
- Provide individuals with some of the basic information and tactics to address a situation if/when they are part of one.
- Help people understand their own comfort levels, assess risks, and choose interventions that feel balanced.
- Discuss and reflect on types of behaviors that may create an unwelcoming environment in professional and other contexts.
- Anticipate scenarios that could happen in professional situations, to help support inclusive participation at the Forum.
- Encourage people to read the Code of Conduct and help them envision some ways they might interact with it.



# Defining “Active Bystander”

- An active bystander witnesses an act that is harmful and doesn't just passively observe or walk away. An active bystander makes the effort to intervene and de-escalate
- Primary Aim is to safely diminish and defuse the negative or potentially harmful situation
- MIT Resource : [Active Bystanders: Definition & Philosophy](#)





# Active Bystander Concepts: Purpose of Intervention

- Reduce harm in the moment: redirect/defuse/interrupt, so as to put a stop to the action/harm
- Demonstrate an alternative to other observers/bystanders
  - [https://www.afsc.org/sites/default/files/documents/bystander\\_intervention\\_final.pdf](https://www.afsc.org/sites/default/files/documents/bystander_intervention_final.pdf)
- Doing Nothing sends a message
  - [Handling Workplace Bullying](#) (LinkedInLearning.com video course) if you have a LinkedInLearning account or lynda.com account
  - <https://www.splcenter.org/20171005/splc-campus-guide-bystander-intervention#intervene>
- Another reason is to model and reinforce the community's expected behaviors



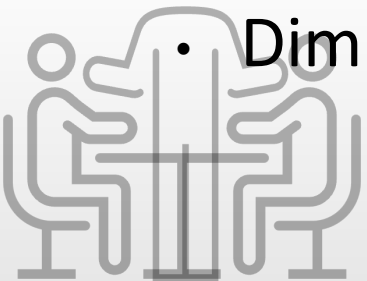
# Purpose of Interventions within the DLF

- Building Community expectations
  - Active bystanders reinforce and uphold the Code of Conduct (CoC)
- Creates space of awareness for the DLF Community
- We contribute to the success of DLF and our community



# Risks and Fears | Why people stay passive

- Fear of the Wrong!
  - not knowing what to do
  - getting it wrong
  - making things worse
  - looking bad
- Power Dynamics
  - Relationships with the people Involved
  - Professional Blowback
- Trauma Triggers
- Safety risks
- Diminishing responsibility



# Kinds of Encounters at a Professional Conference

- Interpersonal between attendees/colleagues
- Interpersonal between attendees and locals/staff
- Session interactions between moderators and attendees
- Session interactions between moderators and presenters
- Session interactions between presenters and attendees
- Interactions between organizers/organizations and member(s)/membership



# Types of Boundaries

- Emotional
- Mental
- Intellectual
- Physical
- Financial
- Cultural
- Organizational (policy)



# Responding to Encounters - Deciding If You Need to Intervene

Ask yourself:

- Whose boundary was crossed?
- What type of boundary was crossed?
- Who is responsible for moderation/enforcement?
- Is it a legal issue?
- Is it a policy or CoC violation?
- Is it a situation where no concrete legal or policy based violation is occurring?



# “Do’s and Don’ts” - DO

- **Do take cues from the individual being harassed.** For example, notice if the person being harassed is resisting in their own way, and honor that. (Especially white folks, don’t police tone of the person being harassed).
- **Do make your presence as a witness known.** For example, make eye contact with the person being harassed and ask them if they want support.
- When speaking, **do use “I” statements as opposed to accusatory “you” statements.**
- **Do keep both of you safe.** Assess your surroundings—are there others nearby you can pull in to support? Working in a team is a good idea, if it is possible.



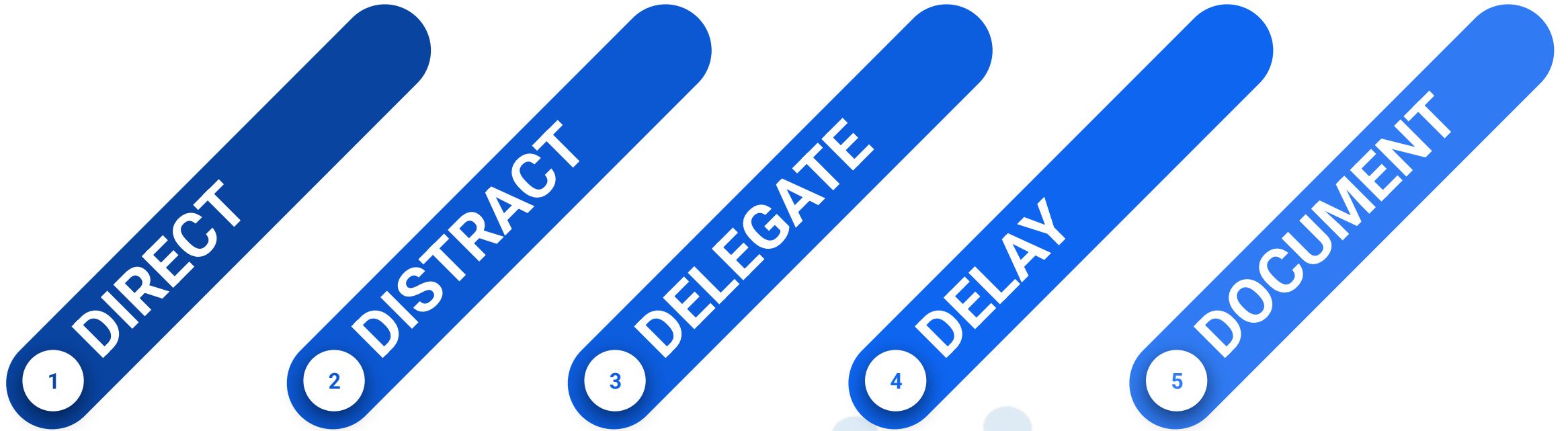


# “Do’s and Don’ts” - **DON’T**

- **Don’t call the police unless absolutely necessary.** For many communities experiencing harassment right now (including Arab and Muslim communities, Black people, queer and trans folks, and immigrants) the police can cause a greater danger for the person being harassed.
- **Don’t escalate the situation.** The goal is to get the person being harassed to safety, not to incite further violence from the attacker.
- **Don’t do nothing.** Silence is dangerous—it communicates approval and leaves the victim high and dry. If you find yourself too nervous or afraid to speak out, move closer to the person being harassed to communicate your support with your presence.



# Strategies: The 5 “D’s”



# Direct

- “Did I hear correctly that you just said \_\_\_\_\_?”
- “That comment was \_\_\_\_\_ (inappropriate / disrespectful / homophobic / racist / etc.)
- “Kim’s pronouns are they/them/theirs, please respect that.”
- “I am interested in hearing what Mark has to say. Please stop interrupting him.”



# Distract

- “Do you know where the bus stop is?”
- “Can you help me find room 325?”
- Accidentally on purpose spill your drink, or drop your belongings.



DELE

# Delegate

- Engage other bystanders.
- DLF Staff and volunteers - look for white lanyards.
- Call or text CLIR/DLF staff at 732-737-7328 (732-RESPECT) (7am to 9pm Local Time)
- Email: [info@diglib.org](mailto:info@diglib.org)



# Delay

## Offer Help to The Person Affected:

“ I heard what the person said to you - are you ok?

“I’m sorry that happened to you. Do you want to talk about it?”

## Call in the Offender:

“ I noticed your comment earlier, & it came off as \_\_\_\_\_ (racist, sexist, etc.) I think some people may have been offended by it, & I want to make sure you are aware...”

# Document

- Keep a safe distance
- Capture landmarks
- Clearly state the day and time
- Try to capture at least 10 seconds of the interaction
- Always check with the person affected before posting or sharing.



<https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/protesters-rights#i-want-to-take-pictures-or-shoot-video-at-a-protest>



# The Purpose of Intervention Strategies

- Do what you can and with respect for the person who is affected.
- Use your best judgment, and consider the safety of yourself and those around you.
- You can also support other active bystanders by working together, or if you notice someone else intervening, consider thanking them.
- The more we show support for each other, the more effective intervention strategies are.

# Communication Recovery Model

- accept feedback
- acknowledge your impact
- apologize
- ask questions for clarification
- reflect and commit to change
- move forward in communication.

from *Ouch! That Stereotype Hurts: Communicating Respectfully in a Diverse World*



# Discussion and Q&A

## Reminders:

- Reality check (check conditions on the ground before deciding)
- Boundaries and agency (remember to try to restore agency to the person being harmed)
- Five Ds (match your comfort level and risks with a way to interrupt what's happening)
- Communication recovery model (learn and make amends after interactions gone wrong)



## Five Ds

- Direct
- Distract
- Delegate
- Delay
- Document



# Scenarios

- Question from audience member in a session seems to have an agenda, not just curiosity or clarification; when the presenter tries to answer, the audience member interrupts to ask it in a different way.
- Someone addresses another person using the wrong pronouns. They are not being malicious, but this is their first time being corrected and they are unsure how to respond.
- You overhear someone make a comment about someone else's appearance or body (either "hitting on" or body policing mode)
- Someone makes a remark that includes commonly used misinformation about a marginalized group.



Thank you! Hope  
to meet you in  
St. Louis!

