When we're talking about inclusion, a lot of it is educating, creating exposure, building connections and building visibility. You have to be exposed to other people who look different from you, who think differently from you, and who have different experiences from you in order to ever be able to feel empathy and understanding and connectedness and see "them" as "we."

Through the All for All initiative, we are trying to bring in as many partners as we can—community groups, government, schools, businesses and individuals—to shine a light on them, and to respond to what we're hearing from the community. We are starting to work with elected leaders across the region so that they're adopting practices that are more representative of an immigrant-friendly and inclusive community. Civic engagement, education and the workplace also play important roles in becoming "a community of we."

We know that people from diverse backgrounds experience a different version of Pittsburgh, one with limited opportunities for advancement and sometimes lacking a sense of belonging. We know it's harder to break in here. That's part of our identity, but part of our identity that needs to change.

We've heard stories from community members from different backgrounds who say that the unleashing of bias is alive and amplified. We also are hearing about the incidents of bullying and of youth not feeling safe or welcome. It was happening before, but now it's just happening more.

On the positive side, we've been encouraged by outpourings of support from community members who are eager to learn how they can contribute to building a more inclusive region.

I think the first people who really "get it" are those who appreciate that this isn't about diversity for the sake of diversity. There's an economic, cultural and simply a human benefit that is spurred by building more welcoming and inclusive communities.

— Interviewed by Eleanor Chute

BE EXPOSED TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE

> **Betty Cruz**
DIRECTOR OF CHANGE AGENCY

Annie O'Neill