

An Evening of Civility

By Amy Malmer, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments May 22, 2024

SEMCOG recently partnered with the Metropolitan Affairs Coalition (MAC), The Civility Project, [Oakland University's Center for Civic Engagement](#), and Huntington Bank to present an Evening of Civility. MAC Co-Chair David Hecker joined Huntington Bank Chairman Gary Torgow to graciously welcome attendees to the bank's beautiful Detroit location.



Nolan Finley and Stephen Henderson, who are partners in The Civility Project, shared their insights and encouraged using the four pillars of civility to guide discussion:

- Drop assumptions
- Set honest goals for the conversation
- Listen actively – a skill that must be learned!
- Keep returning to the conversation – civility is not built overnight

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Mayor Dave Bing, Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan Barnett, Detroit Regional Partnership CEO Maureen Krauss, and Oakland University President Ora Hirsch Pescovitz participated in a panel discussion and shared stories of success built on positive relationships.

In his role as MC for the evening, Dr. David Dulio, Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for Civic Engagement at Oakland University, asked the panel about the importance of collaboration in each of their roles. The panelists then went on to discuss the key ingredients for establishing and sustaining successful collaboration.

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Key take-aways from the engaging talk:

- Good relationships, built on civility and productive dialogue, are key to success.
- Remember that good people form opinions based on their experiences, values, and viewpoints.
- Take time to ask why and how people have formed their opinions, and then listen to their story.

Original Article:

<https://www.semcog.org/blog/artmid/528/articleid/534/an-evening-of-civility>