Opening Keynote — You Are My Other Me: Radical Empathy

Luis Ortega
Founder and Director/Storyteller-in-Chief
Storytellers for Change
Seattle, WA
LuisOrtega@S4Change.org

Learning Outcomes:
As a result of participating in this educational activity, learners will be able to:

- Articulate the definition of empathy, its importance to them and the practice of empathy in their personal and professional lives;
- Articulate how the practice of empathy can contribute to building more inclusive and community-driven environments to close inequity gaps; and
- Articulate how they can practice story-telling and story-listening in their professional roles.

About the Session:
The beauty of empathy, as described by Mexican artist and educator, Kattona Saldaña, is the everlasting opportunity we have as human beings to see and experience all the colors of the world through as many stories as we are willing to listen. In this session, TEDx speaker and founder of Storytellers for Change, Luis Ortega, will engage the audience through humor, poetry, and stories to address why the practice of radical empathy is essential to humanity. Luis addresses how easily we can confuse empathy with sympathy; the need for new metaphors to teach the concept and practice of empathy; and why and how we should and can practice empathy in our personal and professional lives as a way to create more inclusive environments. In addition, Luis also highlights how empathy, as a human-centered approach and strategy, plays an important role in engaging and working with and for communities most impacted by inequity. Through heartfelt, vulnerable, and uplifting storytelling, Luis will emphasize that one of the most essential and effective ways to evoke empathy, build inclusive environments, and close gaps of inequity is through story-listening—our willingness to actively listen to each other and validate the worthiness of our narratives and experiences. In the end, Luis will make the case that in today’s world to truly listen to each other is nothing short of a radical, beautiful, and powerful act of empathy.

Why this is important to a school nurse:
The purpose of this activity is to enable the learner to understand how the practice of storytelling and story-listening can evoke empathy; build more inclusive environments; and close gaps of inequity in our communities. The activity highlights and guides learners to explore how our willingness to actively listen to each other and validate the worthiness of our narratives (experiences) can have a transformative effect in our professional practice.