



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Biannual Report

July 5th, 2023

The following report lists all the goals outlined in the committee's strategic plan as well as all the actions taken towards meeting those goals and all upcoming plans to continue working towards those goals. The report is organized by the four focus areas of our strategic plan: workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, sustainability and accountability, and enhanced client support.

Workforce Diversity

Goals:

1. Work with HR to identify and start utilizing diverse recruitment resources.
2. Evaluate the hiring process to identify any areas of equity and inclusion that could be improved.
3. Create a revised version of the yearly climate survey that does not collect any demographic information but does include agency climate questions and evaluations of the hiring and onboarding process to be completed as part of 90 day reviews.

Actions Taken:

1. In mid-May, VOC became a member of the Workforce Diversity Network and has since been posting all available job openings to their website. We have also explored posting available positions on Rochester Works' job board and have shared all relevant information with Allison. This is in addition to recruitment resources that were already in use, such as LinkedIn, Indeed, Rochester Chamber, and CCSI.
2. The committee met with Allison on April 13th to discuss VOC's current hiring process including job postings, applications, interviews, and onboarding processes. We discussed a few changes such as including in job listings that both applicable experience and education would be considered, asking applicants if they have any immediate family members who are Veterans rather than just asking if they themselves are a Veteran, and discussed how the DEI committee may be able to assist more in the hiring process in the future.
3. The survey is currently about 50% completed and should be ready to be shared with Allison and Laura by the end of the month.

Upcoming Plans:

1. VOC will renew their membership with the Workforce Diversity Network in 2024 and Allison will continue posting available positions on all the recruitment resources listed above.
2. The committee will continue to be available to Allison to assist with reviewing and improving the hiring process in any way we can.
3. The survey should be completed and ready to be implemented part of the 90-day review process in August.



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Workplace Inclusion

Goals:

1. Host trainings to educate staff on topics of diversity and inclusion.
2. Acknowledge and celebrate diversity among staff through planned activities and events.
3. Share the staff climate survey annually to gauge staff diversity as well as feelings and attitudes towards DEI at VOC.

Actions Taken:

1. To date we have hosted three staff trainings: Leveraging Diversity to Achieve Organization Success with Fernán Cepero, The Seven Pillars of Inclusion with Reggie and Gabe, and SafeZone Training with Jessica Cohen from Trillium Health.
2. In honor of Women's History Month in March, we asked all staff to submit a photo of a woman that has had a big impact on their life and share more about them at our all-staff meeting.
3. The staff climate survey was shared in January and was completed by 41 staff members, exceeding our 90% participation goal.

Upcoming Plans:

1. We plan to host three more all-staff trainings this year, as well as a training for staff in supervisory roles focused on supervising a diverse workforce. One of the three staff trainings remaining will be an online implicit bias training that staff can complete at their own pace, and the training for staff in supervisory roles will be done by the Workforce Diversity Network CEO, Michael D'Arcangelo.
2. We plan to host three more staff-focused activities this year.
3. The climate survey will be shared again in January 2024 so that results can be compared year-to-year.

Sustainability and Accountability

Goals:

1. Work with senior leadership and agency managers to improve knowledge of respecting and celebrating diversity in staff and accommodate differences and disabilities if disclosed by staff members.
2. Review employee handbook to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion is embedded in our official policies.



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3. Create an open-door policy to the DEI committee to support and advise staff with any DEI related issues they may encounter in their dealings with clients, other staff, or community partners.
4. Prepare semiannual reports detailing DEI initiatives and accomplishments to be shared with the agency and board of directors.

Actions Taken:

1. Michael D’Arcangelo from the WDN is preparing a training for all staff in supervisory positions focused on supervising a diverse staff.
2. To date we have reviewed sections 1 and 2 of the handbook and did not find anything that we felt needed to be added, removed, or reworded.
3. We host monthly open committee meetings that all staff are welcome to attend. Summary emails are sent out to all staff after the meetings so that everyone is up-to-date on committee activities, even if they are unavailable at regular meeting times. We also include a reminder with our all hands updates that all committee officers are available and welcome staff to use them as a resource if the need should arise.
4. This report is being completed for the board meeting held on July 10th, 2023.

Upcoming Plans:

1. We should be able to host the supervisory training with Michael D’Arcangelo sometime in August. The committee will also take a look at some of the online trainings offered by our EAP to identify some trainings relating to supervising diverse workers that staff can complete at their own pace.
2. We plan to review sections 3 and 4 of the handbook by the end of August, and section 5 by the end of December this year.
3. We will continue to host open meetings and will be sending out a survey soon asking staff what days and times they would be available for these meetings. Based on the responses to this survey, we may change our usual meeting times in order to accommodate as many schedules as possible.
4. The next report will be completed for the board meeting being held on December 18th, 2023.

Enhanced Client Support

Goals:

1. Host trainings to educate staff on topics of diversity and inclusion so they can better serve clients of diverse backgrounds.



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2. Improve our public diversity representation through signage in the agency, enhanced outreach materials, and better representation and acknowledgement on social media and our website.
3. Host events celebrating diversity for clients.
4. Host DEI trainings for clients in partnership with the Employment and Training team.

Actions Taken:

1. See the Workplace Inclusion section for trainings already hosted.
2. In partnership with the Advancement team, several posts have been posted on agency social media pages acknowledging and celebrating diversity focused holidays, and a new DEI webpage has been created and added to the agency website. We also participated in the city's Juneteenth parade on Saturday, June 17th. See below for a full list of social media posts:
 - a. In honor of Black History Month, weekly posts were created recognizing influential Black servicemembers. The servicemembers highlighted were Private Cathay Williams (Army), Ensign Jesse L. Brown (Navy), Tuskegee Airmen (Airforce), and the Montford Point Marines (Marine Corps).
 - b. In honor of Women's History Month, we posted weekly highlighting our women Veterans on staff: Laura Stradley, Judy Leone, Giovanna Gutierrez, and Paula Burgin.
 - c. In April our new DEI webpage (veteransoutreachcenter.org/dei) was posted on our social media.
 - d. In May we posted recognizing Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage month.
 - e. In June two posts were made recognizing DEI related holidays. We posted in honor of Pride Month on June 16th and in honor of Juneteenth on June 19th.
3. The committee had discussed hosting a Pride-related event for clients this summer, but the timing of some staff turnover and some changes to the committee caused us to decide not to pursue the event at that time.
4. In partnership with the Employment and Training team, Fernán Cepero hosted a training called Selling Yourself as a Military Veteran in March.

Upcoming Plans:

1. See the Workplace Inclusion section for upcoming training plans.
2. We will be participating in the Pride Parade and tabling at the Pride Picnic this month in partnership with the VA, and we will continue posting monthly to the agency's social media accounts.
3. The committee will continue to brainstorm ideas for a client-focused event this year.
4. The committee plans to host one more client training and have discussed hosting a DEI in the workplace training as part of E&T's Job Readiness Training classes.