

Extension DEI Taskforce Recommendations

Extension's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (hereafter "DEI") Taskforce is comprised of faculty and staff interested in playing a significant role in the development of strategies and best practices with regards to diversity and inclusion. The purpose of this taskforce is to develop and promote strategies and best practices within the realms of racial, social, sexual, and gender diversity. The DEI Taskforce further serves as an opportunity for non-taskforce members to have a place to provide suggestions and challenges for the DEI Taskforce. The goal of this taskforce is to provide for the betterment of OSU Extension culture so that everyone is provided with a holistic educational, professional, and inclusive experience.

The taskforce has met monthly since June 2020 and has recently shifted to a quarterly meeting schedule. Recent accomplishments:

- ✓ Created a safe and secure place for internal DEI dialog
- ✓ Created taskforce leadership organization chart
- ✓ Drafted DEI vision and mission statements
- ✓ Provided DEI speaker recommendations to Extension's 2020 Annual Conference Planning Committee
- ✓ Lead five workgroups (partnerships, personal, policy, program, and positioning) tasked with developing DEI Extension recommendations for Cabinet's consideration
- ✓ Started an internal DEI Book Club to increase knowledge of DEI topics, develop community and shared learning for Extension faculty, staff, and families. (This program has also been replicated successfully into county-level programming.)

The leadership of the taskforce is comprised of a College Representative, Cathann Kress, VP & Dean, CFAES, two advisors, Jackie Wilkins, Associate Dean and Director and Chair, OSU Extension and Kathy Lechman, Assistant Dean & Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and co-chaired by Nicole Debose, Area Leader and Laquore Meadows, Area Leader. The taskforce has 40+ active members and continues to strategically increase its membership.

TASKFORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Immediate =)*

DRAFT DEI TASKFORCE VISION STATEMENT RECOMMENDATION

Embracing people of all backgrounds and fostering a culture where everyone is welcome, and marginalized voices are heard. Being accountable to each other, across our county and state offices, networks, communities, and transparent in our pursuit of equity.

DRAFT DEI TASKFORCE MISSION STATEMENT RECOMMENDATION

We are committed to creating opportunities for people to explore how science-based knowledge and research can improve social, economic, and environmental conditions in a just and equitable way.

We believe that we can accomplish far more together than alone. Our passion for just and equitable communities requires that we are inclusive, transparent, and fair in all that we do. We act in solidarity and with appreciation for the work of our colleagues and community leaders in pursuit of equity.

We believe our OSU Extension Outreach and Programs must have relevance and be responsive to our community needs, especially around issues of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Our commitment to building trust and alignment among our communities requires that we create opportunities and relationships where all people are valued, heard, respected, and empowered. We can only achieve our vision with full participation from a multitude of cultural and life experiences and communities.

We recognize that the impacts of structural and systematic discrimination disproportionately hurt the most vulnerable communities, including women, L.G.B.T.Q.I.A. + identity, communities of color, income-challenged communities, and those who are not able to advocate for themselves.

We seek to address internal and external inequities by actively valuing democracy, community, partnerships, optimism, wisdom, and perseverance. To fulfill our purpose and live our values, we make our commitment to justice, diversity, equity and inclusion evident in our network structures, organizational structures, policies, administration, staff, mission, and vision. We move collectively, empowering all Ohioans in accordance with CFAES and OSU Extension's vision, mission, and values.

PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Supports and makes recommendations to Cabinet, with a DEI lens, as it develops and implements employee staffing, performance management, and recognition policies, procedures, and processes.

1. *Demonstrate [valueship](#) of extraordinary DEI efforts through recognition:
 - 1.1. Diversity awards, kick-off in December 2021
2. *Equipping and building staff skills to implement themes into ALL external programming:
 - 2.1. Integrate into position descriptions to promote outcome around general culture shift
 - 2.2. Create advisory taskforce matrix/checklist
3. *Attract more diverse candidate pools:
 - 3.1. Create recruitment message templates. (Personnel workgroup created an Area Leader Resource File in Microsoft Teams to use as Workday Hiring Managers)
 - 3.2. Create interview/search committee matrix/checklist that emphasizes DEI values
4. *Increase capacity and ensure uniquely urban needs are being addressed simultaneously:
 - 4.1. Create list of uniquely designed professional development opportunities. (Starter list located on the Personnel channel of the Extension Diversity Equity & Inclusion Team)
5. *[Implement Inclusive Excellence in Hiring Training Program](#):
 - 5.1. Identify persons involved in hiring process and search committees, include programs lead Dr. Leo Taylor. (The 75-minute training provides an overview of best practices for recruiting a diverse candidate pool for faculty & staff positions.)
6. *Promote institutional cultural shift supporting DEI initiatives:
 - 6.1. Provide cross-program training and DEI skill-building trainings

- 6.2. Create a list of professional development opportunities uniquely designed for DEI's mission and work with Learning and Organizational Development to share these with the Extension system
- 6.3. Create DEI Carmen classes for Extension professionals
- 6.4. Partner with Buckeye Wellness Team to offer DEI wellness incentivize through Your Plan for Health by completing DEI Carmen self-paced DEI courses, [inequity and health](#) are interconnected
7. Document DEI progress and accomplishments:
 - 7.1. Create DEI matrix/checklist to track and document progress forward

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Supports Cabinet in the review of existing and new policies adopted to help ensure ease of understanding and accordance with USDA NIFA expectations.

1. *Rename Extension Policy and Procedures to Standard Operating Procedures
2. *Link all current guidance to the appropriate college or university policy
3. *Determine who reviews/approves Extension policy and procedure manual (that will become SOP)
4. Documents to be updated will have to be reviewed with a sensitivity to language that is inclusive, reflective of the organization's DEI goals and in alignment with NIFA Civil Rights review
5. Create one-page Strategic Plan for Taskforce (incorporates committee Recommendations, Process, and Policies Report).

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop and replicate successful formal and informal training for our communities, prioritizing Extension personnel, aligning with the priorities of Cabinet.

1. *Create a "[Committed to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)" landing page (similar to ARTS AND SCIENCES) with our DEI Committee's Vision and Mission Statement, located within the "About" page of [OSU Extension](#) or the "About" page of [CFAES College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences](#)
2. *4-H True Leaders in Equity will distribute youth-specific DEI educational resources to all statewide Extension professionals to stimulate conversations about diversity
3. *Engaged Scholars Network: Build capacity and mutual support to professionals offering DEI programs
4. *Incorporate "Three Questions about Race" videos: Share personal experiences with differences and inequities
5. Apply for [Seed Fund for Racial Justice](#)
6. Present a workshop to Extension professionals
7. *Administer a survey of current DEI programs offered by Extension
8. *Develop online Dashboard (for CFAES and Extension resources) (contacts 4-H Educator Rob Isner and Dr. Kathy Lechman)

POSITIONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Makes recommendations and supports Cabinet in aligning Extensions' values with consistent, value promoting messaging for our personnel and customers.

1. *Establish language/framework for all staff to use when engaging in qualitative conversations (both in-person and online environments):
 - 1.1. Look at curriculum/taxonomy to implement across Extension
 - 1.2. Land Grant University messaging through educating staff on history (pros/cons) to equip them to facilitate external discussions. This should include recognizing historical wrongdoings and the benefits of science/evidence - based programming, curriculum, and strength of university
 - 1.3. Implement general communication guidance when responding to emerging situations and Extension messaging.
2. *Establish language/framework for all staff to use when engaging in social media message:
 - 2.1. Develop county-based social media messaging guidelines for critical DEI communications
 - 2.2. Support Extension leadership to create a system for developing critical social media messaging for county offices to address emerging situations as they arise
3. *Develop online dashboard (for CFAES and Extension resources) (contacts 4-H Educator Rob Isner and Dr. Kathy Lechman) Refer to: <https://www.uab.edu/dei/about/diversity-dashboard>; <https://education.indiana.edu/about/diversity/plan/domains/1-climate.html#mentoring-program>; <https://www.rochester.edu/diversity/dashboards/> (our dash would be a hybrid of these sites features.) (short/long-term)
4. Propose amendments to the “[In Extension, We Value](#)” statements to include DEI values of: “*Embracing people of all backgrounds and fostering a culture where everyone is welcome, and marginalized voices are heard. Being accountable to each other, across our county and state offices, networks, communities, and transparent in our pursuit of equity.*”
5. Propose amendments to the “[OSU Extension Priorities and Program Areas](#)” to include Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion priority; similar to our value statement, “*Embracing people of all backgrounds and fostering a culture where everyone is welcome, and marginalized voices are heard. Being accountable to each other, across our county and state offices, networks, communities, and transparent in our pursuit of equity.*”
6. Propose amendments to the statement “[OSUE is...](#)” to include the following: “**Accountable.** *We embrace people of all backgrounds and foster a culture where everyone is welcome, and marginalized voices are heard, to each other across all our county and state offices, networks, communities, and transparent in our pursuit of equity.*”

PARTNERSHIPS RECOMMENDATIONS

Supports Cabinet in the identification and development of strategic partners to share and explore strategies that increase the DEI competency and capacity of Extension faculty and staff, and Extensions' active presence in all communities.

1. *Create/Re-establish DEI Partnerships Advisory Council
2. Survey OSUE Area Leaders and CFAES Department Chairs to Expand Partners List (below)
3. *Establish Guiding Principles for engagement that align with CFAES Principles of Community, and Principles of Equitable and Inclusive Civic Engagement (Kirwan)

Statewide Partners

- [Serve Ohio](#)
- [United Way Ohio](#)
- [My Brother's Keeper](#)
- [Salvation Army](#)
- [Ohio's Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity \(EDGE\)](#)
- [Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [Opportunities for New Americans](#)
- [Minority Business Enterprise Program](#)
- [Job and Family Services](#) (Current partner)
- [Fatherhood initiative](#) (31 counties)
- [Women who code](#)
- [Black men Code](#)
- [Black girls Code](#)
- [Girls who code](#)
- [Code2040](#) - full participation and leadership of Black and Latinx people in the innovation economy
- [Black Church Food Security Network](#)
- [Green Leadership Trust](#) - environmental and conservation community -
- [Forage + Black](#)
- GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network)
 - [GLSEN Central Ohio](#)
 - [GLSEN Greater Cincinnati](#)
 - [GLSEN Northeast Ohio](#)
 - [GLSEN Northwest Ohio](#)
- [PFLAG](#)
 - [PFLAG Akron](#)
 - [PFLAG Cincinnati](#)
 - [PFLAG Cleveland](#)
 - [PFLAG Columbus](#)
 - [PFLAG Dayton](#)
 - [PFLAG Kent](#)
 - [PFLAG Lima](#)
 - [PFLAG Oxford](#)
 - [PFLAG Toledo](#)
 - [PFLAG Youngstown](#)
- [Equity Ohio](#)

- [Buckeye Region Anti-Violence Organization](#)
- [TransOhio](#)
- [Ohio Department of Health Resources for Women](#)
- [Ohio Domestic Violence Network](#)
- [Ohio Development Services Agency Minority Business Development Division](#)
- [Urban League](#)
- [NAACP](#)
- [Ohio Department of Aging](#)
- [Family and Children First Council](#)

County-wide Partners

- Extension Advisory Councils (per county)
- [Family and Children First Councils](#) (per county)
- [Health Departments](#) (per county)
- [Farm Bureaus](#) (per county)
- [Farm Service Agency](#) (per county)
- Fair Boards (per county)

University-wide Partners

- [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#) (James Moore)
- [Diversity Equity and Inclusion Task Force](#) (university-wide)
- [4-H Access, Equity, and Belonging Committee](#) (National Program Leaders Working Group)
- [NAE4HYDP Diversity & Inclusion Workgroup](#)
- [The Ohio State University Multicultural Center](#)