

**Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC)**  
**February 15, 2022, 4:00-5:00 PM ET**

In attendance: Henry Fadamiro (Chair), Brian Raison, Bret Hess, Majed El-Dweik, Shannon Archibeque-Engle, Jessica Creighton, Wes Burger, Rick Rhodes, David Leibovitz

- Introductions and opening remarks
  - Brian recommended the book *Portraits of Peace: Searching for Hope in a Divided America*. Author John Noltner shares the wisdom of people he had conversations with along a road trip across America. (<https://apomm.net/shop/>)
  - Jessica Creighton (Equal Opportunity Director, NIFA) joined the DCC for the first time today and the group went through a series of introductions.
  - Henry thanked the DCC for its monthly engagement and participation in committee activities.
  - Since the last DCC meeting, the DCC's Plan of Work and the National Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion award call for nominations were both approved by the ESCOP Executive Committee.
  - USDA Equity Commission's Subcommittee on Agriculture has been selected. Over 400 nominations were submitted. None of the DCC nominations were accepted, but some LGU advocates (e.g. Gina Eubanks, LSU) were named to the subcommittee. There is more broad representation from industry than there is from the LGU community.
  - Wes Burger will assume the role of Dean at MS State college of Forest Resources and will be departing the DCC. SAAESD will name a new Southern representative on the DCC. Wes thanked the DCC for its call to action inspiring some of the changes he made in his role as Experiment Station Director.
- **The February 15, 2022 DCC agenda was approved unanimously.**
- **The December 21, 2021 DCC notes were approved unanimously.**
- Feedback from the Call to Action
  - At the last annual meeting, the Experiment Station Section identified four priority areas:
    - Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce
    - Developing a pipeline to work toward inclusive excellence
    - Strengthening partnerships and addressing funding challenges among 1862 / 1990 / 1994 institutions
    - Reaching underserved populations
  - As follow-up, Experiment Station directors were asked to measure the steps they've taken and progress that has been made in each of those priority areas.
  - Directors have been engaged on a quarterly basis, and six institutions shared responses in Q1.
  - Common denominator: ESS/DCC priority areas reflect institutional priority areas. The DCC ask is complementary to the goals of many Land-grant institutions.

- Responses to the call to action are enclosed with these notes. Here are some highlights:
  - WVU: Department chairs underwent diversity, equity, and inclusion training. Chairs are expected to measure progress against what has been learned at this training.
  - Michigan State University has been engaged in strengthening its relationships with 1994 institutions.
  - Cornell AgriTech (Geneva, NY) addressed in detail, each of the ESS DCC priority areas and outlined actions taken and resources deployed in each area.
- Consistent pressure on our collective institutions and exposure of these examples to the ESS Directors is important.
- Shannon asked if there was a way that grant applications might be able to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion criteria to incentivize participation?
  - Jessica confirmed that NIFA is starting to include diversity, equity, and inclusion measurements in compliance reviews.
- Henry suggested we try to find a way to highlight institutional examples from each region.
- **Rick proposed sharing Cornell AgriTech's report (with permission) with the Experiment Station Section, as a model of a robust response to the CTA with action steps enclosed. The DCC supports this proposition.**
- **Rick will seek permission from Cornell AgriTech Director Jan Nyrop, and work with ESCOP leadership on distributing the report to the Directors.**
- **NIFA wants to keep its entire community engaged (research, extension, and beyond) and can share some best practices enclosed in the Cornell report.**
- **Bret noted that this Thursday 2/17/22, the ESCOP Chair's Advisory Committee will meet. This is an opportunity to initially present the Cornell report, call on the regional associations to gather examples, and include a discussion on the Call to Action in regional association spring business meeting agendas.**
- **Rick will draft two notes on Henry's behalf as DCC chair: one addressed to the ESCOP Chair for presentation at the forthcoming CAC meeting, and another addressed to the regional associations to call for regional examples and include a discussion on regional spring meetings.**
- NCFAR seeks short (~10 second) videos from ESS Directors that comprise of a brief introduction. Is there a way to promote the DCC?
  - **A channel for submitting videos to NCFAR will be enclosed with these minutes.**

*The meeting adjourned at 5:02 pm Eastern time.*