

Diversity Catalyst Committee notes October 25, 2022

In attendance: Henry Fadamiro (Chair), Brian Raison, Bret Hess, Jamie Larson, Tracy Dougher, Anna Katharine Mansfield, Nina Lyon Bennett, Rick Rhodes, David Leibovitz

Introductions and opening remarks

- Chair Henry Fadamiro welcomed the group to its first engagement since April 19, 2022.
- Henry has been appointed to a new position, leading Special Initiatives at the Texas A&M University Research Office. The DCC congratulated Henry and thanked him for his service as Chair.

Approval of the meeting agenda

- Two additional agenda items were proposed for this meeting: 1.) Open meeting discussion and 2.) Civil Rights Reviews discussion
 - **The agenda was approved by acclamation.**
- The DCC recapped the minutes from its last meeting in April and some of the follow up activities that took place since then, including creation of a DEI Contact list, presentation of individual and group awards, and informing joint sessions at the ESS CES meeting.
 - **The DCC minutes of April 19, 2022 and verbally discussed interim actions were approved by acclamation.**

Open Discussion

- There were two activities informed by the DCC at the September 2022 Experiment Station Section / Cooperative Extension Section: From Reckoning to Healing and Reconciliation, and Generational Diversity and Interactions in the Workplace.
- Henry urged the committee to continue hosting provocative sessions, engaging in difficult conversations around DEI, and taking on difficult topics such as the Land Grant system's past and Colonialism head on.
- Anna Katharine suggested that the committee establish a mission and vision statement – something that carries more weight than the annual DCC plan of work, guides our activities year to year, articulates why we exist.
- **Brian Raison offered to share some examples of work he has engaged in that may inspire the DCC in drafting its mission and vision statement.**

National Experiment Station Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion award (Call for Nominations and strategy for promoting the award program in 2023)

- Our challenge is to attract a broader set of submissions for this awards program and make the opportunity more attractive.
- The call for nominations does not do enough to explain why the awards program is important. It is wordy and distracts from the value of submitting an award.
- NIFA should prominently promote this awards program on our behalf
- We need to figure out whether the award program is uninteresting, under-exposed, or both.

- Are people across “the system” underestimating what they do in opting not to submit a nomination?
- We need to better tap into communication networks to promote the award call: regular cadence, amplification of our message
- **ESS Directors must promise to do a better job at promoting the work of the awards winners. There must be better exposure for the great work that award winners do – this needs to go beyond a luncheon presentation to administrators and a photo opportunity.**
- **Rick Rhodes will create a draft redline version of the 2023 call for nominations for presentation to the DCC. That document will be circulated to the DCC in advance of the next meeting for comments.**

Meeting adjournment

- Discussion of 2023 Diversity Catalyst Committee activities was put on hold until the next meeting.
- DCC membership rotation and changes were briefly discussed:
 - Nominations are open for the position of DCC Chair; this includes self nominations. No nominations were received on the floor at this meeting.
 - Some members of the DCC including the SAAESD office will be rotating off the committee.
- *The meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm Eastern Time.*