

LAS VEGAS-CLARK COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT

DIVERSITY PLAN

Las Vegas-Clark County Library District Diversity Plan

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Las Vegas-Clark County Library District Diversity Plan

A message from the Executive Director:

In the process of developing its new Strategic Plan, the Library District has gained a greater awareness of the increasingly diverse nature of our residents. One of the challenges identified in the Strategic Plan is the need for the Library District to broaden its services in response to a more diverse community. To successfully achieve the strategic goals and objectives outlined in the Plan, it is increasingly important that the Library District's staff reflect the diversity of the people we serve.

Diversity as a concept and program is a newer development in human resource management policy, but it has its origins in the older concepts of equal opportunity and affirmative action. Diversity policy builds on these previous programs to enable employers to address human differences in both the workplace and the marketplace.

With this background in mind, a broad-based representative staff committee worked with a Board Committee to develop a new Diversity Plan. As we worked together, it became very clear that before we could proceed, we needed to know what diversity meant to us as an organization in accomplishing our mission of service to our many communities. We recognize that our communities are becoming increasingly more diverse, and we want to take advantage of the powerful opportunities of the broadest array of ideas, creativity, and potential contributions inherent in a diverse workforce. Attracting, recruiting, developing and retaining a qualified workforce from diverse populations is critical to assuring that we are relevant to our communities in the years to come.

It is with this in mind that we set about defining and developing initiatives that will incorporate these goals and plans into our organizational culture. We realize that the following plan is a living, breathing document and will only be as good as the persons committed to it. This Administration is at the top of that list of those committed to making this plan a welcome part of how we maintain our workforce in order to serve all our residents in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Daniel L. Walters
Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees voted on October 14, 1999 to create a Diversity Committee to study diversity in employment and to make recommendations to develop an Employment Diversity Plan for the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. Trustees Robinson, Pohl, Weekly and Sandoval were appointed to the Diversity Committee with Trustee Wong serving as Committee Chair.

The Executive Director met with the following staff: Salvador Avila, Clark County; Robb Morss, Sahara West; Felton Thomas, West Las Vegas; Jan Passo, Collection Development; Maria Champlin, Planning Coordinator and Bud Pierce, Human Resources to examine the issues of recruitment and retention of people of color in the library profession as well as in the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District.

The Committee met several times between October 1999 and December 1999 with the Executive Director to examine such issues. The Executive Director presented the staff committee report at the Board's Diversity/Competitive Workplace Committee meeting on December 13, 1999.

Trustees discussed a number of issues that staff should review as it proceeded with diversity policy development. The Board's Diversity/Competitive Workplace Committee accepted staff's recommendation that the Board act on two aspects of the staff report in order to formally move ahead on diversity policy development:

- (1) Direct the administration to prepare the initial annual statistical report that will track changes in the workforce and provide annual comparisons with county demographics;
- (2) Direct staff to prepare a proposed Diversity Plan for Board review and consideration by June 2000.

The staff report was presented to the Board of Trustees on January 13, 2000. Committee Chair Tim Wong moved to direct staff to formulate a Proposed Diversity Plan and present it to the Board when completed, and emphasized the importance for the Board to understand how the diversity plan fits into the Library District's Strategic Plan.

LAS VEGAS-CLARK COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT DIVERSITY VISION STATEMENT

The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District is committed to a workplace in which all people are respected as individuals and are valued for their contributions in accomplishing the District's mission. The District will foster an inclusive, supportive, open, challenging and innovative work environment to enable employees to be positive, creative and reach their full potential.

Why Diversity?

American Library Association Key Action Report #4

The following is taken from the American Library Association's action report regarding diversity.

"Diversity is one of five key action areas adopted by the American Library Association to fulfill its mission of providing the highest quality library and information services for all people. The Association actively promotes equal access to information for all people through libraries and encourages development of library services for diverse population.

The strength of our nation is the diversity of its people. How we deal with this diversity continues to be a challenge.

Diversity applies to more than race and ethnicity. It applies to physical disabilities, sexual orientation, age, language and social class.

Democracy is rooted in respect for all people. Respect is based on understanding. Librarians believe that education is key to building communities and a nation based on understanding and respect.

Libraries are an American value. They offer people of all ages and backgrounds the resources they need to learn and grow and achieve their dreams.

The strength of libraries has always been the diversity of their collections and commitment to serving all people. Libraries of all types – public, school and academic – provide a forum for diverse ideas and points of view that can help us learn about and better understand ourselves and each other.

If libraries are to be their best, their services and staff must reflect both the people they serve and the larger global community. Today's libraries provide a wide range of opportunities for people with diverse needs and interests. These include cultural heritage collections, materials in alternate formats such as large print, also multilingual Internet training, bilingual story hours, English as a Second Language classes and many other creative and resourceful programs.

As a profession, librarians are committed to providing information and resources that serve the diverse needs of their communities and reflect the diversity of human knowledge and experience”.

Diversity and the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District’s Mission Statement

The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District’s mission is ***“to provide the community with materials, services, and facilities to satisfy the need for information; to facilitate lifelong learning; and to promote use of the library. Its aim is to promote the value of information, reflecting the diversity of cultures and viewpoints; and to enhance the community’s awareness of services which aid in the development of individual and community creativity and excellence.”***

In order to successfully achieve the District’s mission, we need to attract and retain a skilled, competent and diverse workforce and foster a positive work environment with opportunities for advancement, training and challenges for all.

The ALA Diversity Action Report states that to effectively serve an ever-growing diverse population our workforce needs to be reflective of the Nation and of our communities’ diversity. A diverse workforce is inherently more productive. Implementing strategies that encourage diversity such as empowering employees, enhancing the quality of work life, forming labor-management partnerships, and fostering a positive work environment with opportunities for advancement, training, and challenges will strengthen the District’s mission.

An organization that accepts diversity and recognizes the contribution of all employees is a healthier and more productive organization than one that does not. Understanding and recognizing diversity enables an organization to capitalize on the differing views and contributions that each of its employees bring to the workplace. Such an organization provides for a richer work environment and ensures that employees work more closely with one another in carrying out organizational goals and objectives. Understanding and recognizing the contribution of diversity enables an organization to better adapt to change.

Managing diversity is important. Whatever the diversity, in people or systems, the benefits of factoring a myriad experiences, insights and approaches into decision making can only enhance the viability of solutions, and our ability to forecast potential consequences. Integrating diversity into an organization’s management practices provides opportunities to facilitate organizational change, harness employee potential, achieve performance goals, and enhance internal and external customer satisfaction, thus furthering the mission of the District. The District’s greatest assets are its employees.

The District’s Diversity/Competitive Workplace Committee realizes that pursuing the objectives of a diversity initiative will require new ways of thinking and doing business. These new ways of thinking can be accomplished if the District’s policies and vision are supported by the organizational culture. The District’s commitment to the principles and legal obligations of Equal Employment Opportunity objectives remains firm and unchanged, and in fact, is enhanced and strengthened through its ability to manage diversity.

Diversity initiatives (managing diversity) are non-mandated management approaches to create an environment that allows all employees to reach their full potential in pursuit of the organization's mission. It excludes no one. Diversity initiatives are proactive and business-linked, requiring assessment of the organizational culture to ensure that it is supportive of inclusion, and is an integral part of the overall mission.

Las Vegas-Clark County Library District's Commitment to Diversity

To better enable the District to carry out its mission, the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director have made diversity a key priority for all managers and employees throughout the organization. The District is committed to being the model employer of a talented, dedicated and effective workforce that reflects our diverse communities. Pursuing these objectives will require institutional changes in a number of our processes and procedures, especially in the way in which we approach empowerment, motivation and job enrichment for all employees. It will require changes in the way we carry out our program responsibilities.

The District is committed to create an environment which:

- Fosters and sustains all diversity in employment regardless of race, ethnicity, physical disabilities, sexual orientation, age, language, and social class.
- Educates the workforce on the nature of diversity.
- Inspires initiatives designed to empower employees.
- Motivates employees to achieve their highest contribution to the District's mission.
- Enables, influences, and challenges employees to perform at their maximum contribution.
- Encourages employees to offer differing views and suggestions toward achieving program and organizational goals without threat of retribution.
- Respects and appreciates individual differences, and ensures all employees are included as full, contributing and influential team members.
- Provides equitable treatment and opportunities.
- Creates and maintains an inclusive approach to all systems, policies and practices which includes but is not limited to: promotions, performance ratings, awards, training, appointments to committee teams, and the delivery of products and services.
- Is flexible regarding non-traditional quality of work life initiatives and facilitates cultural change to support new behaviors.

Why Manage Diversity?

Managing diversity provides a process whereby we can carefully assess where we are organizationally against where we want to be and examines or modifies barriers or inhibitors that prevent us from reaching our goals. Managing diversity is the only cultural change strategy that focuses on inclusion and ensures that the organization's policies, procedures, and practices support the new vision, initiatives and behaviors. If this support is not present, the new initiatives may not succeed. Organizations must step up to the challenge of effectively managing a diverse workforce, or likely be continually plagued by high turnover, low morale, limited innovation, lagging productivity and the inability to recruit and retain the best and the brightest diverse talent.

Role of Leadership in Managing Diversity

Leaders are responsible for acting as change agents and modeling behaviors that support a work environment that maximizes the contributions of employees as they fulfill organizational goals.

Leaders are responsible for ensuring that:

- Appropriate workplace behaviors are supported.
- Policies, procedures and practices support the organization's vision.
- Diversity principles are integrated into the way of life of the organization.
- The organizational culture supports the vision and is responsive to environmental change.
- The environment is inclusive.
- Empowerment and positive influencing of staff is practiced.
- Diversity initiatives are linked to other organizational change initiatives such as communication, education, partnerships and strategic planning.

Role of the Employee in Managing Diversity

Every employee is responsible for focusing on inclusion and engaging in appropriate behaviors that are supportive of the workplace. Each employee need not value all the differences within the District's workforce, but all employees should learn to acknowledge, accept and understand that similarities and differences do exist. Each employee can help create a positive work environment by identifying and working to change rigid practices that are exclusive in nature and add no value. Employees can identify behaviors and practices, whether conscious or unconscious that are exclusionary. Every employee affects organizational outcomes. With each employee working on managing diversity, the District will move closer to an environment where all ideas and perspectives are considered in order to more effectively meet our mission.

THE LAS VEGAS-CLARK COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT DIVERSITY PLAN

The LV-CCLD Diversity Plan is designed to provide:

1. an umbrella plan that outlines the District's vision as it relates to the implementation of diversity initiatives;
2. a general framework so that change agents will acquire a fundamental understanding of managing diversity and its focus on inclusion as demonstrated by appropriate work behavior;
3. a mechanism for the consistent and timely education of District employees; and
4. a plan for District-wide organizational assessments that will be a starting point for staff to create more individualized plans, measures and milestones that reflect their own diversity.

The goals and strategies that follow will support the management of diversity through:

- Leadership at all organizational levels.
- Assessment and measurement.
- Education and development.
- Customer input and feedback.
- External involvement.

This plan is a living document which represents a synthesis of the thoughts, ideas and recommendations from the Diversity/Competitive Workplace Committee. However, as our journey to build a culture that manages diversity continues, ongoing modification to this plan will be necessary.

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: Advocacy

To create a more educated workforce in the area of diversity. To create a workforce that is more cognizant of the organizational culture and the importance of promoting and managing diversity initiatives because of the business necessity.

Objectives:

1. To provide a framework where managing diversity and supporting initiatives (for example, EEO, understanding differences and other change strategies/tools) become the basis for a solid foundation and up-front support.

Actions:

- Provide the staff with opportunities to learn about the Diversity Plan and the managing diversity initiatives through organizational meetings and presentations and managing diversity workshops sponsored by the Human

Resources Department and the Diversity/Competitive Workplace committee.

- Create a diversity network to ensure managing diversity efforts and information is distributed throughout the organization.
- Provide managers with the educational tools needed for them to be able to truly manage diversity in the work environment.

2. To create an environment of supportive policies, procedures and practices that ensure all employees will have the opportunity to successfully accomplish the District's mission and their professional goals.

Actions:

- Monitor Diversity Plan accomplishments.
- Develop a system of accountability for accomplishments for managers and department heads.
- Develop communication products and tools that target various audiences within the District.
- Integrate diversity initiatives into the District's Strategic Plan.
- Distribute diversity initiative updates and articles to staff through the District's newsletter.

Persons Responsible: Human Resources Department, Branch Administrators, and Administrative Department Heads

Goal 2: Recruitment

To develop the District's potential workforce for the 21st century and ensure that the District is viewed as a premier library system that attracts and retains the best and the brightest diverse employees in all areas.

Objectives:

1. To develop outreach programs that will attract high caliber diverse employees, provide exposure and stimulate interest in all specialties required to accomplish the District's mission.
2. To increase workforce diversity at all levels in the District.

Actions:

- Develop a plan for District-wide activities with colleges, universities and industry to promote the District's image and to attract quality staff.
- Identify community organizations and schools and establish networks to enhance and promote diversity and awareness of the District, its mission, impact on day-to-day lives of people, and promote career opportunities.
- Identify community organizations that work specifically with diverse populations, i.e. physically impaired, language challenged, etc. and network with these agencies to promote employment opportunities with the District.

- Develop an intern/shadowing program for prospective staff to introduce the library profession as a truly viable career option to high school and college students. Market through career awareness and orientation programs at targeted schools.
- Promote the District by exhibiting at conferences, workshops and professional meetings. Develop educational, career, and visual materials that highlight and promote District opportunities.
- Educate target audiences, counter misconceptions and disseminate positive awareness and understanding of the library profession at all levels of employment, including entry level positions
- Introduce the District's employment opportunities to potential candidates at professional conferences such as ALA, PLA, REFORMA, NLA, CLA, Black Caucus, and other job fairs.
- Create a directory of appropriate media and web sites to promote recruitment.
- Document the development of a recruitment plan that aggressively promotes the recruitment of a qualified and diverse applicant pool.
- Develop presentations for national, state and local conferences.

Persons Responsible: Staff Diversity Committee, Human Resources Department, Public Relations and Graphics.

Goal 3: Retention

To promote the District and the library profession as a viable career option to potential candidates.

Objectives:

1. To assist employees in the identification of training and job opportunities through the provision of role models and mentoring programs.
2. To create opportunities for open communication between employees and for assimilating newcomers into the organizational structure.
3. To retain high caliber employees through staff development.

Actions:

- Establish mentoring programs for librarians.
- Establish mentoring programs for library school candidates and library school students.
- Establish mentoring programs for Pages – Page Fellows.
- Evaluate the enhancement of existing scholarship benefit for professional development
- Staff Day.

Persons Responsible: Human Resources, Branch Administrators and Staff Diversity Committee

Goal 4: Implementation

To support the District's commitment to implementing actions to ensure diversity initiatives move forward.

Objectives:

1. To ensure initial and ongoing implementation of the Diversity Plan.
2. To complete an annual assessment of the Diversity Plan's objectives adding, changing or deleting objectives as appropriate.

Actions:

- Establish an implementation strategy for the Diversity Plan.
- Establish initial objectives related to the goals of advocacy, recruitment, and retention for the year 2001 and succeeding years.
- Establish an annual assessment of the Diversity Plan's effectiveness to be conducted by the Board's Employee/Management Relations Committee beginning the first quarter of 2002.
- Revise and update the Diversity Plan upon recommendation from the Board's Employee/Management Relations Committee.

MEASURES and ACCOUNTABILITY

Measuring the results of the organization's diversity initiatives is not only critical to the credibility of the District's initiative, but also essential for benchmarking growth and for developing future programming that positively impacts the District's vision and mission.

As measurement is best done by a comparative process that includes both baseline data that details the starting conditions *and* clear objectives against which change can be measured, the following will be implemented:

1. Collect baseline data regarding the number of EEO complaints and employee grievances filed in fiscal year 1999-2000. Goal: reduce the number by five (5) percent in fiscal year 2000-2001.
2. Collect baseline data regarding the number of employees who participated in diversity training/education in fiscal year 1999-2000. Goal: increase participation to 100%.
3. Develop turnover report mechanism through balance of fiscal year 2000-2001. The target areas will be turnover in general, turnover based on gender, full time versus part time, turnover in specific branches, turnover based on ethnic makeup and professional versus non-professional. Goal: Establish turnover tools: exit interviews, statistical reporting and show a decrease in turnover from baseline year compared to the following year.

In the coming months the Diversity Committee will do research on other types of tools that can be used to measure the effectiveness of any diversity initiatives that are undertaken.

PARTNERSHIPS

Managing diversity requires fundamental modification or changes to existing systems and processes. It also requires staff, at all levels, to partner in this effort. Specific partnering efforts will be established with the Union, diversity committees, Human Resources, professional organizations, community organizations, educational sources and task forces.