

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION PLAN 2021-2024



Prepared by Compass Consulting Services, LLC

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Executive Summary

In 2020, the Cleveland Heights- University Heights Library leadership enlisted the support of Compass Consulting Services, LLC (Compass) to help them understand the current state of diversity, equity and inclusion based on input from the experiences of staff, board members and community partners. The mission of the Cleveland Heights – University Heights Libraries is to:

- Provide free access to services and facilities for all ages
- Maintain safe, welcoming spaces and digital environment
- Offer expert information and research assistance
- Maintain and lend outstanding and balanced collections and materials
- Focus on programs and services that transform people’s lives
- Deliver high quality outreach services where they are needed

The Anti-Racism Task Force which is comprised of staff across all levels of the organization partnered with Compass to ultimately develop a plan of action for the system to implement over the next three years that is aligned with the mission of the Library. Under the leadership of Tameka L. Taylor, Ph.D., the team at Compass conducted interviews, focus groups, surveys, and document analysis to identify concerns for the organization to address in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. Ongoing leadership for the implementation of the plan will be provided by the Anti-Racism Task Force. The process and the plan are detailed in this report.

Plan Summary

The Anti-Racism Task Force (Task Force) created an aspirational DEI Vision Statement to guide itself now and in years to come. Working with this vision statement, the Task Force decided to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion as it relates to three overarching goals: Environmental/Organizational Climate, Service and Workforce. The three goals are:

1. **Service-** Develop inclusive services and programs based on fairly allocating resources, coalition building, and effective planning gained through listening to the voices of our diverse staff and community members.
2. **Environmental/Organizational Climate-** Fostering a healthy environment that supports positive professional relationships, incorporates authentic engagement as part of the organization’s approach to decision-making, and improves communication throughout DEI efforts of the CHUH library system.
3. **Workforce:** Recruit and retain diverse staff at all levels of the organization to effectively achieve the overall mission of the library.

The DEI plan will cover 2021 to 2024. The success of the plan is dependent on the work of all employees to achieve the goals herein, under the guidance of the Task Force and the leadership.

Anti-Racism Task Force

The Task Force, made up of staff who volunteered from all levels and departments within the organization, is responsible for the creation and implementation of the DEI plan and will ensure that all goals of the plan are achieved. The members of the Task Force are:

- Sheryl Banks
- Delcresha Box
- Kim DeNero-Ackroyd
- Kevin Echols
- Angie George
- Kareemah Hairston
- Matt Hoffman
- Maggie Kinney
- Nancy Levin
- Laurie Marotta
- Payton Meeks
- Stephen Sanders
- Zahir Sutarwala

DEI Vision Statement

The DEI Vision statement reads, “The library is committed to fostering an environment in which all employees, customers, and volunteers are valued, respected, and welcomed for their individual assets and differences and have opportunities to achieve their fullest potential.”

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library Definitions

Diversity

Diversity is defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. As the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library system recognizes, values, and embraces diversity, we are recognizing, valuing, and embracing the uniqueness of each person.

Equity

Equity takes differences into account to ensure that everyone has access to opportunities that help them achieve desired outcomes

Inclusion

Inclusion when everyone is welcomed, valued and safe regardless of their uniqueness.

DEI Audit Process and Themes

To complete the audit, Compass conducted 24 focus groups and 11 interviews to assess how all levels of Employees, Board Members and External Partners felt regarding DEI. The groups were intentionally categorized by roles in and with the organization. The response rate of the staff survey was 57%.

The main DEI themes that emerged from the data collected at the Cleveland Heights -University Library system is listed below. The next phase of the work involved the identification of strengths and opportunities associated with each theme. Finally, the opportunities were prioritized, and then the focus, moved to the development of the strategies for the plan. Also, Compass looked at the organizations policies, procedures and other written materials for DEI concerns and made recommendations to address them.

The themes that emerged in the audit listed in alphabetical order below are:

Accountability

Strengths

- Staff sees the timing of addressing DEI within the organization as important

Opportunities

- Consistent protocols and procedures for all staff regarding DEI efforts
- Improved transparency of decisions made across the organization
- Increase inclusion of all levels of staff in decision making opportunities

Leadership

Strengths

- Align services provided to meet the diverse needs of the community

- Enhance orientation/professional development to prepare staff to serve the diverse needs of the community
- Improve accommodations for clients with special needs such as unhoused
- Improve quality of services to Black youth
- Improve the quantity of services directed to the millennial population
- Increase opportunities to incorporate knowledge about the communities that we serve in policies and procedures

Opportunities

- Align services provided to meet the diverse needs of the community
- Enhance orientation/professional development to prepare staff to serve the diverse needs of the community
- Improve accommodations for clients with special needs such as unhoused
- Improve quality of services to Black youth
- Improve the quantity of services directed to the millennial population
- Increase opportunities to incorporate knowledge about the communities that we serve in policies and procedures

Organizational Culture

Strengths

- Dedication to the fulfillment of the mission
- Longevity of some staff

Opportunities

- Build on the positive organization history
- Create a safer environment and eliminate fear of retaliation
- Clearly define organizational values related to DEI
- Establish protocols that promote mutual courtesy and respect towards all
- Incorporating the knowledge about the communities that we serve
- Increase integration of DEI protocols and practices throughout the organization to improve morale
- Provide opportunities for all staff to use their additional skills and experiences to meet the vision of the organization

Patron Engagement

Strengths

- Marketing has become more representative of diverse groups
- Offer programming to address the interest of some diverse populations

Opportunities

- Align services provided to meet the diverse needs of the community
- Enhance orientation/professional development to prepare staff to serve the diverse needs of the community
- Improve accommodations for clients with special needs such as unhoused
- Improve quality of services to Black youth
- Improve the quantity of services directed to the millennial population
- Increase opportunities to incorporate knowledge about the communities that we serve in policies and procedures

Recruitment, Retention and Professional Development

Strengths

- HR expanding inclusion of employees in things such as EAP program
- REI Groundwater Training for staff
- Staff desires more effective DEI training and information

Opportunities

- Designate a staff member whose sole responsibility is DEI
- Create a more inclusive environment to assist with retention that incorporates effective mentor programs across all levels of staff
- Create strategies to introduce more opportunities for people of color to library science
- Increase opportunities for sustainable DEI training for all and for more effective follow up with DEI initiatives
- Increase opportunities to bring in more diversity through introducing to field of library science to pages
- Strengthen pipeline for diverse people that leads to long term employment in all positions

DEI Plan FY2021-FY2024

The DEI Plan for FY21-FY24, focuses the Anti-Racism Task Force’s efforts in three distinct areas: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion based on the goals of Environmental/Organizational Climate, Service and Workforce.

| <p>1. Goal: Service Develop inclusive services and programs based on fairly allocating resources, coalition building, and effective planning gained through listening to the voices of our diverse staff and community members.</p> | | | |
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| Key Objectives | Start Date | Completion Date | Responsible Party |
| A. Develop a process to review how the library approaches programs, materials and services that captures the thoughts and ideas from diverse segments of the community and staff. | January 2022 | July 2022 | Committee formed with all levels of staff |
| B. Create mechanisms to allocate resources (people, time, space, and finances) and better inform the development of effective strategies that support unserved and/or underserved communities. | January 2022 | July 2024 | Administration with staff and community input |
| C. Enhance and expand outreach and programming to underserved and unserved community segments. | January 2022 | January 2024 New program design Ongoing Evaluation | Public Services Programming Committee; Public Librarian Specialty; Managers |
| D. Develop methods for effective outreach to non-English speaking communities. | January 2022 | December 2024 | Public Service Librarian. Specialty or committee assignment |

| 2. Goal: Workforce | | | |
|---|----------------|-----------------|---|
| Recruit and retain diverse staff at all levels of the organization to effectively achieve the overall mission of the library. | | | |
| Key Objectives | Start Date | Completion Date | Responsible Party |
| | | | |
| A. Create strategies to identify diverse candidates for library positions. | October 2021 | October 2023 | Human Resources, Anti-Racism Task Force |
| B. Create effective public branding strategies to brand the library as a great place for all people to work. | December 2021 | September 2022 | Communications Dept., Anti-Racism Task Force |
| C. Expand youth-focused mentorship and internship opportunities rolling through all departments to expose diverse teens and young adults to MLIS and non-MLIS library careers. | October 2022 | December 2024 | Human Resources, Departmental Managers, Library Director, Training/Continuing Ed. Departments, Anti-Racism Task Force |
| D. Ensure that HR policies reflect DEI values. | October 2021 | January 2022 | Human Resources, Anti-Racism Task Force |
| E. Develop effective appreciation program for all staff. | June 2022 | December 2023 | AST, Staff Association |
| F. Develop a system to infuse DEI values and planning into ongoing staff engagement. | January 2022 | January 2024 | Anti-Racism Task Force, Staff Association |
| G. Ensure that diverse staff are offered opportunities for professional development and advancement through training, mentoring, and internal activities. | September 2022 | January 2024 | AST, Training Department, Anti-Racism Task Force |
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| 3. Goal: Environmental/Organizational Climate | | | |
| Fostering a healthy environment that supports positive professional relationships, incorporates authentic engagement as part of the organization's approach to decision-making, and improves communication throughout DEI efforts of the CHUH library system. | | | |
| Staff Objectives | Start Date | Completion Date | Responsible Party |
| | | | |
| A. Enhance <u>Inform</u> including content and submission process so that it can become a strong communication tool for DEI efforts to all staff. | October 2021 | February 2022 | Human Resources, Anti-Racism Task Force |
| B. Employ DEI librarian(s) to spearhead DEI efforts as it relates to all library services for all customers. | October 2021 | March 2022 | Administration, AST |
| C. Create a procedure to connect staff input to Staff Association so that they can implement recommendations. | December 2021 | May 2022 | Administration, Web Developer, Staff Association |
| D. Increase opportunities for effective staff engagement around DEI values to improve overall climate. | June 2022 | December 2022 | Staff Association, Anti-Racism Task Force |

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| E. Incorporate use of a DEI lens in organizational decisions. | October 2021 | October 2023 | Administration, AST, other Departments, Anti-Racism Task Force |
| F. Provide opportunities for Staff Association representatives to be trained in the areas of conflict resolution, mediation and other topics so they can support the work of the Anti-Racism Task Force. | April 2022 | December 2022 | Staff Association, Continuing Ed., Human Resources |
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| Administration and Trustee Objectives | | | |
| A. Integrate DEI as an ongoing focus in all areas of the organization. | May 2022 | December 2022 | Administration, Trustees, Anti-Racism Task Force |
| B. Create intentional process to recruit diverse Trustees. | October 2021 | Ongoing | Administration, Trustees |
| C. Develop and offer effective DEI professional development for all staff to support implementation of DEI in the fiber of the organization. | November 2021 | June 2022 | AST, Administration, Human Resources, Continuing Ed. |
| D. Establish a budget and secure funding to support DEI plan. | October 2021 | December 2024 | AST, Administration, Human Resources, Continuing Ed. |
| E. Establish a procurement policy to ensure that a certain percentage of revenue is spent with both locally and diverse segments. | October 2021 | December 2022 | Administration; Trustees |

Conclusion

The Anti-Racism Task Force has the heavy lift of assuring the success of the Cleveland Heights - University Heights Library DEI Plan by not only tracking the work via the start and end deadlines but by supporting the effectiveness of the Task Force. The Task Force must be the primary champions for the ongoing implementation of the plan. However, they cannot be responsible alone for making things happen. It takes the entire staff. As new information emerges or other changes in the organization or external environment occurs, the plan may need to be adjusted to assure the relevancy of the outcomes moving forward.

To ensure success with the DEI plan, the Task Force, staff, and board members alike must all do their part in the implementation and monitoring progress of the plan. Additional committee members should be added to assure that staff from all the branches and departments have full representation in the implementation process as needed. The organization will want to put the resources, such as time, staff, money, etc., into the success of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library DEI Plan.