

The Strengthening Inclusiveness Committees session on September 19, 2013 focused on the topic of **“Hire, Recruit, and Retain Using an Inclusiveness Lens.”**

There were twenty-three individuals in attendance, representing thirteen organizations (City of Arvada; Big Brothers Big Sisters; Center for Work, Education, and Employment [CWEE]; Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education [CAEE]; Colorado Parks and Wildlife; Colorado Youth at Risk; Court Appointed Special Advocates [CASA]; Denver Kids; Denver Open Media; Denver Urban Ministries; Family Tree; Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver; and The Women’s Crisis & Family Outreach Center).

Panelists included: Lauren Casteel (The Denver Foundation); Malinda Mochizuki and Katie Navin (CAEE); Neha Majahan (independent consultant); and Mike Johnson (Project PAVE). The session was facilitated by Jamie Morgan.

The session started with presentations from each of the panelists. Highlights were captured on flipcharts, as follows:

Overarching Concepts

- invest from the heart
- invest in the intangibles; value life experiences
- invest in cultivating new talent
- invest in building authentic relationships
- bring in unrepresented voices to correct past inequities
- have the courage to advocate and take risks, be willing to handle pushback
- commit to having people of color in leadership positions, in seeing their full potential
- be transparent about one’s weaknesses
- recognize that hiring is more art than science
- prioritize diversity, anti-racism, and inclusiveness as an organization
- recognize that self-determination exists within communities you serve; communities have the answers to their problems; give people in those communities the opportunity to lead
- be intentional about creating a pipeline to leadership for those most affected; this may require others to step back from leadership
- use allies in the process of creating positive change
- include wording about “we value people of different backgrounds” in your recruitment materials (not just in your anti-discrimination statement)
- inclusiveness is not a project; it needs to be in the organization’s DNA

Specifics for Hiring

- put inclusiveness experience as a criteria in the job description; weight this criteria as heavily as other criteria
- ask questions to learn more about the applicant's experience, values, and ideas on inclusiveness
- include a variety of people in the hiring process to bring in different perspectives; plan ahead for a larger process
- don't set someone up to be the "only"; provide support
- be willing to extend the timeline in order to get a good pool from which to choose and in order to accommodate the best candidate, if need be
- collaborate with other organizations: they might have someone you could really use, you might have someone they could really use; you might have someone who could really benefit from being employed elsewhere, elsewhere might have someone who could really benefit from being employed with your organization

Specifics for Retention

- provide a welcoming environment
- utilize mentorships: take new hires under one's wing, share knowledge (if this isn't possible from within the organization, find mentors elsewhere)
- utilize a buddy system within the organization
- create safe spaces for cross-cultural dialogue (caucuses)
- provide opportunities for professional development

The session concluded with very brief small-group discussions on attendees' takeaways from the session.

Attached is a handout from Lauren Casteel on staff philosophy.

The next session of Strengthening Inclusiveness Committees group will be November 14, 2013 from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. on a topic to be determined. This group is designed to meet the needs of nonprofit staff who are leading their organization's inclusiveness work. To receive notification of this session and other future sessions, contact Christopher Brunson at { [HYPERLINK "mailto:cbrunson@denverfoundation.org"](mailto:cbrunson@denverfoundation.org) } or by calling 303.330.1790 x147.