

Diversity and Inclusion Report and Recommendations
On Behalf of the Woods Hole Diversity Initiative

Represented by

(in alphabetical order)

Marine Biological Laboratory

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Sea Education Association

United States Geological Survey

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

Woods Hole Research Center

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My role as consultant is to diagnose, prescribe, and facilitate a five-year rehabilitation plan. In other words, I will work to assess the problems, to create actionable solutions, and to assist with the implementation of long-term strategic plans.

Recommendations

This section is divided into strategic recommendations around: (1) Diversity, (2) Inclusion, and (3) Integration. The bulk of the recommendations at this stage focus on Diversity and Inclusion, as they are inextricably connected. That is, you will not be successful at building or maintaining diversity if the climate is hostile toward people of color. At the same time, there needs to exist some diversity before the concept of inclusion becomes meaningful in an intergroup sense. Integration is the long-term goal of the organization once diversity and inclusion have been established.

Diversity

Seven Strategies for Recruitment

- A. **Widen the Net**—There *are* good people of color available throughout the nation—one just needs to look for them. “We tell students to develop networks. Yet doesn’t [WH] feel that it needs to develop its networks too?”
 1. **Think Broadly about Academic Discipline.** There are many people of color in the sciences, broadly defined. Engineering programs are replete with cultural and ethnic diversity. Other options are mathematics, biology, chemistry, computer science, or even English departments.
 2. **Think Broadly about Academic Institutions.** Send people to recruit from HBCUs.
 3. **Think Broadly about Jobs/Roles**—Not all of the jobs in WH require a PhD. There are many types of positions at WH: writers, receptionists, statisticians, accountants, security officers...even “the people who build the nets in the warehouse.”
 4. **Think Outside of the Box**—Be creative and intentional in the search for passionate and qualified people of color with a potential interest in marine science. Develop connections and form partnerships with non-academic organizations that might be excellent sources of potential candidates.

5. **Connect with the Local Community**—recruit from the local (Cape Cod, Providence, Boston) Black and Native community. As one respondent put it, “You have people in your backyard that don’t know about the aquarium or what you do”. Adopt a practice of greater community engagement. Connect with and recruit from the Black churches in West Falmouth and Mashpee, especially for the non-specialized positions.

- B. **The Rooney Rule**—The rule only ensures that minority candidates will be considered and interviewed for each search. It does not mandate actual hiring or quotas.

- C. **Capture the School (rather than the fish)**—Adopt the practice of cluster hiring.

- D. **Go on a Top Three Spree**—If the interest is in a few individuals then it makes little sense to focus exclusively on top universities because there are highly talented people everywhere

- E. **Build Bridges and Fuel the Pipeline**—In addition to PEP, build other programs that inspire interest and passion in oceanic science among younger children

- F. **Bring People to Woods Hole**—give people the opportunity to visit and acclimate to the environment. Do not assume that a person of color would not want to live in Woods Hole because of the weather or the lack of diversity. Some people of color are comfortable around White people and would be less bothered by the lack of demographic diversity than other people of color.

Seven Strategies for Hiring

- A. **Create Diversity Policy for Contractors**—Think carefully about what the appropriate criteria for selection should be, and add “diversity and inclusion” to the list.

- B. **Employ Diverse Interview Panels**— Adopt the policy of employing diverse interview panels. In the event that there are not diverse interviewers available (due to the paucity of diversity), then the panel should have a diverse “monitor” who acts as an unofficial observer.

- C. **Institute Mandatory Diversity Training for Hiring Panels**—emphasize that all hiring panels undergo diversity training that will emphasize: (1) the importance of considering diversity in hiring practices, (2) the notion that diversity and excellence are mutually exclusive is a myth, and (3) the best practices for effective decision-making.

- D. **Create a Professional Development Program for New Hires**— Maria Klawe’s accomplishments at Harvey Mudd College demonstrate that having sufficient structural supports in place can make a tremendous difference.

- E. **Hire Diverse Veterans**— Target veterans of color. Given the thousands of minority veterans living within a 100-mile radius of Woods Hole, it should not be too difficult to capture a few dozen employees through targeted recruitment.

- F. **Exercise Leadership and Moral Authority**— Leadership often requires the courage to “do the right thing”, even against the resistance of an unsympathetic majority

Seven Strategies for Promoting Inclusion

- A. **Leaders Explicitly Communicate Values and Norms**--Lead cultural change at WH. Deliver clear, consistent, and constant communication from the leadership. Create a new mission statement to reflect the integration of D&I into the values of the entire organization, its mission, and its operations.

- B. **Add New Wall Art**—hanging portraits of notable scientists from a variety of gender and ethnic groups sends a clear message to people that they are entering a space that values inclusion.

- C. **Create ERGs**— Establish (and fund) an ethnic minority ERG (Employee Resource Group. Start with an inclusive group that invites all people of color across all of the six institutes. With time and greater diversity, it might be feasible to create ERGs that are specific to distinct minority

groups at distinct institutes. The ERGs public events and activities should be attended and supported by all members of WH, to show support and solidarity.

- D. Establish Mandatory Diversity Training Program**—All current and future employees are required to attend. The program will focus on building cultural competency (to move employees from more ethnocentric to more ethnorelative mindsets). Track progress using the ICCQ (Robertson, Kulik, & Pepper, 2002) or another measure of cultural competence.

- E. Create an Office of Diversity and Inclusion office**—the proposal here is to hire a Chief Diversity Officer, with staff, to assist with the day-to-day affairs associated with diversity and inclusion across the institutes.

- F. Foster Greater Warmth and Work/Life Balance**—people in general felt that the environment could be somewhat cold and unfriendly.

What are the next steps?

1. Develop a concrete plan for implementing strategies around recruitment and hiring, and most importantly for creating accountability and personal responsibility for diversity *outcomes* (as well as process).

2. Establish diversity percentage targets, create timeline, and chart progress. One possible campaign is “25 in 5”, or getting the percentage of underrepresented minorities to 9% Hispanic, 8% African American, and 8% Asian/Pacific Islander in 5 years. Although it would more than double the representation of people of color in WH, it falls well below the 40% minority population of the U.S. In that sense, 25% doesn’t seem too radical.

3. Measure current cultural competence and establish improvement or progress over time

4. Determine the content, audience, and delivery dates of diversity training and cultural competence workshops

5. The integration/sustainability piece requires having a full-time staff that is dedicated to creating structures and policies that support and reinforce the D&I agenda.