

Diversity+Inclusion Conference

Reaching Higher Levels of
Understanding and Effectiveness



Post-Conference Resources

February 24 – 25, 2011 Washington, DC

www.asaecenter.org/diversity



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“ What’s teachable to other organizations is... knowing you’re gonna have some awkward moments [and] being willing to have those awkward moments. ”

Association Leader Interview
ASAE Study 2010

Message From ASAE Staff

Dear Colleague,

Our efforts to create a forum to increase awareness about the importance of infusing Diversity + Inclusion (D+I) into organizational practices continued on February 24–25, when ASAE held a second conference of its kind.

Building off of the momentum established from the first Diversity Summit in 2008 and the strategic plan that preceded that effort, the 2011 Diversity + Inclusion Conference in Washington, DC invited attendees to discuss the knowledge and support that they and their members need to successfully grow D+I practices in their organizations. The conference's three general sessions and twelve workshops offered HR professionals and association leaders practical solutions for evolving workplace realities. We are grateful to our primary event sponsor, Hyatt, for making this possible.

As the association community becomes more globally connected and interdependent, we must invest the time and resources in helping each other connect and deliver value to a wider spectrum of association professionals. This involves helping our community frame and encourage new ways of thinking and operating at professional gatherings like the D+I Conference. It also entails identifying which diversity and inclusion efforts have worked at associations and which have not. *Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion in Membership Associations: An Interview Study* was released at the D+I Conference and identifies ways association professionals have successfully and unsuccessfully applied a D+I lens to various business decisions. Memorable quotes from association leader interviews in this study are featured throughout this post-conference report.

Responsible for leading ASAE's D+I efforts is the Diversity + Inclusion Committee, who continues to help us advance our long-term goal of ensuring that the membership, volunteer leaders, and staff represent a strong, vibrant, and growing model of diversity and inclusion. On behalf of ASAE, we appreciate their support and leadership through the conference planning process. It has laid the foundation for all of us to apply a D+I lens to our work in association management and to the profession at large. Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the work of ASAE.



John H. Graham IV, CAE
President & CEO



Alexis Terry
Director, Diversity + Inclusion

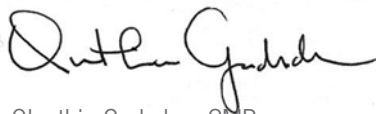
Message From ASAE's D+I Committee

Dear Colleague,

During ASAE's 2011 Diversity + Inclusion Conference: *Reaching Higher Levels of Understanding and Effectiveness*, we appreciated gathering with you and other members, HR professionals, and D+I practitioners who play a critical role in advancing our profession. We hope you were able to learn, share, and influence the crucial conversations that took place.

- **Learning:** The general sessions offered both practical and inspirational insight from diversity and inclusion leaders, while more than twelve 75-minute interactive workshops and discussions focused on the hands-on experience of running a nonprofit. Fifteen-minute individual coaching sessions with speakers and practitioners were also available to attendees.
- **Sharing:** This event was a platform for attendees to present and share their perspectives and contribute ideas for solutions to challenges in the nonprofit community related to diversity and inclusive practices. Attendees could also connect with other participants to discuss the subject matter of their choice in a collegial or confidential setting.
- **Influencing:** We answered the make-or-break-it questions facing members and leaders in associations. All walked away with new ASAE Foundation research on D+I practices that work and don't work in associations as well as the book, *World Class Diversity* by Dr. R. Roosevelt Thomas, to help them influence new initiatives and to break new ground.

To keep these conversations going in the association community, we are pleased to share the enclosed materials and resources from the D+I Conference.



Oleathia Gadsden, CMP
Chair, ASAE Diversity + Inclusion Committee



Stanley Bissey
Vice Chair, ASAE Diversity + Inclusion Committee



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2010–2011 DIVERSITY + INCLUSION COMMITTEE*

In addition to the members of the conference subcommittee, noted with an asterisk (*) above, the following are also members of ASAE's Diversity + Inclusion Committee.

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“ It isn't always just about getting numbers in the door; it's about creating that inclusive environment. ”

Association Leader Interview
ASAE Study 2010

D+I Conference Resources Overview

The following six exercises are only a sampling of the tools that content leaders provided at the D+I Conference to initiate, continue, or influence conversations in association workplaces. Even if you didn't attend the conference, these resources can help you identify how to apply a D+I lens to various business decisions.

“ ...it's not you want to do it [D+] because it's the right thing to do, but in order to participate in this marketplace competitively you have to do it. ”

Association Leader Interview
ASAE Study 2010



EXERCISE #1: ENHANCING DIVERSITY + INCLUSION IN MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS

Background:

During the opening general session, presenters facilitated a small group discussion about the state of diversity and inclusive practices in the nonprofit community based on ASAE Foundation's new research

called *Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion in Membership Organizations: An Interview Study*. The study revealed the following tendencies of associations, based on the extent to which they emphasize D+I.

ASSOCIATIONS WITH A LOW D+I EMPHASIS	ASSOCIATIONS WITH A STRONG D+I EMPHASIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are generally complacent • Avoid conflict • Lack the tools, systems, and champions to support efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower others • Have a high comfort level with change and conflict • Take a long-term view on approaches • Have institutionalized policies and practices that support the application of a D+I lens to association management

Content Leaders:

- **Mary Tschirhart**, professor of public administration and director, Institute for Nonprofit Research, Education and Engagement, North Carolina State University
- **Brittney Cofield-Poole**, project coordinator for the membership association research initiative, Institute for Nonprofit Research, Education and Engagement, North Carolina State University

Enhance diversity and inclusion practices at your membership organization by considering the following questions. These questions were given to attendees to envision what collective success means—and takes—in our community and their own organization.

How close is your association's current situation related to diversity (of members, board, or staff) and your desired state?

How close is your association's current situation related to inclusion (of members, board, or staff) and your desired state?

EXERCISE #2: NAVIGATING COMMON DIVERSITY DILEMMAS IN ASSOCIATIONS

Background:

During the opening general session, some observations and findings were read from **ASAE Foundation's new research called *Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion in Membership Organizations: An Interview Study***. Attendees were asked to role play how they would respond to four observations from colleagues.

Content Leaders:

- **Mary Tschirhart**, professor of public administration and director, Institute for Nonprofit Research, Education and Engagement, North Carolina State University
- **Brittney Cofield-Poole**, project coordinator for the membership association research initiative, Institute for Nonprofit Research, Education and Engagement, North Carolina State University

How to Start:

Consider the strategies below that were generated by attendees. How would you respond if the quote came from a colleague or member in your association?

Observation #1:

"Some association leaders use [the terms] diversity and inclusion interchangeably. There is a tendency to focus more on diversity than inclusion and to use a more targeted approach than a holistic strategy."

How can you create productive tension by changing how diversity and inclusion are defined in your organization?

Strategies

- Introduce the distinctions and intersections between the terms "diversity" and "inclusion."
- Broaden the D+I discussion to desired organizational outcomes to show the connection between D+I targets and organizational objectives.
- What does success look like? Use data. Anticipate answers to the objection: "I don't know what will work in D+I." Some people are afraid to fail, so outline one or two steps to get them started. What's one small act of inclusion that person could take in the next three weeks? Three months?
- "Identify short-term initiatives that build and get to those long-term practices. I hope you don't wait until you have a problem to take a step. Sometimes you have to crash and burn to see what comes out of the fire is a lot more than not doing anything with a risk. Don't wait for pain points to make a move." –Vicki Deal-Williams, ASHA

Observation #2:

"Powerful individuals and groups can make or break a diversity initiative through their control over decisions about resources and association direction."

Who can be recruited to help manage the tensions around diversity and inclusion?

Strategies:

- Anticipate answers to the question: "How would D+I benefit 85%+ of the membership?"
- Collect and share stories of benefits of D+I to your organization's goals or mission
- Introduce the fair not equal concept: "When people ask why you are focused on the xyz group, say that the reason we're doing this is to give fair face-time and visibility. While not equal time, it's still fair to do." – Peter O'Neil, ASAE Board Chair-Elect

- Show how D+I helps rather than hinders organizational success. Anticipate answers to the objection: “Inclusion is domination.” Change the context and raise awareness of definition of inclusion and examples of how different voices are respected and represented in the organization.

Observation #3:

“Attracting diverse underrepresented groups requires catering to a diverse set of needs.”

How are the needs of underrepresented groups met now? Are there better ways to understand and address the needs? If so what are they?

Strategies:

- Anticipate answers to the following objection: “We don’t have enough diversity in our field to draw from.”
- Clarify intentions and desired impact.
- When hiring, remember to show how it’s not just about the individual, it is about how to add diversity to a team to help the organization in the long term. Leverage ally organizations to help you get started.
- One way to attract new members is to first get them to be fans and followers of your organization. Who are your future leaders? Build your strategy around them, and your potential pipeline of talent. Take steps to change the field by reaching out to students and early-career professionals to influence them to go into the profession.

Observation #4:

“Increasing diversity may be as simple as reducing resistance to change.”

Consider the individuals within your organization that are the most resistant to change. How could you assist in facilitating openness to change?

Strategies:

- Anticipate answers to the following objection: “Our organization has other more urgent priorities.”
- “Only wet babies like a change, so to get anywhere with D+I, you need three ingredients: (1) dissatisfaction, (2) a clear vision, and (3) knowledge of the first two or three steps. Get people not to like their current state enough. If people aren’t dissatisfied, then wake them up to the fact that the current state isn’t sustainable.” – Eric Peterson, SHRM
- If it seems too daunting to start with D+I as the end game, then make the end game or the “what” your organizational goal and the “how” or means a D+I lens or strategy. If you look at the goals or issues in the organization, you may find out that you are addressing diversity.
- “If they don’t get it, then we know they understand compound interest so try to explain D+I in those terms. You don’t wait to save when you’re retiring. The board will get that they need to recalibrate. Get them to ask: “What will our portfolio look like? Where are we going to reinvest? Where are we growing and going?” – Jeffrey Cufaude, Idea Architects

EXERCISE #3: HARNESSING THE POWER OF DIVERSITY IN THE BOARDROOM

In comparing its *Nonprofit Governance Indexes* of 2007 and 1994, BoardSource found that board demographics remained unchanged, despite a dramatically changing landscape. Additionally, the *2010 Nonprofit Governance Index* revealed boards remain predominantly Caucasian with a small increase in the proportion of people of color (16% in 2010 compared to 14% in 2007). Four aspects of diversity were measured in the *Governance Index*—gender, age, race, ethnicity—and board members ranked race and ethnicity as more important to boards than age or gender.

BoardSource's new research, *Vital Voices: Lessons Learned from Board Members of Color*, is designed to amplify the voices of people of color serving on nonprofit boards of directors. While more than 86 percent of board members of color surveyed said they either almost always or often feel comfortable voicing their opinions at meetings, 13 percent said they have encountered some form of tokenism.

Valuable Resources for Your Board

Findings from this report can be a valuable resource for your board. If your board is having the same conversations about diversity and inclusion over and over with little or no tangible results, then try asking and answering some questions related to values, traditions and rituals, and conflict resolution in your boardroom.

Content Leader:

- **Vernetta Walker**, director, consulting and training, BoardSource

Values

1. What are the values that the organization considers most important? Consider those that are actually important, not just those that are written.
2. Do most board members share these values?

Traditions and Rituals

3. What are the organization's traditions?
4. What types of activities does the board engage in monthly, quarterly, and annually?
5. Which of these activities are considered of critical importance to a board member's success?
6. What other organizational activities are board members expected to attend?
7. What are the rituals that the board participates in that represent the ideals of the organization?
8. Do board members socialize outside board-related activities? If so, do these social occasions serve as places in which board matters are discussed? What type of events are these activities and who is invited to attend?

Conflict Resolution

9. How does the board resolve conflict between members?
10. How are disagreements resolved?
11. How is anger handled?
12. How do hidden or personal agendas become known?
13. What role(s) do hidden and personal agendas play in decision making for the board?

EXERCISE #4: RETHINK AND REFRESH YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND VOLUNTEER STRATEGIES

Background:

Each of us brings our own unique mix of perspectives on how we see and make sense of the world around us and the work we do. During this session, attendees were challenged to examine their recruitment strategies through a D+I lens to see if different questions or approaches would lead to incremental and/or exponential improvements.

Content Leader:

- **Jeffrey Cufaude**, Idea Architects

Connect With a Broader Customer Base

Expand your potential for incremental innovation and connecting with a broader customer base. Take some time to reflect on long-term recruitment approaches. List the 10 “lenses” or perspectives through which you see things and/or the roles that influence your approaches to membership or volunteer recruitment.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

“ At my last board meeting, I felt like the conversation was just going in circles—same old words with no new results. I know that if I could just impress upon them how critical diversity and inclusion are to the health of this organization that we could see a turnaround in a matter of months. How do I get through to them? ”

**Association Leader Interview
ASAE Study 2010**

EXERCISE #5: GLOBAL CONCEPTS FOR DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS

Background:

With globalization transforming the nature of our business relationships in associations, diversity is no longer merely an issue of equity in hiring but of strategy in the marketplace. The position of the diversity practitioner will become increasingly important, as is navigating the complexity of business relationships in any setting. Dr. Thomas discussed four concepts that all association professionals must manage in order to identify core products and markets that fuel growth, drive innovation, and help associations remain competitive on the global stage. The four management strategies discussed are **(1) workforce representation, (2) workforce demographic relationships, (3) diverse talent, and (4) all strategic mixtures.**

Content leader:

- **Dr. R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr.**, president & CEO, Roosevelt Thomas Consulting & Training

Use These Terms at Your Association

Keep an eye out for how the following terms are used at your association. Knowing their impact can help you define diversity in a way that is relevant and meaningful to your association, understand and influence how your constituents work together, and improve business decisions amidst complexity in the global environment.

Demographic Diversity

Differences, similarities, and tensions related to the presence of multiple forms of a given demographic attribute.

Behavioral Diversity

Differences, similarities and tensions related to a given behavioral dimension.

Diversity Management

The capability to make quality decisions in the midst of any related differences, similarities, tensions, and complexities.

Tension

The feeling of pressure or tautness we experience when faced with a situation which challenges us in some way. Tension is neither inherently good nor bad. It may come in the form of anxiety, stress or excitement, depending on the situation.

Diversity Tension

The stress and strain that comes with the interactions of differences and similarities. It results from the dynamics of the differences and similarities in the elements of the mixture.

Diversity-Challenged

The degree one has difficulty making quality decisions in the midst of *any* set of differences and similarities, and related tensions and complexities.

Diversity Capable

The extent one possesses the capability to make quality decisions in the midst of *any* set of differences and similarities, and related tensions and complexities.

EXERCISE #6: A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH TO CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

Background:

The Center for Legal Inclusiveness (CLI) created an innovative manual with a six-step process to help legal organizations create their own culture of inclusive excellence and innovation. This handout was customized for associations and distributed during the session as an exercise to help attendees identify small steps toward inclusion and innovation in their workplaces and volunteer teams.

Content leader:

- **Kathleen Nalty**, executive director, Center for Legal Inclusiveness

Often leaders have good intentions toward diversity, but lack understanding of how it relates to their everyday job responsibilities. Through framing D+I as a leadership imperative and identifying small steps toward inclusion, you can help your association leaders take action.

Map Out Your Action Plan

Using the chart below, list specific ways you will pursue applying a diversity + inclusion lens in your daily job responsibilities, then try creating action steps to your team, your leadership, your board, etc. The goal is to map out how you will model the way and enable others to take action.

LEADERSHIP ISSUE	ACTION ITEM	ACTION ITEM	ACTION ITEM
Personal Leadership: What concrete steps can I take as the leader in my organization to increase diversity and create a culture of inclusion?			
Team Leadership: What can I do as the leader in my organization to create a team of people that can effectively lead efforts to increase diversity and create a culture of inclusion within the organization?			



LEADERSHIP ISSUE	ACTION ITEM	ACTION ITEM	ACTION ITEM
<p>Executive Level Leadership: What can I do as the leader in my organization to create greater understanding with next level leaders (i.e. Practice Group Leaders) and gain their buy-in to increase diversity and create a culture of inclusion within the organization?</p>			
<p>Urgency/Business Case: What can I do as the leader in my organization to communicate a sense of urgency regarding diversity and inclusiveness and get past organizational inertia (and other barriers) on these topics?</p>			
<p>Including White Men: What can I do as the leader in my organization to create greater awareness of the issues among white men in the organization and communicate the importance of the role they play in increasing diversity and creating cultures of inclusion?</p>			

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