

Texas Recreation and Park Society
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan
(*APPROVED by TRAPS Board - October 6, 2021*)

TEXAS RECREATION & PARK SOCIETY (TRAPS) – VISION & MISSION

Vision – To be the champion for engaged communities, wellness lifestyles and greenspaces.

Mission – Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS) advances the quality-of-life industry through Connections, Advocacy, Resources and Education (C.A.R.E.)

MESSAGE from TRAPS LEADERSHIP

TRAPS commitment to greater awareness and growth as it relates to diversity, equity and inclusion, began in early fall of 2020; with a task force, being appointed by then current president Kimberly Garrett, to focus on diversity and inclusion within the organization and its respective services. The Task Force embraced the assignment; and as information was gathered, exercises and discussions held within the group, it was quickly realized that this was not a short-term task, but an evolving journey. The TRAPS leadership is grateful to this group of members, who took, and take their assignment seriously: willing to share information, challenge ideas, and have difficult conversations.

If TRAPS, as an organization, is going to achieve its vision of engaging communities, then we must understand who makes up the communities within Texas; and more importantly the Texas park and recreation professional community; and ask the question: *Does the TRAPS community mirror these groups?* TRAPS leadership is committed to reducing and/or eliminating barriers to enhancing diversity and inclusion; by analyzing and evaluating internal and external policies, procedures, and programs; as well as, developing more effective and inclusive outreach efforts ... to be intentional through positive and clear communications, and demonstrating actions that match our words and values.

INITIAL CHARGE of the TRAPS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force:

This task force shall consist of six to eight members who should represent a geographic cross-section of the state; and representative of the professional diversity of the industry, particularly within the state of Texas. The task force shall work closely with the TRAPS Executive Director to:

- Define *diversity, inclusion, social justice, racial equity* etc.
- Apply these definitions and determine their meaning in relation to the parks and recreation profession and professionals within the state of Texas.
- Identify specific criteria and strategies that will assist to broaden understanding and address shortfalls/deficits at all levels of the TRAPS organization *e.g., implementation of an organizational self-audit and/or development of an action plan.*

Definitions, Goal and Objectives

The first major task of the DEI Task Force was to work on a document with a set of relevant definitions, a goal and objectives and begin to apply them. This document was completed, and the Board officially adopted it on March 9, 2021. This document will be incorporated into the TRAPS **Manual of Governance & Operations**. Below are the definitions, goal, and objectives.

Equity: The assurance of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented full participation of all groups and participants. The principle of equity acknowledges that historically underserved and underrepresented populations exist

and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to ensure equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.¹

Inclusion: The act of creating environments, in which any individual feels welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in both words and actions for all people.²

Diversity: Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, or mental, physical social and emotional ability.

GOAL:

Identify specific criteria and strategies that will assist to broaden understanding and address shortfalls/deficits at all levels of the TRAPS organization.

Objectives:

- Implement diversity, equity, and inclusive growth opportunities at the branch, regional, state level to help promote and provide self-actualization and discovery to aid in the professional development of Texas Recreation and Park societies and environments. Examples of growth opportunities include, but are not limited to, educational sessions, panels, facilitated roundtable, or hands on activities.
- Facilitate “Safe Discovery Forums” on a quarterly/monthly rotation to initiate dialog of trends, occurrences, and solutions to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Implement resources to aid members/stakeholders of TRAPS in creating tools which improve their workplace environment. Including recruitment, training, hiring, and programming for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Recommended by the DEI task force on 12/2/20 and adopted by the TRAPS Board on 3/9/21.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

Goals

This DEI Action Plan outlines a set of strategies and measurable tasks, based on the Texas Recreation and Park Society’s **CARE Cornerstones: *Connections, Advocacy, Resources* and *Education***, which reflect the guiding values of this organization; and to be achieved over the next few years, and working into the future. Ultimately, the long-term goals of this plan are:

- To see that DEI values are seamlessly integrated into the governance, operations, policies, planning, and programs.
- To recognize that TRAPS is a respected professional association that works to ensure the benefits of parks and recreation are equitably available to and enjoyed by all.

¹ Adapted from the UC Berkley Initiative for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity: Youth Outside. The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) has endorsed these definitions.

² Same as above

Audience

This plan is fundamentally an operational plan written to guide the board and staff in our equity work. For general transparency, this plan will be easily accessible to all staff, board, volunteers, members, vendors, partners, and other key stakeholders so they are knowledgeable about our intentions and path forward.

Plan Coordination

The President is responsible for overseeing the DEI Action Plan, working along with the Executive Director, directors, committees, and staff. Additionally, the president will model desirable behaviors, assure consistent application of this plan and its principles, and manage for equity results.

The DEI Task Force, working along with staff, will regularly reflect, discuss, and document learning from this process. They will also provide quarterly reports to the board of directors.

Diversity and Inclusion focuses on both the present and future of our association – refer to the following charts for tasks and timelines.

Present: Internally, determine the organization's existing Diversity and Inclusion configuration, policies, processes, and beliefs, and utilize that information as a steppingstone toward bolstering the organization's people management and development programs to engage all employees. Externally, continue evaluation of outreach programs to ensure we are offering recreational opportunities that are accessible to all Texans.

Future: Engage all employees and members in enhancing the organizational culture where similarities, differences, complexities, and sometimes tensions are embraced and valued. In this environment, individuals may work to their full potential and the workplace presents a respectful and productive environment for everyone. In addition, future demographic trends are anticipated which will impact Diversity and Inclusion and must be reflected within the organization and with the constituents that we serve.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Texas Recreation and Park Society should:

- meet expectations and standards of recreation and park professional associations, looking to the National Recreation and Park Association, and other successful associations for leadership;
- have the Society, and especially the Board, be reflective of the demographics of Texas;
- see that diversity, equity and inclusion values are integrated into the governance, operations, policies, planning and programs;
- work closer with diverse universities for membership and employment;
- create an online resource of diversity, equity and inclusion related materials such as articles, videos, self-assessment tools, etc.;
- establish a cache of mentors, confidantes or advocates that members can connect with to discuss discrimination, isolation, or uncertainty they might be facing;
- include diversity, equity and inclusion questions on membership and institute registration forms;
- conduct a review of current procedures, practices and norms for recruitment, planning of sessions and make adjustments to ensure a diversity of speakers and sessions.

ACTION PLAN MATRIX

The **TRAPS' Cornerstones** (**CARE** ... *Connections, Advocacy, Resources and Education*) are areas of influence for the purpose, function and growth of the Texas Recreation and Park Society ... thereby creating an organizational culture, where leadership is valued. The **DEI Action Plan Matrix**, that follows, was developed based upon the *TRAPS' Cornerstones*; and incorporates recommended strategies, measurables, tasks, timeline, champions (suggested leaders or groups to achieve the tasks), task team and relevant notes.

The DEI Task Force realizes that there is much recommended to be achieved in this plan; and acknowledges that the best way to accomplish the many tasks is to divide the responsibilities as much as possible between staff, the board, committees, task forces, and TRAPS' supporters and advocates. In doing so, the DEI Task Force hopes to create an enhanced culture supportive of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This plan will be reviewed, updated, and edited as needed. By no means, is this plan inclusive of all needs at present; it is essentially a work in progress. This is the DEI Task Force's best effort to develop a plan that is designed to get our association headed in the right direction.



DEI ACTION PLAN MATRIX (approved 10.06.21)

FRQQHFWRQV– Engage all who serve in the public and private parks and recreation industry with opportunities for networking, collaboration, partnerships, and social events.					
DEI Strategy	DEI Task	Timeline/ Status	Task Champion	Task Team	Notes
Formulate a policy for a moment of silence, reflection and/or silent prayer for all meetings/ Conferences	<p>Communicate that the time of silence is to give thanks and/or reflection.</p> <p>TARGET: Review and monitor regularly. Implement for the 2022 Institute and regional workshops.</p>	<p>Short term 8/21-3/23</p>	<p>Staff - Education Programs Coordinator</p>	<p>Education task force and regional workshop planning committees and state Institute Planning Committee</p>	<p><i>Creates a space for all faiths and beliefs.</i></p> <p>Possibly provide a question at the end of Institute survey to get feedback on this new process. Results provided to education programs coordinator.</p>
Connect frontline and mid-tier professionals with TRAPS vs focus on director level	<p>Work to include and expand a diverse membership base; Address underserved counties, cities, & towns (rural and remote areas) .</p> <p>TARGET: Establish a plan to be implemented by 2023.</p>	<p>Mid Term 3/23 – 3/25</p>	<p>Staff -Membership Manager</p>	<p>presidents’ council/ membership past presidents’ council membership committee</p>	<p>Utilize ambassador at registration for branch/ committee overviews; new member orientation; TRAPS rep. to visit organizations.</p> <p>Advocate and have a better representation of the various professional levels beyond management.</p>
Connect with dept. chair / deans to get more young professional involvement for membership	<p>Work closer with universities for membership & employment.</p> <p>TARGET: contact a minimum of three resources annually.</p> <p>TARGET: establish academic advisory council to include HBCU representatives by summer 2022.</p>	<p>Mid term 3/23 – 3/25</p>	<p>Future and Young Professionals Committee</p>	<p>MILS; Future/Young Professionals; Therapeutic Branches New Executive Director</p>	<p>Ex. would be HBCU's or org. such as the League of Latin American Citizens; ID programs that feed into the field; seek ways to connect and have presence in a subtle manner; create alliances/ affiliations with other org.; cohost/ collaborate on programming to inclusion and unification of purpose/service.</p>
Focus on uniting local areas to regions, then to state networking	<p>Start small in regional or local areas for networking on special aspects of the profession.</p> <p>TARGET: once a quarter hold a meeting/gathering/ networking/Zoom.</p>	<p>Mid term 3/23 – 3/25</p>	<p>Regional Directors</p>	<p>Branch Representatives attend this meeting (e.g., Therapeutic, MIL, POPS, Leisure in Aging etc.)</p>	<p>This may already exist but unsure if it is happening at all levels of the region.</p>

DGYRFD\ - provide public recognition for outstanding services, programs, and facilities created by its members; and will utilize its relations with policy makers and organizations of influence to support legislation and funding at the local, state, and national level that will benefit parks, recreation, open space, and tourism.

DEI Strategy	DEI Task	Timeline/ Status	Task Champion	Task Team	Notes
Identify proposed legislation or policy that impacts parks, recreation, open space & tourism; and does not address/ enhance diversity, equity & inclusion	Each legislative session the TRAPS Platform should include a "WATCH" of bills that lack DEI elements; and challenge or oppose as needed.	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	Legislative Committee	TRAPS Leadership TRAPS Membership	
Develop strategies or incentives that will enhance the diversity of award applicants; and reflects a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion	Review current award categories, application process etc., so as to be inclusive, while addressing diversity, equity and inclusion goals.	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	Awards Committee		
	Recommend additional award categories as needed to promote and/or ensure diversity, equity and inclusion.		Awards Committee	Regions & Branches	

UHVRXUFHV- Connect membership with current and relevant trends, information, suppliers, and services that will enhance professional growth and community development; and influence a greater understanding of the value of the parks, recreation, open space, and tourism.

DEI Strategy	DEI Task	Timeline/ Status	Task Champion	Task Team	Notes
MOGO review and update for DEI appropriate language, perspective, and intent	Appoint small task force to determine priority list of MOGO sections for review.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	DEI Task Force member	Board member, MILS, Past Presidents, TR Branch representatives and staff	May start with Code of Ethics; review of sections should include respective representative board, branch, or committee members; suggest appointing task force by or at Institute.
	Begin review of MOGO based on priority list.	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	Board member	DEI Task Force, respective branch or committee representatives	Farm the review out to a wider range of members will help create buy-in, as well as sharpen the lens of the review and recommended updates.
Consider DEI lens or rep when next complete overhaul of the MOGO occurs.	Long term 3/25 till completed	Board member	DEI Task Force Member, MOGO Task Force		
Once initial update and overhaul of MOGO are complete; DEI review should occur annually.	Ongoing	Board member	DEI Task Force Member, MILS, Past Presidents and TR Branch representatives		

UHVXUFHV- Connect membership with current and relevant trends, information, suppliers, and services that will enhance professional growth and community development; and influence a greater understanding of the value of the parks, recreation, open space, and tourism.

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Create a Library of DEI resources for members to access and utilize	Identify industry leaders in the DEI movement, review resources available via their websites.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	DEI Task Force member	MILS, TR FYP Branches	Resources can be found with NRPA, AAPRA, Trust for Public Land.
	Create a FAQ document for new or potential members to refer to for opportunities regarding scholarships /internships, successfully completing applications and mentors who can help them navigate their career and connection to TRAPS.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	DEI Task Force Member	F/Y Professional and staff	
	Collect and share DEI articles, podcast, publications for memberships to access.	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	DEI Task Force member	MILS, TR, FYP Branches	See JEDI Tools and Templates doc in the Google Drive
	Conduct a survey of agencies to determine what resources they need for DEI initiatives or collect best practices from around the state/nation.	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	Staff Member	Board member. DEI TF	
	Consider developing DEI self-assessment tool to be used by membership/agencies.	Long term 3/25 till completed	Staff Member	DEI TF	Follow the model of the NRPA survey.
	Establish a DEI of Speaker's Bureau to assist departments with staff development.	Long term 3/25 till completed	Education Manager	Board, DEI TF, MILS, TR	May utilize resources provided by NRPA or Academy.
Expand mentor program to include a DEI focus	Establish a cache of mentors, confidantes or advocates that members/future members can connect with to discuss discrimination, isolation, or uncertainty they might be facing.	Short term 8/21-3/23	FYP Branch	Board Member, DEI TF, TR, MILS, Membership Committee	Should be incorporated into current program for connecting mentors and mentees; may also be less intense and just a list of people who are willing to listen and provide guidance.
Continue to research similar organizations SOP for relevancy	Development of professional SOP	Long term 3/25 till completed			

HG X F'DWIR Q – Provide expert training and educational opportunities to support ongoing professional development and career success through conferences, workshops, webinars, and publications.

DEI Strategy	DEI Task	Timeline/ Status	Task Champion	Task Team	Notes
DEI Definition, Goals and Objectives	Distribute board adopted definition, goals, objectives, and survey results to the membership via newsletter, social media, and membership portal.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	Staff	Board member, Marketing/Communication TF, DEI TF	After plan is adopted by the board; "Initial" distribution at Institute 2022. <i>note addition of survey results.</i>
	Share board adopted definition, goals, objectives and survey with region directors and branches; ask them to share and discuss with their groups.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	Staff	Board	After plan is adopted by the board; <i>note addition of survey</i>
	Add board adopted definition, goals, objectives, and survey results to website.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	Staff	Marketing/Communication TF	After plan is adopted by the board; <i>note addition of survey results</i>
	Include DEI questions on membership and institute registration forms: disaggregate data, accommodations, diet, etc.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	Staff	DEI TF, Membership Committee	To establish baseline for creation of vision and measurement of progress and impact of action steps/tasks.
	Establish a DEI vision for organization, membership, and board (ex. 2030 TRAPS membership and board composition will reflect the demographic composition of the State of Texas); develop subsequent strategies for attaining the vision.	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	Board	Branches and Committees, Staff	Need to establish baseline measures for demographics of TRAPS members prior to establishing vision; SMART goals; can be included in a January workshop agenda.
	Incorporate definitions, goals and objectives into TRAPS values, vision and mission statements, CARES, and next strategic plan.	Long term 3/25 till completed	Board	Branches and Committees, Staff	

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DEI Strategy	DEI Task	Timeline/ Status	Task Champion	Task Team	Notes
<i>Establish a series of Safe Discovery Forums (SDF)</i>	Identify leadership for planning and coordinating forums; establish connection with Education Program Coord. for resources and planning purposes.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	Education Committee, Education Manager	Regional Directors	
	Establish a schedule and topics for forums and workshops.	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	Education Committee, Education Manager	Regional Directors	
	Include in annual institute program/education menu.	Long term 3/25 till completed	Education Committee, Education Manager		
<i>Integrate DEI processes and procedures into planning and execution of Annual Institute</i>	Conduct a DEI review of current procedures, practices and norms for recruitment, planning of sessions and adjust to ensure diversity of speakers, sessions, etc.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	Education Committee	Staff	Track data during Institute 2022 (via expanded questions @registration).
	Ensure that the institute guide has descriptions using icons or key update speaker forms.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	Education Committee	Marketing/communication; Education task force	Have speakers identify if the session will include various sensory components or requirements of participants; create a separate DEI topic for the conference as well.
	Have presenters make a disclaimer for sessions regarding noises, lights, touching, physical activity or socializing, etc. prior to start of session.	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	Education Committee, Education Manager	TR Branch, DEI TF	
	Establish "Common Grounds" or "Tacos and Queso" spaces for DEI discussions based on SDF.	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	Education Manager, DEI TF	Education Committee	Can start small in Bryan to test it out.
	Develop a strategy to increase presenter and session diversity.	Long term 3/25 till completed	Education Committee, Education Manager	DEI, MILS, TR, FYP	

HG X F'DWIR Q – Provide expert training and educational opportunities to support ongoing professional development and career success through conferences, workshops, webinars, and publications.

DEI Strategy	DEI Task	Timeline/ Status	Task Champion	Task Team	Notes
<i>Integrate DEI processes and procedures into planning and execution of Annual Institute (continued)</i>	Development of a DEI scholarship for attendance to include registration/assistance - eligibility and recruitment can be organic and respond to trends in most recent registration and participation of membership (can be linked to TEX-ternship).	Ongoing	Membership Manager, FYP	Membership Committee, DEI	
<i>Membership Education Series</i>	Develop a formal report of the survey results with the intent to share with board and eventually membership.	Short term 8/21 - 3/23	DEI TF, Staff	Board	Suggest delivering report along with final DEI Action Plan in November.
	Use results and questions from the survey to educate via the newsletter, social media posts, etc. (ex. Explain what CIS gender is, share demographics of the state vs survey results, why being colorblind just doesn't work, etc.).	Mid term 3/23 – 3/25	DEI TF, Staff	Marketing and Communications	
	Recruit DEI based perspectives for the "From My Park Bench" series.	Long term 3/25 till completed	Staff	Marketing and Communications, DEI TF	
	Take advantage of awareness months (Black History, Hispanic Heritage, Pride, AAPI, Mental Health, etc.) to discuss DEI issues as they relate to the parks and recreation industry.	On-going	Staff		