

Supporting DE&I Initiatives in the Laboratory Workforce

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Brief Summary of Case Study:

In the second session of this year's Building Bridges series, "Supporting DE&I Initiatives in the Laboratory Workforce," Dr. Dana Powell Baker, Ed.D., MBA, MS, MLS(ASCP) shared a case study about APHL's [public health internship program](#) which leverages academic partnerships to support recruitment of underrepresented students into public health laboratory career pathways. Dr. Cliff Sullivan, F(ACHI), FASCP then shared a profile on ASCP's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and the varied types of partnerships engaged to promote DEI efforts for both laboratory members and patients. Finally, Dr. Marilyn Bibbs Freeman, Ph. D., M(ASCP) shared the perspective of APHL's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee, including their collaborative activities both within and outside of APHL to create dialogue and resources in advancing DEIA initiatives.

Lessons Learned/Best Practices Applied by Faculty:

In order to implement DE&I initiatives and affect organizational structure in the laboratory workforce, it is critical to:

1. Share the vision.
Secure organizational buy-in and support for these efforts from higher ups to help allocate resources and monitor progress to achieving goals. Leverage existing, credible research to highlight to decision-makers how greater diversity in the workforce results in greater profitability and value creation.
2. Model behavior to support effective bi-directional communicational and teamwork.
Demonstrate sincerity, consistency, preparedness, and being open to listening. This will help to create a culture of collaboration. Applying a team-based "divide and conquer" approach can also be an effective strategy to tackle initiatives across different facets and areas of attention of DEI(A).
3. Channel a growth mindset.
Stay flexible and adaptable to changing priorities. This growth mindset will support evolution of ideas, including redesigning and refining processes and priorities in order to affect lasting change and sustainability.
4. Establish an outreach strategy with partners.
Work together with other partners committed to DEI(A) initiatives to strengthen and synergize efforts. This may lead to a stronger collective buy-in, new opportunities, and more effective outcomes.
5. Walk the talk.
Put your words into action, commit to the work, and be intentional. Integrate aspects of DEI at all levels and be mindful of representation throughout your organization or practice setting. Do not let setbacks dissuade you from moving forward. It is critical to evaluate the impact of implemented changes to demonstrate the importance and benefits of having a more inclusive laboratory workforce.

Visit our [hub site](#) to find additional resources for this Building Bridges Across the Laboratory session!

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