

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, JUSTICE AND ACCESSIBILITY UPDATE

In January 2023, NASPAA's Executive Council passed its first Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility (DEIJA) plan. The plan is an outgrowth of the final report of NASPAA's Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion which was established after the social justice movement launched following the murder of George Floyd. The DEIJA plan is a significant accomplishment for our organization, as this is the first such plan since NASPAA's founding in 1970. Although comprehensive, there is still much work to complete, especially considering the increasing assaults on human rights and democratic values worldwide. As we face these obstacles, it is even more critical that NASPAA be a diligent partner in meeting these challenges head-on via the DEIJA plan and undertaking advocacy efforts that align with NASPAA's mission where possible.

While developing the strategic and DEIJA plans, NASPAA held several meetings and focus groups. We also communicated with our international members to capture their concerns about diversity from an international context. To help NASPAA better understand these issues, President Brown has charged an ad hoc Committee to study NASPAA's global position. Professor Mohamad Alkadry is leading this committee. There are five additional committee members from universities worldwide. The ad hoc committee will host listening sessions for our international members in May. Their final report will be presented at the October conference in Pittsburgh, PA.

Our DEIJA plan has six goals, which are as follows:

GOAL 1. ACCREDITATION

Increase NASPAA accreditation at HCBUs and other underrepresented organizations associated with the organization domestically and internationally.

GOAL 2. TEACHING AND LEARNING

Serve as a resource and clearinghouse in support of the promotion and encouragement of NASPAA member institutions, staff, board members, and stakeholders to engage in the DEIJA work.

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GOAL 3. DELIVERING DIVERSITY IN NASPAA AND OUR FIELD

Develop and implement pipeline projects for NASPAA program activities, DEIJA recruitment assistance to member institutions, engagement opportunities for members, and heighten awareness of leadership and career opportunities within NASPAA to improve DEIJA.

GOAL 4. RESEARCH AND RECOGNITION

Apply a DEIJA lens to all NASPAA awards, programs, and recognitions.

GOAL 5. ANNUAL CONFERENCE PLANNING

Review all NASPAA future conference planning and practices with an eye toward amplifying diversity, access, equity, and inclusion.

GOAL 6. COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERNAL TRAINING

Conduct a NASPAA DEIJA organizational assessment to identify barriers, obstacles, and areas of improvement in organizational programs, policies, and practices, including internal training.

The next step for staff will be developing tactical action steps for each of the objectives listed under the six goals outlined in the plan. However, since the DEIJA plan is quite the undertaking for NASPAA's four staff members charged with programmatic responsibilities, President Brown has requested assistance from the Diversity and Social Equity Committee. The principal charge of the committee is to participate in implementing the plan. More specifically, the President asked the committee to assist NASPAA with the following objectives:

2.1 Create source templates to guide NASPAA member institutions in developing instructor cultural competencies required to create equitable and inclusive classroom climates.

2.2 Craft source templates to guide NASPAA member institutions in initiating and supporting active discussions about DE&I and its relationship to the role of doctoral programs in pedagogical instruction and preparation.

Because of the critical nature of this work, staff has already begun implementing parts of the DEIJA plan. Here are examples of how we're moving the plan forward:

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1.Objective 1.4 calls for NASPAA to Develop a Training Framework for COPRA. Our consultants have scheduled a bias training session for the COPRA members in August. The training will be delivered virtually.

2.Objective 4.1 calls for NASPAA to: “Apply a DEIJA lens to all NASPAA awards. Last year’s award winners were the most diverse group of awardees ever. NASPAA will continue to promote diversity in this manner.

3.Objective 5.1 challenges staff to review conference practices to amplify diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Director of Events has changed sponsorship offerings to ensure that ALL schools have an opportunity to participate if they choose. No longer will NASPAA give any particular university priority over other members. This is our attempt to make the process fairer and more equitable.

4.Objective 5.2 calls for the creation of a DEIJA training event for participants at all stages of their academic careers. During our annual conference, NASPAA will host a Dining and Dialogue session for the first time. This event will lead participants through a networking session highlighting individual stories and backgrounds. The goal is to create a better understanding and appreciation of diversity in all of its forms.

5.Since January, the Executive Director and the Director of Events have worked diligently to continue to improve NASPAA’s internal organizational culture. Objective 6.1 encourages all staff to see the value of DEIJA. Shortly after the DEIJA plan was passed, staff received a message outlining that NASPAA values diversity in all its forms. We are building a climate that allows each staff member to show up as their true selves. Additionally, the team will regularly receive training via webinars and relevant articles. We will also host DEIJA discussion sessions during staff meetings.

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With the passage of this plan, NASPAA is signaling its commitment to creating more just spaces and intends to take an active role in propagating diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility in ways that support our members worldwide. Click [DEIJA Action Plan](#) to learn more.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Trevor Brown", followed by a horizontal line.

Trevor Brown, Ph.D
President
NASPAA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angel Wright-Lanier", followed by a horizontal line.

Angel Wright-Lanier, Ed.D.
Executive Director
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