Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 101: Creating Cultural Transformation

Carmia Feldman
Tracy Qiu
Allie Skaer
MaryLynn Mack
Research Thesis: Racial Diversity in Public Garden Leadership

Tracy Qiu
What is Racial Diversity?

• Race – social construct, based on treatment in society
• Diversity – differences (gender, race, religion, age, orientation, ability, etc.)
• Dominant group - White/White-American
• “Minority” group - People of color
Changing Face of America

Percent of total U.S. population by race and ethnicity, 1960-2060

• Leaders: decision-making power
• Public gardens: nonprofit, paid full-time staff, programming
Racial Diversity in Environmental and Cultural Nonprofit Leadership

Environmental (Taylor)

- White: 86%
- People of Color: 14%

Cultural (Mellon)

- White: 84%
- People of Color: 16%

Average of 14 – 18% people of color in nonprofit leadership roles
Research Goals

• **Explore** the **experiences** of people of color in public garden leadership

• **Identify barriers** and challenges towards racial diversity in public garden leadership

• **Discuss best practices** in the recruitment, retention and promotion of public garden leaders of color

Research Methodology

• Narrative interviews
• Thirteen leaders in the public garden field that identify as people of color
• Three rounds of qualitative coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the experience of being a person of color in a public garden leadership position (career pipeline, barriers, opportunities)?</td>
<td>Early Exposure to Nature</td>
<td>Educational Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Familial Connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Early Jobs and Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preconceptions of Horticultural Careers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Horticultural as a Second Career</td>
<td>Reasons for Transitioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Educational Transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prior Skills and Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barriers and Challenges</td>
<td>Micro-aggressions and Discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Isolation and Fatigue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Racial Barriers and Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Successes and Opportunities</td>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mentorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Race and Mentorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mentorship – Career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mentorship – Emotional Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the perception of diversity in public horticulture from the perspective of leaders who are people of color?</td>
<td>Perception of Racial Diversity in Public Horticulture</td>
<td>Perceived Lack of Racial Diversity in Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recruitment Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendations for Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the institutional effects of having a person of color in a leadership position?</td>
<td>Effects of Racial Diversity in Leadership Role</td>
<td>Institutional Effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Narratives

Image: Public Finance - http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/2012/06/how-manage-diversity-work
Pipeline

Early Exposure and Career Awareness

ALWAYS
• Something that I sort of always did for work
• I was always tending my parents landscape
• I’ve always been interested in plants
• I was always climbing trees, in the dirt
• I was always interested in growing stuff
• I've always had a knack for plants

NEVER
• (Horticulture) was never an option
• I never academically pursued horticulture at all
• I never saw myself getting into that field
• I never considered it as a career path
• I never thought I would grow up to study it
• I never thought of it as a career, even though I liked it so much
“well the only career choice my kid could possibly have is to be a gardener, and that's not okay.” You know? “My family worked in fields, and struggled, to get us to a better place.”

(In a discussion about parental perceptions of horticulture)
Organizational Culture
Micro-Aggressions

• “I was definitely called "that little Mexican girl." I'm not (even) Mexican...”

• “People used to ask me “What am I? What are you? Are you (American) Indian?””

• “They think that it's funny and it's not, comparing my name to like a terrorist or something like that...”
Leadership and Volunteers

• “It takes leadership from the top to actually change that culture, and it's not my responsibility as a person of color to change that culture.”

• “And I told my boss, and nothing happened. And he's also a white man and I'm the only person of color on staff.”

• “Nobody on staff has done that in a way I feel is inappropriate, but I've had at least one volunteer say something like that to me.”
Emotional Labor

• “They pay me to be nice, so I had to be nice about it.”

• “I mean I know who the racists are. I know who the people are that have already pre-judged me before I've even opened my mouth.”

• “Is this an opportunity to educate, or take them down? And you have to make those kinds of decisions, hundreds of times a day. And it's exhausting.”
Isolation

• “I could look around, there was nobody looked like me. Nobody at all.”

• “I don't feel ostracized or anything like that, but I just feel like an anomaly.”

• “At one time, I was walking around, I was like-- am I the only Black person?”
“I get the sense that oftentimes, that they want you have that struggle, like they're really curious in hearing it, and when you don't it's kind of a downer.”

(On identifying as a person of color)
Successes and Opportunities

People enjoy their careers and find them to be meaningful!

• “It's exciting, it's charging, it feels like I'm doing something that's worthwhile.”

• “...In my experience, in my opinion, there's more intellectual satisfaction in a public garden.”

PoC leaders try to support more emerging professionals of color!

• “I feel like-- I am willing to leave the position open longer in order to leave no stone unturned. Because I don't profess to know everywhere to look either. But I want to be sure that I have given this every consideration.”
Conclusion

Ultimately...

- Topic of racial diversity is complex, emotional, difficult, and uncomfortable

- Goal is to have a professional culture that invites people of color to develop their careers in the public horticulture field

Key Concepts for Dialogue on Race

Allie Byrd Skaer
Allie Byrd Skaer

Internship Engagement Coordinator

Denver Museum of Nature and Science

BS Horticulture
MS Education
MPS Human Plant Interactions

Allie.Skaer@dmns.org
720.921.4405
Diversity refers to the variety of personal experiences, values and worldviews that arise from differences in culture and circumstance. It includes but is not limited to the influence of different cultural, ethnic, and religious heritages and the differences that emerge from class, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability and other socially constructed characteristics.

Equity refers to the guarantee of fair treatment, access, and opportunity for advancement for all individuals. Equity also aims to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of marginalized groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically marginalized populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed in order to provide effective opportunities for all. The key to understanding equity is the idea that individuals and groups need different kinds of policies, programs and practices in order to succeed.

Inclusion indicates an environment in which a diversity of identities are not only represented, but are also supported and embraced through consistent institutional behaviors, practices and policies. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all members.
In the image on the left, the concept of "EQUALITY" is illustrated, where community resources are distributed equally across the community. In the image on the right, the concept of "EQUITY" is shown, where community resources are distributed proportionally to the needs of the community.
Social Justice is about Equity

Here, David, you can use this slingshot.

Equity

Equality

Slingshots for EVERYONE!

Image: Sam Killerman
Adapted from Harro, B (2013)
The cycle of socialization, in Adams et al. (eds) Readings for Social Justice and Diversity
Intersecting Axes of Privilege, Domination, and Oppression

There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.

Audre Lorde

Each and every one of us has the capacity to be an oppressor. I want to encourage each and everyone of us to interrogate how we might be an oppressor and how we might be able to become liberators for ourselves and for each other.

Laverne Cox
<--- Things we say and do.

<--- Our Socialization: Values, Beliefs, What is “Normal”, Expectations, Bias, and Stereotypes.

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html
RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Where are you from? Where are you really from? No, where are you really really from?
- What are you?
- You speak English so well.
- What do your people think about that?
- You're really pretty, for someone so dark.
- You don't act like a normal Black person.
- Why do you sound so White?
- Your name is too hard to pronounce, can I call you Mary?
Colorblind racism is the new racial music most people dance to, the 'new racism' is subtle, institutionalized and seemingly nonracial.

--- Eduardo Bonilla-Silva ---
Links to lists of readings on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

Social Justice Primer Part 1:  
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fJiNPvzPxygKeDd0j5F8NfOzC7Pk2tI8iM9DIWleqqk/edit?usp=sharing

Social Justice Primer Part 2:  
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ccxakG5aJSNJKTGl6cRE4Ivk_iALAXte6NYKZEwM0uk/edit?usp=sharing

Science, Science and Society, Race, Gender, and Justice by Dr. Chanda Hsu Prescod-Weinstein  
https://medium.com/@chanda/a-guide-to-my-writing-for-the-public-a5c27f7a011e
Case Study: Desert Botanical Garden

MaryLynn Mack

Case Study: Desert Botanical Garden
The Beginning and the Buy-in

Board Commitment to Visitor Diversity
Monarch Council & Monarch Society
Monarch Council & Monarch Society

- **Monarch Society**
  - A membership level that can be opted into

- **Monarch Council**
  - A competitive application process for a 12 - 15 member council that includes board development, committee work and a financial obligation
Outcomes
The Surprise
“The Best Places to Work” Survey
Problem in Our Own Backyard

- Staff felt there was an elitist attitude
- Lack of trust with Senior Staff
- Lack of staff diversity
- Equity / professional development opportunities
The Work

- Town Hall Meetings
- Department Meetings
- 360’s
A Call to Accountability

Diversity and Inclusion Plan
Implementation Overview
Phase One: Set the Vision

- Small Group Discussions
- Survey & Data
- Candid Conversations on “Why?”
Phase Two: Education

- Clear Roles / Responsibilities
- Board and Senior Staff 1st
- Trainings and Orientations
Phase Three: Accountability

- Job Descriptions
- Financial Impact
- Ongoing Communications
- Celebration
Outcomes
Advancing Excellence

- A comprehensive pay-for-performance system that includes grades on positions and managerial empowerment to reward & retain
Legacy Leadership Academy

- A competitive one-year program open to all employees
- Leadership - tactical and strategic
Professional Development
Inclusion
Succession Planning

- Short-term / Emergency
- Long-term / Strategic
Cultivating Excellence

- Three R’s
  - Recruit
  - Retain
  - Recognize
The Journey Continues...

Allie Skaer: Allie.Skaer@dmns.org
Tracy Qiu: tqiu@udel.edu
MaryLynn Mack: mlmack@dbg.org
Carmia Feldman: csfeldman@ucdavis.edu

Friday June 23rd - 8:30 am - Room 314
Diversity & Inclusion Open Forum
We want to hear your thoughts!

Please take the Diversity & Inclusion survey in the APGA 2017 Conference App

Thank you!