

**Spirit of Adventure Council, BSA
Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Plan**

Spirit of Adventure Council has strived to be a leader in diversity in the Scouting community. As we progressed and opened our doors more fully to underserved segments of our community, we also learned valuable lessons critical to success. Specifically:

First Lesson – Diversity is the outcome of inclusion

Second Lesson – inclusion is cultural and takes significant time, effort and commitment

Third Lesson – Folks who feel like allies (and believe themselves to be) are often inadvertently standing in the way of inclusion and diversity efforts

Fourth Lesson – listen, be humble, learn, ask, love

Fifth Lesson – by measuring diversity an organization runs the risk of adapting procedures that encourage tokenism.

All these lessons were just under the surface for our council – we felt dedicated to diversity, yet we couldn't seem to recruit board members, or staff or start units in minority or marginalized communities without financially offsetting the entire experience. The natural conclusion to that was "that's the way it is"; if we want to serve people of color, we need to pay for them, or subsidize their efforts.

In 2015 we formally opened the base camp to the public. This had a profound effect on our ability to listen. We essentially had a non-Scout focus group in our building every day. Their feedback taught us an enormous amount about ourselves and helped open us up to listening. We have come to realize and see our Milton base camp as a powerfully organic funnel and cultivation ground to Scouting, from non-traditional, diverse communities. Of the total visitors to the Milton base camp, there are a much higher percentage of communities of color vs. our traditional council membership base. The camp has also allowed SoA to build unique community models such as members of the region's home school community leveraging and using the camp has an augmentation to their work and needs. These natural intersections of diversity seep inclusion potential.

Between 2017 – 2019 we established a D&I task force. This group helped us develop terminology and language confidence. From there we developed "Spotlight Days" and "Volunteer Resource Groups" activities. These functions operated at and through the council, but culturally were considered a separate entity. The task force delivered a formal summary and report that SoA was able to use in establishing a clearer vision and strategic commitment to formally address and work on I&D into the future.

In 2019 we employed a Diversity and Inclusion Consultant. This consultant worked with three staff members Chuck Eaton, Darrin Johnson and Mariama Sano. The intent was to enhance the

understanding of those three strategic people and positions to better expand the work of inclusion over time. This effort has been branded as Catalysts for Inclusion (Cfi) and is envisioned to become an integral part of Spirit of Adventure's ongoing strategic goals and objectives. Cfi will continue its work into 2020 and beyond, as additional SoA staff become formal participants being coached and advised by our consultant resources. Cfi has begun to achieve and produce tangibles, which Staff and the organization will build upon into everyday work and organizational goals and outcomes.

Cfi's Vision Statement:

Building youth of character, no matter where they come from, where they live, what they look like, or how they identify.

Cfi's Mission Statement:

We are dedicated to being open, evolving our culture, and learning together as we build an inclusive landscape around universal access. Steeped in its roots that everyone is invited who wants to participate and benefit from the experiences that it can offer, Spirit of Adventure is committed to unlocking the value of scouting to the widest expanse of diverse communities and individuals as it can possibly reach.

The measurable results and highlights over the past few years are exciting. In 2017, 82% of our membership was white males. Today, through growth and typical attrition, 66% of our membership is white male. This better correlates to the communities we seek to serve. But we still have a long way to go. Similarly, over the past two years, our diversity on the board has increased by 12%.

Our increases in non-white membership are NOT primarily through ScoutReach. These families pay their own way and they typically start out as base camp customers. In effect, they inherently see the value proposition. They pay BEFORE they become members. Over time they learn to love Scouting the same way so many of our legacy families deeply love the Scouting program, and eventually – when they are ready, they self-identify as Scouts and then we register them.

While we've yet to capture additional data metrics around disability and LGBTQ+ diversity in terms of membership and participation, we can affirm that our council has shown commitment and hosted deliberate activities rooted in disability inclusion, and that there has been more receptiveness to and evidence of more LGBTQ+ scouts/volunteers being out about their identity.

2020 Diversity Plan Highlights

- Building a calendar/goals re: Disability Confidence Strategy and implementation for Milton Base Camp (continue to evolve Disability D&I for SoA footprints)
- Building a Diversity Community Orgs/Partners Resources List (with contacts) for referrals, candidates, allyship and news sharing. Build an initial outline by early February 2020.
- Continue to work on a cross plan of a blended 'pitch package' for SoA, which includes Cfl strategic vision and inclusion commitment affirmation.
- Continue to build Diverse Day Camp models and strategies (a la the Lawrence model)
- Assure Inclusion and Diversity branding/messaging visuals are launched in early 2020; work on a next phase of branding/visuals into 2020 and beyond; cultivate communications integration of Cfl work and achievements into SoA's overall communications strategy.
- Matrix Graph Visual (or some other such tracking vehicle) to help the Cfl team (Alums and future Cfl Participants!) to prioritize, track and manage goals and activities (Ultimate Goal – Ready for 2020 team transition!).
- Develop more inclusive hiring practices and the marketing for positions
- Board Development – 4 new board members by year end who are people of color, LGBTQ+, women, and/or disability-diverse
 - Continue to develop Diverse Allies Network (such as Jennifer Pinck); these Allies potentially Board candidates, volunteer candidates, Cfl advisors, donors and/or sponsors
- Multicultural VRG Initiation and Kickoff during First Quarter 2020: The VRG strategy morphed from focusing on an Islamic/Muslim VRG to a Multicultural VRG, in terms of the connective successful inertia that can be harnessed in tapping into Islamic/Muslim, Latino/Latina and other potential Diverse Ethnicities, in supporting the foundational VRG structure for SoA. A women's and girl's VRG which organically started in 2018 will be formally brought into the new comprehensive VRG framework now officially framed.
- VRG support activities will be folded into the Council's District structure in 2020, to help cultivate VRG growth, by also using the Districts' existing structure and anticipated organic interest.

- Develop support and mechanisms for growth in terms of where and how the VRG's 'will exist'.
 - Disabilities
 - Women
 - LGBTQ+
 - Multicultural
 - Specific Ethnicities to possibly morph from Multicultural, if and when critical mass and interest so indicate
- The 'substance' for a next SoA D&I training is in good order, and probably about 85-90% finalized, but the Cfl team has been re-thinking the presentation delivery as a more cross-shared effort between Chuck, Darrin, Mariama and Sean (Cfl group), and possibly a few other SoA guest Staff presenters. A goal of delivering this Training by end of first quarter 2020 should still be aimed for and has Cfl team commitment.
- Establish the 2020 Cfl team participants, Cfl priorities, goals and objectives - as well as connective D&I goals rolled into overall SoA goals
- Launch the Cfl Alumni Model (infusion of Cfl work into SoA organizational fabric)

Cfl = Catalyst for Inclusion (our term for the staff that works directly with BBSquared)

SoA = Spirit of Adventure

D&I = Industry shorthand for Diversity and Inclusion, locally we try to purposefully put inclusion first.