

Empowering Your Board of Directors through Diversity

Presented by

Ellen Yin-Wycoff, *IowaCASA*

Tracy Wright, *NCCASA*

Michelle Dixon-Wall, *WCSAP*

Resource
Sharing
Project



About the Nonprofit Sustainability TA (NSTA) Project

- The Nonprofit Sustainability Technical Assistance (NSTA) Project is a program of the national Resource Sharing Project (RSP) of IowaCASA in partnership with the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV).
- The NSTA Project provides web conferences, coaching calls, and technical assistance to OVW nonprofit grantees. If you need technical assistance (TA) on nonprofit management issue, please contact Ellen Yin-Wycoff at ellen@iowacasa.org or phone 515-505-2729.

Resources and Website:

- Webinar recordings, podcasts, fact sheets, and resources can be found at: <http://resourcesharingproject.org/nonprofit-sustainability>



NSTA Resources

Recorded Webinars:

- Series on the New Uniform Guidance: <http://resourcesharingproject.org/new-uniform-guidance-webinar-series-2015>
- Empowering Your Board to Lead: Understanding the Roles and Responsibilities of Your Board of Directors: <http://resourcesharingproject.org/empowering-your-board-lead-understanding-roles-and-responsibilities-your-board-directors-series>
- OVW Financial Management Practices: <http://resourcesharingproject.org/ovw-financial-management-practices>

Tools:

- Fact Sheets on the New Uniform Guidance: <http://resourcesharingproject.org/new-uniform-guidance-fact-sheets>
- Resource Summary on Board Diversity Resources/Tools: <http://resourcesharingproject.org/board-diversity-resources-diversifying-your-board-directors>

Other Tools:

- Sample Financial Management Manual for Sexual Assault Programs and Coalitions: <http://resourcesharingproject.org/content/financial-management-manual>
- E-Learning Course for Boards of Directors of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions and Local Programs: <http://resourcesharingproject.org/e-learning-course-boards-directors>



Learning Goals

- Participants will be able to identify why building a diverse Board of Directors is connected to building a culturally sensitive/relevant program that truly represents the community it serves.
- Participants will be able to identify 1 - 3 strategies they can recruit, engage, and maintain a diverse Board of Directors.
- Participants will be able to begin developing an action plan for their agencies to strengthen the diversity of their Board of Directors.

Who's On Our Board?

1. Does our Board of Directors reflect our community? (i.e., race, ethnicity, age, survivors, etc.)
2. Does our staff reflect the demographics of our community? Do our services reach our entire community (i.e., marginalized communities, etc.)
3. What do we mean by cultural diversity?
 - How do we define “culture?”
 - How do we define “diversity?”
 - How do we define “inclusion?”

Definition

Culture:

“Learned, shared, and symbolically transmitted design for living.”

- *Kluckhohn and Kelly*

Definition

Diversity:

“the quality of being different or unique at the individual or group level. This includes age; ethnicity; gender; gender identity; language differences; nationality; parental status; physical, mental and developmental abilities; race; religion; sexual orientation; skin color; socio-economic status; work and behavioral styles; the perspectives of each individual shaped by their nation, experiences and culture—and more. Even when people appear the same on the outside, they are different!”

- *UnitedWay.org*

Definition

Inclusion:

“a strategy to leverage diversity. Diversity always exists in social systems. Inclusion, on the other hand, must be created. In order to leverage diversity, an environment must be created where people feel supported, listened to and able to do their personal best.”

- *UnitedWay.org*

10 Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards

1. Determine the agency's mission and purpose
2. Select the Executive Director
3. Support the ED and evaluate/assess her/his performance
4. Plan for the organization's development
5. Determine and monitor the organization's programs and services to ensure it supports agency's mission
6. Ensure adequate financial resources (including fundraising!).

10 Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards (continued)

7. Protect agency's assets and provide proper financial oversight.
8. Build a competent Board through recruitment and Board development training.
9. Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.
10. Enhance the agency's public standing to gain support (from donors, funders, etc.).

Discussion Questions

- Why do we need a “diverse” Board of Directors?
- How does a diverse Board of Directors benefit our agency?

“Homogeneity in traditional governing boards has helped establish and maintain a model for class, ethnic, racial and sex discrimination throughout society.”

Odehndal and Youmans, 1994

Board Composition

- The drive to diversify boards seeks to change this model and is motivated by a concern for accountability and accessibility.
- Membership composition makes a difference for organizational decision-making: that for organizations to be responsive to a diverse society, their boards need to be composed of a diverse membership.
- In order to build an inclusive and diverse organization, it starts with building a diverse and inclusive Board of Directors.

Benefits of a Diverse Board

- Promotes creativity and innovation in accomplishing the agency's mission.
- Increases understanding of the “entire” community needs and can broaden the agency's reach to survivors.
- Enhances the agency's communications and “reach” in the community.
- Can help attract donors and grantmakers (as funders are focused on diversity).

Factors in Building and Maintaining Board Diversity

- The nominating committee has definite goals for diversity and takes the challenge of recruiting people of color seriously
- Racial and cultural diversity is a constant organizational priority
- Boards look all year round for candidates
- Tokenism and the expectation that people of color can/will represent their entire community are avoided
- Board and staff engages in ongoing anti-racist/oppression and cultural diversity training

Discussion Questions

1. What are your agency's relationships with under-represented and marginalized communities? How can your Board (along with staff) help build, nurture, and maintain those relationships?
2. What are the current barriers that make it difficult for your Board to recruit culturally diverse members? How can these barriers be addressed?
3. What are 1 – 3 ways to help change the cultural and organizational climate of the Board to engage and maintain its diverse members, once they come on Board? How can tokenism be avoided?
4. What are 1 – 3 key steps that your Board can take to strengthen its cultural diversity?

Resources

- Diversity in Action: A Board Source Toolkit (Free toolkit but requires registration on Board Source's website):
https://www.boardsource.org/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?Action=Add&ObjectKeyFrom=1A83491A-9853-4C87-86A4-F7D95601C2E2&WebCode=ProdDetailAdd&DoNotSave=yes&ParentObject=CentralizedOrderEntry&ParentDataObject=Invoice%20Detail&ivd_formkey=69202792-63d7-4ba2-bf4e-a0da41270555&ivd_cst_key=f41a9810-c701-4c1d-a563-2d4a46b762a2&ivd_prc_prd_key=26FA74F1-4BF9-47BF-98F3-EAD6EDFE686F
- Beyond Political Correctness: Building a Diverse Board (Board Source Article):
http://www.bridgespan.org/Publications-and-Tools/Hiring-Nonprofit-Leaders/Recruiting-Board-Members/Building-a-Diverse-Board.aspx#.VdZbD8t_Yal
- The Inclusive Nonprofit Boardroom: Leveraging the Transformative Potential of Diversity (Nonprofit Quarterly Article):
<https://nonprofitquarterly.org/2012/12/29/the-inclusive-nonprofit-boardroomleveraging-the-transformative-potential-of-diversity/>
- Successful Strategies to Diversify Your Board: <http://www.drapergroup.com/wp-content/uploads/CONNECTIONS-article-Successful-Strategies-to-Diversify-Your-Board.pdf>

Resources

- Board Diversity Series from BlueAdvocado.org:
<http://www.blueavocado.org/content/fresh-look-diversity-and-boards>
<http://www.blueavocado.org/content/diversity-nonprofit-ecosystem-part-2-3-part-diversity-series> and <http://www.blueavocado.org/content/recruiting-board-diversity-part-3-diversity-series>
- ReShape Newsletter: Board Development and Diversification:
<http://resourcesharingproject.org/content/reshape-newsletter-board-development-and-diversification-november-2002>
- Becoming a More Diverse Nonprofit: Make Your Values Tangible:
http://www.bridgespan.org/Publications-and-Tools/Leadership-Effectiveness/Lead-and-Manage-Well/Becoming-a-More-Diverse-Nonprofit.aspx#.VdZkn8t_YaI
- Diversity on Nonprofit Boards (National Council of Nonprofits):
<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/diversity-nonprofit-boards>

Acknowledgements

This project is supported by Grant No. 2014-TA-AX-K036 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice.

The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this workshop are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

Resource
Sharing
Project



For More Info

Ellen Yin-Wycoff

Email: ellen@iowacasa.org

Phone: 515-505-2729

Tracy Wright

Email: tracy@nccasa.org

Phone: 919- 871-1015

Michelle Dixon-Wall

Email: michelle@wcsap.org

Phone: 360-754-7583, ext. 107

Resource
Sharing
Project

