

# Updates to the DI&A Strategic Plan

In response to concerns expressed by members of the Mines community to evaluate our campus climate, President Johnson and the Mines DI&A team issued statements reaffirming our commitments to DI&A in summer 2020. In addition to publishing those statements, listening sessions were held between Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) members of the Mines community and executive leadership to understand any additional challenges our BIPOC Orediggers experience that were not already on the radar. Three priorities emerged out of those discussions.



- 1. Representation Matters.** Research shows that BIPOC students are proportionally underrepresented in STEM, which inhibits the educational system to serve them as needed and doesn't foster their talents for success<sup>7</sup>. Having highly visible role models and mentors for both students and employees is essential for sustained engagement of BIPOC individuals and reduces attrition and turnover<sup>8</sup>. The DI&A Strategic Plan aims for the demographics of our community to be representative of the different pools from which we attract talent<sup>9</sup>. For example, as a public institution, we aim for our undergraduate population to match the population of college-bound students in Colorado. We have made great strides in broadening participation and must continue these efforts.
- 2. Acknowledgment and Rewards.** During listening sessions with BIPOC students and employees, many felt they are not acknowledged for their performance or rewarded for their efforts accordingly. Studies show that scientists and engineers of color have to work harder than their white peers to get the same recognition and appreciation<sup>10</sup>. Mines is working to understand and rectify patterns of behavior rooted in implicit bias that overlook the contributions of BIPOC members of the community. Intentionally recognizing and rewarding BIPOC Orediggers is vitally important for them to feel valued by the institution, to advance professionally and to reach their full potential.
- 3. Bystanders and Allies.** When a situation occurs that makes one of our Orediggers feel unwelcome, unsafe or unheard, it is critical that supervisors, colleagues and peers advocate for those affected. Observers' silence during these situations signals complicity. Active bystanders or allies are those who intervene and provide support when a transgression occurs, such as a microaggression. Microaggressions are commonplace actions or verbal exchanges, usually unintentional, that communicate hostility, disrespect and negative views towards an identity. A campus of allies who intervene when microaggressions occur is critical for building an inclusive Mines community where everyone feels welcome and supported.

<sup>7</sup> Palmer, R.T., Wood, J.L. (2013). *Community Colleges and STEM: Examining Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities*. ISBN: 9781136743160

<sup>8</sup> N. Aish, P. Asare and E. E. Miskioğlu, "People like me increasing likelihood of success for underrepresented minorities in STEM by providing realistic and relatable role models," 2017 IEEE Frontiers in Education Conference (FIE), Indianapolis, IN, USA, 2017, pp. 1-4, doi: 10.1109/FIE.2017.8190454.

<sup>9</sup> Strategic Plan page 9 - goals to match demographics from pools of talent.

<sup>10</sup> Teachers College Record Volume 121 Number 4, 2019, p. 1-38, tcrecord.org ID Number: 22610

## Efforts to Increase Representation

- Hiring Excellence (HEX) aims to reduce implicit bias during the hiring process.
- Admissions staff undergo learning and development to minimize bias in applicant review and integrate best practices into their recruitment processes.
- Mines Community Alliances (MCAs) attend Human Resources's new employee onboarding programming to elevate representation of Black and Latinx employees to new hires.
- Arthur Lakes Library and the Mines Museum of Earth Science created a new Black Lives Matter exhibit as a welcome banner that restates Mines' commitment to inclusion.
- The Multicultural Engineering Program hosted the Martin Luther King Jr. remembrance and celebration in honor of Dr. King's birthday. Four Mines community members were recognized for their commitment to fostering inclusion on campus.

## Efforts to Elevate Acknowledgment and Rewards

- WISEM in partnership with the Global Education office started development of a new program to increase opportunities for underrepresented and BIPOC women to study abroad. Study abroad opportunities increase retention and graduation rates<sup>11, 12</sup>, which is important because women from URGs at Mines have lower retention rates into years three and four and take longer to graduate compared to other women students.
- Infrastructure and Operations (I&O) created two programs that elevate opportunities for URGs. (1) The Leadership Program teaches lessons in personal change to develop habits for professional growth. (2) Once an employee completes the Leadership Program, they can enroll in the Custodial Apprenticeship Program, which allows participants to work two to four hours weekly in a new area on campus outside of custodial work. Apprenticeship provides URGs with the skills and experience to be considered for promotion in a different field.
- MCAs provide leadership and networking opportunities for employees to connect with executive sponsors. They also provide a recognized campus leadership role, both of which increase career growth.
- The Mines Mentoring Program provides all Orediggers the opportunity to network and find a mentor who will shepherd advancement in their academic and professional career paths.

## Efforts to Cultivate Bystanders and Allies

- Mines DI&A launched new skills-based Implicit Bias and Minimizing Microaggressions workshops.
- Mines DI&A established the Ambassadors Program, a team of Mines students and employees that provides learning and development opportunities for campus. Athletics was the first to pilot this experience.
- Mines created the Office of Institutional Equity & Title IX to handle reports of campus climate concerns and incidents of bias, discrimination, harassment, violence and retaliation.
- Mines established two learning communities: Implicit Bias/Minimizing Microaggressions and Inclusive Classrooms, because one workshop is not enough to drive long-term change.
- Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL) held chapter meetings with presidents and advisors to help FSL culture become more inclusive and safe, hired Esquilin Consulting Services to hold learning sessions and hosted an anti-racist lecture with Lawrence Ross.
- New Student Transition Services (NeST) implemented communications and activities with peer mentors, including listening sessions, CSM101 diversity-based lesson plans, workshops and book clubs.
- FA&O is launching their Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging learning cohorts starting 2021 to create an environment where members can safely engage in conversation.

<sup>11</sup> [nafsa.org/policy-and-advocacy/policy-resources/independent-research-measuring-impact-study-abroad](https://nafsa.org/policy-and-advocacy/policy-resources/independent-research-measuring-impact-study-abroad)

<sup>12</sup> [irpe-reports.colostate.edu/pdf/ResearchBriefs/EA\\_Graduation\\_Rates.pdf](https://irpe-reports.colostate.edu/pdf/ResearchBriefs/EA_Graduation_Rates.pdf)