

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group

May 2021 Report to the Board

Working Group Members:

- Ric Swierat, Board President
- Mark Wilson (C)
- Rajene Hardeman (D)
- Debra Klein (G)
- Priscilla Goldfarb (P)
- Stuart Auchincloss (U)
- MHLS Staff
 - Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director
 - Saran Camara, MHLS Financial Manager & Personnel Officer
 - Kerstin Cruger, MHLS Outreach & Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Specialist

1. The Working Group will proceed with developing brief orientation presentations for the May and September board meetings. These will be led by members of the Working Group.
 - a. May: Use of Pronouns
 - b. September: "Feeling overwhelmed about EDI issues? You're not alone."
2. The Working Group has developed an action plan from recommendations received from the results of the Fall 2021 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment completed by all MHLS board and staff. This action plan has been shared with the designated staff teams and board committee chairs.
 - a. As a result, so far:
 - i. Staff have updated the list of religious/spiritual/cultural days to ensure board/meetings/events are not scheduled on these days (attached). This is also being shared with the MHLS Directors Association's System Services Advisory Committee for their consideration.
 - ii. There is now an [accessibility statement](#) on midhudson.org
 - iii. Two EDI-related questions have been added to the MHLS Board Self-Evaluation Survey for 2022.
 - iv. The first section of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) facilities checklist has been completed. As a result, we will be adding a second ADA accessible parking spot and upgrading signage
 - v. The "*Achieving Diversity within the MHLS Board of Trustees*" document was distributed along with board election notice to Dutchess, Putnam and Ulster counties.
 - b. The Working Group will continue to report on progress made throughout the year.
3. MHLS staff reported on continuing education/professional development offerings for member libraries:
 - a. An Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Series of Webinars has been created and launched with two initial offerings: An introduction to the [Talking Book & Braille Library](#) and "From Diversity to Inclusion: How to Audit Your Collection and Why"
 - b. Coming up:
 - i. [Justice at Work](#) Cohort to be offered. This is a new program offered through the Public Library Association.

- ii. [Safe Zone Project](#) training to be offered
 - iii. EDI Mini-Conference Planning is underway. This will be a live, online event that will feature opening and closing keynote speakers as well as two panel discussions, one featuring the MHLS EDI Working Group, the other, a panel of member libraries.
4. The Working Group's next meeting will be an in-person retreat-style meeting held at the MHLS Auditorium to debrief about the status of our work and identify tactics for moving forward in the coming year.