

Racial Equity Working Group Report

Working Group Members: Ric Swierat, Mark Wilson (Columbia), Rajene Hardeman (Dutchess), Debra Klein (Greene), Priscilla Goldfarb (Putnam), Stuart Auchincloss (Ulster, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich (MHLS), and Casey Conlin (MHLS)

Report from meetings held on:

- September 1, 2020
- September 8, 2020
- October 8, 2020
- October 22, 2020
- November 2, 2020
- November 16, 2020
- December 3, 2020

1. The Committee coded its working purpose statement to start to identify its areas of focus and work:

Working Purpose Statement

OUR LIST OF WORKING STEPS

Actions - how we do our work

Themes – what issues are impacted

Target Elements – who is impacted

Desired Outcome – what is the desirable outcome of our work

To review Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) **policies, procedures and practices** in the areas of **governance, human resources and system service design** and **recommend new approaches**

In a way that **promotes equity, diversity and inclusion** as a core value of the institution

So that **MHLS is authentically improving its commitment to racial and social equity** and serving as a **model** for our member libraries.

2. The group is clear that they are still “in process” and do not have all the answers but have committed to working hard on this issue for our organization. The pace of activities will pick up in

2021 as the group feels its research phase is now evolving into the development and implementation phase.

3. A mind mapping exercise facilitated by Rajene resulted in a road map for to guide the working group's efforts. As a result, the group has formed four teams that will focus on:
 - a. Board Education (Team Members: Priscilla & Debra)
 - i. This team is working on embedding equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) talking points into our new member orientation for March and in two orientation sessions to be held as part of business meetings in 2021.
 - b. Policy Review (Team Members: Debra & Stuart)
 - i. This team is researching a rubric for conducting EDI audits of system policies that can be used by system committees that help draft policy such as the Finance, Personnel & Planning, and Bylaws, Policies and Procedures committees.
 - c. Communication Assessment (Rajene & Casey)
 - i. This team has invited a third person to join them, Kerstin Cruger, MHLS Library Sustainability Associate & Communications Specialist.
 - ii. This team is working on setting standards based on respectful communications for all MHLS communication channels (MHLS Bulletin, web site, social media and listservs. Their ultimate goal is to create a style guide for our organization.
 - d. Board Development/Recruitment (Mark & Ric)
 - i. This team will review our current trustee recruitment procedures to explore opportunities to educate member libraries who nominate members for our board on the topic of trustee recruitment with an eye towards EDI.
4. New for 2021: An orientation for MHLS committee chairs will be offered in January. This event will include a section on infusing our work with an EDI perspective. Other topics to be covered will include meeting planning, facilitation and reporting.
5. Open to Feedback: Working group members are very to hear where your thoughts are on this topic and feedback you may have on the work that lies ahead. All trustees are welcome to reach out to any working group member to provide feedback.