Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group

February 2024 Report to the Board

Working Group Members:

- Rajene Hardeman, Co-Chair (D)
- Mark Wilson, Co-Chair (C)
- Stuart Auchincloss (U)
- Heather Blakely (U)
- Barry Ramage (D), Board President, ex officio
- Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director

1. The group continued its discussion about the potential to evolve the EDI Working Group to a new “Core Values Advisory Group.” It is understood that the Bylaws, Policy & Procedures Committee will discuss what the difference between a working group and advisory group would be. In preparation for this proposal the group reviewed the current purpose statement of their working group, the organization’s Core Values as developed through the Plan of Service creation process and reviewed past work of their working group.
   a. The group is aiming to transition from a working group to the Core Values Advisory Group during this calendar year.
   b. The group defined why this advisory group is necessary noting the need to govern authentically, ensure we are responsive to our community, to serve as a model, and to inform ourselves about important things going on in the culture and then bring it back to the board.
   c. The group drafted a working purpose statement for a Core Values Working Group: The purpose statement of the Core Values Advisory Group is to support MHLS in authentically addressing our core values as they apply to the governance of the system.
   d. At the upcoming Committee Chairs meeting, President Ramage will inquire if folks would like any education on topics that intersect with the 2024 Priorities & Plan of Service Core Values. This may inform the working group’s presentations to the board at the May and September board meeting.

2. ACTION: The group is recommending that the fund created to help fund the Book Haven Collection be named in honor of Debra Klein. Mark Wilson will draft a description of the fund in this context for the board’s consideration.