



Educate. Embrace. Empower.

Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Committee Newsletter

Fourth Issue | April 2021

Our Mission: Educate, Embrace and Empower a workplace of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion



Introduction to this Issue

from Theresa Thomas, DEI Committee Chair

I choose to smile!

We often encounter situations that limit our ability to smile. We are heartbroken by the tragedies that surround us, and we can feel powerless to change predicted (sometimes unpredicted) outcomes. I've stopped to ask the important questions of why and when. Why does hate exist and when will we overcome it? I have not received the definitive answer that I long for, but I've decided to smile anyway.

I choose to smile because there is more love in the world than hate. I just need to magnify the love more. I choose to smile because I can influence positive change within my immediate circle. I smile because there are thousands upon thousands of people like me who want the world to be a place of peace, love and welcoming for all regardless of race, religion or sexual orientation. I smile because I am not alone, but surrounded by residents and co-workers who do their part every day to embrace diversity, to offer comfort during difficult moments and days, and to share hope that our world will be better simply because we are here and we won't stop contributing to make it a better place for all.

Within our Goodwin House community, we are intentionally making efforts to enlarge our resident and leadership diversity footprint. We've increased the diversity of our leadership team from 24% to 29% since July 2020. As you will read in the Human Resources section,

we have expanded our recruitment methods to gain a more diverse application base.

We are intentionally providing opportunities to have open and honest conversations about difficult topics through the We Care Hotline, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the DEI Committee. We want to support and uplift anyone who is having a difficult time navigating through the intense racial divide and ongoing attacks against various people of color, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Please email us at dei@goodwinhouse.org for additional information or to share a topic you would like us to bring to the forefront.

Behind my mask, which is essential to keeping us safe, I smile broadly, because during my most stressful moments, my minutes of fear, my tears of uncertainty, I know I have you! I am grateful for a community where I can be my authentic self. At the core of who I am, I believe that Goodwin House has and will continue to provide a platform of diversity equality and inclusion. We are not fully there, but we are more aware than ever that change is needed. Join us in the Diversity Journey, it's always better when we do it together.

Smiling because of you,

Theresa

Questions & Feedback? Email us any time at DEI@goodwinhouse.org

Fostering Connection & Engagement

Contributors: Frank Wade, Elizabeth Whitehouse and Holly Hanisian

In our January newsletter, we shared our four current areas of focus: Leadership, Human Resources, Employee Engagement and Marketing & Communications and Sales. Colleagues from these areas were welcoming, and our work together has been educational. We would like to share these updates with you:

GHI leadership has been engaged in the following activities:

- **Strategy Team (ST) Will Attend LeadingAge Virginia Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Webinar Series.** This three-part virtual event will explore the reasons why diversity, equity and inclusion are important; uncover personal baggage that we bring from our culture and environment; and review case studies denoting bias and discrimination. Following each session, the Strategy Team will meet to discuss key takeaways and explore how we can apply them to Goodwin House.
- **The GHI Board Community Accountability Committee Invites DEI to their May 12 Meeting.** The Goodwin House Board of Trustees is engaged in learning about health disparities of underserved older adults. The board's Community Accountability Committee has invited the DEI Committee to their May 12 meeting, which will host Natalie Talis, Population Health Manager for the City of Alexandria. Ms. Talis will provide information about health disparities among older adults within the City of Alexandria. The Committee seeks to better understand the needs of underserved populations and how GHI might help support those needs.
- **Expanded Diversity Focus within GHI Strategic Plan.** The GHI Board of Trustees voted to amend the Strategic Plan Diversity pillar to include a focus on welcoming diverse racial, ethnic and LGBTQ+ backgrounds into the Goodwin House family. Economic diversity as an original strategic initiative was not explicitly focused on these other dimensions of diversity. Leadership has been working with Human Resources and Sales to benchmark current metrics, goals and progress toward greater diversity.

Upcoming Topics & Events

Friday Thoughts for May & Beyond

- Celebrating Mothers
- Honoring Memorial Day
- Staff Share About Their Country and Culture

Update from Marketing & Sales

Spreading the Goodwin House Welcome to More Diverse Older Adults!

Contributors: Carol Lewis, Theresa Thomas and Lindsay Hutter

To support the goal of increasing diversity among our resident populations, the Marketing & Communications Department and the Sales Department have been working with the DEI Committee and other departments within Goodwin House to expand our outreach. Here are a few highlights of their efforts over the last two months:

- Developed a set of strategies and measurable goals to expand resident diversity
- Conducted outreach to several historically Black churches
- Reached out to the Northern Virginia chapter of the Sigma Delta Theta sorority (a sisterhood of predominantly Black, college educated women) in collaboration with GHBC resident Dr. Nancy Randolph, who is a member
- Presented to the Association of Black American Ambassadors in collaboration with GHBC resident George Moose, who is a member of the Association
- Expanded our marketing outreach to include parts of the District of Columbia that have larger populations of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC)
- Secured media coverage of the Black History Month activities at GHBC and GHA in February

Over the next months, we are engaged in the following activities:

- Pursuing media coverage of a new Palliative Care and Hospice Guide for Black communities; Goodwin House Palliative Care and Hospice Chaplain Arion Lillard-Green co-authored the guide
- Pursuing media coverage and possible advertisements in various publications around Pride Month (which celebrates the LBGT+ community) in June
- Working with the residents on the DEI Committee to set up focus groups with residents to learn how Goodwin House can be more welcoming and inclusive
- Expanding the invitation list for an upcoming webinar on post-pandemic re-entry to include churches and other organizations that serve diverse populations of older adults. This webinar will likely take place in late May. DEI Committee member Beth Robinson (Director of Member Services for Goodwin House at Home) will moderate and Goodwin House Palliative Care and Hospice Chaplain Arion Lillard-Green and Goodwin House Palliative Care and Hospice Medical Director Dr. Margaret Gloria will be panelists.

Update on Staff Engagement

Let's Develop Understanding of Different Cultures by Learning About One Another

Contributors: Nathalia Salvatierra, Theresa Thomas and Reggie Edwards

There are 195 countries in the world, and our Goodwin House employees represent more than 60 of them! Each of these countries holds a unique set of customs, traditions, beliefs, etc. that are perhaps very different from your own. By learning about different cultures, you can come to better understand what makes people different, too. When you can identify with other people, you can empathize with their situation.

The DEI Committee would like to highlight a different country every month from the perspective of our employees and residents. If you're interested in sharing about where you're from, please email us at dei@goodwinhouse.org.

Below, please find examples of what you might share and ideas to inspire you.

Norms: are generally accepted standards of social behaviors. They can be informal or formal, and many are informal, unwritten rules. For example, in Japan it is unthinkable to wear shoes in the home. Are there any norms that are part of your culture?

Language: is an element of culture that people first learn from their parents, grandparents, siblings and peers. In Bolivia, Spanish is not the only language spoken. The indigenous people speak 36 different languages! Students are required to learn Aymara and Quechua, the two main indigenous languages. What languages are spoken in the country that you're from?

Festivals: often celebrate certain aspects of community culture, beliefs or history. Have you heard of the Mombasa Carnival? It is Kenya's largest annual festival: a carnival of floats, costumes, music and dance. Being invaded by different countries has made their culture unique. That is why the carnival displays artists and musicians who represent

the different cultures of Kenya. What is a festival that you celebrate each year?

Pastimes: are what people do for enjoyment such as sports, hobbies and recreation. Did you know that cricket is the most popular sport in India? In fact, cricket is played at every nook and corner of cities and villages with immense passion and zeal. What sport is popular in your country? What games were passed on to you by your parents?

Food: What we eat plays an enormous role in our lives. The same can be said for its role in cultures and traditions. The cultivation, selection, preparation and appreciation of food passes from one generation to the next. This includes fine dining and everyday meals as well as foods associated with holidays, pastimes and recreation. A traditional Korean dish eaten during the celebration of the Korean New Year is Tteokguk, or sliced rice cake soup. Are there any dishes you grew up with that are not common in other countries or cultures? Are there special foods you look forward to eating?

What aspects of your country or culture would you like to share with others? We're eager to hear from you, to learn more about our colleagues and to share your stories! dei@goodwinhouse.org

Update from Human Resources

Increasing Staff Diversity

Contributors: Beth Robinson, Todd Endo and Fran Casey

Community is one of our core organizational values at Goodwin House. We seek to create and sustain strong and caring communities where those who live, work and visit will find places of welcome and belonging. While we've always prided ourselves on fulfilling this value, we know there is room for improvement.

We have expanded our recruitment efforts in an attempt to attract a more diverse group of candidates. We are also reviewing our onboarding and engagement practices to ensure that we provide a welcoming and inclusive environment to all staff. To meet our objectives, we have implemented the following:

- Rob Liebreich and Fran Casey have annual goals that include these objectives:
To establish a clear pathway for those within the organization from diverse backgrounds to gain skills and opportunities that may lead to career advancement.
To increase diversity among the Senior Leadership Team above the current percentage, which is 29% (up from 25% since July 2020).
- A revision of our entire performance management system is underway. We are making enhancements that will allow greater opportunity for staff members to share their long-term goals and for managers to provide opportunities for continued growth and development.
- To expand the diversity of applicants for the CFO (Chief Financial Officer) position, we used LinkedIn to reach candidates we might not have reached otherwise.
- We are working on a plan to establish relationships with universities that represent a more diverse student population.
- To ensure that we are providing the skills necessary for our high performing staff to advance within Goodwin House, our Executive Directors are meeting one-on-one with department leaders to create a talent matrix. The talent matrix helps department leaders to assess staff based on past performance and future potential and to create individualized development plans.
- Staff will have the option to include their pronoun as part of their signature. In early May, we will share the details as well as the process for adding preferred pronouns to the GHI standard signature block.

**The DEI Committee and Human Resources welcome your questions and feedback.
Email us at dei@goodwinhouse.org or hr@goodwinhouse.org**