



Educate. Embrace. Empower.

Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Committee Newsletter

Second Issue | November 2020

Our Mission

Educate, Embrace and Empower a workplace of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion

Our Vision

The Diversity Committee will seek open and honest communication and collaboration that will inform and celebrate the cultural, ethnic and sexual orientation of all members of our staff without bias.

Welcome to Our Latest Issue

Thank you for the ongoing support you continue to share with us. The Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Committee members have been encouraged by the level of engagement we have experienced in our first few months. We appreciate all of you for your support.

When we published our first newsletter in August, we intended to print a newsletter every other month. Our “Friday Thoughts” emails that we share every other week have resulted in such high levels of engagement that we have changed our plans. Starting in 2021, we will publish our newsletter quarterly.

As we continue on our collective journey, we welcome your ideas and feedback. Please share your questions and stories with us.
Email dei@goodwinhouse.org



Introduction to this Issue

from Theresa Thomas, DEI Committee Chair

Welcome to the second edition of the Diversity Equality and Inclusion Committee Newsletter. So much has occurred since the inception of this committee in July. We held our first meeting July 15th during some of the most challenging events for our country.

We watched in disbelief as a police officer held his knee on the neck of George Floyd for over eight minutes, resulting in the death of George Floyd. We share the pain of those who have experienced the death of a loved one due to COVID 19. We cried as people joined in protest against systemic racism with the realization that an age old problem was once again in the forefront but with a much more united focus and call for change.

As a committee, we are charged with guiding our organization's approach to diversity. We do this through hearing from our staff and residents, making suggestions to our Senior Leadership and always looking for ways to be inclusive of all the wonderful cultures that make Goodwin House a great place to live and work. Within our committee, we represent different ethnic groups, vary in age, gender and sexual orientation. We are diverse in our thinking and approach to meet the needs of this place that we love.

The DEI Committee agrees that Goodwin House is an organization willing to intentionally look inward with the hope of embracing any racial, social, economic and sexual differences with open arms and a heart of understanding. To that end, we are making strides, some small and a little slower than expected, but with a commitment to doing our part to Educate, Embrace and Empower a workplace of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion.

We are glad to be on this journey with you!

Get to Know Our Committee Members

As we continue our work, we expect to welcome new members to our committee. In our first issue, we introduced most of our committee members. We would like to introduce one more member of our team.



Alfred Gayflor

My name is Alfred Gayflor. I'm originally from Sierra Leone in West Africa. I have lived in the United States for over four years. I'm currently in Northern Virginia Community College studying Information and Technology. I'm glad to be part of this great committee that stands for change. My opinion about diversity is we are all told that as humans, we are a singular species. But, in the real world, we are divided by so many factors. We are trained to be conceited enough to consider our very race, culture, faith, gender or subculture as the ultimate gospel on morality and life. Equality implies that everyone enjoys the same rights. Everyone is bound by the same laws, has access to the same health care and education, and equal opportunity to employment. Given the diversity in race, social status and economic status in our society, true equality can be difficult to achieve. I believe if we all work together it can be easy to achieve.

Did You Take Our Survey? There's Still Time!



We included a link to a short survey in our first newsletter. We wrote questions that are designed to give the committee a sense of where you think we should focus some of our attention. We would like to increase participation in the survey, so we will be sending an email to all staff encouraging you to take the survey.

Sharing your feedback with us is key to our being able to directly address the issues before us. We look forward to gaining insights from the survey. We will share survey results in our January issue.

Friday Thoughts Foster Connection & Engagement

“R.E.S.P.E.C.T - I just want to add my congratulations to you for this “respectfully written publication.” You have hit the nail(s) on the head. Thank you for words we all need to hear, and to put them into our daily lives.”

“I would like to thank Nathalia for a really wonderful article. While we celebrate diversity at Goodwin House, we seem to seldom get to know or understand diversity on a personal level. It is okay to treat everyone as ‘one of us’, but Nathalia’s writing reminds us that there are diverse individual stories to learn. I will do my best to get to know more of our diverse Goodwin House population.”

The two quotes above are just a sample of the feedback we have received since we began sharing our biweekly emails written by staff and residents. We are extremely happy with the response we have received to the “Friday Thoughts” emails we have been sharing with everyone. These personally written articles allow us to learn and appreciate our differences. They aim to express some of the many reasons why we celebrate diversity. They also often provide simple steps that we each can take to embrace diversity by embracing one another.

Thanks to your feedback, we know there are topics and thoughts that maybe you want to share. If you have “Friday Thoughts” that you want to share through the DEI Committee, please reach out to us and let us know. With all articles, we review the content, check the facts and provide copyediting and formatting edits. We have gained further understanding of our differences through engaging in our collaborative editorial process, which is another benefit to the committee’s work.

In addition to sharing “Friday Thoughts” articles via email with Goodwin House residents and staff, we ask authors for permission to share it on our blog and social media platforms that we use (Facebook & LinkedIn). We are inclusive, though limited in the number of articles we produce each month. We ask that you be patient if you submit an idea you would like us to pursue. Every voice matters!

What’s Your Story?

Getting to know each other is part of how we honor and celebrate diversity, equality and inclusion. We enjoy getting to know you better. Please feel free to share your personal background and stories with us. As we learn about everyone, we begin to see how diverse we truly are, not just as an organizational family, but as individuals. Diversity, equality and inclusion comes in many forms. Each of these ideas can express itself in many ways.

How do you express yourself?

Updates On Our Progress

Since August, the committee has worked with colleagues throughout the organization to advance the following efforts that are part of our goals:

Marketing for a Diverse Resident Population

- ⇒ Our Life Plan Community Sales team has been busy working on ways to improve awareness of our community to a broader, more diverse population. The team has forged a partnership with Alfred Street Baptist Church, a historically Black church located in Alexandria. Sharing of masks, surgical gloves, voting guide information and job openings are ways of building relationships that may encourage their members to recommend others who will be interested in living at Goodwin House.
- ⇒ Goodwin House at Home, Home Health, Hospice and the Life Plan Community Sales teams sponsored the Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA) Fall Fundraiser. SSA serves many diverse older adults Alexandria, and this is an opportunity to support and share the beauty of the larger Alexandria community.

Advancement Opportunities within Goodwin House:

Thanks to feedback from staff throughout the organization, the DEI Committee became aware of concerns about career advancement within our own organization. Many staff let us know that they would often learn about job openings at Goodwin House after the hiring process had been completed. This resulted in staff not being able to apply for these jobs.

Working with Human Resources, we found new ways to ensure that all staff have the chance to learn about job openings. Open jobs continue to be posted to our website. In addition to these online listings, we now support staff growth more intentionally by posting current job openings every week. You will find them near the time clocks where you check in and out of work. Listings are updated weekly and emailed, too.

We should note that not all positions will be posted. In some cases, staff members have their job descriptions or titles changed to better reflect their role. In these instances, the person performing the function may receive a new title and new job description, but no additional staff are hired to take over their previous role.

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