Advancing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. What does that mean for us?

Ana Lu Fonseca, Assistant Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. University Outreach and Engagement. Oregon State University.

Why now?

Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) leaders and stakeholders clearly recognize how the rapidly changing racial/ethnic demographics across the United State is cause for a radical shift in how organizations view, embrace and transform, with respect to its relationship to historically underrepresented groups.

Specifically, in order for fish and wildlife agencies to solidify their efforts to “advancing conservation through information exchange and working partnerships” and to support sound resource management and build partnership at ALL LEVELS to support wildlife for the use and benefit of ALL CITIZENS, now and in the future, a common understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion is a central piece.

An important perspective

Inclusion is not a matter of political correctness. It is the key to growth. Jesse Jackson

OSU’s Division of Outreach and Engagement enhances access to enrichment and problem solving through reciprocal relationships for the exchange of knowledge and resources in partnership with individuals, communities, business, industries, government, and educational institutions. We believe that the work of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) go beyond race and ethnicity; Diversity and inclusion encompass education level, gender identity and expression, physical ability, income etc. However, we believe that racial inequities are pervasive, preventable, and unjust and that all approaches to DEI should be explicit, while not exclusive, on racial inequities. To help us approach our work from a broader view, we have been working using the Courageous Conversation About Race (CCAR) approach (Singleton, 2015). This work,
internationally-embraced approach for addressing structural racial inequities in a direct, compassionate and sustainable manner.

Objectives
In this 3-hour training, participants will:

- Define our own social identity and how that interplays with our world view and how we lead
- Engage with foundational frameworks including mindfulness, wellness, and brain science
- Engage with language and definitions frequently used in racial equity efforts
- Recognize that our community is comprised of diverse and intersecting social identities
- Build critical awareness of our shared histories (the creation of whiteness, race and racism)
- Understand opportunities for future engagement and commit to taking action together

O&E experience and practice with this protocol has rendered four compelling lessons about racial equity, and systemic transformation useful to the partnership: 1) Diversity can lead to innovation, but we need to be ready to embrace it first 2) We need to be able to talk about race, in a free and open environment 3) Intentionality Matters, but is not enough 4) Partnerships Matter.

Participants will learn to build trust, set basic agreements and a common language to engage in effective conversations about how to move forward through difficult conversations and situations.

Participants: Commissioners, Directors, Senior Leadership

Date: Monday, July 16th (3 hours), 1-4pm

Facilitator: Ana Lu Fonseca provides organizational leadership for enhancing a collaborative, just, and inclusive community in the Division of University Outreach and Engagement. She has always had a passion for social change and the value that authenticity brings to organizations and the world. Before being an Assistant Director, she was working as an Extension faculty in various community engagement programs such as creating Culturally Relevant STEM and Healthy Living curriculum. She has a BS in Social Psychology and MS in Natural Resource Education and Extension and is currently working on her PhD in Education. Before working at OSU she worked for the Federal Mexican Government implementing innovative rural development programs for indigenous communities. Areas of interest include: social justice, intersection between innovation and diversity, culturally relevant programming, healthy living and community empowerment.

If you are interested in participating in this workshop, please bring that to the attention of your agency director, since they will be developing and submitting the complete listing of attendees from their respective jurisdiction. Since interest is expected to be keen, we encourage that be done sooner rather than later, because participation is capped at 50.