

Diversity Awareness Work Group

Highlights 2003 — 2008



“EACH ONE, TEACH ONE”

Mission Statement

To recommend strategies that will increase participation of black employees at the supervisory, managerial and exempt levels of Pinellas County Government.

Diversity is a conscious effort, not a marketing mantra without any accountability. Many government entities wave diversity banners. The primary issue is whether African-American public employees are included in the lineup when leadership teams and succession plans are being developed.



In 2002, when Pinellas County’s newly hired administrator came aboard, he was surprised by the lack of a diverse workforce represented at the exempt level. An assistant county administrator was assigned to work with staff to identify, organize and make recommendations to assist his administration with diversifying Pinellas County’s workforce. Since its inception in 2003, the Work Group has raised the awareness of the lack of diversity at the exempt and management levels and has created a think tank designed to assist leadership with addressing this issue.

The Work Group is comprised of managerial level minorities (African-Americans) representing various appointing authorities and departments throughout the Unified Personnel System. These professionals have provided insight to county leadership and encouraged employees to maximize their career opportunities with Pinellas County. To date, the Work Group has assisted in identifying African-Americans with the ability, potential and ambition to be successful in higher employment capacities than their current level. These initiatives have allowed members of the Work Group to cultivate and foster mentoring relationships.

As a result, this process has raised the awareness of the need to increase diversity at the exempt and management levels. To that end, positive diversity collaboratives with the County Administrator’s Office, Human Resources, Human Rights and other BOCC departments are developing recommendations that should result in greater minority representation at various levels of employment. Despite current budget constraints, it is conceivable that with top management support and increased communication of the existence and purpose of the Diversity Awareness Work Group, there will be a greater urgency to increase minority representation at supervisory and management levels.

<i>Diversity Awareness Work Group *</i>	
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Deborah Berry	Vernon Bryant
Floyd Crawford	James Dates
Monica Davis-Griffin	Deborah Godfrey
Darryl Hall	Rita Hargrove
Darlina Herring	Chester Johnson
Cynthia Johnson, Ph.D.	Anthony Jones
Charles Minnis	Mercedes Pearson
Leon Russell	Dennis Simpson
Clifford Still	Elitha Stanfield, Chair
Michelle Wallace	<i>*as of 2008</i>

Highlights

The Diversity Awareness Work Group has been committed to strategically positioning its efforts to positively impact the following focus areas of Pinellas government.



Effective Government

- The Unified Personnel System (UPS) contracted with a consultant to develop and provide a comprehensive curriculum to heighten the awareness of diversity inclusion. Currently the UPS offers the training on a quarterly basis to all employees.
 - Diversity is included as a leadership dimension in the Succession Management program for the Unified Personnel System.
 - Increased African-American employees in exempt positions under the BCC from 12 in 2004 to 18 in 2008.
 - Increased minority representation on various task teams.
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Improve Key Processes

- The County Administrator required all directors, managers, and supervisors to attend diversity training as part of their basic supervisory skills development.
 - Evidence of a diverse workforce can be identified in internal and external communications via, newsletters, web presence and marketing publications.
 - Enhanced employee development through the Work Group's mentoring
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Develop Workforce of the Future

- The Work Group utilized a listing of current employees to identify emerging leaders targeting them for mentoring.
 - Developed a list of 40 potential candidates perceived as emerging leaders.
 - Conducted two informative round table discussions with 10 participants currently being mentored.
 - Members of the Work Group took a leadership role in planning, presenting and organizing the First Annual Leadership Summit in partnership with the National Forum for Black Public Administrators. The participants included Tampa Bay area public administrators, political leaders and college students.
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Maximize Best Practices & Technology

- Encouraged vendors' increased visibility and utilization of diversity in marketing and recruitment of staff for Pinellas County.
 - Members of the Work Group conducted community presentations on the diversity initiatives of Pinellas County.
 - Efforts to expand diversity in the workforce have been reflected in service to citizens.
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According to the Microsoft Corporation, diversity enriches our performance and products, the communities in which we live and work, and the lives of our employees.

While some see diversity as an obligation it has become increasingly apparent that appropriate management of a diverse workforce is critical for organizations that seek to improve and maintain their competitive advantage.

Although Pinellas County has met goals for the hiring of African-American and other minorities in the entry level positions, there is a definite need to identify and promote blacks into the managerial level of the organization. If the County wishes to achieve its vision of "...working to be the standard for public service in America ..." it must have a workforce that represents the face of the community it serves at all strata of the organization.



Short Term & Long Term Goals

Short Term

- Document success of work group.
- Encourage inclusion of diversity in hiring search for county administrator.
- Document county's accomplishments and milestones.
- Mentor former and future participants of the round table discussions.
- Mentor and support employees that are displaced as a result of budget reductions.
- Provide support and encouragement for those remaining employed.

Long Term

- Identify and encourage employees to prepare for future growth and management opportunities.
- Assist county administration with identifying and implementing an accountability measure for diversity inclusion.
- Seek and promote visible evidence of African-Americans and other identified minority populations represented in supervisory and management levels in all departments of Pinellas County Government.
- Participate in the National Forum for Black Public Administrator's (NFBPA) effort to identify emerging public administrators.
- Employ lessons learned in aiding other under-represented minority groups
- Monitor pending managerial retirements as avenues to increase diversity at all supervisory levels.