



## Update from the SCCMHA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Team:

Since our previous update, the DEI Action Team at SCCMHA has been hard at work looking for further ways to impact the agency and move our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan forward.

Efforts such as new training, outreach and collaboration are part of our efforts and are discussed in this update.

Moving forward, the Action Team will issue quarterly emails to update staff on the goings-on of the DEI initiatives and how you can help us shape the future of our agency in regards to improving on our workforce diversity and creating a larger sense of belonging and inclusion at SCCMHA.

Just to remind you, our DEI Action Team consists of the following staff members:



- Ernie Ahmad, Supported Employment Specialist (Supported Employment)
- Andrew Ferguson, Public Relations Specialist (Hancock)
- Melissa Gutzwiller, Director of Environmental Services; Customer Service and Security (Hancock)
- Jennifer Keilitz, Director of Network Services, Public Policy and Continuing Education (Hancock)
- Sandra Lindsey, Chief Executive Officer (Hancock)
- Ryan Mulder, Manager of the Office of the CEO (Hancock)
- Kentera Patterson, Officer of Recipient Rights and Compliance (Hancock)
- Fred Stahl, Director of Human Resources, Facility and Transportation (A&W)
- Monique Taylor-Whitson, Mental Health Supervisor, Central Access and Intake (Hancock)
- Kristie Wolbert, Executive Director of Clinical Services and Programs (Hancock)

## **DEI 101 Training Module**

Effective Oct. 1, SCCMHA will launch DEI 101, a new training module for staff to learn more about diversity, equity and inclusion. The training will outline different facets of what DEI is, actions that can be taken with the people we serve and effective ways to practice DEI in our everyday lives.

The training – developed with help from Dr. Paul Elam and MPHI – is an hour-long online training session that will be provided to all new hires of SCCMHA going forward.

All current staff who have received previous DEI training through SCCMHA will not be required to take it, however they may if they choose.

In addition, this training will also be offered to our network providers who would like to engage in learning about DEI practices and how they can apply these lessons to their interactions with the persons served by SCCMHA.

## **Facilitation Training for Supervisors**

Supervisors at SCCMHA are required to take DEI Facilitation Training as a way to engage with their staff concerning DEI, spark conversations and broach topics to generate more equity and inclusion with the agency and those we serve.

For SCCMHA supervisors who have not yet taken this training, we are planning on providing the training at a future date, yet to be decided.

The training will be conducted by Dr. Paul Elam with MPHI.

## **DEI Interview Questions**

In an effort to instill our agency's mission with prospective candidates, administrators and supervisors who conduct employment interviews will now be asking questions relating to DEI.

These questions will provide more information from those interested in positions with SCCMHA in what they understand about DEI and how they apply these practices in their daily professional lives.

## **DEI Survey Results**

In June, we asked SCCMHA staff to complete a survey asking for feedback regarding how they celebrate their culture, through things like music, food, dance, clothing or however they feel best represents their background.

We received a great response rate regarding the survey, with 76 staff members answering the questions, many of which lending insight as to how they celebrate their background and why it's important to them.

The DEI Action Team will be taking the responses gathered and working on ways we can help to provide opportunities for our diverse team to share that heritage and background with everyone.

We thank those that participated in the survey and ask you to stay tuned for further information about this.

## **Still Actively Recruiting DEI Leader**

SCCMHA is still seeking a Diversity and Workforce Development Officer to oversee the implementation of the DEI Action Plan. This position will work to support and guide DEI principles

and endeavors at SCCMHA, assist to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, and improve overall workforce culture.

Our candidate requires human resource workforce recruitment experience, ideally in healthcare, colleges/universities and non-traditional recruitment audiences like college fraternities and sororities. The ideal candidate must have DEI knowledge as specified in the job description. Paul Elam, PhD, who has been leading our current DEI initiatives, will be training and coaching the individual once hired.

If you know someone who you believe is qualified, we encourage you to refer this external candidate to our website. If your referral is successful, SCCMHA's referral bonus program will pay you a cash bonus of \$2500 for this particular classification. Please see Policy 412 for all the details and remember that for each qualified candidate referred, the referring employee must complete a separate Employee Referral form in its entirety **prior to** the HR department receiving any contact, resume or application from the qualified candidate.

To learn more about this position, click [here](#).

## SCCMHA Annual Report

SCCMHA has released our 2023-24 Annual Report, highlighting our enrollment numbers, financial information, accomplishments and achievements.

It also features an article spotlighting the DEI Action Team and the efforts made and how we will move forward into the next year.

Click [here](#) to see the annual report and learn more about SCCMHA and what we have achieved over the last year.

## DEI Mailbox Now Available

Our DEI Action Plan best succeeds when we all work together. To invite other contributions, suggestions, thoughts and ideas, we have created an email address for staff to reach out and connect with the Action Team to help further our goals within SCCMHA.

For any ideas you may have or general questions about the DEI Action Plan, please contact [DEI.Feedback@sccmha.org](mailto:DEI.Feedback@sccmha.org).