**Diversity Workgroup Meeting**

**July 20, 2022**

**12:00pm-2:30 pm**

Discussion

Chat

Presentation

**Action/Decision**

**Stress Management Webinar Notes**

* Think of something you’re grateful for
* Objectives
  + Recognize signs of stress in yourself
  + Learn how beliefs affect stress level
  + Identify resources to manage stress
* What is stress?
  + The APA 2019 “Stress in America” poll results show that a majority of adults experience significant stress around:
    - Current political climate
    - Healthcare
    - Mass shootings
  + Nearly 3 in 5 adults say they could have used more emotional support in the last year
  + Stress is our bodies physical and emotional response to any demand or pressure
* Physical signs of stress
  + Faster heartbeat
  + Change in appetite
  + Rapid breathing
  + Any chronic medical condition could be exacerbated
* Emotional signs of stress
  + Feelings of sadness
  + Overall irritability
  + Negative
  + Not feeling satisfied
* Behavioral signs of stress
  + Difficulty concentrating
  + Isolating
  + Accident prone
  + Abruptness
  + Fidgeting
  + Change in work habits
  + Increased absenteeism
* Long term effects of stress
  + Chronic conditions can be exacerbated
  + More prone to engage in short term energy releasing behaviors
    - Increased alcohol usage, sex, shopping, avoidance
* When stress strikes
  + Learning about our self-stress and developing a plan for our reaction when it happens
* ABC Technique
  + Actual Event (source of stress)
  + Beliefs (what the situation means to you)
  + Consequences (how the situation affects you emotionally, behaviorally, and physically)
  + Disputing (and changing absolute thinking and beliefs)
  + Effective (outlook)
* Resilience
  + APA defines resiliency as the ability to adapt positively in the face of adversity, trauma, or tragedy
* Focusing and calming
  + Use thought stopping
  + Manage use of time
  + Effectively delegate
  + Breathe
  + Practice progressive muscle relaxation
  + Use positive imagery
* Balanced living practices
  + Eat a healthy balanced diet
  + Add exercise and stretching to your daily routine
  + Get a good night of sleep
  + Add humor
  + Build and maintain support
* Summary
  + Recognize signs of stress in yourself
  + Identify typical sources of stress and how beliefs contribute to stress
  + Develop new skills and balanced living practices to build resilience and manage stress

**Welcome, and transition to DWG meeting**

* Diversity Workgroup Announcements (see [PowerPoint](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/diversity_workgroup_july_2022_bi_monthly_meeting) uploaded to meeting materials)

**Webinar Discussion**

* Stress Management Materials(see [PDF](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/diversity_workgroup_july_2022_bi_monthly_meeting) uploaded to meeting materials)
* **Mackenzie**: This was a nice reminder to take breaks which is especially helpful when working from home. We should include more webinars so people can be reminded of this
* **Wendy**: This was a good refresher and a little eye opening when she showed indications of stress and so many on the list I could say, “I’m regularly experiencing or have experienced this.” Focus on health and self-care are important so I really appreciated it. My takeaway is I need to have a better balance – a lot happening in our world has me doomscrolling. I felt good yesterday when I took time to vote and had some time outside to find moments that are healing
* **Briana**: We’re focusing this meeting on mental health and stress because with everything that’s going on in this world, a lot of us are at capacity, so we want to do a check-in with everyone, so we all feel supported and are in a good place
* **Vanessa**: I choose an activity that doesn’t require thinking in the same way I think at work, like climbing. I multitask at work so my attention is always across many tasks and can lead to burnout so its important outside of work that I have time for my brain to rest
* **Rico**: I deescalate stress by in the morning I walk along a creek in the woods because you don’t have the opportunity to think about stresses and it’s a moment to hold everything down and be with nature and its helpful
* **Cindy**: I appreciated the reminder to practice gratefulness and to check in internally and with others during times of stress
* **Ola-Imani**: I enjoyed the webinar as Mackenzie said, it was a nice reminder to give ourselves grace. I think sometimes it may feel cushiony to have the opportunities to work from home, from a computer, or work in the field (travel) but we must realize the mental challenges or stress triggers that may come with each and remember that we are entitled to give ourselves that self-care. Something I have to remember is that taking those breaks and giving myself time really helps me and my job performance in the long run!

**Meet Dr. Kandis Boyd New Director of Chesapeake Bay Program (Dr. Boyd)**

* Dr. Kandis Boyd: *Dr. Boyd has nearly 30 years of experience leading, teaching, advising and mentoring students and early career enthusiasts in environmental and atmospheric science. She has a tremendous skillset as a strategic leader in the sciences and success engaging diverse communities and youth.*
  + Kandis wants to get to know as many people as she can so cameras on are great!
  + Has been the “first” in every position she’s had and has been in spaces where there is a need to make those places diverse, so DEIJ is a priority
  + Serving as Vice Chair of Equal Employment Advisory Commission, she learned so much about the internal eye, and how to hire someone and make them feel welcome
    - Started #WomenofNOAA hashtag to highlight women in the field
  + There are many connections between DEIA and mental health
  + She wants to know how she can be a resource and help in future efforts
    - All levels need to know how to do our part to implement this
    - “In every aspect of the Bay, many hands make light work”
* **Allison**: Is there an employee training component in the DEIA plan you developed?
  + **Kandis**: It’s being implemented as we speak and I hope the initiatives are finding their way to the table. It’s important to touch the employee at all aspects of their career path; onboarding DEIJ is often overlooked; how to hire people or recruit people and make sure they feel included and appreciated
* **Randy**: I can relate to this working on the first of the DEIJ efforts
* **Kandis**: The conversation should start with, “how can we collaborate and partner?” Thinking about the future and how we can all contribute is REALLY important
* **Bo**: How do you take care of yourself and keep yourself engaged and happy?
  + **Kandis**: During the pandemic, I started walking around my neighborhood. I do that in the morning or evening and taking a walk can be really fulfilling. In terms of the job, one aspect is knowing when to turn on/off work. Learning to focus on the task at hand is important. It’s okay to say not you’re not okay – some days we’re not 100%. If you need a day, take a day
* **Lora**: One thing DWG has heard a lot from the Bay community is a challenge with access to nonacademic or government funding opportunities put out – some challenges are around assimilation and acculturation. How do we meet federal requirements for grant opportunities while making those opportunities truly open to communities?
* **Jess**: You talked about being the “first” in many positions. Can you talk about a time you felt welcome in those positions? What was that space like?
  + **Kandis** – I’m a queer female, African American, single mother of 2. When you’re the “only” in a space you feel like you can’t be your true self in the space, and you have to transform yourself into the majority. Early in my career I moved 5 times in 10 years. I know what it feels like when you’re a number or statistic. At a previous job, I met the director early on and it felt like I mattered, and my title didn’t matter, the director wanted to meet with every new hire. We need to think about a diverse environment but also an inclusive environment.

**Workgroup Successes & Updates**

* Diversity Workgroup
  + Set actions and priorities to be a working group
  + Plans and structure are in place and there is support at every level
  + If you notice someone is not here but they should be, Briana can do outreach to have the best team possible to work on upcoming projects
* Future Meetings
  + Next meeting focus will be on how to direct money to people who really need it
  + Issue of tapping people out of their capacity
    - What can we do as DWG to make sure people aren’t overwhelmed and stressed out? Better collaborate between signatories and workgroups?
  + Themed meetings (EJ, Grant Programs,…)
    - **Jess**: Briana, I like the idea about themed meetings on key topics.
  + Collaborate with workgroup members to ensure the time works so everyone can attend and fully participate
  + Make the EJ meetings in the evening
* GIT Funding Scope 3 project
  + in 2021 Gabby from cc on scope 11 and that project wrapped up and will be shared at future mtg; from that, scope 3 is focused on equitable grants in the watershed and how we can bring funders together to troubleshoot and discuss barriers and bring in community orgs that might have trouble accessing funding and how we can benefit them
* DEIJ Coordinator
  + EPA HQ has a lot of focus on DEIJ and EJ, and DWG tries to do both
  + DEIJ coordinator can focus on internal, the DEIJ Implementation Plan, providing training
  + Briana can focus on external, EJ, how we can better serve
  + Allows DWG to not put on every hat for everyone and focus on Logic and Action plan
* DWG Staffer Update
  + Staffer vacancy is in the middle of the CRC Cooperative Agreement renewal process
  + CRC will continue to manage EMCDP for the next 5 years
  + Changes to the way staff support is structured *(in about 10 months)*
  + CRC will meet with the Grants teams in early August to strategize staff support
* Diversity Survey
  + Closed and the results were statistically significant!
  + Next workgroup meeting September we will talk about diversity indicator survey results and community assistance grants
* Chesapeake Youth Initiative Youth Ambassadors
  + Crafting their action projects for the summer. If you're interested in sharing our expertise in helping to scope out their projects, please contact Brittany Hall
  + Most live in the DC/MD/VA area
* The SACNAS National Diversity in STEM Conference
  + In Puerto Rico this year
  + Early Registration deadline: **July 31st**
  + This is a great conference to go to even if you haven't submitted an abstract
  + <https://www.sacnas.org/conference>

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| **Attendees** |  |
| Briana Yancy; US EPA | Wellington Ashe; Civicworks |
| Mackenzie Smith; Towson University | Allison Ng; US EPA |
| Bianca Martinez Penn; University of Miami | Sandi Olek; MD DNR |
| Caroline Johnson; Chesapeake Research Consortium (CRC) | Sophie Stern; Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay |
| Wendy O'Sullivan – National Park Service (NPS) | Susan Casey; MDE |
| Clare Sevcik; DNREC | Caitlin Eversmier; MDE |
| Lora Harris; UMCES | Cindy Osorto; MDE |
| Phoebe Galione Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring (ALLARM) | Marisa Baldine; CRC |
| Cheyenne Owens USFWS | Ola-Imani Davis; Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay |
| Melissa Fagan, CRC | Kandis Boyd; US EPA |
| Rico Newman; Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs | Laura Cattell Noll; Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay |
| Randy K. Rowel; CRC | Kathy Somoza; Chesapeake Bay Trust |
| Alisha Camacho; Washington Area Community Investment Fund | Julie Lawson; Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) |
| Trystan Sill; MD DNR | Emily Hendrickson; PA DCNR |
| Rachel Felver; Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay | Breck Sullivan; USGS |
| Britt Slattery; NPS | Madeline Lambrix; US EPA |
| Carmera Thomas; The Conservation Fund & Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition | Ashley James; U.S. EPA |
| Brittany Hall; NPS | Kalaia Tripeaux; PA DCNR |
| Bo Williams; US EPA | Alex Smith; Division Street Landscaping |
| Vanessa Van Note; US EPA | Avery Lavoie; US EPA |
| Jess Blackburn, CAC Coordinator |  |