



## Agenda Diversity

**Location:** General Dynamics Information Technology (GDIT) at Arlington Center  
3434 Washington Boulevard, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Arlington, VA 22201

### Meeting Objectives

- Review preliminary results of the 2019 Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) diversity indicator to reflect on our progress to date.
- Discuss challenges and lessons learned over the past few years to inform our [narrative analysis](#) and update our [diversity workplan](#).
- Learn and discuss how GIS can be used to complement our work and goals.
- Hear an update on Skeo's work to develop a CBP Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy; provide feedback on their draft recommendations.
- Set aside time for a round robin, during which participants can share updates and announcements.

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Tuana Phillips	Coordinator, EPA	Malia Pownall	CBF
Francesca King	Staffer, CRC	Gaby Roffe	Chesapeake Conservancy
Mariah Davis*	Choose Clean Water	Jake Leizear	Chesapeake Conservancy
Ola Davis*	Alliance for the Bay	Jessica Elliott	Chesapeake Conservancy
Caitlyn Johnstone*	Alliance for the Bay	Kara Pennino	DOEE
Ruby Stemmler*	ecoLatinos	Rochelle Altholz	Dept Conservation Recreation (VA)
Brittany Omoleye-Hall	NPS	Edgar Freeman	MD DNR
Amy Handen	NPS	Trystan Sill	MD DNR
Wendy O'Sullivan	NPS	Sherry Witt	GDIT
Phone			
Jim Edwards	Chair, EPA	Fatima Hassan	Nat'l park and planning
Noelle Chao	WSA	Clare Sevcik	DNREC
Alexis Dickerson	CBF	Sky Swanson	UMCES
Bre'Anna Brooks	CBT	Melissa Fagan	CRC
Emily Hendrickson	PA DCNR		

\*denotes Steering Committee member

## Welcome & Introductions

Jim Edward, chair of the workgroup, welcomed everybody to the meeting and introduced Sherry Witt, host of the meeting and facilitator of the workplan discussion.

## Updates

Tuana Phillips provided an update on the progress and status of workgroup-related actions:

- Workgroup members have attended 8 career fairs and similar events since March 2019.
  - Includes participation by MD DNR, CRC, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, NPS, EPA CBP, CBF, Chesapeake Conservancy.
- We have strengthened the relationship with Virginia State University (VSU) thanks to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between VSU, EPA, and Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The MOU was signed in May 2019; there will be future opportunities for the workgroup to engage with VSU through this MOU.
- Members of the workgroup worked with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay to coordinate scholarships for students from Bowie State University, Morgan State, and the Choose Clean Water Program's Young Professionals of Color Mentorship Program.
- CBP webpage will include an addition of an Environmental Justice Page (coming soon).
  - Diversity Workgroup website changes include changing the sitepath from Diversity Action Team to Workgroup; DEI resources, and updates to member list.
  - Reminder to please fill out [this google docs form](#) to help us update the status of workgroup members and interested parties.

## Recruiting, Hiring, and Retention Resources

### Presentation

Francesca King presented and sought input on a draft document of hiring and employment resources that she is putting together. This document would be on the CBP website and would include a list of places to post jobs that are targeted to diverse communities. It would also include guidance around wording job descriptions and other ways to be transparent and promote DEI in hiring.

Summary of feedback:

1. If it is a Google doc, ensure it is protected to prevent accidental deletions.
  - a. Google docs captures history of edits.
  - b. Option for contributors to enter suggestions and then moderator can accept.
  - c. Desire to be able to see recent edits to notice and reflect on new additions.
2. Importance of strengthening relationships with those listed in the document
  - a. Suggestion to have reciprocal relationship, where we point to colleges and universities as a resource for posting jobs, and they point to CBP as a resource for students interested in environmental careers.
  - b. Importance of relationships with departments other than environmental science: Spanish department for bilingual students, social science, etc.
3. Suggestion to have contacts for post high school programs, not just higher education. Target different education levels.
  - a. Project Green Classrooms is working on an initiative geared towards younger students, highlighting opportunities like Chesapeake Conservation Corps, Work2 Live Well, Chesapeake Youth Portal. This is more for organizations looking to be more equitable and diverse in their hiring practices.

## Results from the 2019 Diversity Profile

Earlier this year, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay distributed a Chesapeake Bay Program diversity profile assessment. Tuana Phillips shared the *preliminary* results and compared them to the 2016 results.

- 2016: 13.7% POC  
86.3% white
- 2019: 15% people of color  
85% white

## Workplan Discussion: What Have We Accomplished and Learned to Date?

Sherry Witt of General Dynamics Information Technology facilitated a discussion of the 2018-19 Diversity Workplan, why the remaining actions have experienced minor or major barriers. The discussion was framed around questions that will inform the Narrative Analysis, the next step in the Strategy Review System (SRS) adaptive management process.

*Summary of discussion:*

### 1. What lessons have we learned over the past two years of implementation?

#### Methods

- a. Previously, there was a lot of policy writing about the process and extensive documents discussing the issues. Now, that work is being translated and interpreted to become more actionable.
- b. There has been a lot of turnover of staff and of membership in workgroup.
- c. In the past it has been informational meeting on what bay program is doing instead of what we as workgroup is doing.
- d. Meetings are usually sharing best practices, etc. Should we have a secondary document where we measure success, what is working and not working, and share best practices?
- e. The workplan is overwhelming and difficult to digest, which limits how much is done as well as ownership. Work has been done to make it more digestible and applicable. Workgroup does not have ownership. There is a need for workgroup members to look at it and identify who is already doing what, as well as who could do things that need to be done.

#### Measuring Success

- f. At recent meetings, we've shared updates, what is happening, what we can do. This is important and at future meetings we should continue this as well as identify next goals, what the workgroup can do, who can take ownership. Then we can track progress.
- g. Define what success is in the workplan between now and 2021, and what the steps are to reach it.
- h. Define success and measures of success like we created 4 new pipelines
- i. The ultimate goal is to reach the diversity outcome. What will it take to get there? What do we need to do to modify and reach it? What are our obstacles?
- j. Constantly looking at actions would be a good thing to do at future meetings
- k. More avenues for workgroup members to see how they can make a difference toward bay program goals. Collaborative force from workgroup. And see that tracked and see progress and that you are a part of it.

## **Challenges and opportunities**

- l. Diversity spans entire partnership, which is a challenge and opportunity. Everybody comes to table because eager in this work but that brings a diverse set of ideas and focuses; so many wonderful ideas that has challenged the group in terms of who we are and what we do.
  - i. Especially true with grassroots organizations. Everybody has different perceptions, challenges. Bring those to the table and respect those different viewpoints to develop a good plan going forward.
  - ii. Importance of incentives and opportunity for grassroots organizations to be involved.
- m. Policy is essential, but when policies are being developed, there are certain actions that can happen to get us closer to the goals.
- n. There aren't enough grassroots organizations involved in this. Create space for these organizations to have a role in certain projects or implementation in portions of the agenda.
- o. Barriers from the federal government and NPS. Look to barriers as a way to find solutions.
  - i. Example: Hiring laws give veteran preference. So: partner with DOD early, make connections so that when people become veterans, they are aligned and have connections with grassroots. Then it's okay that they are at the top of the list. The military reflects population better than most organizations.
- p. Once barriers are overcome, the other important part is retaining diverse staff that are part of the bay program. Working with contractors, working with people who aren't at this current table and making sure they are at the cultural competency trainings.
  - i. With that, also about empowering. Allowing people to move up into positions of more authority and power without tokenizing.

### **Successes:**

- q. The 25% goal of the diversity indicator.
- r. MOU and relationship with VSU.
- s. Contractor and work with Skeo.

## **2. Are we making progress at a rate necessary to achieve our outcome?**

- a. Discussion about measuring success in relationship to the diversity indicator (25% by 2025). Overall sentiment that we are achieving success, but at this rate will not meet the diversity indicator target. Discussion about survey methods to measure diversity indicator, including it coming from a different source in the future.

## **3. What scientific, fiscal and policy-related developments will influence our work over the next two years?**

- a. Most common responses:
  - Administration
  - Budget cuts
  - Capacity
  - Climate change/resiliency
  - Cultural Shifts

- Low salaries vs. student debt and other expenses
- Limited job opportunities/hiring freezes
- Public health initiatives
- Retiring workforce
- Workforce development opportunities

#### 4. What are our barriers for reaching our outcome?

- Used Mentimeter to create a word cloud. The below is a simplified version (combined similar answers into themes). Larger version found [here](#).



- Discussion summary:

##### i. **Culture:**

- Often includes considerations that the organization often is not welcoming to different ethnicities, ways of thinking and to people of different economic situations. There is often a race-silent, gender-silent culture in many organizations where diversity and issues like this are not spoken. If we want to have diverse staff, we should seek to build organizational cultures that welcome and celebrate diversity.
- Cultural competency is one thing, but what else can we do? Only 3 on team, how to get to others involved? Everybody has to get involved and feel like they are a part of this goal.

##### ii. **Funding:**

- How can we identify unique funding opportunities and pursue them? The Chesapeake conservancy is working on equitable funding opportunities.
- CBT grantmaking organization: using a connector group model. For example, interfaith partners for the Chesapeake contracted to do outreach to work with faith community.
- Workshop: bring people who do financing and budgeting to table so at the end of event connections can be made and steps taken.

4. Come together and coordinate, so instead of getting little pieces of philanthropic support, how do we go in together and leverage philanthropic and federal dollars.
5. Shift culture from only seeing value in funding (how many trees are planted etc.) more on meaningful opportunities; meaningful opportunities were marked off points historically

iii. **Workforce:**

1. Engage younger generation. Project green classrooms.

iv. **Goals:**

1. What do we want to focus on, what actions do we want to take?
2. When we talk about actions, also want to talk about timeframes. Have short-term goals. Want to say who is responsible, maybe your organization can do something

## **Review of Existing GIS tools and Efforts That Relate to Environmental Justice**

### **[Presentations: 3a,3b,3c found here](#)**

John Wolf, GIS Team Leader at the CBP Office gave an overview of existing GIS (geographic information system) tools and efforts that can be used to help us visually make connections between environmental justice and watershed restoration work. These tools and efforts include:

1. A **Cross-GIT Mapping** effort that combined priority CBP map layers (e.g. low to high restoration potential) with demographic map layers that are indicative of EJ areas. This project was a more strategic way of looking across goals and outcomes and seeing areas of common interest. How do we map and characterize landscape from diversity perspective?
2. The **EPA National EJ Screen tool** based on demographics/population. Has 11 environmental indicators and 6 demographic indicators
3. The **Chesapeake EJ Screen tool** developed in 2016. Conceived by Diversity Workgroup; has evolved. The idea is how we can take info from national tool and combine it with info from Chesapeake Bay watershed agreement. It was intended to be national tool customized for us. Originally designed as a pilot

## **Identifying Our GIS Needs and Wants**

### **[Presentation](#)**

Jake Lazier, Senior Geospatial Analyst at Chesapeake Conservancy led a discussion on the multi-year cooperative agreement between the Conservancy and CBP to produce GIS data products that support the goals and outcomes of the CBP. Led workgroup to think about the following questions:

- What are your current geospatial tools, abilities, and barriers?
- What are some current needs you have that could be solved geospatially?
- Not just about creating a map. What are metrics and measures we use in particular?

Next steps: workgroup to check out the tools, see what is out there and Jake will come back to ask for more feedback.

### **Update on Chesapeake Bay Program DEI Strategy**

Sarah Malpass, Project Manager at Skeo Solutions provided an update on Skeo's work to develop a DEI Strategy for the partnership. Workgroup was given the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft recommendations from the [DEI Strategy document](#).

#### **Framework discussion:**

- **What stands out to you about the assessment findings?**
  - Difference between number of respondents believing DEI is important, vs commitment being demonstrated.
  - Need for consistent champions in leadership.
  - DEI not being factored into decision making
    - How can this workgroup utilize skillsets to work across different GITs to bring them into this circle?

#### **Strategy recommendations discussion:**

- **What recommendations could be near-term, low-hanging fruit?**
  - Advancing DEI through mission related work: NPS as they revive gateways program and establish a formal federal grants program
    - Purposefully weave in these recommendations
  - Innovation conferences: non-traditional, black church. Ability to show their work and showing non-traditional environmental work.
- **What stands out to you about the recommendations? Anything missing?**
  - No clear path for connections and paths for program to be more effective in DEI work: build capacity of grassroots.
    - Help small or non-traditional audience to build the capacity so that they can sit at the table eventually
    - Clearly defined relationship to community groups
  - We should explore creating sub-geographic groups, with geographically specific meetings and reach out to those groups. This could be a good way to engage.

#### **Next steps and upcoming dates:**

January TBD: Conference call with Skeo to provide further feedback on draft DEI Strategy

Feb 13: Management Board Progress meeting

March TBD: Diversity Workgroup in-person meeting

May 12: Near-final workplan and management materials due

May 14: Public and signatory feedback begins

May 19-21: Choose Clean Water Conference in Richmond

June 1: Public and signatory feedback ends

June 10: Final workplan materials due

June 11: Final workplan materials presented to Management Board