



**Chesapeake Bay Program**  
*Science. Restoration. Partnership.*

## Diversity Workgroup Meeting Minutes

Feb 19, 2021 – WebEx Meeting

### Meeting Objectives

- Hear an update on recent and ongoing work to advance our workgroup's and broader CBP partnership's DEIJ goals.
- Share updates and announcements that are happening within your own jurisdiction or organization.
- Participate in break-out room discussions to brainstorm how the work of other ChesapeakeBay Watershed Agreement outcomes can incorporate DEIJ considerations.
- Participate in group discussion to advance two specific actions in our 2020-2021 logic and action plan.

### Meeting Attendees (\* indicates Steering Committee members):

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Wendy O' Sullivan	Workgroup Vice-Chair, NPS	Britt Slattery	NPS
Tuana Phillips	Coordinator, EPA	John Brakeall	PA DEP
Bo Williams	EPA	Rochelle Altholz	VA DCR
Briana Yancy	Diversity Staffer, CRC	Nora Jackson	Urban Tree Canopy Staffer
Karen Campblin	VSC NAACP Environmental Climate Justice Committee, Chair	Alexandra Fries	UMCES IAN
Julie Reichert-Nguyen	NOAA	Katherine Stahl	FWS
Thomas Butler	Climate Staffer, CRC	Katie Brownson	US Forest Service
Gabrielle Roffe*	Chesapeake Conservancy, NPS	Erin Sullivan*	EPA
Alexis Dickerson	Chesapeake Bay Foundation	Caitlyn Johnstone*	Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Bre'Anna Brooks	Chesapeake Bay Trust	Sky Swanson	UMCES
Brek Sullivan	Climate Staffer, CRC	Jason Swartz	PA DCNR
Carmena Thomas	Chesapeake Bay Foundation	Kevin Newman	District Department of Energy & Environment
Hayat Rasul	ALLARM	Julie Mawhorter	US Forest Service

Jess Blackburn	Alliance for Chesapeake Bay, CAC Coordinator	Max Fairweather	Chesapeake College
Melissa Fagan	CRC	Frank Rodgers	Cacapon Institute
Trystan Sill*	Maryland DNR	Ruby Stemmie*	ecoLatinos
Emily Hendrickson	PA DCNR	Ola-Imani Davis*	Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
Kristin Saunders	UMCES	BeKura Shabazz	First Alliance Consulting
Chantal Madray	Enhance Partnering, Leadership, and Management Staffer, CRC	Clare Sevcik*	DNREC
Laura Cattell Noll	Local Leadership Coordinator, ACB	Shannon Sprague	NOAA
Shannon Moore	Local Leadership Workgroup	Shea Zwerver	PA DCNR
Brittany Hall	NPS Chesapeake	Pamela Bingham	Bingham Consulting Services
Ross Cooper	Alexandria Renew Enterprises	Lauren Taneyhill	NOAA
Edgar Freeman	MD DNR	Julie Lawson	Mayor's Office of the Clean City (DC)
Trena Ferrell	NASA	Meryem Karad	VA Office of the Governor
Michael Hughes	Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer for Maryland's Frederick County Government.	Mariah Davis*	Choose Clean Water Coalition

## Welcome, Introductions, and Review of Meeting Objectives

Wendy O'Sullivan provided welcoming remarks and a land acknowledgement. For information about Indigenous territories refer to: <https://native-land.ca/> Wendy also conducted roll call and discussed the exciting [Executive Order](#) on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities.

Briana Yancy led an icebreaker to acknowledge some of the many contributions of Black/African American inventors. Top answers in the word cloud: Super Soaker and Traffic Light! For more information on Black/African American inventors refer to [The A-Z List of Black Inventors](#)

**ACTION:** Workgroup members, the list of workgroup members that Wendy read is posted on our [workgroup page](#). If you don't see your name on there but you are a member of our workgroup please email Tuana or Briana.

## Diversity Workgroup and DEIJ Action Team Updates

Tuana Phillips provided the [Diversity Workgroup Updates](#). These updates included information on the workgroup seeking a new chair, GIT funding projects, presentations, C-stream interns and resources.

**ACTION:** Interested workgroup members, please submit self nominations for chair by Feb 22nd. Please refer to the [Chair Description and Self Nomination Guide](#) for more information.

Bo Williams provided the [DEIJ Action Team Updates](#) which included highlighting the Action Team members, vision and timeline. DEIJ Action Team is providing an update to the Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) at their Meeting on **March 2nd**. Bo's final slide asked "are you available/willing to help with outreach/messaging?"

**ACTION:** Diversity Workgroup members will meet for a special meeting on **March 17th** to further discuss the DEIJ Action Team's recommendations and ideas for starting up a Community Advisory Board. Tuana will send a calendar invitation after the meeting.

Meryem Karad: Community outreach should be two fold. Need to communicate with community members early and often. They're helping us craft as opposed to saying this is the plan please give us outreach. What should talking to communities look like, maybe a community forum?

Shannon Moore, Mariah Davis and Melissa Fagan volunteered to help with outreach.

Kristin Saunders suggested creating a signup genius. Shannon Sprague suggested the idea of creating an opportunity for a youth position on the CAB and many members affirmed that was a great idea. Clare Sevcik brought up an important point about power dynamics. Melissa Fagan mentioned that their school board youth rep has actually been one of the most reasonable voices at the table! Kristin Saunders suggested having youth teamed up with a mentor on that CAB board who can be their mentor.

John Brakeall: A part of having diversity is having diversity of thought and that is what youth can help bring.

**ACTION:** Workgroup members, if you are interested in helping with outreach and messaging then please indicate that when you fill out the post meeting survey. The DEIJ Action Team will need to think through the possibility of having a youth position on CAB.

## **Round Robin: Updates from Workgroup Members and Meeting Attendees**

Ola-Imani Davis (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)— the Alliance is seeking a [DEIJ consultant](#) by **March 12th**. The DEI Team has worked to create a diverse terminology sheet. Essentially a sheet of diverse terms but more than just a glossary, an understanding of how to communicate these terms widely. It is meant to be a living document.

Bre'Anna Brooks (Chesapeake Bay Trust): CBT CCC opportunity now open. Deadline is in **Mid-March**. New this year to accompany the Chesapeake Conservation Corps, we are offering a Diversity Fellowship! all information can be found [here](#). CBT is hiring two program assistants as well.

Brittany Hall (NPS Chesapeake): setting up a Youth Summit (high school and college). Will be soliciting mentors to help youth learn about issues and communicate their perspectives to CBP leadership. time commitment 20 hours over 12 weeks. We are hoping to have mentors who are familiar with CBP goals and initiatives.

Julie Lawson (DC Mayor's Office of the Clean City): Contact me ([julie.lawson@dc.gov](mailto:julie.lawson@dc.gov)) about Clean City opening opportunity to use trash and public realm work to strengthen communities. Have to be a D.C resident within 60 days of starting the position.

Clare Sevcik (Delaware DNREC): Delaware's DNREC has formed an internal EJ/DEIJ Team to assess our internal policies/regulations/actions/deliverables to make sure EJ and DEIJ considerations are at the front with other crucial priorities for decision makers and project considerations.

Tuana Phillips (EPA): The CBP Communications Office will hold a webinar next Wednesday, February 24 at noon. The session is geared toward the media and other interested parties and will explain who is the Chesapeake Bay Program, what do we do and what we can offer in the way of expertise, data and information. The media advisory is available on our website:

[https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/mediaadvisory/chesapeake\\_bay\\_program\\_overview\\_who\\_we\\_are\\_what\\_we\\_do\\_and\\_how\\_we\\_can\\_help\\_y](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/mediaadvisory/chesapeake_bay_program_overview_who_we_are_what_we_do_and_how_we_can_help_y)

Tuana Phillips (EPA): Also, EPA is currently hiring for pathways recent graduates. Recent Graduates who have completed a qualifying degree or certificate from a qualifying educational institution or technical education program within the preceding 2 years of the announcement closing date OR current students who will complete a qualifying degree/certificate by August 31, 2021. Veterans unable to apply within 2 years of receiving their degree due to military service obligation may apply up to 6 years after degree/certification. <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/592506500>

Sky Swanson (UMCES IAN): UMCES report card diversity-related indicators, distance from parkland, public access, heat vulnerability index, and percent households in poverty. Feel free to reach out to Sky or Alex Fries for more information.

Katie Brownson (US Forest Service): Following on Wendy's earlier comments regarding the priorities of the new administration, USDA released a Climate 21 Transition Memo that acknowledges the history of past discrimination within the agency and calls for DEIJ to be a priority in climate resiliency efforts:

[https://climate21.org/documents/C21\\_USDA.pdf](https://climate21.org/documents/C21_USDA.pdf)

Mariah Davis (Choose Clean Water Coalition): Preparing right now for Annual Lobby day. Asking Congress for 90.5 billion dollars for CB restoration efforts. Asking members of Congress to become cosponsors for the Environmental Justice for All Act.

Melissa Fagan (Chesapeake Research Consortium): exciting update about C-StREAM internship program. Received a 3-year grant and will be able to hire a full time coordinator.

Alexis Dickerson (Chesapeake Bay Foundation): CBF is also hiring, one year fellowship. looking for recent graduate <https://www.cbf.org/about-cbf/jobs-internships/jobs/making-history-campaign.html>

Trystan Sill (Maryland DNR): Just a reminder to anyone who has open positions...please share to the youth/young professionals portal on the Chesapeake network!

<https://www.chesapeakenetwork.org/groups/chesapeake-youth-portal/>

Emily Hendrickson (Pennsylvania DCNR): PA DCNR has designed and are rolling out trailhead welcome signs emphasizing inclusivity on public lands to be posted at state parks and forests, and will make the design available to partners. also creating a youth advisory council to help us advance DEI issues.

**ACTION:** Briana will share these opportunities via email

## **Breakout Discussions: Integrating DEIJ into the Work of Other Goals and Outcomes**

Workgroup members went to break out rooms to give feedback to other groups on how to improve DEIJ efforts. The slides contain notes and suggestions.

[Local Leadership Slides](#)

[Urban Tree Canopy Slides](#)

## Climate Slides

### **Report Outs from Breakout Groups**

Laura Cattell Noll led the report out for Local Leadership, Nora Jackson led the report out for Urban Tree Canopy and Brek Sullivan led the report out for Climate.

In the slides above each group includes more detailed information about the results from each breakout group. It is important to note that there was a lot of overlap between key takeaways from each break out group.

- getting in touch with community before doing projects First include communities in conversation but when we go make sure listening first and incorporating suggestions in next step
- Don't just include community members but make them feel comfortable
- communication and outreach two way relationship essential. LISTEN to communities
- focus on relationship building
- using tools like EJ screen, community mapping,
- Own work within workgroup outside of collaborating with diversity workgroup tools and trainings for workgroup, possible cultural humility, implicit bias, NASA on power and privilege
- thinking about compensation....

Wendy O'Sullivan: Everyone from the Local Leaders breakout, here is a link with more info on Gateways Community from a national conference two years go with our partner, The Conservation Fund. Lots of good sessions.

<https://www.conservationfund.org/impact/blog/19-programs/conservation-leadership-network/1978-national-summit-for-gateway-communities>

Trena Ferrell: I manage an NASA app that might help with trees

<https://observer.globe.gov/about/get-the-app> and NASA will be having a trees campaign starting soon..  
<https://observer.globe.gov/do-globe-observer/challenges/trees-challenge-2021>

Trystan Sill: Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition is a good group for tree canopy

Caitlyn Johnstone: Frank made a great point about it not being about the tree cover of the whole county or tree cover of the state but how that tree cover is in relation to the people. So if were interested in tree canopy and public health really need to look at the relationship to

Trystan Sill: the climate group is excited to hear the results of the DEI PAC list of BIPOC orgs and BIPOC serving orgs.

Julie Reichert-Nguyen: Make sure that greening of areas does not displace people as it increases property values in an area and that these projects Improve for the existing communities not to displace them.

Pamela Bingham: I know what the work group is trying to get to but we keep having the same low hanging fruit level discussions. A different way to break out in the future is for people who have been in EJ for a really long time and people who are new to compare differences in the discussion. There is a whole list of organizations and groups that has existed for 20 years so we know who to reach out to but it is really about how we can make it easier for these people to participate. For example, full time or salaried employees are covered to participate, but EJ and community organizers are often doing this on their own time unpaid. It is important for CBP to put resources into the community to ease their ability to participate and those resources don't always have to be money. It could be training as well, but there needs to be some conversation on how to make it simpler for them [community members]. Everyone is looking at this like we are going into the community and doing something for them but what if that is not the help they need or want. How can we advance to the meat of what's going to happen with DEI?

Wendy O'Sullivan: It is time to shift into a working workgroup. These cross workgroup conversations are important and it feels like we are closer than we have been to truly shifting via the implementation plan.

Pamela Bingham: Weather and natural disasters are teachable moments. There needs to be integration between the environmental field and disaster assistance. EPA does not yet integrate with FEMA, but this presents an opportunity to teach about trees, rain gardens, barrels, etc.

**ACTION:** Review implementation plan when it becomes available for public review to see if suggestions for community outreach, compensation and other factors are sufficient. Community input is going to be vital so it would be good to review for anything glaring before taking it to the community.

## Group Discussion on Two Actions in our Logic and Action Plan

Briana reviewed the [hiring and recruitment document](#) that contains information on job boards whose target audience is people of color, a list of HBCUs and MSIs career center resources and hiring tips.

**ACTION:** Workgroup members, please add comments and edits to the [hiring and recruitment document](#) by **March 23<sup>rd</sup>** so the final document can be uploaded to the Diversity Workgroup's website.

Gabrielle Roffe facilitated the discussion on meaningful and authentic connections to universities and colleges. Having lists like the hiring and recruitment document is really useful, but we need to go beyond recruitment and build authentic relationships with professors, students, etc. Members have been doing that through a variety of different ways and have established great relationships. Now, how can we connect that to the CBP so CBP can be a larger network that can provide resources for diverse groups?

Pamela Bingham: There are many agencies who have had long standing connections and partnerships with HBCUs such as NASA, NOAA, EPA (in the 90's), USGS, DOE and the Student Conservation Association. In addition, most agencies have special interest groups within them that exist within the entity so they're not people dependent. The Chesapeake Bay program needs to connect with those who run these programs.

Trena Ferrel mentioned that we can contact her to connect us with the right person from NASA. NASA has advisory committees for other racial/ethnic group. NASA has a brown bag series and would like the Bay Program to come give a talk- she reached out to Tuana.

Workgroup members provided answers to three questions via [JamBoard](#)

*Q1: Who is one partner that workgroup members know that they can connect to the CBP?*

- Dickinson College queer student union, kappa alpha psi, delta sigma theta, center of race and ethnicity, womanist groups
- Environmental Department at Salisbury University and their Program Specialist
- LINKS Incorporated - Mentoring Program with Coppin State University
- C-StREAM internship program alumni network
- NPS Youth Programs Manager, George McDonald
- Patuxent Environmental and Aquatic Research Laboratory (PEARL)- Morgan State University
- EPA has MOUs with Bowie State University and Virginia State University
- Norfolk State - History program
- Ward 8 Woods in DC
- NASA MUREP partners
- Dr. Elizabeth Clark-Lewis, professor at Howard University helps connect DC national parks with intern and fellowship applicants

- Maryland Project Green Classrooms has its Youth and Young Professionals green jobs portal, hosted by the Alliance for Chesapeake Bay on Chesapeake Network.
- UMD Career Services
- Congressional Black Foundation
- Associate Professor Tonya Sanders from the Morgan State School of Architecture & Planning.
- Shepherd University, WV, has an associate VP for diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Backyard Basecamp- environmental education, youth empowerment group, and environmental justice in Baltimore City.
- NPS has a partnership with Omega Psi Phi.
- The Aquarium has strong partnerships with Coppin and Morgan

*Q2: How can we make these relationships outlast a specific person's connections and knowledge?*

- Make DEIJ endemic to the entire agency/organization. If DEIJ work and relationships sit with one person/group, they will disappear when that person/group leaves.
- Dr. Frances Kuo, a ecosystems health researcher says, "There's a notion that green spaces are just frivolous and an amenity—urban forestry to mayors is first on the list. It's really not seen as a necessary part of healthy human habitats..." I think the same is true for DEIJ, there are are workgroups, think tanks etc, but equity and justice are not 1st on the list with leadership where it should be
- Ensuring CBP interest/work groups are part of job descriptions (if possible) in organizations that are already in your network -Hayat Rasul, ALLARM

*Q3: What can the Bay Program provide to workgroup members to help facilitate partnerships?*

- CBP can be a repository or clearing house for opportunities
- In many cases we may have upper level partnerships but students aren't regularly receiving communication or building sustained relationships with CBP.
- Reach out to career offices and faculty at higher ed institutions to help them know about resources such as the youth jobs portal. And promote through everyone's established relationships.
- Create one page document to share with groups, job fairs etc. as an easy first step while also sharing these resources via QR codes
- Speaker series for students, career offices and instructors - with efforts to reach people outside of environmental careers as well
- NPS has an approach called OneNPS under its Urban Agenda program that could serve as an example CBP. [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/urban/upload/UrbanAgenda\\_web.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/urban/upload/UrbanAgenda_web.pdf)
- Partnership database with ongoing projects; visuals of how organizations are connected; etc.
- Science Needs Database tracks ongoing projects in the short and long term and shows what organizations are participating in them.
- Speakers network. would be a good resource for colleges and professors. How can you reach underrepresented groups who haven't even thought of environmental careers. CBP could start a webinar series or youtube.
- Professors are looking for time to fill so CBP could go give virtual talks to schools.

**ACTION:** Briana and Tuana will compile this information and connect with members who posted comments so we can discuss making these connections and other useful suggestions happen.

## **The Way Forward & Closing Remarks**

Wendy provided closing remarks.

Next Meeting: Special meeting on **March 17th 1-2 PM** to continue discussing the DEIJ Action Team's work

**ACTION:** Please complete the [post-meeting survey](#)!


Stay Safe and Healthy Everyone!



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MH Michael Hughes

NJ Nora Jackson

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Chat

DEFER OUR WASHINGTON, D.C. from Calley Johnson to everyone: 9:17 AM

Poor connection so I won't be on video, but so glad to "see" you all here today!

from Wendy O'Sullivan to everyone: 9:17 AM

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/staffing-main/presidential-actions/>

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Chat

join with you today.

from Shannon Sprague to everyone: 9:15 AM

Welcome Briana!

from Tuana Phillips to everyone: 9:16 AM

So good to see everyone!

from Tuana Phillips to everyone: 9:16 AM

Smile for a screenshot :)

To: Everyone

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