

Diversity and Inclusion Committee – Annual Report

Drafted: August 2021

Finalized: October 2021

After recognizing the lack of diversity within the geosciences, several members of the Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center formed the Diversity and Inclusion Committee in the summer of 2020 to develop strategies to foster a more collaborative, interdisciplinary, and inclusive community. Several [goals were established](#) last year, and this annual report details the progress made and the further actions needed.

Status Levels for Actions: Completed, Ongoing, Begun, No Action

1. Advise leadership at the state, regional, and local levels about injustices toward people of color and the communities most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Ongoing - Several members of the Byrd Center have contributed to this effort. Examples of specific efforts include:

- a. Advised Franklin County on COVID-19 and extreme heat events (Jason Cervenec, Aaron Wilson)
- b. Hosted Solve Climate by 2030 focused on issues of justice (Karina Peggau) (*also addresses 8*)
- c. Hosted Erikson talk about indigenous communities in the Arctic in autumn 2020 (Stacy Porter, Karina Peggau, Jason Cervenec) (*also addresses 2, 8*)
- d. Recruited speaker on climate justice for health and climate event at Wexner Medical Center (Karina Peggau) (*also addresses 8*)
- e. Reviewed City of Columbus Urban Forestry Plan and ongoing work with urban heat island (Jason Cervenec)
- f. Continued to offer En-ROADS simulation with general focus on young people (Stacy Porter)
- g. Contributed to planning for Katharine Hayhoe virtual visit (Karina Peggau)
- h. Service to MORPC Sustaining Scioto work to ensure sufficient drinking water for Central Ohio (Aaron Wilson)
- i. Testified before committees of general assembly (Aaron Wilson)

2. Ensure that the broader impacts that are part of our federal research grants specifically focus on underserved populations, including Black, indigenous, and people of color.

Ongoing - Several members of the Byrd Center have contributed to this effort. Examples of specific efforts include:

- a. Included ODI and SACNAS in advertising new grants development officer (Michele Cook)
- b. Participated in summer library program with OSU for interns from neighborhoods adjacent to campus; also sought funding for high school interns in two broader impacts of grants; plan to offer one or two positions in summer 2020 and sharing info with other units on campus (Jason Cervenec) (*also addresses 3, 7, 10*)
- c. Amplified opportunities and voices of other communities, both on campus and off campus partners, on social media, website, and newsletters (Karina Peggau)

- d. Education and Outreach accepted three REU students in Summer 2020 and one in Summer 2021 (Jason Cervenec) (*also addresses 7, 10, 11*)
- e. Logged seminar speakers/information dated back to 10/2019 (Gillian Everett)
- f. *See also: 1c*

3. Encourage science and engineering to diverse K-12 youth through our public programs, including tours, speakers, activities, and media.

Ongoing - Several members of the Byrd Center have contributed to this effort. Examples of specific efforts include:

- a. Collecting demographic data for audience at outreach programs (Karina Peggau, Jason Cervenec) (*also addresses 7*)
- b. Developed and implementing Climathon (Jason Cervenec, Karina Peggau, Geddy Davis)
- c. Reached out to new partners working with diverse audiences, including – Gladden House in Hilltop, Homeless Families Foundation in Franklinton, and Central State University and Columbus State University for current and future initiatives (Karina Peggau, Jason Cervenec, Aaron Wilson) (*also addresses 7*)
- d. Collaborated with OSU Upward Bound program in Canton region (Geddy Davis, Rebecca Ricciardo)
- e. Worked with Broader Impacts Community on campus to reach wider audiences as a group rather than individually (Karina Peggau, Jason Cervenec)
- f. Worked to make programs and materials more accessible to audiences with hearing or vision impairments (Karina Peggau, Jason Cervenec, Gillian Everett)

4. Establish a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to ensure the Center’s vision, strategies, and operations support the actions listed in this statement, drawing on resources provided by Ohio State’s Office of Diversity & Inclusion. One member of this committee will serve on the Byrd Center Executive Committee.

Completed - The committee currently includes Jason Cervenec, Karina Peggau, and Allison Chartrand (Stacy Porter was a member before accepting her current position at Wittenberg University). Jason Cervenec is also on the Executive Committee. We welcome new members to join the team.

5. Work with the Office of Human Resources to incorporate effective interviewing practices and equitable weighing of experience to ensure recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of people of color and ethnic minority candidates for research, staff, and student positions.

Begun - With URGE [Deliverable 5](#), we identified some of the limited resources available and training materials. The committee has yet to implement training or widespread adoption of these practices. The Byrd Center does not do extensive hiring, but these practices could be used with interviewing of future staff, postdoctoral fellows (such as making the scoring rubric publicly available for the Byrd Fellows), and undergraduate students. Modeling these practices is also a training opportunity/ professional development for our students and early career researchers. We advocated to departments about looking beyond GRE for admission practices. The Code of Conduct was completed.

6. Facilitate center-wide dialogue about social justice and reform in America and offer annual diversity training to members.

Ongoing - Several members of the Byrd Center have contributed to this effort. Examples of specific efforts include:

- a. Members participated in URGE Pod under leadership of Stacy Porter (Jason Cervenec, Allison Chartrand, Karina Peggau, Roxana Sierra-Hernández, Audrey Sawyer, Mike Durand, Michele Cook, Emilie Beaudon, Liz Griffith, Ian Howat)
- b. Code of Conduct discussions were held during winter and continued with URGE discussions in May (about 25 Byrd Center members)
- c. Code of Conduct includes links to implicit bias/active bystander training available at OSU (Stacy Porter, Karina Peggau, Jason Cervenec, Allison Chartrand)
- d. Hosted *Picture A Scientist* film screening & panel discussion in collaboration with SACNAS Chapter OSU & the Office of Diversity & Inclusion (Stacy Porter, Allison Chartrand) (**also addresses 8**)
- e. Plan to include report on URGE Pod/committee's work at center-wide event in autumn 2021
- f. Plan to host panel discussion about working with diverse communities in the field in autumn 2021
- g. Plan to collect demographic data collection with brief autumn 2021 survey (Karina Peggau) (**also addresses 13**)
- h. Plan to work with SES to complete Field Safety Plan in the 2021-22 academic year ([URGE Deliverable 6](#)) (**also addresses 13**)

7. Work with appropriate partners to measure and improve the effectiveness of our outreach to people of color and ethnic minority groups.

Ongoing - Several members of the Byrd Center have contributed to this effort. Examples of specific efforts include those described in **items 2b, 2d, 3a, 3c**.

8. Encourage center members to showcase research from Black, indigenous and people of color in classes and seminars.

Ongoing - Several members of the Byrd Center have contributed to this effort. Examples of specific efforts include:

- a. Hosted All We Can Save Book Club (Stacy Porter)
- b. **See also: 1b, 1c, 1d, 6d**

9. Include a Land Acknowledgement in advance of seminars and public programs.¹

Completed - We read this before programs and invite other members to adopt their own Land Acknowledgements. [Here is a guide](#). The delivery of the land acknowledgement is as important as the content to show respect. The committee continues to explore ways to ensure that this is a meaningful action.

10. Establish a fund to recruit and support students from underrepresented groups participating in Byrd Center research

Begun - Several members of the Byrd Center have contributed to this effort. Examples of specific efforts include those described in *items 2b and 2d*.

The committee recommends the Byrd Center explore the following:

1. An opportunity for a Diversity & Inclusion thread of Byrd Fellows with solicitation of donations to fund the initiative
2. An opportunity to crowdsource or do a fundraising event once a year for initiatives such as the high school interns or outreach with diverse communities

11. Work with other Ohio State units and off-campus partners to establish a pathways program for paid summer internships, with mentoring, as an on ramp for underrepresented youth in science.

Completed - Education and Outreach accepted three REU students in Summer 2020 and one in Summer 2021 (Jason Cervenec). The team also funded one high school intern in summer 2021 and intends to provide one or two openings in summer 2022 (Jason Cervenec). (*2d, also addresses 7, 10*)

12. Include research on climate and environmental justice within our strategic plan.

No Action - The center is currently working with the medical and public health communities to work in this domain. We do not have impending hires in this space but would like to work with any existing initiatives on campus.

13. Support efforts by the Ohio State Office of Research and other university partners to recruit underrepresented scientists.

Begun - We are aware that OSU will be moving on an initiative in this space but there has been no invitation for the Byrd Center to be involved to our knowledge. Several members of the Byrd Center have contributed to related efforts. Examples of specific efforts include:

- a. Shared the speaker series earlier this year
- b. Created resources guide and liaisons to help people moving to Columbus to join the Byrd Center (URGE [Deliverable 7](#))
- c. PI submitted NSF CAREER Grant Proposal with specific plans to recruit underrepresented students (Demián Gómez)
- d. *See also: 6g, 6h*

Anticipated Work This Year

The committee anticipates pursuing the following work this academic year:

3 months

- Code of Conduct enacted and circulated (**6b**)
- Proposal preparation officer joins D&I committee

9 months

- Continue efforts described in **1d, 2f, 3a, 6h, 6g**
- E&O visit to HBCU in Ohio completed

1 year

- Donations solicited for two high school interns in summer 2022 and to expand outreach efforts to diverse audiences (**2b, 2d, also addresses 10, 11**)
- Donations solicited for Byrd Fellows thread with specific D&I objectives (**10.1**)
- Wider range of educators and communities engaged in outreach programs
- Proposal prep officer gathers data on D&I within proposals and works with PIs to expand efforts on projects