Virtual IDE Committee Update

Presented by: Dave Galbraith, WEF Delegate
Diversity ignites creativity, problem solving and innovation.
Did you see yourself in this video?
9 Committee Chairs “YPs”
• We formed the IDE Committee “Inclusion Diversity & Equity” in 2018

• Our goal was to better understand how the ACWWA can improve and retain representation within the water industry through “quantitative” and “qualitative” surveys.

• Dr. Jennie Rand, Acadia University, (our ACWWA Chair at the time) began by preparing requests for funding to hire someone to develop and implement the survey.

• The two-phase project was partially funded through the NSERC Women in Science and Engineering Program for the Atlantic Region (WISEatlantic)
• The goal of the surveys is to determine what factors predict workplace commitment and whether gender and/or age moderates such effects.

• In addition to the questionnaires, a number of demographic variables were included (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, etc.) to capture the diversity of the ACWWA workforce.

• In-person “telephone” surveys are currently under way and will be conducted over the summer of 2020 with individuals who indicated that they would like to be interviewed.

• The interviews will focus on capturing how employees’ relationships and interactions with co-workers and supervisors affect their sense of belonging, and how the workplace culture and policies contribute to the lack of diversity within the industry.

• We have identified volunteers both male & female from many sectors; such as Government, Academia, Engineering Firms, Consultants, Suppliers, etc.
The surveys consisted of five standardized questionnaires:

1. workplace commitment
2. sense of belonging
3. corporate social responsibility (CSR)  
   (one’s view of how socially responsible their employer/organization is)
4. work life balance (WLB)
5. diversity perception
Preliminary IDE Survey results – as of May 2020:

European ethnicity (50%)
Male (61%)
Heterosexual (97%)

Equal numbers completed survey:
(BBs) Baby Boomer/Gen Xer individuals (born 1949-1976)
Millennial individuals (born 1977-1997)

Gender comparisons revealed that women reported lower levels of:
Sense of belonging, CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), WLB (work-life balance), and diversity climate as compared to men

Generational comparisons revealed that Millennials reported lower levels of sense of belonging, CSR and WLB than BBs/Gen Xers.

Overall a sense of belonging and CSR are crucial for commitment to the workplace.
More females are starting careers in the water sector
Close to 1/3 of the industry workforce may be retiring in 10-15 years
These preliminary findings of the project have given us a snapshot of the diversity within the “water” industry in Atlantic Canada, however analysis of the standardized questionnaires is needed to further understand members commitment and belongingness to the industry.

The final results of this two-phase project was expected to be presented at our annual conference in Fredericton (October 2020)…

However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, our Fall Conference was cancelled; so we will need to release the findings in a different way… perhaps virtually.

We are intending to share the results publicly later this year…
This survey is designed to gather information and make recommendations to the ACWWA… it will be up to us to look at how to best identify opportunities to become more Inclusive, Diverse and Equitable.

We need to have a conversation and develop a plan as to how to share this information (once available) with the stakeholders and others.

One key item we are noticing is the workforce shortage that is about to occur.

Several communities that are under represented will need to be included to help address the work force shortage about to occur in the “Water” sector.
Inclusion starts with “I”

What one action you will take to support this strategy?
Thank you...

Q & A
See you in Charlottetown, PEI
May 26-28, 2021