WEFMAX Day I

**DE&I POLL**

How important is DE&I to your MA? 1=Top Priority | 5 = Does not Matter

**RESULTS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DE&amp;I Poll</th>
<th>Responses from MAs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Picked One-(California) DE&amp;I is very prominent in California and promoted in multiple public spaces.</td>
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<td>Two</td>
<td>Picked One-(Virginia) Had a taskforce dedicated to DE&amp;I. Priority is to bring people in the industry. Challenge is that they don’t have another.</td>
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<td>Three</td>
<td>Picked Two-Has committees in place but want to initiate more programing and implement engagement.</td>
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<td>Four</td>
<td>Picked Three (Rocky Mt) DE&amp;I was a hot topic during their conference.</td>
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<td>Five</td>
<td>Picked Three- DE&amp;I is important but they do not have a plan. Big state and would like to see more minorities on the board.</td>
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• Picked Four-Did not make a priority
• Nevada-Currently partners with another association. Challenges: They are a small MA but wishes to see what works and doesn’t work for other MAs.

MA DE&I TOOLKIT ROLL OUT AND DISCUSSION

Moderator: Joe Navas
Presenters: Donnell Duncan & Nikita Lingenfelter

Deep Drive into DE&I Toolkit

• DE&I is not common knowledge.
• Purpose of the toolkit is to provide the common knowledge that various MAs can apply.
• Diversity committee was started in Georgia but only lasted a year due to the lack of leadership.
• Purpose is also to engage YP new to the field.
• Be realistic in your goals “What can you really accomplish in a year or two years”.
• Active inclusion embraces and celebrates everyone’s values.
• The year 2030 is when we will feel the effects of the “brain drain” on the industry due to the baby boomers exiting the workforce.
• The lack of diversity can impact your ability to be “creative”.
• BOLD actions are needed to enforce DE&I.
• Share your challenges and successes with your WEF Delegates.

Discuss/Solicit Feedback from MAs

Which MAs have formed a DE&I Subcommittee/committee?

• Saki (Missouri)- Had a subcommittee already formed but used the toolkit to help them figure out where to start.
• Katie (Missouri)- The toolkit helped enforce ideas that their subcommittees were already formed
• Virginia- relied on the toolkit to form the Mission and Vision for Virginia WEA. Picked topics from the toolkit and assigned to subgroups. Challenge: The toolkit is a little overwhelming.

Who has formed a committee?

• Ohio- Has not formed a committee due to other priorities (conference, covid...) Feels DE&I is important to their MA and is currently working on forming a committee.
• Nebraska- Challenges: How to internally structure their committee. Overwhelmed with the possibilities.
• Iowa- Modified their strategic plan 6 years ago. Have not started a committee.
• Alabama- Two delegates and 500 members. Challenge: trying to get people engaged...looking for that “corporate leader”.
**DE&I Challenges Facing MAs**

- Keeping the momentum up and assigning volunteers to projects.
- Biggest Challenge is developing events that are inclusive for all members.
  Events MAs have hosted that have been inclusive:
  - Poker Tournament- Offer a “learners/beginners” table for members who do not know how to play.
  - Paint and Sip Event
- Keeping the momentum with assigned volunteers to projects.
- Shrimp and Bingo (Shrimp Broil and Bingo) YP organizers and the event is mostly attended by YPs.

**Feedback on WEF’s Communication pertaining to tools like these:**

- Toolkits are not easily accessible. Did not know where to find the toolkits.
- Have DE&I PowerPoints will help MAs present a common theme from the Federation to the MAs
  - Suggested a 25 minute presentation at a conference or a board meeting.
- Requiring a username and password to access information in the MA Resource Center.

**EXPLORING DE&I EXERCISE**

**Brainstorming Exercise #1: Understanding DE&I**

- What Does diversity Mean to You?
- Do you See Spaces within Your MA That May Not have Equal Access?
- What does it mean to feel INCLUDED?

**Report Out & Discussion**

**What Does diversity Mean to You?**

- Variety, various occupations. You want your MA to reflect your community.
- Having your MA reflect the industry as a whole.
- Different perceptions with different views.

**Do you See Spaces within Your MA That May Not have Equal Access?**

- Student groups
- Rural Communities
- Contractors (Nebraska)
- Young Professional
- Awards- Improve award titles within their MA
- Operators
High School Students

What does it mean to feel INCLUDED?

- Lack of representation in your community.
- Provide different conferences with different focuses to target all members (Nebraska)
- Be intentional with your invitation.
- Being apart of a team.
- Listening to each other.
- Expand Communication and make everyone feel welcome.

Brainstorming Exercise #2: Identifying DE&I Barriers
Brainstorming Exercise 3: Removing DE&I Barriers

Barriers and resolutions identified:

- Size or the state and location (Alaska) makes it challenging to have active members from all over the state. 2/3 of the population is in South Central Alaska. Hopes to get a DE&I committee to incorporate more rural members.
  
Possible Solution:
  - Focus on making your in-person meetings “Hybrid” to incorporate members who are unable to attend.

- Timing (Nebraska) Meets challenges when scheduling meetings.
  
Possible Solutions:
  - Frequently changed the location of meetings to accommodate members in varied locations.
  - Host 30 minute meetings on Zoom to accommodate members who cannot join.

- Political and Parenting (Alabama) Members view DE&I as an item on the “liberal agenda”. Education is Key.
  
Possible Solutions:
  - Host honest and open conversations within your MA to address the uncomfortable. Then group the concerns into themes. Identify if it is a fear of concern or just a fear of the unknown.
  - Only focus on how DE&I can look like in a positive light.
  - Identify the influencers (Plant managers, General Managers...) and focus your energy on them. Incorporate them in the conversation.

- Lack of Discussion and Lack of meetings (North Dakota) Have Meetings that Focus on DE&I.
  
Possible Solution:
  - Include the influencers in the conversation.
• Communication (Virginia) Figuring out how to engage members located in different parts of the state.

Possible Solution:
  o Study influencers/advocates and the way they connect to people.
  o Diversify who is telling the story.

• Managing Success- How do you know if you’re succeeding?
• Age- Challenge is to get members who have personal commitments to volunteer and dedicate hours to the MA.
• MA Only Membership

NEVADA WEA’S DE&I JOURNEY
Presenters: Joe Navas

• **Why is diversity so low in STEM program?**
Solution:
  o Present to local K-12 grade schools and Title/Tier 1 Schools. Teach about
  o Prek-5-Classroom/Zoom, presentations, LOTS of Pictures, hands on activities and story time
  o 6-8TH GRADE-Presentations and hands on activities
  o 9-12th grade-presentations, hands on activities, site visits
  o University Outreach- Partner with national societies

  *Suggestion to bring community college representative to visit the high school.*

ORGANIZING RESIDENTS TO PRIORITIZE AND INFLUENCE INFRASTRUCTURE IN TARGETED COMMUNITIES
Presenter: Eboni Green (Communication professional that is passionate about water)

• Organizing Residents to influence and prioritize infrastructure in targeted communities
• Goal is to make sure everybody had access to and information about the water industry and raise the standards of communications
• Equity based projects:
  o Proctor Creek Watershed
  o Atlanta Brownfields to Atlantic Station
• Organizing Process- WHAT DO YOU WANT? Who can give it to you? How do you access it? Do you know what you don’t know? What will you do with what you know?
• Building Infrastructure Collectively
  o Managing results
  o Proactive Preserving New trust
  o Infrastructure for all
• Inclusively collaborate>Identify and develop promising interventions> Engage and adapt to implement custom interventions>Scale interventions for medium impact>Sustain and continually improve engagement opportunities.
• What do your audiences have no idea they don’t know?
  o Beneficial resources and how to access them
• Cool aspects of your MA?
  o Georgia started a program started H2 Opportunity (similar to Work for Water)
• Determine which social media platforms work best for certain communications

NEBRASKA WEA’S DE&I JOURNEY
Presenters: Garrett Lane & Scott Aurit

• Nebraska WEA
  o Volunteer Organization consisting of NWEA AND NWOD
  o Currently has 27 committees
  o Yearly publications outreach through various platforms
• Top down Approach - Engage membership, committees, student chapters
• 2022 Goals and expectations
  o Help people understand the NEWA and WEF Mission
  o Make it easier for members to get involved
  o Create an environment that welcomes open discussion
• In July, they plan to host a DE&I Workshop with their Board Members.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

• A lot of beneficial information was shared.
• WEF to provide a DE&I PowerPoint Slides to MAs that they can present at their meetings.
• WEF give an annual presentation to MAs to inform them on what WEF Provides (Updates on programs...new programs...How do you get involved in committees...)
• WEF to host a meeting for all DE&I Summit (or workshop) for MA DE&I Chairs.
  o First meeting- Review each MAs Website
  o Second meeting- Focus on conversations
• WEF to host a monthly call for all DE&I Chairs
• WEF should create a Rural Member Membership type for utilities.

WEFMAX Day 2

WEF Message
Presenter: Diego Rosso
• Water professionals provide a service to EVERYONE.
• A majority of environmental engineers graduate and have employment arranged; this has created challenges in academia.
• WEF recognizes the challenges of small Treatment Plants. Most of them are being managed by one person.
• Evolve the way you operate and encourage engagement.
• Develop a proactive approach to “change”.

HOD UPDATE
Presenter: Donnell Duncan

• The HOD provides monthly updates to WEB Members
• HOD Workgroups- Water Communications, Federal Advocacy, Emerging Leaders
• HOD Standing Committees- Steering, Nominating, Budget, MEFMAX, Diversity Equity and Inclusion
• WEFTEC – New Orleans October 10-12

HOD COMMITTEE AND WORKGROUP UPDATED
Presenters:

• Budget: Donnell Duncan
  o Administer FY22 Grant Program
    ▪ $100,00 allocated by WEF for distribution
    ▪ 2 rounds of grant distribution
    ▪ $47K available for distribution for round 2 (Round 2 Deadline is June 24th)
  o How are applications evaluated?
    ▪ Application aligns with WEFs strategic plan
    ▪ Impact on industry or membership
  o Conduct MA Survey
    ▪ Survey is emailed to MAs
    ▪ 2022 survey focused on the Covid Relief Fund

Emerging Leaders: Matt Alpaugh

• Working with the SYPC Committee to identify roadblocks.
• Create examples of outcomes
• Reason leaders are overlooked
  o Lack of awareness
  o Lack of support
  o Lack of resources to support success

Water Communications: Elizabeth Wick

• Future meeting topics “Social media and how to have fun with it”
- Plan to survey MAs to find out what social media platforms they use. They plan to create toolkits to accommodate the social media needs of the platform.

**Federal Advocacy Workgroup:** Diane Grossenheider & Jon Koch

- Main goal is to get everyone sign up and become a Water Advocate.
- The Federal Advocacy Workgroup now has a water advocate in every state.
- State advocates are encouraged to contact their state representatives and notify them of the current needs of the water community. The Federal Advocacy Workgroup provides email templates to each advocate.
- Current Calls of Action:
  - FY23 Water Infrastructure Appropriations
  - Co-sponsor Wipes Labeling Legislation
  - PFAS Liability Exemptions
- The workgroup is currently working on a toolkit.

**Nominating Committee** – Donnell Duncan

- Encourage members to volunteer for a committee they are passionate about.
- Delegate-at-Large- Represents a constituency but not a MA (Ex, Construction, manufacturing...)
- Currently encouraging member to apply to for the HOD Speaker Elect position

**MA CODE OF CONDUCT**
Presenter: Kathleen Waugh

- Toolkit launched in March 2022
  
  How the toolkit was developed
  - Developed WEF’s Member Discipline Policy and WEF Board approved it in 2020
  - WEF Board of Ethics Subcommittee formed in 2020
  - Developed WEF Member Code of Conduct with Stakeholder involvement and WEF Board approved in 2021
  - Implemented Code in WEF membership join/renewal process in 2021
  - Toolkit developed in 2021
- Goal- Ensure a professional, safe and welcoming environment for all
- Purpose- To provide sample templates/backgrounds to assist MAs in developing MA policies and procedures relating to MA Conduct.

**MA SHARING SESSION**

*Moderator:* Diego Rosso
NORTH DAKOTA WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
Presenters: Sarah Waldron Feld & Kellen Grubb
Perspective from a Small MA

- 121 Members in 2017. Membership dropped due to covid.
- NDWEA Challenges
  - Diversity of members
  - Strategic planning
  - Board Personnel changes
  - Operator Training- Spring training and Annual Conference
  - Joint participation in annual conference governed by North Dakota Water Pollution and Control (NDWPCC)
- Student Organizations
  - Over the last decade, student membership ranged from 20-30 members
  - Membership fees are subsidized by local MA
    - $5 to join WEF $5 to join AWWA
  - Strong Faculty Leadership and MA Support
- Goals
  - Put strategic plan to action
  - Support and enhance ongoing training and continuing education
  - Add interim meetings to accomplish goals
  - Increase membership numbers

MISSOURI WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
Presenters: Saki Urushidani & Katie Bruegge
New Conference Attendee Orientation by the MWEA DEI Committee

- In 2021, their goal was to engage new conference attendees
- Newly formed DE&I Committee
- Goals and Objectives
  - Established conference ambassadors for both MWEA and AWWA
  - Provide new conference orientation for new attendees
- During the orientation the MWEA and AWWA presidents gave presentations about their organizations.
- Conference Resources Provided at the meeting:
  - Conference booklet
  - Conference App
  - Look Around- Golden Shovel (5S), DE&I Pins, Committee Ribbons
  - Registration Desk
  - Conference Ambassador
- Provided information about Water for People
• Provided information on how to get credit for your continuing education

OHIO WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
Presenter: Elizabeth Wick

COVID- What has stuck around OWEA besides the Virus

• OWEA received two rounds of Paycheck Protection Funding
• Covid Changes:
  o Canceling/Delay in-person classes
  o Added online learning options
  o In 2021, the One Water conference was in person and had a hybrid option
  o Host Online meeting
• Evaluation Changes
  o Virtual- Modified EC meeting duration time.
• Online Learning- Provides monthly webinars ($15.00)
• No longer host Executive Committee meetings on Zoom.
• COVID made OWEA partnerships stronger with the Ohio EPA, Governor’s Office, DAWWA and Vendors)
• COVID exposed the need for a large reserve.
• Since CVOID, they have added a clause that allows transfers for deposits
• COVID created many challenges and opportunities for MA’s