



Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work

Organizational Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Needs Assessment

Prepared by



Project Summary



- Data to produce this report was collected through the anonymous electronic surveys of 130 GWSCSW members and 44 one-on-one interviews with past and present members. Of those who volunteered to be interviewed:

- 40 identify as white (included in that number are members who also identify as Jewish),
- Four members identify as people of color with three identifying as BIPOC,
- Seven identify themselves as LGBT+ including two members who identify as transgender or nonbinary,
- 33 identify themselves as heterosexual and cisgender,
- Five members identify as men,
- 35 members identify as women.

Organizational Value



Most valued services:

- Professional Development CEU Events
- Education
- Meeting and networking with colleagues
- Legislative power
- Listserv
- Mentoring/New Member services (Cited by members 65 and over, three members under 65)

The Generation Gap



	Members 60 and Over	Members Under 60
Democracy within the Nonprofit	Vote for the board and trust their decisions will reflect membership	Vote for the board with the expectation their voices will be heard, considered, and reflected in board decisions
Diversity and Inclusion	Want more diversity among membership and feel it is one of several priorities.	Many ONLY want to participate in organizations with a diverse membership.
Volunteering	Choose whether to volunteer based on current systems	Want to build new models of volunteering that make it more feasible for busy professionals, as well as young parents
Inclusivity	Feel their views are heard and respected by the board and organizational leadership	Feel their views are often dismissed by the board and organizational leadership
Organizational Climate	Feel the organization is friendly and welcoming	Feel unwelcome by members and board 60 and over
Agism	Offended by language used to imply they are no longer relevant to the profession.	Offended by language used to imply that “young people” will come around to more traditional thinking as they mature.
Communication	Feel younger members expectations are too high for a member-led nonprofit.	Feel they have little voice in GWSCSW

Membership



- Many members under 60 ONLY want involvement organizations with diversity.
- Many members 60 and over want greater diversity, and feel it is one of many priorities.
- Younger members want the organization to be more welcoming to their input.
- Older members feel alienated by ageist language
- Younger members want new models of volunteering to make it more feasible for younger professionals and working parents.
- All members value social opportunities, with older members enjoying the current offerings and younger members seeking more casual and online opportunities.

Board Processes



Support for and trust in the work of the board of directors splits along generational lines :

Members 60 and Over

- Satisfied with the current board
- Feel included in the process

Members Under 60

- Want more updates
- Want more opportunities to engage
- Concerned about cliquishness and decisions based on interpersonal relationships

All Generations:

- Concerned about inclusivity and flexibility issues brought up last fall

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



- Need for demographic data
- Need for shared organizational language
- Need for voices from marginalized communities (populations)
- Need for policy around inclusivity
- Need more more community conversations and learning opportunities around bias and Antiracism

Communication



- Listserv is a powerful tool for information, but destructive tool for discussion
- Need for new forums for community discussions
- Need for norms and facilitation of communication to avoid hostility
- Need for a communications plan to diversify means of communicating

Newer Members



- Want more explicit language and efforts regarding social justice
- Want opportunities to engage in which they feel included as peers
- Feel commitment to social justice, antiracism, and antibias is essential for an organization

Recommendations



- Gather and track demographic information of membership.
- Poll members of marginalized communities as to their experiences with the Society, their expectations of the Society, and what can be done to make the society more attractive to their communities.
- Poll members under the age of 60 as to their experiences with the Society, their expectations of the Society, and what can be done to make the society more attractive to their communities.

Recommendations



- Develop affinity groups according to identity and other topics. (E.g., Transgender Social Workers Affinity Group, Hispanic Social Workers Affinity Group, etc.)
- Two- way mentorship providing a newer social worker with professional guidance and the older social worker with newer information and perspectives to stay culturally current.
- Develop new public forum for discussion of topics of concerns to members and for the board to gain input from members.
- Develop a communications plan to improve the quality and the frequency of communication within the society.

Recommendations



- Hold community conversations to gain input on specific ways to make volunteering more feasible for all members.
- Ensure that all links and pages of the website are operational and updated.
- Hold a community conversation specifically dedicated to the upheaval of last fall.
- Recruit multiple moderators selected to represent multiple communities to moderate the listserv.
- Hold community conversations, use polling apps, and use email to solicit suggestions from members to develop a set of norms and guidelines regarding community listserv use and expectations.

Recommendations



- Revise board bylaws to include board communication with membership, designated board and committee spaces for members of marginalized communities, and improvement of transparency of board work and decision making.
- Assemble an advisory committee made up of members from non-dominant cultures and marginalized communities to advise the board and organizational leadership on key decisions, language choices, and to interrogate planned statements, decisions, and outward facing processes and communication for unintended consequences and cultural competency.