



The AFS Approach: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Bias

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By: DIAG and Facing Our Biases

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AFS-USA Mission

AFS-USA works toward a more just and peaceful world by providing international and intercultural learning experiences to individuals, families, schools, and communities through a global volunteer partnership.



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Looking Ahead: Mission and Vision

- Becoming a more inclusive multicultural organization both individually and collectively
- Providing organization-wide volunteer, participant, host family, and staff trainings/education sessions
- Serving as a resource for individuals, communities, and organizations
- Collaborating with external organizations working on bias, diversity, and/or inclusion

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A Commitment to Diversity

Fostering inclusion is inherent to the AFS mission of creating a more just and peaceful world.



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Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group (DIAG)

The National Volunteer Assembly voted to establish the Diversity Committee now the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group to evaluate, monitor and implement diversity initiatives across the organization. The DIAG works with volunteers and staff to enhance diversity for AFS-USA, understanding our current student, host family, and volunteer demographics, and make recommendations for improving under-represented communities, so that AFS-USA reflects the country as a whole.

Objectives

- In 2014-2017, the initial focus of the DIAG will include involvement in the contributions to the implementation phase of strategic planning process number 3.
- The DIAG will focus on data collection, analysis, and interpretation, as well as research on best practices and demographic trends.

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Facing Our Biases (FoB) Project

Impact Statement

“Facing Our Biases” will guide individuals and AFS-USA to identify and work through all types of biases - anything that marginalizes people.

AFS-USA will be an authentic, effective resource to help people learn to overcome biases.

All efforts will reflect a consciousness of the need for our society to overcome bias, become more inclusive, and embrace diversity.

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Members of DIAG & FoB



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Volunteer and Staff Culture Survey Results

- 75% of White respondents generally indicated they did not feel bias exists at AFS. 25% of White respondents felt some level of bias
- Depending on the question, 40-60% of persons of color indicated that they experienced or witnessed bias in their interactions with AFS
- Throughout the comments on the volunteer survey, many people illustrated a lack of knowledge or understanding of what Bias, Equity and Inclusion are
- In the Capstone Project, approx. 54% of respondents felt Diversity is an issue
- 78% respondents stated that we are all responsible for participating in the solution

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Demographics of Volunteers

- Approximately 80% of volunteers are white and female
- Is AFS welcoming and inclusive to all types of volunteers?
- Do we provide diverse experiences to our participants?

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AFS-USA's Definition of Bias

A behavior or act – verbal, written, or physical – whether intended or not, which targets an individual or group based on perceived or actual characteristics, such as but not limited to: race; ethnic, national, or regional origin; predisposing genetic characteristics; color; alienage, or citizenship status; creed, or religious belief; partnership, or marital status; sexual orientation; sex, gender identity or expression; disability; age; status as a victim of domestic violence; or veteran, education, class, unemployment or socioeconomic status.

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Diversity Wheel



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Bias Response Policies - A Brief History

- 60 and 70's - Campus Civil Rights Movement
 - Affirmative Action
 - Students and greater society demand better response to discrimination on campuses
- 80's and 90's – Bias Response Policies at major universities are established
- 2000's – Becoming More Widely Popular

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Why AFS? Why Now?

- A plan to address the bias incidents that are already and will continue to occur
- A way to support witnesses and victims when experiencing bias, and to no longer tolerate those who foster bias
- A vehicle for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Education and Culture Change

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Key Aspects of our AFS Bias Response Policy (BRP)

- AFS USA's new policy is modeled after Vassar and Cornell's policies on Bias
- Universally enforced for all sectors of AFS – staff, volunteers etc.
- Bias Incident Response Team (BIRT) represent members from each sector of Organization

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Stay Tuned!

You will be hearing more about:

- How to report a bias incident
- What happens when you report the incident
- Confidentiality
- Education on next steps
- Link to BRP
- Formalizing and Training Bias incident response team (BIRT)

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Educational Resources and Trainings

- Webinars for volunteers
- HR all staff training on Bias, Harassment, Discrimination
- Including diversity, inclusion, and bias content in training and orientations

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What does my headscarf mean to you?

Yassmin Abdel-Magied TED Talk



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What is Implicit Bias?

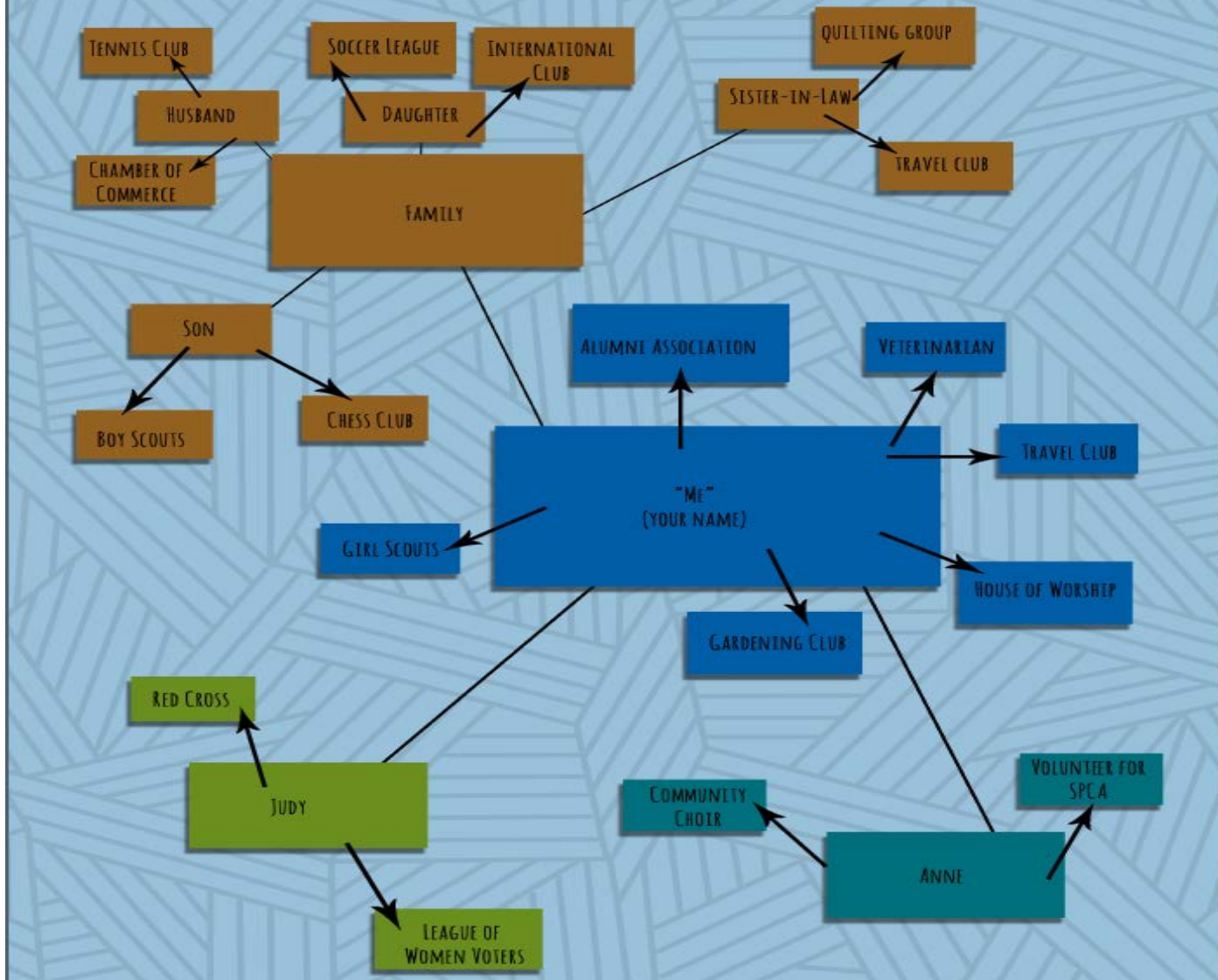
“...Biases are the stories we make up about people before we know who they actually are...”
– Verna Myers



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My Personal Network



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My Personal Network

Here's how it works:

Start with your existing network

Think of all the people you know; activities in which you participate; organizations to which you, family or friends belong; other volunteer activities, etc.

Now sketch your own network below



“ME”

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My Friends Exercise

X - Similar; 0 - Different

Person	Ethnicity	Age	Education	Religion	Marital Status	Gender	Language	Sexual Orientation
me								

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Best Practices for Developing Cultures of Inclusion- Individual

- Question you own assumptions about others
- Acknowledge your own reactions, biases, and assumptions, and the feelings they generate
- Intentionally spend time and develop friendships with others different from you
- Read books and watch movies from other cultural perspectives
- Intentionally seek out different perspectives and views when planning, problem solving, and making decisions
- Challenge stereotypic comments, bias and assumptions you encounter
- Let people know that ethnic, gender, racial, religious, etc. jokes and comments are off limits.

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Best Practices for Developing Cultures of Inclusion- Individual

- Ask yourself and others the UB questions: Would I/we be making the same choice or decision if the person was of a different group?
- Respectfully ask for permission to share feedback when you see or hear someone do something exclusionary; assume good intention, but share how behavior affected you
- Join or volunteer with an organization that represents a population with which you have little or no experience
- Ask others who are different from you (visibly and invisibly) how you could behave that would feel more inclusive to them. Listen to their answers without being defensive and thank them for being willing to give you feedback

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Best Practices for Developing Cultures of Inclusion- Team

- Mentor people different from you in some significant dimensions of diversity; become allies to each other
- Solicit and use varied viewpoints, ideas, and perspectives in team decisions and projects
- Avoid polarized either/or thinking by looking for additional options
- Walk the talk of valuing differences in feedback, promotions, rewards, and project assignments
- Engage volunteers in discussions about diversity and inclusion and their impact on the team

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Best Practices for Developing Cultures of Inclusion- Team

- Describe team values/norms/rules/in behavioral terms, not concepts, so new members will understand specific expectations
- Make time to share personal stories so team members know each other as individuals, not just “roles”
- If your team is not all co-located and/or global, schedule meeting at times that respects time differences and personal obligations (e.g., commutes, time zones, family obligations)
- Ask routinely what the team could do to feel more inclusive for each individual
- Provide information in several formats (written/oral) to accommodate different learning styles

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We Challenge You to Mentor

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Thank You for Joining Us!

Questions?

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