



CUAHSI Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan Preface

Dear Friends:

CUAHSI recently completed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic plan. The plan was developed by an *ad hoc* committee of the Board of Directors. Contributors included: CUAHSI Board members Jeanne vanBriesen (chair), Beth Boyer, Alejandro Flores, Michael Gooseff, Holly Michael, and Gretchen Miller; at-large members Salli Dymond (Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota Duluth), Teamrat Ghezzehei (Associate Professor, University of California, Merced), Kaylyn Gootman (Post-Doctoral Fellow, West Virginia University), Julia Guimond (Graduate Student, University of Delaware), Kevin Roche (Post-Doctoral Fellow, University of Notre Dame), Shandin Pete (Instructor, Salish Kootenai College), Marcelo Somos-Valenzuela (Assistant Professor, University of La Frontera, Chile), and Liz Tran (former CUAHSI staff).

CUAHSI is committed to ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion are core values reflected in our internal culture and practices. Our vision is that CUAHSI's commitment to DEI will strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration among water scientists by fostering the integration of diverse ideas and perspectives in the hydrologic sciences. The strategic plan seeks to align CUAHSI's DEI strategy with our overall strategic planning process and to coordinate DEI analysis and actions throughout CUAHSI programming.

The goals of the CUAHSI Strategic DEI Plan are to (1) increase the diversity of CUAHSI members and member representatives, leadership in CUAHSI activities, and participants in CUAHSI activities; (2) increase equity in all CUAHSI programs and activities; and (3) increase inclusion in all CUAHSI programs and activities. These are challenging goals and we will need the support of the entire community in achieving these goals.

We welcome your thoughts on this strategic plan, as well as your thoughts on the implementation plan now under development, including strategies for achieving our goals and for measuring progress. Please send your comments to DEI@cuahsi.org.

Jerad Bales
Executive Director, CUAHSI
February 23, 2020

CUAHSI Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Introduction

CUAHSI's strategic plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a first step to align the DEI strategy with CUAHSI's strategic planning process and to coordinate DEI analysis and action throughout CUAHSI programming. Diversity is defined by the full spectrum of personal attributes, cultural affiliations, and professional or socioeconomic statuses that characterize individuals' identities¹. Inclusion is about all members of a community, regardless of these identities, feeling valued and welcomed². Equity focuses on ensuring access to the same opportunities for all our community members. Consistent with our scientific peer and related organizations (e.g., AGU), we believe advancing diversity, equity and inclusion within our scientific organizations and professions will require iterative actions and evaluation.³ Following the example of the National Science Foundation (NSF), we believe this plan provides shared direction, encourages commitment, and creates alignment⁴ so that CUAHSI can coordinate and collaborate with the many organizations focused on diversity, equity and inclusion. Further, we are committed to developing structures and strategies that institutionalize a culture of inclusion and equity so that the success of these initiatives is sustainable within CUAHSI.

Background and Charge

In January 2019, the CUAHSI Board of Directors created the ad hoc committee for Diversity and Inclusion and created the following charge to the committee:

- Review the current state of the CUAHSI Diversity and Inclusion policy and practices, the policies and practices of other professional/scholarly societies, and the needs of CUAHSI members;
- Develop a CUAHSI Policy on Diversity and Inclusion to reflect the above needs, and to include working definition for diversity and inclusion for CUAHSI;
- Review diversity participation in all facets of CUAHSI activities;
- Review and recommend additional areas for CUAHSI to provide increased support and measures of effectiveness for a more robust CUAHSI diversity and inclusion program;
- Recommend any additional considerations for CUAHSI to inform and engage its members more broadly on the issues of diversity and inclusion.

In April 2019, as part of the CUAHSI Cooperative Agreement funding from the NSF, CUAHSI was charged with producing a Strategic Plan for Diversity by the end of 2019 and an Implementation Plan based on that Strategic Plan in 2020. The charge from the Board of

¹ Attributes may include, but are not limited to, "characteristics such as national origin, language, race, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, educational background, and family structures. The concept of diversity also encompasses differences among people concerning where they are from and where they have lived and their differences in thought and life experiences." NSF, 2012. In addition, CUAHSI also identifies as a core value consideration of diversity of professional experiences, expertise, employment sector, and professional career stage.

² Inclusion is defined as having a culture that connects each individual to the organization; "encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; and leverages diversity throughout the organization so that all individuals are able to participate and contribute to their full potential."

³ These concepts are consistent with remarks by AGU President Eric Davidson.

⁴ National Science Foundation's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2012-2016

Directors (above) incorporates components of both the Strategic Plan and the Implementation Plan. The present document is the Strategic Plan only.

Vision and Mission

The Consortium of Universities for the Advancement of Hydrologic Science, Inc. (CUAHSI) is committed to ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are core values reflected in our internal culture and practices. We support inclusivity and oppose discrimination of any kind, including that which is based on race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, language, political opinion, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, and socioeconomic status. Further, we support broad inclusion of colleagues across career stages, experience level, expertise, employment sector and professional background. We will take concrete steps to fulfil this mission by addressing the objectives described below, and we pledge to quantify, monitor, and report our progress to CUAHSI members.

Our vision is that this commitment to DEI will strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration among water scientists fostering the integration of diverse ideas and perspectives in the hydrologic sciences. Further, our work will expand public awareness of the complex hydrological challenges of the 21st century and empower members of an increasingly diverse society to identify and address these challenges. Our commitment to DEI strengthens the basic tenets of CUAHSI's mission and core values as described in the CUAHSI Strategic Plan⁵.

Strategic Goals

The goals of the CUAHSI Strategic Diversity Plan are to (1) increase the diversity of CUAHSI members and member representatives, leadership in CUAHSI activities, and participants in CUAHSI activities; (2) increase equity in all CUAHSI programs and activities; and (3) increase inclusion in all CUAHSI programs and activities. As a strategic plan, the present document provides vision and strategic goals, leaving specific implementation and programming steps to subsequent plans. However, there are key actions CUAHSI will immediately undertake to support the development of an implementation plan. Thus, within each goal, short-term actions are described as well as potential approaches for longer term implementation.

Goal 1. Deepen knowledge in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within CUAHSI leadership.

Change is not rapid, and research on diversity suggests maintaining active focus and accountability on expectations of change is necessary for progress. Ongoing efforts across scientific fields are likely to yield new analysis and synthesis with respect to interventions that work. For example, the National Academies has an ongoing project, [Addressing the Underrepresentation of Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine](#), with a report due out in 2020. The National Science Foundation has funded multiple projects in the [Inclusion across the Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science \(INCLUDES\) Initiative as well as in its Organizational Change for Gender Equity in STEM Academic Professions \(ADVANCE\) Program](#). CUAHSI will follow the results of these (and other) projects and activities and incorporate best practices identified through these efforts into its planning. This will require both board and staff attention. While DEI is everyone's job, an initial action will be to identify a lead staff member who will be responsible for considering DEI

⁵ CUAHSI Strategic Plan: <https://www.cuahsi.org/library/strategic-plans/>

issues within each programmatic area. The board may also want to convert the ad hoc Diversity and Inclusion committee to a standing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee.

Goal 2. Expand understanding of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion among CUAHSI staff and volunteers.

It is important that CUAHSI staff and leadership understand the value of DEI to the organization. CUAHSI staff will identify relevant and appropriate DEI training and will be trained on best practices to enhance DEI. Onboarding of new Directors will include DEI training, and CUAHSI expectations for DEI will be provided to all CUAHSI program participants. As an example of training available, the Earth Science Women’s Network (ESWN)⁶ developed bystander intervention workshops for scientists to combat harassment and bullying in science. They are particularly focused on harassment that occurs in informal science settings – laboratories, field sites, ships, planes, etc. They are working on ‘train the trainer’ workshops, which could be leveraged to expand their reach to partners, including CUAHSI. Workshop information at: <https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/workshops/index.html>

Goal 3. Expand membership to include a broader range of academic institutions.

According to the CUAHSI bylaws, full CUAHSI membership is available to institutions with “graduate degree programs in hydrologic sciences;” other academic institutions are eligible for associate member status. We expect this was originally intended to emphasize the organization’s commitment to support the research enterprise. CUAHSI has grown sufficiently and the science community has evolved to a point such that this limited access to full membership is no longer appropriate. By continuing to limit membership in such a way, CUAHSI may be inadvertently sending the message to undergraduate-focused (including two-year schools) and minority-serving institutions that they are considered lesser and not fully qualified to participate in CUAHSI activities. Deeper inclusion of such institutions will serve the entire community in multiple ways including better connecting a more diverse group of students to potential graduate school opportunities, expanding CUAHSI’s educational outreach activities, and uptake of CUAHSI services by a wider pool of students and faculty. The CUAHSI board will propose a bylaws change to the CUAHSI membership to allow increased inclusivity. In parallel with this structural change, longer-term actions will include targeted outreach activities to build membership among minority-serving institutions.

Goal 4. Develop new targeted programs to increase diversity within the CUAHSI community.

Successful activities and programs related to diversity in the geosciences have been documented (e.g., [Promoting Geoscience Research, and Success, PROGRESS](#))⁷ and often include activities specifically designed to increase connections among junior professionals or pre-professionals and more senior role models and mentors. Similarly, programs like RESESS ([Research Experiences in Solid Earth Science for Students](#)), are dedicated to increasing the diversity of the geoscience workforce by supporting students from historically under-represented groups.

⁶ ESWN is a peer-to-peer mentoring network. <https://eswnonline.org>

⁷ Hernandez, P.R., Bloodhart, B., Barnes, RT, Adams, AS, Clinton, SM, Pollack, I., Godfrey, E., Burt, M., Fischer, EV (2017) Promoting professional identity, motivation, and persistence: benefits of an informal mentoring program for female undergraduate students, PLoS ONE 12(11):e0187531. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0187531>

CUAHSI's role as a professional organization gives it an important capacity to engage in this type of targeted development of connections among scientists with different backgrounds and from diverse communities. CUAHSI will reach out to potential partner organizations to begin discussions of collaborative engagement. In the longer term, CUAHSI will, in partnership with the community, evaluate the feasibility of a mentoring program that pairs scientists from the CUAHSI community with students from under-represented groups, which may require additional funds. CUAHSI will also seek funding to support a new fellowship program to enable under-represented students to attend CUAHSI programs.

In parallel with targeted programs to increase diversity, CUAHSI will consider how a focus on DEI can be woven into existing programs (e.g. Pathfinders, Summer Institute, etc.), such that DEI is an integral component of all CUAHSI activities and is woven into the fabric of the organization.

Goal 5. Raise awareness of DEI issues in the CUAHSI community.

CUAHSI's mission is "to advance water science by strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration in the water science community, to empower the community by providing critical infrastructure, and to promote education in the water sciences at all levels⁸." The building blocks of this mission are the foundation of an inclusive community. By raising the awareness of the CUAHSI community to issues around DEI in hydrological sciences, CUAHSI can further strengthen, educate, and empower the community. Stronger community and interdisciplinary collaborations can be achieved by refining CUAHSI's own policies and practices such that the CUAHSI community and CUAHSI's programs can become more inclusive and equitable. This goal will be supported by specific programming, such as a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion session at CUAHSI conferences, workshops and cyberseminars on an aspect of diversity in hydrology (e.g., tribal water rights), workshops on integrating diversity within hydrologic teaching or mentoring, and hosting bystander training. As noted for goal 4, CUAHSI will seek funding to provide financial support to help enable the success of students from underrepresented and under-resourced backgrounds.

Goal 6. Increase inclusion and equity in CUAHSI programming.

Many conferences and organizations have developed codes of conduct for their scientific meetings designed to create safe, open, and professional environments and to support the respectful, inclusive and equitable treatment of all participants (e.g., AGU⁹, Gordon Research Conferences¹⁰). These codes remind participants that treating others with respect and avoiding discriminatory, exclusionary, or harassing behaviors is expected. Such policies provide clear guidance with regard to expectations and are backed up by a set of policies and procedures to manage violations (e.g., AGU's Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy)¹¹. An important component of both equity and inclusion efforts is to ensure diverse participation in panels and speaking components of programs. As noted by Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the National Institutes of Health, "too often, women and members of groups underrepresented in

⁸ CUAHSI Strategic Plan: <https://www.cuahsi.org/library/strategic-plans/>

⁹ AGU Meetings Code of Conduct, <https://fallmeeting.agu.org/2018/agu-meetings-code-of-conduct/>

¹⁰ Gordon Research Conferences "Inappropriate Behavior Policy," <https://www.grc.org/about/grc-policies-and-legal-disclaimers/>

¹¹ AGU Ethics Policy, updated September 2017, <https://ethics.agu.org/files/2013/03/Scientific-Integrity-and-Professional-Ethics.pdf>

science are conspicuously missing in the marquee speaking slots at scientific meetings and other high-level conferences.”¹² Addressing these issues is important not only to support equity, but also to support inclusivity. When people see and/or hear others like themselves succeeding or included in high profile roles at meetings and conferences, their sense of inclusion (or belonging) increases.¹³ Speaking invitations for CUAHSI programs (e.g., Biennial keynotes, cyberseminars) are issued by a wide range of CUAHSI members and volunteers. Ensuring such invitations are inclusive and that these events support a sense of belonging among all CUAHSI members requires a proactive approach. CUAHSI will ensure that all event organizers are aware of the relevant information with respect to this issue by providing the [Guide to Organizing Inclusive Meetings](#),¹⁴ and CUAHSI will ask each organizer to provide details of how they considered this in their planning. CUAHSI will strive to make online materials, workshops, tools, and field experiences accessible to people with disabilities. As noted in Goal 2, CUAHSI staff will identify relevant and appropriate DEI training and will be trained on best practices to enhance DEI. Onboarding of new Directors will include DEI training, and CUAHSI expectations for DEI will be provided to all CUAHSI program participants, especially including selection committees.

Metrics of Progress

We will collect baseline data from which we can identify meaningful metrics that can subsequently be used to measure progress on CUAHSI’s DEI goals. We anticipate that this analysis of baseline data will support the development of the CUAHSI Diversity Equity and Inclusion Implementation Plan in 2020. The baseline data collection will be retrospective. We will review CUAHSI records and to the extent possible identify the following: gender identity, country of origin, ethnicity, affiliated organization, and career stage. Because this data collection is retrospective, it is likely that records will be incomplete. Nevertheless, the data analysis should provide a sense of diversity in CUAHSI activities during the last approximately 18 years. As part of the Implementation Plan, we will identify appropriate measures that should be collected in the future to provide metrics of DEI in CUAHSI activities. Ultimately, we intend to use these metrics to inform decision-making on leadership recruitment, programming, awards through reports to the CUAHSI Board of Directors, members, NSF, and the community.

¹² Collins, FS., (2019) “Time to End the Manel Tradition.” <https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/who-we-are/nih-director/statements/time-end-manel-tradition>

¹³Good, C., Rattan, A, and Dweck, CS (2012) Why do women opt out? Sense of belonging and women’s representation in mathematics, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102(3): 700-717. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0026659>

¹⁴ Guide to Organizing Inclusive Meetings, <https://500womenscientists.org/inclusive-scientific-meetings>