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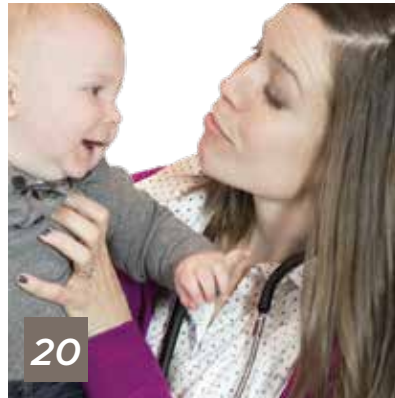
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FORUM MAGAZINE ONLINE

If you're interested in more exciting content from Association Forum, head to *FORUM Magazine Online* at forummagazine.org. Along with reading current and past *FORUM* articles, members can access exclusive content relating to each new issue. For the Sep/Oct issue, you can read more about Hilton's journey and commitment to a Welcoming Environment.

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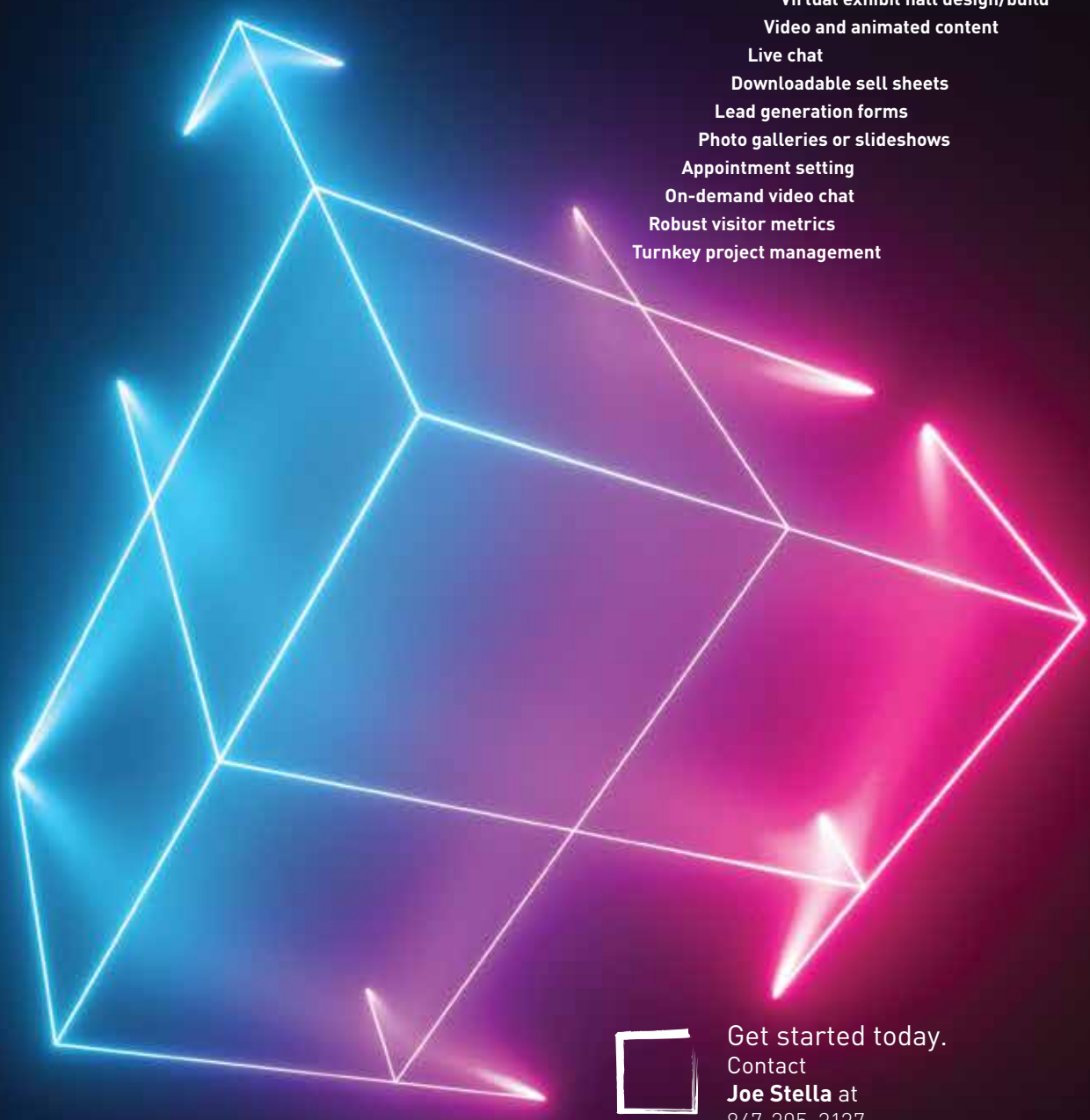
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MICHELLE MASON, FASAE, CAE

PRESIDENT AND CEO
ASSOCIATION FORUM

WHAT IS A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT®?

Association Forum defines a Welcoming Environment as an environment that installs a sense of belonging and connectedness and engages individuals in an authentic manner. An environment in which uniqueness is valued, respected and supported through opportunities and interaction. By welcoming the thoughts and ideas of those from diverse backgrounds, we can approach the challenges of tomorrow in new and creative ways.

We Are a Rich Tapestry

The September/October issue of *FORUM* is one of my favorites. Its primary focus is on Welcoming Environment®. Over the years, we have engaged members and stakeholders in our Welcoming Environment initiative. It started organically and has evolved into a movement of belonging and connectedness in the association community. Members want to be respected, valued and have their voices heard. The environment we create communicates our beliefs about the people we serve. This environment and the way we treat each other, as well as the way we offer services, are critical aspects of our work to increase access to all who are passionate about associations.

Association Forum has always understood that we are an organization where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. That is the fundamental purpose for inclusion — to optimize for the maximum benefit of the whole. We work well together as a community because of our differences, not despite them. Through this, we leverage our collective potential to impact society.

As we think about our role in the race-relations dialogue, we have a call to action. The global dialogue on racial injustice has accelerated us to be held more accountable for supporting the eradication of racism in America and viewing this as a corporate social responsibility. Associations touch every aspect of society: from the trades to supply chains to standards to healthcare and more. Associations advance the world. How will we leverage this moment?

The next generation is developing in one of the most diverse and technologically advanced times in modern history. These leaders are telling us through their behaviors — protest and advocacy — that they want change and expect our actions to demonstrate that today. We will not always be perfect in our pursuit of racial accord; however, we must continue to have the uncomfortable and transparent conversations on implicit and unconscious bias, racial inequity, and diversity on leadership teams and boards of directors. These conversations must lead to change.

What actions can we take together?

A start is to create a Welcoming Environment, where your staff, members and stakeholders feel comfortable addressing tough issues and expressing opinions that honor their uniqueness and stretch you to think in a different way. Diversity and inclusion are linked, however, not the same. You can't excel in one while ignoring the other. Diversity points to the traits and characteristics that make us unique, and inclusion is the behaviors and social norms that allow us to feel welcomed.

We learned in our Welcoming Environment research (released in July) that members and staff reported their associations have not been successful at having diverse leadership and weaving inclusion into daily communications. Members and staff both responded "least likely to agree" when asked if their associations create opportunities for inclusion-focused events and that inclusion is integrated into everyday behaviors in the association.

I'm curious, how do you think your members and staff will respond to this key finding? **E**

“We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color.”

—MAYA ANGELOU

As part of our efforts to provide a Welcoming Environment® for our members, we are providing a copy of our Core Values translated into **Arabic** by Interpro Translation Solutions, Inc.

كجزء من الجهود التي نبذلها لتوفير Welcoming Environment® لأعضائنا، نوفر نسخة مترجمة إلى اللغة العربية من وثيقة القيم الجوهرية الخاصة بنا مقدمة من شركة Interpro Translation Solutions.

Be a Welcoming Environment

We are a welcoming environment that actively seeks to enhance the larger community by recognizing the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. We will make everyone who interacts with us feel welcomed, represented, engaged, inspired and empowered.

توفير بيئة ذات حفاوة

نوفر بيئة ذات حفاوة تسعى بفاعلية إلى تعزيز المجتمع الأكبر عبر الاعتراف بأن الاتحاد خيرٌ من التفرقة. سنجعل كل من يتعامل معنا يشعر بالحفاوة والتمثيل والمشاركة والإلهام والتمكين.

Embrace Innovation and Quality

We love to try new ideas and seek inspiration from inside and outside the association community—we value improvements big and small. Experimenting with breakthroughs is encouraged and celebrated; however, we know when to pull the plug. We aim to continuously improve.

تبني الابتكار والجودة

نستمتع بتنفيذ الأفكار الجديدة، كما نسعى إلى الإلهام من داخل مجتمع الرابطة وخارجه—فنحن نُقدّر التحسينات كبيرةً وصغيرةً. يتم تشجيع التجارب التي تتضمن أوجه تقدم ويُحتفى بها؛ ومع ذلك، نعلم متى ننسحب. نهدف إلى التطور المستمر.

Have Fun and Stay Positive

It's a fact that you generally spend more time with your co-workers than you do with your own family. We strive to make our work environment one that is fun, positive and an overall great place to work.

الاستمتاع والتخلي بالإيجابية

في حقيقة الأمر، إنك تقضي وقتاً مع زملائك في العمل أطول من الوقت الذي تقضيه مع عائلتك. لذلك نسعى جاهدين إلى جعل بيئة عملنا بيئة ممتعة، وإيجابية، ومقر رائع للعمل بشكل عام.

Open and Honest Communication and Teamwork

You don't know what you don't know! Effective communication is key. We shall cultivate an environment where we speak openly, honestly and with the goal of building a better team. Candor is constructively embraced. We will work collaboratively to deliver value to members.

التواصل المفتوح والصادق والعمل الجماعي

إنك لا تعلم ما تجهله! التواصل الفعال أمر لا غنى عنه. علينا أن نخلق بيئة تُعزز الحديث المفتوح والصريح بهدف بناء فريق أفضل. يتم تبني الصراحة بطريقة بناءة. سنعمل معاً لنقل القيم إلى الأعضاء.

Accountability—Own It

We hold each other accountable and expect people to respectfully ask questions and raise concerns. Because work requires interdependent teams and collaboration, we will trust and depend on each other to be responsive and to deliver value and quality services to stakeholders.

المساءلة-حافظ عليها

نحن نضع بعضنا البعض في موضع المساءلة، ونتوقع من الأشخاص طرح الأسئلة وإثارة التساؤلات باحترام. حيث يتطلب العمل فرقاً مترابطة ومتعاونة، سنتق في بعضنا البعض ويعتمد كل منا على الآخر لكي نكون مستجيبين ولكي ننقل القيم وخدمات الجودة إلى أصحاب المصلحة.

Win with Integrity

We operate ethically, contributing our time, talents and know-how to advance our communities where we work and live. We commit to growing our association in ways that benefit the environment and society.

الفوز بنزاهة

نعمل بشكل أخلاقي، ونساهم بوقتنا ومواهبنا ودرائتنا لتطوير مجتمعاتنا حيث نعمل ونعيش. نلتزم بتنمية رابطتنا بطرق تفيد البيئة والمجتمع.

Forging New Paths

ASSOCIATIONS WORK TIRELESSLY TO BECOME CHAMPIONS OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

While many associations have prioritized creating diverse, equitable and inclusive environments, leadership teams know the task is far from complete. Here is a glimpse into the plans of some organizations on the forefront of meaningful change:

“ACHE has prioritized our commitment to diversity and inclusion for over 20 years. With the recent elevation of societal injustices, we have reinforced our commitment to improve and expand our efforts. While it would be easier to launch immediate new initiatives that react to the current crisis, we want to ensure our next steps produce sustainable, meaningful outcomes. At its July meeting, the ACHE Board of Governors and leadership team will address our strategy for moving forward in a timely fashion.”

— CIE ARMSTEAD, DBA, DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION, AMERICAN COLLEGE OF HEALTHCARE EXECUTIVES



“CCIM Institute believes that, together, we can create a future where racial injustice, oppression and inopportunity are relegated to the past. When it comes to supporting the diverse group of association professionals who make up our team, that means doubling down on our commitment to pay equity, inclusive hiring practices and developing a culture where marginalized voices play a key role in advancing the industry we serve.”

— ALEXANDREA HANBA, VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS, CCIM INSTITUTE



“The Society of Actuaries (SOA) will take on several efforts to champion a more diverse, equitable and inclusive organization. Our efforts will include:

- Addition of resources focused on improving the diversity of the profession and our organization, and training of our staff and volunteers to recognize and combat the effects of unconscious bias and racism wherever they may appear.
- Development of a focused and nimble executive-level team reporting to our board of directors. This team works with and supports our existing work on the Joint Committee on Inclusion, Equity and Diversity with the Casualty Actuarial Society — one of our sister organizations.
- Our ongoing actuarial research to focus on issues unique to communities of color in America, including topics such as retirement security, access to healthcare and outcomes of healthcare expenditures, and social determinants of life expectancy.
- Increased educational programs focused on issues of racism.
- Education to prevent unintentional bias in big data and models in insurance — areas in which our members work.
- Increased financial support of partner organizations to increase the number and proportion of diverse people in the U.S. actuarial profession.
- Transparency about our work on diversity, equity and inclusion, so we are accountable for the progress being made on all these efforts.”

— SOA



“As part of the objectives to address the issue of membership inclusion, the ILCMA Board established an ad hoc task force with the goal to identify barriers to the participation of women and minorities in the local government profession and the association, and to work with the association to implement actions to reduce these barriers.

Some tasks that might be undertaken by the task force include:

- Gathering input from women, minorities and other underrepresented local government employees to better define the barriers to entry and advancement within the local government management profession.
- Exploring similar initiatives being undertaken by ICMA or other associations of municipal professionals (IGFOA, APWA, APA, IPELRA, IL Chiefs of Police, IL Fire Chiefs, etc.) to identify best practices and seek ways to collaborate.
- Identifying actions that can be taken by individual members, affiliate groups or member communities to reduce barriers to inclusion and to make ILCMA membership more welcoming and supportive of women members, minority members and other underrepresented groups.
- Reporting recommendations to the board of directors and general membership to advance the mission, vision and goals of the strategic plan relating to member-inclusion.”

— DAWN PETERS, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF THE IL CITY/COUNTY
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION AND
WI CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION



“In our recent statement about righting the wrongs of racial inequality, APA publicly recognized the role the planning profession has played in perpetuating discrimination historically. We believe this is the time to demonstrate humility in leadership as we advance a strong commitment to creating great communities for all people. Our focus now is on taking relevant, problem-solving action and sharing resources, so our members can better address systemic inequities in their daily work.

As part of our long-term strategy to center equity, APA is proud to continue our learning journey as cosponsor of Association Forum’s Welcoming Environment® research; we’ll keep working with our own chapters, volunteers, staff and elected leadership to activate meaningful change at every level of our organization.”

— MIKE WELCH, DIRECTOR
OF LEADERSHIP,
AMERICAN PLANNING
ASSOCIATION



American Planning Association
Creating Great Communities for All

An Expert Checklist.

If your association is working to improve DE&I but could use some guidance on how to make the most impact, Association Forum’s Welcoming Environment Best Practices outline the ideal targets for strategic priorities, governance structure, as well as membership and programs. Visit associationforum.org/diversitybestpractices to read the full list.

A Landmark Decision

EXAMINING THE U.S. SUPREME COURT'S LGBTQ EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION RULING

BY TIMOTHY A. FRENCH

Q: I understand that the Supreme Court recently decided a case expanding the scope of employment discrimination laws. How might that affect associations?

A: A recent Supreme Court decision determined that federal law prohibits employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or transgender status. The decision affects any association with employees and may have broader implications.

Last June, in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination against a person for being homosexual or transgender. Title VII states that it is "unlawful for an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge



TIMOTHY A. FRENCH, JD

CHICAGO LAW PARTNERS, LLC

any individual, or otherwise discriminate against any individual with respect to compensation, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.”

Each of the three plaintiffs in the consolidated cases before the Supreme Court had been fired, notwithstanding their good employment records, after their employers learned that they were gay or transgender. The employees challenged those firings under Title VII. The question for the court was whether unlawful discrimination because of “sex” includes sexual orientation and gender identity. The court first noted that a discriminatory firing is prohibited if the termination would not have happened “but for” the prohibited cause. According to the court, an employer cannot avoid liability just by citing some other factor that contributed to its challenged employment decision. As long as the employee’s sex represented one reason for the decision, the law is triggered.

The court next addressed the fundamental issue, i.e., whether firing someone for being gay or transgender necessarily involves a firing “because of sex.” The court concluded that it does. In reaching that conclusion, the court reasoned that firing someone for being homosexual implicitly involves terminating that person for engaging in conduct that would be tolerated in a person of a different sex. Firing a male employee because he is gay, for example, amounts to firing a man for being attracted to other men, behavior that would not be cause for termination if the employee were a woman. Similarly, terminating the employment of an individual because they are a transgender female (an individual assigned the male sex at birth who has transitioned to


living and working as a female) amounts to firing that employee for exhibiting the traits of a woman, behavior that would not be cause for termination if the employee were assigned the female sex at birth.

The court concluded that “an employer who intentionally treats a person worse because of sex – such as firing the person for actions or attributes it would tolerate in an individual of another sex – discriminates against that person in violation of Title VII.” Thus, the

court found, “it is impossible to discriminate against a person for being homosexual or transgender without discriminating against that individual based on sex.”

The court’s holding that Title VII, a federal law, prohibits employment discrimination against a person for being homosexual or transgender is a landmark decision because it significantly alters the employment landscape in the United States. Prior to the court’s decision, employers in 27 states could have fired an employee because the employee was gay or transgender. That was true notwithstanding the Supreme Court’s 2015 decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which struck down state laws banning gay marriage. Consequently, until this past June, a gay employee in a state without employment law protections for sexual orientation and gender identity legally could marry their partner on a Saturday but then legally be fired by their employer on the basis of their sexual orientation the following Monday. That is no longer the case. It is now unlawful in every state for an employer to discriminate against an employee because the employee is gay or transgender.

The practical ramifications of the court’s decision are straightforward in the sense that it is now against federal law for an employer to discriminate against gay and transgender people in an employment context. Employers need to review their employee handbooks and workplace notices to ensure that they reflect this latest development in federal law.

The broader implications of the court’s landmark ruling, however, are less clear. For example, the court did not consider whether employers need to ensure that transgender employees are allowed to use the washrooms or locker rooms of their choice; whether dress codes need to change; or whether religiously-affiliated employers will be held to strict account under Title VII if they assert that the tenets of their faith are not compatible with gay or transgender employees. The court also did not address discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity outside the employment context (e.g., with respect to membership decisions or health care benefits). Those circumstances simply were not part of the record under review by the court in *Bostock*. For now, then, employers must rely on state laws and regulations, lower court decisions and commentary for guidance on those issues. 

THIS LAW REVIEW WAS WRITTEN BY TIMOTHY A. FRENCH AND EDITED BY JED MANDEL, BOTH OF WHOM ARE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF CHICAGO LAW PARTNERS, LLC. CLP SERVES AS THE ASSOCIATION FORUM’S GENERAL COUNSEL.





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FOCUS

In this rapidly changing world, one thing is certain: a Welcoming Environment® is more important than ever. The next pages will reveal ways to connect with and embrace your members and teams for lasting, authentic connection.

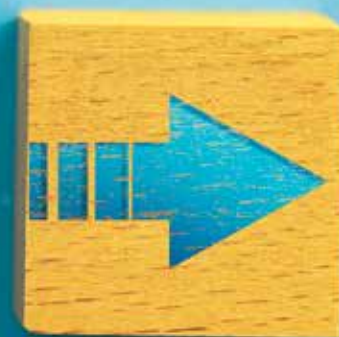
“We want to be a catalyst for change, and we want this research to spark action within the community. But first, we knew we had to look inward at our organizations and find what is working and what could be improved.”

Fueling the Journey, pg. 12

“We showed the members as the hero, in the center of our brand. We said, ‘You ARE our brand,’ and it showed the AAP and its members are one and the same.”

The Real Deal, pg. 20

OPEN TO CHANGE



“From remote working to wellness reimbursement to increased focus on equity, employers are striving to be more welcoming.”

Return on Investment, pg. 26

Fueling the Journey

Association Forum's
groundbreaking Welcoming
Environment® research

By Kim Kelly, CAE



Image: Apola/iStock Collection via gettyimages.com

When Michelle Mason, CEO of Association Forum, talks about a Welcoming Environment®, she describes it as a journey. There

is not an organization around that has completed the work. Rather, we are all at different places on this quest, and there are things that can be done to improve our organizations, our memberships and our leadership. This journey informed the concept of a Welcoming Environment.

Association Forum coined the term to describe the creation of a sense of belonging and connectedness that engages individuals in an authentic manner in which uniqueness is valued, respected and supported through opportunities and interaction. Creating a Welcoming Environment drives deeper engagement and increased participation with the association community and will ultimately increase revenue and build sustainable relationships.

You've probably heard these efforts referred to as diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I), but a Welcoming Environment is even broader — encompassing both the efforts involved and the results. Research shows that creating a Welcoming Environment improves business outcomes. In a study of tech firms, published in June 2020 in the *Academy of Management Journal*, researchers found that firms with high levels of diversity in both upper management and lower management achieved the greatest levels of productivity. The research also showed that groups with less racial diversity were less capable of making good business decisions, absorbing information and obtaining a competitive advantage.

**JON HOCKMAN**MCKINLEY
ADVISORS**DJ JOHNSON,**
IOM, CAE

AHWONN

**JOEL ALBIZO,**
FASAE

APA

Why Now?

Creating a Welcoming Environment has been a part of Association Forum's core values for years. We trademarked the term in 2018 and have developed an online resource kit for association staff to leverage within their own organizations. Each year, we devote an issue of our magazine to the topic of Welcoming Environment. We also host live events around the topic, including our annual national summit. Even with all these efforts, we wanted more. We want to be a catalyst for change, and we want this research to spark action within the community. But first, we knew we had to look inward at our organizations and find what is working and what could be improved. So we embarked on a groundbreaking study, partnering with association consulting firm McKinley Advisors to conduct research in the fall of 2019. Results were compiled and presented in the spring of 2020.

"Association Forum deeply believes in creating a Welcoming Environment, and we knew that this work was urgent," says Mason. Then, amidst the coronavirus pandemic, the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor sparked a resurgence in the Black Lives Matter movement. Protests sprouted up in cities big and small across the United States. Both corporate and nonprofit organizations scrambled to support the movement, and social media has exploded with ways people from all ethnic backgrounds can support the Black community.

"Hopefully we've learned in the last few weeks that we have to lean into the discomfort here," says Jon Hockman, principal of McKinley Advisors. "There are some ugly truths all around, but there's also responsibility and an opportunity to do things differently. If it were easy to do, it would have been done a long time ago."

DJ Johnson, IOM, CAE, is the vice president of membership and volunteer engagement for the Association for Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AHWONN) and has more than 20 years of association experience. He agrees that this work cannot wait. "When it comes to diversity, equity and inclusion, it's never a one-and-done conversation," he says. "My hope is that AHWONN will participate in this survey or a similar one annually in perpetuity so that we have some kind of tool to benchmark how our members feel about us and how our members perceive these issues."

Whether your organization has just begun this journey, or your

team is on the path and not sure where to go next, you'll find actionable data within this research.

Taking Action

Supported by 12 cosponsoring organizations, our research aims to understand the current state of DE&I efforts in the association sector. Through this initiative, we intend to shed light on the tools, approaches, successes and challenges that associations are facing as they attempt to create organizations that embody the tenets of Welcoming Environments.

"This is just the beginning of what we hope is a longitudinal study of associations creating Welcoming Environments," says Mason. "We needed to start here to create a benchmark for future research, but we also wanted to invite associations in our community to come along with us on this journey."

The study invited organizations to survey either their members, their staff or both. The results set up a baseline for other associations to access, and each participating organization was given an in-depth report on their own survey results. In this way, the research reflects an overall starting point for the association community at large but also gives the cosponsoring organizations an idea of where they are in their own journey.

"McKinley did some preliminary work on diversity, equity and inclusion a year ago because we thought there was a gap there," says Hockman. What they found was that there isn't much literature on the association space specifically. Most of the research in this area has been conducted in the corporate world, but the team at McKinley knew nonprofits were dealing with similar challenges. Hence, this research is a critical step to driving action within the association community.

The Research

During an initial immersion meeting, the teams from Association Forum and McKinley Advisors discussed goals, methodology and how this research could impact the association community. Next, McKinley's team held interviews with 25 key contacts and stakeholders, including cosponsoring organizations. The research team also reviewed relevant literature and past research on this topic area — much of it from the corporate space, as mentioned above.

Using all of this information, McKinley's team crafted electronic surveys to be sent to the cosponsoring organizations. Two surveys were created: one for staff and one for members. While the surveys were tailored for the specific audiences, they covered the same topics so that the results could be analyzed side-by-side.

Once the surveys were completed, the results were compiled and analyzed. McKinley held a webinar to present the findings to cosponsoring organizations in May. In June, debriefings were held with each organization to further dive into their individual results. Then, McKinley published the findings in a white paper and also presented them to the association community at the Virtual Summit on Welcoming Environment.

The Findings

The results of the survey can be broken down into four key questions for exploration:

- Are associations representative of their industry or sector?
- What are the perceptions of association members and staff about how well the association is doing in terms of DE&I?
- What challenges are associations facing in implementing action-oriented tactics to foster DE&I?
- What DE&I topics, areas or initiatives are most important to association members and/or staff?

Are associations representative of their industry or sector?

Only 40% of association staff and 44% of members responded "yes" to this question. Therefore, more than half of association staff and members feel that their association is not representative of the industry or are unsure. The survey then asked why and, so as not to suggest answers, left an open space for participants to respond. Lack of racial and ethnic diversity topped the answers for both surveys. Other reasons included lack of gender diversity and lack of diversity in leadership.

One of the challenges associations face in tracking representation is a lack of data and demographics on their members. "It's basically impossible in a quantitative way to measure progress if you don't have a data set to start with," says Hockman.

Unfortunately, many associations don't track member demographics such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and more. And the groups that do track this have usually only done so recently.

Johnson experienced this roadblock at AHWONN and noted that the association just

started collecting expanded member demographics last year. The data include gender, work setting, race, sexual orientation and special accommodations (to track members with disabilities). They even ask members if they live in a rural or urban area because of the differences in workplace setting and healthcare access. Unfortunately, only 3% of members have filled in these demographics, but it's a start.

"We've done special campaigns to our members to explain the confidentiality of their information and how we'll use it," says Johnson. "It also shows that just because you have a path and a direction doesn't mean that your membership is automatically going to fall in line. You need to educate them and socialize them to it."

Joel Albizo, FASAE, CEO of the American Planning Association (APA), says that his group tracks expanded demographics but also struggles for complete data. Because this is a relatively new practice to the APA, new members' profiles are much more complete than seasoned members'.

As an initial step, all groups should look at the attributes they're collecting for their membership and consider where there is room for improvement.

What are the perceptions of association members and staff about how well the association is doing in terms of DE&I?

Responses to this question followed a bell curve for both members and staff. Very few members (4%) called their associations "not at all successful," and the percentages rose to 31% answering "moderately successful." The numbers fell again around "very successful" and further still for "extremely successful." A similar pattern followed for the answers given by association staff. (See Figure 1.)

This lukewarm response indicates there is more work to be done. While organizations may have official policies or committees addressing DE&I, the overall tone among respondents was that this isn't enough. As McKinley's team drilled down on the results, they found that members of associations with budgets in the range of \$10–\$19.9 million were

"In order for organizations to make true change, they have to be open and approach these topics with a posture of curiosity, as well as a posture of humility and true desire to change."

— DJ JOHNSON, IOM, CAE, ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH, OBSTETRIC AND NEONATAL NURSES

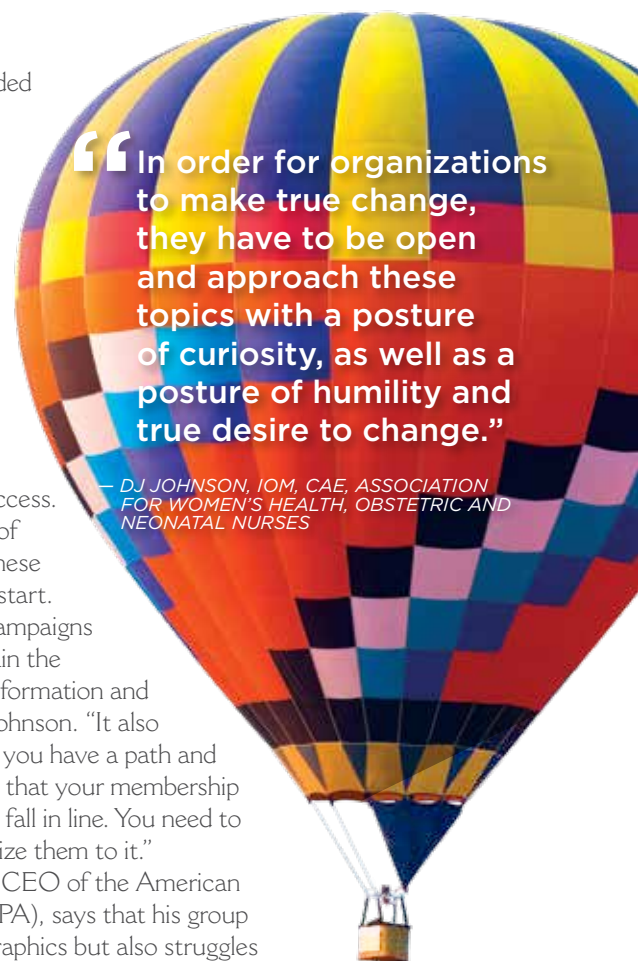
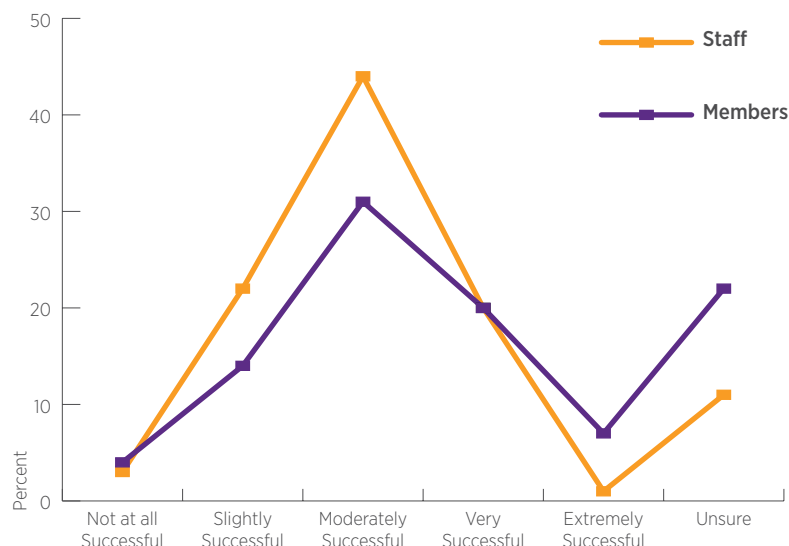


FIGURE 1: ASSOCIATION'S LEVEL OF SUCCESS AT CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT



“We set aside money in our budget for diversity this year as a way to operationalize it and move from talking to action.”

— JUDY GAUS, ASSOCIATION OF EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS

more likely to feel their association has been successful (36%) compared to those from organizations with lower budgets (23%) or higher budgets (27%).

“It raises the question: Are dollars the determinant of success here?” says Hockman. He adds that it would be a shame for organizations to feel they can’t afford a focus on Welcoming Environment because the data show that success is not necessarily about a financial investment. Many organizations are already seeing the financial effects of the economic downturn due to the coronavirus pandemic and will be strapped for resources. Yet, this research reveals several areas of improvement that rely more on strategy and strong decision-making than finances.

For Judy Gaus, vice president of human resources and operations at the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM), allocating funds to these initiatives have helped make them a priority for the organization. “We started going down the path of talking about diversity five years ago, but it’s been very slow, and other strategic priorities got in the way. We set aside money in our budget for

diversity this year as a way to operationalize it and move from talking to action,” says Gaus.

In addition to participating in the staff portion of this survey, AEM hired a consultant to take a deeper look at ways the organization can create a Welcoming Environment. The consultant will prioritize the large amount of information contained in the survey results, as well as create a roadmap to start taking action.

Encouragingly, members responded that they feel welcome at association events they attend, as well as in the locations where those events are held. Yet, both members and staff were less likely to respond that their associations created opportunities for inclusion-focused events or integrated inclusion into the association’s everyday behaviors.

Drilling down further, female association staff were less likely to report feeling included in their workplace (55% agree) compared to males (77%). Similarly, females were less likely to agree that their association workplaces create inclusion-based opportunities for those of different backgrounds (49%) and that inclusion is integrated in the workplace (43%) when compared to males (71% and 63%, respectively).

Hockman suggests that organizations take a hard look at their own practices and “be willing to acknowledge that we aren’t as inclusive and welcoming in day-to-day communications as we’d like to be.” He adds that “teams are too homogenous right now. You can’t change the mix of your team overnight, but there’s so much guidance in recent days to not only read different authors but also talk to people with lived experience.”

Talking to people with lived experience will shed light on needed growth, but could also lead to some tough conversations. Johnson echoes this sentiment and adds that change rarely happens without some conflict: “In order for organizations to make true change, they have to be open and approach these topics with a posture of curiosity, as well as a posture of humility and true desire to change.”

What challenges are associations facing in implementing action-oriented tactics to foster DE&I?

When it comes to creating a Welcoming Environment in the workplace, 41% of participants cited finding qualified diverse employees as a challenge. “Other competing strategic priorities” closely followed, with 36% of participants acknowledging it as a key challenge to fostering DE&I. “I hope that more organizations start looking at DE&I as an essential part of business, as opposed to a nice-to-have,”



JUDY GAUS

AEM

says Johnson, noting that these initiatives sometimes take a backseat during an economic downturn. (See Figure 2.)

Finding qualified, diverse talent was a priority for AEM, so Gaus hired a recruiter to help source a more varied talent pool. Located in Milwaukee, AEM struggles to find applicants familiar with association management. One way it's found success in managing this is by creating an internship program. "Many of our interns are of diverse backgrounds, and that became a talent pipeline for us," says Gaus.

One of the biggest challenges Albizo sees at the APA is turning ideas into action. The group has an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) Committee and has leadership committed to these efforts. "The challenge we have is that we're this large, complex organization. How do we use the true assets of the organization — brand, capital, operational capacity — and how do we do what we do best to advance this?" he says.

Albizo says that the APA is rich in well-intentioned ideas, but the real work is scoping them out and putting them into action. "Focus on things that are executable," he suggests. He also asks his team which ideas will be catalysts for more change. "What you want to create is a virtuous cycle," Albizo says, adding that "some activities create a foundation and lead to other virtuous activities. Then you have a pattern. Then a habit. And then a culture."

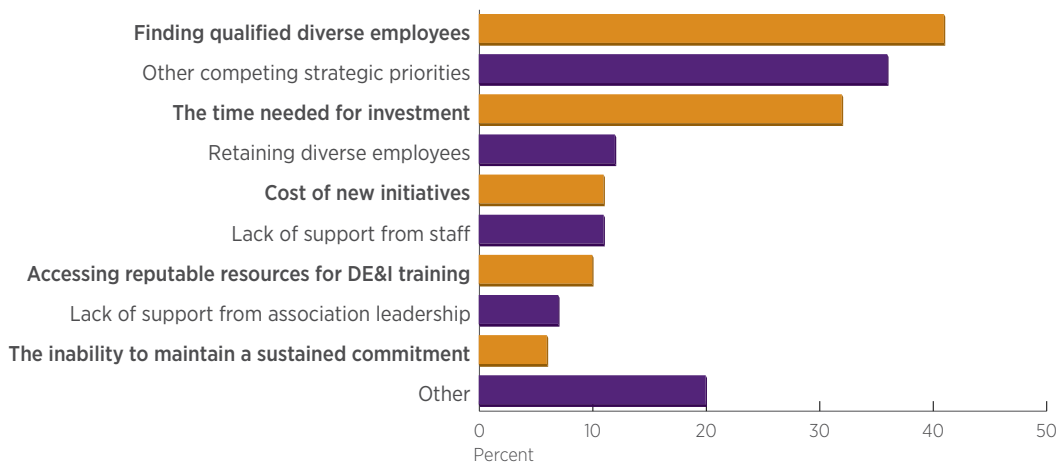
What DE&I topics, areas or initiatives are most important to association members and/or staff?

One key finding in this area was that members are very familiar with topics related to more overt aspects of DE&I such as race, gender, socioeconomic status and age. Members are not as familiar with more subtle or nuanced topics like microaggressions, allyship and intersectionality.

In some cases, an organization may fear that addressing these issues will shed light on unfavorable

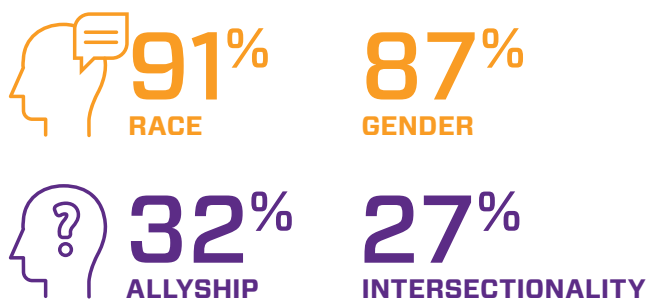
FIGURE 2: BARRIERS TO INTEGRATING DE&I ENCOUNTERED OVER THE LAST YEAR

Results only from association staff



ARE MEMBERS FAMILIAR WITH DE&I?

Members are very familiar with topics related to more overt forms of DE&I such as race (91%) and gender (87%), but not as familiar with more subtle or nuanced topics like allyship (32%) and intersectionality (27%).



areas of the association. "Failure to name an issue actually gives the issue more power," says Hockman. He goes on to say, "We've got to admit that we have issues and have those uncomfortable conversations. Doing something and risking being wrong is better than doing nothing and thinking you're safe. You're not better off by doing nothing."

Johnson sees this finding as an opportunity. "I think it's important that all organizations take a hard look and work to educate their volunteer leaders



and their general membership about these issues,” he says. He goes on to explain that the survey provides a solid starting point for where to steer that type of education.

Findings also revealed that the tactics deemed most necessary by members are among the least likely to have already been implemented by the association. For instance, 54% of members surveyed said it was necessary to create opportunities for more diverse members to participate in association leadership. But only 21% reported that their association

had already implemented a tactic to address this. There was a similar gap in response to hosting events specifically designed to foster a Welcoming Environment as well as providing diversity training to members.

This area of the research indicates opportunity for associations. Many associations already have committees or task forces to address DE&I, but it’s difficult to prioritize all the ideas churned out in those groups. This research reveals what members believe to be most important and what’s not getting done.

LEADERSHIP DIVERSITY

54% of members surveyed said it was necessary to create opportunities for more diverse members to participate in association leadership. But only 21% reported that their association had already implemented a tactic to address this.



Where do we go from here?

While organizations may have official policies or committees addressing DE&I, the overall tone among respondents was that this isn't enough.

A leading takeaway of the research findings is that feelings of inclusion are low in the workplace. Fewer than half of all members reported that they are satisfied with the level of inclusion, while nearly 90% indicated it is one of the most important attributes to exist within the workplace.

Instead of letting these findings brew feelings of defeatism, all the associations we spoke with were eager to get started on the work that needs to be done.


“This is a good time to be in the listen-learn-reflect-and-grow mode,” says Albizo.

Gaus agrees that this research has provided a springboard for AEM's initiatives. “Although we tried to have conversations with staff, they were certainly not to the level to which these [survey questions] touched,” she says, adding that it’s “great to get the feedback; it creates a great starting point for us to build and grow on.”

Thanks to the cosponsoring organizations, Association Forum and McKinley Advisors were able to provide data around issues that are paramount to growing a healthy organization. The organizations that participated had to be open-minded, humble and willing to have tough conversations. We applaud their participation.

Both Association Forum and McKinley Advisors hope to provide even more information for the association community by conducting this research in years to come.

Albizo likened this journey of creating a Welcoming Environment to the idea of mastering a skill versus focusing on results. When you focus on mastery, he says, “it becomes less about the end and more about the process. I think sometimes people are so frustrated with association work because they’re just managing not to fail. You’ll enjoy the journey a lot more when what you’re occupied with is the learning, growth and development.”

This is an important sentiment for associations. We all have room to grow our organizations into more Welcoming Environments — for our staff, for our members and for the communities we serve. 

KIM KELLY, CAE, IS THE OWNER OF KIM KELLY CONSULTING.

Ready to get to work? Visit the Welcoming Environment resource center at associationforum.org/welcomingenvironment for concepts you can implement right now.



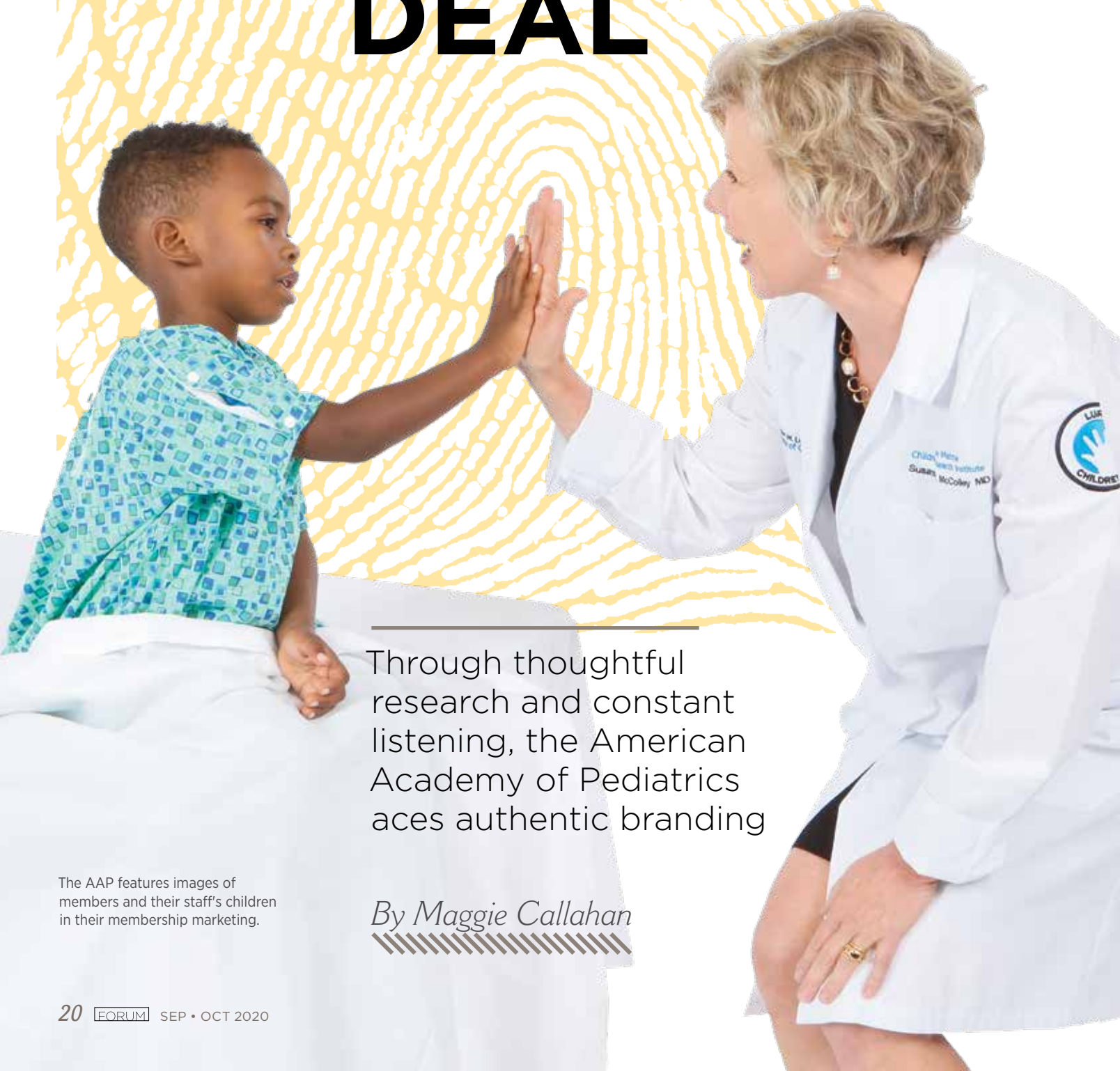
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Through thoughtful research and constant listening, the American Academy of Pediatrics aces authentic branding

The AAP features images of members and their staff's children in their membership marketing.

By Maggie Callahan



au·then·tic branding

/ô THEN(t)ik/ /brandiNG/

The extent to which consumers perceive a brand to be faithful toward itself, true to its consumers, motivated by caring and responsibility, and able to support consumers in being true to themselves.

— THE JOURNAL OF CONSUMER PSYCHOLOGY

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s many organizations break their silence and take stances on social issues, honesty and transparency with members is more important than ever before. Even for organizations with established reputations and brand equity, if members don't feel represented, included and a part of the mission, nothing else really matters.

For the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), achieving authentic branding meant taking their nearly 100-year-old trusted reputation and elevating it to become a brand that makes members feel seen and heard — a success that is reflected in engagement and retention.



TIPS FOR AUTHENTIC BRANDING

For sustained success, it is imperative to understand your audience — members — and make sure your message is being clearly conveyed. Here, Tina Morton of the American Academy of Pediatrics shares her tips for developing your authentic brand.

Define your branding mission. How do you want your audience to feel? What comes over them when they see your visuals or letterhead? What is the first thing they think of when they see it? Brainstorm and write those words down.

Create your visuals. Using the words you brainstormed when you defined your mission, let them lead you to the visuals that you would use. Your goal is to take that feeling and execute it.

Survey your members. Start by understanding the current impression members have. Ask, 'When you hear our name what comes to mind?' You may already have good brand equity, and

you just need to leverage it. Or if maybe you don't, then it's about shifting brand perception, and that means taking a different approach.

Work with a talented agency. Tap into the expertise of agencies whose business is branding. AAP worked with two — Culture 22 and Avenue M — during their process. "We worked with Culture 22 for the visual overhaul. They helped establish colors, font — the visual aesthetic. Avenue M assisted in conducting our member survey."

Never stop listening. Just because you have strong branding does not mean your work is done. Authentic branding only exists if your members are on board, so if they express displeasure, it's time to act. When a recent renewal campaign during COVID-19 upset some members, the AAP team quickly revamped their messaging with a more empathetic — and successful — approach.

Path to a Blueprint

Based in Itasca, Illinois, the AAP has been the voice of pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists since its inception in 1930.

"The AAP is recognized as one of the most expert and influential organizations on all matters related to child health," says Tina Morton, the director of member marketing and engagement for the AAP. Most notably through education, advocacy and public policy, the AAP works to accomplish its mission of achieving optimal physical, mental and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults. As for the benefits its 67,000 members most highly rate, education, policy and guidelines top the list.

When it comes to imagery, the AAP's brand has always been closely tied to its symbol — the Della Robbia — a seal depicting a young child loosely wrapped in a swaddle. Instantly recognized by professionals in the field, "this seal evokes feelings of credibility and accuracy," Morton says.

Despite this brand equity and respected reputation, the AAP had room for improvement when it came to connecting with members. So, in 2013 when Morton began her job at the AAP, the journey to more authentic branding began.

Among her first pursuits was leading the membership marketing team in a visual rebrand for all membership communications.

"We took everything and put it on a table," Morton says. "We looked at print and digital — all the mastheads, emails, brochures and Facebook pages — and we asked, 'Does everything match?' What we saw was that the team was taking different approaches. There was no clear scheme."

To develop a distinct visual plan, the AAP enlisted Culture 22, a brand storytelling agency. "They did a bunch of interviews and activities with our members. They put out toys and sophisticated mood boards and observed our members interacting with them to get an overall feel for what our members like," she says.

This research helped inform the brand's font style, color palette and the design behind photography.

Know Thy Member

With a solid visual aesthetic in place, AAP partnered with marketing consulting group Avenue M to survey members and establish a baseline understanding of member satisfaction and goals. "AAP had not done a comprehensive member assessment in a while, so I needed to establish this for the bulk of my work," Morton says. "We looked at every membership

benefit and asked, 'How important is it to you, and how well are we delivering it?'"

The survey results were enlightening — highlighting weaknesses and presenting a clearer description of their members.

"It not only helped us get a feel for demographics, but it helped us recognize different member personas," Morton says. For example, they identified a mission-driven member persona that joins because they believe in doing good. Another segment is transactional, joining for the member benefits they get in return. Yet another segment wants to be very engaged, interested in what can they do to help.

But, until now, the Academy had been communicating with these different groups the exact same way.

"Every member was getting the same message, and it wasn't effective," Morton says. Learning about the personas allowed the marketing department to be more thoughtful about their messaging. Now, the Academy creates multiple versions of each membership communication, whether it is an email message

The AAP uses member images, like those below, in marketing collateral from brochures to banners at annual meetings.



or a paper dues invoice, to make sure they are hitting the right tones.

The survey also gave them insights into why membership numbers for subspecialists, such as pediatric cardiologists or pediatric gastroenterologists, were declining. Sentiments showed that subspecialists felt that the AAP was geared more toward generalists than them. The results also revealed why subspecialists did join the Academy — to participate in AAP Sections (interassociation communities of like-minded professionals), education development and policy reviews — and it allowed for another opportunity for tailored messaging.

“We determined which words in email subject lines get better click rates with subspecialists, so now subject lines that go to subspecialists are different than the subject lines to generalists,” she says. “And we’ve greatly improved our retention and recruitment rates with subspecialists.”

The Academy implements similar tailored messaging through social media, with one Twitter feed and

two Facebook pages — one for trainees and one for early career physicians.

“We get a ton of engagement on social media whether it’s advocacy, a call to action or a tweetstorm to impact legislation,” Morton says.

A Thousand Words

Along with specific messaging and visual consistency, the photos and images used in membership marketing materials also needed revamping.

“The survey revealed that the visuals we were using were not reflective of members’ experiences,” she says, explaining that prior to the survey, the Academy had been using many images of babies on the marketing materials.

“Members indicated they preferred to see themselves and other pediatric physicians with infants, children and adolescents. They also want to see diversity, including children with disabilities and special needs — all of the children they take care of on a daily basis,” Morton says.

To restock their supply of images, Morton and her team hired a professional photographer and invited members to have their photos taken with the children of AAP staff.



Image: lauradibaise/istock Collection via gettyimages.com

THE DELLA ROBBIA

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) began using a form of their Della Robbia in 1930. It was inspired by the medallions designed by Andrea della Robbia (1437–1528) that decorate the “Ospedale degli Innocenti,” or foundling hospital of the innocents, in Florence, Italy. It’s the oldest known institution continuously devoted to the care of children, according to the AAP.



American Academy
of Pediatrics

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"We showed the members as the hero, in the center of our brand," Morton says. "We said, 'You ARE our brand,' and it showed the AAP and its members are one and the same."

First appearing in printed and online membership collateral, the larger unveiling of the campaign was at the annual AAP Experience, the National Conference and Exhibition, and has been used at all conferences since. Morton says members take photos next to their own poster-sized images or with their photo in brochures.

At last year's conference, these photos were featured on huge banners that simply said, "Thank you."

Now they have a robust in-house bank of stock photos, which they encourage all departments of the AAP to use.

"We have been perceived as an organization that is hard to penetrate," Morton says. The survey revealed three main reasons why members weren't engaging:

- They weren't asked
- They didn't know how
- They didn't have a lot of time

The survey then asked if they would engage if they were asked, and the answer was overwhelmingly, "yes."

"And if they were engaged, the majority responded that they were more likely to renew," Morton says.

These findings led them to launch the AAP Volunteer Network Online portal, where members can search for volunteer opportunities using a variety of filters to find the perfect fit. "We want to help members see this environment is for everybody."

A Welcoming Brand

Creating a Welcoming Environment® has long been a priority of the AAP, which has sections on LGBTQ health and wellness, as well as diversity and inclusion. But even with these opportunities in place, member engagement was lagging.

A VOICE FOR CHILDREN

The American Academy of Pediatrics has one goal in mind — ensuring the safety and health of children. Because of this, the Academy has long been an outspoken advocate on a variety of social issues.

Whether speaking in favor of gay marriage or fighting against racism, the AAP provides studies and data about the impact on children and works to be a change agent.

"The AAP is known for taking a stand and coming out with a statement," Morton says. "The single driving motivation for any stance we take on any issue is: 'What is best for children?'"



COVID-19 Updates

Knowing your members also means constantly listening and being ready to pivot. As timing would have it, AAP's renewal campaign was planned to launch right as the coronavirus numbers were climbing.

"COVID-19 really kind of turned everything upside down," she says. "We were getting some backlash around our messaging and communications. Members were sending these back to us saying, 'Why am I getting this when were dealing with this crisis?'"

"We met with the team and made the decision to stop all recruitment and put a pause on the renewal process — but not for too long because that's our bread and butter.

"We rewrote all the renewal messages. It was a series of eight or nine touches via print and email. The first four or five don't even have a call to action; they just offer resources and say simply, 'We're here for you.'" Then the campaign slowly offers a subtle call to action to renew. If the membership lapses, the member still gets key benefits for 60 days. And even after 60 days, if the member is not able to pay dues, they can talk about waiving dues for a year. "Once we switched to that messaging, we got absolutely no blowback," says Morton, who personally responded to every complaint received.

Recruitment did not resume again until late June, but Morton says they would remain nimble, and if messaging isn't right, they will quickly tailor it.



TINA MORTON

DIRECTOR
OF MEMBER
MARKETING AND
ENGAGEMENT, AAP

AAP marketing images depict the diversity in both membership and members' patients.



Measuring Success

Morton says the ways the Academy measures success are two-fold. "Obviously, there are metrics like regular emails opened, sales tactics and campaign results. But for measuring branding success, it's the things like members taking their picture by their face when they see it on a sign at the conference; it's using their Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics (FAAP) credential after their name; it's when they call and ask if they can use our logo. It's international members joining even though it's a U.S.-based organization."

Currently working on a digital transformation to improve user experience, Morton says the AAP will work hard to maintain their authenticity.

"For our membership, authentic branding means that when they see our Della Robbia, they know it is credible, ethical and driven by the main goal of improving children's health globally. It will never change, and we will not stray from that," Morton states.

She adds that all of the improvements — from the visual aesthetic and more energetic tone of voice to members seeing themselves represented in the messaging — have contributed to their authenticity. **E**

MAGGIE CALLAHAN IS A
CHICAGO-BASED WRITER
AND EDITOR.

RETURN ON INVEST



Image: VidorHsu/iStock Collection via gettyimages.com



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Rethinking employee benefits and perks during the pandemic and beyond

By Teresa Brinati



The COVID-19 pandemic cast a long shadow on once-coveted employee perks when employees at many associations had to abruptly transition to working from home in March. Lost were benefits such as on-site gyms, community gathering spaces and pet-friendly offices. Mastering a variety of tech tools, meeting virtually and maximizing digital products swiftly became the new imperative. Amazingly, we got our work done, even while juggling childcare and the distractions of home.

Employers are now focused on adapting workspaces to safely bring employees back to the office. But months of sheltering in place have significantly raised the profile of working remotely. In a poll of 1,227 working adults two years ago, the benefits provider Unum found that the most desired perks have to do with flexible work options. The pandemic has inadvertently boosted the viability of such options and may pave the way for new, creative employee benefits.

What Employees Really Want

To work remotely was the most frequent request from prospective employees at the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT). IFT began offering remote work up to two days per week — and flexible schedules for those who aren't able to work remotely — to its benefits package five years ago.

“Our benefits have evolved to address needs our employees have expressed and to keep pace with the industry,” said Lauren Friedman, IFT’s director of human resources. “We’ve always had a robust total compensation package which we continuously benchmark.”

Over the past half-decade, IFT has added casual dress every day, paid parental leave for mothers and fathers, a mother’s room to accommodate staff who are breastfeeding, a wellness reimbursement and a floating holiday to be used for days the organization doesn’t have off.

Benefits

20%

INCREASED OFFERINGS

In a 2019 Society for Human Resource Management survey, 20% of responding employers indicated they increased offerings in health-related and wellness benefits.



IFT's benefits progression is fairly typical. Barring changes in the regulatory landscape or economic conditions, employee benefits offerings tend to evolve over time rather than seeing abrupt year-over-year changes, according to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). Each year SHRM

conducts a research study about the types of employee benefits that organizations are offering, including health, wellness, leave, flexibility, career, retirement and other benefits. With 2,763 HR professionals responding, SHRM's 2019 survey found that health-related benefits and wellness benefits saw the greatest increases

across employers surveyed, with 20% of employers indicating they increased offerings in those areas.

Enhancing health and wellness benefits are on the radar screen of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), which has added an additional medical plan to its benefit offerings. "We wanted to offer a plan that better met the needs of some of our employees who had limited healthcare needs and who wanted a plan with lower premiums," said Mardel Ahleong, ACHE's vice president for human resources.

ACHE has also added a pre-tax parking benefit to its package, as well as a privacy room in its office for nursing mothers. "We update our wellness plan biometric goals each year to ensure we're measuring the most current health benchmarks," Ahleong noted. "We also conduct periodic surveys of staff to seek their input on our benefit offerings."

In the SHRM survey last year, other notable changes in employee benefits by percentage points included an increase in student loan repayment (4%), part-time telecommuting (5%) and standing desks (7%).

Creating a Work Environment Where People Will Stay

The workforce today is multigenerational — Baby Boomers, Gen X and Millennials form the majority of the workforce, but most organizations include members of the older Traditionalists and younger Gen Zs as well, according to SHRM. So employees

at different stages in life want and need different benefits, but at least one generation consistently pushes for more.

"Millennials are driving benefits because they are more concerned," said Dr. Monica Gavino, a former human resources executive who is now an associate professor in the School of Management at San José State University. "The West Coast sets the trends for benefits, with Silicon Valley employers willing to take risks in implementing new benefits."

"Some tech giants offer free meals or subsidized cafeterias as a benefit," said Gavino, who noted that meditation and prayer rooms are a new trend. Who couldn't use a dose of Zen, especially during these extraordinary times? There is data to support that regular meditation can help boost work performance, improve employee wellness and cultivate a positive culture.

The key, of course, is to retain and engage employees, particularly because their tenure — the average stay of an employee — is two to three years, reported Gavino. "After that, they'll typically leave for a better title and more money. Attracting them isn't enough. It's what you do and how you treat them when they're there."

Gavino, who is a Latina, emphasized that being welcoming as an organization, particularly for a diverse workforce, is critical. "Organizations need to recognize how important it is for diverse candidates to see during the hiring process diversity in the hiring committees, top and middle management, and peers who they will work with," Gavino said. "When we're not welcome, we will leave," she added.

ACHE was recently recognized by Association Forum for its Welcoming Environment®: "One that is comfortable, inclusive and empowering — they open the door for innovation, increased participation and an elevated sense of community and involvement for all."

Keeping Lines of Communication Open

The national conversation on race and racism has elevated the urgency of diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) efforts. The anti-racist movement is driving associations to revisit how they operate and to actively engage in dialog with their employees and their members.

"ACHE is committed to equity and inclusion with our staff and our members," said Ahleong. "Each year we host a diversity training and focus on all areas of diversity, including race, gender and ability. We

have utilized speakers from our Employee Assistance Programs, online modules and even a theater group called Erasing the Distance.”

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has forced ACHE to evaluate how to welcome employees in a remote work environment, it still does organizational introductions. Ahleong said that a “tell-us-about-you” questionnaire requests information about an employee’s hobbies, favorite foods, etc., and gauges interest in various internal committees for service opportunities. This info is shared with the employee’s manager and on ACHE’s intranet under employee profiles, which builds community.

These activities are significant pieces in a Welcoming Environment. IFT highlights its DE&I events in its staff newsletter by inviting employees to tell a story about how such events resonate with them. Articles have featured Black History Month, LGBTQ Pride, Disability Awareness Month, Asian-Pacific American heritage and history and the Mexican Day of the Dead. But even before an employee joins the association’s staff, IFT stresses its commitment to DE&I throughout the recruiting process, which sets a welcoming tone as well as opens the lines of communication.

“We’ve had prospective employees mention needs early in the process such as a room to pray, which we were able to accommodate,” Friedman noted.

At IFT, new employees are assigned a “buddy”. The role of the buddy is to help ease the transition into the organization and serve as a resource for any questions new employees may have. All new hires meet with IFT’s senior manager of DE&I & International Programs to get more acquainted with initiatives in this area, including its strategic promise, “Include.” After 30 days on the job, there is a check-in. New employees are asked various questions about their experience joining IFT such as how welcomed and included they were made to feel in their first month and anything they need to do their job that they may not have at the moment.

“Our hope is that these meetings will foster relationships throughout the organization, giving employees ample resources to voice any concerns they may have,” Friedman added.

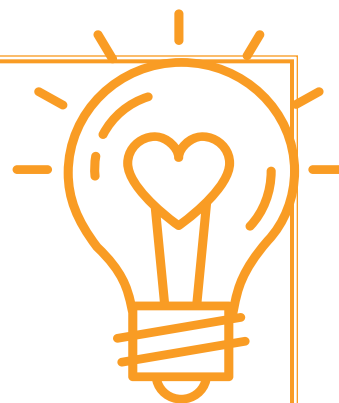
This year IFT added Juneteenth to its holiday schedule to highlight the social injustices occurring in the United States. Along with the day off, IFT provided educational resources about the significance of the day and a list of events to partake in during the celebration. In addition, IFT began hosting “restorative circle” discussions for employees to have a safe space to process and share experiences with

CREATIVE BENEFITS

Employees’ needs have shifted during the pandemic. Here are some ideas to meet these needs:

- > Telehealth services
- > Mental health services
- > Additional sick leave, or “crisis days” to be used for both physical and mental health
- > Bonuses. According to [hrexecutive.com](https://www.hrexecutive.com), “Employers are expected to allocate the largest amount of their payroll budget to bonuses in the history of Aon’s 43-year study.”
- > Childcare assistance
- > Wellness resources, such as virtual fitness subscriptions
- > Financial wellness resources


List adapted from an article posted on Human Resource Executive, [hrexecutive.com](https://www.hrexecutive.com)



each other and which will continue to be available as long as employees need them.

Invest in People

Staying current and competitive with other employers is a necessity for every association. From remote working to wellness reimbursement to increased focus on equity, employers are striving to be more welcoming. As the pandemic lingers and the work-from-home option grows, some new perks may be needed to attract talent and retain quality workers. For example, benefits might include equipping homebound workers with tools of the trade such as ergonomic chairs, laptops, second monitors and microphones.

Investing in the people side ultimately benefits the association. “Smaller organizations can do some great things because they can be nimble,” Gavino added. “There comes a point in any organization’s growth when you have to invest in the people side—creating a wonderful culture where everyone can contribute and help the organization reach its goals is a competitive advantage of any company.” 

TERESA BRINATI IS THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLISHING AT THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS AND MAY BE REACHED AT TBRINATI@ARCHIVISTS.ORG.



Virtual Adventure

ASNR'S REIMAGINED
MEETING IS AN ONLINE
GLOBAL SUCCESS

SUBMITTED BY THE AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF NEURORADIOLOGY

The American Society of Neuroradiology (ASNR) has a reputation for putting on impactful annual meetings. This year, the 2019–2020 ASNR annual meeting (#ASNR20) surpassed all expectations to become one of the most successful meetings in the society's history. Originally planned as an in-person meeting to be held in Las Vegas from May 30–June 4, the organization had to quickly pivot to a virtual version once the COVID-19 pandemic became a reality.

Bringing New Life to the Familiar

When Dr. Joshua Hirsch took on the role as program chair of #ASNR20, he thought its robust academic base could expand to include new vendor partners, untapped participant markets and a greater level of

buzz on social media. ASNR Executive Director Mary Beth Hepp had recently hired Director of Education Erica Kruse and Meetings Director Lynn Brown. Hirsch points out that rather than seeing new hires as a challenge, it allowed the group to think creatively right from the outset. With board support, this team set out to reenergize the program and break a few records in the process. An operations group was quickly formed by a strong subset of volunteers and staff. "This working group had an amazing symbiosis. To accomplish our goals, we had to rethink the way we planned, organized and marketed the meeting and symposium," Hirsch states. "#ASNR20 added new tracks, deepened the scope of the event, created multiple new partner opportunities, and made

a concerted effort to get the schedule and abstract topics out earlier to members, nonmembers and vendors — both nationally and internationally. We held nothing back.”

Embracing New Ideas

An important charge of the newly formed operations committee was curating and finalizing a program much earlier than in the past. Kruse notes that there were “many obvious advantages to prioritizing the final schedule early on in the process. It allowed for speaker/moderator travel planning, the ability to advance market the program and the early filling of the room block.” Further, the agenda highlighted the upgraded content of the meeting.

The group had added more continuing education and planned new networking opportunities for attendees, such as a reunion night. They also added several partner benefits including VIP get-togethers and innovation theater sessions. Other strategic changes addressed logistics such as menu planning, new badging, signage, staging and more.

Soon, it became clear that the meeting was going to break records for the society. As this was a new version of the event, very aggressive parameters had been set for many metrics including vendor partnership. Hepp says, “The response by industry sponsors was fantastic, with #ASNR20 positioned to be the highest sponsor-based, revenue-producing meeting in the society’s history by a remarkably wide margin.” Early registration suggested that more than 2,000 attendees would be present, closing in on a societal record set at its 50-year celebratory meeting.

Enter the Pandemic

“It was probably around February when we started to wonder about our ability to host an in-person meeting,” Hirsch explains. “When COVID-19 first showed up in Wuhan, China, we realized participants from that region weren’t going to be able to make the trip in numbers. Then the virus hit Europe, and it became obvious that European involvement was not going to be at the levels we had anticipated. Despite these realities, we still hoped that #ASNR20 could still be a live meeting. By March, however, it became apparent that the world had changed, and an in-person meeting in Vegas was going to be, at the very least, challenging.”

Moving forward

The decision to make the meeting virtual was not made lightly. Other options existed, including pausing the conference this year and starting over again in

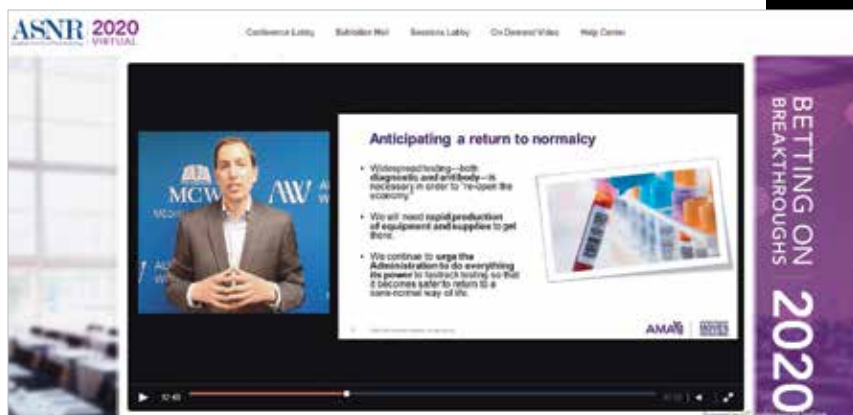
2021. ASNR took a different path. “We had put so much energy into creating the Vegas meeting that it was hard to walk away from it,” Hirsch states. “As the biggest booster on the volunteer side, I felt like I had to be the first one to say the words out loud: We need to once again reimagine #ASNR20 and go virtual.” Moving forward would require intense teamwork and support across the board, with everyone figuring out the various logistics involved, including contract legalities, policies, technology, marketing, training — all under a time crunch.

Contract legalities: “Our first step was to call Caesar’s Palace to figure out how to move forward in a way that didn’t penalize the society or the hotel. Thanks to the good relationship that Lynn Brown had developed with her contact at Caesar’s, she was able to renegotiate the details of the contract in a way that all parties were satisfied and that received full support of our board,” Hirsch explains. Adds Brown, “I think that dealing one-on-one with our contact and having calm conversations on how we are all in this together helped us find a win-win for both the hotel and for the society.”

Policies: The board agreed from the onset that ASNR would operate utilizing the “good will” principle. Anyone who wanted a refund — registrants or vendors — would be given 100% of their money back. Registrants were given several options, including the ability to roll over their fee for next year’s live meeting. Vendors were offered a free virtual booth at #ASNR20 if they applied their current fees to an in-person booth next year. If a vendor wanted a refund, they could buy a virtual booth this year for \$1,000.

Technology: Hirsch says, “ASNR has been thinking about adding virtual components to its offerings for some time now. Today’s technology enables options that would not have been possible before: You could have wanted to do a virtual meeting 10 years ago, but the tools weren’t there. The sledgehammer of a global pandemic has helped us to overcome technological trepidations to open up other opportunities.”

A key component to being able to shift the meeting from in-person to virtual was finding the right technological engine to host the event. “I think our ability to maneuver so quickly was due to the fact that Kruse jumped in and set up appointments with several different companies to try out their platforms before it became obvious that we were headed in this direction,” Hepp says. They chose vConferenceOnline to customize their event. “We wanted to have all of our options vetted and ready to go once we made a decision. This legwork put us



ASNR
virtual
event
session

ahead of other associations who were also moving to a virtual meeting as we were able to be put on the build schedule for platforms before the companies were all booked up,” she says. The organization streamlined the amount of content and turned the abstracts into e-posters — increasing the number from 400 entries to 1,000.

Marketing: “Our next step was to get the word out to all meeting stakeholders,” Kruse explains. “We already had a communication system in place for all of our COVID-19 messaging. We used vehicles such as email, Twitter, Facebook and our website to educate registrants, speakers, vendors and the like on moving virtual. We sought creative partnerships with other societies in the radiology and neuroradiology space. We wound up increasing registration — particularly internationally — to over 4,400 participants. Our nonmember attendance soared to 45% of the total.” The team credits ease of access as the primary driver, together with setting the right price point and managing the content so that it was plentiful without being overwhelming. The hashtag “#ASNR” saw more than 15 million impressions, confirming that the marketing was successful.

Sponsor realignment: “You have to reset your expectations on what is appropriate for a sponsorship. For example, one of our sponsorships involved a company distributing the Wi-Fi password in Vegas, so things like that needed to be updated,” Hepp explains.

Training: A great deal of time and training went into helping speakers learn the technology needed to give their presentations: recording the speech, uploading it onto the platform, using slides to enhance the lecture and being able to handle questions/answers during the session. Recording lectures is not as easy as getting on a Zoom chat. Be prepared to work with speakers and their varying technology levels. In addition, participants needed to be able to interact with the conference platform in order to view the presentations and navigate the meeting to

To accomplish our goals, we had to rethink the way we planned, organized and marketed the meeting and symposium.

BETTING ON
BREAKTHROUGHS
2020




meet their individual needs. Fortunately, ASNR had a 95% retention rate for their bench of speakers.

Keys to Success

Teamwork is the foundation. You must have a tight working relationship between volunteer leadership and association staff. Without that trust and transparency, an organization may not be agile enough to face this type of challenge.

Flexibility is key. Moving this meeting online was new to everyone. “We were all figuring out things together in this new world — staff, vendors, speakers,” Hirsch says. “We had to have patience and work to find mutually workable solutions.”

Follow-up is important. Hepp notes that one of the most important aspects of this meeting is the “after market.” Available for download, participants can view the content that was most important to them for 90 days post-event. In addition, individuals who were not able to attend can purchase access to the content. “We found that one-third of participants joined us in real time, one-third will be watching on demand, and the last third pursued a hybrid of IRL and on-demand,” Hepp notes.

Hirsch, Hepp, Brown and Kruse all agree that the dynamics of this year, their ability to embrace uncertainty and the extremely successful pivot to a virtual meeting have changed the organization fundamentally. Hirsch, now ASNR president, states, “While this virtual adventure came about for unfortunate reasons, distance learning is something ASNR will embrace. I believe #ASNR20 proved to be inspirational, fostering connections and providing breakthrough learning.” 

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Sharing the Knowledge

ASSOCIATION FORUM'S
2020-2021 WELCOMING
ENVIRONMENT® INITIATIVES

Image: MrSquid/Stock Collection via gettyimages.com

As one of our association's core values, Association Forum is committed to not only creating a Welcoming Environment, but also helping our community learn about inclusivity. Following is a look at some of the Welcoming Environment® programming offered in 2020, as well as what's to come.

We'd like to thank the partners who have supported these efforts and helped make these programs possible. Vetted Solutions, a recruiting and consulting firm focused on associations, chose to support Welcoming Environment initiatives because they mirror their own values. "What is so appealing to us may not be any one or two initiatives as much as the opportunity it all creates for leverage," says R. Norris Orms, FACHE, FASAE, CAE, vice president of Vetted Solutions in Chicago. He goes on to say that the initiatives "provide a central mechanism to drive the process in an organized way and to share information and ideas about what works and works well to advance the 'big idea.' It's inclusivity in action — making us more together than we are individually."

Association Management Center (AMC) has also partnered with Association Forum to support DE&I initiatives. "As our society continues to confront complex social issues that impact our communities, AMC is here to support our staff as well as our association and industry partners," says CEO Steve Smith, MS CAE FAAMSE. "We stand together with Association Forum to create an environment that is welcoming and inclusive to all. AMC is committed to building a workforce that is diverse across many dimensions including ability, age, gender, gender identity, education, ethnicity, nationality, political opinion, professional experience, race, racial identity, religion, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status. We are proud of the people who have chosen to take this journey with us as we continue to learn and grow together. We also look forward to the learning, shared experiences and changes we will experience as a company because of it."

In addition, Hilton also supports the work being done with these programs. "As a business of people serving people, Hilton is committed to creating welcoming and inclusive experiences for our team members and guests," says Amy Clark, managing director for association group sales, Hilton worldwide sales. She adds, "That means creating an environment where all of our more than 420,000 team members feel included and supported, and are able to extend that experience to our guests. Whether it is providing resources for our team members so they are able to reach their full potential, or offering diversity training to all team members to meet our high standards for cultural sensitivity, we are dedicated to ensuring we maintain a Welcoming Environment for all."

2020 Welcoming Environment Programming:

- Publication of executive summary addressing research study conducted in 2019 on how associations are creating Welcoming Environments
- Virtual Summit on Welcoming Environment: July 22, 2020
- Welcoming Environment Research Findings session at Forum Forward: August 26, 2020
- This issue of *FORUM* magazine!

2021 Welcoming Environment Programming:

- Conversation Circle: February 2021
- National Summit on Welcoming Environment: Spring 2021

/// **GET THE LATEST DETAILS** on these events at associationforum.org.



And the Winner Is...

INSTITUTE OF FOOD TECHNOLOGISTS RECEIVES 2020
WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT® ORGANIZATIONAL AWARD

Image: ASIFE / Stock collection via gettyimages.com



IFT staff poses for a virtual photo.

The Welcoming Environment Organizational Award is awarded to an association that has demonstrated exemplary outcomes in providing an inclusive and welcoming environment and culture. This year's winner is the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT).

"Diversity, equity and inclusion has become central to all we do," says IFT CEO Christie Tarantino-Dean, FASAE, CAE. "Our core value of community really speaks to our organizational culture, and appreciating and acknowledging our differences is central to our efforts."

IFT's application stood out because the organization has created a thorough program to support its more than 80 employees. IFT has a dedicated staff person to lead these efforts and integrates the tenets of a Welcoming Environment into employee recruiting, retention and training programs, as well as performance reviews. The organization also promotes a Welcoming Environment in daily communications by encouraging staff to include gender pronouns in email signatures and sharing diversity and inclusion reflections at internal meetings.

IFT's staff has embraced these efforts and worked to weave them into all aspects of the association, including the group's strategic plan and annual meeting. IFT's president and staff acted upon a member suggestion to organize a LGBTQ+ reception at the annual meeting. In addition, meeting attendees were given the option of gender-neutral bathrooms and also invited to choose a word from a button wall featuring their commitment to diversity. Member feedback has been positive around

these changes. In fact, one member offered that being misgendered is a reoccurring event, and the gender-neutral bathrooms allowed for less anxiety and a stronger sense of self as an attendee.

Employee engagement is another way that IFT fosters a Welcoming Environment. They provide diversity training for their leadership team and have internal meeting guidelines that include tips on how to be inclusive and ensure each person can have their voice heard.

When asked what's next for IFT's Welcoming Environment initiatives, Tarantino-Dean pointed to the recent resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement in the wake of George Floyd's death. "We have focused lately on opportunities to address our own feelings and emotions around social injustice through restorative circles facilitated by our senior manager of diversity, equity and inclusion," she says. These circles were meant to be "safe spaces" for staff to share how they were feeling during this time. "I wasn't sure what to expect, but I was blown away with the honesty and humility of my colleagues," says Tarantino-Dean. "I am fortunate to work with a team that wants to do their part to make the world a better, more inclusive and equitable place."

Congratulations to IFT for creating a Welcoming Environment and being this year's honoree. **F**

JOIN US in recognizing IFT and 2020's other award winners at this year's Virtual Honors Gala on Dec. 14. Visit associationforum.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

Sponsored by:

**PORT
LAND**

American Association of Diabetes Educators Has New Name

The former American Association of Diabetes Educators is now the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists (ADCES). The rebranding reflects the association's shift from referencing the specialty title as "diabetes educator" to the more comprehensive "diabetes care and education specialist." The new title more accurately signifies the range of expertise diabetes care and education specialists provide to people with diabetes, prediabetes and cardiometabolic conditions, the health care system, payers and providers.

"The ADCES name and specialty title integrate clinical management and expertise, which are very important aspects of our work that weren't reflected in the title diabetes educator," said Kellie Antinori-Lent, MSN, RN, ACNS-BC, BC-ADM,

CDCES, FADCES, 2020 president of ADCES. "Our new name will help raise awareness among those who benefit from our services, as well as those who are in a position to increase the utilization of diabetes education, so we can build a landscape that helps individuals achieve optimal clinical and quality of life outcomes."

The new name better reflects the association's mission to ensure every individual with diabetes, prediabetes or a cardiometabolic condition has access to care that is developed, supervised and/or delivered by a diabetes care and education specialist.



Two Georgia Facilities are First to Achieve GBAC STAR Facility Accreditation

The Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC), a Division of ISSA, announced that the Georgia World Congress Center and Dinner in a Dash are the first organizations to achieve GBAC STAR™ facility accreditation. The GBAC STAR program helps commercial and public facilities of all sizes establish and carry out a systematic approach to cleaning, disinfection and infection prevention.

With more than 4 million square feet of total space, Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC) features 1.5 million square feet of flexible exhibit space and is one of only a few venues to offer more than 1 million square feet of contiguous exhibition space. As the world's largest LEED-certified convention center, GWCC welcomes more than 1 million visitors annually. GWCC was among the first convention centers in the country to commit to achieving GBAC STAR certification to make future gatherings safer.

"We are honored to be pacing the industry by achieving GBAC STAR accreditation," said Frank Poe, executive director of Georgia World Congress Center Authority. "Although events will look different moving forward, our commitment to our customers, show attendees and team members that the highest cleaning and disinfection protocols are being implemented at GWCC hasn't changed. We would expect nothing less of ourselves and for our facility."

In 2012, Julie and Mike Cook founded Dinner in a Dash in Monroe, Georgia, allowing customers to pick up home-cooked meals for busy nights. With six employees

and just about 1,500 square feet of space, Dinner in a Dash was built as a to-go concept rather than dine-in. However, the family-owned company saw the GBAC STAR program as an opportunity to provide additional reassurance in uncertain times.

"Our employees and customers are the heart of our business," Julie Cook said. "Achieving GBAC STAR accreditation further showcases our dedication to cleanliness and the people who have helped our business become what it is today."

Facilities and organizations in 30 countries are adopting the GBAC STAR program to ensure they follow best practices in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. These include professional sports venues, hotels, restaurants, convention centers, airports, churches and more.



The GBAC Star program helps facilities follow best practices during COVID-19.



BECOME A MICROBIAL WARRIOR. The GBAC Fundamentals Online Course will teach you infection and contamination control measures for infectious disease outbreaks. Learn more at associationforum.org/browse/ignite. When registering, use promo code ASSOCFORUM.



Toronto Convention and Visitors Association Changes Name to Destination Toronto

Announced during their virtual Annual General Meeting in June, the Toronto Convention and Visitors Association is now named Destination Toronto.

“As Toronto has evolved and grown over recent years, so have we as an organization, and it’s time to reflect that in our name. And while our community and the visitor economy is facing deep challenges, we know the future is bright for the city we love to share with the world,” writes Heather Neale, director of sales for the U.S. market.

She continues to explain that “this shift towards a new name is about amplifying the many voices within our organization and industry into one compelling narrative. The project began months ago — well before the global pandemic — and now seems more relevant than ever.”

The organization’s tagline is now: One Vision. One Destination. Endless Stories. Destination Toronto. 📍

/// [VISIT seetorontonow.com](https://www.seetorontonow.com)
for more information.



Become a Digital Event Strategist

Digital events are part of the fabric of association management now more than ever. That’s why, as part of a new partnership with the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), Association Forum is offering a perk to members who enroll in digital events training.

Knowing how to create a digital strategy has become a way to future-proof your work. Accelerate your ability to plan and produce a seamless experience with the PCMA Digital Event Fast Track. This curated collection of core lessons lays the groundwork for the full Digital Event Strategist certification, a designation that will help you stand out as an authority in an increasingly crowded field.



Discover the full PCMA portfolio of customizable digital solutions — including coaching and consulting — at the PCMA Digital Experience Institute. Use code **FORUM** to receive the PCMA member rate when you register.

/// **FOR MORE INFORMATION** on the courses, visit
pcma.org/engage/learning-products.

MEMBERSHIP

Promotions and Changes

The Society of Gynecological Oncology and Foundation for Women's Cancer (SGO/FWC) is pleased to announce the promotion of **Ellen J. Sullivan, MS, MSJ**, to the new position of chief operating officer. Sullivan came to SGO/FWC in 2012 and most recently served as chief communications and membership officer. She has been the lead staff liaison to the Communications, Publications and Membership Committees as well as the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force and the COVID-19 Task Force. In her new role, Sullivan will focus internally on key staffing, process and infrastructure improvements and issues.



SGO Marketing Manager **Lindsey Powell, MNM**, is now the director of marketing, communications and membership. Lindsey joined the staff in July 2018 as marketing/communications coordinator for the FWC. She is a veteran of the Peace Corps-Indonesia and holds a bachelor's degree in marketing and master's degree in nonprofit management. Powell has overseen the redesign of the new SGO website, which launched in June, and has managed work groups of the Communications Committee and Diversity & Inclusion Task Force. She will be the lead staff liaison for those committees as well as the Membership Committee.



The American Supply Association, whose members do business in the plumbing, heating, cooling, pipe and industrial pipe, valve and fittings industry (PHCP-PVF), recently hired association veteran **Merrill Drew, CAE**, as its new director of marketing and communications. In her role, Drew is responsible for developing and managing the brand strategies and implementing integrated marketing and communications plans for all programs and services that increase the awareness and image of ASA.



"Merrill's impact here at ASA has been immediate and highly meaningful," said Mike Miazga, ASA's vice president of sales and membership. "Merrill has hit the ground running and already has taken the association's marketing and communications platforms to another level that will greatly benefit ASA's strong membership base."

New Association Forum Members

Individual Members

Jules Burke, SMART Productions, Inc
Mary Kate Cunningham, CAE, ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership
Tammy Foshay, Smart Association Management
Kyle Fredrickson, Reviewr
Lacy Hawley, Tourism Vancouver
Reggie Henry, CAE, ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership
Jackie Kavcak, Tourism Vancouver
Vanessa Nicol Gonzalez-Leyva, ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership
Desmond J. Ryan, CAE, Independent
Gary Schirmacher, Experient, A Maritz Global Events Company
Kris Velilla, American College of Chest Physicians
Kara Weber, Conference Technology Enhancements

Forum Plus Members

Jamey Richardson, American Academy of Implant Dentistry
Tracy Sferra, American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
Katie Binhack, American Bar Association
Emma Buell, American Bar Association
Sara Calvillo, American Bar Association
Leonel De La Mora, American Bar Association
Taylor Kremer, American Bar Association
Bryan Lambert, American Bar Association
Briana Morris, American Bar Association
Lorraine Murray, American Bar Association
Abigail Phillips, American Bar Association
Rachel Rojas-Brennan, American Bar Association
Rebecca Tripp, American Bar Association
Patricia Bonsu, American College of Healthcare Executives
Jill Hunt, American Epilepsy Society
Genevieve Hix, American Library Association
Ni'Shele Jackson, American Library Association
Kara Malenfant, American Library Association
Sarah Polen, American Library Association
Nathaniel Kollias, American Veterinary Medical Association
Mark Rosati, American Veterinary Medical Association
Stephanie Adams, Association Management Center
Colleen Armstrong, Association Management Center
Lindsey Baris, Association Management Center
Kaitlyn Gaede, Association Management Center
Michelle Gallas, Association Management Center
Karen Mikula, Association Management Center
Gina Parisi, Association Management Center
Laura Smith, Association Management Center
Michelle Whitworth, Association Management Center
Ryan Wilkinson, Association Management Center
Deja Hall, Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists
Kate Thomas, Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists
Christopher Vincent, CFA Society Chicago
LaVerne Palmer, Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)
Kristi Feliksik, Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)
Suzanne Hill, Institute of Real Estate Management
Kristin Keith, National Association of Personal Financial Advisors
Mike Kessellmayer, Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

Events listed here are Association Forum programs. Further details and registration information can be found at associationforum.org/events. Programs are subject to change.

SmartTech Conference® 2020

Sept. 30, 2020
8:30 a.m.–4:45 p.m.
CAE credit hours: 5.0
Standard rate (begins Sept. 1): \$119 member;
\$149 nonmember

Association Forum is Transforming for the Digital Revolution.

Our revamped SmartTech Conference will help you navigate a new decade and transform the digital side of your business with tools and techniques for incorporating AI and emerging technologies. SmartTech 2020 kicks off with an opening keynote from ISACA Chief Technology Officer Simona Rollinson where she will showcase emerging technologies and what they will mean for associations as they evolve to better serve their members' needs. Then choose from breakouts on topics such as cybersecurity, AI, subscription models and machine learning.

**All events
are virtual.**

OCTOBER

Turn Up the Volume on Your Partnership Revenue with PPN's Corporate Partnership Accelerator Training

Oct. 7 & 8, 2020
9 a.m.–noon each day
CAE credit hours: 5.0
Fee: Check associationforum.org for details.

This two half-day training course, offered by the Partnership Professionals Network (PPN) in partnership with Association Forum, is crafted so association executives can more effectively implement revenue-generating corporate partnership and sponsorship strategies. In this active learning training, participants will have the opportunity to practice pitching their value proposition. Following the training, participants will receive a sample assets worksheet and sample packaging document to aide in developing or enhancing a successful corporate partnership program. This program will address various aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic on in-person conference sponsorships, virtual conference sponsorships and year-long partnerships.

Presenting the Association Management Essentials Series

Designed to meet the growing needs of your entry and mid-level employees, this series consists of three-hour, highly interactive, targeted learning sessions focused on core management essentials and built upon the CAE domains. Courses are available individually or as a bundle. A certificate of completion (as well as 15 CAE credits) will be awarded to those participants who complete the entire series.

Membership 360

Sept. 14, 2020, 9 a.m.–noon

Ins and Outs of Association Law

Sept. 23, 2020, 9 a.m.–noon

Your Leadership Potential

Oct. 14, 2020, 9 a.m.–noon

Governance Essentials

Oct. 28, 2020, 9 a.m.–noon

Pricing:

Full bundle: \$599 members; \$849 nonmembers

Per session: \$149 members; \$199 nonmembers

For full details and schedules, visit associationforum.org/events/associationmanagementessentials.

Receive 10% off if you bring a second person to any of the sessions. Email education@associationforum.org for this special group rate.

Call for Nominations for Open Positions on the 2021–2023 Association Forum Board of Directors

Please read the Call for Nominations carefully and in its entirety to ensure full understanding of the process. All recommendations for nomination and any information collected as part of the process are strictly confidential.

In 2021, Association Forum's Nominating Committee will elect two association professional members and one industry partner to serve on the Association Forum Board of Directors for the term spanning 2021–2023. We encourage you to nominate qualified candidates.

Board member duties are as defined in the Bylaws, Article V: Board of Directors.

Bylaws Article V: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Authority and Responsibility. The affairs of the Forum shall be managed by the Board of Directors, which shall have supervision, control, and direction of the Forum, shall determine its policies or changes therein within the limits of these Bylaws, shall actively promote its purposes, and shall have discretion in the disbursement of its funds. The Board of Directors may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its business as shall be deemed advisable and may, in the execution of the powers granted, appoint such agents as it may consider necessary.

Section 2. Composition. The Board of Directors shall be composed of thirteen (13) voting members as follows: Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, Immediate Past Chair, six (6) additional Regular Members (collectively, "Regular Member Directors"), and three (3) Supplier Partner Members (collectively, "Supplier Partner Directors"). In addition, the President & Chief Executive Officer shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board.

Section 3. Qualifications. Only Regular Members and Supplier Partner Members shall be eligible to serve on the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Term. Officers shall serve a one (1) year term in office, or until such time as their successors are duly elected, qualified, and assume their position. Directors shall serve a three (3) year term in office, or until such time as their successors are duly elected, qualified, and assume their position. In order to provide for a staggered term, two (2) Regular Member Directors and one (1) Supplier Partner Director shall be elected each year. Officers and Directors shall take office on April 1 of the year in which they are elected. Terms shall run from April 1 to March 31, or until such time as successors are duly elected, qualified, and

assume their position. Regular Member and Supplier Partner Directors completing a full term in office shall not be eligible for re-election to the Board until at least one (1) year has elapsed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Regular Member Directors completing a full term in office shall be eligible for election as an Officer of the Forum and may serve on the Board in such capacity.

Section 5. Manner of Election.

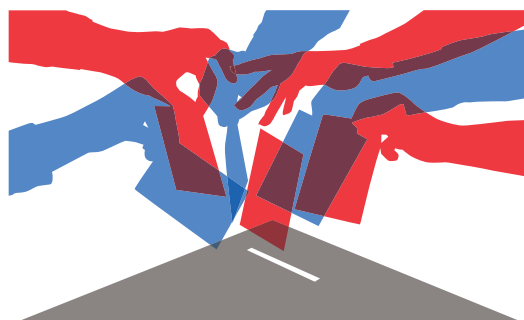
a. Nominating Committee Recommended Slate.

At least sixty (60) days prior to April 1 of each year, the Nominating Committee shall recommend a slate of qualified candidates to the Board of Directors to fill each seat on the Board of Directors that is either vacant or set to expire. Members of the Nominating Committee are ineligible to stand for election to any office.

b. Publication of Slate.

The Nominating Committee's recommended slate shall be announced to all members.

TO LEARN MORE, visit associationforum.org or contact executiveoffice@associationforum.org.



Timetable and Key Actions

Nov. 6, 2020: Completed nominations are due by 11:59 p.m. CT.

Nov. 20, 2020: Completed applications are due by 11:59 p.m. CT.

Dec. 18, 2020: Members selected for interviews will be notified.

Jan. 15, 2021: Candidate interviews are conducted (virtual or in-person to be determined)

March 24, 2021: Board of Directors approves 2021–2023 Candidate Slate.

March 26, 2021: Approved Slate for 2021–2023 is announced to members.

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PCMA	pcma.org	33
Tourism Vancouver	tourismvancouver.com	<i>back cover</i>

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

- Publication Title:** *FORUM*.
- Publication no.:** 1056-0092
- Filing Date:** August 2020.
- Issue Frequency:** Bi monthly, with combined January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October and November/December issues.
- No. of Issues Published Annually:** 6.
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- Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication:** Association Forum, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.
- Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters:** Association Forum, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.
- Full Names and Complete Mailing Address of Publisher and Editor:** Publisher: Michelle Mason, FASAE, CAE, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.
Editor: Kara Brockman, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.
- Owner:** Association Forum, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.
- Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding One Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities:** None.
- The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:** has not changed during the preceding 12 months.
- Publication Title:** *FORUM* Magazine.
- Issue Date for Circulation Data Below:** July/August 2020.

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation:

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
A. Total No. Copies (Net Press Run)	1,624	1,349
B. Paid Circulation		
1. Outside County Mail Subscriptions	0	0
2. In County Mail Subscriptions	0	0
3. Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution	0	0
4. Other classes mailed through the USPS	0	0
C. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	1,525	1,250
D. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution by Mail		
1. Outside County Copies	99	99
2. In County Copies	0	0
3. Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0	0
4. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail	0	0
E. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	99	99
F. Total Distribution	1,624	1,349
G. Copies not Distributed	99	99
H. Total	1,624	1,349
I. Percent Paid and/or Requested	93.9%	92.6%

- This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the September/October 2020 issue of this publication.
- I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).

—Kara Brockman, Editor

PARTNERS MAKE IT POSSIBLE

Alpana Singh

Master Sommelier, Entrepreneur,
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Alpana Singh's road to the top of her field was a whirlwind, so it's no surprise she is highly sought after as a dynamic and engaging speaker with a fascinating story to tell. As the daughter of Fijian-Indian immigrants, she beat the odds and achieved her goal of becoming a Master Sommelier (there are only 274 Master Sommeliers worldwide) at the tender age of 26. She was the youngest woman, the first Woman of Color and the only South Asian in the world ever to do so. This distinguished accomplishment, along with her effervescence, experience and energy, was magnetic, and it wasn't long before Alpana found herself in the local spotlight. For 12 seasons, she has served as the host of the Emmy Award-winning restaurant review television show, *Check, Please!*, on Chicago's PBS station. In December 2012, Alpana opened The Boarding House, a wine-driven concept. In February of 2015, Alpana opened her second restaurant, Seven Lions, on Chicago's iconic Michigan Avenue. In 2016, Alpana announced her third restaurant venture, Terra & Vine, in Evanston, Illinois. She conducts a series of discussions about the life of wine, its cultural importance, and how anyone can become an expert. Alpana will take you on a journey to connect whatever message you are looking to convey — whether it's wines made by women, selections that celebrate the spirit of entrepreneurship or bottles that highlight global diversity, Alpana will customize a tasting, keynote or dinner to really personalize and bring home the theme of your event.

eShow

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eShow's full line of event management solutions provides event managers with web-based and on-site event management solutions for all event sizes—all under one umbrella. Our products include Virtual Event Management (VEM®), Virtual Exhibits, Webinar Event Management (WEM®), Registration Management, Housing & Travel Management, Exhibit Sales & Floor Plan Management, Mobile Apps, Event Websites, Speaker & Session Management, Abstract & Committee Management and much more.

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At GLC, we believe that every brand has a story to tell. At the heart of these stories are people: amazing people who do ordinary things or ordinary people who do amazing things. Whether rooted in thought leadership, best practices or human interest, content has the power to connect, to inspire and to move audiences through positive change and growth both personally and professionally. Through traditional media and innovative new channels, our content programs connect brands to people, driving strategic outcomes and reinforcing the relational value between the two. That's why we do what we do.

What we do

GLC provides turnkey media, marketing and communications services to professional and trade associations. We utilize award-winning design and compelling thought leadership content to attract and engage member audiences. Our approach is informed by data and analytics, as well as our extensive experience in the association marketplace.

GLC's approach is media-agnostic and designed around specific business goals and objectives. Our focus is and always has been to use the power of design and storytelling to develop best-in-class media platforms — whether in print, digital, social or video — that deliver measurable results for our clients. Our process is innovative, collaborative and flexible, while our project management and attention to detail is highly regarded by our 30 association client partners.

While much in the world and our industry has changed, our passion has remained consistent: To help organizations tell stories that empower their audiences. For more than 50 years, this is what has set us apart from our competitors.

Meet Minneapolis

Tom Ruzsa

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Minneapolis.org



As much as we would love to welcome you to Minneapolis right now, we know now just isn't the time. It's more important that we all stay safe and healthy. But that doesn't mean we're sitting idle. The Meet Minneapolis team is here to help you with your future meeting planning needs — and our locals are doing their best to keep our restaurants, shops, and attractions up and running so that you can enjoy them when the time is right.

When it is time to meet, discover the destination that's been on every meeting planner's list to check out for their next meeting. Minneapolis has it all: a dramatic riverfront skyline, three professional sports stadiums within 1.3 miles, so much art you're literally surrounded by it and a theater on almost every corner. A culture committed to perfecting the craft of the brew, the best park system in the nation, and a foodie paradise where you can get Nordic cuisine for breakfast, Ethiopian for lunch and this thing called a "Jucy Lucy" for dinner — and oh yeah, cocktails on a Ferris wheel. A place to bring your dancing shoes and party at festivals all year round, enjoy four gorgeous seasons surrounded by 13 lakes, the Mississippi River and a waterfall, and meet friendly locals who can't wait to show you why they love living here.

PCMA

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Simon T. Bailey is a Breakthrough Strategist, Virtual Educator and Executive Coach dedicated to helping individuals and organizations pursue their potential. He goes beyond feel-good content and provides actionable insight to spark the shift you need. His expertise has helped an Orlando-based healthcare system to be ranked No. 1 in customer service by Expedia.com.

Through Simon T. Bailey International, he offers consulting, training, and coaching focused on leadership, communication, client relationships and organizational culture. More than 1,800 organizations in 49 countries (including Google, American Express, Nationwide, Hilton and Sony) have enlisted his help to better connect with their clients and employees.

The author of ten recently launched his online institute in the summer of 2020 dedicated to skill-based training, upskilling and reskilling. A believer that education is a change catalyst, he's synthesized 40 years of professional experiences into career-enhancing exercises.

"Simon Bailey is one of a kind — down to earth, with vision, passion and purpose in helping people look within themselves to be at their best. I had the pleasure of meeting Simon during a recent event where he delivered a flawless message on how to own, sustain and create moments of brilliance. I would highly recommend Simon."

— Program manager at Transamerica

When is the last time you allowed yourself to think big? Let's get started together.

- To collaborate with Simon, please visit <http://www.simontbailey.com/speak>
- To invest in your development, please visit www.SimonTBaileyInstitute.com

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Nature all around, and a climate that invites us to experience her all year-round, we have a special perspective, one that reminds us of the deeper connection we have to the earth and to each other. Maybe that's what makes this place so welcoming and safe — the only way to know is to experience it for yourselves. We can't wait to meet you again!

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What's one thing in your workspace that brings you happiness?

"My 2-year-old twin daughters! Now that we are fully remote, I very much appreciate the giggles (although sometimes cries) that come from other areas of the house. While I am blessed that my husband is able to watch them while I work, I do love having lunch with them daily and checking in on them during those much-needed breaks! ENA has really worked hard to make sure all staff feel connected and supported, and I think they deserve a huge shoutout!"

– Jamie Garcia, meetings manager, Emergency Nurses Association



"Having the current issue of *FORUM* magazine close by... But seriously, being around my colleagues and knowing that they are enjoying their work and discovering new ways we can do better together."

– Paul Pomerantz, chief executive officer, American Society of Anesthesiologists



"My little cat, Huey. My husband and I adopted him during quarantine after learning that a lot of cats were being relinquished. We don't know his back story, but he charmed us so quickly — and bringing him back to our apartment opened up a spot at the shelter for another cat in search of a forever home."

– Emily Besser, manager of advocacy and practice affairs, American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association

"The stack of books that precariously props up my small monitor. Varied in topic and quality, the books are a constant reminder of thoughtful colleagues who gifted knowledge; countless hours spent connecting concepts to complex real-world situations; and the increasingly relevant idea that, often, the most important lessons can't be gleaned from books at all."

– Rich Rosfelder, vice president of strategic communications, CCIM Institute



"My workspace is now a nook in my living room, where the sun peeks through the windows brightest. I redesigned it to be an office space, plopping a plushy pillow here and work-style motivating quote there. Due to COVID-19, our staff has temporarily redefined a routine workday for the safety of our members and staff. Despite the transition to working from home, I enjoy the simplicity and comfort of these recent days. In some ways this shift, though triggered by something devastating, has allowed me to learn more about myself. Working on a project with my shoes off or preparing a report and reciting aloud while pacing back and forth with coffee in hand (not risking disturbing others) has been a booster of productivity in the most unexpected fashion."

– Dianna Reeves, office manager, CFA Society Chicago





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City by Nature

WHEN YOU'RE READY – Minneapolis is ready to plan your next meeting.

8 REASONS TO CONSIDER MINNEAPOLIS FOR YOUR NEXT MEETING



A CITY LEADING THE PATH FORWARD

As the catalyst city for a nationwide movement, Meet Minneapolis stands in solidarity with our city and leaders from all backgrounds in recognizing the need to transform our city from the inside out – to ensure Minneapolis is both a safe and equitable place for everyone to live, work and visit.



MINNEAPOLIS CONVENTION CENTER (MCC)

The MCC Client Event Health & Safety Plan and MCC Social Distancing Floor Plans demonstrate the health and safety of guests and team members are our first priority.



THE HOTEL WELCOME SIGN IS OUT (& IT'S ALSO SANITIZED)

From enhanced cleaning protocols and social distancing, Minneapolis hotels are ready to welcome guests.



SOCIAL DISTANCE: A CITY BY NATURE

In Minneapolis, you're never farther than 6 blocks away from a park. Our breathtaking waterfalls, chain of lakes, the Mississippi River, and biking and running trails all around the city make us the perfect place to enjoy a day of adventure safely.



WE ARE STAFFED & READY

Monitoring all the changes and disruptions of our industry, the Meet Minneapolis staff is ready to handle all your meeting needs.



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Explore our unique restaurants, shops and attractions that have opened their doors safely to welcome back patrons.



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- 2: Position the QR code to appear in the viewfinder
- 3: Launch the website [Minneapolis.org/safety-updates](https://minneapolis.org/safety-updates)

> CONTACT

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