Muskegon Community College DEI Partnership Proposal
June, 2021

Purpose
In 2020, Muskegon Community College (MCC) President Dale Nesbary established a DEI Taskforce to begin the work of establishing an Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at the College. The DEI Taskforce is charged with developing a strategy and processes that will establish MCC as the West Michigan educational hub for assisting organizations who seek help in developing DEI strategy and training for their respective companies. The Office will be led by a Chief Diversity Officer reporting to the President and staffed at a level to support internal College and external business and community professional development needs. MCC will fund the Chief Diversity Officer position while this proposal seeks financial support from partners to fund operating staff.

The Ask
MCC’s FY 2021 budget, as proposed, funds a Cabinet level Chief Diversity Officer position. (An investment of $180,000 by the community college.) We are asking partners to provide stretch 3-year funding for two additional staff, one being full time professional and the other administrative in nature (an additional $150,000). Stretch funding would allow the College to get about the business of meeting internal college DEI needs (supported by the Chief Diversity Officer funded by MCC), as well as those requested by regional partners including nonprofits, schools, governments, as well as operating businesses (supported by the Chief Diversity Officer and two additional team members). The additional support will help bolster external priorities first, meaning additional staff hired from these funds will have prioritize external training first.

In addition to providing general learning opportunities for the greater community, specific services will be available to for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, including:

- Assistance in developing plans in recruiting, developing, and retaining employees (people) of color
- Opportunities for DEI training and annual staff development
• Development of a loaned business executive program that would work alongside MCC DEI team members on a specific project, while also serving as a resource to the community
• Share group collaborations (workshops, seminars, convocations)

The Need
An environmental scan of West Michigan identifies scant ongoing support for DEI training in the region. While a growing number of organizations maintain internal facing diversity staff (Amway Corporation, the City of Muskegon, Talent 2025), only Talent 2025 provides external facing training and only on a part time basis. There is no local resource capacity in Muskegon County. While some organizations provide conferences or one time training, there is very limited long term DEI training among the menu of options. This office, located in an institution of higher education, intends to fill that gap.

MCC DEI Taskforce
Taskforce members reflect professionals who work for the college (internally) and those outside of the college (externally) with years of experience in community outreach, human resources, and diversity, equity and inclusion, the members of the Taskforce are:

▪ Stephanie Briggs – Director of Admissions, MCC
▪ Nicholas Budimir – Faculty, Social Sciences Department, MCC
▪ Henry Edwards – Vice President Organizational Effectiveness & Diversity (Retired)
▪ Eli Fox – Institutional Research Analyst, MCC
▪ Ed Garner – Regional Director, Michigan Small Business Development Center, Grand Valley State University
▪ Kenneth James – Director of Inclusion, Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce
▪ Morris Jenkins, Ph.D., J.D. – Associate Professor, Justice, Law and Public Safety, Lewis University, former Dean of Social Sciences, Southeast Missouri State University
▪ Lowell Kirksey – Muskegon NAACP
▪ Dr Michelle Loyd-Paige, Executive Associate to the President for Diversity & Inclusion, Calvin University
▪ Dr Dale Nesbary – President, MCC
Definitions and Conceptual Framework

In its approach to the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion, Muskegon Community College (MCC) uses the following definitions:

- **Diversity:** Diversity encompasses complex differences and similarities in perspectives, identities, and points of view among members of an institution, as well as among individuals who make up the wider community. Diversity includes important and interrelated dimensions of human identity such as race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, socio-economic status, nationality, citizenship, religion, sexual orientation, ability and age. (Source: [https://www.luther.edu/ed-accreditation/assets/Standard_4_IR_3_10_13.pdf](https://www.luther.edu/ed-accreditation/assets/Standard_4_IR_3_10_13.pdf))

- **Equity:** Fairness or justice in the way people are treated. (Merriam-Webster)

- **Inclusion:** “The achievement of an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the organization’s success”. (Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) – [http://www.talentintelligence.com/blog/bid/bid/377611/inclusion-and-the-benefits-of-diversity-in-the-workplace](http://www.talentintelligence.com/blog/bid/bid/377611/inclusion-and-the-benefits-of-diversity-in-the-workplace))

MCC uses a Conceptual Framework (based on Managerial Learning literature), to establish what is referred to as the Cornerstones of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. There are 4-Cornerstones (components) of the framework, DEI
initiatives and programs are identified under one of the components; all which would make-up an organization’s DEI strategic requirements and needs:

**Cultural Awareness**
- Train-the-Trainer, Program Design (Implicit Bias, Generational Diversity), Training
- State/Federal Laws (Protected Classes)
- Developing Employee Resource Groups
- Diverse Terminology/Definitions
- Diversity Demographics/Data (i.e. Internal and External)

**Workforce/Organizational Strategy**
- Mission Statement
- Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Statement
- Leadership Development (BoD, Employee Data; Hiring; Formal/Informal Mentoring)
- Restorative Justice
- Employee Resource Groups
- Business Diversity (Supplier Diversity)
- Recruitment and Retention

**Cultural Competency**
- Organizational Values/Expectations
- Individual Self-Awareness
- Continuum of Learning
- Climate Assessment

**Community Outreach**
- Philanthropy
- Building Community Relationships - Global and Local

MCC is committed to partnering with local and regional businesses and nonprofits in achieving their diversity, equity, and inclusion goals throughout West Michigan.

**HOW MCC OFFICE OF DIVERSITY CAN SUPPORT OUR PARTNERS**

The MCC Office of Diversity can support partners in three specific areas. While not all inclusive, these areas represent some of the most challenging components of DEI and where organizations need assistance.

**Demographics Analytics and People Analytics**

Key components in developing a DEI effort for any company or organization centers around first identifying the problem, and then focusing on finding the right solutions for that unique problem, at that time, and for that particular area and/or location. The initial task is to assess the company and/or organization. Once the assessments have been completed, our approach in developing and implementing DEI programs and/or systems is based on analytics. MCC Office of Diversity can assist companies (different divisions in multiple cities or states) with the demographic assessment. This approach takes into consideration that one size or one solution does not fit all problems. When considering a problem that obviously calls for a DEI solution, we are dealing with the people aspect of a business and we must first identify the particular demographics where the division is located.
There are two analytic approaches that support DEI efforts, *Demographic and People Analytics*. *Demographic* analytics includes things that allow us to measure the dimensions and dynamics of populations. To amplify demographics (external) with the people analytics (internal). The data provides a narrative of what the numbers mean to the business strategy. MCC’s Office of Institutional Research and Grants may be consulted to provide additional resources as needed.

*People* analytics is known as talent analytics of Human Resources (HR) analytics that can help managers and executives make decisions about their employees or workforce. It allows a company to adequately align its workforce with its marketplace and to a company’s workforce sources. This allows a company to be able to visualize its workforce.

This data-driven approach supports a company’s strategic decision making, which allows the company to better manage its workforce by making quick and deliberate adjustments to its people plans, relative to diversity, equity and inclusion.

**Diversity Training**

To achieve cultural awareness and competency of employees at all levels of the organization, it is important that a menu of *Diversity Training* be available. The Office of Diversity at MCC will advise and assist organizations in determining what this diversity training menu looks like and how best to deliver the training. If Diversity Training has been introduced previously, there may be a need to assess the benefits of the training and, if needed, how to build on existing training.

Some examples of training may include:

- **Baseline or Level Set Diversity Training** – this is entry level training that would be delivered in a classroom environment. Employees from all levels of the organization attend/participate in the class (hourly to executive level).

- **Customized Training** – this is diversity training designed to meet the specific needs of the organization. For example, if there is a need to develop diverse leaders in the organization, a client could choose to nominate selected employees of color to enroll in Muskegon’s Inclusive Leadership Academy.
Recruitment

An ongoing challenge for many organizations, including MCC and our partners is Recruiting employees at all levels should reflect and look like the customers and the communities we serve. Diverse recruitment strategies at every level of the organization is important. Today’s employees will join and stay with the companies that they feel embrace and welcome diverse employees. Potential employees like to see workforce members who look like them as early as their initial interview.

Although successful recruitment begins with Human Resources, there must be a strategy to achieve the company’s diverse recruiting goals and to utilize demographic and people analysis as mentioned earlier. MCC’s Office of DEI will assist its partners in achieving their diverse recruitment goals at the hourly, supervisory, management and executive levels from a local, regional, and global perspective.

The Three I’s of Diversity

In conclusion, the primary goal of an organization is the return on investment (ROI). The best determinant of whether DEI provides ROI is seen in the three I’s:

1. **Intent** – is the expectation met
2. **Integration** – into all aspects of the business
3. **Investment** – cost commitment

We anticipate a positive response and look forward to partnering to provide quality, long term DEI training in the region. For further information, please contact:

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