

## **Diversity and Inclusion Report and Recommendations**

from 38 minutes to 114 minutes. In total, I was able to collect approximately 20 hours of qualitative data that offered insightful, first-hand accounts of how they arrived in Woods Hole, what it is like to live and work there. Among the respondents, there was a high level of diversity in age (25-65+), tenure at WH (4 weeks to 40+ years), race/ethnicity [White, Black (African American and other ethnicities), Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic (from various ethnicities)], educational level (e.g., HS, BS, MS, PhD) and job type (e.g., researcher, administrator, staff, etc.).

The interviewees were given the chance to offer open-ended commentary about their experience of living or working in Woods Hole. I also asked a number of questions related to: how they

4. Preponderance of Overt Racism and Aggression/Micro-aggression

!" Presence of Apathy, Skepticism, and Resignation #

1. **Dearth of Diversity**—Every single person that I interviewed lamented the lack of demographic diversity at WH. One respondent revealed, “I am used to being the only Black person and yet it’s remarkable how different it is [here]”. Another remarked, “I don’t care about sensitivity training...just get more people [of color]!” Several individuals noted the feeling of “eyes being on them” due to how much they stick out when they are at work or in the community. Others discussed how the lack of diversity created complications, such as the lack of dating opportunities, difficulty in finding housing, or unpleasant scrutiny and harassment by the police.

In addition,

## 2. **Absence of Cultural Competence—**

WH stated that “I don’t want to go back because people just don’t care about me.” When I asked what it would take to reconsider, s/he responded “they would have to double my salary...and I would still only *think* about it.”

With respect to “involvement”, a number of people reported being socially excluded. There were many such stories and it was heartbreaking to listen to them. One respondent told the story of being invited to the SEA anniversary at the Swope Center, only to be snubbed. The PEP students “dressed up” for the event and were told that the buses would come back to pick them up. They waited for nearly an hour. Finally, George and another person happened to stop by the residences and carried them to the event in their car. According to the respondent, “when we finally arrived you could tell that they were really surprised to see us, and didn’t want us there. It was so passive aggressive and I felt really hurt and humiliated. I think the whole group did. I actually wanted to cry but John Bullard was really cool. He pulled up chairs for us and asked the speaker to give us a private recap of the presentation that we missed.” Another story came from a student whose advisor invited everyone to his/her mountain home except for this particular student. I could hear the pain and feeling of rejection. “I’m not sure why [s/he] never invited me. I don’t know...I guess they just assumed that I don’t ski or something.” S/he does ski.

There were many concerns around “protection”. In fact, this was one of the biggest sources of concern. The prevailing belief is that, despite all of the hostility that people of color face, there is no grievance option. As one respondent stated, “you either suck it up and deal with it or you leave. If you complain, you’ll get it twice as bad”. Another confessed that “it’s so hard to get in [at WH] that you don’t want to risk not getting in [by complaining]” A different respondent noted that “passive aggressive energy directed at [people of color] makes you feel like you have to cover your bases all the time because you’re constantly under suspicion”. Another respondent reported that people of color are very vulnerable to lies that are spread about them by envious or prejudiced White employees. S/he said, “they constantly told lies to my boss that I wasn’t doing



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people who do pure math and computer science who work in Woods Hole. You just have to show them why applying these skills to ocean science would be interesting”

2. **Think Broadly about Academic Institutions.** Many respondents referred to the existence of a certain level of elitism in WH that makes researchers reluctant to look beyond the Ivy League. When asked whether it was to capitalize on the likelihood of quality, many felt that it had as much to do with class and “cultural fit” as academic ability per se. One respondent stated that WH wants to “stay in its own lane...they only recruit from top tier schools—White institutions. There are top students at other schools too. Just ask Scott Doney. He learned this when he took on Shanna Williamson from Skidmore who turned out to be better than the student from Oxford.”

I propose *sending* people to recruit from HBCUs (e-mailing a program or job description isn't enough. A flesh and blood presenter would be more effective). Some HBCUs, non-Ivy, and minority serving institutions with Marine Biology and/or Environmental Science programs are: Univers6cm BT 45 0 3 (r) f2 (e)50 Tm /TT2 1 Tf ( ) Tj ET Q q 0T Q q 0T Q Tc 5094ivn7T Q Tc 0 0Tc





professional and social support to one another. This effectiveness of this approach is exemplified by the Posse Program ([www.possefoundation.org](http://www.possefoundation.org)) which has found that the graduation rate of people of color soars beyond 90% when they are accompanied to college by other kids from their communities.

I recommend that WH adopt the practice of cluster hiring. In addition to providing support to others in the cohort, it produces a “snowball effect” whereby persons of previous cohorts provide support to future cohorts. Like compound interest, it enriches and facilitates the process of diversification over time.

One respondent insisted that “having a house where I could provide a room to a person of color who might have a hard time getting housing elsewhere was very important to [me/us]”

**D. Go on a Top Three Spree— At Harvard**

([www.phdproject.org](http://www.phdproject.org)), which succeeded in quadrupling the number of minority faculty in business schools across the country from 294 to 1,253 since 1994.

- F. **Bring People to Woods Hole**—give people the opportunity to visit and acclimate to the environment. Many respondents cautioned against simply assuming that a person of color would not want to live in Woods Hole because of the weather or the lack of diversity. Some people of color are comfortable around White people and would be less bothered by the lack of demographic diversity than other people of color. There are other reasons that a person of color might be happy in Woods Hole. Several respondents were from warmer regions but decided to settle in Woods Hole because of the natural beauty and their commitment to marine science.

### **Strategies for Hiring**

- A. **Create Diversity Policy for Contractors**—Massport observed that very few of the contractors on their multi-million dollar development contracts were people of color.

**Diversity and Inclusion** (Underrepresented minority? *Demonstrated* commitment to D&I of underrepresented minorities, e.g., Teach for America? Demonstrated resilience by overcoming hardship or struggle? The research



It is also possible to track progress using the ICCQ (Robertson, Kulik, & Pepper, 2002) or another measure of cultural competence.

- E. Create an Office of Diversity and Inclusion office**—the proposal here is to hire a Chief Diversity Officer, with staff, to assist with the day-to-day affairs associated with diversity and inclusion across the institutes. This person’s job responsibilities would included the following:
1. Monitor all interview panels (see Item B under strategies for hiring)
  2. Provides a source of support and guidance for the community of color
  3. Handles complaints, grievances, and Title IX violations and investigations
  4. Have a monthly one-hour meeting with directors of all of the institutes
  5. Assist with the planning of multi-cultural programming and events (so that it doesn’t always fall on current employees)
  6. Make trips around the country to facilitate broader recruitment
  7. Build connections and partnerships with “out of the box” organizations
  8. Serve as a liaison with the broader Cape Cod community (e.g., Falmouth, Mashpee)

It is important that the institutes think carefully about the person that they hire. Ideally, it should be someone who is: (1) familiar with academic or funding institutions, or WH more specifically, (2) vehemently committed to the mission of diversity and inclusion, and (3) politically savvy, persuasive, and able to effectively deal with diverse and potentially difficult personalities. I would be happy to help with drafting the ad for such a position and serving on the interview panel.

- F. Foster Greater Warmth and Work/Life Balance**—people in general felt that the environment could be somewhat cold and unfriendly. This was not always due to cultural differences, but rather was often attributed to the “scientific personality” or “New England culture”. However, this lack of warmth

recruitment or hiring practices, (3) no accountability or formal structures to ensure that diversity is a consideration in recruitment and hiring, (4) low inclusivity coupled with widespread aggression against people of color, and (4) no conspicuous institutional procedure for reporting, tracking, or addressing grievances from employees who experience hostility and discrimination at work.

A common trap that some well-