

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

Strategic Plan for Managing Diversity

Introduction

Our strategic plan for diversity management challenges the men and women of United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to implement diversity as a leadership, performance and mission readiness issue. Additionally, we must join together in changing the membership of America's Volunteer Life Saving Force to better reflect the diverse fabric of our country.

The demographics of our country continue to change at an ever-quicken pace and the Auxiliary should fully reflect all citizens of the country in its membership. The Auxiliary will leverage diversity and establish an environment of inclusion for every citizen including those with disabilities. With full participation and honest enthusiastic dialogue this prepares our members and future leaders to execute the Auxiliary's mission in step with the core values of the United States Coast Guard.

Effective leaders develop from an environment of openness, candor, risk taking and respect for a diverse membership. Strong bold leadership enables organizations and builds a culture of inclusion and trust for mission execution.

As we endeavor towards making the Auxiliary a leading volunteer organization in diversity management, the strategic plan builds upon the progress we've achieved thus far and provides direction for our leaders and members as we continue to serve as an example to other organizations. In this 71st year of volunteer service to our Nation and to the USCG, we proudly continue to dedicate our time and resources to assist in meeting the various missions of the United States Coast Guard and the recreational boating public.

While we strive to increase our recruiting momentum and the retention of our current members, we recognize that our response to diversity management influences the culture of our organization and its leadership to directly impact mission execution and the performance of our membership.

The Purpose of Diversity

Diversity is a readiness issue that is critical to mission execution. Inclusion of all individuals and respect for their viewpoints produces better decisions and action in organizations. The Auxiliary is making advances in diversity and inclusion by establishing a *Diversity Research Group*. This group will provide training for leaders and members to improve our efforts to recruit retain and leverage a diverse and talented volunteer force. The Research Group's members, under the guidance of the National Diversity Advisor, will be responsible for recognizing and rewarding members actively involved with diversity initiatives specified in this Plan.

This Strategic plan is a living document that will evolve overtime as the Auxiliary continues to expand its knowledge base regarding diversity management. The goals, objectives and action items of this plan requires that all of our Leaders make a commitment to ensuring that the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary provides an environment that values and embraces the contributions and potential of every member of our diverse society.

The Diversity Vision

The Auxiliary's vision is to make diversity an organizational imperative and bring us a treasure trove of different perspectives. Our vision is more than an alignment of organizational goals but an indispensable dynamic process to increase performance and productivity as we strive to become the "*Volunteer Organization of Choice*".

Through this shared vision, we'll recognize diversity and remove all barriers, real or perceived, so current and potential members will feel an increased pride and honor in their membership.

- Our members are **honored** to offer themselves as volunteers to assist the USCG, with the desire for training and meaningful involvement, so that we can enhance safety in the boating community.
- We'll **respect** the volunteer nature of our organization and provide current and prospective members with a positive environment to reach their full potential.
- We'll encourage the **devotion to duty**, while understanding the unique abilities of each member, each giving according to their own abilities.

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

Diversity Policy Statement

It is the policy of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to ensure that all citizens, regardless of race, gender, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, religion, or physical or mental disability have an equal opportunity to become a volunteer of this organization. It is after all, part of our mission to become the volunteer organization of choice.

As the National Commodore, I will personally lead the diversity initiatives and challenge all who serve to do the same through leadership, mentorship, service, and example. As someone committed to diversity, I understand that providing training is one of the strategies that helps build an inclusive environment, which is crucial to attracting and retaining top talent, building member engagement, and fostering creativity and innovation. Our Strategic Plan for Managing Diversity will guide us in our efforts towards accomplishing this goal.

Diversity of thoughts, ideas, and competencies of our people, keeps the Auxiliary strong and empowers us to mission readiness and excellence.

Diversity is an imperative to the Auxiliary; it can increase morale and impact our success. In essence every member is responsible for fostering an inclusive team atmosphere and being a contributing part of Team Coast Guard.

The Auxiliary is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment, a journey guided by the deeply held values of *Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty*, as America's Guardians, we understand that diversity is not a problem to be solved, but is an asset to be developed.

James E. Vass,

James E. Vass
National Commodore, U.S.C.G. Auxiliary

The Diversity Strategic Goals

Goal 1. Create a positive volunteer environment for managing membership diversity.

Objectives:

- A. Understand the current Auxiliary culture to assist in the identification and removal of barriers.
- B. Enlighten our leaders and members through on-going training at all level to manage diversity as a membership retention issue.
- C. Achieve a diverse volunteer membership that represents all segments of our society.
- D. Ensure plans, policies and resources fully support managing diversity.

Goal 2. Be an organization that highly values its members and respects their differences.

Objectives:

- A. Leaders and Members recognize, understand, value and solicit differences.
- B. Recognize and reward individual and group contributions to managing diversity.
- C. Provide fair, equal and rapid conflict resolution.
- D. Communicate effectively with all members.

Goal 3. Ensure all Auxiliarists have the opportunity to reach their full potential as members.

Objectives:

- A. Ensure every member understands task requirements and responsibilities and is coached to achieve success, building on skills and assets unique to each person.

- B. Remove any and all physical barriers.

Diversity Action Items

Goal 1.

- Action items:
- (1. Conduct diversity surveys to determine membership makeup and diversity issues that apply to the Auxiliary.
 - (2. Develop intervention strategies to address cultural barriers identified in the surveys.
 - (3. Implement a plan to measure effectiveness of strategies.
 - (4. Incorporate diversity management training into all national meetings.
 - (5. Incorporate diversity management training into all basic leadership courses.
 - (6. Build a diversity message /agenda from top leadership to members through speeches, written materials, etc.
 - (7. Create a bibliography of reading materials for Leaders.
 - (8. Conduct research to better understand what attracts women, youth, and other minorities to the auxiliary.
 - (9. Develop a recruitment action Plan to target all segments of the population.
 - (10. Provide an appropriate budget for the diversity initiatives, marketing tools and instructional programs.

Goal 2.

- Action Items:
- (1. Create and implement a strategic plan fundamental to achieving our individual and collective success.
 - (2. Ensure all Leaders receive diversity management training prior to assuming office.
 - (3. Administer the NACO Three Star Award for Diversity.
 - (4. Review the discrimination complaint process to ensure timely resolution of complaints.
 - (5. Develop methods to ensure accountability for implementing diversity initiatives.
 - (6. Use the “*Navigator*” to widely disseminate the concepts of valuing diversity and the organizational goals for managing diversity.

Goal 3.

- Action Items:
- (1. Expand the Mentor program to ensure that every member has a mentor for the first year, and every member has the opportunity to be a mentor.
 - (2. Create awareness that adequate access for persons with disabilities should be maintained so that all members can attend activities.