



ALUMNI OF COLOR ENGAGEMENT

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-20

Developed by:
WFAA Diversity
Work Group



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“Great things are brought about and burdens are lightened through the efforts of many hands anxiously engaged in a good cause.” — Elder M. Russell Ballard

Creating this strategic plan would not have been possible without the assistance of the members of our diversity work group, who sought to understand the problem, provide constructive feedback, and most importantly, listen.

To our organizational leadership, thank you for understanding the importance of developing a thoughtful and intentional process for engaging our alumni of color.

Above all, thank you to the alumni participants for the candid feedback and actionable solutions they provided through the online affinity survey, the Dane County focus group, and the regional listening-session tour.

WFAA Diversity Work Group Cochairs

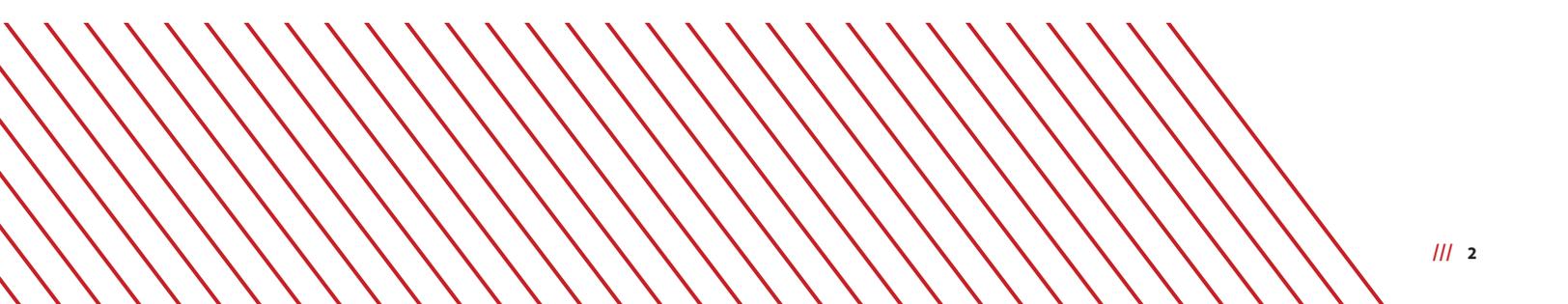
- Gia Gallimore, director of diverse alumni engagement
- Angela Lillethun '95, director of regional relations and volunteer management

WFAA Diversity Work Group Members

- John Baron, marketing coordinator
- Jonas Gomez-Tijerino, diverse alumni engagement intern
- Jessica Gile '14, program coordinator
- Tracey McClure '87, senior development program specialist
- Caroline Sullivan '12, marketing manager
- Stephanie Wallace '05, program manager

Division of Diversity, Equity & Educational Achievement Diversity Work Group Member

- Tracy Williams-Maclin, interim senior director of external relations, partnerships, and development



INTRODUCTION

The Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association (WFAA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the University of Wisconsin–Madison and promoting a climate that welcomes, celebrates, and respects the variety of human experience. As an organization, we recognize that our efforts to engage diverse alumni have at times fallen short. To address these shortcomings, our leadership has made outreach and engagement to diverse alumni a top organizational priority. To this end, we have formed an interdepartmental work group dedicated to assessing and developing a strategic plan for enriched alumni engagement. The work group has segmented diverse alumni into a three-year¹ plan to allow for intentional analysis of each constituent group.

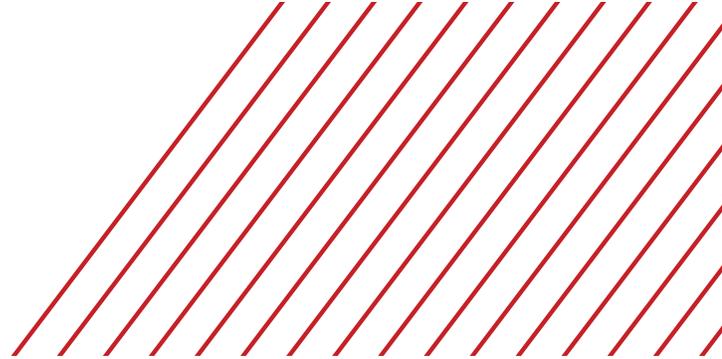
During phase one, we conducted a series of listening sessions with alumni of color in key communities across the country. Additionally, the director of diverse alumni engagement — who also leads the work group — conducted benchmarking research with peer institutions and attended an annual professional-association conference to learn best practices for building stronger relationships with diverse alumni.

These efforts led to the creation of the following plan, which includes an overview of our data-collection efforts, diverse-alumni engagement-program objectives, and phase-one strategies for fiscal year 2018–20. In particular, our plan seeks to build inclusive and sustainable programs for alumni of color in the following ways:

- Improving contact information for alumni of color to ensure that our communications reach an audience that is both broader and more targeted
- Reactivating identity-based affinity groups such as the African American Alumni Association, American Indian Alumni Council, and Hispanic Latino Alumni Association
- Producing a targeted publication strategy that ensures that WFAA's communications are inclusive of alumni of color and relevant topics
- Establishing measurable goals to increase participation from alumni of color in existing and new WFAA programming

In addition to the above program objectives, we acknowledge the importance of our leadership in strengthening internal staff training and support, which includes but is not limited to educational and professional development on diversity and inclusion.

¹**Phase 1:** Alumni of color (AOC); **Phase 2:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) alumni; **Phase 3:** To be determined after gathering information regarding the needs of other alumni populations



WFAA MISSION

The Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association (WFAA) mission statement serves as the foundation of the diverse alumni engagement strategic plan.



To promote the welfare and advance the objectives of the University of Wisconsin–Madison by encouraging and stewarding the interest, engagement, and financial support of alumni, donors, and friends in the life of the university and with each other.

WFAA and all Wisconsin Alumni Association (WAA) programs are open to all alumni, students, and friends of the university. We encourage diversity, inclusivity, and participation by all of these groups in our activities and do not discriminate on any basis. We embrace UW–Madison's sifting and winnowing motto, which is a cherished and widely admired tradition.

DATA

The data-collection process outlined below consisted of online surveys, focus groups, and regional listening sessions.

According to the U.S. Department of Education,² “Since 1977, the department, along with the other federal agencies, has been collecting aggregated student data on race and ethnicity for five categories (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian and Pacific Islander, Black or African American, Hispanic, and White).” Currently there are more than 442,000 living University of Wisconsin–Madison alumni. Of those alumni, approximately 30,158 (7 percent) self-identify as alumni of color. Understanding the history of national data collection, our organization recognizes that our alumni of color population is not fully accounted for within our current data.

STEP 1: AFFINITY SURVEY

Since 2015, WFAA has conducted a yearly online affinity survey that measures alumni feelings toward and perceptions of the university. In analyzing the results of the three-year data collection, we found a significant difference in affinity between alumni of color and white alumni.

STEP 2: DANE COUNTY FOCUS GROUPS

To explore the root causes of the difference in affinity, we conducted four focus groups in Dane County with both alumni groups to gather further insights about the engagement of alumni aged 24 to 38 in Dane County, Wisconsin. One of the focus groups was dedicated specifically to receive feedback from alumni of color. The following themes emerged:

- Alumni of color feel disappointed with the lack of progress pertaining to the support and advancement of students of color at UW–Madison.
- Alumni of color feel pride for their race/ethnicity and community, and they emphasized the value of peer-to-peer relationships.
- Alumni of color are interested in participating in community activities and in community spaces that welcome families.
- Improved engagement with alumni of color would consist of presenting opportunities to volunteer for community-based events and the intentional use of community spaces for WFAA events.

STEP 3: REGIONAL LISTENING SESSIONS

In winter 2017–18, WFAA launched a listening-session tour of Atlanta, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Madison to gather additional qualitative data on the experience of alumni of color (Appendix A: Listening Session Facilitator Outline and Appendix B: Listening Session Questions, pages 7-8). Of the 310 invited to participate, 36 alumni attended (a participation rate of 11.5 percent) [Appendix C: Listening Participant Data, page 9].

Facilitated by WAA’s chief alumni officer and executive director and WFAA’s director of diverse alumni engagement, these sessions were intended to identify specific issues that WFAA should address regarding the engagement of alumni of color and to gain insights to inform WFAA program redesign for sustained engagement of alumni of color. The following themes emerged during these sessions:

- Alumni of color felt isolated from Badger traditions during their time on campus; therefore, they are not likely to engage as alumni.
- Alumni of color feel excluded from WAA and WFAA communications; specifically, they lack connection to the organizations’ marketing.
- Alumni of color seek to support current UW students of color through developing mentor/mentee relationships.
- Alumni of color expressed the importance of providing spaces within their geographical areas where they can welcome, connect with, and support each other.

²“New Race and Ethnicity Guidance for the Collection of Federal Education Data.” U.S. Department of Education., n.p., August 2008, Web. 26 March 2018

ALUMNI OF COLOR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

The objectives and strategies outlined below will aid in achieving the program objectives listed in the introduction section of this plan. Some strategies may use alternative implementation methods to aid in achieving the objectives.

OBJECTIVE 1: STRENGTHEN THE NETWORK OF ALUMNI OF COLOR

Year 1 (2018–19) Strategies

- Reestablish identity-based affinity groups to connect alumni with the university and with each other and to provide feedback and input on engagement efforts
- Strengthen diversity within alumni chapters by exploring chapter-leadership roles and engagement programming related to diverse alumni engagement in key geographic areas

Year 2 (2019–20) Strategy

- Reestablish a Diverse Alumni Advisory Council to increase the engagement of alumni of color with current programming and to provide support to WFAA leadership

OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE MARKETING AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Year 1 (2018–19) Strategies

- Ensure that WAA and WFAA communications are inclusive of a diverse alumni population by exploring the possibility of developing content and an online publication that will appeal to our diverse constituents
- Enhance diversity and inclusion in current WFAA programming³ by defining and incorporating a measurable outcome in WFAA programmatic elements
- Provide networking opportunities through special-edition programming that allows alumni of color to connect in an environment conducive to discussing their specific concerns

OBJECTIVE 3: CULTIVATE STUDENT-TO-ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

Year 1 (2018–19) Strategies

- Connect alumni to students and each other for mentoring and career development through an online networking platform such as Badger Bridge (badgerbridge.com)
- Explore a partnership with the UW's Office of Admissions and Recruitment to assist with increasing the volunteer participation by alumni of color in addition to connecting prospective students of color with diverse alumni
- Support campus-partner⁴ programs and activities by sponsoring and/or participating in annual events to connect current students to WFAA's programs and opportunities
- Partner with alumni offices in schools and colleges to cross-promote opportunities for alumni and share them through the new online communication tool for alumni of color

Year 2 (2019–20) Strategy

- Connect students of color with alumni by supporting campus mentorship programs and initiate a partnership that will allow WFAA to share these opportunities with alumni of color to increase alumni-to-student connections

³Badger Café, Global Hot Spots, Success and the City, Founders' Day, Grandparents University

⁴Division of Student Life (DoSL) and Division of Diversity, Equity & Educational Achievement

ASSESSMENT METHODS

As we embark on the two-year alumni of color engagement strategic plan, it is important to share the assessment methods that WFAA will use to determine attainment.

The four methods listed are current measurements used to assess all organizational programs:

- Acquire stakeholder feedback at the conclusion of year one
- Improve data collection related to alumni-of-color constituents
- Increase participation measured by attendance tracking
- Increase the affinity score measured by annual affinity survey

CONCLUSION

As we move forward with the implementation of the 2018–20 Alumni of Color Engagement Strategic Plan, it is important to share WFAA's organizational values (listed below) and to understand that they are carefully embedded within the strategies in this plan.

As eloquently stated by listening session participant, Prenicia Clifton '04, "When developing the next steps, ensure that WFAA creates a plan that supports diversity and inclusion versus diversity and isolation." This plan provides potential strategies to build an inclusive, intentional, and sustainable engagement experience for alumni of color to connect with the university and with each other.

WFAA VALUES

1. WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT DELIVERING RESULTS.
2. WE WORK TOGETHER AND WITH OUR CAMPUS PARTNERS AS A TEAM.
3. WE ARE COMMITTED TO ALUMNI, DONORS, VOLUNTEERS, AND OTHERS.
4. WE ARE OPEN MINDED.
5. WE CREATE A POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT.

ALUMNI OF COLOR LISTENING SESSION FACILITATOR OUTLINE

Welcome/Introduction

Group members state their names.

Introduce Sarah Schutt, chief alumni officer and executive director of the Wisconsin Alumni Association; she offers brief remarks.

Session Goals

Learn about specific issues that the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association (WFAA) should address regarding AOC engagement

Gain insights to consider while redesigning WFAA programs for the sustained engagement of alumni of color

Ground Rules

- There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.
- All opinions are valuable.
- We are not here to correct or confirm anything.
- This is your time to share, and we want to hear from everyone.
- If you feel uncomfortable speaking to the group, feel free to submit your comments in writing.
- It is important to be honest.

Facilitator Role

Ensure that we keep things on track. If you wish to speak with Sarah or me regarding specific questions, we will be available at the end of the session.

Roundtable Discussion (40 minutes)

Discussion questions two through four.

Please allow five minutes per question to ensure that everyone at your table has time to share.

Each table has a digital recorder that will assist in gathering accurate qualitative data from the session.

Group Discussion (40 minutes)

Discussion questions five through eight.

We'll ask each person to share his or her thoughts. We'll go around the room for your responses to each question. We will take notes so that we can record everyone's basic ideas and discern common themes.

If you need to add or clarify something, we'll take a minute at the end of the discussion of each question, but only after everyone has spoken. It's important to allow each person enough time to express his or her thoughts.

Wrap-up/Surveys

Next Steps

Complete the additional listening sessions by the end of January 2018

Review benchmarking data from peer institutions

Develop a final report by Q2 2018

ALUMNI OF COLOR LISTENING SESSION QUESTIONS

The goals of the listening session are to learn about specific issues that WFAA should address regarding AOC engagement and to gain insights to consider while redesigning WFAA programs for the sustained engagement of alumni of color.

Contextual Questions

1. Why did you choose to attend this listening session?
2. How did your ethnic/racial identity affect your experience at UW–Madison?
3. How does your ethnic/racial identity affect your experience as a UW alumnus/na?
4. What is your relationship with the University of Wisconsin–Madison today?
5. What do you believe is the role of the alumni association in fostering an alumni community that values diversity and inclusion?
6. What are specific areas of improvement that the alumni association should consider when engaging alumni of color?

Engagement Questions

1. What are specific events and/or strategies that would inform and connect you as an alumnus/na of color?
2. In what ways would you like to connect with current UW students and recent alumni?
3. What would motivate you to engage and remain engaged with the University of Wisconsin–Madison?

Thank you for taking the time to attend the listening session. We at WFAA value your input and will carefully review and analyze the information. We plan to produce and share the final report of themes and action steps in March 2018.

ALUMNI OF COLOR

LISTENING SESSION

PARTICIPANT DATA

TUESDAY, JAN. 23, 2018

Atlanta

4 in person; 2 teleconference

2 male identified; 4 female identified

5 African American/black

1 multiracial/biracial

6 total

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 15, 2017

Chicago

5 in person

1 male identified; 4 female identified

3 African American/black

1 Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander

1 Did not disclose

5 total

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 6, 2017

Madison

10 in person

5 male identified; 5 female identified

9 African American/black

1 Hispanic/Latinx

10 total

TUESDAY, NOV. 14, 2017

Milwaukee

15 in person

4 male identified; 11 female identified

5 Hispanic/Latinx

8 African American/black

1 Asian American

1 Did not disclose

15 total



WISCONSIN
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION