



## 2022 AGC Diversity & Inclusion Roundtable

On May 25, 2022, AGC held its first-ever in-person diversity & inclusion roundtable. Attendees participated in a full day working session focused on diversity & inclusion-related issues in the construction industry. Participants at the roundtable shared successes and challenges they've had in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce, supporting inclusive management and leadership; building supplier diversity programs and working with diverse businesses; and developing effective diversity & inclusion programs.

The following report summarizes the best practices that members of the roundtable identified.

### Recruitment and Retention

1. **Partner with local non-profits to find new pools of workers to recruit from.** Firms have seen success in partnering with non-profits to assist with recruiting individuals into construction. Targeted groups that firms have had success in partnering with include returning citizens, veterans, and refugee groups.
2. **Work in partnership with seasoned employees to develop and mentor younger employees.** There is a gap in diverse representation in the upper management levels of construction companies. Younger employees often leave because they don't understand where they fit into the growth of the company and aren't given opportunities gain the experience needed to move into larger roles. There is an opportunity to utilize seasoned managers and executives nearing the end of the careers to mentor the future leaders of a company and provide them growth opportunities.

### Inclusive Management and Leadership

1. **Develop job performance standards evaluating inclusive management skills and ensure that standards are being enforced uniformly across the company.** The ability to manage diverse teams in an inclusive way is an important part of being a manager. Companies should be building diversity & inclusion into job descriptions for management positions and evaluating managers' job performance based on their job responsibilities and requirements related to diversity & inclusion.

2. **Work in partnership with executive leadership to move diversity & inclusion efforts forward.** It is critical that diversity & inclusion staff has the decision-making authority and respect to be able to inspire change and influence company policies. However, it is not always possible for the diversity & inclusion staff to be in every meeting where decisions are made. Identifying executive leaders to move strategic diversity & inclusion priorities forward is critical to success.
3. **Encourage executive leaders to acknowledge important diversity & inclusion-related events and conduct check-ins with employees who might have been impacted.** Examples shared at the roundtable include a company CEO making personal phone calls to every black employee after George Floyd was killed in May 2020 and every Asian employee following anti-Asian hate crimes in 2020/2021 to check in with them on how they were feeling, and holding company-wide stand-downs following national diversity & inclusion-related incidents.

### **Supplier Diversity and Working with Diverse Businesses**

1. **Utilize diverse businesses even when project goals do not require it to build and maintain strong relationships.** Building a strong business relationship takes time and effort. Only utilizing diverse business when a project requires it is not conducive to building long-lasting business relationships.
2. **Break large contracts into smaller pieces to provide more opportunities to small or emerging businesses.** Breaking one big contract into smaller, more manageable pieces allows small and emerging businesses the opportunity to gain experience working with your company, take on less risk, build their portfolio and grow their expertise. Helping small and emerging businesses grow and be successful will allow your company to utilize their expertise on future projects.

### **Creating Effective Diversity & Inclusion Programs**

1. **Ensure that field staff have the opportunity to participate in diversity & inclusion-related programming.** Offer virtual programming during a time of day and for an appropriate length of time that will allow field staff to participate. Communicate to your field staff the importance of having them participate. One of the roundtable participants holds a virtual lunch 'n learn once a month on diversity & inclusion-related topics. Their company ensures every employee has access, for 30-60 minutes over lunch, so the field staff can participate.
2. **Develop zero tolerance policies and hold individuals accountable for diversity & inclusion-related incidents.** In order to create an inclusive job site where everyone feels

safe and like they belong, incidents of harassment, hazing and bullying must not be tolerated. Developing zero tolerance policies for these types of incidents allow a company to communicate up front what the behavior expectations are. Once policies are in place, they need to be uniformly enforced. Allowing an employee who doesn't adhere to a company's diversity & inclusion policies to remain employed because they "get the job done" undermines current and future diversity & inclusion efforts.

3. **Create a recognition program that rewards employees who go "above and beyond" for diversity & inclusion.** Giving employees the opportunity to be recognized for their diversity & inclusion efforts can go a long way towards creating long-term champions for a company's diversity & inclusion efforts. Examples of recognition programs that were offered include senior leadership bonus plans tied to diversity & inclusion, monthly recognition of an employee for diversity & inclusion efforts, and a CEO discretionary fund dedicated to providing bonuses to employees on an ad hoc basis for diversity & inclusion-related activities.

## Summary

A big thanks to the thought leaders who participated in this Diversity & Inclusion Roundtable. Representatives from the following companies contributed to these discussions:

Atlantic Constructors, Inc.

Bulley & Andrews, LLC

Gilbane Building Company

Keller Management Services

Massimino Building Corp

Millstone Weber, LLC

New South Construction Company, Inc.

Southland Industries

Tarlton Corporation

Tenna

Turner Construction Company

AGC of Missouri

AGC of Ohio – Cleveland Division

Master Builders' Association of Western  
Pennsylvania Inc.