

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

KNOWLEDGE ★ REPRESENTATION ★ COMMUNITY

People of Color Affinity Group Leadership Meeting

Thursday, July 16, 2020

2-3pm EDT

Zoom Call

*Notes from the January 21, January 31, February 7 and February 14 meetings also attached

Attendees:

Pam Breaux

Carla Du Pree

Abigail Gomez

Marisa Summers

Encarnacion Teruel

1. Action Items and Topics of Discussion PRIOR to COVID-19

- a. Send a Doodle poll to group members requesting available dates for conference calls to take place during the year leading up to the October NASAA assembly.
- b. Survey group members requesting goals, objectives and the vision for what the group can do to support their work and their work in the SAAs.
- c. Outline agenda and content for the reconnecting call; looking forward, once Doodle poll results are in, start working on content for other couple of calls leading up to the NASAA Assembly in October.
- d. The leadership team refined the affinity group statement of purpose.
- e. The leadership team crafted a warm welcome and informative letter which was sent to the group on February 21st via the listserv. To note, the statement of purpose was not attached to the notice and the text was difficult to read.

2. Meeting Notes – July 16

- a. Pam noted that SAA's are responding to the COVID-19 crisis with a focus on equity and disenfranchised groups.
- b. The leadership team agreed that while the notice sent in February contained thoughts that are still relative, perhaps the next notice should reference the current racial climate in our country, the demand for racial justice and how SAA's are navigating this demand.
- c. Pam noted that the October 2020 Assembly has been canceled and, in its stead, NASAA will be hosting a Learning Series.
- d. The team agreed that having a meeting in late **August would be too soon and that September would be a better month**. Encarnacion suggested that the kickoff meeting be a town hall format. The Zoom virtual meeting platform should be used, as Carla suggested that we should see everyone's faces.
 - i. The kickoff meeting should serve as a time to reconnect as well as an opportunity to share the agenda for 2021.

- ii. The meeting should be a safe place for members to speak without fear of discussions being mentioned at their perspective SAA's.
 - iii. The meeting should be a listening space, affording the group a constructive and proactive space to vent.
 - iv. The meeting(s) should have two segments: 1) Allow the group to share their experiences, what they are hearing and what they see as success, and 2) provide resources and solutions to problems as well as a point forward.
 - v. Carla noted that the meeting should have breakout sessions.
 - vi. Carla suggested that the meeting invitation have a powerful image attached and Abi suggested a powerful quote. The team agreed that the invitation should have a strong message from the leadership team as a launch into 2021.
 - vii. To give group members a fair opportunity to speak, Marisa suggested using the talking stick method.
- e. Encarnacion mentioned the importance of understanding the intersectionality of human rights issues concerning people of color and COVID-19 issues. And, the plight of people of color has always existed but is now coming to light in a way for the whole world to see. **What is the role of the SAA during these difficult times?** How can we hold them accountable for their anti-racism statements? To note, not all communities are the same and have been affected by COVID-19 and racial injustices differently. He suggested that it makes sense to do the survey, but structure it differently to address individual community needs and experiences.
- f. Encarnacion suggested that NASAA have **a web page** for the affinity group that provides resources, or a platform directly linked to communities.
- g. Carla noted that **SAA's feel restricted**. She suggested that a systems approach will be needed for SAAs to be able to provide funding for organizations that have not heretofore been funded.
- h. Encarnacion noted that some organizations have announced their **commitment to being anti-racist, yet their organizations' resources are not accessible enough to people of color**; this is a complicated matter for SAA's and the federal government. The agency bylaws may focus on non-discrimination; however, it is not translated into to the actual application and work that the agency is doing. Some agencies are breaking the rules to be more equitable due to state of emergency; let's continue to break them.
- i. **Encarnacion suggested that the kickoff focus be reconnecting the affinity group and a discussion of their goals as well as their needs. The second meeting should focus on resources and solutions.**
- j. Abi suggested that the leadership team consider a **"front porch"** to perhaps take place once a week (or at some appropriate intervals), thus providing an opportunity for the group to vocalize their needs, frustrations, etc., more often. Marisa suggested polling the group to seek someone who has the credentials to convene "beauty shop/barber shop" sessions once or twice a

month.

- k. **The team discussed eliminating the survey and allowing the group to speak openly about their challenges during the meeting, and for those who are not comfortable, typing them into the chat function. The survey can also be a link in the chat.**

3. Next Steps

- a. The team agreed to meet again to organize and prepare an agenda and message for the affinity group to meet. Communication will then be sent to the affinity group. Marisa will schedule the next leadership team meeting.
- b. Marisa will send the team a PDF of the previous meeting notes. The document will include notes from the following meetings: January 21, January 31, February 7 and February 14.
- c. The team agreed that the affinity group should meet once in September and again after the November election.
- d. To assist in reformatting the original leadership group letter, Marisa will create a Google doc and share it with the team.

January 21, 2020 – People of Color Affinity Group Leadership Team Notes

Meeting attendees: Carla DuPree, Encarnacion Teruel, Abigail Gomez, Pam Breaux, Sandi Tun

- **NASAA Updates**
 - Pam shared results of polling that NASAA conducted last summer highlighting key topics that PoC group members' would like to cover in professional development trainings. Poll results might be helpful background information as leadership group considers content for these trainings.
 - Sandi suggested that the PoC group could build an online community using our new CRM platform – Salesforce. NASAA is currently transitioning to the new database so more information will come once we have fully migrated to SF.
 - Notes from January 10th leadership meeting will be shared with group after this call.
- **PoC Affinity Group Mission Statement**
 - Encarnacion reviewed the draft mission statement that NASAA/Connie sent the group initially and edited the statement for a second round of review with the group.
 - Group feedback to the redrafted statement was positive. The question came up as to whether we might be able to distill the statement even further into one sentence; a quick and easy one-liner that we can use to engage members and non-members. Grow and engage a dynamic “hive mind” of collective resources – (Definition) a notional entity consisting of a large number of people who share their knowledge or

opinions with one another, regarded as producing either uncritical conformity or collective intelligence

- It was noted that the opening sentence of the draft statement was a good starting point for condensing the larger statement "The POC Affinity Group is a NASAA members led group of all state arts agency staff and council members who identity as persons of color. " Maybe we need two sentences?
 - Hitting the reset button – many of the folks involved with the group already have an idea of what and who we are. We have an opportunity to relook at our purpose and move forward with the momentum of the group.

- **Professional Development Training**

- More clearly define PoC's group relationship with NASAA. Perhaps the group could play a stronger advocacy role rather than focusing on professional development training.
- It was noted that if professional development was one of the key requests from group members, we need to determine how best to meet that request. ST NOTE – we can look at how we can develop this professional training resource in our SF community platform (that we will build at a future date).
 - The suggestion was made that NASAA could take top one or two topics and run a quick webinar for PoC group members and others.
- More clearly understand who group members are and what their needs are for professional development. The larger group ranges from entry-level staff to managers to leadership etc who each have different requests.
- Share resources and links with the group offline, so that during meetings the group can stay on track with key PoC topics.
- NASAA's mentorship program is a great resource for group members and should continue to be promoted and shared with the group.

- **Miscellaneous**

- Conference calls: how can we better manager calls with the full group? Better time management, provide goals for each call, be succinct etc.

- **ACTION STEPS FROM THIS MEETING:**

- Agenda items for next meeting

- Review draft statement to solidify language on purpose of PoC affinity group. Deadline Jan 24 for feedback on statement
- Discuss outreach calls to invite members to our next group meeting
- Discuss content and date for next meeting with the full group
- Tech updates from NASAA in relation to establishing a PoC affinity group online community

Next meeting date – January 31st 2020 at 11.00am. ST will send the group calendar invite and dial-in instructions.

January 31, 2020 – People of Color Affinity Group Leadership Team Notes

Meeting Attendees: Encarnacion Teruel, Abigail Gomez, Carla DuPree, Pam Breaux, and Sandi Tun

- Review draft mission statement to solidify language on purpose of PoC affinity group
 - Latest draft of mission statement that incorporated everyone's feedback is dated January 24th and was emailed to the leadership team. During call, all group members approved draft version dated Jan 24th 2020.
 - Suggestion was made to share latest draft with the group overall so that members have an opportunity to engage and provide their input for the final statement.
 - This draft mission statement is a way of putting into place and expanding concept of what our group is about and how we're going to move forward.
 - Suggested next steps – go back and reconnect with people to determine what the group wants; review what we're going to be doing/talking about in PoC affinity group calls; determine schedule of calls.

- Discuss outreach calls to invite members to our next group meeting
 - When reaching out to the PoC community, we want to ask them to review the draft mission statement, get their feedback and suggestions for collective approval.
 - Mention to group that we are thinking about a speaker series, offer some possible topics and ask for group's feedback on topics and presenters that they would like to hear from.
 - Ask the question to the group – besides speaker series, what other kinds of activities should we be looking at doing?
 - We also need to think about how to attract new members to the group. It might help to provide succinct overview of PoC group to share with members and potential members so that they can determine whether they want to be part of our Listserv or not. That overview needs to give clear messaging about what the group is, who the group serves, and clearly define group activities such as the speaker series etc.

- Discuss content and date for next meeting with the full group
 - It was suggested that we could organize 5 conference calls for whole group, including 4 for speaker series topics.
 - When asking members for group activity suggestions, we can also discuss potential of creating sub-committees or break-away teams that can focus on general interest areas that can be covered "offline" – outside of scheduled group meeting.

- First meeting is also a good opportunity to solicit feedback from group on whether another survey or more open formatted opportunity for response.
- Continue to include "Conversation Norms" as part of larger group meetings.
- Focus meetings on providing guidance, resources, and tangible deliverables to members. What can we give back to the members of the group i.e. information that matters to the group and that can be useful for their day-to-day lives.
 - These group meetings can be informational and provide a platform for dialogue and conversation.
 - Should we try to put some kind of speaker series together – different topic per call? Offer presentations by someone in the field dealing with topics relevant to the group e.g. Edgar Villaneuva – author of "Decolonizing Wealth – Indigenous Wisdom" who discusses philanthropy and biased distribution of wealth.
- The idea of using our conference calls as a platform to talk about trending and relevant topics to the group was brought up. For example, "American Dirt" is a current conversation piece that bears talking about as a group.
- Tech updates from NASAA in relation to establishing a PoC affinity group online community
 - Not much to update currently. NASAA is in the midst of SF training so not much of an update to share; we'll have time to start looking at creating an online community for the PoC affinity group no earlier than mid-March going into April.

NEXT STEPS

- Put together an email that encapsulates everything we're saying – this communication will aim to make the distinction between defining specific focus of this group versus other kinds of resources that are available through other general channels e.g. NASAA, other platforms.
- Draft succinct overview of PoC group mission and purpose for new and current members.
- Determine dates for group calls.
- Figure out what kind of poll we're going to send out asking for group feedback on speaker series topics, other activities etc.
- The question of how the Listserv is going to be revamped was brought up. How to add new members, remove old members?
 - Before the Listserv and online community are ready, we'll work off the Excel sheet of members that Connie put together. We can add and remove members from the Excel; once the Listserv is ready, pass on those Excel updates to Sandi who will update the Listserv distribution list.
- When the group is ready to invite new members to join, they are welcome to post announcements via "NASAA Notes"; a monthly communication sent out

by NASAA to members, affiliates, etc. **TO DO:** Sandi will send the leadership group calendar list of "NASAA Notes" schedule and date when information for Notes is needed.

- **Deadline Dates** – February 7th 2020 – deadline for finalizing draft emails to send to group and week of Feb 10th, start contacting people.
 - o Schedule another leadership call on February 7th to review strategy and draft emails. 11.00am EST; Carla won't be able to join.
 - Agenda items – 1) Discuss outreach calls; 2) Review content and schedule first outreach call

February 7, 2020 – People of Color Affinity Group Leadership Team Notes

Meeting Attendees: Encarnacion Teruel, Pam Breaux, and Sandi Tun

- Review draft emails to group – 1) Email to members outlining 2020 plans for the group; 2) Succinct overview of PoC group to share with new and current members to help them decide whether they want to join our Listserv.
 - o Encarnacion has started working on the draft email outlining 2020 plans but hasn't finished yet. He will continue drafting the email today and send it to the leadership group this afternoon for review and feedback.
 - o Pam suggested that if Encarnacion can send the draft email out today, we could ask the leadership team to provide feedback by next Wednesday (February 12th) with a follow up group call to review on Friday, February 14th.
 - o **TO DO:** Sandi will send calendar invite for 11.00am EST 2/14/2020 for the whole group to reconvene; we will coordinate schedules as needed.
- AGENDA ITEMS for next meeting:
 - o Review draft emails to the group so that we can roll forward with the PoC Listserv
 - o Discuss outreach calls to invite members to our next group meeting
 - o Discuss content and meeting dates with the full group

February 14, 2020 – People of Color Affinity Group Leadership Team Notes

Meeting Attendees: Encarnacion Teruel, Abigail Gomez, Pam Breaux, and Sandi Tun

- Review draft emails to group
 - 1) Email to members outlining 2020 plans for the group
 - o Encarnacion shared a draft email with leadership team on 2/14/2020 using language that gives a **refresher for current members of the group**
 - o One technical edit was suggested under Carla's e-signature:
 - Add "NASAA Board Member" to Carla's e-signature and for consistency, move "Council Member" from first line of signature to the second line with addition of NASAA Board Member

- 2) Succinct overview of PoC group to share with new and current members to help them decide whether they want to join our Listserv
 - Abi's draft email sent on 2/13/2020 uses language geared towards recruiting potential new members who are unfamiliar with the PoC group
 - Ideas were exchanged suggesting that we could perhaps send the recruitment email as an attachment to other communications e.g. posting in NASAA Notes monthly newsletter to invite people from across full state arts agency membership who weren't at the table last year to join the group

- 3) How will we send out the emails?
 - The question was raised as to what would be the best sequence for communicating with the overall group and scheduling upcoming meetings. Should we send a doodle poll to full PoC group asking for meeting dates and then invite new members after we confirm those dates?
 - It was suggested that a good first step will be to determine best meeting times for leadership team
 - Followed by outreach email to current members – *tentative Feb 21st*
 - After which, the leadership team will send a doodle poll to the entire group offering handful of potential meetings dates to choose from – *tentative week of Feb 24th*
 - Confirm results of poll and schedule meetings – *tentative week of March 2nd*
 - Pam noted that both emails can be posted in and sent via our PoC affinity group Listserv; alternatively, Encarnacion and Abi can send out directly OR NASAA can send it out; same with the doodle poll. NASAA is here to support whatever decision the leadership team makes.
 - Sandi will manage the administrative work around Listserv – we can add a note from Encarnacion OR Abi to the end of the initial outreach email for a personal touch; sending through the Listserv gives some institutional weight behind it.
 - Leadership team consensus to send both emails through the Listserv

- Discuss outreach calls to invite members to our next group meeting
 - During an earlier leadership team meeting, the group had discussed the idea of personally reaching out to current (and potential) members up by phone with a follow up email outlining more information
 - Question came up as to whether we need to call directly; our initial discussions started with personal outreach, not necessarily by phone
 - Leadership decided to first send email to current group members followed by doodle poll for meeting dates. Once there is some feedback from the overall group, then leadership team can start

making outreach calls to follow up with those who didn't respond to the doodle poll.

- As for inviting/recruiting new members to the group, send names and emails to Sandi so that she can add them to the Listserv.
- Discuss content and dates for meeting(s) with the full group
 - The last few leadership meetings have suggested that we aim for 5 total meetings for the year – one reconnecting call with the group, followed by 4 calls based on doodle poll and member feedback
 - Group started off with quarterly meetings; concern brought up that 5 meetings before October meeting in PR may not be feasible due to time and other commitments
 - Add the statement in doodle poll to “Pick up to 3-4 dates” so that we have some flexibility and add some breathing room to the schedule
 - Pam noted that there's no need for pressure to get certain number of meetings on the calendar by certain date; the reconnecting call is a great opportunity to reconnect on content and evaluate time commitment across the group
 - A reminder that the group will have an opportunity to meet in person at the upcoming NASAA Assembly in Puerto Rico. NASAA is working on assigning a dedicated room, full-time at the Assembly for the PoC Affinity group to use as a home base for casual meetings, networking, etc

NEXT STEPS

- Encarnacion will send Abi dates of when he is available to meet; they can then review and coordinate schedules
- Discuss and review content of doodle poll
 - How are we going to gauge the response from group members? Are we tabulating results from the first reconnect email OR are we waiting for responses to the doodle poll; the doodle poll would include a preview of group purpose statement and suggestion of potential meeting dates
- Outline agenda and content for the reconnecting call; looking forward, once doodle poll results are in, start working on content for other couple of calls leading up to the NASAA Assembly in October.
 - Reminder that the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures (NALAC) conference will take place in July in Chicago. This event offers another opportunity for PoC affinity group members to meet in person and connect.
 - Dates: 19th – 23rd July 2020
 - NALAC's Leadership Institute will be hosted in Chicago during the previous week, followed by the larger group conference
 - Abi will connect with NALAC to find out if there's an opportunity for PoC affinity group members to meet or have dinner in Chicago during this conference

- Ellie Hernandez, a former Illinois Arts Council leader was instrumental in resurrection of NALAC; Encarnacion noted that he would like to be part of NALAC again so it would be great to reach out to them about opportunities at their July conference
- Another interesting content piece might be to highlight Chicago Latinos in Philanthropy (CLIP), an organization that has been around for 30 years, originally started as a small, volunteer group that has grown into a larger organization. CLIP's work highlights the changing landscape that now includes larger numbers of Latinos and people of color integrated into the philanthropy community
- In philanthropy and other areas, there is solid participation from a younger generation who are focused and driven. Reaffirming and inspirational to see younger folks continuing the journey
 - CLIP has observed that this younger generation is actively seeking professional development in their fields. Within the CLIP group, they are trying to recruit mentors from older members to guide and help the younger generation

The PoC Affinity Group provides a platform to connect and to learn, adding value that can't be accessed anywhere.