

Kansas Statewide Diversity Network

March 12, 2009

Agenda Items:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Cultural Celebration Update – Debbie Lang
- Presentation – Don Dew (Reach Out USA)
- Announcements
 - YWCA R.A.C.E. Committee – Thoughtful Thursdays
 - TPAC 6-8 pm
- Roundtable Discussion

Introduction of Attendees:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Dwight Garmin (KDoT) | <input type="checkbox"/> Marie Ortega de Ortiz (JJA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Debbie Lang (SRS) | <input type="checkbox"/> Anthony Fadale (SRS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mike Smith (KDoT) | <input type="checkbox"/> Don Dew (Reach Out USA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Williams (DoA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Vicki Jamison (OSH) * joined via audio bridge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> George Vega (DoA) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lou Ann Kibbe (SW Independent Living) | |

Cultural Celebration Update:

- 3rd Annual Cultural Celebration, May 7th, 2009 11:00 – 1:30 @ State Capitol, South Apron. Numerous vendors and entertainment are scheduled.

ReachOut USA Presentation:

- Don Dew (Hays, KS) from ReachOut USA was guest speaker. Don talked to us about Advocacy and Outreach; Peer Support on LGBT issues
- Acronyms most commonly used are GLBT or LGBT for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender population.
- [Agency Assessments](#) were distributed with additional inquiry as to where agencies are regarding their policies and procedures. Are state agencies being inclusive of LGBT rights?
- It was noted that some EEO clauses were updated to include language such as “respect differences of others,” however, more explicit language is desired that specifically references sexual orientation. The question remains, “where are agencies in regard to their [policy](#) updates?”
- Additional inquiry was asked about the status of agency training since the signing of Executive Order 07-24? It was noted that the state website was not updated until 1 year following the signing of the Executive Order.
- Several agencies present at the meeting shared their current policy and training activities.

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- The question was posed as to LGBT members within the current State Diversity Network and an invitation to have ReachOut USA participate as an SDN member was extended and accepted.
- The SDN expressed a desire for suggestions from the LGBT community to improve recruitment, selection, and retention efforts in the state.
- Approximately 72,000 Kansans belong to the LGBT community and many are Kansas employees.
- Importance was stressed in needing to ensure the SDN is representative of diverse perspectives. ReachOut USA agreed to assist in helping the SDN develop community contacts.
- Safe work environments are the key to knowing there are no recriminations. Fostering a safe work environment to work and feel safe is important. This is an important aspect that needs to be included in training (reference the [William Institute article](#)).
- Reach Out USA offers training ranging from 5 hrs to 8 hrs in length with costs varying depending on the length of time requested. Contact Don Dew at Reach Out USA if your agency is interested in their training. Training is currently being offered in both Kansas and Missouri. Additional information may be found at the Reach Out USA website (<http://www.reachoutusa.org/>) or their new website (<http://reachout-usa.blogspot.com/2009/01/reachout-usa-announces-new-website.html>)
- George explained that the overall objective of the SDN has always been to reach out into the communities and invited suggestions on how the SDN may become more proactive in their efforts.
- To be more proactive a stronger focus must be placed on the consumers – to show there is no bias. Example was shared that some consumers may steer away from going to a social service agency if there is potential bias toward LGBT individuals or people with disabilities. The suggestion was made to go out and actually say you support the LGBT community and are against anti-violence. Be consumer-oriented.
- New amendment act, like the ADA, need to look to see what concepts to add to make the message of acceptance and awareness known.
- June is LGBT Awareness month.

Announcements:

- The YWCA is co-sponsoring an offering of Hairspray and opening up afterwards for community discussions. Everyone is welcome and the open discussion will be hosted by the YWCA R.A.C.E. Committee.
- The Commission on Disability Concerns is facing tough and dramatic economic hardships that will affect an 18 – 24% budget cut. A request was made to help show support for their funding by contacting your commissioners.

Roundtable:

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- What does the SDN want to do about a new incoming Governor administration if Governor Sebelius is chosen as the HHS Secretary? Do we want to find out if the efforts and purpose of the SDN are still supported or wait and see what happens? Discussion was held to perhaps ask the new incoming administration for a statement of support for Executive Order 07-24 and the SDN.
- Washburn University held a Diversity Matters event on February 20, 2009. The focus of the event was the diversity in religion. Different religious groups spoke about their stance on the LGBT community and acceptance varied. The next Diversity Matters event will focus on Diversity in the Workplace and will be held on March 27, 2009 at 1:30 PM in room 270 in the Morgan building at Washburn University.
- Mike Smith (KDoT) shared an update on the seriousness of underutilization. Anthony Fadale (SRS) shared mentoring efforts being provided and described how EEO reps. sit in on interviews and review interview questions. At KDoT, there are 6 EEO Reps that do not sit in on all interviews. KDOT is experiencing difficulty in hiring people with disabilities and want to offer mock interviews that involve clients.
- KDOT has started an internal EEO/Civil Rights Board. It was noted that no efforts are made to recognize people of various cultures within KDOT currently; however, efforts are starting to celebrate different cultural months. (A KDOT poster was shared with the SDN membership.) The next internal Advisory Meeting on March 30th will look at mentoring programs.
- Anthony Fadale (SRS) shared personal life experiences that have led him to recognize how he can serve as a role model for persons with disabilities.

Next SDN meeting – April 9, 2009; Location to be determined.

NOTE:

Documents attached that were distributed during the March meeting.