

TO: CPCS STAFF
FROM: KRISTA GADZALA
RE: DIVERSITY

MAY 2015

In an effort to provide more leadership on diversity initiatives, including the creation of an agency-wide Diversity Plan and the development of Diversity Trainings for all staff, this past year the Chief Counsel created the new position of Diversity Officer. I am pleased to have received the Diversity Officer position with CPCS which will be a key management role in the Department of Human Resources. In this role, I will continue to work with the Chief Counsel and members of the senior management team to create a workplace that values our similarities and unique differences. This administration and this agency value an inclusive workplace and believe that our clients, our staff, and our practice are enriched by developing and supporting a climate of inclusion and trust.

Diversity is not limited to the narrow focus on differences and protected categories such as gender, race, ethnicity, age and physical ability; diversity covers a wide range of aspects and is defined as respecting and valuing differences that include generational differences, educational level, thinking style, seniority, culture, field of work, religion and family composition.

As a part of our continued effort to reflect these values, we have worked in areas of outreach, recruitment and training. We have worked with our local law schools to partner with multicultural groups, the Boston Lawyers Group and the coalition of Commonwealth Compact. We have connected with the major affinity bar groups and have participated on panel discussions to increase our exposure to lawyers of color in our communities.

Furthermore, we have increased our ability to break down language barriers with our clients by hiring bilingual staff and through the use of language line. Moreover, all incoming staff now attend an all-day orientation program which include discussions on diversity and cultural competence and an opening presentation on poverty.

Internally, we continue to strive for maximum inclusion regardless of position within the agency. One instance of these efforts is the Chief Counsel's creation of the Diversity and Inclusion Group (DIG) in November 2011. We work with all of our professional groups (admin, social worker advocates, investigators, IT and finance) to gain a better understanding of valuing diversity, from a variety of perspectives. To improve upon fair and transparent hiring process for all promotional opportunities, we have centralized hiring procedures by implementing a "Best Practices" model and have added a Professional Development segment on all performance review forms, to identify and document specific career growth steps for all motivated employees.

We have made progress towards some of our goals but there is much work to be accomplished. I have now added a "Diversity and Inclusion" page, linked to the HR site on our intranet. Please visit this page to find out about more work being done. We will also have information about lectures, seminars, events, articles and opportunities. I will continue to work with DIG on these goals, but as stated on our mission statement, "Our ability to achieve these goals depends on the efforts of all of us."