



# State Council on Affirmative Action Report

January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

February 2022

*Summary and highlights of the Council's activities  
during 2021, including the annual diversity awards.*

## Division of Personnel Management

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**STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION**

Tony Evers, Governor  
Kathy Blumenfeld, Secretary-designee

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February 14, 2022

The Honorable Tony Evers  
Governor, State of Wisconsin

The Honorable Chris Kapenga  
President, Wisconsin Senate

The Honorable Robin J. Vos  
Speaker, Wisconsin Assembly

Dear Governor Evers, Senator Kapenga, and Speaker Vos:

I am pleased to present the January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021, annual report for the State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA). The Division of Personnel Management (DPM) is expected under s. 15.017(3) Wis. Stats., and s. 230.46 Wis. Stats. to prepare a report summarizing SCAA's activities and highlight the annual diversity awards, which recognize exemplary individuals, programs, and initiatives.

The Council's mission is to foster measurable progress towards an equitable, inclusive, and diverse workforce in state government and the University of Wisconsin system. Its efforts complement the mission of the Division of Personnel Management (DPM), Bureau of Equity and Inclusion (BEI) to promote innovative, diverse, and inclusive, equal employment opportunity along with strategic H.R. leadership and direction.

I look forward to a working relationship with the SCAA as we continue to serve the residents of our great State. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments that you may have.

Sincerely,

Malika Evanco  
DPM Administrator

## Message from SCAA Chair, Adín Palau

Our Council continues to foster the relationship with the Affirmative Action Advisory Councils (AAAC) and the Bureau of Equity and Inclusion to provide strategic direction and support the statewide efforts to enhance Wisconsin's workforce, remove barriers to work, and meet the State's current and future workforce needs.

First, we want to acknowledge the dedication and efforts the Department of Personnel Management (DPM) is undertaking to transform our capacity to recruit a diverse workforce. Surely, the State of Wisconsin is emulating best practices in the areas of diversity and inclusion.

I also want to recognize the work of our council members. The work of the Council is only possible because of their dedication and leadership.

We continue to seek ways to promote the promising practices that move our State forward. On October 29, 2021, we celebrated the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Diversity Awards. This ceremony afforded us the opportunity to recognize state agencies and U.W. campuses for their diversity program achievements. It was our distinct honor to have the presence of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the First Lady, and Secretaries of various state agencies joining us to celebrate these accomplishments.

One of our goals for 2022 is to achieve strategies that address the ability of the State to recruit, retain and promote diverse talent. It is imperative that we pay close attention to the demographic composition of our state workforce and influence change to acquire a diverse workforce that is representative of the diverse communities we serve. Also important is the need to address our capacity to ensure equality in compensation and provide promotional opportunities for members of underserved communities.

Additionally, in 2022, our Council will be developing recommendations to equip our State with best practices for measuring and fostering agency culture, climate, and workplace engagement.

We look forward to a successful year and continued transformation to position our State as a national leader in job creation, labor force participation, and equity and inclusion practices.

Sincerely,



Adín Palau, Chair of the State Council on Affirmative Action

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## SCAA MISSION

The State Council on Affirmative Action was created by Chapter 196, Laws of 1977, s. 230.46, Wis. Stats., and describes the duties of the Council as follows:

*"The Council on affirmative action shall serve in a direct advisory capacity to the Administrator and as part of that relationship shall evaluate the progress of affirmative action programs throughout the civil service system, seek compliance with state and federal regulations and recommend improvements in the State's affirmative action efforts as an employer. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Council may recommend legislation, consult with agency personnel and other interested persons, conduct hearings, and take other appropriate action to promote affirmative action. The Council shall report at least once per year to the Governor and the legislature."*

The Council's overall purpose is to oversee strategic initiatives that foster and evaluate measurable progress towards an equitable, inclusive, and diverse workforce in state government.

## SCAA MEMBERSHIP

*“There is created in the division of personnel management in the department of administration a council on affirmative action consisting of 15 members appointed for 3-year terms. A majority of members shall be public members, and a majority of members shall be minority persons, women, or persons with disabilities, appointed with consideration to the appropriate representation of each group. The president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly, the minority leader of the senate, and the minority leader of the assembly each shall appoint one member, and the remaining members shall be appointed by the Governor.” s. 15.107(3) Wis. Stats.*

### **Members of the State Council on Affirmative Action from January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020:**

**Shiva Bidar-Sielaff (Member at Large)**

Chief Diversity Officer  
UW Health

**Alenka Dries**

Equal Opportunity Program Specialist  
State of Wisconsin - Department of Revenue

**Fabiola Hamdan, MSSW**

Immigration Affairs Supervisor  
Dane County Dept of Human Services

**Jacquelyn Boggess**

Executive Director  
Center for Family Policy  
And Practice

**Carlene Bechen**

Fair Maps Organizer  
Wisconsin Voices

**Janice Crump**

Medical Student  
Milwaukee Veteran’s Hospital

**Dr. Shandowlyon Hendricks-Williams (resigned August 2021)**

Educator, Milwaukee

**Philomena Kebec (resigned November 2021)**

Attorney, Policy Analyst  
Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife  
Commission

**Lisa Mortenson (Secretary)**

Equal Opportunity Specialist–Senior  
State of Wisconsin – Department of Health  
Services

**Adin Palau (Chair)**

Assistant Director of Community Relations  
University of Wisconsin – Madison

**Corinda Rainey-Moore (Vice-Chair)**

Wisconsin Council on Children and Families  
Outreach and Engagement Coordinator

**Karen Nelson**

Director, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion  
Rogers Behavioral Health

**Joshua Hargrove**

Associate Attorney  
Tracey Wood & Associates

**Yee Leng Xiong**

Executive Director  
Hmong American Center, Inc.

## SCAA ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

### **I. Council Meeting – January 13, 2021**

The Council passed a motion to create an Executive Order #59 Planning Committee to assist in carrying out directives from EO59.

The Council also voted and passed the 2021 meeting schedule, retaining the previous meeting schedule of the regular council meetings occurring on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every other month from 9:00 am – 11:00 am.

The Bureau of Equity and Inclusion provided updates on the Enterprise Wellness Program and changes in the Employee Assistance Program vendors.

### **II. Council Retreat – March 10, 2021**

The Council held a three-hour retreat in lieu of a regular meeting, facilitated by the Bureau of Equity and Inclusion and Member-At-Large, Shiva Bidar-Sielaff. The purpose of this retreat was to refocus the Council on its statutory authority, develop charges from that authority, and create working subcommittees devoted to carrying out the aspects of those charges.

The Council was divided into three groups, which ultimately defined the following charges:

- 1.) Developing communication channels and networking opportunities with organizations that represent protected groups to ensure that information about the State's employment opportunities is widely disseminated.
- 2) Assisting and advising state agencies in implementing agency equity and inclusion action plans aimed at promoting affirmative action, equity, inclusion, and diversity in state government.
- 3.) Maintaining Council Internal Affairs: Ensuring council governance and function are compliant with legal requirements and effectively fosters council mission.

No motions occurred during the retreat, and Council members were asked to consider the information discussed during the retreat for a vote during the following meeting.

### **III. Council Meeting – May 26, 2021**

This meeting deviated from the regular meeting schedule due to a lack of quorum on the regularly scheduled date.

The Council passed a motion creating the Workforce Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee and the Communication and Outreach Subcommittee to fulfill the identified charges from the March retreat. Council chair appointed Council Member Karen Nelson as Chair of the Workforce Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee, and Council Member-At-Large, Shiva Bidar-Sielaff, as Chair of the Communication and Outreach Subcommittee. The Chair also appointed Vice-Chair Corinda Rainey-Moore as the leader of the subcommittees.

Council Member Lisa Mortenson gave an update on the 2021 Diversity Awards Planning Committee, announcing that the committee would be meeting one day per week for one hour between June and August and inviting interested council members to join the meetings.

The Bureau of Equity and Inclusion provided updates on the progress of the 2021 Diversity Internship Program and the Enterprise Mediation Program. The Bureau Director answered questions from the Council on these programs and associated policies.

#### **IV. Council Meeting – July 14, 2021**

The Bureau of Equity and Inclusion provided updates on the Student Diversity Internship Program and answered questions from the Council regarding the program.

Council Member Lisa Mortenson provided an update on the Diversity Awards Ceremony, scheduled for Friday, October 29 in the State Assembly Chambers, and an update on the promotional video for the awards program.

The Council received updates from the subcommittees created during the May meeting; the subcommittees were unable to meet for their first meetings since their creation. The Council, the Bureau of Equity and Inclusion, and the Division of Personnel Management engaged in discussions regarding regular council member attendance and availability. Council Member At-Large, Shiva Bidar-Sielaff proposed reserving the first hour of the regularly scheduled council meetings for the subcommittee meetings and retaining the second hour for the council meetings. The motion was proposed and passed unanimously by the Council.

#### **V. Ad Hoc Council Meeting – September 8, 2021**

The Council did not have a quorum present for this meeting. Diversity Award winner selection took place during a Diversity Awards Planning Committee Meeting on September 24, 2021.

#### **VI. 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Diversity Awards Ceremony – October 29, 2021**

The Council, in conjunction with the 38<sup>th</sup> Virginia Hart Special Recognition Award, celebrated the 2021 Diversity Award winners in the Assembly Chambers of the Wisconsin State Capitol. The **Department of Health Services** received the 2022

Diversity Award for creating the Office of Health Equity (OHE) and the Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Council (HEDI).

The **University of Wisconsin-Platteville** received the 2022 Ann Lydecker Educational Diversity Award for its Department of Campus Climate. The **Department of Children and Families** received the Program Award for Outstanding Achievement for its Back to the Future Project.

**Bianca Shaw, Director of the Office of Urban Development** with the **Department of Children and Families**, received the Outstanding Leadership Award. **Marianne Rosen**, also of the **Department of Children and Families**, received an honorable mention in the award category of Outstanding Leadership.

**Dr. Pilar Melero, Professor of the University of Wisconsin Whitewater**, received the University Lifetime of Service Award. **Administrative Law Judge Rose Ann Wasserman** of the **Department of Workforce Development** received the State Agency Lifetime of Service Award.

## **VII. Council Meeting – November 10, 2021**

The Bureau of Equity and Inclusion provided updates on the work of the Bureau, including addressing COVID-19 policies and returning to the work environment. The Bureau Director also announced that Bureau staffing for the Council would be available for four meetings per year in 2022. The Council will need to provide bureau staff with all subcommittee meeting agendas to post the public meeting notice accordingly. Subcommittees will also need to provide meeting minutes to staff within 72 hours. The Council has the use of the Microsoft Teams group explicitly created for the SCAA to share information accordingly.

The Council engaged in further discussions about the regular attendance of appointed council members. The Chair indicated that the Executive Committee desired to use the remainder of November and December to discuss with each council member their attendance. Chair Adin Palau indicated he would send out a 30-minute invite to members for this discussion.

The Council discussed the need for the subcommittees to continue to meet in between the four staffed Council meetings. The Chair indicated the Executive Committee would coordinate with the chairs of the subcommittees, schedule the meetings, and present the plan in the first meeting of 2022.

The Diversity Awards Planning Committee updated the Council on the success of the 2021 Diversity Awards and expressed a desire to begin the work on increasing participation for next year.

The Council requested input from members for the 2021 SCAA Annual Report.

## 2022 GOALS FOR SCAA

- 1) *Assist and advise state agencies and government officials regarding the development and implementation of agency equity and inclusion action plans to promote affirmative action, equity, inclusion, and diversity in state government.*
- 2) *Facilitate strategies for agencies to reach diverse candidates, including developing tools to measure the effectiveness and integration of equity and inclusion into full-cycle recruitment and retention initiatives.*
- 3) *Champion and advocate for the State's equity and inclusion initiatives, policies, and programs.*
- 4) *Develop communication channels and networking opportunities with organizations that represent protected groups to ensure that information about the State's employment opportunities is widely disseminated.*
- 5) *Evaluate the progress of affirmative action, equity, and inclusion programs throughout the civil service system and provide suggestions for continuous improvement or recommendations of best practices and promising initiatives or programs.*

## STAFF SERVICES FOR THE SCAA

The Division of Personnel Management, Bureau of Equity and Inclusion, 101 East Wilson Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7855, provides staff services to the Council. Inquiries regarding this report can be addressed to:

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Bureau of Equity and Inclusion  
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