WSWS Officer and Committee Report
July 2021

Office or Committee Name: Diversity & Inclusion ad hoc Committee
Officer or Chairperson Name: Elizabeth Mosqueda, Chair
Date of Preparation (include year): 7/9/21, Summer 2021 Board Meeting

Activities during the year:

WSWS D&I Survey Results:
A few key results:

- There were 28 respondents, with 11 from the 20+ years of membership group and the rest roughly evenly from the other groups
- The Likert scale we used was from 1 (Not included/represented) to 5 (Very included/represented)
- The group of people who selected the lowest score for each of these questions had overlap but was not entirely the same people
- Seems clear that people generally feel a sense of personal belonging in WSWS but identify larger-scale issues with inclusiveness and representation

Q1. How included do you feel as a member or meeting participant of WSWS?

	Total selected
1- Not included	0
2	0
3	5
4	8
5- Very included	15

Q2. How included do you feel by the leadership that makes up WSWS?

	Total selected
1- Not included	0
2	5
3	4
4	5
5- Very included	14

Q3. Do you feel members of all backgrounds are adequately represented throughout WSWS?

	Total selected
1- Not adequately represented	6
2	3
3	6
4	8
5- Adequate representation	5

Q4. How did you learn about this society?

	Total
Through a different society	4
Career colleague	11
College	13
Other	0

Q5. How long have you attended WSWS annual meetings?

	Total
5 years or less	5
6-10 years	4
11-15 years	5
16-20 years	3
Over 20 years	11

Q6. In terms of feeling included, how do you feel participating in this society compared to other societies you participate in?

	Total
Very satisfied	21
Somewhat satisfied	5
Somewhat dissatisfied	1
Very dissatisfied	0
Not applicable	1

Q7. If you participate in other societies, what are these other societies doing to make you feel included?

"Other societies I am a member of don't seem to being doing as much as the WSWS to address inclusivity. The WSWS also seems to be more "informal" than other societies. I feel the lesser emphasis on formality does help with inclusivity. Something about seeing older members not wearing ties, or the occasional fishing vest, puts everyone at a similar level."

“No discrimination of any kind. Everyone is appreciated for the talent, intellect, and capacity.”

“They include symposia and research sections on a wide variety of weed science subject areas.”

“Assigned seating at awards banquets so that you have to mix and mingle and meet people and those who are longer term members don't just stick to the people they already know”

“Nothing more”

“MIxers, Mentoring newer members, Breakout events.”

“They do less than WSWS”
“I'm an old white male, so I already feel included.”

Q8. Please provide any other suggestions on how we can make this society more diverse and inclusive.

“Retention of professionals of diverse backgrounds in the western region. Good people always move on. WSWS recruits and trains well but we lose students. Institutions don’t help much by not hiring diversity in the west.”

“Women and POC are critically lacking in the society. I would like to see fewer white men over 50 years old in leadership. I think it should be a requirement that every elected position needs to have a candidate that is not white and/or male. I also think that symposiums should have some kind of diversity requirement for speakers. Those who win awards also do not seem diverse. I do not like it when the same person wins multiple awards in the same year--seems like favoritism. My first time attending the annual meeting, I felt very obviously that I stood out as a young woman; I felt I did not belong. Over time, I got to know people and now feel more comfortable and included in the section I attend each year. I would also like to see the society include more young people who are not students to increase diversity.”

“Keep this society a PROFESSIONAL society not a platform for social issues. Do not distinguish or ILLUMINATE in any way human differenences. Just recognize professional contributions: work, contribution, service, leadership, etc.”

“WSWS is doing a great job and is a very welcoming society.”

“Retention of professionals of diverse backgrounds in the western region. Good people always move on. WSWS recruits and trains well but we lose students. Institutions don’t help much by not hiring diversity in the west.”

“Include more diversity on the board”
“Fill board appointed positions with less represented groups so as to create member recognition of these people “

“I think internally, collecting some demographic data as part of this survey would be helpful. I think there probably are already some differences with how included people feel. Externally, I think we should figure out a way to market our meetings to non-traditional audiences. Articles in newsletters or email lists that reach more diverse audiences (minority serving institutions, SACNAS/MANRRS national & local chapters, etc) might be worth considering.”

“Mixers, Mentoring for newer members, Breakout events, Communications and Social Media.”

WSWS D&I Social Hour Summary:

Outline: Below is a summary of the discussion had by members during the 2021 WSWS Annual Meeting's D&I Social Hour. Please note that input and discussion from participants was annotated to the best ability to not change or impact member input in any way. Nearly all discussion from the moderator (Elizabeth Mosqueda) was not included to ensure all feedback the D&I ad hoc committee can work with came from participants.

Discussion Summary:

Can we adopt something where we highlight people of color in our field – perhaps using social media?

-Twitter would be a good platform

-Exp. Jessica Wear's Twitter Account, "Real Scientists"

- Perhaps set up a week where we promote people of color in our field

-We can set something ourselves or "piggyback" from another established account

-Can we tie this into our Student Members Opportunities area of our Mission Statement proposal?

-And/OR perhaps we can make some type of informational video on what a weed scientist is and how to become a weed scientist?

How often D&I communities include non-neurotypical people (people with autisms or learning disabilities)?

- Think about the ACTIONS we can do on top of the communities we can serve.

What do others think about bringing in a professional to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts within our society?

– Many said yes

Is it appropriate to ask members how they self-identify? Would members be less likely to answer a question like this or do you think it's intrusive?

- "I would be more inclined to answer these questions if I knew why they were being asked. We need to think about the context in which these questions would be asked."

- "I don't really care for these questions. Usually just ignore them to get through survey quicker. A question in the chat came up about the membership and the board. WSWS is known for diversity, our

student members are very diverse, however the problem is that we train these students so well that they leave the western region, and we do not retain them withing the west because the jobs are not always in the west. I would put this more on the shoulders of those who hire and ask why we are not hiring more of our students (not just weed science, entomology, plant path, soil science, etc.). It's more the sources of the membership than it is the organization. I do not see many people staying in the west and how can this change?"

- Maybe WSWS can have a job website for jobs specifically in the west.

- Can we also highlight not only traditional weed science jobs on this website, but also nontraditional jobs, like startup companies.

Have the incoming President and other leadership positions be more conscious of who they are serving to help lead the society to be more equitable and diverse.

Are there opportunities to make the student competition judging/scoring more inclusive i.e. eye contact, voice, and behavior. There are people who have neuro divergence disabilities that are not obvious to people all the time.

> -Exp. Judging for eye contact can negatively impact some people. People on the autism spectrum do not usually make eye contact.
>
> -As a student and foreign student, it would be great to have comments back on presentations. For students who English is not their first language, presenting could be incredibly intimidating, so perhaps having on the score sheets where the judges can note feedback on your presentation for the American public in general would help.
>
> -For UCCE student competitions, on the score sheet there is a section that asks, "Is there any special things we should know about you" or something along these lines. This gives presenters a chance, if they want, to let the judges know anything like if they are hard of hearing or if they have some type of disability, so this goes in the students files so the judges know to take this into consideration when judging.
>
> -Also, considering cultural differences - perhaps give a tip list on what American's consider as what qualifies as a good "talk."
>
> -Also, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) would be great to collaborate with as they have a job forum where we can put job postings. There is a lot of traffic on their job site!

10 minutes of other discussion after social hour summary:

-We don't want to change students to be more like us, we don't want to assimilate them, we want to support them.

-How can we bring students in, accept them as they are AND make sure they have the necessary skills they need to enter our field.

-WSWS can’t be all things for our students, but what are some things we can do as a society to help students find these other support groups to help them create a supportive community outside of weed science – can WSWS support some students to attend meetings like HACU, SACNAS, or MANRRS.

-It would be good to go back to past students and see what they are doing now – This way we see where other things besides weed science our support and degree’s take our student members.

Chat Comments:

-To Joe's comment, are there opportunities to make the student contest judging criteria more inclusive? I.E. scoring on eye contact/voice/behavior

-Having been involved with WSWS for around 20 years, one of the things that has always struck me is the contrast between the student population (often pretty diverse) vs the 'career' and board populations. Is this something you've talked about/incorporated into your proposal?

-Coburn that's a great point. We have not discussed that specifically, but it is very important.

-Elizabeth, how about you consider collaborating with HACU - The HACU National Internship Program. Jobs/internships/higher education opportunities can be flown and get exposure. https://www.hacu.net/hacu/HNIP.asp

-would like to second Carl's comment/question about scoring rubric for student contest and reviewing it to look for biases in how students from different cultural backgrounds might have different communication styles.

-Your twitter thread brought it to mind Joe!

-Vanelle - my experiences on the board and committees were similar - not enough diversity and this is something (in contrast with jobs) that WSWS has direct control over

-Thank you, Elizabeth, and everyone else. Great discussion and I'm glad to see this work is happening.

-thx!

Recommendations for Board Action:

Draft timeframe for our tasks:

- August - October 2021: Work on developing D&I material for WSWS website, PRIORITY
- November - March-ish : Work on modifying WSWS Operating Guide

Questions for BoD:

- Can we collect demographic information as members register for the annual meeting starting next year? We think this would be important and relevant information that we can trace over time and acquiring it during the registration process would be best. We need to put a clause stating that it is optional to disclose this information!

- What is the procedure of changing the Operating Guide? How does the BoD recommend we take on this task to ensure we follow appropriate procedures?

Budget Needs:

NA

Name of Person Preparing This Report:
Elizabeth Mosqueda