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**NYC SERVICE & NPCC RELEASE REPORT ON THE CURRENT STATE OF  
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION ON NYC NONPROFIT BOARDS**

*Report shares nonprofit boards are interested in addressing DEI; demographics do not reflect the diversity of NYC*

**NEW YORK**— NYC Service, in partnership with the Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York (NPCC), released [\*What Lies Beneath: The State of NYC Nonprofit Board Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion\*](#) to identify nonprofit board diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) gaps, strategies, recommendations and resources for NYC's nonprofit sector.

The report is a result of a six month study conducted with the NYC Nonprofit Board Development Coalition, led by NYC Service, which assessed nonprofit board composition, board policies, as well as procedures. The study discovered that nonprofit leadership demographics do not reflect the diversity of New York City; DEI is valued, but not effectively addressed; representation in leadership matters; board complacency and resistance to change impede DEI; and boards may be perpetuating harmful biases.

“It is critical that nonprofit leaders articulate and embrace DEI values within their organization’s board composition, mission and programs,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Nonprofit leadership has a responsibility to reflect the communities they serve and the city is here to support their efforts.”

“The best long term solutions come from within communities as experts of their own experiences,” said **Patricia Eng, NYC Chief Service Officer**. “Leadership that reflects the core constituency strengthens the fabric of the community, our city, and our nation. In today’s world, this is a ‘must have’, not just ‘nice to have’ toward a vibrant democracy.”

“Nonprofits work hard to serve their communities effectively, and must be diverse, equitable, and inclusive to do so,” said **Sharon Stapel, President of NPCC**. “This report encourages a

frank conversation about the systemic and individual barriers that we all struggle with, and offers recommendations and strategies to truly center equity in their work.”

The report’s findings are a culmination of 420 online survey respondents and 37 focus group participants, representing nonprofit Chief Executive Officers/Executive Directors (CEOs/EDs) and board members throughout the five boroughs of NYC. The survey asked respondents to provide the composition of their board in terms of age, gender identity, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability status; their board policies and procedures; as well as, successes and challenges with regards to addressing DEI on their boards. The focus group interviews assigned NYC nonprofit CEOs/EDs and board members to separate focus groups to encourage open dialogue. Using an open-ended interview method, the participants discussed what they thought it meant to diversify a board; successes and challenges with recruitment and onboarding; reasons for joining a board; and barriers to and recommendations for achieving board diversity, equity, and inclusivity.

“The Council of Urban Professionals is grateful for the publication of the DEI Report and we stand ready to support NYC’s nonprofit organizations that are committed to greater inclusivity,” said **Chanda Gibson, Executive Director of the Council of Urban Professionals**. “We have a pool of talented, experienced professionals of color who are ready to serve, so we look forward to leading the change we want to see, together.”

“It is incredibly helpful to have this report that speaks to the challenges and opportunities for NYC nonprofits looking to address diversity, equity and inclusion through the work of their boards,” said **Keith Timko, Executive Director of the Support Center**. “If we believe these values are important--that of equity and inclusion--they need to be reflected in the work of our nonprofit boards. This study is critically important to understanding where we are today and where we would like to be tomorrow.”

“The issues of diversity, equity and inclusion are critically important to our organization and is central to our work and our vision of New York City as an equitable, diverse and just city that provides quality housing where all New Yorkers can live and thrive in their communities,” said **Edline Jacquet, Board Chair of Met Council Research & Educational Fund**. “As one of the oldest housing and tenants rights groups in the city and a grassroots, member driven social justice nonprofit organization made up of New York City tenants, we understand how important it is to have a racially and culturally diverse board leadership that truly represents the tenants and the communities that we represent. This report highlights the need to seriously address these issues in a thoughtful and strategic way and provides important insights from a range of perspectives from leaders on the ground involved in this critical work.”

“Our country suffers from historical and current racist attitudes and biases against people that are different,” said **Nancy D. Miller, Executive Director/CEO of VISIONS/Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired**. “Board diversity combined with staff diversity encourages the recognition and action against these inherent biases at the nonprofit policy and service level. This report will engage the sector in soul searching leading to action that makes significant change in how we work with one another across our differences.”

“To disrupt an inequitable system, we have to expand access to power,” said **Kathrine Mott, Chief Executive Officer of Let’s Get Ready**. “And that starts within our organization through diverse representation at every level of decision making. We look forward to implementing the findings of the NYC Board Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion report to become an even stronger and more effective organization.”

“Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work on the board level is vitally important,” said **George Suttles, Board Member of Odyssey House**. “It informs our strategies and ultimately helps us better serve our clients. If we want to have an impact, part of our process must include building a board that is reflective of the communities and demographics we serve.”

“Diversity, Equity and Inclusion on nonprofit boards adds value and authenticity to the mission and work of organizations,” said **Ramik Williams, Executive Director of Directions for Our Youth Inc.** “I believe this report will communicate the challenges, successes and needs of bringing diversity, equity and inclusion to the nonprofit sector in New York City and generate conversations, and more importantly actions to diversify organizational leadership. I applaud the Mayor's Office and challenge other elected officials on the state and local levels as well as other stakeholders particularly those in the philanthropic and service provision side to further the work and bring change to the nonprofit sector.”

Based on the survey results, the study found that policies and procedures are not absolute guarantees in ensuring sustainable change. Nonprofit leaders must harness existing board support for DEI to build a deepened and common framework to successfully approach this issue, and move away from counterproductive and ineffective thinking and solutions. The report shares the following recommendations to guide CEOs/EDs and board leaders’ DEI efforts and to hold themselves and their organizations accountable:

1. Articulate a common language for DEI
  - a. Define DEI
  - b. Address privilege and power imbalances
  - c. Challenge cultural biases and assumptions
2. Build internal support to mobilize change
  - a. Recruit DEI advocates
  - b. Communicate the value add of DEI
  - c. Disrupt board complacency
3. Create and implement strategic DEI goals and practices
  - a. Determine what DEI success means for your board
  - b. Look holistically across board and organizational practices
4. Dedicate the board and organization to sustained awareness and accountability

The NYC Nonprofit Board Development Coalition will come together and form an action plan to support nonprofit leaders in the City looking to improve board diversity, equity, and inclusion.

To access the full report, click [here](#).

**NYC Service**

NYC Service is a division of the Office of the Mayor which promotes volunteerism, engages New Yorkers in service, builds volunteer capacity and mobilizes the power of volunteers and national service members to impact New York City's greatest needs. The vision is to inspire and empower all New Yorkers to serve their City and each other through New York City's nonprofits, businesses, and city agencies. For more information and to find an opportunity to [#ServeNYC](#), visit [nyc.gov/service](http://nyc.gov/service).

**Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York**

NPCC is the largest and most diverse nonprofit membership organization in New York City. NPCC supports nearly 1,700 members by encouraging strong, transparent and informed management and by advocating for fair and reasonable nonprofit public policy. For more information, visit <http://www.npccny.org>.

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