
**Report from the Task Force
on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion**

**Miss
America
2.0**

2019

December 2020

We're a
passionate
organization
filled with passionate
individuals



On June 17, 2020, MAO Board Chair Shantel Krebs sent out a request to all those associated with the Miss America Organization (MAO) to apply for their new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Task Force, and utilized an outside selection committee to determine which applicants were best equipped to join the task force. The request was made in the wake of many organization stakeholders reaching out to MAO and/or the Miss America's Outstanding Teen ("Teen") program to express concerns regarding the ongoing national protests, civil unrest, and MAO's role in the ongoing conversation on justice and equity. Before assembling a new taskforce, MAO acknowledged the work of the previous D&I task force stating:

"The women involved in that committee worked hard to develop a DEI report that we recognize now, more than ever, we need to update and implement to live up to our organization's mission. Our priority is to truly be a space

for all women to grow, learn, network, and earn scholarship dollars."

Thus, the 2020 DE&I Task Force has updated and expanded upon the previous committee's work and report.

Upon formation in August 2020, the first task of the 2020 Task Force was to obtain updated quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comparative analysis and update the previous recommendations. The following report details the results of the efforts mentioned above over a 90-day period.

Below is a brief explanation of the mission of this Task Force, a case for the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts with real-world examples of the benefits of a robust DE&I policy in place. This report also contains anecdotal stories of candidate and volunteer experiences in the Miss America system (See Appendix A) to illuminate current shortcomings within the Miss America program in dealing with an ever-changing and diverse population.

Introduction

The Miss America Organization faces many challenges as it seeks to maintain relevance and longevity. DE&I must be an integral part of the strategic vision of this storied, iconic American institution.

The Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is committed to providing MAO with concrete strategies to improve the organization's diversity from within, extending to the state and local programs. The ultimate goal of these recommendations is to reflect and embrace our country's individual and cultural diversity with sensitivity and respect.

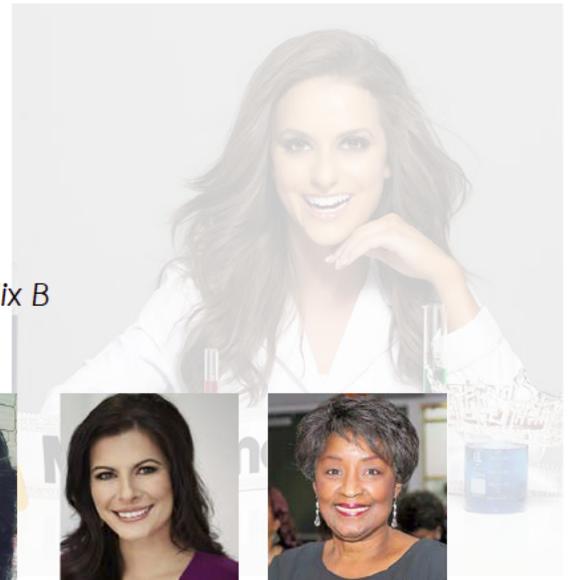
The Task Force firmly believes that as a leader in the empowerment of young women, MAO must embrace every individual's unique beauty, no matter their ethnic background, racial identity, sexual orientation, body type, ability, religion, or economic status.

By sending a clear message of inclusion, the Task Force believes that deserving young women who otherwise may not have considered participating in the program will know that they, too, are capable of success within the Miss America Organization.



Meet the 2020 DE&I Task Force

Brief member biographies are available in Appendix B



Co-Chair,
Michelle
Anderson



Co-Chair,
Brittany Lewis



Co-Secretary,
Jennifer
McKenna



Co-Secretary,
Maria Smith



Sonia Amir
Bowie



Brenda
Edwards



Dennis Horn



Nicole Kelly



Brianna
Mason



Rodney
Neely



Shenan Reed



Allison Rogers



Dave Sidhu



Merissa
(Mimi)
Stricker



Emily Tinsman



Debbye
Turner Bell



Rachael
Vopatek



Cori Wallace

2018 D&I Team

*Chair, Dr. Debbye Turner Bell
Caressa Cameron Jackson
Nina Davuluri
Ericka Dunlap
Elizabeth (Ward) Gracen
Trellynda Kerr*

*Crystal Lee
Sloane Lewis
Octavia Reese
Lorna Ricota
Ane Romero
Marjorie Vincent-Tripp*

Did you know?

Americans born between 1981 and 1996, commonly known as millennials, now outnumber Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) in the U.S. population, as does Generation Z (those born between 1997 and 2015). Nearly half (44%) of millennials and Gen Z (48%) are members of a racial or ethnic minority group. With so much competition in our popular culture for the attention and resources of young women, and corporate dollars, MAO cannot afford to ignore any population in the United States. As former Global Head of Inclusive Engagement at Uber, Bernard Coleman writes, “Ignoring demographic changes amount to organizational irrelevance.”

What is Diversity?

Diversity is not just about ethnicity or race. Diversity, fully understood, includes gender, age, socio-economic background, body size and type, sexual orientation and identity, education, religion, ability, and more.

The Allegis Group, in a March 2018 article, put it this way, “As a practice, D&I is no longer about compliance, quotas, or check-off-the-box activities; instead, it is about taking down the barriers that stand between employers and vital sources of scarce talent. It is about bringing to bear the full power of diverse, personal experiences and perspectives to understand customers, create value, and support innovation.”



What is Equity?

Equity is a dedication to fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for everyone. An equitable organization identifies and eliminates barriers that have prevented the full participation of marginalized groups. According to the University of Washington,

“the principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.”

According to North Carolina’s Winston-Salem State University, “the terms equality and equity are often used interchangeably; however, they differ in important ways. Equality is typically defined as treating everyone the same and giving everyone access to the same opportunities. Meanwhile, equity refers to proportional representation (by race, class, gender, etc.) in those same opportunities.” Equity is fair treatment based on differing needs. Equity recognizes that equal treatment does not necessarily produce equal outcomes.

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion creates an environment in which any individual or group can feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued as a fully participating member. An inclusive space actively seeks to understand and embrace difference. Inclusion goes beyond diverse individuals' presence; it requires diverse individuals to become equal participants with access to decision-making processes affecting them, specifically the ability to influence policies, practices, and values espoused by the organization.

We extrapolate this definition to accommodate non-work-related activities that comprise the majority of interactions between MAO, its titleholders, candidates, judges, directors, boards, and volunteers. Inclusion in this sense ensures that all participants are valued for who they are, engaged for their insights, opinions, and skills, and comfortable to express their authentic selves among others who participate in the Organization.



Why Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion?

Studies show that an effective and robust diversity, equity, and inclusion policy within any organization can improve revenue, drive innovation, attract greater talent, and increase sustainability.

Candidate participation, scholarship fundraising, corporate sponsorship, advertising revenue, even television broadcast placement all hinge on MAO being an entity that looks and behaves like the population it seeks to serve. Studies show that ethnically diverse companies are 35% more likely to financially outperform their peers. Companies with effective diversity programs have 2.3 times higher cash flow per employee and are 1.7 times more innovative than those without DE&I initiatives. These facts certainly apply to a volunteer organization like MAO, as well. See Appendix C for an example of one company's success in implementing DE&I initiatives.

Beyond “Filling the Quota”

It is not only important to focus on recruiting a diverse leadership, staff, volunteer corps, and candidate pool, but to foster an environment and culture that is affirming and supportive for all.

According to Dr. Dafina-Lazarus Stewart, professor of higher education and student affairs at Colorado State University,

“Diversity and inclusion rhetoric asks fundamentally different questions and is concerned with fundamentally different issues than efforts seeking equity and justice.”

She elaborates:

- Diversity asks, “Who’s in the room?” Equity responds: “Who is trying to get in the room but can’t? Whose presence in the room is under constant threat of erasure?”
- Inclusion asks, “Has everyone’s ideas been heard?” Justice responds, “Whose ideas won’t be taken as seriously because they aren’t in the majority?”



- Diversity asks, “How many more of [pick any minoritized identity] group do we have this year than last?” Equity responds, “What conditions have we created that maintain certain groups as the perpetual majority here?”
- Inclusion asks, “Is this environment safe for everyone to feel like they belong?” Justice challenges, “Whose safety is being sacrificed and minimized to allow others to be comfortable maintaining dehumanizing views?”

Inclusion and equity are just as important as diversity. Without the efforts to create an inclusive and equitable environment, diversity efforts will ultimately be in vain.

Even in securing sponsors for local, state, and national MAO programs, DE&I must be taken into account. Consideration for sponsored goods and services such as hair care services, beauty products, tanning salons, wardrobe, and more can be viewed as microaggressions or prejudices against populations of candidates that cannot avail themselves of the goods or services offered.

Methods and Strategy

The Task Force requested the following information to aid in the effort to assess the state of the organization's DE&I efforts:

- 1) A list of all current MAO & Teen board members with their backgrounds, expertise, and demographics.
- 2) A list of all MAO & Teen staff, including consultants, freelancers, and advisers with their backgrounds, expertise, and demographics.
- 3) A list and descriptions of all MAO & Teen state Executive Directors, and state board members.
- 4) A list and descriptions of last year's MAO & Teen national judges.
- 5) A list and descriptions of last year's MAO & Teen state competition judges.
- 6) Demographics of the candidates who have participated in the local, state, and national competitions over the last 5 years.
- 7) Copies of all promotional and marketing materials produced by MAO & Teen in the last 5 years.
- 8) List of most recent advertisers during the 2020 Miss America telecast and Teen competition.
- 9) List of sponsors and major donors, current and those from the last five years.
- 10) Any existing policies in place regarding diversity, equity and inclusion for candidates, board members, judges, and other volunteers, and any related grievance processes.
- 11) A copy of the Young & Rubicam sponsorship deck containing demographics of candidates and audience, as well as social media recommendations.
- 12) Information as to which national publications and media outlets are covering Miss America & Teen.
- 13) Estimated cost of participation for MAO & Teen.

This information proved to be a challenge to obtain, since the bulk of the information is not collected or stored by MAO, particularly information related to state programs and teen programs whose information, if stored, is done so in a decentralized fashion.

Ultimately MAO was able to provide the committee with a list of sponsors, as well as biographies and press releases for preliminary and final night judges for the 2015-2019 Miss America competitions. Additionally, a grievance process exists for all concerned via the Miss America website.



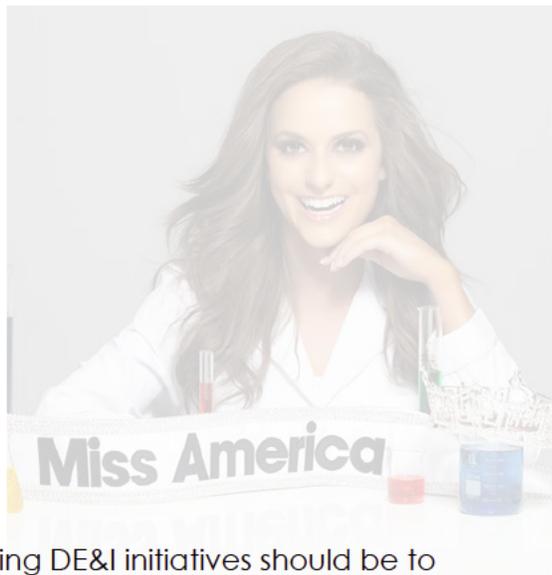
Our DE&I Task

The primary focus of the 2020 DE&I Task Force was to deliver a report outlining a series of substantive DE&I related recommendations that MAO should consider implementing. At present, the Task Force is an advisory function, not an implementation force; thus, the DE&I Task Force developed a survey to obtain quantitative demographic data and open commentary to inform any qualitative recommendations.

The survey was distributed via the MAO office to approximately 1200 MAO state organizations and volunteers, inviting them to participate, and requesting that they disseminate the survey pervasively throughout their organizations, to include:

- Candidates (Contestants), Parents, Former Titleholders (Forever)
- Executive Directors, Executive Board Members, Advisory/Auxiliary Boards
- Judges, Auditors, Production / Backstage Crew
- Mentors, Coaches, Preparation Team Members
- Sponsors, Donors, Friends, Supporters, Other Volunteers

Since a database does not exist that contains comprehensive demographic information about the state organizations, one of MAO's top priorities regarding developing and



implementing DE&I initiatives should be to create a culture of appreciation for the importance of this effort and to require participating State Organizations to provide demographic data annually (see *Appendix D* for an example of the questions that should be included on the annual State Operating Report (SOR) and Local Operating Report (LOR)).

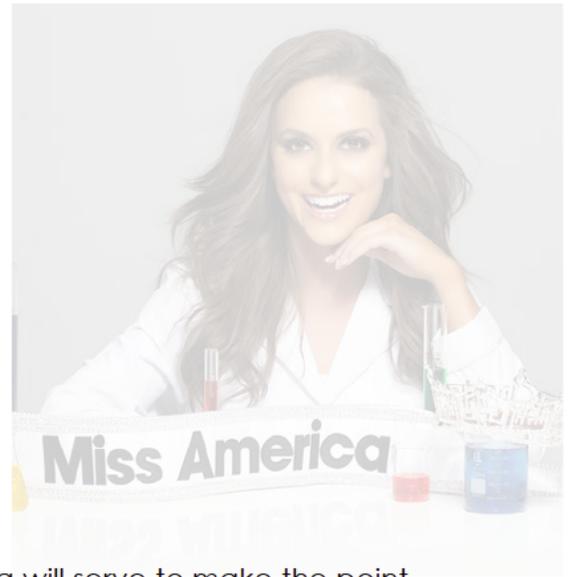


DE&I Survey Findings

The following are the findings of a 14-question survey the Task Force conducted over a 21-day period in October-November 2020 in an effort to assess the Miss America Organization's current state of DE&I.

The questions asked respondents about their geographic location, multi-state support, years of involvement, program division affiliation, service roles, gender, age, household income, race, ethnicity, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and any comments, personal experiences, or recommendations.

The survey received 1106 responses.



The data will serve to make the point that there is certainly room for progress in MAO to be a more diverse, representative organization of the current U.S. population, and to foster a more equitable, inclusive environment.

Additionally, the comments

indicated that clear definition and sustained communications as to what the terms diversity, equity and inclusion mean, as well as what they do not mean, and how they would be implemented should be a primary focus in informing local and state directors, judges, candidates, and all volunteers during the development and/or deployment of DE&I related efforts.

Reference Standards

For reference and context, demographic information of the general population in the United States (U.S.) was obtained from a variety of sources, including but not limited to the Pew Research Center, Gallup, the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

Although a 2020 U.S. Census canvass had been completed at the time of issuance of this report, the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 report had not yet been published; therefore, the latest 2019 interim Census data available was used for analysis where applicable. According to the U.S. Census, as of July 1, 2019, the total U.S. population was estimated at 324,356,000.

The survey graphs depicted on subsequent pages demonstrate diversity in representation, but do not demonstrate inclusion or equity among represented groups.

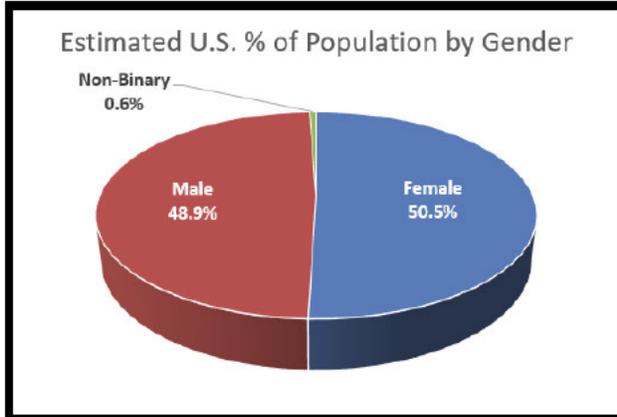
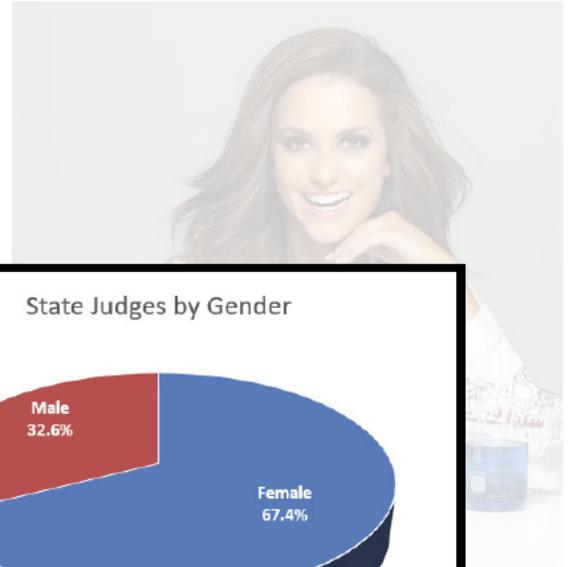


Although a significant sample size, the 1106 respondents do not represent a comprehensive dataset and must be regarded as a relative inclination of the demographics among any group.

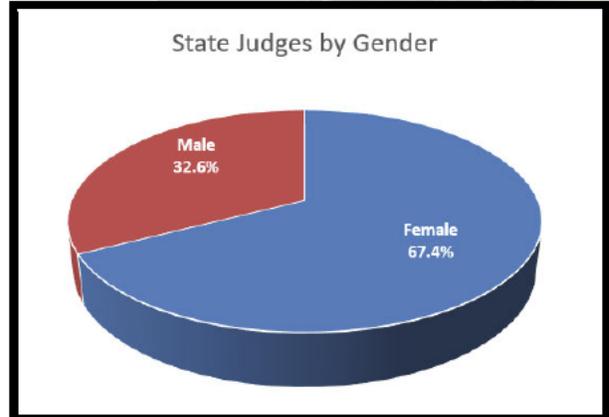
- Underrepresentation of a group is defined as any group where there is a 3-percentage point difference between the estimated U.S. population and the population as identified by the survey results.
- Significant underrepresentation is defined as any group where there is a 5-percentage point difference between the estimated U.S. population and the population as identified by the survey results.
- Efforts to bring significant underrepresentation into balance should be of highest priority.

Demographic Comparisons

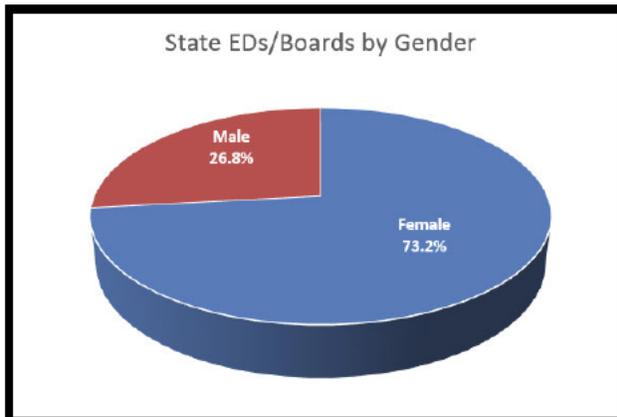
Gender



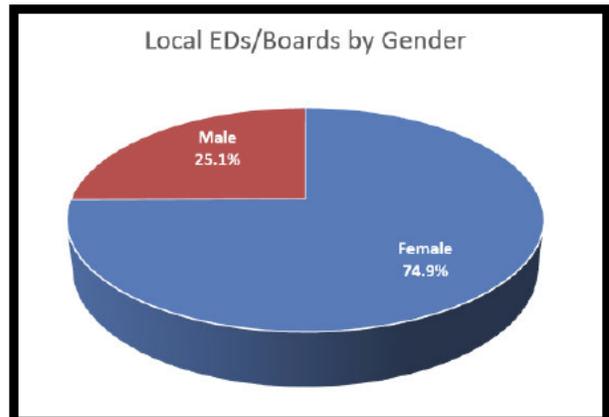
U.S. male vs. female population is almost evenly split.



Female judges outnumber male judges 2 to 1.



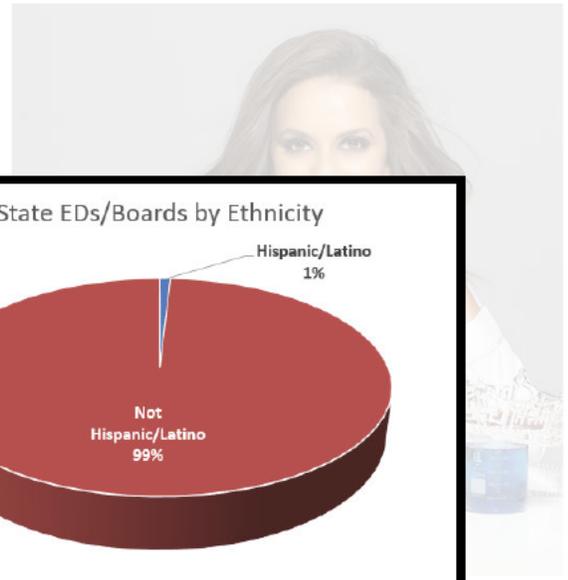
Females outnumber male Executive Directors and Board Members at both local and state levels 3 to 1.



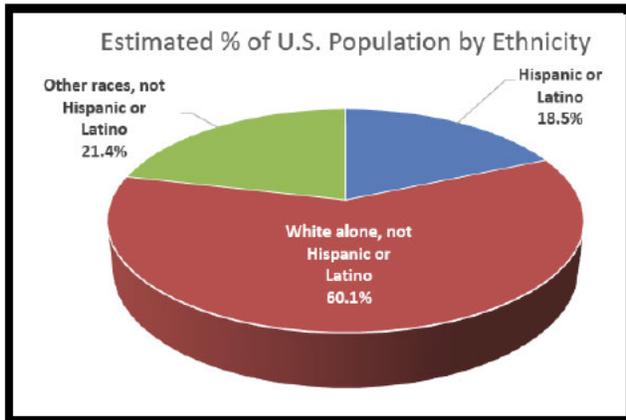
In proportion to the U.S. population of those who identify as female (50.5%), the MAO & Teen organizations are overly indexed for those who identify as female (67.4% and higher). Additionally, the gender distribution of MAO national leadership team (Staff and Board of Trustees) is overly indexed for those who identify as female (79%).

Sample Survey Response:

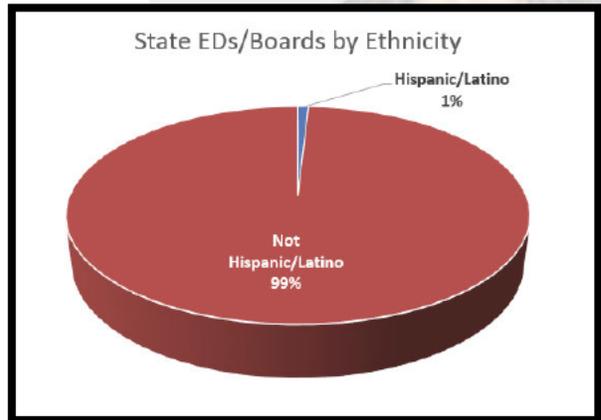
“Men have been supporting this program for years. The last Miss Arkansas pageant had an all female judging panel, not very diverse! Don’t forget about us guys!”



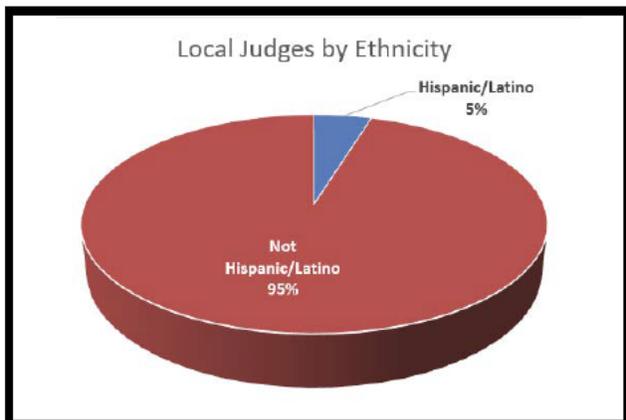
Ethnicity



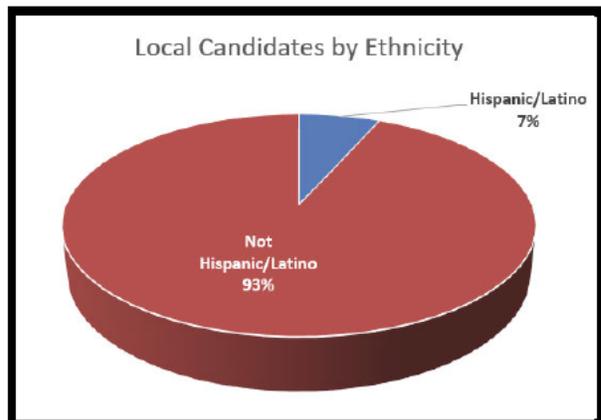
Total Non-Hispanic/Latino population is 81.5%.



Hispanic/Latino representation on state boards is virtually non-existent.



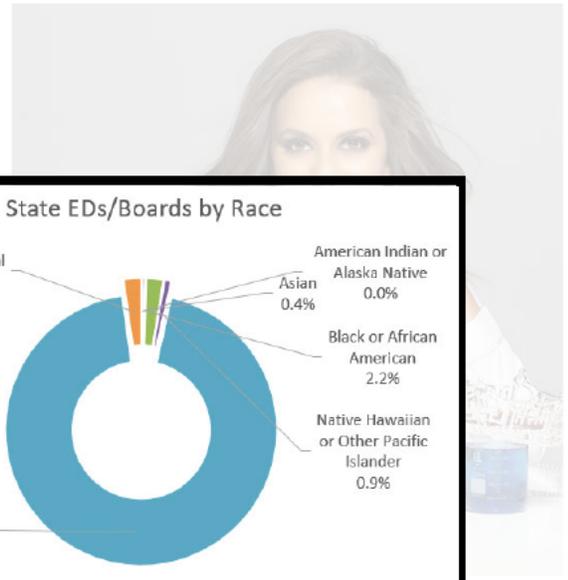
Hispanic/Latino judges are commensurate with current candidates, but not compared to U.S. population.



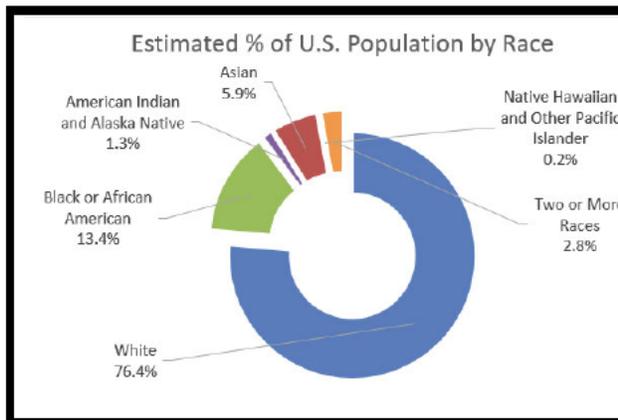
In proportion to the U.S. population of people who identify as Hispanic or Latino (18.5%), people of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity are significantly underrepresented within the MAO & Teen organizations across all key aggregate groups (EDs/Boards, Judges and Candidates (1% to 7%)). Targeted recruitment among this group should be considered. Recommended groups with which to investigate partnerships are presented in Appendix E.

Sample Survey Response:

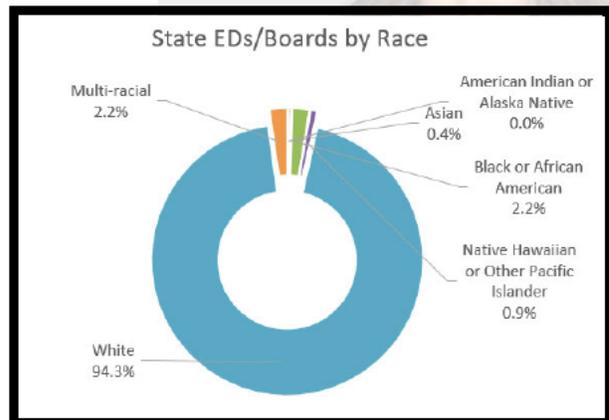
“In relation to the Miss America Organization, I have been told more than once not to disclose my ethnic background nor my religious/non-religious beliefs to judges or the organization. I was told that disclosing that I am Hispanic may hurt my chances of winning. I was told I could pass as white, and that's a good thing.”



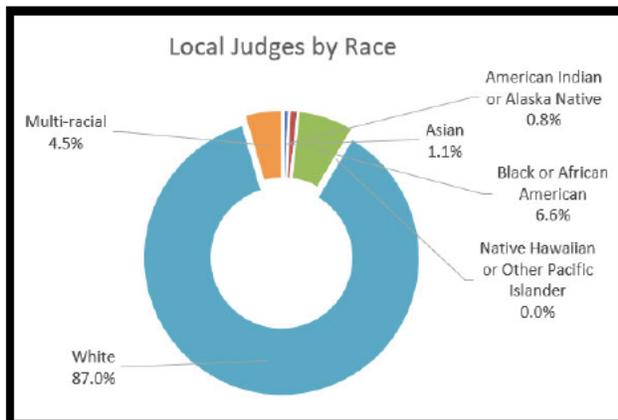
Race



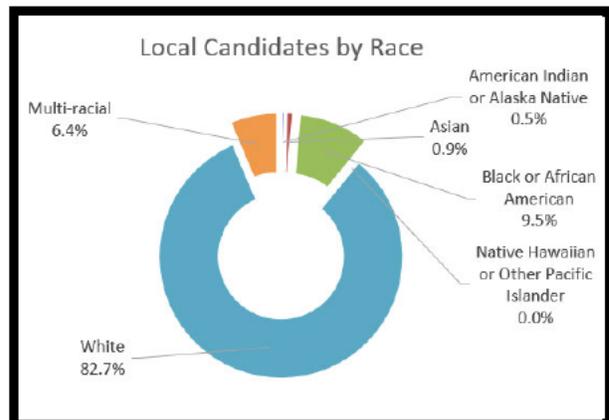
U.S. population is majority White at 76.4%.



Black state level EDs/board members are significantly under indexed by 11.2%.



Asian local level judges are under indexed by 4.8%.



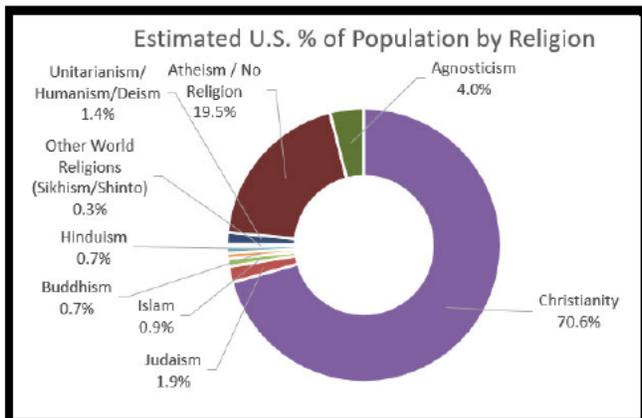
Local candidates are generally more diverse than local EDs/Boards and Judges.

In proportion to the U.S. population of those who identify as White (76.4%), the MAO & Teen organizations are overly indexed for those who identify as White (82.7% and higher). Within specific minority populations of respondents, those who identify as Black are underrepresented among Candidates, and significantly underrepresented among EDs/Boards and Judges. Those who identify as Asian are significantly underrepresented among all key aggregate groups (EDs/Boards, Judges, and Candidates). Targeted recruitment among these groups should be considered. Recommended groups with which to investigate partnerships are presented in Appendix E.

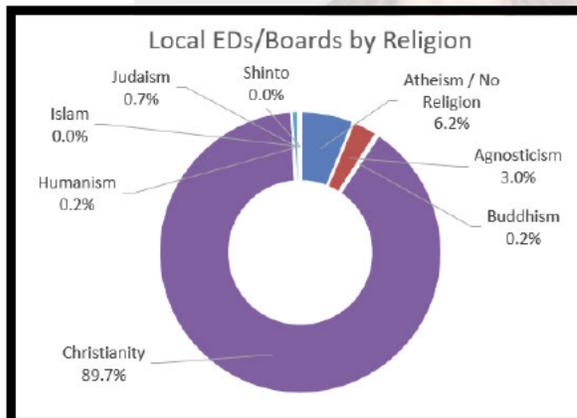
Sample Survey Response:

“While at Miss America, there were about 9/51 contestants of color in my class who were frequently mixed up despite having little to no physical similarities. Several white midwestern state candidates happened to be blonde and shared many of the same physical characteristics, yet they were never called the wrong name or mixed up.”

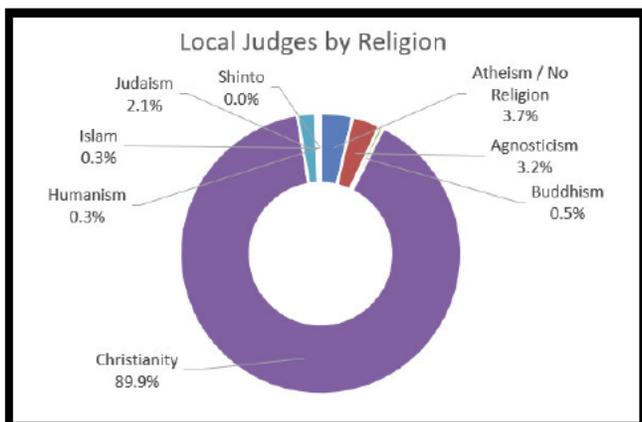
Religion



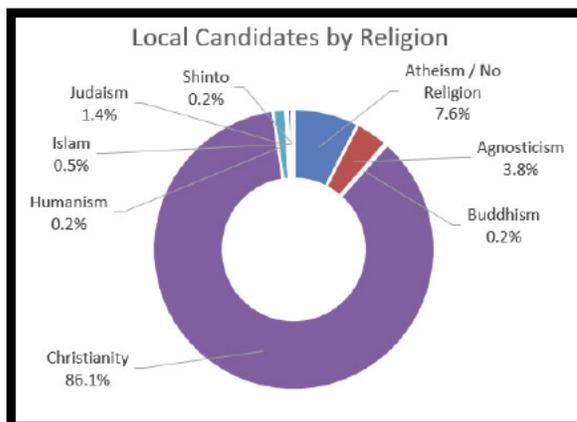
U.S. population is majority Christian at 70.6% with a significant Atheist/Non-Religious population at 19.5%.



Local level EDs/boards are significantly over indexed as Christian by 19.1%.



Local judges are generally represented among those religions represented by local candidates, although both are under indexed among minority religions in comparison to the U.S. population.

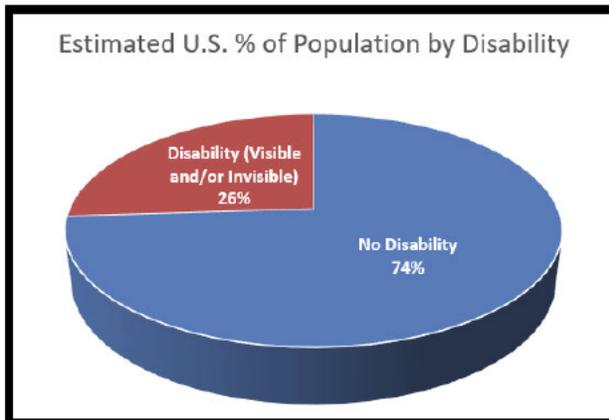


In proportion to the U.S. population of those who identify as Christian (70.6%), the MAO & Teen organizations are overly indexed for those who identify as Christian (86.1% and higher). Within specific minority populations of respondents, those who identify as Atheist are significantly underrepresented among Candidates, EDs/Boards and Judges. Targeted recruitment among this group should be considered. Recommended groups with which to investigate partnerships are presented in Appendix E.

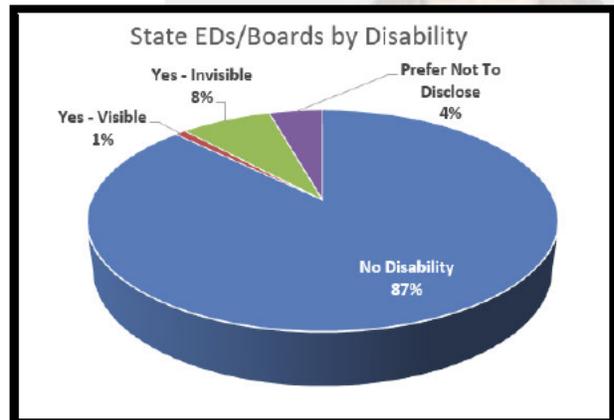
Sample Survey Response:

“I have been told by several people [within the organization] not to disclose that I am an atheist. This advice came from another candidate's personal exclusionary experiences who was told by two judging committees that Miss America couldn't be an atheist.”

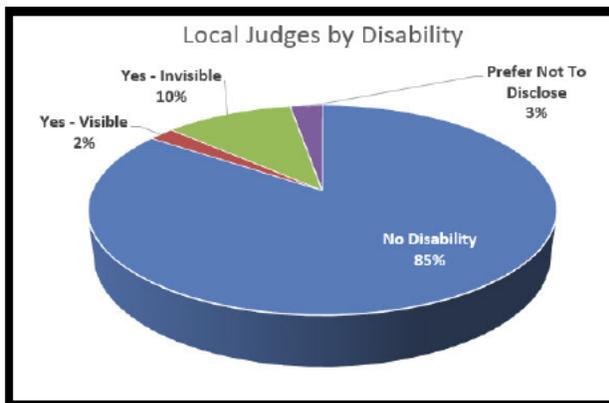
Ability



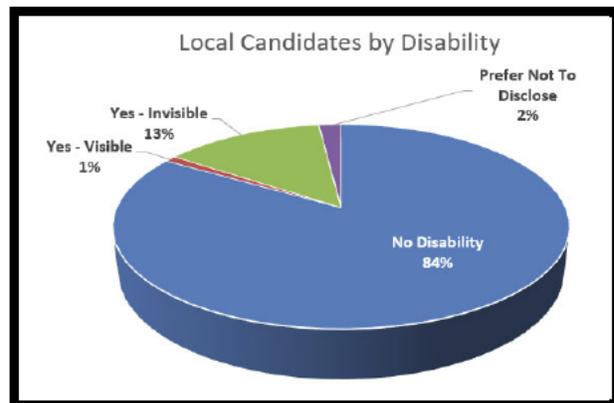
U.S. population who identify as having a disability is 26%.



State level EDs/board members who identify as having a disability are under indexed by 15%.



Local judges and candidates who identify as having a disability are under indexed by 12-14%.

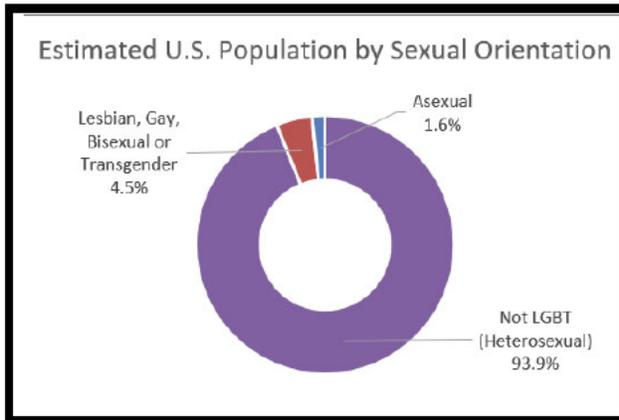


In proportion to the U.S. population of those who identify as having a disability (26%), the MAO & Teen organizations significantly under indexed (12-15%). Targeted recruitment among this group should be considered. Recommended groups with which to investigate partnerships are presented in Appendix E.

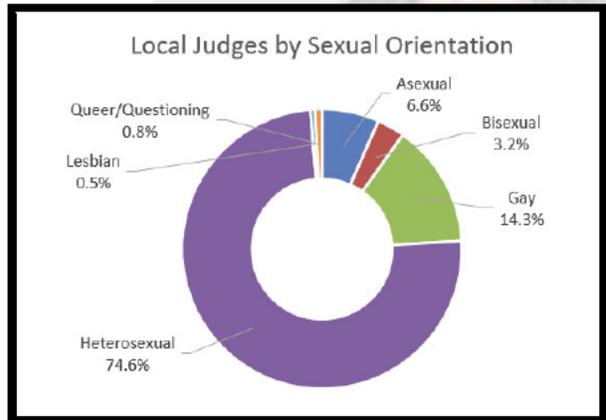
Sample Survey Response:

“I am a local titleholder with inattentive type ADHD and have slow processing speed. I am very smart and can perform a titleholder's duties, but I feel discriminated against (not purposely) in the judging process in private and onstage interviews. People with ADHD and slow processing speeds often use filler words, look up at the ceiling, and fidget when we are formulating answers because we have issues with the executive functioning system in our brains. We also sometimes explain things slower and stumble on our words. None of these things means that we are not intelligent, confident, a team player, or any other titleholder's characteristics. It is not bad that we have these difficulties, but I feel the organization views my ADHD as a weakness because of our society.”

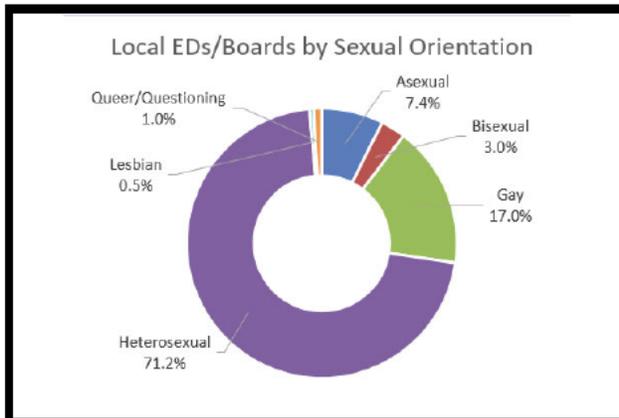
Sexual Orientation



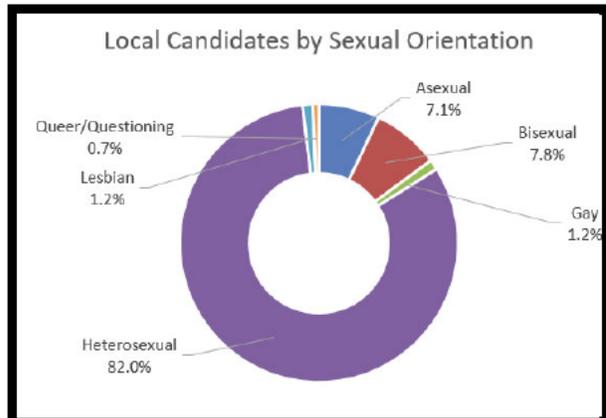
U.S. population is majority Heterosexual at 93.9%.



More LGBTQ people (18.8%) serve as local judges than are indexed within the U.S. population (4.5%)



Local EDs/board members are more diverse in LGBTQ status and Asexuality by 28.8% vs. U.S. population.



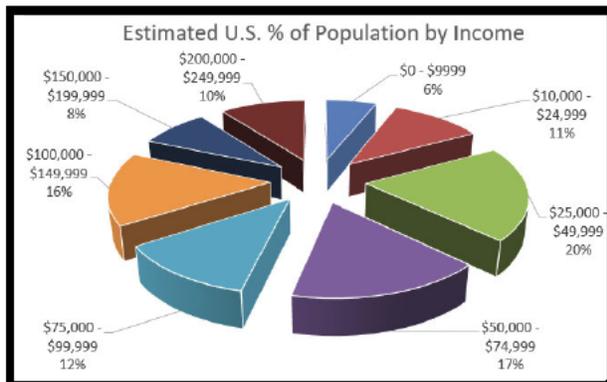
Local candidates are less diverse by sexual orientation than local EDs/Boards and Judges.

In proportion to the U.S. population of those who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+), the MAO & Teen organizations are appropriately indexed. Efforts should focus on equity and inclusion practices. Recommended groups with which to investigate partnerships are presented in Appendix E.

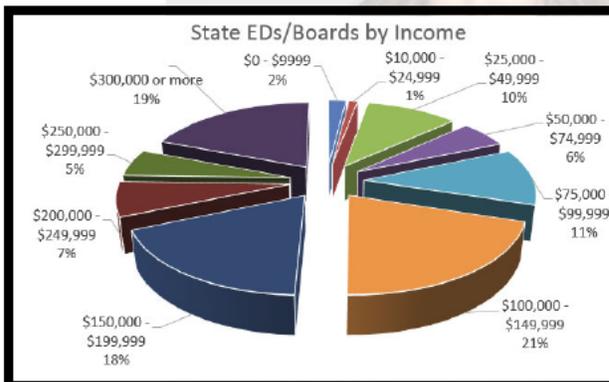
Sample Survey Response:

“As a queer titleholder, I have had multiple instances of blatantly homophobic and inappropriate questions and behaviors from judges. There needs to be some level of implicit bias training, or something related, with better examples of how to talk about diversity for judges.”

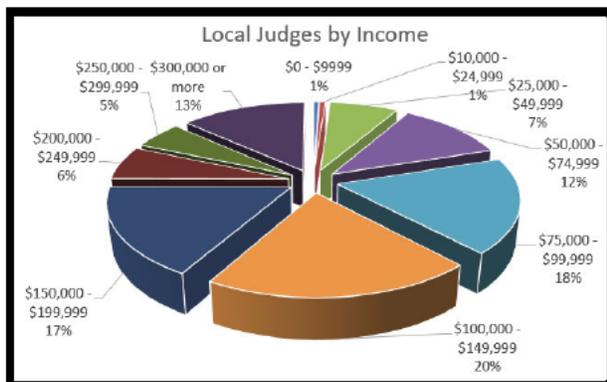
Income



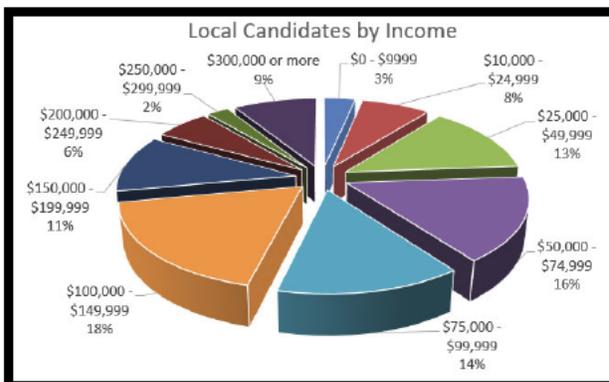
66% of U.S. population earns less than \$100K. 90% earns less than \$200K.



30% of State EDs/Board Members earn less than \$100K. 69% earn less than \$200K.



39% of local judges earn less than \$100K. 76% earn less than \$200K.



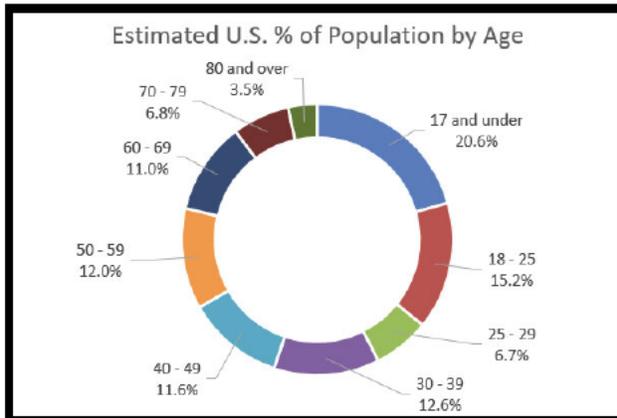
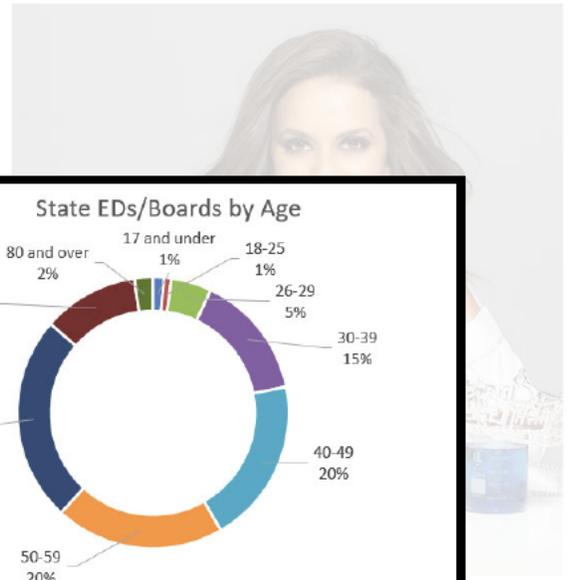
54% of local candidates earn less than \$100K. 83% earn less than \$200K (closest to U.S. population).

In comparison to the U.S. population median income (\$69K), the median income based on survey respondents for State and Local EDs/Boards is estimated at \$131K, the State and Local Judges median income is estimated at \$132K and the median income for Candidates is estimated at \$108K. The variance of nearly \$40K between the U.S. population median income and that of Candidate respondents may indicate that prospective Candidates in lower socio-economic strata have difficulty understanding the value proposition for enrolling in the program or in accessing monetary resources needed to participate fully.

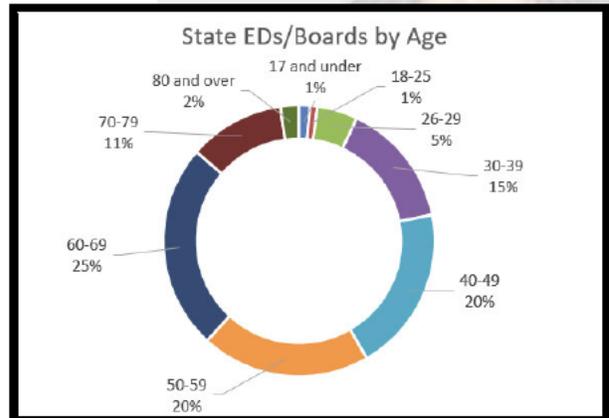
Sample Survey Response:

“The costs related to being a candidate are enormous. In the small rural community we serve, we are struggling to recruit candidates due to the financial strain associated with competing. Potential candidates have communicated the concern that they have to spend more money to compete than they would possibly earn in scholarship dollars. As a parent of a local teen in 2018, I personally saw the financial impact. I worry about any program's future when young ladies discuss that MAO is for the ‘rich girls.’”

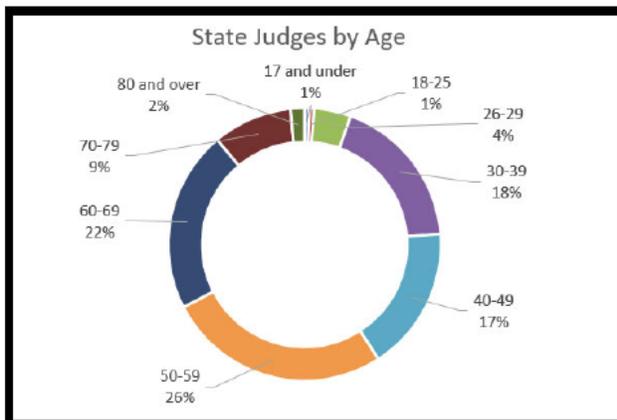
Age



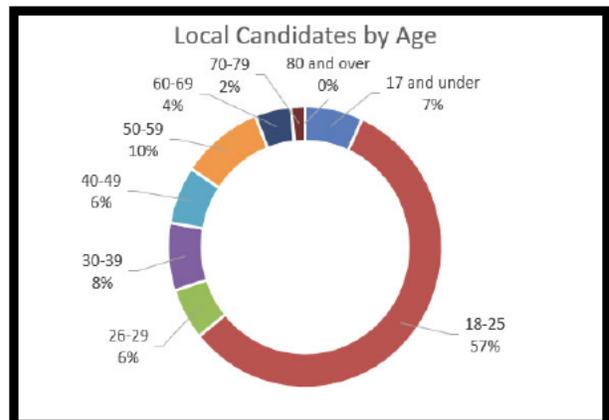
The U.S. population is approx. 23% Baby Boomers, 17.6% Gen X, 19.3% Millennials, and 20% Gen Z.



46% of State EDs/Boards are Baby Boomers, 30% are Gen X – 36% older the U.S. population.



44% of state judges are Baby Boomers, 30% are Gen X, 22% are Millennials and 1% are Gen Z.



60% of local candidates are Gen Z, while 14% of former candidates are Millennials & 11% are Gen X

In proportion to the U.S. population of those who identify as Baby Boomers and Generation X combined (40.6%), the MAO & Teen organizations are overly indexed by approximately 30% among State EDs/Boards and approximately 28% among State Judges.

Sample Survey Response:

“Boards need to be reviewed by nationals. There are many states where the state board is older and stuck in their ways.”

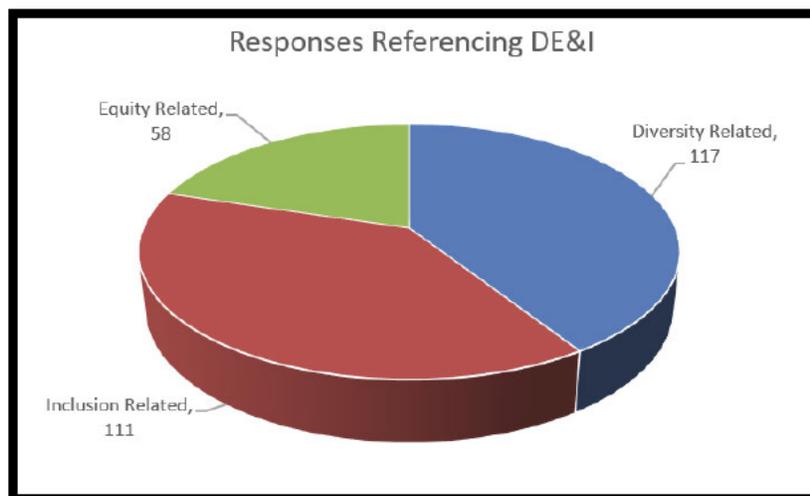
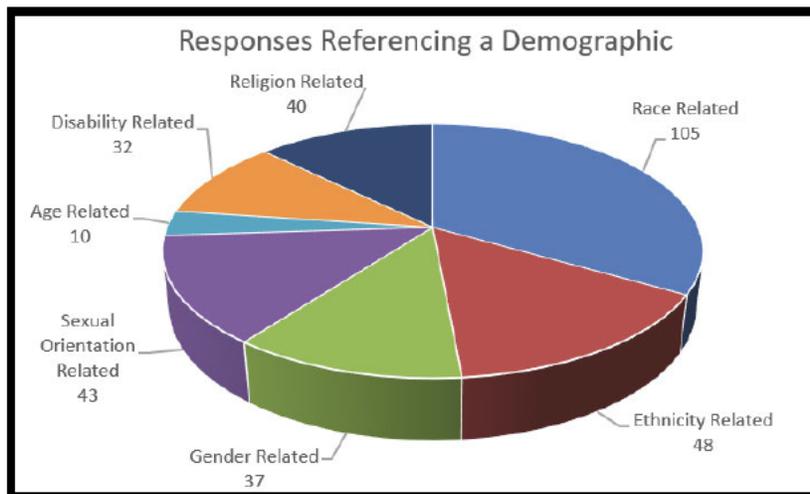


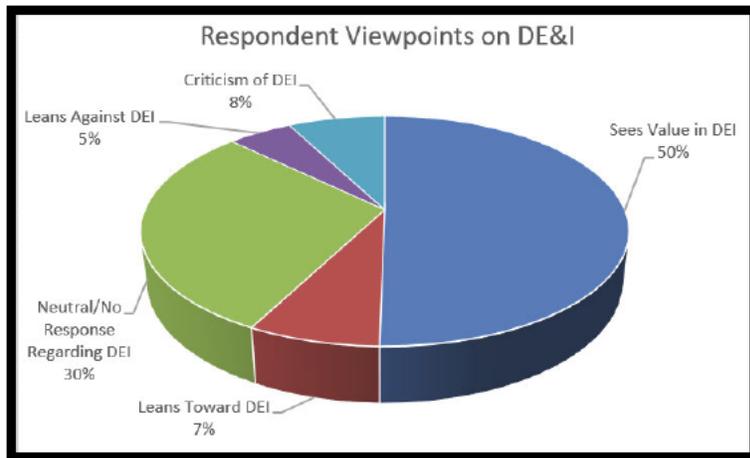
For additional insights regarding the makeup of candidates and volunteers in MAO by State, Program and Years of Service for which no U.S. national comparison data is applicable, see Appendix F.

Open-Ended Survey Responses

The final question on the survey provided an optional opportunity for respondents to answer the following question: "Please share any comments, personal experiences or recommendations that would help the Miss America Organization better understand your perspective and further our diversity, equity and inclusion efforts?"

The information and graphs below describe the nature of the responses for the 362 individuals who completed the question. For verbatim examples of submitted responses, see Appendix A.





57% of open-ended responses were favorable toward DE&I efforts.

Diversity

Open-ended survey responses indicate that there is a prevalent misconception that the term "diverse" refers solely to the demographic of race, that it applies primarily to people of color, and that it is affiliated with some type of quota or preferential treatment. The nature of the term includes ALL, which within the concept of race includes those who identify as White, as well as other key demographics such as age, ability, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, political ideology, and so on.

This misconception is highly detrimental to MAO's DE&I efforts and must be dispelled through clear communication. Understanding of the comprehensive reality of the term must be clearly understood by all candidates, judges, directors, board members, and volunteers to ensure implementation of diversity-related efforts is conducted in accordance with MAO guidelines, and to dispel any notions of certain groups of people being disadvantaged by such

implementation. The following survey response is an example of this ideology and use of incorrect terminology such as "diverse contestant":

Sample Survey Response:

"As a parent I feel at times diversity is put above actual competition. In an effort to force the pageant to be more diverse, girls who do not fit in the diverse category are actually put at a disadvantage. They aren't allowed to compete if a local is reserved for a person who meets the more diverse mold. So even if the competition doesn't have enough contestants with the diverse contestants, non diverse competitions aren't allowed to enter."

Careful attention to transition from thoughts and terminology like "diverse candidates" which tends to "otherize" participants in favor of terminology like "diversity among candidates" which includes candidates of all types should be a component of MAO's DE&I training and communication plans.



Inclusion and Equity

It is noted that in comparison to the U.S. population, certain groups of people may be represented in proportion to the U.S. population (e.g., those who identify as Jewish, those who identify as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, etc.); however, it is important to ensure that each group is not only represented but that efforts are made to ensure all participants feel included, and that accommodations be made to provide equity and demonstrate respect for those groups where accommodations ensure full comfort in participation.

The following survey response is an example of non-inclusive behavior affecting an equitably indexed demographic minority population:

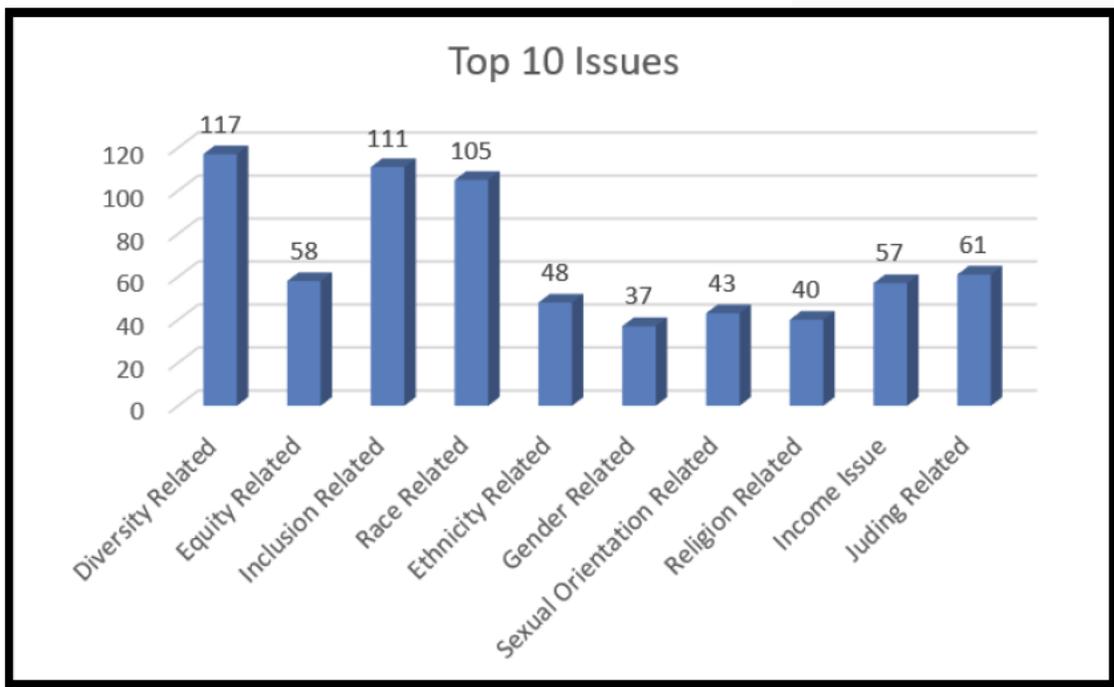
Sample Survey Response:

“There is no outreach to Jewish contestants, for example through Jewish Community Centers. Pageants are often held on Jewish holidays, such as Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur. It is quite revealing that BESS MYERSON was the last and only Miss America, and that was over 70 years ago.”



Open-ended survey responses indicate that targeted recruitment and respect for underrepresented demographic populations, as well as low-cost options for prospective candidates from lower socio-economic strata should be implemented to ensure both equity and inclusion.

Top 10 Issues



Open-ended survey responses highlighted ten issues of key importance to MAO's DE&I efforts.

Issues relating to diversity, equity, inclusion, and demographic-based issues have been discussed previously in this report; therefore, the remaining issues relating to judges and income are discussed below.

Recommendations across all of these areas are offered in subsequent sections of this report.

Judging

Judges panels need to reflect the diversity of the candidates and communities in which the competitions they are empaneled on are conducted. Judges' instructions should include appropriate techniques for posing questions that allow candidates to express their viewpoint without causing offense or discomfort, or without focusing on demographic issues that are not substantive to the candidate's application for the job.

Sample Survey Response:

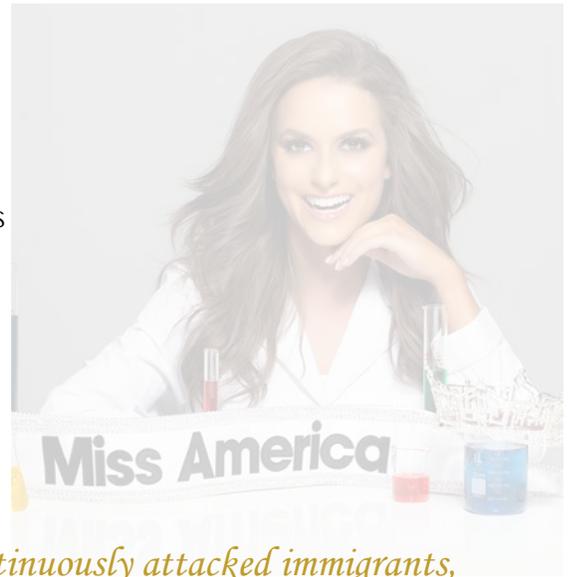
“During my Miss America interview, a judge continuously attacked immigrants, specifically Mexicans, even referring to children from immigrant mothers as “illegal babies” and asking if I felt these babies had the right to be citizens when their “Mexican mothers crossed the border illegally.” Question after question from this woman was pure hate and so openly racist, I was nearly paralyzed in shock and anger. Six to seven questions from her were only about immigrants, specifically from Mexico. As I scanned the room of judges, I was internally screaming, “are you all not hearing this?” For 10 minutes, I stood realizing that everything I prepared for, to realize my childhood dream to become Miss America, would never be a reality all because of the color of my skin, or in this judge’s eyes, “an illegal baby.” Never mind that I am from a state where my family spans fifteen generations and home to indigenous people who would argue as to who the immigrants really are. Interviews are an opportunity for judges to meet each contestant and also learn more about their platform. My platform was suicide prevention.”

Income

The requisite costs to competing (e.g., Children's Miracle Network and other fundraising, competition wardrobe and accessories, event tickets for family, etc.) as well as other inherent costs to competing (e.g., lessons/coaching for competitions, hair/makeup, internet access for social media posting, etc.) are deterrents for many candidates and their families, leading to a decrease in the general number of candidates. More pointedly, the aforementioned is significantly cost-prohibitive for candidates from lower socio-economic strata.

Sample Survey Response:

“I think that income diversity should also be addressed. It is costly to compete in pageants, and women from higher-income families are more likely to win since they have the resources/funds to hire coaches, purchase new outfits, pay sponsorship fees [CMN], etc.”



Runway to The Future

Based on the (limited) findings of the Task Force's survey of the Miss America Organization, many segments of the U.S. population are under-represented within the leadership, volunteers, and candidates of the organization.

There are important strides that can be made to help MAO become an accurate reflection of the U.S. More importantly, these strides can help the organization make the Miss America program, and its benefits, accessible to all young women who want to be involved.

The following are the recommendations of the Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.



Recommendations

Organizational Leadership

- 1) The Task Force recommends that MAO create a national staff position, Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), and source it with a professional in the DE&I discipline to ensure ongoing efforts of diversity, equity, and inclusion are developed, funded and instituted properly and formally.

The CDO should have primary responsibility for developing an actionable, legally defensible, time-bound implementation plan, and maintain overall accountability and fiscal responsibility for its enactment.

- 2) The Miss America Organization Board of Trustees as well as local and state Boards of Directors should be a reflection of the diverse populations within the United States, including but not limited to gender, age, race, religion, ability, identities, and sexual orientation.

The Task Force is not recommending, nor advocating for “quotas,” but is recommending that careful consideration be taken in selecting prospective members for the MAO Board of Trustees, as well as state and local Directorships and Boards of Directors.



- a. The Task Force recommends that a concerted effort be made to recruit and install trustees and local / state directors that represent the diverse demographics, backgrounds, and experiences in the U.S., and that they be constituted at levels more commensurate with the U.S. population.

When possible, Boards should seek to include capable volunteers who have not had prior opportunities to serve in a leadership capacity, for example by expanding board roles, forming new committees or task forces, and other working groups that provide opportunities for involvement.

- b. Local, state, and national boards should include members that are not involved currently or have been involved historically in the MAO program (i.e. non-“pageant people”).

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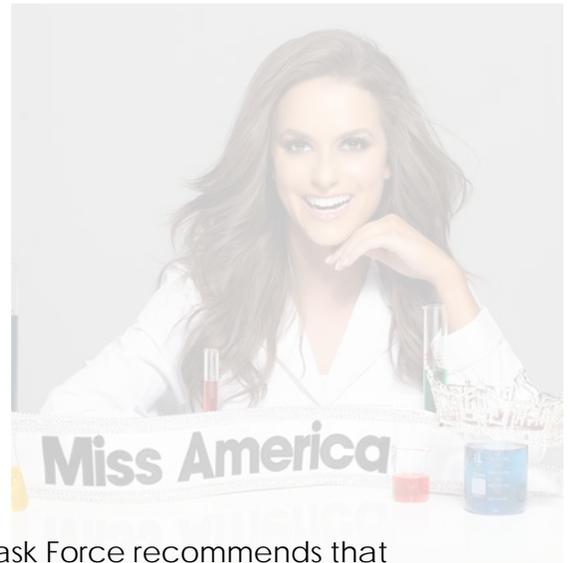
- 3) The Task Force recommends that the Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion remain in an advisory capacity, to ensure oversight. The Task Force requests that MAO Board of Trustees set a timeline and strategy for implementing these or other DE&I initiatives. The Task Force is willing to maintain an active role in assisting in the implementation of these recommendations.

Additionally, creating an ongoing committee that includes MAO Trustees and leaders would demonstrate a sincere and ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Data Collection and Transparency

- 4) Diversity efforts can only be successful when an organization has a clear and accurate picture of the makeup of the organization.

Therefore, the Task Force recommends that MAO commit to completely and thoroughly assessing the organization currently (beyond what this Task Force was able to do), then setting goals for increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion based on a complete and accurate picture of the candidates, volunteers, judges, and leaders that participate in the MAO.



- 5) The Task Force recommends that demographic information be collected comprehensively on an annual basis. State and local organizations should be required to submit demographic information on their candidates, board members, regular volunteers, and judges as a condition of receiving or renewing their franchise licenses.
- 6) The Task Force recommends that this 2020 DE&I Task Force Report be distributed to MAO national staff and MAO Board of Trustees, as well as State and Local Executive Directors and Boards of Directors to foster transparency, awareness, and adoption of DE&I recommendations.

Policies and Procedures

- 7) The Task Force recommends that a DE&I policy be developed, disseminated to all participants, and posted publicly via the organization's website. Upon request, the Task Force can recommend an excellent agency that assists organizations in developing a comprehensive DE&I policy.

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- 8) The Task Force recommends that the Miss America handbook and guidelines include information about selecting judges from various communities that represent a diverse set of worldviews and lived experiences.

Put simply, the Task Force suggests that each judging panel offer an eclectic set of judges with attention to age, race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, political ideology, and expertise, among others. Diverse backgrounds in the judging pool creates different perspectives, and therefore a more balanced panel, which will lead to more diversity among titleholders.

- 9) The Task Force recommends that MAO develop specific policy regarding the participation of transgender women in the Miss America program. Failure to create a policy could lead to litigation in the future.

- 10) The Task Force recommends that MAO invest funds and ensure all contractual language is updated to accommodate candidates with disabilities. In addition, accessibility accommodations should be implemented to assist volunteers and audience members with disabilities, including but not limited to, live captions, ASL interpreters, audio describer services, and any other access needs.



Training

- 11) The Task Force recommends that MAO provide unconscious bias (diversity) training for the MAO national staff, MAO Board of Trustees, State and Local Executive Directors, State and Local Boards of Directors, judges, candidates, and volunteers. This can be accomplished with online training, webinars, and/or videoconferencing.
- 12) The Task Force recommends that there be a requirement for MAO national staff, MAO Board of Trustees, State Executive Directors, State and Local Boards of Directors, candidates, and volunteers to complete periodic “brush-ups” on diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives; perhaps every year during national competition week.

Upon request, the Task Force can provide recommendations of individuals and companies that provide such training.

Judging

- 13) The Task Force recommends that judges' instructions be developed and reviewed by professionals in the DE&I discipline prior to dissemination, and that existing judges' instructional videos/materials be updated to ensure the use of language and behaviors that foster DE&I efforts.
- 14) The Task Force recommends that judges be instructed to avoid demographic related questions unless core to the candidate's social impact initiative, or if freely engaged by the candidate (e.g. featured in the candidate's biography, raised by the candidate as an interview topic, etc.).

Furthermore, judges should be instructed that a candidate's viewpoints may be highly different from their own, and if asked, the candidate should be able to support their viewpoint rather than having to defend it, as the candidate is not participating in the interview to validate the judges' opinions.

- 15) The Task Force recommends that judges be instructed to keep an open mind to value a vast array of talents which would empower candidates to perform talent selections that may not involve formal training.



Further, it is recommended that the scoring system be revised to eliminate as many potential vectors for bias as possible, such as discontinued use of composite scores and final ballots as opposed to strict numeric scoring.

Fundraising

- 16) The Task Force recommends that MAO remove any fundraising requirements that serve as a barrier to participation and allow entry of all candidates.
- 17) The Task Force recommends that MAO create or partner with organizations that promote rental, consignment, swapping and/or donation of wardrobe and similar items to reduce cost burdens, and to encourage state and local programs to implement these types of programs/ partnerships.
- 18) The Task Force recommends that MAO reduce the number of extraneous events (e.g. pre-competition dinners, post-competition receptions/breakfasts, etc.) and encourage its state and

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local programs to do so in order to relieve the financial burden for candidates' families. Alternative fundraising suggestions that solicit from the general public rather than contestants' families are available in Appendix G.

- 19) Given the \$60K+ variance between the U.S. median income and that of the EDs/Boards and Judges, the Task Force recommends that EDs/Boards and Judges be instructed that socio-economic barriers should be taken into account when organizing group activities; however, should not have an effect on awarding scores to candidates during competition phases.

Recruitment and Retention

- 20) The Task Force recommends that MAO pay careful attention to marketing, advertising, and recruiting materials to ensure that these all reflect the diversity that MAO seeks to achieve.
- 21) MAO has historically relied on word-of-mouth recruitment, which creates a circle of the same type of candidates with the same background year after year.

Therefore, the Task Force recommends that MAO establish a strategic working group dedicated to actively looking for strategic partnerships and options/ideas to broaden the candidate pool.



This working group would also identify marketing, social media and communications opportunities to tap into communities that are currently underrepresented in MAO and Teen. (See Appendix E for suggested organizations with which the strategic working group could partner or consult).

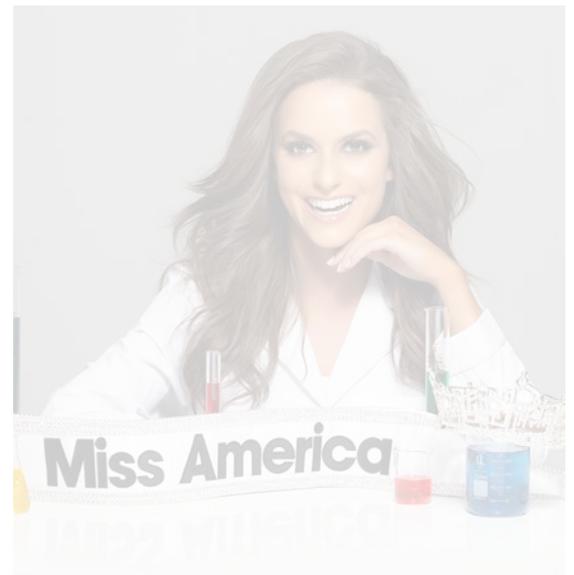
- 22) The Task Force recommends that MAO embark on a virtual or in-person listening tour to hear first-hand feedback regarding DE&I related activities and issues, and to build goodwill with the Organization's participants. Bi-directional communication should increase the retention of candidates and volunteers and inhibit attrition of candidates in minority populations.
- 23) The Task Force recommends that MAO establish an anonymous form or other reporting mechanism for participants (candidates, volunteers, leaders, etc.) to report misconduct, harmful attitudes and environments that discourage diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Summary

"Prepare great women for the world and prepare the world for great women."

Diversity, equity, and inclusion must be a part of the lifeblood of the Miss America Organization. In order to meet its mission to "Prepare great women for the world and prepare the world for great women," MAO must position itself to attract, nurture, and represent all women who are interested in the benefits of this organization.

The Miss America program shed its policy of exclusion many decades ago, but the new frontier is to adopt a true commitment to inclusion that will lead naturally to greater diversity throughout the organization.



The Task Force thanks MAO for recognizing the importance of this effort and sincerely hopes that the information and recommendations herein will be helpful in moving this beloved American institution into a bright and prosperous future.

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Appendix A

Anecdotal stories of candidate and volunteer experiences in the Miss America system that illuminate current shortcomings within the program in dealing with an ever-changing and diverse population:

Racial Identity

- While at Miss America, there were about 9/51 contestants of color in my class who were frequently mixed up despite having little to no physical similarities. Several white midwestern state candidates happened to be blonde and shared many of the same physical characteristics, yet they were never called the wrong name or mixed up.
- It's hard to combat personal biases in the current environment. For example, mothers complaining a candidate "only won because she's Black," directors telling titleholders aspects of their competition are "too ethnic," and hair sponsors from salons who do not know how to cater to all hair-types is commonplace.
- We need more women of color on the actual executive board, not just in DEI positions.
- I would appreciate a diverse set of judges. Typically, my state has seen white men/women judges with the occasional POC [person of color]. I do not believe this represents what America looks like. As a Latina woman, I would love to see diversity in race, ethnicity, profession, sexual orientation, and beliefs regarding the judges.
- If we are going to survive as an organization, we need to provide training to those who volunteer to know and work with those who are not the "stereotype" of a "pageant girl." We seem at a loss as to how to work with and mentor those who identify as anything but as a heterosexual, white, able-bodied woman. I have several personal experiences assisting others that work with African-American titleholders for the first time. The volunteers don't know how to have a conversation about hair, makeup, etc., because they have never worked with anyone of color.
- As a black woman, I was heavily impacted by Miss America's lack of activity when it came to the death of George Floyd and the rise in the BLM Movement. I didn't feel spoken for fast enough, and when I did, Miss America could not even say "We Stand With Black Lives" - it felt like there was a hesitation, and it made me reevaluate my position within the Organization.
- As a member of our state's judges liaison team, I have sat in on numerous interviews. Time and time again, women of color are given a line of questioning that focuses on their race. The white women never get these same questions. It's ridiculous. These young women of color spend a large portion of their interview basically trying to prove they could do the job even though they are a minority in this (majority white) state. Meanwhile, the white candidates have the opportunity to discuss questions focused on social impact, world issues, and opinions.

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- In my state, I was one of only two candidates of color. Our “Forever” of color are still in the single-digits. Some local directors have made an effort to get diverse judging panels, but this doesn’t always happen at the local level because we are a small state. Our ENTIRE state board is made of white, predominately middle-aged members. Last year, our only non-white local director decided to part ways with the organization, so all of our LEDs are white. If a mentor is given to a girl, it is typically only black contestants who are given a black mentor, but I’m not sure if this is intentional.
- Last year, I noticed that many judges' panels for state competitions were all White. This could be one factor concerning why Southern states have so few winners who are African-American. Florida only has one, Tennessee just got their first one. Some states like North Carolina and Alabama just got their 2nd. Judges panels should be more diverse.
- I understand that each state judges panel must have one judge of color or different ethnicity. However, I believe this should be multiplied, especially since the lowest score on a judge's panel is dropped. I think equal representation needs to be seen on the judge's panel and also required within each state's board among its members. Each state board should have an inclusion committee. This would help even the playing field for contestants who are in states that have had few women of color represent those states.

Ethnicity

- In relation to the Miss America Organization, I have been told more than once not to disclose my ethnic background nor my religious/non-religious beliefs to judges or the organization. I was told that disclosing that I am Hispanic may hurt my chances of winning. I was told I could pass as white, and that's a good thing. I've also been told not to disclose my Hispanic descent because I am not Hispanic enough (My Hispanic heritage comes from my grandfather, I am 1/4th). Additionally, I've noticed in my highly Hispanic town (e.g., 50% of the population is of Hispanic descent), the judging committee rarely reflects the ethnic makeup of the surrounding community. From my experience, these policies/beliefs do not represent the national organization, but they do represent people involved, including judges, volunteers, and potentially local or state directors/boards.
- We could be more diverse as our people in our state are. For example, a more comprehensive range of contestants such as Cuban, African, Vietnamese, Ghanan, Spanish/Latin American. We have several military bases in our state, so it causes all sorts of people to live here.
- During my interview, a judge continuously attacked... immigrants, specifically Mexicans, even referring to children from immigrant mothers as “illegal babies” and asking if I felt these babies had the right to be citizens when their, “Mexican mothers crossed the border illegally.” Question after question from this woman was pure hate and so openly racist I was nearly paralyzed in shock and anger. Six to seven questions from her were only about immigrants, specifically from Mexico. As I scanned the room of judges, I was internally screaming, “are you all not hearing this?” For 10 minutes, I stood realizing that everything I prepared for, to realize my childhood dream to become Miss America, would never be a reality all because of the color of my skin, or in this judge’s eyes, “an illegal baby.” Never mind that I am from a state where my family spans fifteen generations and home to indigenous people who would argue as to who the immigrants really are. Interviews are an opportunity for judges to meet each contestant and also learn more about their platform. My platform was suicide prevention. [Moreover,] from

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the moment I arrived at Miss America, I was assigned to a room with the only other Hispanic woman competing that year. As we got our room assignments, I couldn't help but think how strange it was that out of all 52 women; the organization selected us to room together.

- In the 90 year history of Miss America, there has NEVER been a Hispanic Miss America. Also, there is not one person of color on the Miss America board. How can this organization reflect America when the organization itself doesn't practice these values?

Body Image & Aesthetic

- The mistake that I often see, especially at the local and state level, are judges that are recycled--they continually judge local and state competitions based on an old ideal. There are state leaders who do not support the new (improved) way of Miss America. I believe those leaders should be identified and go through training themselves. The "old" way of treating state titleholders (aka bullying or telling them to lose weight/wear certain things/talk a certain way) must be removed.
- When imagining a national titleholder representing everyone, even a state titleholder, many contestants go down a list of physical restrictions that will disqualify them—for example, tattoos, weight, height, hair, or any skin conditions. I've heard this countless times from girls or women I'm trying to bring to the program. I will show them countless local titleholders, but it's hard to find that diversity on the state and national stage.
- Also, body expectations are still for those who are extremely thin. Let's emphasize health over being skinny! Candidates have to have money to participate. There are few resources to help candidates who are of a lower SES.

Religion

- I have been told by several people [within the organization] not to disclose that I am an atheist. This advice came from another candidate's personal exclusionary experiences who was told by two judging committees that Miss America couldn't be an atheist. It terrifies me that a judge would ask about my religious beliefs in the interview.
- There is no outreach to Jewish contestants, for example, through Jewish Community Centers. Pageants are often held on Jewish holidays, such as Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur. It is quite revealing that BESS MYERSON was the last and only Miss America, which was over 70 years ago.
- Our state organization has historically been overtly Christian-based (prayer at state workshop etc.), which can feel exclusionary to non-Christians
- MAO is very Christian-centric. One might think that only followers of the Christian faith need apply. I have seen Candidates ignore and/or hide their religious affiliations in an attempt to fit into what they perceive to be the winning religion.

Ability

- I am a local titleholder with inattentive type ADHD and have slow processing speed. I am very smart and can perform a titleholder's duties, but I feel discriminated against (not purposely) in the judging process in private and onstage interviews. People with ADHD and slow processing speeds often use filler words, look up at the ceiling, and fidget when we are formulating answers because we have issues with the executive functioning system in our brains. We also sometimes explain things slower and stumble on our words.

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None of these things means that we are not intelligent, confident, a team player, or any other titleholder's characteristics. It is not bad that we have these difficulties, but I feel the organization views my ADHD as a weakness because of our society.

- The most important and helpful tool for the Miss America Pageant is to support contestants with disabilities. Every local, state and national pageant should give contestants 1-2 extra minutes to explain their abilities to the judges before the private interview begins. In 1995, I took advantage of this opportunity to explain my deafness and motivate the judges to believe in my ability. It's an excellent opportunity for the judges to see me as a woman first and my disability second.
- In my experience, Disability Education is very much needed in this organization. As a past Titleholder, Sponsor, Donor, and Volunteer, I have had the experience, especially from the State Director and President of the Board in our State Program, that they didn't know how to handle such a situation and where to put Volunteers that are disabled.
- Please look into requiring judges not to ask insensitive or offensive questions related to mental health disorders. On three separate occasions, I have personally experienced judges questioning my ability to successfully serve as a titleholder given my mental illnesses (that I am very open about).
- I competed one year as an Outstanding Teen candidate. I have autism, and my experience was horrible. The extensive focus on dance for the opening number does not consider individuals like me who are limited in their movement and coordination. Because I am not missing an arm or using a wheelchair, most people just assumed I "shouldn't" be competing. No one understood how difficult it was for someone on the spectrum to even be in this type of environment - shoved into a small room with tons of chaos, extremely loud noise. I will never forget how, when the other teen candidates learned of my disability, they stopped talking to me.

Socioeconomic Background

- I think it's important that we find ways to encourage young women from all walks of life to participate. Traditionally the Miss America contestants come from white middle to upper-class families. In addition to racial diversity, we must also seek ways to include young women from lower socioeconomic statuses.
- Miss America needs to make sure it is inclusive from a financial perspective. Until you make the program affordable or the scholarships larger, you will limit the audience of girls that can compete. Women must be seen beyond the hair/makeup/dresses/shoes. Judges should understand this.
- Miss America caters to an upper-class social status. For Miss America to be one of the largest scholarship organizations for women, it caters to women who may not need the money as much as other women. Often women spend thousands of dollars on evening gowns, talents, etc. This takes away from the idea of earning scholarships if it takes hundreds of dollars to be considered "competitive."
- I think that income diversity should also be addressed. It is costly to compete in pageants, and women from higher-income families are more likely to win since they have the resources/funds to hire coaches, purchase new outfits, pay sponsorship fees [CMN], etc.
- It is expensive to compete in Miss America and MAOT. As such, it naturally screens out candidates who cannot afford to compete. Talent is the most expensive component

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] to being a candidate are enormous. In the small rural community we serve, we are struggling to recruit candidates due to the financial strain associated with competing. Potential candidates have communicated the concern that they have to spend more money to compete than they would possibly earn in scholarship dollars. As a parent of a local teen in 2018, I personally saw the financial impact. I worry about any program's future when young ladies discuss that MAO is for the "rich girls."

Age

- The Miss America Organization should raise the age requirement to compete. The age requirement is too low, considering how in modern times, many women are still in school as late as their 30s. The age requirement made sense many years ago when women were getting married at very young ages. However, this is not the case anymore. Nowadays, the average age a woman gets married is 28. By simply raising the age requirement, the Miss America Organization will surely see a lot more diversity, equity, and inclusion in its participants.
- I detest how at the young age of 25, I was denied the opportunity to compete for my dream title because I was turning 26 before the year ended. As a mental health supporter, I really would appreciate the opportunity to use the Miss America Organization as a platform to advocate for the mental health community. Additionally, I am a young professional attending graduate school that really needs scholarship money to pay for school. As the largest provider of scholarship money for women, I would hope the Miss America Organization has a heightened interest in making sure women that choose to further their education are given the opportunity to compete for scholarship money.

Political Ideology

- MAO on a local and state level does not celebrate the diversity of thought. Too often, we see volunteers (who are usually aged 50+) perpetrating antiquated ideas about femininity, being a titleholder, and what is deemed appropriate. This stalls progress and keeps the competition held back socially.
- Right now, it seems that the Miss America Organization only supports one party, the democrats. When you look at the MAO social media, it follows individuals such as Joe Biden, Michelle Obama, and Demi Lovato - who just released a song slandering the current administration - but does not follow our sitting president or anyone in his administration or even anyone that has publicly supported him. I'm extremely displeased with the blatant disregard for President Trump and his cabinet. I'm by no means saying the organization needs to 100% support President Trump, but it should, at the very least, respect anyone in office. Still, it has been clear that it is acceptable for some titleholders to express their liberal views and not acceptable for others with different views to express

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them. MAO should follow both parties and allow their volunteers and titleholders to feel safe and free to share all of their ideas.

- Another concern I have is the issue of politics. I have seen this go both ways. I've seen judges' panels reveal themselves to stand politically one way or the other and become argumentative with candidates who have opposing political views. This is really not acceptable. The political views of the judge's panel should not be made apparent. And the candidates should have the right to hold whatever political or religious beliefs they have, whether or not judges agree with them.
- My daughter was a state titleholder, and when she responded to a question in her private interview at Miss America, she observed a judge sneer and shook her head "no" in response to her answer. Her question was on abortion, and her response was neither controversial nor uninformed, but honest and compassionate. Would you perceive that to be equitable or inclusive? That judge's visible response violated the very core values of this organization and left me, and my daughter, with the perception that the MAO chose not to be tolerant of conservative contestants, and the outcome that year was preordained for a more liberal titleholder. Left us with the perception of not only exclusion but also rejection.

Gender Identity

- I think it could help to put a pronouns line in the contract. I use she/they pronouns, and some non-binary candidates use their pronouns exclusively, which would be important to include for press releases and the mc script.
- It's more than just checking boxes of DEI...if we're going to be inclusive and provide opportunities for all women to be involved in this program, some difficult but necessary decisions of opening the system up to trans women.
- I think it would be a great idea to allow trans women to compete as well - the whole idea that you have to have "always been a female" is outdated and transphobic. Trans-women are women, period. It's no different than allowing non-binary "female" individuals since it is also seen as a type of trans identity in the LGBTQ+ community.

Sexual Orientation

- During my time as I titleholder, I did not feel incredibly comfortable disclosing that I am bisexual. I would love to see more visual celebration of LGBTQ+ candidates!
- As a former lesbian state titleholder, I felt that I would be ostracized by many of the board members at the time if I chose to compete as openly gay. I would like the national board to address the issue of LGBTQ+ candidates with rules and guidelines for state programs to follow that support and protect this vulnerable group of candidates. I would also like to see Miss America celebrate things like pride month, etc.
- I know women in the organization who have hidden their sexual orientation while competing to avoid being discriminated against or inappropriately questioned during interviews. I myself was even encouraged not to be open about my sexuality if I hoped to succeed in the organization. This has shifted over the last two years; however, more work needs to be done.
- As a queer titleholder, I have had multiple instances of blatantly homophobic and inappropriate questions and behaviors from judges. There needs to be some level of implicit bias training, or something related, with better examples of how to talk about diversity for judges.

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Appendix B

Below are the biographies of the members of the Miss America Organization's 2020 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force:

Michelle Anderson, Co-Chair

As Miss Delaware 1995, Michelle Harris Anderson earned a Bert Parks Talent Award for her vocals at Miss America. Michelle has performed at Showboat and Bally's Casinos, Philadelphia 76ers, Cape May Jazz Festival, the Apollo, and leading roles in "Kiss Me Kate," "Ten Little Indians," and "The Buddy Holly Story."

Anderson was a featured expert for Comcast TV's "It's Your Morning," News 12's "Spotlight NJ," and In Style magazine. She owned an image consultancy for 20 years, served as Executive Director of Mrs. NJ, and is a Miss Delaware Forevers Advisory Board founding member. As former elected Municipal Committeewoman, her achievements were exhibited in her hometown's Ocean City Historical Museum.

Michelle is an IT Senior Manager leading M&A at Johnson & Johnson, presents keynotes at industry conferences and TEDx talks, is an accredited Information Governance Professional, and is one of less than 1500 Certified Records Managers worldwide. A Duke University graduate, she is currently pursuing an MBA at Drexel University in Pennsylvania where her family resides.

Brittany Lewis, Co-Chair

Brittany Lee Lewis made history as the 49th Miss Black America, walking in the legacy of former contestants like Oprah Winfrey and Toni Braxton, and continuing the legacy of Black protest via the country's first nationally televised pageant for Black women. Not a newcomer to pageants, she also held the title of Miss Delaware and competed in the 2015 Miss America pageant. Brittany's national and state titles dovetailed perfectly as a professor of African American, urban, and U.S. 20th century history at George Washington University.

In addition to her academic and pageant endeavors, Brittany is a political commentator and host, regularly appearing on numerous domestic and international television networks. She is also a domestic violence awareness advocate, rising disc jockey, member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc! Her activism, research, and pageant ventures have been featured in Essence, USA Today, Colorlines, Southern Living, and NPR, among others.

Jennifer McKenna, Co-Secretary

As the granddaughter of Italian immigrants, Jennifer is devoted to eradicating racism in America. She received her Juris Doctor from the George Mason University School of Law where she was The Association of Public Interest Law's President, received the Sorenson Institute's Fellowship and was appointed by Governor Mark Warner to serve on his Commission on National and Community Service. Jennifer's legal research was published as part of the domestic relations bench book from the American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law's report to the Department of Justice.

She collaborated with Microsoft on an amicus brief filed in the United States Supreme Court and published a Legal Backgrounder regarding Illegal Alien Detention. Under the George W. Bush administration, Jennifer served as a Legal Policy Analyst in The Office of National Drug Control Policy. She was Miss Virginia 2002 and is currently Co-Executive Director and Board Secretary for Miss Florida. She, her husband Ken and their four children, reside in Orlando.

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Sonia Amir Bowie

Born to a Pakistani father and Colombian mother, Sonia came to America at a young age to seek a better life. She overcame adversity by remaining true to herself, staying focused on her education and never forgetting where she came from. Sonia took a chance to further her American Dream when she participated, and won, the Miss Maryland 2000 title which allowed her to serve her state and helped pay for her education. Sonia is a proud Alumna of the University of Maryland College Park, University of Maryland University College, and Georgetown University.

Sonia remains an active MAO volunteer. She co-founded the Miss Maryland Sorority that awards a Sisterhood Scholarship, she is the Local Director for the Miss Urbana (MD) Program and coordinates free virtual life skills workshops for all young women nationwide. Currently Sonia works for the Doctoral Department at Hood College. She and her family reside in Urbana, Maryland.

Brenda Edwards

Upon retiring from a 32-year career in the Telecommunications industry, Brenda Edwards became a full-time volunteer in the non-profit sector. Her career included a Senior Leadership role with responsibility for over 400 employees, a three-year assignment based in Puerto Rico, and other leadership roles that served much of the USA, the Bahamas, and parts of South America.

Brenda joined the Miss America Organization as a local Executive Director in 2004 and currently serves as Executive Director for two local competitions. During the 2019-2020 season, Brenda recruited four new local competitions to the Miss Florida program.

In 2005, Brenda founded Scholarship for South Florida, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization. Since then the organization has made available over \$100,000 in scholarship assistance including in-kind and cash scholarship donations. In January of 2020, Brenda very gladly came out of retirement to accept a Membership Manager position with the Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida.

Dennis Horn

A native of Mississippi and a graduate of Mississippi State University with a BS in Marketing, Dennis currently resides in Little Rock, Arkansas. He is employed as a Specialty Pharmaceutical Sales Manager.

A student of music and theater, Dennis served as Entertainment Chairman for the Mississippi State University Pageant in Starkville. He was the Executive Director of the Miss Jonesboro, Arkansas and Miss Teen Jonesboro Arkansas Scholarship Pageants from 1996-1998. After moving to Little Rock, Arkansas, he served as the Executive Director of the Miss Little Rock/Miss Teen Little Rock and the Miss Pulaski County/Miss Teen Pulaski County Scholarship Pageants.

Dennis serves as President of the Miss Arkansas Board of Directors, In-kind sponsor co-chairman and chairman of the Miss Arkansas Prep Committee who helped prepare Miss America, Savvy Shields.

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Nicole Kelly

Nicole Kelly, Miss Iowa 2013, is one of very few to compete at Miss America with a visible disability. After working for a year as Miss Iowa and traveling across the country to advocate for those living with a disability, Nicole transitioned into speaking professionally. Nicole is represented by Keppler Speaking Agency and has proudly spoken at hundreds of K-12 schools and given educational lectures at universities across the country. Nicole has spoken at corporations including Google, Microsoft, Allstate, and Riot Games. In 2019 Nicole shared her story on the mainstage of NPR's The Moth.

Nicole is proud to be an advisory company member of National Disability Theatre and served as the emcee at the Kennedy Center's celebration for the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In 2017 Nicole completed her master's degree in broadcast journalism at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. Since her time competing at Miss America, Nicole has directed several state pageant productions in various states.

Brianna Mason

Brianna Mason was crowned Miss Tennessee 2019, a historic win as she is the first African-America to win the title. She is a 2013 graduate of Ravenwood High School in Brentwood, TN. She is a University of Tennessee-Knoxville alumna having received a B.A. Degree Psychology in 2017 and a Master of Science in Elementary Education in 2018. She was a Charles Lattimore Graduate Scholar with the College of Health, Education, and Human Sciences at UTK and a part of the selective Urban Multicultural Education Cohort. Brianna continued her family's legacy as a first grade teacher in Nashville, TN.

Brianna is the founder of Advocates for Autism a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is dedicated to raising awareness to include, inform, collaborate and celebrate individuals and families that are affected daily by Autism. She is the official State Ambassador for Autism Tennessee and a partner with the Tennessee Council on Autism Spectrum Disorder. In addition, she partners with agencies across the state to provide resources and create inclusive sensory-free spaces for people living with Autism.

Rodney Neely

Rodney L. Neely is a graduate of the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy, Columbia, S.C. He has worked in law enforcement for a total of 10 years, with the Greenville and Fountain Inn Police Departments. He served in the uniformed patrol division and later promoted to the detective division. He later became self-employed and was afforded the opportunity of being contracted to coordinate security and staffing for Clemson Memorial Stadium (Death Valley), and home of the Carolina Panthers at Ericson Stadium.

Currently, he is the Owner and President of The Crowd Management Group and oversees the Crowd Management and Personal Protection Division. He is also the Security Chairman for BMW Charity Pro AM Presented by SYNEX, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Miss America's Outstanding Teen and Miss America Organization.

Through his tenure in the industry Rodney has provided Executive Protection for many celebrities, to include Kevin Costner, Aaron Rogers, Hill Harper, Kurt Russell, Don Cheadle, Anthony Anderson, George Clooney, Hayden Panettiere and Miss America to name a few. He has provided security for the movie sets of Leatherheads starring George Clooney, Miss America Reality Check and New Daughter starring Kevin Costner. Rodney is also the founder of the Concern Citizens of Mauldin. Through his organization, the city of Mauldin has budgeted \$50,000 for diversity and inclusion training for its employees and city council.

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Shenan Reed

Advertising Executive, digital media entrepreneur and public speaker, Shenan is a highly sought-after thought leader, regularly presenting at major advertising and digital media industry conferences. Her deep understanding of advertising, media and analytics has mandated her inclusion on several advisory boards including Pinterest, AdLedger, Namely, Teads and Style Coalition. She has been a judge for the Stevie Awards for Women in Business as well as an award recipient and proudly serves on the Board of Trustees for the Miss America Organization.

As President, Chief Client Officer for platformGSK US, Shenan oversees the GSKs Power of One solution in the US market. Prior to having the privilege to work in GSK, Shenan was in the same role for Verizon overseeing their strategic activity across the Publicis Groupe agencies serving its business.

Allison Rogers

As Miss Rhode Island 2006, Allison Rogers received the Quality of Life Award for her service work and "Go Green! Global Warming Awareness" platform at Miss America 2007. She served on the Miss RI Scholarship Program Board for six years and most recently served as Executive Director from 2016 to 2018. Allison brings close to two decades of experience spanning from Capitol Hill, state government, the nonprofit sector, and academia. As a biracial individual (half Cape Verdean-American and half Irish-American), Allison has spent many years working on diversity, equity, and inclusion policies within government.

Allison received her B.A. with Honors from Harvard, her Ed.M. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and her M.A. in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College. She is currently pursuing a Joint Accelerated J.D./L.L.M. degree program at Vermont Law School.

Dave Sidhu

Dave Sidhu is an attorney, public servant, and academic. He practices criminal law, serves as pro bono counsel with the Office of the Maryland Attorney General, and mediates cases for his county's human rights office. He previously has worked at the Supreme Court of the United States, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and the U.S. Sentencing Commission, where he helped ensure that every employee in the agency received implicit bias training.

He has taught at Georgetown, Baltimore, Maryland, and New Mexico, where he became the first Sikh to receive tenure at a U.S. law school. He also held research posts at Harvard, Oxford, Stanford, and Georgetown. He serves on the Gucci Changemakers Council, volunteers with his local fire department, and founded an outpatient addiction facility. Dave graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, Johns Hopkins University, and George Washington University.

Merissa (Mimi) Stricker

As an Interlochen Arts Academy and Hartt School Alumni, Mimi's formal training lies in both vocal performance and dance. She has worked in print, in television, and on stages nationwide. In 1997, she served as Miss Connecticut, and she won a coveted Bert Parks Talent Award at the 1998 Miss America Scholarship Pageant. Mimi worked at the North East School of the Arts as Director of Dance in San Antonio, Texas. Her students can be seen on screens and stages internationally.

Taking a sabbatical to raise children, she tended a farm with amphibians, reptiles, barnyard animals, and beehives. In 2017, a move to Seattle brought the opportunity to return to dance as Dance Team Director at Sammamish High School. Mimi continues to invest in her community by serving as a mentor, leading worship in her church, staying involved in the Miss America Organization, and in various community projects.

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Emily Tinsman

Emily Tinsman earned her degree in Music Education from Drake University in 2019. Shortly after graduation, Emily was crowned Miss Iowa 2019-2020 and competed for the title of Miss America 2020. She is an advocate for arts education through her initiative "Americans for the Arts- Advocate, Educate, Invest". Every year, arts programs are the first to get cut during economic declines and her initiative focuses on the preservation of arts programs in schools through advocacy, education, and investment.

This fall, she began her teaching career at William G. Harding Middle School in Des Moines, Iowa where she serves as the 6th-8th grade vocal music teacher. Nothing brings her greater joy than sharing music and providing equitable and inclusive opportunities for all students.

Debbye Turner Bell

Dr. Debbye Turner Bell is a veterinarian, journalist, corporate trainer, minister, motivational speaker, wife, and mother. Dr. Turner Bell is the Founder and CEO of Debbye Turner Bell Consulting, through which she provides leadership development training in communications, influence, and diversity to corporate and business leaders, managers, and executives. Turner Bell is also a faculty member of the Institute for Management Studies. Since being crowned Miss America 1990, Turner Bell has addressed audiences in the corporate, academic, and community service arenas in every state of the U.S. and several countries around the world.

For more than 25 years, Turner Bell worked in broadcast journalism. Her roles include being a staff correspondent for CBS News network in New York City, and an anchor for a global cable news network. Currently, she can be seen as an expert contributor to the show DOGS 101 on Animal Planet.

Over the course of her career, Turner Bell has found time to serve on many local, state and national boards, including the National Council on Youth Leadership, Children's Miracle Network, and the Miss America Organization Board of Trustees.

Rachael Vopatek

Rachael Vopatek serves as Director of Public Relations/Marketing and Board Chair for the Miss Iowa Scholarship Program. Rachael's leadership roles also include Board Chair for her local American Red Cross, Co-Chair for St. Baldrick's Organization, Chair of Board of Education and Director of the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce. Rachael is a graduate of the University of Iowa. She and her husband are parents of two young boys and reside in DeWitt Iowa.

As a white parent of a biracial child, Rachael is particularly passionate and active in her support and personal education on topics of diversity, equity and inclusion. Rachael appreciates progress in diversity and inclusion that the Miss America Organization has made over the course of its 100 year history and is committed to supporting further diversity initiatives by raising awareness, participating in purposeful dialogues and taking action via at the local, state and National level via the DE&I Taskforce.

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Cori Wallace

Cori Wallace has served on multiple task forces for other national organizations attempting to address issues related to belonging and inclusion.

She is in business development for non-profit business at Rhyme & Reason Design, a marketing firm in Atlanta, GA and serves as a Miss America Tour Manager. Cori has an extensive career in executing effective and innovative marketing strategy for national non-profit organizations. She served as a member of Gamma Phi Beta International Sorority's 9-member Belonging and Inclusion Task Force, which identified action items and explored opportunities for increased engagement of BIPOC.

Cori was the only woman of color to serve on Delta Gamma Fraternity's International Council and served a membership of 125,000 living members. She was elected to two two-year terms in office. She is the only Black woman to serve at that level for any sorority of its kind.

**A biography for Maria Smith was not available at time of report publication.

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Appendix C

Example of one company's success in implementing DE&I initiatives:

Allegis Group: April 18, 2018

<https://www.allegisgroup.com/en/insights/blog/2018/april/diversity-inclusion-best-practices>

"Three Workplace Diversity Best Practices"

Adversity makes change happen. Between 1991 and 1993, IBM reported \$16 billion in losses. Its internal structure was complex, deeply siloed, and resistant to change. The IT market was evolving rapidly, and CEO Lou Gerstner saw a culture that was out of touch with customers. What happened next is well known. Business units were cut. Tens of thousands of employees were laid off. Old conservative cultural rules, from dress code to employee bonus calculations, were thrown out, and the company turned around under a solutions and customer-driven market focus. Less well known is the fact that Gerstner made diversity a priority as part of that cultural turnaround.

In 1994, Gerstner kicked off an initiative that would reinvent diversity for a company that historically fought discrimination by simply ignoring differences within its workforce. He established diversity task forces to understand different parts of the workforce. He pushed the issue as a leader, making it part of conversations with other executives, touching on everything from flexibility for working mothers to succession planning, and he approached diversity as a business imperative, linking it to performance in market sectors. The strategy worked. By 2003, the company had significantly expanded its client base among women-owned businesses, as well as markets for Hispanic, Native American, Asian, and black people. Harvard Business Review reported that revenue for small and medium-sized businesses grew from "\$10 million in 1998 to hundreds of millions of dollars in 2003."

As IBM found, the motivation for improving diversity does not have to be regulatory compliance. And while everyone agrees that D&I is a vision for good, a moral imperative is not always enough to make it a priority. At its root, moving the needle on D&I requires a change in the status quo, and it requires a force to make it a business imperative. Gerstner saw a future that embraced diversity in employees and diversity in markets. It was part of a larger turnaround for IBM, and the result was a bottom-line impact that was part of a business transformation.

While companies do not need to be facing major adversity to re-think D&I, building a diverse workforce and inclusive culture requires real change and implementation of proven best practices. So, what does it take for a D&I effort that achieves impact? The answer is common to all successful initiatives: executive commitment, a clear position on D&I, and metrics for success.

Best Practice #1: Establish Executive Commitment and Ownership

Talent and HR leaders can create D&I programs, but without executive support, lasting change will not happen. Through the commitment of C-suite leadership, organizations can give HR and talent organizations the backing to ensure D&I initiatives rise to the level of priority needed to affect change. Leadership must move the effort forward in three crucial areas: framing the story, raising the volume, and transforming expectations:

Framing the Story — D&I as a Business Issue: Today, building a diverse workforce and inclusive culture is a priority that can be linked to business objectives. Does the company's workforce reflect the diversity and interests of its markets? If not, how does the workforce need to change, and what impact should that change have on the organization's competitive capability? The answers to these questions are expected to come from C-suite leaders as those questions connect to core business performance.

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Raising the Volume — Making D&I “Unignorable”: There is no question that HR and talent management can build awareness for D&I and enforce policies that improve everything from diverse candidate recruitment to employee experience in an inclusive culture. However, executive leaders have a unique ability to make it personal. An executive leader can question managers on their flexibility for working requirements, succession planning, or compensation of diverse employees. That executive can create and approve the message that will live in communications to employees, investors, or prospective customers. Most of all, corporate leadership can set the goals, ask the questions, and create the mandate (and discomfort) needed to spur change.

Transforming Expectations — From Nice-to-Have Activity to Measurable Result: Results-driven initiatives are based on clear metrics and objectives. Executive leadership can be held accountable for achieving change, whether that means a positive result in an audit of compensation across the employee population or in the percentage of diverse groups advancing to higher roles over a given timeframe. Working with HR and lines of business, executive leaders can determine objectives, communicate the vision, and push the activity that will achieve change.

Best Practice #2: Articulate a Position on D&I

Because a D&I commitment requires communication and change management, a clearly defined position is essential. Standalone diversity committees and task forces are widely used to move the D&I vision forward. These groups represent all facets of the organization, not just senior leadership, and they are frequently granted authority to develop the diversity statement.

A D&I mission statement is the centerpiece for promoting diversity both internally among employees and externally in the marketplace. The vision sets the tone for how the company wants to improve. At the same time, the vision must be honest as it reflects both the company's accomplishments and the work yet to be done. Most importantly, the vision must be championed by executive leadership.

Best Practice #3: Identify Goals and Metrics

The cliché is true, “What gets measured, gets done.” When it comes to D&I programs, relevant metrics are the key to ensuring accountability, sustaining and improving activity, and driving impact. But what exactly can an organization measure? The answer goes well beyond the traditional hiring quotas of the past.

While diversity can be measured through headcount, inclusion requires more focused attention. The good news is there is a wealth of data to be tracked, and much of that data can help companies pinpoint and address issues related to employee experience. A holistic look at metrics, and the data that can be collected across the employee lifecycle, can provide an accurate picture of where the issues lie.

The types of data being collected will ultimately determine the direction of the D&I strategy. For example, tracking the proportion of different nationalities in a given market and location and comparing it to the company's employee mix can reveal gaps. This approach can be carried to all levels and types of diversity, including ethnicity, age, nationality, gender, veteran status, or disability. Input from legal counsel is important when collecting data, as laws vary greatly around the world. Armed with a strategy that captures D&I data and compares it to relevant thresholds in key areas of recruiting and employee experience, organizations can set goals that can be measured.

Together, the influence of executive support, a clear D&I position, and metrics for success can make the difference between a nice-to-have activity and a D&I effort that raises the bar on talent acquisition effectiveness and employee experience. With these pieces in place, companies can focus their efforts on applying best practices for building a diverse workforce and inclusive employee culture that is attractive to talent from all backgrounds.

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Appendix D

Questions that should be included for annual collection during the submission of State Operating Reports and Local Operating Reports:

1. A list of all current MAO & Teen board members with their demographics.
2. A list and descriptions of all MAO & Teen state Executive Directors and state board members.
3. A list and descriptions of previous year's MAO & Teen state competition judges.
4. A list and descriptions of MAO & Teen local directors and board members.
5. A list and descriptions of previous year's MAO & Teen local competition judges.
6. Demographics of the candidates who have participated in the local, state, and national competitions last year.

Data submissions to include name of state, any DE&I statements in place, and the anonymous collection of demographics information including race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, income, disability, and religious belief.

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Appendix E

Suggested organizations with which the strategic working group could partner or consult:

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| <p>National Pan-Hellenic Council The National Pan-Hellenic Council, Incorporated (NPHC) is currently composed of nine (9) International Greek letter Sororities and Fraternities: Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc., Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. NPHC promotes interaction through forums, meetings and other mediums for the exchange of information and engages in cooperative programming and initiatives through various activities and functions.</p> | <p>Vanetta Cheeks Reeder, President 3951 Snapfinger Pkwy, Suite 218 Decatur, GA 30035 Office: 404-942-3257 Fax: 404-806-9943 vccheeksreeder@nphcq.org</p> <p>Mailing Address: PO Box 360850 Decatur, GA 30036 Email: info@nphcq.org http://www.nphcq.org/quantum</p> |
| <p>Black Girls Rock BLACK GIRLS ROCK! a youth empowerment mentoring organization. Bond simultaneously created the annual BLACK GIRLS ROCK! Awards to celebrate the accomplishments of exceptional women of color who have made outstanding contributions in their careers and stand as inspirational and positive role models in the community.</p> | <p>Beverly Bond, Founder and Executive Director P.O. Box 380186 Brooklyn, NY 11238 Phone: 718-789-7625 https://blackgirlsrock.com</p> <p>General Information: info@blackgirlsrockinc.com</p> <p>Public Relations: pr@blackgirlsrockinc.com</p> <p>Youth Programs: programs@blackgirlsrock.org</p> |
| <p>National Hispanic Institute The National Hispanic Institute targets top Hispanics in high school and college and conducts creative leadership training to develop students' self-marketing, networking, college planning and organizational development skills.</p> | <p>Ernesto Nieto, Founder and President P.O. Box 220 Maxwell, TX 78656 Phone: 512-357-6137 https://www.nationalhispanicinstitute.org</p> |
| <p>Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities The Hispanic Association of Colleges and University is a national organization representing the accredited colleges and universities in the United States where Hispanic students constitute at least 25 percent of the total student enrollment.</p> | <p>Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, Chair 8415 Datapoint Drive, Suite 400 San Antonio, TX 78229 (210) 692-3805 (voice) (210) 692-0823 (fax) E-mail: hacu@hacu.net https://www.hacu.net/hacu/default.asp</p> |

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| <p>Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLADD) GLAAD rewrites the script for LGBTQ acceptance. As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.</p> | <p>Sarah Kate Ellis, President and CEO 104 West 29th street New York, New York Phone: (212) 629-3322</p> |
| <p>The Trevor Project Founded in 1998 by the creators of the Academy Award®-winning short film TREVOR, The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer & questioning (LGBTQ) young people under 25.</p> | <p>Peggy Rajski, Founder Phone: 1-866-488-7386</p> |
| <p>American Indian College Fund The American Indian College Fund invests in Native students and tribal college education to transform lives and communities.</p> | <p>Cheryl Crazy Bull (Sicangu Lakota) President and Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Carrie Basgall, Executive Assistant to President and CEO 8333 Greenwood Blvd Denver, Colorado Phone:(303) 426-8900 https://www.facebook.com/collegefund</p> |
| <p>The American Indian Higher Education Consortium AIHEC is the collective spirit and unifying voice of our nation's 38 Tribal Colleges and Universities.</p> | <p>Maggie Grandon President & CEO 121 Oronoco Street Alexandria, VA 22314 703.838.0400 mgrandon@aihec.org http://www.aihec.org</p> |
| <p>The Center for Asian Pacific American Women The Center for Asian Pacific Women (The Center) is a national, nonprofit organization dedicated to the enhancement and enrichment of leadership skills for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women through education, networking, and mentorship.</p> | <p>Executive Director - Courtney Chappell 75 Broadway Ste 202 San Francisco, California Courtney@apawomen.org https://apawomen.org https://www.facebook.com/CtrAPAWomen</p> |
| <p>Ascend Ascend is the largest, non-profit Pan-Asian organization for business professionals in North America. Established in 2005, Ascend has grown to serve professionals and corporations across various professions and across multiple industries.</p> | <p>Peyen Fong, National Programs & Marketing Advisor 247 West 30th Street, 12th Floor New York, NY 10001 (212) 248-4888 info@ascendleadership.org https://www.ascendleadership.org</p> |

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| <p>Association on Higher Education and Disability Since 1977, AHEAD has offered an unparalleled member experience to disability resource professionals, student affairs personnel, ADA coordinators, diversity officers, AT/IT staff, faculty and other instructional personnel, and colleagues who are invested in creating welcoming higher education experiences for disabled individuals. Informed by its diverse membership, AHEAD delivers exceptional professional development opportunities through conferences, workshops, webinars, publications, and consultation; fosters community and member networking; informs members of emerging issues relevant to disability and higher education in the legislative and regulatory spheres; and disseminates data, promotes research, and furthers evidence-based practice.</p> | <p>Richard Allegra 8015 West Kenton Circle, Suite 230 Huntersville, NC 28078 Phone: 704-947-7779</p> |
| <p>The American Association of People with Disabilities The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) is a convener, connector, and catalyst for change, increasing the political and economic power of people with disabilities.</p> | <p>Helena Berger, President and CEO 2013 H Street, NW, 5th Floor Washington DC, 20006 202-521-4316</p> |
| <p>Special Olympics In every corner of the earth, the Special Olympics is changing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities.</p> | <p>Mary Davis, Chief Executive Officer Phone: (202) 628-3630 info@specialolympics.org https://www.specialolympics.org https://www.facebook.com/SpecialOlympics</p> |
| <p>American Humanist Association We strive to bring about a progressive society where being good without a god is an accepted and respected way to live life. We are accomplishing this through our defense of civil liberties and secular governance, by our outreach to the growing number of people without traditional religious faith, and through a continued refinement and advancement of the humanist worldview. Humanism is a nontheistic worldview with ethical values informed by scientific knowledge and driven by a desire to meet the needs of people in the here and now. At the foundation of those values is an affirmation of the dignity of every human being.</p> | <p>Roy Speckhardt, Executive Director 1821 Jefferson Place, NW Washington, DC 20036 Phone: 202-238-9088 https://americanhumanist.org</p> |

2020 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report

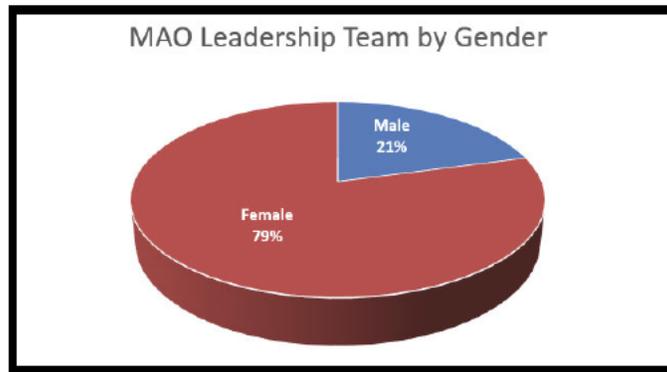
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| <p>American Atheists American Atheists envisions a world in which public policy is made using the best evidence we have rather than religious dogma and where religious beliefs are no longer seen as an excuse for bigotry or cause to receive special treatment from the government. We fight for religious equality for all Americans by protecting what Thomas Jefferson called the "wall of separation" between state and church created by the First Amendments. We strive to create an environment where atheism and atheists are accepted as members of our nation's communities and where casual bigotry against our community is seen as abhorrent and unacceptable. We promote understanding of atheists through education, outreach, and community building and work to end the stigma associated with being an atheist in America.</p> | <p>Nick Fish, President Phone: (908) 276-7300 x308 Email: nfish@atheists.org https://www.atheists.org</p> |
| <p>Society for Adolescent Health & Medicine's Diversity Committee An organization for potential partnership with MAO for current titleholders to become Anti-Racism advocates.</p> <p>SAHM's Diversity Committee has created this toolkit to provide access to resources to help adolescent health professionals combat racism, promote racial justice, reduce health disparities, and advance health equity for youth. The toolkit supports SAHM members in implementing the recommendations of the 2018 position paper, Racism and Its Harmful Effects on Nondominant Racial-Ethnic Youth and Youth-Serving Providers: A Call to Action for Organizational Change.</p> | <p>Ryan Norton, CAE, Executive Director 111 W. Jackson Blvd. Suite 1412 Chicago, IL 60604 USA Phone: 847-686-2246 Fax: 847-686-2251 Email: info@adolescenthealth.org</p> <p>Sample Curriculum: https://www.adolescenthealth.org/Resources/Anti-Racism-Toolkit.aspx</p> |

2020 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report

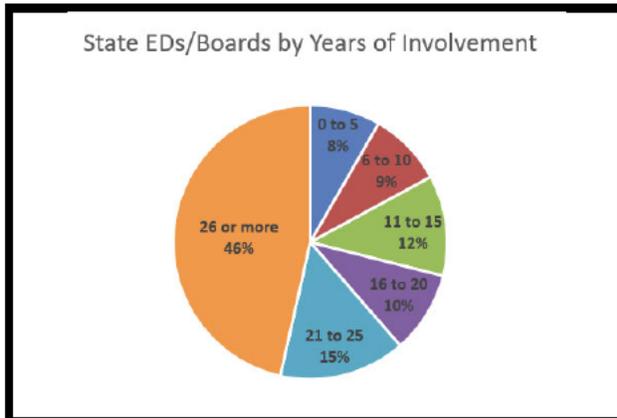
Appendix F

Below are is additional demographic information related to MAO, as well as additional responses to Question 14 of the 2020 MAO DE&I survey related to respondents' involvement with MAO.

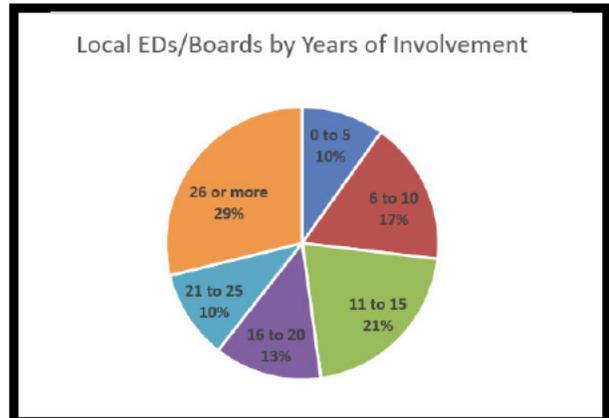
MAO Leadership and Staff by Gender



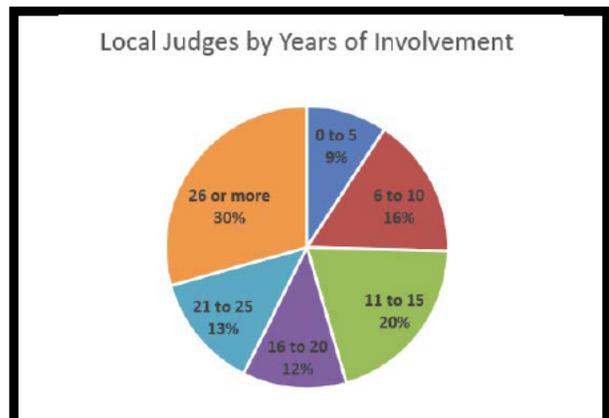
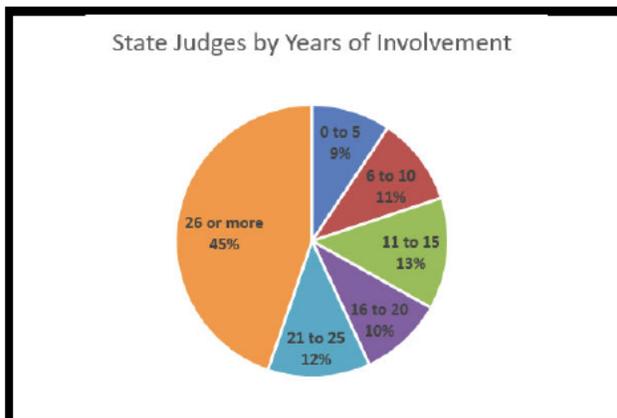
Years of Involvement in MAO



The majority of State EDs/Boards are comprised of members who have served 26 years or more.



Local EDs/board members serving 11 to 15 years nearly match those serving 26 years or more.



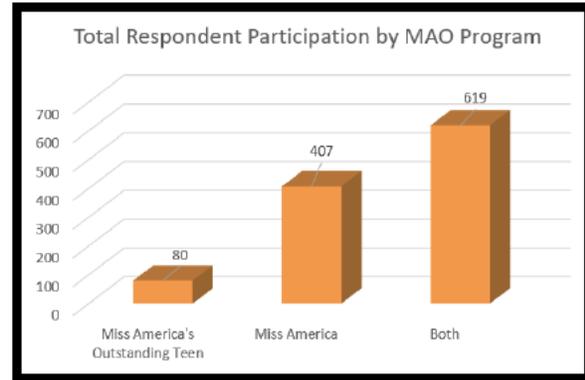
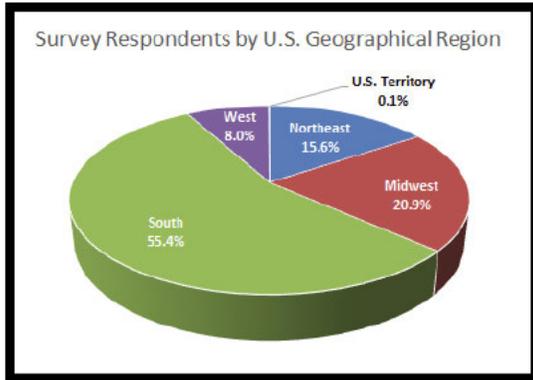
2020 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report

State judges closely mirror their state ED/Board counterparts.

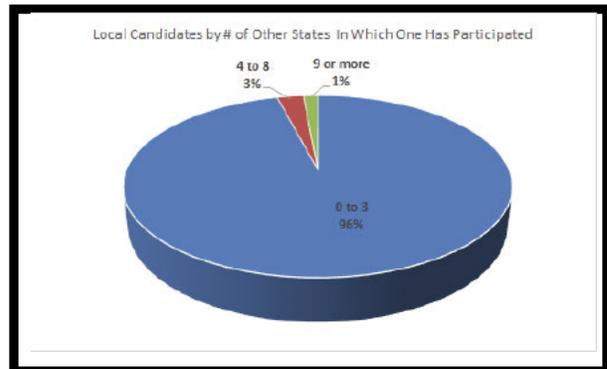
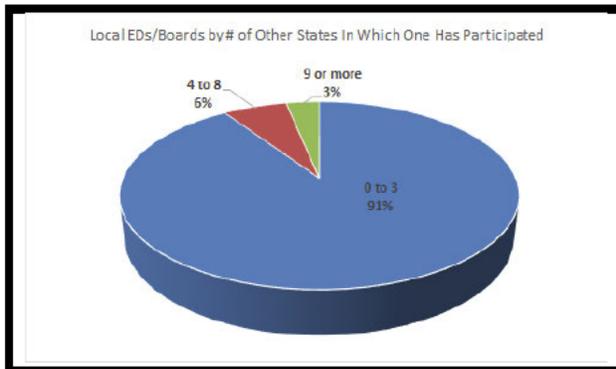
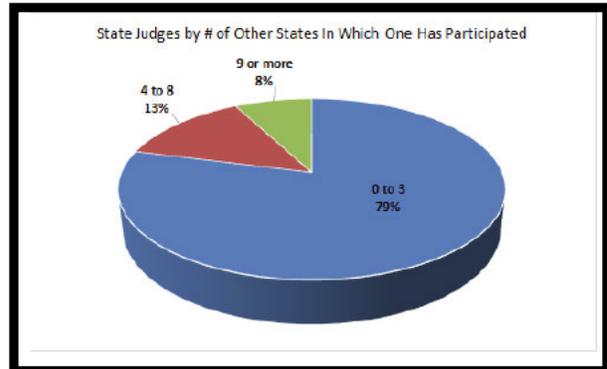
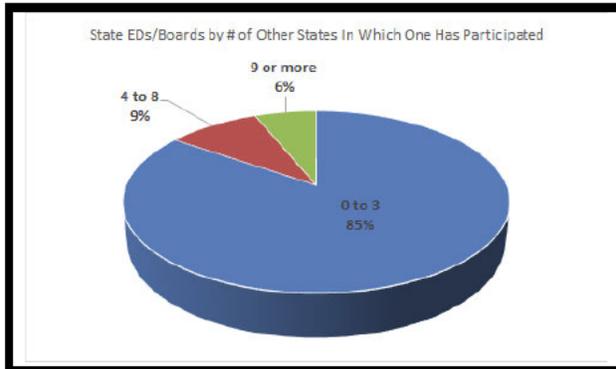
Local judges closely mirror local ED/Board counterparts and are more diverse in years involved.

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Respondents by Geography and Program Involvement



Participation Across Multiple States



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Appendix G

To reduce the economic burden on contestants' families to support competition related activities, below are suggestions for alternative fundraising vehicles that are focused on soliciting monetary support from public engagement.

- 1) Online Opportunities
 - a. Cost-per-vote/entry contests
 - i. children's online art/essay contests
 - ii. raffles to have a titleholder virtually make an appearance
 - iii. opportunity to name a scholarship/award after oneself
 - b. Direct appeals
 - i. donation buttons on websites and social media sites
 - ii. donation pages hosted by external services (e.g GoFundMe)
- 2) In-person donation fundraisers
 - a. Events conducted in outdoor public venues where the public who may be less familiar with MAO can participate and gain awareness of the organization:
 - i. "talent in the park" featuring current candidates
 - ii. cost-per-song karaoke
 - iii. mini-golf challenges
 - iv. 5k walk/runs.
- 3) Private donor sources
 - a. Partnerships/employee relationship with Boards of Education for donations in exchange for titleholder appearances at schools promoting educational agendas and initiatives.
 - b. Partnerships with State Legislatures and/or local councils for annual appropriation in exchange for commitments of titleholder to make appearances or for board to provide on-stage presentation opportunity for legislature/council members
 - c. Direct appeals to request tax-deductible donations from local and major companies in exchange for advertising and promotion rights

Additional fundraising ideas are currently being developed by the MAO for distribution to state and local directors/boards. Those fundraising ideas should certainly be considered in addition to the suggestions described above.