



THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY 2024 WORKFORCE DIVERSITY SUMMIT



**DIVERSITY FORWARD...
PAST LESSONS,
PRESENT CHALLENGES,
FUTURE POSSIBILITIES**

\$45 - General Registration
\$35 - Four or more for the same organization

*Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits
may be available

Thursday, October 10th



8:30 AM - 4:00 PM



**DCF Office of Training and
Professional Development**



30 Van Dyke Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

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CLOSES OCT 4, 2024



AGENDA

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Registration

9:00 a.m.

Welcome - Auditorium II - *Allison Chris Myers, Chair and CEO NJ Civil Service Commission*

Opening - Auditorium II - *“State of DEI: An Overview,” Jayné Johnson, Esq., Director, Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (Office of Equity), Office of the NJ Governor*

Morning Plenary Session – “Past Lessons, Present Challenges” - Auditorium II

DEI in Review: Navigating Course in a Changing Legal Landscape

Panel: Jayné Johnson, Esq., Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (Office of Equity); Lora Fong, Esq., Chief Diversity Officer, Office of the Attorney General, Law and Public Safety; Rhasheda Douglas, Esq., Assistant Dean, Minority Student Programs, Rutgers University Law; Robert Johnson, Esq., Chief Diversity Officer, Gibbons P.C.; and Kirsten Scheurer Brannigan, Esq. Managing Partner, KS Brannigan Law, P.C.

Panel Moderator: Valerie A. Jackson, Esq., Diversity Officer & Legal Liaison, Department of the Treasury, Division of Administration

In the aftermath of the Supreme Court's ruling that ended race-based affirmative action in higher education, organizations are facing critical challenges related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The surge in lawsuits targeting private and public sector diversity programs has led to a rapidly evolving legal landscape, raising concerns about the future of DEI efforts.

This session will provide participants with practical strategies and insights to navigate these complexities. Our panel of experienced legal and diversity experts will explore the importance of minimizing risks while promoting DEI within organizations, with a focus on inclusive policies and accountability mechanisms.

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Workshops

1) Keep Calm and Carry On: Maintaining Your Calm in the Midst of Chaos

Overview: This workshop will explore the concepts of positive mindset, resilience, and well-being. It is important to be both reflective and responsive to how we maintain our calm and lead (in various ways) as we attempt to navigate challenging and chaotic conditions so that we can thrive as people, teams, organizations, and communities. Participants will achieve outcomes in the following areas: 1) an understanding of resilience and well-being; 2) empowerment about their ability to become better leaders (of self and others) with a positive mindset and practicing well-being and resilience; and 3) the ability to identify and implement the necessary tasks and steps required to develop their own personal well-being and resilience plan.

Presenter: Cedric Ashley, Esq., Ashley Law Firm

2) An Exploration of Implicit Bias

Overview: This is a review of implicit bias including an overview of the impact of microaggressions. This interactive session introduces participants to the concept of implicit bias. Participants will consider how implicit bias manifests in our interactions with others and explore strategies for addressing implicit bias in ourselves and in the workplace. Participants will be introduced to how the NJ Law Against Discrimination protects individuals from discrimination and bias-based harassment in the workplace. Goals of the workshop include: 1) introduction of participants to the concept of implicit bias and to demonstrate how implicit bias manifests itself; 2) assist participants in better understanding bias prevention within the framework of the protected classes listed in the NJ Law Against Discrimination; and 3) introducing strategies to address implicit bias in ourselves and in our workplaces.

Presenter: Elissa Zylbershlag, Director of Education and Training, New Jersey Division on Civil Rights

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3) Creating Opportunities in Supplier Diversity

Overview: Strategies for executing diversity and inclusion opportunities targeted toward greater utilization of minority, women, veteran, disabled veteran, and LGBTQ+ owned businesses.

Presenter: Candice M. Alfonso, Esq., Chief Diversity Officer and Director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Department of Treasury

4) The Work of a DEI Professional, Safe Spaces, and Shared Gems

Overview: In light of challenges, governmental, and legislative evaluations of DEI practices, policies, and programs, this session will focus on the ongoing work of DEI professionals. Specifically, organizations incorporating DEI in their infrastructures rely on DEI leaders and practitioners to foster these efforts and to promote appropriate programs and strategies to accomplish their DEI strategies and institutional objectives. This will be an interactive practitioner focused dialogue including an exploration of 1) achieving and measuring success in DEIB strategy; 2) overcoming resistance to change; and 3) ensuring longevity of DEIB initiatives.

Presenters: Matthew J. Camardella, Esq., General Counsel, American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity (AAAED); Olympia Cook, Diversity Officer, Department of Children and Families; and Elaine Saunders, Ed.D., Director of Workforce Development at the Community FoodBank of New Jersey

12:10 p.m. Luncheon - Auditorium II

Keynote Speaker, Assemblywoman Shavonda E. Sumter (D)

Assemblywoman Sumter has served on the General Assembly from 2012 - present, the Majority Conference Leader 2015-2019, the Deputy Speaker 2014-15, and the N.J. Legislative Black Caucus Chair 2022 - present.

1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Workshops

1) Keep Calm and Carry On: Maintaining Your Calm in the Midst of Chaos (Repeated from a.m.)

Overview: This workshop will explore the concepts of positive mindset, resilience, and well-being. It is important to be both reflective and responsive to how we maintain our calm and lead (in various ways) as we attempt to navigate challenging and chaotic conditions so that we can thrive as people, teams, organizations, and communities. Participants will achieve outcomes in the following areas: 1) an understanding of resilience and well-being; 2) empowerment about their ability to become better leaders (of self and others) with a positive mindset and practicing well-being and resilience; and 3) the ability to identify and implement the necessary tasks and steps required to develop their own personal well-being and resilience plan.

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3) Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) Groups in the Workplace

Overview: : This session will explore the challenges and lessons learned in establishing an ERG. Organizational leaders with ERGs at their departments/agencies will share reflections on their experiences. Questions explored: What are ERGs? Should my organization create an ERG? What are the processes/steps for developing an ERG?

Presenters: Lora Fong, Esq., OAG/LPS, Chief Diversity Officer; Monise Princilus, Diversity Officer, Department of Environmental Protection; and Braheim Knight, Diversity Officer, Department of Labor

2:40 p.m. Closing Plenary Session – “Future Possibilities” - Auditorium II

4) When Leaders Lead: Building a Blueprint for Sustainable DEI Initiatives—An Overview of E.O. 319

E.O. 319 includes the formation of a Statewide Equity Infrastructure Policy that will provide State agencies with strategic direction for achieving greater equity.

Presenter(s): Jayné Johnson, Esq., Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (Office of Equity); Lora Fong, Esq., Chief Diversity Officer, Office of the Attorney General, Law and Public Safety; Candice M. Alfonso, Esq., Chief Diversity Officer and Director of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Department of Treasury; and Charlie Williams, PhD, Executive Director, Office of Diversity Programs, CSC.

Panel Moderator: Kimberly Cahall, Chief Enforcement Officer, Office of Enforcement Policy, NJ Department of Environmental Protection

Summit Registration Dates:

Registration available August 19, 2024 through October 4, 2024

Join us as we empower New Jersey's public service workforce for a more inclusive future.