

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Newsletter

February 2026 Edition

https://bnhra.org/Diversity_and_Inclusion



WELCOME TO THE DEIA NEWSLETTER!

Welcome to the first edition of the BNHRA DEIA Newsletter! We are thrilled that you have decided to make DEIA practices part of your everyday workplace culture, and we are here to serve as your experts and advocates on these initiatives.

The BNHRA DEIA Committee is founded on a mission to create spaces for collaboration, conversation, and community service that advance equity and belonging across Western New York. We believe diversity is more than representation; it's the recognition that every voice, experience, and identity contributes to the strength of our workplaces and communities.

With a commitment to empowering and educating HR leaders, business professionals, and the public at large, we aim to serve as your DEIA experts. Together we will elevate all DEIA practices across Western New York!

DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Workplace diversity celebrates the unique qualities, perspectives, and work styles that each individual brings to the table. Inclusion ensures those differences are not only welcomed but woven into the fabric of organizational culture and decision-making. When we examine what it means to have a diverse workforce, it is more than just the identifiable characteristics that we have been trained on which include race, gender, and age. Rather, diversity in the workplace includes these identifiable characteristics and also unidentifiable characteristics.

Diversity in the workplace practices allow all employees and community members to show up as their true authentic selves. Why is this so important? Well, when employees feel psychologically safe and included in the workplace, it has been statistically proven to reduce absenteeism and turnover rates, increase innovation and collaboration, which therefore increase profitability. In short, having sound diversity protocols and strategies, are not only a financial win for the organization, but more importantly – the RIGHT thing to do!



UPCOMING BNHRA EVENTS

February 25, 2026 – Empower HR Panel at

March 19, 2026 – Spring Legal Update

Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another's uniqueness.

- Ola Joseph



DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE: A DEEPER DIVE

As we talked about above, there are many different types of diversity when it comes to the workplace:

- Demographic: Includes race, gender, age, and sexual orientation.
- Cognitive & Experiential: Involves different life experiences, thinking styles, and educational backgrounds.
- Cultural & Structural: Covers nationalities, languages, and representation across different levels of seniority and job functions.

When we examine all these different facets of diversity, it is important to consider ALL forms of diversity. To do so, be mindful of your own bias that you may have. What do we mean by this? Time for some self-reflection...when you see an applicant who has applied from your alma mater, do you immediately think positively about them? What if the applicant is from your rival school? This is an example of a minor form of bias, but in some cases, it is more severe. The first step to creating a diverse and inclusive environment is being aware of our own bias.

DEIA CHAMPION SPOTLIGHT

Do you know someone who is a true DEIA champion, or a company that is the model for DEIA initiatives? That person who truly understands what DEIA means and practices it every day in the workplace, and the company who views DEIA as a cultural practice and not just a checkbox item?



We want to interview them! The DEIA Champion Spotlight will be the dedicated section to celebrate those individuals and companies that are the models for DEIA.

Submit your recommendations by emailing the DEIA Diversity Director, LaTanya Walton at LWalton-Brown@sayyesbuffalo.org

We look forward to celebrating with you!



WORKPLACE IMPLEMENTATION

So how do we implement diversity in the workplace? This is where many employers find themselves getting stumped.

Start simple – write down your commitment to diversity, establish a mission statement, and then outwardly communicating it. Publish it on your website, include it in your handbook, and post it on your HRIS platform.

Then take it to the next step – training! Provide training on your diversity mission statement and practices as part of onboarding, new manager development, and champion it as part of all professional development topics throughout the year and company values.



STAY TUNED FOR MORE UPDATES

Over the course of this year, the BNHRA DEIA Committee will be providing monthly newsletters related to DEIA topics. Each quarter of the year will be assigned a letter from DEIA as an area of focus. Quarter 1 will be focused on “D” – Diversity. We are open to comments, questions, and suggestions from all so that we can make this a best-in-class resource for you! For comments or suggestions, please email Alyssa Klimuszka at alyssa@herhrsolutions.com