



**Employment
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Message from the Editor

Dear Queen's University Member,

Welcome to the eighth issue of Equity Matters at Queen's, a bi-monthly electronic newsletter from Queen's Equity Office.

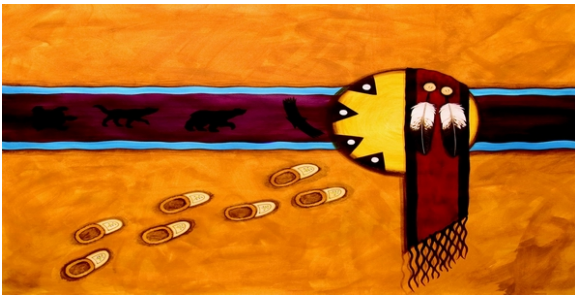
The theme of this issue is "*Advancing Equity at Queen's: A Shared Responsibility*". This issue highlights two distinct and new equity initiatives taking place at Queen's. They include: The Human Resources "Recruitment Boot Camp" and The Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training Program. The "Equity in Focus" section of the newsletter invites readers to consider the ways in which our unconscious biases may enter the hiring and recruitment process.

The creation of an equitable community, one that is diverse as well as inclusive and that is respectful and protects the human rights of its members, requires the work of every member of the community, across all of our sites and campuses, including students, teaching staff, administrative staff, visitors, alumni and guests. At Queen's we believe that excellence flourishes in an environment that embraces the diversity of people, that helps them to achieve their full potential, that facilitates the free expression of their diverse perspectives through respectful discourse, and in which high standards are maintained for students and staff alike. Each in their unique way, the two above noted initiatives are helping Queen's reach the goal of overcoming barriers to achieving employment equity, accessibility, and educational equity while also creating awareness and education.

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. We invite you to share your comments and suggestions for future topics concerning equity at Queen's and beyond. Please contact us at equity@queensu.ca. We wish you all the best in this coming academic year!

-The Equity Office at Queen's University

Employment Equity “Bits and Bites”: Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training at Queen’s



Ontario has the highest number of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Of the total 1,172,785 persons of Aboriginal ancestry in Canada in 2006, 242,490 (21.0%) live in Ontario. Almost 78% of Aboriginal people reside in off-reserve (rural, non-reserve and urban) communities. It is well documented that many underlying factors negatively affect the whole health (mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical) of Aboriginal people in Canada. The Aboriginal population has generally noted that they have experienced culturally insensitive healthcare practices and interactions that have often included subtle and overt forms of racism. The results of an initial environmental scan indicated that except for medical schools, a few nursing schools and schools with Aboriginal-specific curricula, all other programmes had little to no Aboriginal content in their curriculum.

One of the proposed solutions was to train all front line health care professionals in the area of Aboriginal cultural safety. The Anishnawbe Health Toronto (AHT), a fully accredited Community Health Centre, initiated the *Aboriginal Cultural Safety Initiative*, a program designed to address gaps in post-secondary health sciences curricula in the area of Aboriginal cultural safety for healthcare providers. The Four Directions Aboriginal Centre at Queen’s University has been involved in the project and has been delivering the Aboriginal Cultural Safety program to health

units across campus for the past three years. More recently, the training has garnered attention of other departments (outside of the health sciences) who have been requesting the training for staff, students, and faculty in their units.

Laura Maracle, the facilitator of this program at Queen’s (and Aboriginal *Aboriginal Student Success Strategist of Queen’s Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre*) of Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre) believes this training can be beneficial and useful to all departments and units across campus: *“ACST is a critical component that should be mandatory within all levels of education and programs at Queen’s University. Also, it is beneficial to have workshops delivered in classrooms and classes by an Aboriginal educator who speak directly to the issues presented.”* Dialogue in these areas allow for Faculties and Departments to act as role models to students in valuing cultural diversity and cross cultural relationships and emphasizes the importance of collaboration between the University community and the Aboriginal community.

Margaret Jamieson, a faculty member from the School of Rehabilitation shares her thoughts on the importance of this training: *“I had the pleasure of hearing Laura Maracle present on Aboriginal Cultural Safety at the November meeting of the Queen’s Council on Employment Equity and on several occasions in a course on Socio-cultural Determinants of Occupation offered by the Queen’s School of Rehabilitation Therapy. On all of these occasions, Laura introduces us to the concept of cultural safety and the possibility of creating equitable environments in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people work together to maximize respect and inclusion..... If equity is to be achieved at Queen’s University, the Queen’s community needs to not only hold equity*

as a valued principle but to be willing to explore different perspectives and take these perspectives into consideration when planning. The Queen's community needs not only to 'talk the talk but walk the walk.' The presentation by Laura Maracle offers a step forward."

For more information on the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training program, please contact Laura Maracle at laura.maracle@queensu.ca

Equity in the Focus: Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process



Everyone has individual biases, which are determined by factors such as social environment, upbringing and culture. However, when it comes to the recruitment selection process, these biases can effect key hiring decisions and at times lead to prospective candidates being passed for key positions and organisations missing out on key talent.

While those involved in the hiring process might be aware of a few conscious biases they have, it's those that they are not aware of - the unconscious biases - that pose the highest risk. This is something that needs to be addressed by all involved in recruitment, from HR professionals and recruiters, to external search firms, right through to front line directors and managers. When hiring, the end goal is simply to get the best talent on board to help the business grow. However, if unconscious bias is a factor, it can lead to a lack of diversity, and potentially a lack of top talent, in your workforce.

A number of studies point directly to how unconscious decisions impact business decisions. Researchers at MIT and the University of Chicago have discovered that even names can unconsciously impact people's decision-making. These researchers distributed 5,000 resumes to 1,250 employers who were advertising employment opportunities. The résumés had a key distinction in them: some were mailed out with names that were determined to be "typically white," others with names that were "typically black." Every company was sent four resumes: one of each race that was considered an "average" résumé and one of each race that was considered "highly skilled."

Pre-interviews with company human resources employees had established that most of the companies were aggressively seeking diversity, a fact that seems more likely to have them lean toward somebody with a name that suggests a black candidate. And yet, the results indicated something else was occurring. Résumés with "typically white" names received 50 percent more call-backs than those with "typically black" names. There was another striking difference. While the highly skilled "typically white" named candidates received more call-backs than the average ones, there was virtually no difference between the numbers of call-backs received by highly skilled versus average "typically black" named candidates. Even more strikingly, average "typically white" named candidates received more call-backs than highly skilled "typically black" named candidates!

There are a number of strategies that will help us create workplace cultures in which employees can actively "unconceal" perceptions and patterns that have been hidden. According to *"The Level Playing Field Institute"*, a San Francisco based non-profit which studies, identifies a variety of ways to remove hidden biases from the boardroom. ***Here are steps each of us can take to mitigate our hidden bias:***

1. Recognize that as human beings, our brains make mistakes without us even knowing it. The

new science of “unconscious bias” applies to how we perceive other people. We all have biases and becoming aware of our own biases will help us mitigate them in the workplace.

2. Reframe the conversation to focus on fair treatment and respect, and away from discrimination and “protected classes”.

3. Review every aspect of the employment life cycle for hidden bias – screening resumes, interviews, onboarding, assignment process, mentoring programs, performance evaluation, identifying high performers, promotion and termination.

4. Ensure that anonymous employee surveys are conducted company-wide to first understand what specific issues of hidden bias and unfairness might exist at your workplace. Each department or location may have different issues.

5. Conduct anonymous surveys with former employees to understand what were the issues they faced, what steps could be taken for them to consider coming back, whether they encourage or discourage prospective employees from applying for positions at your company and whether they encourage or discourage prospective customers/clients from using your company’s products or services.

6. Initiate a resume study within your industry, company and/or department to see whether resumes with roughly equivalent education and experience are weighted equally, when the names are obviously gender or race or culturally distinct.

7. Support projects that encourage positive images of equity seeking groups (women, Aboriginal Peoples, Persons with disabilities, visible minorities, members of the LGBTQ community etc.). Distribute widely stories and pictures that portray stereotype-busting images – posters, newsletters, annual reports, speaker series, podcasts. Many studies show that the

mere positive image of specific groups of people can combat our hidden bias.

8. Identify, support and collaborate with effective programs that increase diversity in the pipeline.

Excerpts of this article were taken from: *Cook Ross- Proven Strategies for Addressing Unconscious Bias in the Workplace.*

Equity in the Community: The Queen’s Recruitment Boot Camp



The Queen’s Human Resources department is pleased to offer a new foundational

program; **Recruitment Boot Camp**. This program, designed for hiring managers, provides the framework for the acquisition of talent into the University and sets the stage for a proficient, consistent approach to hiring in our environment.

Through discussion and practical application of tools and techniques, participants will develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to find and employ individuals whose qualifications match our organizational needs.

Hiring talented individuals is critical to our success. Understanding relevant legislation and inequities in hiring practices will mitigate risks associated with hiring activities and result in better individual to job fit, higher retention rates, and more productive and engaged employees.

Recruitment Boot Camp explores the multi-step decision processes that occur when bringing individuals into the University through the three stages of acquiring talent: Recruitment, Interviewing, and Selection. Critical components relating to accessibility, inclusivity and Human Rights are incorporated into the workshop to not only create awareness for hiring managers, but to

educate on the importance each of these plays throughout the hiring process.

The Client Services Team (CST), Human Resources, will be reaching out to their client groups to schedule sessions over the coming months. All sessions will be facilitated by members of the CST who will continue to provide ongoing support and resources following the session. For more information on the Recruitment Boot Camp, please contact Mary Elms at: mary.elms@queensu.ca



Connect with the Equity Office!



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