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# REALITIES

A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Talent Management Education Series Brought to you by Nonprofit HR and partners!

## Race Diversity Practices in Nonprofits

WEBINAR TRANSCRIPT



Nonprofit**HR**

# REALITIES: RACE DIVERSITY PRACTICES IN NONPROFITS

**Date of Recording:** June 30, 2020

Webinar Recording

Webinar Slides

Are you struggling with discussions about how race, racism and racial equity show up in your workplace? You're not alone. Nationwide, the civil unrest and renewed demands for racial equality have created new opportunities for organizations to thoroughly assess their approach to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Race is already a challenging topic for any workforce to thoroughly dismantle and discuss. Having those discussions as the nation is still recovering from the blows of COVID-19 make it even more challenging. Many HR leaders in nonprofits and other social enterprises are finding that they simply have not done enough to thrive in the current environment. Knowing why your organization wants to conduct racial equity work is critical to sustaining your mission, and creating safe spaces for your people to co-create a more equitable workforce and employee experience.

During this webinar, speakers discussed:

- Nonprofit HR's latest diversity practices reporting and key findings you should know now
- How the recent protests and their impact on organizations are shaping our knowledge practices and sector-reporting
- How these data can be used to better galvanize your organization's readiness to convene necessary conversations on race
- Critical steps needed to talk about race in the workplace

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## SPEAKERS



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## MODERATOR



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**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Hello everyone and welcome. Thank you for joining us this afternoon for Nonprofit HR Talent Management Education Series, Realities: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging.

Today's session is entitled Race Diversity Practices in nonprofits. My name is Alicia Schoshinski and the co-leader of Nonprofit HR Knowledge Practice in a Senior HR Business partner and I will be your moderator for today. We have a lot of great content to cover so let's get started. But before we do, I'd like to go over a few items so that you know how to best participate in today's event. So, you've joined the presentation listening, using your computer's speaker system by default, but if you would prefer to join over the telephone, just select telephone in the audio pane, and the dial in information will be displayed. You will have the opportunity to submit text questions to today's presenters by typing your questions into the questions pane of the control panel. You may send in your questions at any time during the presentation. We will collect these and address them during the Q and A session at the end of today's presentation.

Today's webinar is being recorded, and you will receive a follow-up e-mail within the next few days with a link to view the recording. Today's session will be moderated by Lisa Brown Alexander, President and CEO of Nonprofit HR. She'll be joined by Emily Holthaus, Senior Advisor, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Nonprofit HR.

Under Lisa Alexander's direction, Nonprofit HR has served some of the most prominent non-profits in associations in the country. With more than 25 years of Human Resource Management experience working with non-profit and for-profit organizations, Lisa and Nonprofit HR have helped hundreds of social sector organizations realize improved impact through Talent. Lisa provides strategic level guidance to Nonprofit HRS clients and works closely with C-suite leaders and non-profit Boards of Directors on client engagements.

Emily Holthaus is known for collaborating with organizations to design organizational strategy and implement leadership development solutions toward the outcomes of greater equity, inclusion, human capital, and engagement in both physical and virtual environments. Prior to serving as Nonprofit HR's lead Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultant, Emily served as the Director of Multicultural leadership Development for YMCA of the USA, where she worked to identify, engage, inspire, develop, and retain multicultural staff to ensure the leadership of YMCA reflects the diverse communities it serves. Emily was also a key member of the Y's USA Talent and Knowledge Management Senior team that led the development of strategy and implementation of training solutions to support a nationwide workforce of more than 250,000 employees.

So, without further ado, I will hand it over to Lisa and Emily.

**LISA BROWN ALEXANDER:** Thank you so much, Alicia. Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you so much for joining us today for this important conversation. Obviously, the issue of race and equity, diversity, and inclusion has been top of mind for so many of us based on a number of factors including, but certainly not limited to, the current climate. This afternoon, we want to talk about the issue of race and diversity and equity in the context of non-profit organizations. It's not a conversation we have often, but it's an important one. And today, we wanted to frame the crisis. We want to share some data and equip you with language that you can use in your organizations to engage in critical conversations around race and equity and inclusion. Then, engage you in a discussion about how race shows up in your organization. So, with that, we'll get started.

Just a couple of things before we do, though. As a reminder, if you haven't had a chance to participate in our 2020 non-profit Diversity Practices Survey, that survey has launched, and it will close on July 21st. This is our second year printed, leading this particular survey, and it has given us kind of a window into the soul of non-profits, associations, philanthropy, and social enterprise to better understand their diversity practices. So, we encourage you to participate so that you can benchmark your organization's practices against those of other similar organizations. It's a national survey, and we do hope that you'll participate.

Just another quick note regarding this series. Some of you are familiar with Nonprofit HR and the work that we have done to provide knowledge resources to the non-profit sector. We recently wrapped up our COVID-19 series and our new series realities, which will take a deep dive into DEI and the meaning of belonging, will take place between now through the end of the year. So, once a month, we will host conversations around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging related topics through the rest of the year that will focus on each of the major functional areas of talent management. So, stay tuned for more. You'll see information about this. You can save the dates on your calendar, but we'll look at everything from talent acquisition to exit management and talk about each of those areas through the lens of DEI. So, look forward to more.

Then, finally, I wanted to announce the first to know that we're excited about standing up our new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practice at Nonprofit HR. So, if you have some specific organizational needs, in addition to the traditional services that we've offered in the area of Search, Outsourcing, project based Consulting, and total rewards, were also very excited to now offer specific support around DEI. That includes partnership, strategy, planning, design and implementation, equity reviews and assessments, training, and facilitation. So, this augments our current services and we're very excited to be able to support your very specific needs in this space going forward. So, if there's anything we can do to assist you after today's call, please feel free to reach out.

Alright, so let us get started. Let's talk about where we are today. We know that we're in crisis, as it relates to race. We're also at an important inflection point as a nation, as social impact organizations and as individual citizens and residents here in the United States. So, let's talk a little bit about the crisis that we face as a sector.

We know that the non-profit sector is a microcosm of the world, right? And certainly, a microcosm of America, and by virtue of that, the very things that exist in our broader society also permeate the sector, the social impact space, the non-profit sector, the philanthropic sector, the association sector, whatever particular community your organization is aligned to. It's likely facing some of the same challenges than the rest of the nation is experiencing: racial difference and harassment discrimination, segregation, even within your own workforce. Issues are now emerging that some, but not all, have been grappling with for a long time. So, it's to be expected that we would find ourselves now be ready and faced with having to deal with these issues within our organizations in the context of work.

And so, today, we wanted to share just a little bit of data from our 2019 survey to provide context for the rest of this afternoon's conversation.

This is a quick snapshot of the question that we posed to our survey respondents. Last year, we had over 500 survey respondents from across the country representing all organizational size and mission focuses.



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What we learned is that the most significant diversity, equity, and inclusion challenge that non-profits were facing was around realizing racial and ethnic diversity, heads and shoulders above all of the other challenges that organizations reported last year, with 42% of respondents saying that they were struggling in this particular area. As you will see, there are other struggles that organizations have or had in 2019 with respect to realizing optimal DEI within organizations, but race and ethnicity, by far, superseded all other challenges.

I wanted to share that information because as you think about your organization's culture and environment, it's important to understand that you're not alone. For many organizations, even though they may be working in diverse communities or communities of color, they have not looked inward to grapple with and addressed the very concerns that may be facing them as an organization. Not so much the work in the community, but the work within.

We're going to spend some time talking about that today. But I wanted to just highlight this one data point as something that you should know that many, many organizations are struggling with, or at least were in 2019, and it will be interesting to see where we land for 2020. Please do participate in that survey, so we can hear from you.

One of the things that we also learned through the work done by the Building Movement Project, and the Race to Lead report, which is a critical report on leadership within the non-profit sector and how it's experienced by people of color versus those who identify as White, is that there is general agreement and consensus that the lack of diversity within the non-profit sector, and non-profit leadership in particular, is a major problem. 79% of respondents to the Race to Lead survey, and this particular question, agreed. Whether they were Black, Latino, Asian, Native American, or African American, they agreed that the lack of diversity is a problem for this sector. With only 12% of the usual and 9% disagreeing. So, there's general consensus that this is an area of concern within the social sector.

We also know that the issue of race is a crisis that impacts the nation. You would have to be living under a rock not to be dialed in at this point to what's going on nationwide. From our political realm, to societal realm, to economics, to the issue of racial injustice and police brutality this impact is experienced, particularly by African American men, but certainly African American people in general. Race is an issue that we are now looking dead in the face and need to address. We intend to do that today and provide you with the tools that you need to engage in critical conversations in your own organizations because we know that race is a struggle both for the sector and for the nation.

I wanted to just highlight some data that the Pew Research Center reported on and produced last year when they asked the question of everyday Americans about their perceptions of race, race relations, and the status of race relations in the United States. You'll see that 50% of the respondents indicated that they thought that race relations in America was generally bad with 41% indicating that they thought it was generally good. And then when we look across the color lines, there are significant differences in perceptions by everyday Americans, regardless of whether they work in the sector or not, or connected to the sector, about the status of race relations. This, again, was 2019. 56% of white Americans perceive that race relations are bad, compared with 71% of those who identify as Black and 60% by those who identify as Hispanic or Latino, and so on.

It's important to raise this because we experience race and have discussions about race in the non-profit sector. The non-profit workplace will be impacted by how we identify and the experiences that are lived by

each of us based on our ethnicity and our racial identity. I wanted to just highlight that we also noted that non-whites are more likely to see advantages of being white. We've heard over and over again, the term white privilege. Some refer to it as white advantage. But there are definitely differences and perceptions about the advantages that come with being white versus being black, or Latino, or even Asian identifying as Asian in the workplace. This is important information for us to have, as we think through how race shows up in our organizations.

We want to spend a little more time digging more deeply into some of the results from the 2019 survey, again, so you can benchmark your own organization, better understand, and be aware of how race is impacting other race, ethnicity, and diversity matters in other non-profits around the country. As I mentioned, we had over 500 participating organizations in our 2019 survey. We had the largest representation of participants coming from social and human services, followed by the education space, and then health and human services. We had representation from all sub sectors or segments of the non-profit sector, but these three had the largest representation. Then, in terms of size, we had a disproportionate or a larger percentage of non-profits from smaller organizations, those with budgets between one and about five million.

In terms of headcount, we had our largest representation coming from organizations with between 21 and 50 staff members, followed by organizations with 51 to 100. So again, think about where your organization falls on the scale, but you'll see that we had decent representation from just about every segment from a headcount perspective.

In terms of where organizations are in the maturity curve, you will see that of those who participated, the vast majority are mature, or were mature, sustained, and sustainable organizations, which means we're not talking about organizations struggling with DEI, that are new startup organizations, or even in growth mode. We're talking about organizations that, in some instances, have been around for hundreds of years, at least tens of years, decades. So, are these organizations struggling with the issue of DEI, even though programmatically, maybe financially, operationally they're mature organizations?

In terms of budget size, as I mentioned, the largest segment of participating organizations came from the smaller end of the spectrum, with organizations having budgets between 1 and 5 million. Also, you'll notice that larger organizations represented about 23%. if you look at the last two segments shown on-screen, organizations with budgets of more than 20 million and then greater than 40 million represented about a quarter, just under a quarter of our survey respondents.

We asked a question of organizations: how many of you have a formal diversity statement? And what we heard was that 52% of participating organizations had one and 40% did not. So, roughly half and half of organizations had a statement, and half didn't.

Organizations that were larger tend to be those that had statements, right? So, if you had a budget of greater than \$20 million, you're more likely to have a different formal diversity statement versus not. Conversely, with those organizations that were smaller, with budgets of less than a million, a greater majority tended not to have statements. While there's not a correlation around mission type with those organizations, with a diversity statement, we didn't see that the larger ones tended to be more advanced in this space by having a statement. Now, of course, having statement is not the end all and be all, however, it's an important part of your Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategy. Emily will talk more about that shortly, but it is a step.

We want to recognize that, those that are larger tend to be more advanced around making these formal statements. Then, we also learned that the mission types that were more likely to have formal diversity statements were in the arts and culture, and human and civil rights space. This, obviously, the human civil rights space, makes total sense. But no, only 57% those organizations have diversity statements, which means there is a very healthy number, namely 43%, of human and civil rights organizations working in this space that are operating without a formal statement of their own, right?

That gives us an idea about where we are just in general as a social impact community and the people who are in the trenches doing this work every day or not who are kind of leading the way with having diversity statements. It stands to reason that many other types of social impact organizations may not have statements as well.

When it comes to having a formal diversity strategy, right, so we're defense, differentiating a statement from having strategy statement is just kind of a one-time position versus having a plan that will integrate with your broader operations and programmatic activity. We learned that it was a larger percentage of organizations that might have, or not have a strategy, rather, versus have a statement, and, so, 69% of respondents responded without a strategy, even though they may have had a statement from a diversity strategy.

Again, differentiating here, larger organizations were those that tended to have a formal strategy versus those that were smaller, the least likely of those organizations to operate without a strategy where those in the 5 to 9 million range. And, those with a budget of less than a million, in terms of organizations, by type, indicated that they had a strategy. Social and human service organizations and education organizations were most likely to have, are more likely to have, a diversion strategy versus those in the animal rights space and associations.

In terms of the primary drivers for creating a diverse diversity strategy, what we learned was that there was a lot of difference across organizations. You'll notice that the other column indicated 30% of organizations had reasons other than those listed here, for creating a diversity strategy.

Based on the list of options that we provided, lack of diversity at the leadership level was the driving reason for creating a strategy. We know that, for example, 27% of non-profit boards have absolutely no people of color right within their organizations. We also know that people of color represent those that do have people of color on their boards and that only represents 16% versus the fact that people of color represented 39% of the population.

As in general, as a social impact space, diversity at the leadership level is a key challenge and a key driver for why organizations are creating diversity strategies, but also a reason or reflective of the fact that there is limited diversity strategy at the leadership level.

In terms of resources, we wanted to highlight the fact that, while organizations may have statements and strategies, in the majority of cases, participating organizations did not have someone who could be solely dedicated to their organization's diversity efforts. Now, what will be interesting is to see whether or not that metric changes? When we complete this survey this year, we know that a number of organizations have already begun exploring, hiring a diversity or equity and inclusion officer to their leadership teams, and so we'll be able to verify and validate that through the results of our survey this year. Stay tuned for more on that piece.

For those organizations that did not have a dedicated diversity professional on their team, only 20% retain the services of an external consultant, 19% have not considered doing that, and 53% just have no resource available to them at all. If you're in that court category, you can certainly know that you can reach Nonprofit HR right now. There are a number of highly qualified professionals out there who can help your organization through its own DEI journey. So, know that you're not alone. You're certainly not alone. If you don't have a coach or a consultant or someone on your board who can help you, there certainly are resources available.

All right, so, I'm going to turn it over to Emily at this point to equip you with some language that you can use to have critical conversations in your organization. And so, with that, I'll turn it over to Emily, all yours.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** All right, thank you so much, Lisa. I'm going to ask the team if they can give me control of my slides, and we'll get started and jump into it, now that we have the foundation of the data to talk a little bit about and a common language that will help us all be on the same page, related to equity. Then, we'll get into how all of you can begin to get on that journey, to infuse equity into your leadership brand.

I'm going to go and talk a little bit about just diversity as we think about it. Oftentimes, right now, when we talk about diversity, race is at the top of our mind. But, really, diversity is just any presence of difference within a given setting. So, diversity means a lot of different things to a lot of different people.

And, I do want to share that, when we talk about diversity, there are so many pieces that come into play. As I'm showing you this graphic here, you'll see that the center circles are what we call core dimensions of diversity. Those orange circles, some are more visible than others, are things that are more difficult to change, and they are part of the core of who we are as individuals. As you move out into the green, this is just a snapshot of many of the other different things that create diversity within the workplace, within our communities, within the world. It's very difficult and complex, and that's why, when we talk about equity as it relates to diversity, it's a very complex topic and subject.

I do today want to try to make some things a little bit more interactive. So, if you are thinking and looking at all of the dimensions of diversity that I'm showing you, what is the one that kind of hits you today in a certain way? If you feel comfortable in the chat box, to just say, "hello, my name is and today, I identify..." and choose a dimension to identify with the group today. If you feel comfortable and you want to use the chat box and participate, please choose one, and just introduce yourself in the chat box and identify for us.

Today, I will do it for you. My name is Emily, and lately, race has been on my mind, so I identify as African American and that is something that, over the last couple of weeks, has been at the forefront for me as one of the dimensions that I identify.

The reason why I just asked you to do that is because there's a very important point about diversity.

The point is that the individual decides how they identify, and we don't put identification on others. I think oftentimes human nature has us to jump to potentially putting people in spaces where we believe that they belong.

But identification is something that belongs to the individual, as well.



If we think about inclusion now, this is, I think, the more difficult parts of the equation, because we know that we're going to bring people together and everyone is going to be different based on all those dimensions that I just shared with you, as well as many more that weren't on the slide. But the real question here with inclusion is: So, what do we do? What do we do with the diversity that's at the table? It's very easy to create a universal environment, but not have it be an inclusive environment.

If voices aren't being heard, if people aren't being valued and leveraged, and allowed to live up to their full leadership potential within a given setting, it doesn't work. I think about it from a personal standpoint, back before COVID, when we could have barbecues and picnic and parties at our homes. I want you to think about when you do those types of things. Who do you give refrigerator privileges to at your house? And we know it's a different level of guest. When you have those certain people that you pull close to you, that you allow to go and run and get things out of the fridge for other people, they get to see kind of what's behind the curtain with your party, and you really draw them close. You include them, in part of your team, that is, sort of pulling off the party or the event. I would say, who are those people in your home or in your life that you're pulling close? That's what we see as full inclusion and, in the workplace, that's the same thing. Whose voice do you value? Who do you allow to see, sort of under the curtain, and be a close part of what happens in your organization? We know we don't give this privilege to everyone.

You have to ask yourself: Why is that? How can we draw more people close and have them fully included in what's happening in our workplace and in our lives?

So, talking a little bit about equity, it a lot of times people get confused with equality. Equality is giving everyone the same thing, no matter what the starting point will be, but equity is very specific and very different. Equity is that approach that ensures that everyone has access to the same opportunities. Equity recognizes that advantages and barriers to exist and that, as a result, we don't all start from the same place. I think in this example, we're talking about economics, right? What we're showing you here is easier to understand with economics, but when we add race and race equity on top of it, it becomes a more complex conversation.

We must acknowledge that not everyone has that same starting place in society. Once we acknowledge that, we need to do what we can to correct and address whatever imbalance exists.

I know, because I talked to a lot of people about this, that the idea of advantages and barriers is kind of intangible. It's hard sometimes to see them.

One very specific HR related example is a study that was done where they talked about candidates, and their resumes, and candidates I'm putting this in air quotes. You can't see me, but white sounding names, like Greg or Emily, for instance, were 50% more likely to receive a call back than candidates that had African American sounding names like LaKeisha or Jamal.

What's interesting about this is, I've personally experienced that; where someone has called me for an interview and talked to me. They're like, Emily, yes, come in, we want to meet you. Then when I come in, they kind of look around, like, where's Emily? This is because they weren't expecting Emily to look like me. It's an interesting phenomenon and I think that there's lots of other studies in the HR realm dealing with people where some of these inequities to exist. And that's just what we have to recognize and figure out, how to get past some of that, and get us to where we need to be an offering everyone the equal opportunities, regardless of their starting point.

Here's just a little bit more, I'm defining equity, It's the guarantee of the fair treatment, access, and opportunity for all. And that space where individuals are not at a disadvantage because of their background, or social position, or race, whatever dimension of diversity we're talking about.

Also, the really important thing about equity is it requires institutions to address systems and processes and barriers that have prevented that full access and fair treatment. This is why this is a really difficult and complex thing. But if your organization isn't ready to focus on systems, you're going to have a challenging road to be able to get to an equitable organization. As systems, we know, live far beyond the timing of those that built those systems and the effects from the systems we often still feel today.

If you're not familiar with a practice called redlining, I would suggest that you take some time to sort of Google and learn. It was where during a certain period in our history, it was legal to sort of draw red lines around certain areas of maps and banks wouldn't provide loans to people that were in those areas. Businesses often wouldn't come in and start businesses within those areas. What that results, and even today, is that many communities, often low-income communities, communities of color, won't have a grocery store in them or won't have a bank in them. It causes people to have to take 2 and 3 buses to get to those fundamental things that most of us take for granted, all of that as a result of a practice illegal practice called redlining.

So that's just one example of a system that was in place, and we're still feeling the effects. Another really interesting one that I've been reading about recently that I didn't know about was called peonage, and it's the period after slavery of how a loophole was used in the 13th Amendment to incarcerate black people for very minor infractions through these new black codes that were created.

By putting them into mass incarceration situations, they were able to be rented out to people to do work where they weren't getting paid. The state institution that was incarcerating them was getting paid. This occurred for many, many, many years after slavery was over, and we still have a phenomenon today, about disproportionate incarceration of black people in the United States. Those are just a couple of systematic examples that I would throw out. So, this if for all of you, to just give you a picture of what we're talking about and why this idea of understanding systems and dismantling them and making them work for everyone is an important part of the equation. It's difficult, it's a difficult part, too. Here's why I think this is difficult, and I just want to talk to you a little bit about some things that will get in the way of us achieving equity in our organizations.

I'm losing my power to change my slides. Team, can you change for me? There we go.

I want you to imagine that our world is filled with invisible doors. Invisible doors are all over our world, all over our nation, all over your communities. When some people approach those invisible doors there, wide open, we walk right through them. We go on, we move through life, see the life that we want and don't run into any barriers with the doors.

But for other people, the doors look very different.

For some, in our community, those invisible doors that we walked through and were wide open for us, are actually closed to others. So, they might be closed. They might even be locked to others. Inequities are often invisible to those who don't experience them.

That's why people sometimes have such a challenge with understanding, especially racism in our country, and in our communities, because maybe they've never experienced it. Also, because they've never been close enough to someone else to see someone else experienced it. So, it's hard for people to believe that the way that they walk through life.

Someone else may be having a very different parallel, a very different experience as they walk through life.

I will just personally share with all of you that I have a multicultural family. My husband is a white man and I am African American female woman.

His proximity to me allows him to see some of those invisible doors that he didn't know existed.

One quick example, I know many of you travel and before COVID, I was on the road. I traveled a lot with my work and with my family, and all of us have done this, where we've accidentally locked our hotel key in the room, right? Then, you have to go down to the desk, and go talk to them to go get it.

My husband never understood the experience of a person of color when this happens. When it happens to me, and I myself, I have to go downstairs. I have to wait for the security guard to welcome you back up to my room. They go and asked me to get my ID. I show them my ID and they make sure and verify that the name matches, and then they walk me back downstairs with my ID to show to the person at the desk to retrieve a copy of my key. That is the process, for me, every time it happens.

For my husband, when he goes downstairs the desk, he says, "Oh, my goodness, I just locked my key in the room." And the person behind the desk says, "Oh, mister Holthaus, here's a new one." and thank you and he's backup in two minutes.

Those are the types of things that I think happen on a daily basis to people of color, and that's an example of some of those doors that are shut, and that, if you didn't have proximity, you would never know and understand. So, we're going to ask you to think about and evaluate which doors are open for you, and think about potentially which doors are not open for others, and what you will want to do about that in your organization. Next slide. Here's the other thing that gets in the way and this is part of our DNA as humans. It's this concept called implicit bias.

Scientifically, we could talk about the science behind this, and it's a whole course in conversation. So, you'll just have to trust me that everyone has it, no matter what background you come from, what race you are, what world you live in.

Our brains are tailored to make shortcuts that allow us to make decisions quickly, and with those quick shortcuts, oftentimes, we aren't seeing the reality of what that situation is or what is happening in that situation because we are making these decisions very quickly. Implicit bias is attitudes and stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. We make these decisions very quickly, very snap judgements, but they drive our actions and are really important. I'm going to give you a real-time example here on the next slide.

The Symphony Orchestra had primarily male performers for years and years, and years and years. They realized, at one point, that they wanted to understand why this was happening and what was going on in their system. That potentially made it so that, really, there were almost fewer than 5% women in Symphony

Orchestras. This kind of doesn't make sense, because we know that both men and women are talented. So, what they decided to do is create a system change around their process for auditions.

What they would do now is they would put up this big black curtain across the stage and they would put the chair behind the curtain and the folks that were listening would be on the other side. They even went as far to ask the artist to remove their shoes because if I'm wearing high heels today and I'm going across the stage, you're going to have a click, click, click, which may give you a clue about gender.

So, they eliminated all of that. By doing that one very simple thing, within a few years, they were up to 25%.

Now, today, some orchestras are well into the 30 to 40% of women that make up orchestras. That is a real-time example of how an organization understood that there was bias in their system and in their organization, and they made a structural change to address it.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** So, Emily, can we pick up right here? And just, I have one question from somebody that I wanted to toss out there. Somebody said, when you're talking about systems, can you discuss the difference between systemic and systematic?

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** The difference between systemic and systematic. I've never been asked that question before. I think systemic means usually long term and deeply rooted processes that have been embedded into DNA of organizations for a very long time. Those are the harder pieces to address. I think we have systems for everything and organizations. So, systems and processes are a little bit closer to the surface and potentially easier to change and fix. That would be how I would distinguish between the two. But, in this example, all of the above needs to be addressed and looked at. It's the fundamental things that are rooted systemically in organizations about how they operate, what they believe, as well as the systems and processes that potentially work well for some, but not for all. So, it's a yes, and with all of that.

It's a great question. Thank you.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Great. Thank you. And then, just somewhat related to that, of what you were talking about in terms of selecting staff? Somebody mentioned, we're talking about racial diversity, and looking for ways to diversify staff: What are some best practices for seeking out staff? More diverse staff?

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Yeah. So, I think that I ask organizations often to think about: where are you looking? People will often tell me, "Emily, no-one diverse applies. I don't know, we just can't find anyone."

And my initial question is, where are you looking, and what unconventional ways of recruitment?

What types of key partnerships do you have with institutions that attract the same demographics that you're looking to attract? If we're talking about race, and we'll just use African Americans as an example. How often do you recruit at institutions that have large numbers of African Americans that are part of them naturally?

Or oftentimes, recruitment happens through people's networks, and if everyone, or many of the people in your organization, look the same and they're recruiting from their networks, human nature tells us that you're going to get similar people based on recruitment through networks. So, I think I advise people to look at what is your recruitment process, what type of a net are you casting. If you're doing the same thing that



you've done for a long time, chances are that's not going to work for you. So, how can you sort of look at that system and expand the way that you view your recruitment processes in a different way.

But on the flip side, I would also say, what does it feel like for, we'll use African Americans, again, African Americans in your organization?

Because if your organization has a reputation of having a culture that is not inclusive or welcoming, then that can also be a signal of why you cannot recruit or retain African Americans to your organization. So, it isn't just one piece or one part of the system. You really need to look at that whole talent management life cycle through, is there a difference between retention rates for white staff and for staff of color in your organization? Is there a difference in promotion rates? Do you have a system for promotions or is it really about sponsorship that can have inequities as part of that?

So, it's not an easy question with a simple answer as it depends on what's happening in your organization, but I do tell people that you really need to be creative and your approaches to re-imagining some of those systems to get a different result than you're getting today.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** OK, and then finally, related to talent acquisition, what about removing names and addresses from resumes, does that help to reduce bias?

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Absolutely. That's a great practice. I know it's definitely with the automation that happens now with how a lot of organizations process things.

Automation can sometimes help you with that and remove those for you. But I think if you have a regular process where people are reading resumes, it does help to do that, to remove names. I think another thing that I had an organization do around that processes before the face-to-face interviews happen, have all the people that are on the panel, those decision panels to take some of the Harvard Implicit Bias Course exams, they're 10 minute little tests that you can take that help to bring biases to the forefront of your mind.

If you have the panel, do that within a few days of doing an interview process, it helps them to take bias out of their decision making and really begin to look for the right candidate. Again, those are little small, sort of, tweaks to processes, but all of those things add up to really matter as it relates to creating equitable system.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** OK, great, thanks, Emily.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** This idea of creating an inclusive and equitable environments workplace world, I cannot be clear to say, is not a one-time thing. Like, hey, I take a training and everyone takes training, and we're done, or a one-off initiative. It's an ongoing commitment from everyone and we talk a lot about that. It is definitely a marathon and not a sprint. Inequities did not emerge in one day. They emerged over time, and we have to be sort of relentless and the commitment to continue to apply an equity lens to current systems and processes, new systems and processes, and past systems and processes to help us continue to make sure that they're equitable for all.

**LISA BROWN ALEXANDER:** Actually, if I may, Emily, just before you go on. I want to just reinforce the notion of spending time evaluating where you are as an organization and one of the things that we have been advising organizations that have reached out to us is to spend more time in discovery. Which means to get clear about why you might want to do this work, what success looks like for you as an organization before jumping into programs because it is easy to host a training session for a couple of hours or to have a

multicultural luncheon for staff to celebrate difference, but those are kind of one and done events, as Emily stated.

Here's where the important work really comes, from sitting back and looking at your organization's strategy, your priorities, and understanding how a DEI initiative or effort can not only enhance your workforce, but also help drive for greater impact in the communities where you serve, right? When we look at diversity and equity and inclusion through that lens, it has a longer shelf life because it's more than just the moment, the events that happen. It really becomes part of your business strategy, your operational strategy, your programmatic strategy and where that happens, we tend to see greater success.

So, I just wanted to add to that.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** 100%, yes. And I just want to stop with all of you on a reflection point for a moment. I currently live in Austin, Texas, and this is a mural from here in Austin.

We do a lot of murals to express our feelings and our activism through art. This is just a cool piece that I wanted to share with all of you based on the current events that are happening. I'm also from, originally, the Twin Cities. The Twin Cities is my hometown. So for me, everything that has transpired over the last few weeks has been, really, it felt personal to me just being in the environments and understanding the challenges that exist in myself, experiencing challenges, my family, that I've worked with, staff members that I've worked with. I've been reflecting, and kind of asking myself, like, what does, it feels a little different this time, though. I feel like there's something different about this moment in time and I've been trying to sort of reflect and put my finger on it.

It really has to do with this idea that it is going to take all of us to change the reality of what's been going on in our country, change the reality of how it feels to be in organizations, change the way that we view each other, and how we interact with each other. I work with a lot of people that sort of take the view of, I want to be an ally to people of color throughout this, and I want to support them and what I really want to help people understand is that ally ship is a point along the journey.

But really, the place where everyone needs to be is ownership, because racism impacts all of us, racism will not change until everyone has ownership for driving that change.

The analogy I liked to use is this.

I'm a sports person. I don't know if you are or not. But if you are a fan of a game and you're in the stands and you cheer for your team, and support them, and you wear the gear, and you stand up when you need to. You, even when they have a losing season, you still support them.

It's a different relationship than the actual players, though, that are in the game because you can share on the sidelines whether or not the team wins or loses the game. You go back home. The team who's playing the game, is the one who has to suffer the consequences of if its professional sports getting cut from the team or running laps in burpees the next day because they didn't execute what they needed to execute. It's a different level of involvement, right? So, I would ask you as it relates to equity or racial equity, are you in the stands or are you in the game?

My request to everyone is, how do you get yourself in the game, and move from that idea of, yes, that's terrible and it's happening to someone outside me, too. I'm going to have ownership for my role, and what I can do to dismantle it and really take on the consequences either way about what needs to happen with the game.

So, it's a reflection point that I've had, that I feel like this moment in time is different, because I do feel that people are seeing it very clearly, more clearly than they have before. That all of you, I hope, in your organizations, will begin to think about how to utilize your influence and move along that path to ownership, to transform your organizations to be more equitable.

I want to talk about that for a minute. I want to talk about you as a leader, and what you bring to the table. Many, or most of you on this call, are either leading people directly or in charge of teams, of lots of people, and you have a large role and responsibility and equity in your organization. So, we're going to talk a little bit about how you might be able to infuse equity into your personal leadership brand.

There's three pieces and I'm going to go a little bit deeper into each one. The first one is just that idea of awareness, self-awareness, and knowing yourself. It is understanding yourself well enough to know what biases you have, what privileges you have, and recognizing that that's sort of a step one piece.

The next one is: see. See something, say something. Oftentimes in organizations, we may see inequities happening, but because they might not be happening to us, and they may be happening to others, we sort of tend to not say anything. Or maybe we question, was that really what I saw? I think what I'm going to ask all of you to do is to reflect on making sure that you're paying attention to your lived experience in the workplace, but also the lived experience of others.

Then, if something is happening, to see it and say it out loud so that things can change. Then the last one is about building intentional relationships and initiating brave conversations, which we'll talk about in a moment. Let's go to the next slide.

People always are like, well, how do I know how I'm experiencing bias, or how that's showing up for me? I alluded to this a little bit earlier as a technique that some organizations have used to infuse into their hiring panels. But the Harvard Implicit Bias study has been going on for many years now and they have a set of these implicit association tests available online, it's free. If you have never tried this, I just gave you some homework today. Like, go on and take a couple of these. This is your own personal information. You don't, this isn't for you to share with anyone else, but it's to help you identify, potentially, where some implicit biases may be occurring for you. Personally, I've taken them all. I remember I was most shocked and hit in the face when I took the Gender Career IAT [Implicit Association Test]. I will just share my result with you that I came out favoring men as a gender and career preference.

I think that I am just like one of those feminism women in the workplace kind of people and I was really shocked and I had to reflect on sort of why that result came back for me. I was thinking about how my husband and I's relationship at home, and how I really view, like, what his roles are, what my roles are. I came to the realization that the test, it came out correctly, and then I had to reflect and say, Oh, my goodness! Has that biased impacted my decision making around hiring, around asking women to do more or less in the workplace, or giving stretch assignments, based on my attitudes and bias that exists in that space? So, that's how you utilize this, to just understand where you are, reflect on it, and then pause when you're making decisions, so that you can understand and recognize where bias might exist for you.

This is a really cool tool that has been all over the Internet and the source is [surgeryredesign.com](http://surgeryredesign.com). We need to give them credit for it, but I just always thought that this is a really solid way for you to think about and in this case, we're talking about racism, and becoming anti-racist, and race equity, but where are you along the continuum as it relates to race equity?

They've got the fears down the learning zone. The idea is that you want to get into that growth zone, and the growth zone never ends. It's continuing. We're going to keep growing every day, but we want to definitely move along that path to get into the growth zone.

I think another piece of this is you want to really work hard on yourself. I will say, as a person of color, that we can't always depend on the people of color in our lives to be our educators. They're an important part in a part of important relationship, but utilize resources, and books, and videos, and internet and conversations to help you move into that learning space, so that you can move into the growth space. This is a really great way to sort of categorize those movement of zones to becoming anti-racist and getting on that journey. So, it's a great resource.

The second piece was that see something, say something piece. We talked a lot about how bias is in people, but it's also in institutions. So, organizations must be cognizant of the policies and procedures and culture that create bias within their structures. And the important part for you want to recognize about this is it's important for you to understand your own biases.

Because, as an individual in an organization, you make decisions every day. You set policy every day, and you enforce policy every day. You make a lot of decisions. If there's bias in your decision making, that rolls up into organizational bias over time. There is a direct correlation between the two. I think the other piece is that you need to consistently hold your organization that people within it accountable to inequities when they exist and not be afraid to call them out.

It is even greatly important too that you call out inequities for others, not just when it benefits you, but when it benefits others. I spent a long career in the YMCA and I work hard to be an ally and champion to the LGBTQ+ community. I don't personally identify, but I want to be a champion.

I want to be someone that those individuals can count on to give voice at the table when they aren't there necessarily and then why don't we talk a lot about what is a membership organization? In many ways, it was a man, a woman, and kids, and a dog. That was, how it is defined. And we had to expand that so that we can really fulfill our vision for all. I remember being at the table, and speaking up and saying, we need to not be thinking about it this way. We need to be thinking about family holistically, keeping all families in mind, really being a voice when that voice was not at the table, and seeing an inequity of how we were reviewing the family structure in our organization. That's one example. It's more powerful sometimes if allies and those are impacted call it out together than it is just for those impacted to be asking for it, if that makes sense.

So, it's really important to advocate and call it out, not just for things that aren't applicable to you, but some of those doors that maybe you walk through and others don't, to call those out as well.

The last piece has to do with relationship building and brave conversations. I talked a little bit earlier about proximity, and the fact that my husband, being a white man, and me, being an African American woman, we



have proximity to each other, which allows us to have a lens into each other's lives experiences and we both learn about each other all the time because of that. I think as humans, we tend to have homogeneous proximity. What I mean by that is if you think about who you go to church with, who you invite to your home, potentially your family makeup, people that you choose to spend time with closely, oftentimes, that's not always a diverse group around us. Until we begin to build authentic relationships with people who identify differently from us, whether it's race, or any of those other, 50 dimensions that I showed you on the slide earlier.

Until we began to do that, it will not really allow us to understand the lived experiences of others because, again, those doors are invisible and it's so hard to believe and see, unless we have that proximity. So, one piece of homework that everyone can do, and I know we can invite people out right now to real live in person lunch today, but maybe start to build some relationships over Zoom. Zoom lunch with a colleague who maybe identifies differently than you and begin to build that authentic relationships so that you all can have those conversations together and give honest feedback and talk about your lived experiences. Then do it again and again, and repeat, repeat, repeat.

If we continue to expand our connections and our proximity to people that are different than us, it will be a game changer for our society and for our world.

Then, lastly, I have on this screen here, just some piece up, go back one more slide. Yep, so the brave conversations piece is really important and all of you are leaders in your workplace, and what you're seeing on the slide there, to be present and respect confidentiality. Those are just some engagement principles that I will use anytime I'm doing a crucial or brave conversation in the workplace to sort of set the stage. We are going to, as a send out after this is over as part of the follow-up, you'll get a tool around how to design brave conversations in your workplace. I would encourage all of you to have them as much as you possibly can and encourage them and organize them. Understand that it's not going to be perfect, that people are going to say the wrong things, and that is just how it is going to be, but it should not prevent us from having those brave conversations. A lot of times, you'll see, we say create safe space.

I like to call it brave space because, really, it's about people getting in dialog together and respecting confidentiality, but then allowing the learning and expanded perspective to leave the room with all of us and creating those connections in those brave spaces.

So, I encourage all of you, if you can, begin to start dialog in your communities and in your workplaces and begin to just not worry about having a conversation.

All right, I've talked a lot, and we're getting down to really the place where you all will be able to ask questions that you might have. But, if nothing else from this, I want you to just remember the invisible doors analogy. I want you to really, in all of your spaces and places, strive to make those invisible doors and those invisible opportunities visible to yourself. I want you to really think about and reflect on your own life and lived experiences, but then also on the lived experiences of others. That may be different, that may be experiencing some of those locked and closed, invisible doors. How are you going to use your expanded equity lens and your leadership influence to change it, to make the doors invisible, doors open to all?

I do want to hear from all of you now, in the chat, or as many of you that feel comfortable. We've got a lot of people on here. Really, I want to say, we spent time, but the rubber meets the road after you leave here, right? Based on either some of the data that was shared, or some of the concepts that I have shared today,

I'm curious what might you do differently? What might you do to begin to get on that journey, to infuse equity into your leadership brand?

How might you influence your organization to address equity in a different way? I'd love for all of you to, you can to chat and share some of your thoughts.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Please share those in the questions box, because the chat is not available. Please type them into the questions, and we'll be happy to read them out.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Oh, awesome. Maybe we can just read a few. I know we can't read 366, but I would love for all of you really to think about and reflect on that commitment today because, at the end of it all, we want to have these conversations. We also want to change our futures and our environments in our workplace, and so it starts with what you decide to take on and what you decide to transform for your leadership.

I just wanted to thank everyone for being willing and come into the conversation today and as you can see, we could be talking for days about this and still not get to a resolution point, but it's all about getting on the journey and starting where you are. So, I just want to thank everyone, and Alicia, I will turn it back over to you, if you want to shout out some of those commitments and then we can get into the questions and answers.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Definitely, thank you very much. I do see a few people typing them in and let me see if I can catch up with some of these.

Somebody said, I will use more creative ways to post jobs and seek out diverse candidates.

Another person said, sorry, it's bouncing around the law Rahim. I have made a commitment to just do better in all of my actions related to DEI. Sounds basic, but it keeps me grounded.

Then, somebody else said, focus on seeing race while not discriminating based on race. Maintain a view of the best outcome for everyone.

Somebody else is going to read and reflect on, nothing. Where did it go? Read and reflect on not being racist. Somebody else said.  
Sorry, one second takeaway.

We'll be asking senior leadership team to reflect on what our reason is for adding a DEI statement to our strategic plan.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Excellent.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Yes, one more. It says, I'm a gay man, CFO and Head of HR. I will create an optional inclusion Zoom session for our 75 worldwide employees.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Love it. Great. Thank you for sharing some of those.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Yes, and thank you everybody, for submitting those. Thank you, Emily and Lisa, for all the information you shared this afternoon. If there are any other questions, please type them into the

questions box. I know we have quite a few here, and we'd like to get through as many as we can in the remaining time we have. So, let me ask a few here.

One question is: have you found that there is a lot of assumption in inequities, discrimination, and racism?

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Normally yeah, I'm trying to process the question. So, have I found that there are a lot of assumptions. I'm not I'm not fully sure what the person asking means by that.

I think that I would say, sometimes. Is it subjective? I would say potentially, yes. I do feel like often the people experiencing the inequities are the experts, and they often come up against spaces where they're not believed that because those invisible doors are open to others, and then they're shut for maybe 1 or 2 people in an organization, the organization doesn't necessarily believe their lived experience to be illegitimate and so on.

I'm a believer in understanding and listening to marginalized populations, and really trying to see what I may not be seeing, and that's sort of my first place that I go. I think, organizationally, from a culture perspective, some cultures are more open to hearing what may not be working and others are not.

I think it can be subjective, but I think it's important to really listen and understand what it feels like when those doors are closed in your organization. Listening to that perspective, I don't know, if you have another take on that question.

**LISA BROWN ALEXANDER:** I actually do. Yeah. Thanks, Emily. One of the things that we do a lot of when we help organizations assess their culture is to facilitate conversations by organizational demographics. So, if she knows that there's a particular segment of your work force that is marginalized, or whose voices unnecessarily heard, it's OK to convene them and give them the brave space or safe space to have a conversation, to share their perspectives, their insights because what that does is two things. It does engagement., it conveys a commitment to having the voice of the voiceless be heard.

It also helps to inform the strategy or the approach that you take as an organization to address diversity, equity, and inclusion within your organization. What works for one organization may not work for another and it's very kind of specific to the needs and the makeup of your workforce. So, making an intentional safe, embrace space for those people to share their observations and concerns and to inform what you do as an organization is a very easy no cost way to advance the conversation at Nonprofit HR.

For example, immediately after the George Floyd incident, tragedy I should say, not even incident, we convened two groups of staff. The first was our staff who identify as black and we gave them space to have conversation and to express their concerns and their fears. We also separately convened the staff who don't identify as black to give them a safe space to express their concerns and experiences through the entire episode. It was a small gesture, but it was an important one for us, as a way of making sure that people who maybe didn't feel like they were going to be heard on either side of the equation were heard.

I would encourage you as a simple start to think through your own workforce demographics and identify where there might be opportunities to give voice to those who otherwise are voiceless.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Thank you, Lisa and Emily. Related to that, somebody asked, how do you create safe space if people start to say nasty things to each other? In those conversations, how do you create a safe space?

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Yeah. I think one thing that I always do, and I did share with you the rules of engagement on prior. It's important whenever you bring people together to talk to them about what the goal of the conversation is, what the parameters are, and let them know that you are going to sort of enforce whatever those rules of engagement are.

So, very few and far between, have I had people really get confrontational and disrespectful. More oftentimes, someone will say something offensive without knowing what they're saying is offensive. I think, usually, the group will politely correct it.

But, if necessary, you know, following up with that person will help them understand and give them perspective on what was shared. I think if people do start getting really emotional or hidden, you can call a time out, pause the conversation, allow individuals to calm down, and come back and revisit. I've had that happen before. We just call this time out and had some individual discussions and then come back to resume. I think the most important piece is just setting the stage first and helping people understand the purpose and why we're here and it's really to expand perspectives, not to debate. It's to listen, and to learn, and to hear others. No personal experiences as we move through. I've done a lot of these conversations, as you might imagine, over the last three weeks in various sectors and with groups.

Not once have we had anybody really step out and sort of get to that side of things, but I know it can happen.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Thank you. Somebody else asked a question mentioning that: a major responsibility for non-profit boards is fundraising and those tend to attract older, white people with connections to wealth.

How can we break this pattern and encourage more diversity on boards without tokenized?

**LISA BROWN ALEXANDER:** Let me address that really quickly, BoardSource put together a report called Leading with Intent back in 2017. Out of that work, they produced and created a number of principles and guidelines and steps that organizations can use to help diversify their boards, and we're in 2020. So yes, there are a lot of boards that are predominantly men, predominantly older people. We know that 27% of non-profit boards have absolutely no people of color on them whatsoever. We know that this is a real thing.

But if the idea is to try to diversify your donor base, it does start with your board and the communities that they're connected to.

It also gives you an opportunity to extend some of your board opportunities to new places and people who represent different walks of life. The first is to ascertain whether or not your board recognizes and values diversity and is ready to embrace diversity and inclusion. Then, go about the process of getting your organization into new communities, communities where perhaps you don't see wealth exists, but it does. There's a whole community of people, for example, graduates and alumni from, historically black colleges and universities. Many of those alumni are in very good financial positions and could potentially be donors to your organization.



Look beyond your immediate community on your board. Encourage your board to understand the importance of diversity and then lean on that report from BoardSource, *Leading with Intent*. It was done in 2017, because they have put together some excellent resources to help boards diversify both their board members and their donor base.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Lisa, I just want to add one other piece of that series that I strongly suggest that people really even just evaluate their systems for fundraising. What I mean by that is, Lisa alluded to the limiting beliefs we have about who can give money and who we ask and who we approach. But then, also, how do we position communities of color to leverage fundraising that might not be positive?

I know in many non-profits that I've worked for children of color are often lifted up as those that need things the most. We used to use the word dog and pony show because they would say, OK, we're going to come and bring these donors over here to see these kids and watch them and feel bad for them. It's setting up this dynamic that reinforces racism and reinforces classism and all of these other things. As you're thinking about transforming the leadership of who raises money, I would also encourage you to think about your actual systems. Who is on your fundraising flyers, and how does that look, and how are you positioning the need that you're fundraising for so that you're making sure that equity is infused throughout your fundraising processes, as well.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Great. Thank you. Another question is related to offering feedback or performance reviews, do you have any resources or tools that are proven to support feedback that's free of implicit bias?

**LISA BROWN ALEXANDER:** That's a tougher one. We are going to be looking at the full talent management life cycle as part of this series. We will be diving into performance management and how bias shows up in the performance management process. That is a topic that we're going to be tackling in the coming months. Stay tuned for that, but I'm going to turn that to Emily to answer. I don't position myself as the DEI expert, so I'll let her answer that one.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Yeah, I think different non-profits use different systems for performance management, and I would just, again, be thinking about how bias might be introduced into some of the systems that you're using. I'll just throw it out there.

If it's a nine-box system, how are you ensuring that the leaders that are putting the employees into the nine-box have been trained, and understand what biases, and how their biases might come in to how they're making those decisions? Also, are we soliciting opinions for how replacing individuals based on multiple inputs versus just one person's opinion? Things like that. It's tough because a lot of people approach it differently, but I really think that, as you begin to look at your system and how it's used, looking for places where bias might be introduced, and then making the shifts and how it is actually executed so that it eliminates bias. So, that's just one example.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Great, thank you. I have a few questions related to leadership and the board, how do we get leadership commitment to DEI efforts? How do we present an argument to the board on the importance of incorporating race and diversity practices? So, the question is at the higher leadership level, highly advanced DEI.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** Yeah, I can jump in first and then you can add on. I think that for-profit companies understand this really well because for them, it's about making money and about knowing that. They have to be diverse, to appeal to diverse client bases that purchase their products, right? But, in the non-profit sector, it's a little bit more difficult because that's sort of not the work that we do. Oftentimes we do really good work, serving all different aspects of community, but maybe our staff does not reflect that and the board feels like everything's going OK the way it is and they don't see sort of the value in it. So, I encourage people to think about like what is the value proposition? What is the business case for your organization? Are you going to be able to serve more people? If your constituents see themselves reflected in the leadership of your organization, it expands your mission. We also know that diverse teams are more effective and more creative which helps drive innovation in organizations.

So, what is it for you that having a diverse, no leadership team, and having actual equitable systems and processes is going to drive for your strategic outcomes, and what your organization is looking to do within the community? It's a little tougher because we don't have that business event number to drive to in the non-profit sector.

We also know that we can expand our reach if people feel welcome within our doors, or within our community that we create. Also, that expanding our mission can cause an impact and is what all of us in the social sector wanted to do. Equity, diversity, and inclusion is directly related to our ability to do that.

Lisa? I don't know if you have other ideas not.

**LISA BROWN ALEXANDER:** I don't. No, you nailed it.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** OK, great, and then, my other question here, what can we offer our staff and teams to support them during the Black Lives Matter Movement? Anything else that you haven't mentioned?

**LISA BROWN ALEXANDER:** I don't want to under emphasize the importance of listening, without trying to solve. I think, sometimes, as leaders, we want to kind of go straight to a solution. When, in fact, what some folks need and want right now is to be heard, to feel safe, and to know that the organization, that they're giving their time and talent to care about who they are as a whole person. And so I think the best advice I can offer as a talent management professional, as having been in this space for more than 25 years, is the power of listening, and the power of making space, for people to share their concerns, to be heard without fear of retaliation.

Now, that's a good thing to do. It requires trust on the part of both parties, but it also requires a willingness to hear things that may be difficult without necessarily trying to respond or defend oneself or defend our organizations.

Sometimes we really just need to listen and reflect back on the culture work that we do as a firm and I'm always amazed at how powerful being heard can be to those who otherwise don't feel heard. I've left meetings where people have been in tears. People have expressed gratitude because they just want it to be heard. So, my best advice to you as the person who asked the question is, make space to listen. Do it intentionally. Don't rush that process. People whose voices otherwise are not heard, to be heard and convey to them that it's safe to do so and be sure that you insulate them from any retaliatory action for having spoken up.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** Great. Then, somebody else has mentioned, they've struggled with many leaders on diversity to the extent that the leaders have said: we're enforcing it. To the extent that we will face reverse discrimination suits, how would you respond to such a statement and can reverse discrimination be a byproduct of diversity efforts?

Any thoughts on that?

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** That's a loaded question.

**LISA BROWN ALEXANDER:** Very loaded.

**EMILY HOLTHAUS:** I'm trying to think of a best way to position my thoughts around this. I think at home. Racism in itself is related to systems and who is on top of the system and has power and privilege. It's very difficult to sort of take that argument of reverse racism because, really, it's about where power is seated and how the system works to benefit others.

So, I'm not a lawyer, and I don't know the legal pieces of all of this. I don't know, Lisa, you can weigh in on sort of the legalities of it. But, I think being intentional about trying to create diversity is something that a lot of institutions do well, and they figured out a way to do it so that it's equitable. Really, we're not talking about affirmative action. What we're saying is these three seats need to be held by these three types of people, or whatever. We're talking about creating systems that allow equal opportunities for all. We have to be honest, in some organizations where sponsorship, networks, or how people advancing move up. If you are sponsored by somebody in senior leadership, you continue to move. If you aren't pulled in and sponsored by someone high up in the network, you don't move, and you get stuck. I think those are the systems that exist that sort of create the challenges that we have today, especially at the senior leadership levels. So, we have to help people understand that those systems are in place in their organization, and that we need to disrupt them and make them equitable.

I think once we help people understand that, they can see that it's not really our first discrimination piece. It's about leveling the playing field and opening opportunities for all and that's really what you're striving for, right? It's not about, a way to give somebody some more of an advantage. It's not about not giving anyone about an inch, and it's about opening it up for everyone to have equal opportunity.

So, Lisa, I don't have the legal answer for that because I don't have the HR background like you do.

**LISA BROWN ALEXANDER:** You know, there have been cases of reverse discrimination and particularly within the academic and higher ed space. But I think if you focus on, as Emily said, trying to level the playing field ensuring that your organization is inclusive that your policies are not adversely and disproportionately impacting certain segments of your workforce and trying to make those corrections continue to convey the message. This is not about taking away from one, so another can get, right? It's ensuring that everyone has access, and everybody's included.

That is not to say that you're going to be fully and completely insulated from someone leveling a claim that they experienced reverse racism in your organization. I think by continuously and intentionally conveying that you're creating an inclusive workplace and that you are trying to create an equitable workplace to make sure that not just your systems, but your practices are insights inclusive and equitable. Then you can lean on that now. That, again, doesn't prevent someone from making the claim. Your practices really will speak to, if

it rises to a level of a legal matter, how you've actually handled your benefits, your hiring practices, your promotional practices, how your policies actually played out, will tell the story in a court of law. So, check those practices.

Check your organization for equity. Do an assessment, if you don't know how to do one, find someone who can help you. We certainly can do that. But we'll check your practices and your systems to make sure that no one, regardless of where they sit, is disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged.

**ALICIA SCHOSHINSKI:** OK, great, thank you very much. I think that's all the time we have today for question and answer, but I know there were some questions about asking for some resources for reading and such. So, we will try to follow up and provide some of those in our e-mail follow up. Thank you to everyone who attended today's webinar. We certainly hope you found it to be valuable. Thanks again to Lisa and Emily for leading today's discussion. We'll be hosting the next webinar in this series on July 28th, and that will be focused on Inclusive Workforce Planning and Diversity Practices in non-profits.

As Lisa mentioned, we will be going into more of the actions you can take in our subsequent webinars. Please be sure to complete the feedback survey that will pop up once the webcast has ended. If you'd like more information about available services, or support from Nonprofit HR, please e-mail info at [nonprofithr.com](mailto:nonprofithr.com) or visit us on the web at [nonprofithr.com](http://nonprofithr.com).

I believe we also posted the link for the upcoming Diversities Survey. So please take the time to fill that out, as well.

So, we thank you all for attending, and we hope you have a wonderful day.

**TRANSCRIPT END**





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