

AUGS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan

Our multi-year plan, will focus on the following areas:

- **Leadership and Engagement:** Create a professional culture that promotes ongoing conversation regarding diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice within the AUGS board, committees, and member communities.
- **Knowledge and Education:** Provide consistent educational opportunities to ensure professionals in the field of urogynecology have the knowledge and skills to deliver high quality, culturally competent and equitable care.
- **Research:** Promote the scholarship of underrepresented health care professionals and scientists. Support research dedicated to addressing the needs of marginalized populations.
- **Recognition:** Designate days for formal acknowledgement of enslaved women subjected to abuse in the name of advancing science.
- **Advocacy:** Engage, partner, and invest in the work of community-based organizations, advocates, and activists promoting inclusiveness and advancing access to health care for all women. Leverage relationships with governmental agencies and private industry to reduce health inequities.

Goals and Objectives

Leadership and Engagement - Create opportunities for expanding the conversation regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion within AUGS and amongst its board, committees, and member communities.

Objectives:

1. Create a permanent DEI Committee that reports into the AUGS Board of Directors. Charged with:
 - a. Overseeing the DEI efforts and action plan for AUGS
2. Charge the Governance Committee with ensuring the AUGS Board of Directors is comprised of a diverse group that represents the AUGS membership and its commitment to inclusion.
 - a. Consider designating Board seats for various membership categories to ensure broad representation for example designating board seats for a private practice physician, fellow, allied health professionals, etc.
3. Develop and implement a mentorship Program that is representative of the AUGS membership and provides opportunities for all members to engage and develop leadership skills.
 - a. Establish a pathway for members to access AUGS volunteer opportunities, as well as career mentorship.
4. Consider expanding special interest or affinity groups/outreach to members in private practice, members who are retired and younger women to determine if new programming should be offered that is focused on the diverse needs of AUGS' growing membership.
5. Conduct a Membership Engagement Survey to further explore inclusion concerns noted in the Climate Survey
 - a. Explore the value of AUGS and membership in the society.
 - b. Explore views on current volunteer opportunities offered, ability to become a volunteer and if there are other volunteer opportunities members are seeking.

Knowledge and Education - Provide consistent educational opportunities to ensure professionals in the field of urogynecology have the knowledge and skills to deliver high quality, culturally competent and equitable care.

Objectives:

1. Create a new educational resource section on the AUGS Website for DEI information and resources.
2. Develop educational programming or curriculum on anti-racism, equity, diversity, justice, cultural differences with our patients, community outreach, law, and medicine, with a focus on women's health
3. Build a sense of community and encourage dialogue on these topics to foster engagement. Inclusion and connectivity/personal connection are the fabric of our organization and need to be nurtured at the organizational level.
4. Establish discussion forums for open discussion and sharing of information within the AUGS membership and in the broader community.
 - a. Recommend the first discussion forum be the creation of a DEI Blog on the AUGS Website that provides members a communication vehicle for sharing personal stories, experiences, and information with the Urogyn community.

5. Charge the DEI Committee with reviewing the AUGS patient education materials to evaluate if they are sensitive to the different patient cultures.
 - a. Ensure bias-free patient educational materials that support improved health literacy among women.
 - i. Review current fact sheets to ensure they appeal to a wide audience (including LGBTQ+ population)
 - b. Establish a process to review AUGS patient facing information to ensure inclusivity in language and visual depictions, keeping in mind multiple DEI issues.
 - c. Identify new topics that should be considered through the lens of DEI initiatives (pain is one example).
6. Encourage faculty to reach out and include diverse speakers (practice setting, diversity, etc.) for all AUGS education efforts (courses, workshops, webinars, etc.)
7. Recognize, react, and respond to workplace gender and racial micro and macroaggressions against providers

Research - Promote the scholarship of underrepresented health care professionals and scientists. Support research dedicated to addressing the needs of marginalized populations.

Objectives:

1. Work to increase representation of study participants to include women of color and other marginalized communities in research.
2. Develop a new program within AUGS that provides research education, mentorship and leadership training for early-career professionals and underrepresented minorities to increase the number of clinician scientists.
3. Consider expanding the PFD Week Abstract process to include:
 - a. Evaluation criteria focused on the project's inclusion of women of color or marginalized communities
 - b. Health disparities research category equivalent to quality of life, basic science, etc.
4. Include criteria about recruitment strategy of patients that fosters inclusion of women of color and marginalized communities in the PFD Research Foundation Grants program. Recommend using language similar to NIH.
 - a. Increase diversity of patient population included in Urogyn studies.
 - b. Ensure grants include information in the methods section about increasing representation of URM.

Recognition - Designate days for formal acknowledgement of enslaved women subjected to abuse in the name of advancing science.

Objectives:

1. February 28 thru March 1 will be established as days for formal, national acknowledgement of Betsey, Lucy, and Anarcha, the enslaved women operated on by Dr. J. Marion Sims, and other women that were subjected to abuse in the name of advancing science.
2. Develop an AUGS-specific program that recognizes and honors Betsey, Lucy and Anarcha.
 - a. Create an endowed research grant and lecture fund through the PFD Research Foundation – The ABLE (Anarcha, Betsey, Lucy, et al) Research Endowment funds an annual lecture at PFD Week and research project focused on advocating and improving care for marginalized groups.

Advocacy - Engage, partner, and invest in the work of community-based organizations, advocates, and activists promoting inclusiveness and advancing access to health care for all women. Leverage relationships with governmental agencies and private industry to reduce health inequities.

Objectives:

1. Expand the vision of the AUGS Patient Advisory Group to include patients of diverse backgrounds.
2. Medical Student and Resident Outreach/Mentorship Program
3. AUGS Resident Scholars Program
 - a. Create an expansion of this program to include those residents from DO programs, community-based programs, programs not affiliated with a major academic center, resource-limited areas and/or programs. Ensure there is focus on the diversity of the residents receiving these awards.
4. Creation of a Pathway Program (similar to a Big brother, big sister program concept)
 - a. Support fellowship programs to remain competitive for residents
5. Expansion of the AUGS Marketing Toolkit to include community engagement tools and resources.