

## Minutes POC SIG CALL June 13, 2019

### **Opening remarks and general announcements** (Christopher Watson)

### **SIG leadership announcements/changes** (Gayle Iwamasa/Marcos Lopez)

- Dr. Marcos Lopez is departing the VA and will step down from his leadership position. Dr. Christopher Watson will be taking on a leadership role in the SIG.
- Chris spoke to the contributions that Marcos has made and stepping -up make change in the VA
- Marcos encouraged others to continue the efforts and highlighted the 4 core components of Allyship.

### **VACO update** (Claire Collie/Gayle Iwamasa)

- Last week was the official start of the Mission Act. There are a few hiccups with access for mental health, but they are aware and working toward addressing this.

### **AVAPL Conference debriefing** (Marcos Lopez and Gayle Iwamasa)

This was open to the group about the issues surrounding Diversity.

### **AVAPL conference topics related to diversity:**

- ✓ Invited Panel – Allyship 101: The Who, What, and Why
- ✓ Breakout – Showing Up for Social Justice: Allyship (How to be a better human being)
- ✓ Networking lunch – POC SIG
- ✓ Breakout – Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Trainees: Their Perceptions and Ours
- ✓ POC SIG Social Hour (evening)
- ✓ Best Practices from the Field – Developing a Diversity Consultation Service for Patient Care and Staff Support
- ✓ APA Presidential Address from Dr. Rosie Davis – topic was on Poverty

### **The group provided feedback about the conference:**

Comment 1- Spoke to thinking that things were great and that the range and expanse of the topics covering diversity was excellent. Felt like others may have felt shocked or surprised by the issues presented. It felt new to some present which was interested

Comment 2- Concur with what was said previously and noted that there was a complete lack of information surrounding microaggressions and allyship as concepts.

Comment 3- Appreciated that a lot of the presentations were in the large group so many people could not opt out of the programming, as the commenter feels that many assume that since they are nice people they know enough about diversity. It was refreshing to see the infusion across so many presentations. The commenter was glad that many were uncomfortable and had some strong reactions.

Additional comments stressed the importance of having these conversations and how do we as a group pull people into having these conversations and how do we bring that to a larger scale. Many were pleased to see the opportunity for sharing.

People need to see people of color at the conference in the future.

Dr. Sam Wan as AVAPL Leadership noted- This was the first year that there was an array of diversity throughout the conference at this level. He encouraged those who attended to please submit the post-conference survey and provide their insights. The post-conference survey information can be useful for future planning. The first planning meeting is scheduled for June 26<sup>th</sup> for next year's conference.

The newsletter committee reached out to Chris about their debrief which included an action plan as to what they can do to be more inclusive of diversity issues in the newsletter.

**Constructive feedback that was shared:**

Discussed that some felt the conference was a bit cliquish and did not feel apart of the larger group. This was especially the case for some who were new to the conference. We should work toward creating a more open and welcoming environment.

Also, others noted that some attendees felt that the discussions were divisive. This led to a discussion of what exactly was meant by 'divisive.' This discussion will be continued on a future call.

**Education Corner** (Kristin Powell)

Please contact Kristin if you are interested in participating or know of others who would be willing to share their leadership journey at [Kristin.Powell@va.gov](mailto:Kristin.Powell@va.gov)

**Concluding comments** (Christopher Watson)

Our next call will occur on 07/11/2019

Participants on the Call = 28