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Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Committee Purpose Statement

Audubon Community Nature Center's (ACNC) Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Committee is working toward creating a more inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible organization by:

1. examining the ways that ACNC can address disparities in the communities that we serve.
2. engaging community members, especially those whose voices are often marginalized.
3. providing a space to learn about and discuss IDEA issues and how they relate to ACNC's organizational culture, programming, staffing, leadership, and governance.
4. establishing organizational principles, policies, and procedures that foster an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible organization.
5. providing ongoing education/training on IDEA related topics that affect ACNC and the communities that it serves.
6. conducting ongoing evaluations of the organizational progress in meeting these goals at least annually.

IDEA Definition of Terms

ACNC has adopted the following definition of terms that inform its IDEA Commitment.*

Inclusion: Fostering a sense of belonging by centering, valuing, and amplifying the voices, perspectives, and styles of those who experience more barriers based on their identities.

Diversity: Valuing the psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals.

Equity: Recognizing that longstanding advantages and barriers exist which need to be eliminated in order to ensure that resources are allocated in a way that everyone has access to the same opportunities.

Access: Designing environments and experiences to be used by the widest range of people in an integrated and effective manner.

** These definitions are based on resources from The J.E.D.I. Collaborative, US Climate Action Network, and American Trails.*

Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access

Audubon Community Nature Center recognizes that a healthy ecosystem is defined by its level of biodiversity. Similarly, ACNC believes that the level of diversity within an organization's leadership, staff, and constituency defines its health and overall relevance to the community that it serves.

ACNC also recognizes that there is a lack of diversity within the backgrounds, experiences, identities, and abilities of people within the environmental field as well as within the existing governance, leadership, staff, and constituency of Audubon Community Nature Center.

To uphold the IDEA commitments listed below, ACNC recognizes that it requires the acceptance, active participation, and an ongoing evaluation of these efforts by staff, board of directors, and the broader ACNC community.

Specific goals that address the organization's ongoing IDEA efforts will be included in ACNC's Strategic Plan which is updated every three years.

In order to fulfill its vision where *every* child within the local community has a real and healthy connection to nature, ACNC makes the following commitments:

1. Organizational Culture and Human Resources

ACNC commits to fostering an environment that respects each individual, seeks and values diverse perspectives, and ensures each employee, volunteer and/or member can actively contribute to fulfilling the organization's mission. ACNC is committed to making the time and space necessary to have ongoing conversations related to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access that will continually evolve and move the organization forward in a positive manner. ACNC will continue to ask: 'who is not present in the room/conversation that should be considered?'

2. Organizational Leadership and Governance

ACNC commits to recruiting and retaining board members, committee members, and staff leadership who represent a diverse set of backgrounds, experiences, identities, and abilities with the intention of having leadership/governance that accurately reflects the surrounding community. Additionally, the organizational leadership and governance commits to having regular conversations to evaluate the organization's progress related to its IDEA commitments.

3. Major Financial Support

ACNC commits to upholding its IDEA commitments among financial partners. ACNC will ensure that its major donors, business sponsors, investments, and Audubon Community Partners' culture and practices do not conflict with ACNC's commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access. ACNC retains the right to reject future financial support and remove all recognition attributed to any donor that exhibits practices that are in conflict with these commitments.

4. Programs and Services

ACNC commits to creating and implementing programs that are designed with an awareness of individuals' differences and perspectives. Additionally, ACNC commits to fostering an inclusive and accessible environment that treats all participants and visitors with respect and enables them to have a positive experience.

5. Buildings and Grounds

ACNC commits to making its buildings and grounds welcoming to all visitors regardless of their ability, age, ethnicity, gender, primary language, and socioeconomic background.

6. Principles, Policies, and Procedures

ACNC commits to addressing inclusion, diversity, equity, and access in each of its organizational policies and procedures.