



APA Board of Directors - Committee & Task Force Report

BOARD MEETING

DATE: Sunday, April 15, 2007

TO: APA Board of Directors

FROM: Fernando Costa, AICP; Mitchell J. Silver, AICP
Co-Chairs of the Diversity Subcommittee of Membership

SUBJECT: Diversity Subcommittee Report

ADOPTED POLICY:
Action on this report will not constitute adopted policy.

TYPE OF REPORT:

Action
[X] Information

CONSENT AGENDA

Yes
[X] No

FISCAL NOTE:

Activities will be funded through the adopted budget for FY 2008-2009.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN:

Activities advance goals and strategies related to diversity.

RECOMMENDATION: Acceptance of this report.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE BOARD: None.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Diversity is very important to APA. We believe that reflecting the diversity of our constituents can strengthen the organization as a whole, and this fact is recognized and understood by our leadership

The Diversity Initiative includes the implementation of the adopted recommendations of the Diversity Task Force, the actions outlined in the Growth Strategy, and in the goals and strategies of the 2006-2007 Development Plan.

The Diversity Subcommittee met in a series of conference calls since the Fall Leadership meetings in Fort Worth in November 2006. The report that follows describes the progress made in implementation of the various activities that are part of APA's Diversity Initiative. The Diversity Subcommittee recognizes that increasing the diversity of our organization is vital to the future of APA. The goals and strategies to achieve this objective are being implemented throughout the Association.

INTRODUCTION

Based on the APA membership data, APA has lower percentages of minority members than the U.S. population at large. Less than 10% of APA members are minorities, compared with over 30% in the general population. This under representation is based on several factors which APA has sought to substantiate through membership surveys, focus groups and the minority summit. This information gathering has been crucial to developing our overall strategy to improve APA's diversity and meet the needs of a diverse membership.

In March 2005, the Board adopted the report of the Diversity Task Force, which included recommendations listed below. Some of these are increasing the amount of funding for minority scholarships, creating an APA Ambassadors Outreach program, and creating a Diversity Portal on our website and a Social Equity Reader. APA has implemented many of the recommendations and we are carrying out the rest.

In 2004, the APA Board adopted a Growth Strategy, which identified minorities as one of five key groups to be targeted for membership growth. The Growth Strategy listed nine strategies to increase minority membership. One of the strategies called for a Minority Summit to be held in order to find out from APA members and non-members: why minorities are not joining APA or retaining their membership; what type of opportunities, programs and services APA should establish to attract minority planners; what type of planning issues in minority communities that APA should cover; what programs, products or services APA should offer; and, to validate the nine strategies the APA Board adopted in the Growth Strategy as it relates to minorities.

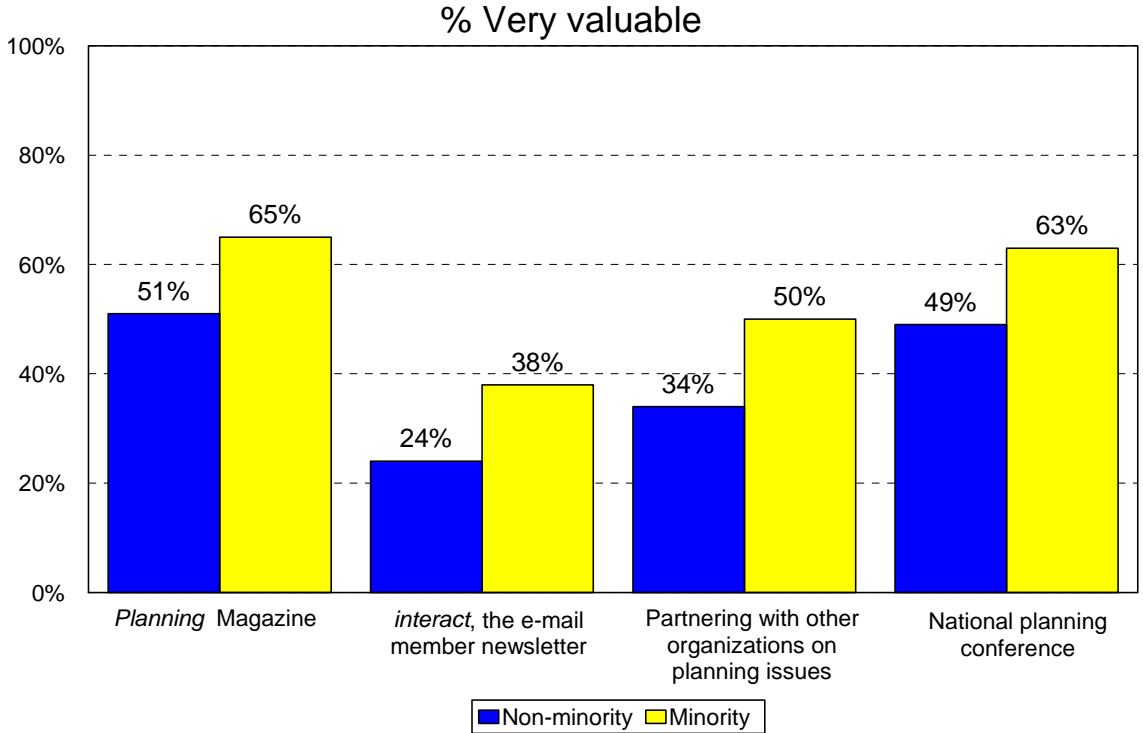
Also, APA's Development Plan for 2006-2007, which lists the Association's highest goals and outlines strategies to achieve them, contains many elements which relate to increasing our diversity and better serving a diverse membership. Those strategies are listed in this report, and our progress in achieving them is described in detail below.

Also, the Association has conducted a scientific membership survey, which included an over-sampling of minority members, to see how their satisfaction with APA's products and services compares with other members. The results are good, and are detailed below.

APA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2006

The differences here are a striking change from the survey results for the same questions asked in 2002. In the earlier survey, minority members were less likely than other members to say APA’s programs were very valuable. In 2006, minority members were more likely to say products and services were very valuable.

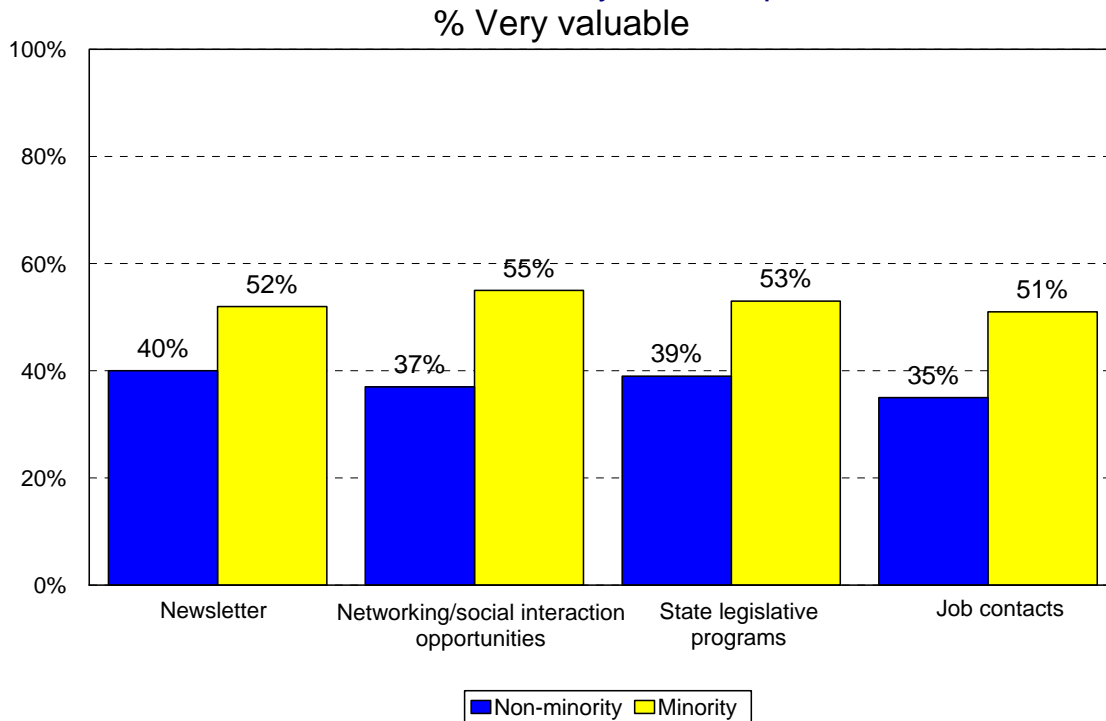
Q3 & 4. How valuable or invaluable are the following products, programs, and services offered by APA?*



*N sizes range from 252 to 291 for Non-minority Regular members, and from 102 to 116 for Minority Regular members.

The same results were seen when we asked about chapter programs. Overall, minority members perceived greater value in these products and services than did other members. The results in this table and the one above are the responses of Regular Members, since our sample sizes did not allow for statistically valid over-sampling of minority Student Members and minority Planning Board Members.

Q5. How valuable or invaluable are the following products, programs, and services offered by APA chapters?*



*N sizes range from 249 to 276 for Non-minority Regular members, and from 97 to 107 for Minority Regular members.

APA AMBASSADORS PROGRAM

In response to the Board-adopted recommendation of the Diversity Task Force, APA National is initiating the APA Ambassador Program. This is a program in which members work to attract minority college students to the planning profession. We believe the Ambassador Program will benefit the diversity and growth of both the planning field and APA’s membership.

The APA Ambassador Program is designed to connect students, particularly students of color, with practicing planners in an effort to: (1) expose them to the field of planning and related careers as well as (2) educate them about pursuing graduate studies in the field. This program will target educational institutions with high percentages of minority students including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

APA National is asking that current leadership be responsible for helping to identify qualified APA Ambassador candidates. Ambassadors should be APA members of color with at least five years of experience in the profession. Ambassadors must be willing and able to make a one-year commitment to the program. During the designated time period, each Ambassador is expected to visit three to five educational institutions to conduct informational sessions on the field of planning. Ambassadors are also encouraged to attend on-campus career and graduate school fairs. Ambassadors should plan to visit educational institutions within the Ambassador's geographic region.

Becoming an APA Ambassador will be a voluntary leadership position and compensation will not be provided. APA National will cover registration fees and other related expenses for career and graduate school fairs. Individual APA Chapters and Divisions are encouraged to provide additional funding for their Ambassadors. APA National will also assist with the identification of outreach opportunities, the provision of promotional materials and resources, and logistics coordination.

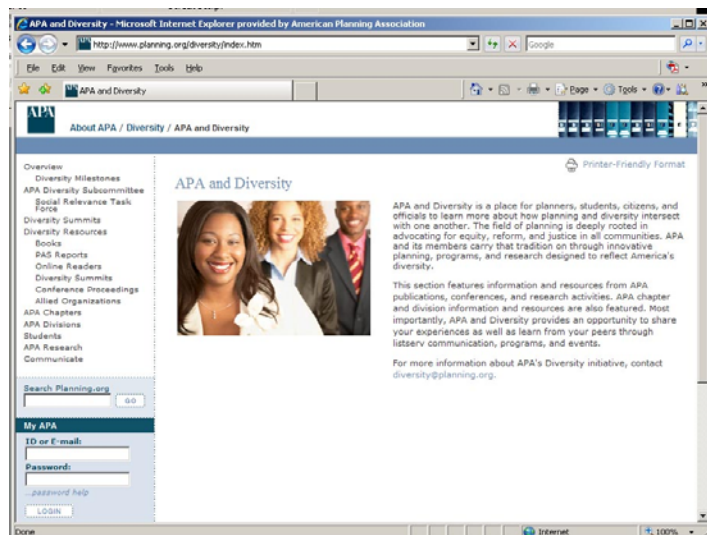
The Diversity Subcommittee is working closely with the North Carolina Chapter's Diversity Committee, which agreed to try the program as a pilot this year to see what materials or lessons learned can be gained before the program is officially rolled out. We are working with Fleming El-Amin and other chapter leaders, and are planning to host a pilot program with 3 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Shaw, St. Augustine's and NC Central) and with NC State University this year.

The APA Ambassador Program provides a unique opportunity for individual APA Chapters, Divisions, and members to become directly involved in the recruitment and development of a diverse new generation of planners. The Ambassadors Program will be rolled out in the fall of 2007.

Diversity Web Portal

The recent launch of the diversity web portal continues to offer a valuable resource for those interested in APA's diversity initiative or in social equity and planning. Also, the site has links to chapter and division programs related to diversity.

The diversity portal is online at www.planning.org/diversity.



Planners of Color Acknowledgments

One of the recommendations of the Diversity Task Force in 2005 was to broaden the “Planning Story” by acknowledging the accomplishments of planners of color in *Planning* magazine, *Practicing Planner*, interact and on APA’s website.

Over the past century, planners of color have made significant contributions to planning and the profession, yet little is known about their story. Today, planners of color are making great places, great plans, and great communities, yet little is known about their story. Planners past and present should be acknowledged to not only recognize their contributions, but to inspire young people to pursue planning as a profession and to continue the tradition of “Making Great Communities Happen.”

APA has continued its long tradition of highlighting both economic and racial diversity issues in its publications. Virtually every issue of *Planning* magazine has one or more articles—sometimes the feature article—that focus on diversity issues. We have recently launched a new, occasional series on “Overlooked America”. There were also frequent articles focusing on diversity in *Practicing Planner*.

The current issue of *Practicing Planner* (Volume 5, Number 1, 2007) is focused on social responsibility, and includes the four papers presented at the AICP Symposium in Fort Worth.

Finally, the Diversity Subcommittee has organized a Diversity Forum at the National Planning Conference in Philadelphia, on Tuesday from 5:15 to 6:15 at the Convention Center. All leadership is encouraged to attend. At the Forum, we will discuss the work of the committee, and engage in dialogue with members. The Forum precedes the joint Diversity Reception, hosted by the APA population divisions.

IMPLEMENTATION: APA’s Executive Director will ensure implementation of the activities described in this report.

DIVERSITY SUBCOMMITTEE ROSTER:

FERNANDO COSTA, AICP
MITCHELL J. SILVER, AICP
IRVING M. BLUE
CORNELIUS DAVIS, AICP
JEANETTE DINWIDDIE-MOORE, AICP
TED JOJOLA
MARJORIE P. PRESS
VERONICA ROSALES, AICP
HING WONG, AICP
