

Organization Name: Gannett Fleming

Project or Program Name: [did not provide]

Goal that best reflects your Project or Program's achievements: Promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racist policies through our work in the tolling industry

Launch date for the Project or Program

1/5/2018

How many months of proven experience is this submission based upon?

Gannett Fleming's efforts around diversity equity and inclusion are more than a project or program. Instead, it is a journey that continues to evolve, inspired by our desire to create a culture of belonging and support the communities we serve in meaningful way. We officially launched our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee (Steering Committee), roughly 5 years. The Steering Committee has broad responsibility to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion across the organization.

Is this Project or Program complete? If no, when will it be completed?

No. Our work to become more diverse, equitable and inclusive will be on-going and continuing to expand as the firm grows. We view DE&I as core to our values and a key component to our overall business strategy moving forward with no end in sight. While there have been and will continue to be key milestones that we reach, there is always room to improve and enhance our existing strategy, approach, and programming. Gannett Fleming has some aggressive goals around growth to be accomplished by 2025. Given our DE&I strategy is directly linked to Gannett Fleming's Strategic Action Plan, we envision December 2025 as a pivotal point in fulfilling our commitment to corporate social responsibility and equity to stakeholders, both internal and external.

Briefly describe the Project or Program

In 2016, Gannett Fleming established a Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee. This Steering Committee is responsible for developing DE&I strategy that aligns with Gannett Fleming's business objective and goals. Primary areas of focus are to drive leadership commitment and accountability, and to foster and drive change by applying a lens of inclusion across our business, processes, people, and policies. Ultimately the D & I Steering Committee is responsible for guiding continual improvement in diversity, equity and inclusion within Gannett Fleming.

What objective(s) was the Project or Program designed to accomplish?

- Raise awareness and promote the benefits of building diversity and inclusion within the business.
- Influence change by supporting the recruitment and retention of diverse talent.
- Supporting the implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across the business
- Create a workplace culture where all employees feel heard, respected, welcomed, and valued for their unique qualities, ideas and perspective.
- Work collaboratively with Gannett Fleming Board of Directors to improve diversity and inclusion performance and outcomes across the organization.

How did the Project or Program accomplish the stated objectives?

To help guide these efforts, Gannett Fleming engaged a diversity and inclusion expert, who brought an outside perspective and educated leadership on what is happening within the consulting engineering industry, as well as offered best practices from other industries where efforts are more advanced than ours. The outside consultant served as a powerful and critical component to putting our finger on the pulse of employees' perception of where the company stands on the spectrum of diversity and inclusion. For example, the consultant administered a survey to employees, led focus groups across several offices, and conducted executive-level interviews. The findings were then summarized and analyzed, and ultimately used to inform the firm's strategic action plan.

The firm's talent acquisition team has employed a number of strategies to help ensure that diverse slates of candidates are being presented during the interview and selection process to embrace inclusive hiring practices, including:

- No longer asking for salary history as part of the hiring process, as it's proven to contribute to widening the wage gap, adversely impacting women and people of color
- Active engagement of professional associations that serve individuals from underrepresented groups such as the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE).
- Diversifying the interview teams to present a variety of perspectives about a candidate
- Piloting the presentation of "blind resumes" to the hiring manager (i.e., removing the names and other identifying information about candidates)

Education and training are important elements to building awareness and reaching skeptics and late adopters. They are also essential to all levels of the organization — from managers who should be mindful of employees who are being spoken over during meetings, to early career professionals who are developing their workplace behaviors.

Education for employees has included two mandatory sessions on unconscious bias. Unconscious bias refers to the brain's automatic, instant association of stereotypes or attitudes toward particular groups, without conscious awareness.

We also recognized cultural observances and celebrations by launching our "Lift Every Voice" series in 2020. Gannett Fleming employees were asked to respond to a series of questions on why these cultural events were important to them and how our diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives have impacted their experience at Gannett Fleming. 2021 marks the 2nd year of formally and acknowledging these celebrations, leading to a broader understanding of different perspectives, while creating a stronger sense of belonging among our employees. These celebrations include Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy, the contributions of Black engineers during Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month and Asian American Pacific Islander month.

What were the successful, demonstrable results of the Project or Program that positively affected the customer, agency and/or the community?

Clients and partners who were also interested in driving a more inclusive and diverse culture have engaged the firm for advice and collaboration. Gannett Fleming works with other architecture, engineering, and construction companies through groups like the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) Design Professional's Coalition to share best practices and improve the entire industry. No one has all the answers, and it's been encouraging to see our industry rise to the

challenge of tackling this issue through collaboration.

In 2018, the firm began sponsoring two annual engineering scholarships — one for a female student and one for a Black student — and deliberate and targeted recruiting efforts at historically Black colleges and universities. In 2019, the scholarship was expanded to include computer science majors, all with the goal of developing diverse talent and encouraging innovation.

Is your Project or Program relevant and applicable to the overall toll industry? If so, how?

The 48,000 miles of highway development and expansion through the 1950's 60's and 70's, resulted in the demise of black communities that were thriving and vibrant, gutting neighborhoods, impacting the tax base, that has led to disparities in public education, healthcare and impacted the life of communities of color. Our DE&I efforts coupled with the challenges of 2021, have created a heightened sense of awareness around the social and environmental impacts of what was once considered progress. We have begun to have conversations with clients about being more intentional and making it a point to consider the integration of environmental and social equity goals in the design and development of infrastructure projects.

How did this Project or Program achieve or demonstrate excellence?

In 2017 metrics for the firm in the areas of employee retention and promotion in under-represented groups fell flat. Since 2018 we have realized an over 14% increase in the number of hires coming from underrepresented groups. Our current voluntary and involuntary turnover rates against industry standards demonstrates that the firm has better performance than most industry peers.

Describe any innovative aspects of your Project or Program

Promoting diversity, equity and inclusion enhances innovative thinking. At Gannett Fleming, we've created a space where innovative ideas can thrive, inviting different perspectives and opinions across the entire organization. It is difficult to highlight one aspect of our programming or journey that could be considered innovative, given every organization is at a different stage of DE&I. Connected Women at Gannett Fleming, an employee resource group, graduated it's first class of Connected Relationship mentors/mentees in 2020. This Connected Relationships Mentorship Program was created with the goal of developing mentor/mentee relationships and helping to support them by fostering a creative, encouraging, and mutually beneficial environment. In targeting women and people of color, this program successfully cultivated relationships between individuals who, otherwise, may have never had the opportunity to meet and learn from one another. Establishing mentor programs can be quite impactful to bridge generational and cultural gaps and dispelling gender and racial stereotypes. Making these connections internally have elevated strong emerging talent from diverse groups, lifting voices that may otherwise may not have been heard.

List individuals worthy of special recognition for this Project or Program

- Robert Scaer, Chairman and CEO
- Masai Lawson, Manager of Talent Acquisition & Chair Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee
- Judy Hricak, Chief Communications Officer and Founding Member of Connected Women
- Jason McCartney, Former Steering Committee Chair of Future Generations