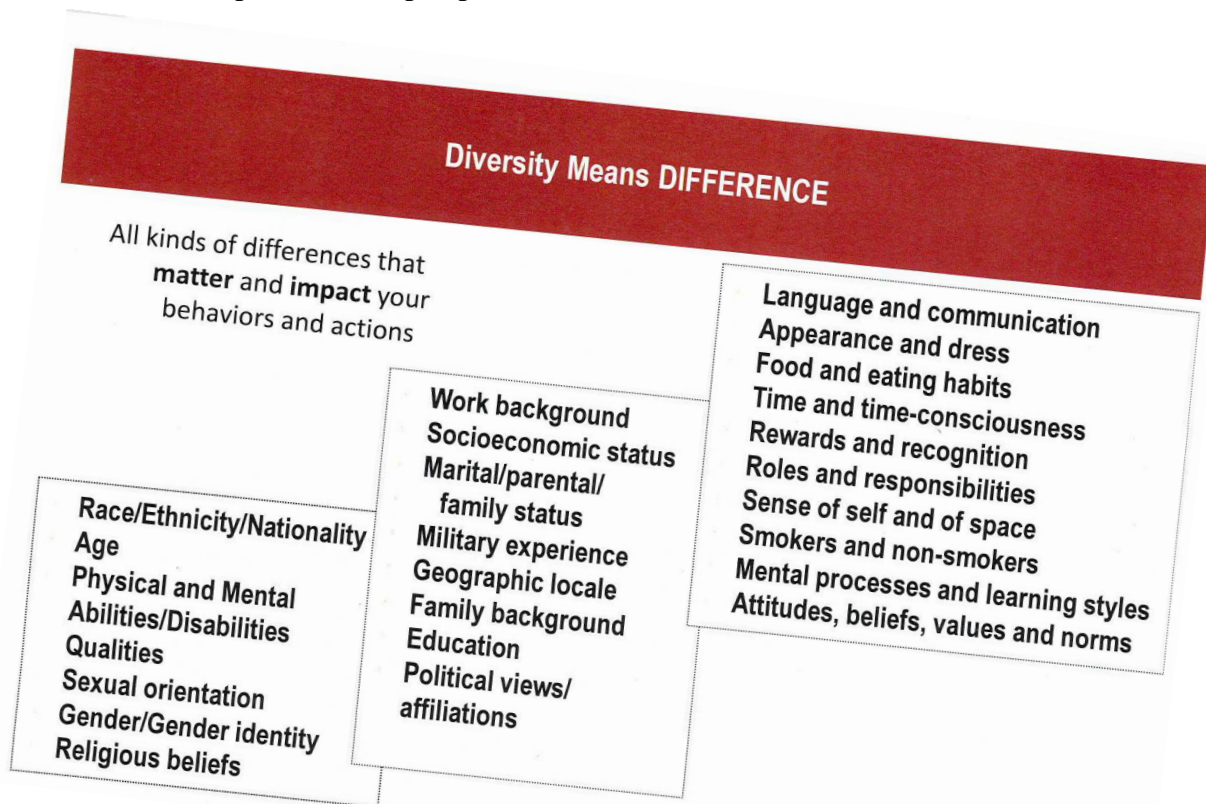


# Help needed for Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan

Diversity means DIFFERENCE. Those differences are often used to make assessments unsupported by facts. No one wants to be judged by gender, race, age, physical & mental abilities, religious beliefs, or similar reason unrelated to their ability to perform. Diversity does NOT mean less than.

Inclusion means a workplace environment where everyone has an opportunity to fully participate in creating organization success and where each person is valued for his or her distinctive skills, experience and perspectives.



Kent County Department Directors and Assistant Directors recently participated in an Executive Diversity Roundtable Workshop presented by Janet and Gary Smith, the founders of IVY Planning Group LLC of Bethesda, Maryland, where are the consultants responsible for conducting the 2019 Diversity & Inclusion Study. The Directors learned that effective D&I is a “journey”, takes the full commitment of leadership, and requires everyone, not just HR to implement the strategy.

The purpose of the 2019 study was to complete an independent analysis of Kent County’s human resources processes and develop a comprehensive diversity and inclusion strategy that is consistent with the goals of the organization resulting in an actionable written report. The study

started with a series of focus group meetings and interviews with employees, managers, department heads and citizens. Later, IVY reviewed previous diversity studies, position testing materials, recruitment and selection processes and procedures, and various demographic reports to develop a variety of recommendations and ultimately the strategies to achieve better workforce representation.

## Speaking for D&I

### Key Points:

- We are all diverse so...this initiative is for all of us, about all of us, and benefits all of us
- D&I are more than philosophies...they are strategic mission enablers
- D&I will help us attract, utilize, and keep great talent and serve our diverse stakeholders
- D&I can create advantages and positive outcomes...we should approach and use them as such
- D&I are everyone's responsibility...we are all in this together so get engaged
- Speaking for D&I requires addressing the misconceptions and answering the tough questions

As implementation of the D&I Strategic Plan moves forward, departmental supervisors will receive training on various topics from asking the right questions during interviews to setting aside natural bias and misperceptions. Some employees will soon be asked to serve on the Implementation Committee and in time all employees will learn to appreciate and value the workplace contributions of coworkers with diverse backgrounds. Do YOU want to be part of the journey? Speak to your department head.

The D&I Study Report is posted on the County website in the Employee Portal under the Notices & Announcement tab or click:  
<http://www.co.kent.de.us/personnel/employee-portal.aspx>

The Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategic Plan developed by IVY provides an actionable roadmap to implementing Recommendations from the D&I Assessment. While there are correlations between the Recommendations and roadmap, the plan is intended to stand on its own as the longer term plan for D&I at Kent County Levy Court.



**GOAL 1:** Improve diverse talent pipelines, sourcing & technologies to support the employee lifecycle

- Strategy 1 –Improve KCLC’s reputation as an employer of choice for diverse talent
- Strategy 2 –Enhance diversity recruiting through strategic partnerships
- Strategy 3 –Improve applicant tracking process and tools

- Strategy 4 –Enhance the interview and testing process
- Strategy 5 –Review and update online and print media to include language that demonstrates commitment to D&I
- Strategy 6 –Incorporate succession planning for key roles

GOAL 2: Enhance commitment and accountability to advance diversity and inclusion

- Strategy 1 –Develop D&I organizational goals that cascade to leadership as the way to accountability and inclusion
- Strategy 2 –Hold staff accountable to the D&I strategy, goals, and measurements
- Strategy 3 –Strengthen D&I awareness and expertise among all leaders through learning opportunities
- Strategy 4 –Improve Performance Management and Annual Assessment Tool
- Strategy 5 –Capture and track employee feedback and engagement

GOAL 3: Build a culture of inclusion

- Strategy 1–Build a D&I Implementation and Accountability Team
- Strategy 2 –Enhance internal employee KCLC communications to demonstrate greater commitment to inclusion
- Strategy 3 –Enhance D&I Training
- Strategy 4 –Facilitate on-going D&I discussions to assess progress and maintain feedback loop

IVY has nearly 30 years of experience with a proven track record of managing complex projects and maintaining high quality client relationships for large and small public sector and private sector organizations. IVY conducted a comprehensive diversity and inclusion study of the State of Delaware Executive Branch in 2016. IVY’s co-founders have been named as Top 25 consultants by *Consulting* magazine, one of the top 500 woman-owned U.S. companies by DiversityBusiness.com, has testified by U.S. Congressional subcommittees, etc.

*(posted 02/28/20)*