

# DIVERSITY

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# CHAMPIONS

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*Inclusion Matters in East Tennessee*

“WHERE EVERYONE IS EMBRACED AND EMPOWERED TO EXCEL.”

Strategic Plan 2013-2015

## **About This Document**

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Thank you.

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## **Mission Statement**

Diversity Champions is the resource destination for promoting inclusion of all people and businesses into the fabric of economic and social life within the greater East Tennessee area.

## **Values and Beliefs**

- We believe collaboration with groups and organizations that share our mission are essential for total inclusion.
- We believe promoting business and personal professional development around the subject of diversity and inclusion improves community relations.
- We believe East Tennessee should reflect the diverse fabric of our social and economic make-up.
- We believe change is inevitable and necessary for global competitiveness.

## Organization History

Diversity Champions is a group of 60 Knoxville-area business leaders focused on communicating the importance of a diverse workforce. The task force was created to:

- Challenge the definition of diversity and inclusion within their firms as more than race and gender.
- Hold our elected officials accountable to diversity and inclusion policies that have substance and enforceability.
- Engage and communicate diversity and inclusion as core values.
- Communicate diversity success stories to the media, to the Diversity Champions task force, and to employees.
- Seek to ensure procurement spending that exceeds goals with minority-, woman-, and veteran-owned firms.
- Publicly support the notion that diversity and inclusion are key to the economic development of our region.
- Develop a written strategic plan, measure the results, and recognize those who are excelling in diversity practices.

## Significant Impact

In 2012, the Diversity Champions released the Report on Workforce and Marketplace Economic Inclusion. The Taskforce realized there are many areas of diversity that are important, however, the first report released narrowed its' focus to the two primary areas with the understanding that future reports will be released to address other diversity concerns.

A survey tool was developed to collect important information from regional companies to better understand the “Best Practices” and establish a network promoting the “best of the best” in diversity practices.

The challenge for the Taskforce was to identify economic development goals that would serve as the purpose for the report. The following are the three economic goals established by the team.

### The Goals

1. Define the scope of diversity and inclusion for the region.
2. Promote workplace and marketplace inclusion.
3. Produce a biennial report on diversity and inclusion.

To achieve these goals, the Taskforce examined the efforts of the Knoxville Chamber's initiative to make "Knoxville America's Best Business Address." In order to play a role in accomplishing that goal, the Taskforce focused on the following themes:

1. Cities with the best quality of life status intentionally support and embrace diversity and inclusion.
2. A diverse and inclusive workforce leads to innovation, creativity, and attracts quality employees.
3. Doing business with small, minority, women, veteran, and disabled owned vendors makes good business sense.

The Team clearly defined the goals for the Taskforce, and moved on to define their mission. Based on current data, the Taskforce was convinced their mission was to create a document that may be the first of its' kind in the local area. The report would collect and share statistics that would assess the status of diversity and inclusion, best practices, and accountability.

### The Mission

Assessing the status of diversity and inclusion encompasses monitoring statistics, evaluating best practices, and developing accountability process. The taskforce further defines diversity by understanding the business return on investment, the role of migration patterns of newcomers, multi-generational employment, and issues involving persons with disabilities and veterans. This report presents statistics, best practices, and comments from firms seeking the best-in-class businesses, political leaders, and CEOs who are making "Knoxville America's Best Business Address®" and East Tennessee a place "Where Everyone is Embraced and Empowered to Excel."

## The Strategic Plan

In 2013, the Diversity Champions gathered to discuss their long-term sustainability. To prepare for the future, the team agreed to develop a long-range strategic plan to support diversity and ensure the Diversity Champions would exist long into the future.

With the assistance and facilitation from one of our Champions firms, Markets Demand More, LLC conducted two sessions with Diversity Champion members. The process was intense, and each participant contributed to the overall success of the plan.

The team revisited the mission statement, their visions and beliefs, and identified five major goals to accomplish. After the sessions, the Diversity Champions felt they had delivered a plan that would serve as a guide and reference for their future growth and sustainability.

A Champion Leader will be selected to head a team to address the tactics supporting each goal. Each goal will have an identified responsible agent, a timeline for start date and completion. Team Leads will be accountable for reporting at designated council meeting the progress made in their area responsibility.

## The Five Strategies

### **I. Marketing and Public Relations (Team Leader: Carol Waldo. Team: Tammy White, Stephanie Cook, Isabel Huie, Judy Pale, Tina Jones)**

*“To raise awareness of who we are and the importance of “Diversity and Inclusion” within our ever-changing community.”*

### **II. Leadership and Organization Management ( Leader: Konda Jones, Team-Mae Mosley, Delores Mitchell, Joshalyn Hundley, Linda Wiley)**

*“To move from an “Ad Hoc” group of volunteers addressing a specific void around “Diversity and Inclusion,” to an organization with leadership and structure.”*

### **III. Funding and Financial Resources (Team Leader: Angela Conner, Judy Pale, Tammy White, Tina Jones, Doug Minter, Doug Downey)**

*“To create a financial lifeline of growth, sustainability, and execution of the organization’s mission.”*

### **IV. Business Community Outreach and Education (Team Leader: Isabell Huie? or Joshalyn Hundley?, Team-,Meiko Thompson, Tammy, Carol Waldo, Marie Westfall (ORAU-Adhoc), Stephanie, Cynthia, Beth, Kristen, JoAnn Jeter)**

*“To educate the community at large about the resources and services available through the Diversity Champions.”*

### **V. Accountability, Growth, and Sustainability (Leader (Open) Team: Mae Mosley, Mac Tobler, Konda Jones, Delores Mitchell, Joshalyn Hundley, Doug Minter, Bill Meyers)**

*“To build a structural framework by which we will continue to impact the ever-changing markets to meet the needs of global competitiveness in the region by fostering “Diversity and Inclusion.”*



