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Diversity and Inclusion Project: City of Winston Salem, NC

Addressing the human relations needs of the City of Winston Salem by planning, developing, implementing and facilitating a comprehensive diversity and inclusion project that will address systemic racial issues in the City's Fire Department (WSFD) and make recommendations to improve WSFD's organizational culture, processes and policies to make them more inclusive.



Anthony Wade and Willie Ratchford



Diversity and Inclusion Project Proposal

City of Winston Salem, NC

Winston Salem Fire Department

Introduction

Anthony Wade and Willie Ratchford are pleased to present this proposal to work with the City of Winston Salem, North Carolina by planning, developing, implementing and facilitating a comprehensive diversity and inclusion project that will address systemic racial issues in the City's Fire Department (WSFD) and to make recommendations to improve WSFD's organizational culture, processes and policies to make them more inclusive.

The City of Winston Salem is an organization of employees of different races, colors, faiths, ethnicities, nationalities and sexual orientations. The city holds the same diverse representation of life as does the world. Winston Salem's leaders and staff understand that there is more that unites their city than divides it; and that as an organization that values diversity and inclusion they must remain mindful of the commonalities that comprise the very fabric and makeup of the city and its constituents.

It is right that as a diverse organization, Winston Salem strives for an environment of fairness, equity, inclusion and respect. Winston Salem's path towards equity and inclusion is beneath the feet of its employees as it ventures to communicate about difficult issues, reflect and receive knowledge, foster mutual understanding, and model mutual tolerance for all who choose to work for the city.

Winston Salem employs people of diverse backgrounds, including race, sex, religion, national origin, color, age, disability, familial status, and sexual orientation. The customer base that Winston Salem serves also represents the various community factions as outlined above. In order to provide services that are culturally competent and appropriate, all city staff must educate themselves about the racial, ethnic, cultural, economic, social, and sexual dynamics of the community. City employees must increase their understanding of their constituents' and their employees' human relations.

To address Winston Salem's desire to address diversity and inclusion in its Fire Department, Wade and Ratchford will develop and implement a

comprehensive diversity and inclusion plan for all employees of the WSFD as follows:

Diversity and Inclusion Summary

The diversity and inclusion plan will be about staff of WSFD coming together to address systemic racial issues head on. It will encourage staff who might see diversity and inclusion as a barrier to how they treat each other and value each other's humanity, to better understand that such thinking should have no place at WSFD and in their dealings with one another, their customers and partners. All staff of WSFD should be committed to creating rooms where they value and respect each other based upon individual contributions to the organization. No one who is employed by WSFD should feel less than; or that they are not valued or respected because of their race, sex, religion, national origin, color, age, disability, familial status, sexual orientation or their gender identity. This thinking should also apply to WSFD's clients and customer base. In a sense, diversity and inclusion for the employees of WSFD is about great business practices and great customer service.

The plan will be interactive and experiential in that it will provide opportunities for WSFD employees to engage one another in honest and substantive dialogue around issues of diversity, inclusion and respect.

The plan will be based upon the following objectives and goals:

- Understanding the definitions of diversity, inclusion, bias, equity, and respect
- WSFD employees understanding their responsibilities and expectations under the City of Winston Salem's personnel policies that foster diversity and inclusion
- WSFD employees understanding that diversity and inclusion are important and the benefits to all employees of the fire department
- WSFD employees becoming more aware of their own personal values and how their past has created their current perceptions, behaviors around diversity and inclusion
- WSFD employees gaining a new perspective to recognize and respect cultural diversity and inclusion

- WSFD employees learning to resolve interpersonal conflict and how to maximize the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace
- WSFD employees developing personal responsibility on how they might use their role in WSFD to transform the fire department's organizational culture to one where "all employees will be treated fairly and with respect."
- WSFD employees integrate diversity, equity and inclusion into their "Organizational Citizenship" where all employees act in a way that improves the psychological well-being and social environment of the Department.

Scope of Work

Wade and Ratchford affirm that they will effectively address Winston Salem's desire to determine if systemic racial issues are prevalent in the fire department, help its fire department address recruitment challenges regarding diversity and inclusion, determine if the concerns raised by the fire department's employees has merit, provide effective recommendations to improve the fire department's organizational culture, processes and policies, and provide opportunities for WSFD employees to engage in activities that will meet the objectives outlined above.

Wade and Ratchford also affirm that as a part of their standard operating procedure, they will develop a comprehensive plan for this work in conjunction with the appropriate organizational contacts. In this instance Wade and Ratchford will:

- Perform a culture / climate assessment of the WSFD
- Gather information regarding diversity and inclusion issues from WSFD employees and others (race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, and disability)
- Use a SWOT Analysis and/or an environmental scan to identify the fire department's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats; and potential growth areas

- Develop and facilitate a comprehensive diversity and inclusion training module that can be used to improve the cultural competency of fire employees and all other city staff if needed
- Make recommendations as follows:
 - Needed resources and support the City and fire department require to build an inclusive environment for all City departments to include training, technical assistance, staff development, accountability, Community engagement sessions to receive and value resident voices and feedback on primary and related topics, etc.

Action Items to Get the Work Started

In the event the Consultants and the City of Winston Salem decide to sign off on a contract to have this work done, both entities need to start thinking about the following action items to get the process moving forward. The items listed are not exclusive as other actionable items can and will be added from the City and the Consultants. Items listed below may also be removed at the request of the City.

- Consultants will need the City's EEO1 Report by departments for employment data, and City of Winston Salem's racial/ethnic demographics – useful to consider workforce disparities
- Consultants will need copies of print materials and/or social media posts obtained by the City to ascertain resident and community perceptions and concerns
- Consultants will work with City of Winston Salem staff to identify appropriate community groups for focus group sessions
- Consultants would like to meet/interview the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, the Fire Chief and others deemed appropriate as a part of the environmental scan
- Consultants, in conjunction with the WSFD Chief and Executive staff, will need to determine the number and make up of WSFD staff focus groups, especially considering fire staff works in shifts
- Consultants will need to review WSFD / City outreach and recruitment strategies

- Consultants will build a DEI training module after consultation with appropriate City staff; and make plans for facilitation of the module, including train the trainer sessions
- Consultants will need to know the full story on social media concerns
- If the City conducts periodic surveys of citizens to evaluate the effectiveness of the City, the Consultants will need to review the most recent survey results. Departmental feedback on WSFD will be helpful
- Consultants need to review the City's DEI Initiatives / Policies
- Consultants would like to know what steps the City takes to allow its employees to have intentional dialogue/conversation about race and DEI issues
- Near the end of this process the Consultants will develop a list of recommendations, resources and support the WSFD and the City require to build an inclusive environment for all City departments to include training, technical assistance, staff development and accountability

The Consultants

Willie Ratchford is the President of WPR Consulting, LLC. Mr. Ratchford is responsible for developing, directing, and implementing programs and activities to maintain and improve community relations, directing and reviewing equal opportunity investigations and discrimination complaints, and recommending solutions for community problems, and providing training in anti-discrimination laws, ordinances, and regulations. He oversees strategic operations planning, business planning, and the development of goals and objectives for WPR Consulting, LLC.

He received his bachelor's degree in Sociology from Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts and completed one year of study towards a master's in social work at UNC Chapel Hill. He is a graduate of the John F. Kennedy Leadership School at Harvard University (Leadership Certification), the Institute of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Certificate of Municipal Administration), the

Charlotte Chamber Leadership School and Focus on Leadership. He is also a certified trainer in mediation, diversity, fair housing and sexual harassment.

Ratchford has been active in civil rights for over 40 years and in 1998 he received the Charlotte Area Peace Corps Association's first "Peace Prize" for his work to reduce tensions and foster a spirit of harmony in the community. In 2005 he received the Individual Human Rights Award from the National Association of Human Rights Workers and the Nancy Susan Reynolds Award for Race Relations in 2006, presented by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation to recognize persons who have encouraged and motivated improved relationships among people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. In 2008 he received the Spirit of Detroit Award in recognition of exceptional achievement, outstanding leadership, and dedication to improving the quality of life for everyone. In 2011 he received Mecklenburg Ministries' Annual Community Leader Award. In 2015 Charlotte Mayor Dan Clodfelter presented to Ratchford the Mayor Richard Vinroot Award for outstanding community service for his work to help calm community tensions in the wake of the trial of a police officer accused of killing a citizen. He is a Past President of the National Association of Human Rights Workers.

Anthony W. Wade, PhD, SHRM-CP, PHR is a human resources and diversity professional who provides organizational consulting services in the areas of human capital solutions. This includes, but not limited to, diversity-equity-inclusion, talent management, compensation administration, change management, employee relations, equal employment opportunity (EEO), adult education and training, and leadership development.

Wade holds a bachelor's degree in human resources administration from Saint Leo University in St. Leo, Florida and a master's degree in management from Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. He also holds an earned doctorate of philosophy in education and human resource studies with a specialization in organizational performance and change from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. A graduate of the Institute of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Certificate in County Administration), Wade is also a graduate and past program chair of LEADERSHIP North Carolina. Additionally, he is a graduate of the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute at Patrick Air Force Base in Cocoa Beach, Florida (Certificate of completion of the Equal Opportunity Advisor Program). He is nationally certified as a Department of the Army EEO Counselor by the U.S. Army's EEO

Compliance and Complaints Review Division in Washington, D.C., a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) by the Human Resource Certification Institute in Alexandria, Virginia, and a Certified Professional in Human Resources (SHRM-CP) by the Society for Human Resource Management in Alexandria, Virginia.

An honorably retired U.S. Air Force (USAF) veteran, Wade's experience in diversity, fair employment and human relations spans nearly 40 years in the public, private, higher education and military sectors. In 1992 he was recognized as the top Equal Opportunity Treatment/Human Relations Program Manager for USAF Air Education and Training Command and the first runner-up for the same award Air Force worldwide. In 1999 the Wilmington City Council and the New Hanover County Commissioners in North Carolina presented him with "Resolutions of Appreciation" for outstanding excellence and service as the County's Human Relations Director. This included his work as the County's fair employment practices director from 1995 to 1999 in which Wade enforced the local fair employment ordinance in the public/private sectors and managed its work-sharing agreement with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In 2004 he received the "Diversity Recognition Award" for his work in hosting and facilitating the City and County of Denver, Colorado's Diversity Committee's Professional Development Workshop/Forum, successfully educating elected/appointed officials, senior department heads and committee members on progressive diversity initiatives and strategies. He was recognized in 2015 by the U.S. Army's 71st Ordnance Group for providing professional development training for soldiers assigned as military equal opportunity officers and advisors across bases in five states. He is a charter member and was the first president of the Colorado state chapter of the National Association of African-Americans in Human Resources (NAAAHR) as well as a past regional vice president and life member. He is also a past president of the National Association of Human Rights Workers.

References

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Quote - \$20,000.00

- Administration, Preparation and Consultation with Appropriate City of Winston Salem Staff
- Focus Groups – WSFD Staff and Community Groups
- WSFD Culture/Climate Assessment (Environmental Scan)
- SWOT Analysis / Determine Potential Growth Areas
- Development of Diversity Training Modules / Facilitation and Train the Trainer Sessions
- Recommendations Platform to Build an Inclusive Environment
- Travel and Accommodations as Needed

Submitted By:

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