



2022 Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Progress Report



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Our Commitment

David Myers, CEO

When I started as President & CEO in 2011, AIR was beginning a journey to become a more diverse and inclusive institution. Thanks to the efforts of so many, that journey has continued and grown throughout my tenure and today diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are a foundational part of our mission, our work, and our investments. In 2022, we continued to integrate DEI and cultural and linguistic competence (CLC) into our policies, practices, and daily operations, and improved and expanded our supports for staff to understand and engage with DEI and CLC. During 2022, we were pushed to think deeply and differently about inclusion as we became a more global organization. The results of an equity audit required us to reflect on our DEI practices and consider changes. As I prepare to retire in early 2024, I am proud of the progress we have made in our DEI journey, but I know there is much work left to be done if we are to achieve our mission and create a better, more equitable world.



Karen Francis, Vice President and Chief Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Officer

In 2022, our collective work took AIR's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) journey to new heights. We continued leveraging opportunities to learn and grow as an institution, enhance our internal practices—including expanding our global DEI presence to engage all staff across the institution—and nurture external partnerships to grow and sustain our efforts. Our collective DEI journey has been one motivated by the sentiment that we are all working together, and we are in good hands with each other. As we continue this journey, there is a role and responsibility that we all should play with these efforts. We must think about the value of diversity—to see and not forget anyone; lean in on equity—to do our part to ensure fairness for all; and promote inclusion—so that all voices can be heard. We are an amazing mosaic of diversity and culture working towards our mission: making the world a more equitable place.



2022 Highlights

Recognition

- As we continued our collective diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) journey in 2022, we received some significant recognition for building a workplace that values DEI. In particular, AIR was **recognized** with the following honors:
 - [Disability Equality Index \(DEI\): Best Places to Work for Disability Inclusion](#)
 - Diversity MBA: [50 Out Front Best Places to Work for Women & Diverse Managers](#)—ranked 15th and recognized for the following subcategories:
 - » Best in Class for Board Diversity
 - » Best in Class for Representation
 - » Top 5: Advancement of People of Color
 - [Seramount Best Company for Multicultural Women](#)
 - [Seramount Top Companies for Executive Women](#)

AIR DEI Framework and Strategic Pillars

In 2022, we continued to focus our efforts on bringing our DEI framework and strategic pillars to life. Next, we provide some highlights of what we have accomplished.



Pillar 1: Positive Work Environment

Maximizing the potential of all staff and fostering a positive work culture in a dispersed work environment

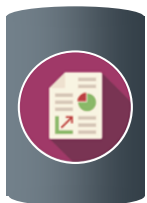
- The DEI Office, DEI Council, and Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) hosted more than 15 learning events to foster communication, engagement, and the integration of DEI and cultural and linguistic competence (CLC) across the institution.
- The DEI Office hosted a series of “**listening sessions**” with staff in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Addis Abba, Ethiopia; Mexico City, Mexico; and Nairobi, Kenya, to establish relationships for engaging with institution-wide DEI efforts.
- More than 500 AIR staff signed the **DEI staff pledge**, committing to taking action toward a fair, inclusive, and equitable workplace.
- The **Equity Audit** was completed and a report summarizing the results was reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), the DEI Council, ERG leaders, and program area leaders. In partnership with the DEI Council, the DEI Office developed a series of action plans in response to the findings of the Equity Audit. Task groups have been formed to implement the action plans and recommendations.



Pillar 2: Cultural Competence in Our Work

Delivering research and technical assistance services that reflect an understanding of the culture and world view of our clients, communities, and audiences globally

- The **Equity Review Process** was implemented across divisions and program areas. Staff received training on how to apply the Equity Review Process to projects. The DEI Office is supporting evaluation efforts and the process for continuous quality improvement.
- The **Equity Walk Series** was planned for early 2023, and launched in January 2023. This is a workshop series that is intended to engage all staff across the institution in peer-to-peer learning opportunities that focus on equity in project work, collaboration, and professional relationships.
- The **Equity Repository** task group partnered with DEI Liaisons to gather feedback on which resources should be housed in the repository. The group created an intake form and home page for the repository, which is expected to launch in 2023.
- **DEI Liaisons**, representing divisions, program areas, and functions across AIR, collaborated with the DEI Office and division/program area leadership to disseminate information related to DEI and support implementation of DEI initiatives in their respective divisions/units.
- The **Cultural and Linguistic Competence (CLC) Workgroup** continues outreach across AIR to integrate CLC into all aspects of our work. The workgroup continued to conduct training sessions for staff, including training sessions with the DEI Liaisons on using AIR's Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Standards for Projects, Research, and Operations (CLAS PRO) and how to implement CLAS PRO in their program areas. The CLC Workgroup also launched a CLC Assessment Tool.
- The DEI Office continued **partnering with AIR Learning & Development** to promote the *Living the AIR Values* training series and to make improvements to other training offerings. The two teams also collaborated on infusing DEI into the new performance management system, which launched in 2022.



Pillar 3: Mission-Driven Work

Building our reputation as a leader in the field of behavioral and social science research and technical assistance with a global focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion

- The DEI Office developed and maintained a quarterly CEO Dashboard on DEI and CLC in project work. The goal of the dashboard is to monitor institution-wide progress in ensuring the use of CLAS PRO standards and DEI principles in how we conduct project work.
- The DEI Office and the Technology Solutions team worked together to digitize the Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDEIB) Tool. When completed, the digitized version of the tool will be available globally for organizations to use as they engage in benchmarking DEI activities. AIR is proud of its partnership with the authors of the GDEIB to bring the digitized tool to the field and to expand our footprint in DEI research and evaluation.

- AIR continues to be an active participant and supporter of the [Evidence and Equity Collaborative](#) along with eight other peer organizations (Abt, Mathematica, MDRC, NORC, RAND, RTI, Urban Institute, and Westat). The organizations in the Evidence and Equity Collaborative are working to support diversity in their workplaces, strengthen inclusive practices in programs and policy research, and build a foundation for equitable analysis ready to inform systems, policies, and programs across the nation.
- The DEI Office continued building **strategic partnerships** with outside organizations to ensure AIR uses best practices to benchmark its progress against other organizations.
- AIR's DEI efforts were featured in **national publications**, including *Diversity in Action*. The DEI Office continued to partner with AIR's Communications and Public Affairs team to highlight DEI work and progress in blogs, social media posts, and other public-facing communications.



Pillar 4: Growth and Sustainability

Supporting growth and vitality of the institution to meet emerging needs globally

- AIR continued its [Pipeline Partnership Program \(P3\)](#) with Howard University, the University of Texas at San Antonio, and Georgia State University. During the 2022 spring semester, virtual learning events were held with each partner institution on topics selected by participants including *Translating Scholarship and Research for Policymakers, Practitioners, and the Public*. To align with AIR's global vision, the P3 was expanded to include two universities in East Africa: the University of Nairobi in Kenya and the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

Key Accomplishments

Diversity, Equality, & Inclusion Council

AIR's Diversity, Equality, & Inclusion (DEI) Council supports AIR's mission and goals, focusing on activities to integrate DEI principles into AIR's functions and to monitor the implementation of AIR's DEI strategy. The Council partners strategically with AIR leadership and staff to encourage, promote, and celebrate diversity across all levels at AIR.

2022 Members

- Nikki Sharan, chair
- Beth Howard-Brown, vice chair
- David Myers, executive sponsor
- Karen Francis, Vice President, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
- Cecilia Newman, DEI senior program manager
- Marion Baldwin
- Kelly Burrello
- Nicol Christie
- Christina Davis
- Danielle Ferguson
- Carmen Fermin
- Victoria Geis
- Ashu Handa
- Dierdre Magnan
- Morena Martinez
- Maureen Maurer
- Adria Molotsky
- Mitchell Morey
- Nara Nayar
- Chris Paek
- Deyvis Rodriguez
- Raquel Sanchez
- Monica Wright
- Nadeem Yousaf
- Young Yee Kim, ex officio member

Key Accomplishments in 2022

- During the 2022 DEI Leaders' Summit, the DEI Council developed **three action plans** that align with the 2020–2024 AIR Strategic Plan and AIR's five commitments to DEI. These action plans responded directly to the findings and recommendations from the equity audit conducted by Seramount in 2021. The three action plans outline strategies that aim to facilitate progress toward achieving our goals of DEI and CLC throughout AIR. The 2022 Action Plans are:
 - **Representation:** The demographic makeup of staff across the institution highlights a lack of staff from underrepresented groups. We need to ensure that AIR staff represent and reflect the diversity of the communities we serve across the globe. The DEI Council proposes a set of hiring

policies and practices that will enhance our ability to reach diverse candidate pools and close the gaps across dimensions of diversity within our workforce.

- **Retention and Engagement:** Retention and recruitment go hand in hand: recruiting staff from diverse backgrounds is futile if we cannot retain our current diverse staff. With a successful strategy to engage employees, AIR will see higher retention rates. Through the development of a culture of sponsorship throughout AIR, the DEI Council believes it can facilitate increased career development opportunities and promote networking opportunities and foster a culture that is inclusive for staff at all levels.
- **Engagement:** Because AIR is a global institution that interacts with colleagues and communities across the world, the DEI Council proposes the development of a common and collective understanding of AIR’s global DEI approach to achieving its mission. It is critical that we build staff capacity and ensure that all new hires are appropriately trained in this global perspective and in cultural and linguistic competence.

Cultural & Linguistic Competence Workgroup

AIR’s CLC Workgroup provides technical assistance to project teams, practice area members, and staff in other business functions in how to adopt CLAS PRO. The CLAS PRO document provides guiding principles and standards for the effective and measurable integration of CLC into all aspects of our work.

2022 CLC Workgroup Members

- Karen Francis, lead
- Tammie Causey
- Paula Dias
- Wehmah Jones
- Robyn Madison-Harris
- Cecilia Newman, co-lead
- Pete Rehder
- Yan Wang

Key Accomplishments in 2022

The CLC Workgroup actively worked through its 2022 workplan, which prioritized engaging all AIR staff in training and technical assistance intended to build institution-wide capacity to implement and apply the CLAS PRO standards. Some of the highlights include:

- Developed the tip sheet “**Collaborating with Consultants and Partners to Incorporate Principles of Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Research Projects**,” a companion piece to the CLAS PRO. This tip sheet provides examples for the practical application of the principles and standards that focus on understanding being culturally responsive to the populations and subpopulations being studied.

- Hosted sessions with project teams to review the **results of the CLC Assessment Tool**, enabling teams to identify strengths and opportunities to enhance the delivery of services and supports.
- Began development of a **virtual CLC Assessment Tool** in Airtable to allow for more accessibility across AIR.
- Provided **training to DEI Liaisons** on operationalizing the CLAS PRO standards alongside the Equity Review Process.
- Hosted workshops with the participants from the **Pipeline Partnership Program** (Georgia State University, Howard University, the University of Texas at San Antonio) on the importance of integrating CLC into survey design and methodology.
- Planned **“Walking the Journey Toward Cultural & Linguistic Competence: A Training of Trainers”** for DEI Liaisons, Project Directors, and Project Reviewers across AIR to ensure a deeper understanding of CLC and CLAS PRO that will allow participants to drive this work throughout the institution. The training of trainers was completed in the first quarter of 2023.
- Held office hours to provide technical assistance to project teams for CLC integration.

Employee Resource Groups

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are groups of employees who join together in the workplace based on shared characteristics, interests, life experience, and allyship. At AIR, ERGs are voluntary, employee-led groups that foster a diverse and inclusive workplace aligned with our mission, values, and goals.



ERG Key Accomplishments in 2022

AIR's eight ERGs continued working toward their mission of fostering an inclusive organizational culture and climate. They welcomed **more than 250 new members**, including colleagues from AIR's recently integrated affiliate organizations. Each group continued to host community-building events for members and learning events for the broader organization. An ERG umbrella group, consisting of the leaders of each ERG, met monthly to provide updates and identify opportunities for collaboration. An interest group began work to establish a new group, an Interfaith ERG, which will launch in 2023.

Mission

Access AIR promotes a work environment that is inclusive of and responsive to people with disabilities, their families, and the communities served by AIR.

Leadership

- Victoria Geis, vice chair
- Perry Gorelik, documentarian
- Vanessa Batiste, treasurer
- Beth Howard-Brown, member-at-large
- Ananth Koppikar, executive sponsor

Key Accomplishments in 2022

- Welcomed **disability rights icon Judith Heumann** for a conversation about work in the disabilities space to celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). It was AIR’s first ERG learning event that was open to the public.
- Hosted a **watch party** of the documentary *Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution*, featuring Judith Heumann, to prepare for the NDEAM speaker event.
- Continued our **partnership with BroadFutures**, an organization that places candidates with identified disabilities in jobs and internships.
- Supported the implementation of AIR’s revised **Inclusive Meeting Guidelines**.
- Advocated for the use of **closed captioning** to ensure AIR-wide events are accessible to all staff.



AIR Asians in Motion

Mission

AIR Asians in Motion (AIM) identifies and promotes opportunities to enhance the success of employees of Asian heritage at AIR and welcomes everyone who supports their success.



Leadership

Christopher Paek, chair

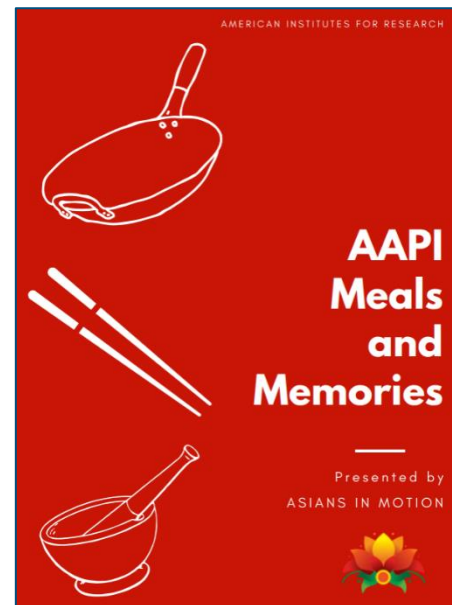
Varsha Ranjit, co-vice chair

Thanh Mai, co-vice chair

Mary Ann Fox, executive sponsor

Key Accomplishments in 2022

- Hosted a **Lunar New Year virtual celebration** in February.
- Hosted an **Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month** event in May called “**We Are What We Eat: Celebrating the Diversity of Pan-Asian Cuisines.**” AIM members and event participants shared the stories behind their favorite recipes; a **collaborative cookbook** was created with the recipes that were shared.
- Hosted a **career networking event** for AIM members in October to facilitate networking for Asian-identifying staff to improve representation across AIR.
- Hosted a **Diwali celebration** in November for AIM members.
- Responded to **language-needs requests** from project directors for languages like traditional Chinese, connecting AIM members to project-related opportunities.



AIR BLAAC Diaspora Network



Mission

The AIR BLAAC Diaspora Network is dedicated to promoting a work environment that is inclusive, fosters professional mobility, and engages in practices that are culturally responsible. Although many of our members have links to Black, Latino, African America, African, and Caribbean backgrounds, all AIR employees interested in advancing our work are encouraged to join.

Leadership

Danielle Ferguson, chair

Betheny Lyke, co-chair

Carolyn Rugamas, documentarian

Jennifer Hudson, community supports liaison

Marijo Ahlgrimm, executive sponsor

Key Accomplishments in 2022

- Hosted the annual **Black History Month speaker event** on *Financial Freedom in the BLAAC Community: Past, Present, and Future*. Guest speakers discussed how to build financial capacity and confidence individually and collectively for the greater purposes of financial security and social and economic equity.
- Featured **member spotlights** across AIR during Black History Month.
- Hosted annual **Juneteenth celebration**, continuing the discussion of financial freedom in the BLAAC community.
- Continued weekly **water cooler meetings** to provide an informal forum for members to connect each Friday.

AIR CREW



Mission

AIR's Collaborative Remote Employee Workforce (AIR CREW) is a voluntary membership team that focuses on the special contributions, considerations, and challenges related to working virtually in a dispersed workforce.

Leadership

Deirdre Magnan, chair

Patti Furlano, vice chair

Amanda Williams, documentarian

Cecilia Zhang, social chair

Nicol Christie, member-at-large

David Seidenfeld, executive sponsor

Key Accomplishments in 2022

- Hosted an interactive, virtual **storytelling event** in January.
- During **National Storytelling Week**, CREW launched a promotional campaign in MS Teams to share fun facts and trivia, generating engagement among members.
- Promoted the **Everyday Inclusivity tip-sheet** to all staff in AIR Weekly and during AIR CREW membership meetings.
- Supported the establishment of **regional remote staff groups** via MS Teams, which resulted in regional remote staff connecting for in-person social activities and coworking opportunities.
- Revised the **governing documents** (business plan, charter, and bylaws), to be reviewed and approved by membership in 2023.
- Increased **member engagement** and connection through polls, discussion prompts, and shared resources.
- Continued publishing a bimonthly **member newsletter** featuring member highlights, AIR and ERG news, reminders, tips for collaborating remotely, and more.

AIR PRIDE



Mission

AIR Pride furthers AIR's DEI efforts by fostering a work environment in which employees who identify along the spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities are respected and valued.

Leadership

Nara Nayar, chair

Lee Nethercott, vice chair

Miguel Mitchell, documentarian

Andie Eder, membership engagement

Hans Bos, executive sponsor

Key Accomplishments in 2022

- Hosted an **LGBTQ+ Pride Month Celebration** called *Pride in The Plus: Who Else is Part of the LGBTQ+ Community and Why it Matters*. Guest speaker Angela Chen, a science journalist and author, discussed asexuality and the other identities that make up the all-encompassing “plus” in LGBTQ+.
- Held an **open forum** following the Club Q shooting to provide support to members and other LGBTQ+ colleagues.
- Established a team to collaborate on a **white paper** about gender identity data collection and gender identity support at AIR.
- Began working with AIR Facilities on establishing **all-gender restrooms** in AIR offices.
- Created a **business development group** to support AIR in winning project work related to LGBTQ+ populations and issues.

AIR Stars & Stripes



AIR STARS & STRIPES

Mission

AIR Stars & Stripes leverages and develops the unique contributions of veterans and people with military backgrounds or interests to build a culture that fosters innovation, enhances and supports programs and activities aligned with AIR's mission, gives employees opportunities to develop and grow, provides learning and enrichment opportunities for AIR's workforce, and offers employees access to potential leadership opportunities.

Leadership

Mitchell Morey, chair

Sudie Whalen, vice chair

Sean Hartwell, treasurer

George Bohrnstedt, executive sponsor

Key Accomplishments in 2022

- Hosted a **Veterans Day learning event** about veterans' employment and their needs in the labor force.
- Conducted a **care package drive** for military families for Independence Day benefiting Blue Star Moms.
- Promoted **military-related holidays** to encourage an accepting culture. This included developing an AIR-wide message acknowledging Memorial Day.
- Continued to provide contributions to AIR's **research and technical assistance projects and proposals** related to veterans and the military.

AIR VIVA



Mission

AIR VIVA contributes to AIR's mission and business by representing and supporting the development of Latino, Hispanic, and Chicano employees and allies across AIR. AIR VIVA promotes a culture of inclusion by providing a professional and collegial space to engage in dialogue about the diversity and richness of the Latino, Hispanic, and Chicano cultures.

Leadership

Raquel Sanchez, chair

Melissa Chavarria, co-chair

Angelica Herrera, promotions chair

Mary Louise Baez, documentarian

Makini Nyanteh, executive sponsor

Key Accomplishments in 2022

- Hosted a two-part learning event for **Hispanic Heritage Month** on language equity and inclusion.
- Established a partnership with **Community Language Cooperative** for further training to remove barriers to language access in project work, resources, and events at AIR.
- Held **membership meetings** on assorted topics of interest including a Cinco de Mayo event.
- Conducted outreach to **staff in Mexico** to ensure their voices are heard.

AIR WISE

Mission

The mission of AIR WISE is to be a strategic partner across all AIR business functions to enhance opportunities for connection, networking, and collaboration to address the intersectional needs of women. AIR WISE aims to empower women of all backgrounds and their advocates to grow professionally and personally and to contribute to advancing our focus on the social and cultural construct of gender and its implications across our human services, health, and international development work.



Leadership

Adria Molotsky, chair
Robin Gwathney, co-chair
Kelly Burrello, vice chair
Abigail Jefferys, documentarian
Bharati Belwalkar, social/membership chair
Kirsten Rhode, executive sponsor

Key Accomplishments in 2022

- Hosted an annual **Women's History Month event** called *How Climate Change Impacts Women*. The event was led by AIR's Brittany Iskarpatyoti.
- Hosted an event during **Black History Month** called *Unsung Heroines of the Women's and Civil Rights Movements*, which highlighted trailblazing women of the civil rights movements and their contributions.
- Used the results of a **membership survey** to align the ERG's events and supports with members' interests and needs. Also ensured an **intersectional approach** to events and supports.
- Held multiple open forums following the **Roe v. Wade ruling**. The title of these forums was *Holding Space for Solace and Reflection*.
- Held an event on **Unpacking and Navigating U.G.L.Y. Situations** to address members' interest in discussing feeling U.G.L.Y. (Unwelcome, Greatly Unappreciated, Left Out, and Yearning for Better Opportunities). The aim of the event was to provide support and mentorship.
- Hosted monthly **coffee chats**.

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Established in 1946, the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts behavioral and social science research and delivers technical assistance both domestically and internationally in the areas of education, health, and the workforce. AIR's work is driven by its mission to generate and use rigorous evidence that contributes to a better, more equitable world. With headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, AIR has offices across the U.S. and abroad. For more information, visit [AIR.ORG](https://www.air.org).



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