ASCA DIVERSITY AND INLCUSION TASK FORCE

Final Report

Introduction

In July 2015, the ASCA charged a group of individuals with the following: "The ASCA Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan Task Force is charged with providing a recommended written plan to the Board of Directors that is designed to infuse the core values of Diversity and Inclusion into all aspects of the Association." This included evaluating the organizations documents and events then making recommendations for changes, updates or continued re-evaluation. Please see addendum #1 for the full charge to the task force. Additionally, the group was charged with working with becky martinez, a diversity consultant to assist with the project. The following individuals were asked and agreed to serve on the task force: Reyna Anaya, Juhi Bhatt, James Bond, Phillip Burns, Dani Clark, Omar Estrada Torres, Chris Fiorello, Nancy Geist Giacomini, Donnie Howard, Akilah Jones, DuJuan Smith, and Jennifer Waller. Regina Curran was added to the group upon election as the Director of Diversity and Inclusion to the ASCA Board of Directors.

The group convened in person in January 2016 in Louisville, KY. They laid out a strategy and action plan to move forward, however, events during the 2016 ASCA Annual Conference derailed the group and they were delayed in getting back on track until January of 2017. In order to move the project and task along, the group divided into four smaller working groups. One group was led by James Bond, who focused on working on recommendations for leadership systemically within ASCA as well as the research project and results of the climate survey administered in April 2016. Another group was led by Regina Curran, who was focused on evaluating ASCA documents such as the Statement of Diversity, providing recommendations and direction for the Director of Diversity & Inclusion Board member, and finally other areas of content generation for student conduct and ASCA. Akilah Jones was focused on evaluating and providing recommendation for ASCA Events including Gehring, Conference and other educational events including webinars to ensure that we are continually meeting the needs of our membership in regard to issues related to diversity and inclusion. Finally, Jennifer Waller was focused on evaluating the ASCA Strategic plans, assessing leadership development within ASCA, and examining the website and standardizing survey info that is gathered by the organization.

The following is a summary and recommendations for the ASCA Board of Directors:

Recommendations for how to best support and systemically incorporate identity-based groups within ASCA, which have currently found homes as Communities of Practice (CoP), mentor-mentee relationships, and member-driven summits at the annual conference.

One part of the charge given to the task force was as stated above. This charge in part was based on a history within the Association where groups vied for "space" to come together at national meetings (Annual Conference or Academy) in a myriad of ways, most notably:

- No-host meals
- Concurrent session summits
- Space and time designated for informal gatherings, both publicized and not
- Communities of Practice

There were advantages and disadvantages to these approaches. Most notably was the inconsistency in when and how they were offered. More vocal groups, or more appropriately, identity groups with established leaders within it would know how to navigate or negotiate space for their respective members. The unintended consequence of the provision of space or services for some groups and not others was seen as preferential and left members feeling marginalized, the antithesis of the value of inclusion ASCA wished to promote by providing such opportunities. The lack of a clear, consistent method to communicate desired services left members frustrated.

The association has established CoPs for groups where underrepresented populations can work to develop professional content and advise the ASCA leadership on issues affecting the intended group. Those groups seem to have a connection to Diversity and Inclusions are the LGBTQIA, Historically Under-Represented Institutions, Women and Student Conduct, and Men and Student Conduct. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee is the standing committee tasked with addressing any concerns relating to these associational values as well as providing direction to the leadership.

Concurrent "summits" have evolved at annual conferences. The first was the African American Male Summit, followed by what is now known as the Women of Color Summit. These summits were initially requests through program proposals each year, but have been established as recurring meetings without the need of proposals in recent years. One recurring challenge is a sense of competition where a member may have mixed feelings as to which summit to attend if they identify with more than one group.

1. Maintain standing space for all currently existing summits during annual conferences. The following proposals are offered to help establish consistent, transparent mechanisms for those who feel they need to create opportunities for connection with the previous year's summit leaders to confirm their participation
   a. Recommendation: Allow for such a space at the Academy. This would be a good way to connect members who may not know that such groups exist. By having faculty members or ASCA leadership facilitate these spaces, it may provide for additional mentoring opportunities.
   b. Recommendation: Invite CoPs to have Summits as well, especially LGBTQIA. If the invitation is declined, find out how the CoP wants to connect socially at the Conference and the Academy.
2. Establish a conference committee person for D&I efforts at all association-level events.
   a. Provide for such opportunities at the regional level events.
3. Provide transparency on the website and regularly in ASCA newsletters as to how communities may come together.
4. Continue to gather updates from CoPs and committees and post them for review and comment by the membership.

Recommendations to make ASCA events and products more inclusive, including but not limited to:
- Conference
- Regional events
- Gehring Academy
- Webinars
- Publications
- Website

ASCA Annual Conference

The ASCA Annual Conference continues to be the organization's most prominent and financially successful event. Attendance has steadily grown for the past 6 years and at times space limitations have caused the organization to be creative to meet the needs of multiple audiences and participants. The following proposals are offered to help improve the experience of participants, specifically in regard to issues related to diversity and inclusion.

- Scholarship Recipients – evaluate the current award of the Diversity Scholarships to identify potential increases that may be more in line with the Raymond Goldstone ASCA Foundation Scholarship.

- Gender Inclusive Restrooms –work with hotel properties to accommodate multi-stall gender inclusive restrooms in the meeting facilities.

- Diversity & Inclusion Luncheon – provide more collaboration between the Diversity & Inclusion committee and conference committee

- Schedule diversity sessions throughout the conference to ensure attendees have the opportunity to attend various diversity related sessions rather than needing to choose amongst a one-day limited schedule.

- Accommodations – develop a process for individuals needing accommodations during the annual conference that may include sign language interpreters, visual aids, chairs, meal options, etc.

- Dress code/standards – in newsletters and other conference communications, include information on attire for the annual conference.

- Soliciting session topics from COPs and Committees – in order ensure a robust and well-rounded program and sessions for the annual conference, we encourage the conference committee to solicit topics from ASCA Communities of Practices and Committees.

- Gender inclusive language – develop best practice or guidance on gender inclusive language for concurrent sessions, featured & keynote speakers, and other meetings during the conference.

- US-centric language – develop best practice or guidance on avoiding United States centric language (e.g., Title IX, FERPA, Clery) in concurrent sessions, featured & keynote speakers, and other meetings during the conference.

- Utilizing ASCA best practices as standard for presentations – develop best practice or guidance on utilizing ASCA standards for rationale for practices and not relying on campus or legal regulations

- Keep attendance cost down – In an effort to reduce cost, it is recommended that ASCA events offer a room share option for participants.

Donald D. Gehring Academy

The Donald D. Gehring Academy is ASCA's signature training event. Based on recent research, for 70% of participants, it is their first ASCA event. In a similar vein to the ASCA Annual Conference, the following is recommended:

- Low cost cities – continue to look for locations where cost and price is a primary factor in the selection process. This includes considerations for both travel, meals and hotel/housing options.

- Intentionality of Faculty selected – To provide a well-rounded, experience for participants, it is recommended that the faculty selection process take into consideration the various backgrounds, experiences, and personal & social identities.

State/Regional events

The planning and implementation of state and regional events for ASCA has largely been undertaken by volunteers. Similar to the ASCA Annual Conference and the Donald D. Gehring Academy, it is recommended that cost considerations be foremost in the planning process. Additionally, it is recommended that training be provided to state and region coordinators in order to provide them with the resources and information needed to plan various events for ASCA. The items included in planning the conference and the academy should be included in the training for the volunteer leaders planning ASCA events.

Webinars

ASCA webinars provide educational opportunities to supplement in-person events as well as provide opportunities for learning to those with limited resources. The following is recommended:
- Accommodations – develop a process for individuals needing accommodations for a webinar that may include sign language interpreters, visual aids, chairs, meal

options, etc. Additionally, every effort should be made to provide accessible presentations for computer use.

Publications
ASCA publications also provide valuable educational information for members. To ensure member needs are met, any and all publications should be visually inclusive and checked for visual and audio accessibility.

Website
The ASCA website is an important entry point for members and non-members to find information about the organization and its events, resources, and other education. Every effort should be made to ensure that the information is as user friendly as possible. Additionally, the website should be evaluated to meet universal design standards and adaptive technology for accessibility. Any and all pictures included should be visually inclusive as well as all text should have gender inclusive language. Finally, it is recommended that clear directions be developed and posted on how to join a Community of Practice, Committee, Forum and/or Listservs.

Other Recommendations
Several other areas were evaluated and the following recommendations are:

- Mentoring – in the application, open ended questions should be included that address what an individual is looking for in a potential mentor. Additionally, questions regarding multiple personal and social identities should be included.
- Leadership application/appointment process – to better prepare individuals for future leadership positions, it is recommended that co-leadership opportunities be offered as well as extending the appointment period to 2-years rather 1-year.
- Training of appointed leaders – develop comprehensive leadership training that includes expectations of the position, resources available, process for creating ASCA events, how to access ASCA funds and working with the Central Office staff.

ASCA Demographic Information - Membership, Event Registration and Survey Research

As an organization, ASCA collects various data and information about its members in an effort to better understand who the member is as well how this contributes to the membership as a whole. ASCA strives to provide members with a well-rounded, engaging membership experience that develops the individual through a variety of in-person events as well as various volunteer leadership positions, both elected and appointed.
In various systems, ASCA asks members to describe themselves, typically in regard to professional and personal identity. The organization uses this data to monitor trends, analyze responses and distribute targeted information about ASCA programs, events, and services.

Recommendations
The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force makes the following recommendations regarding the collection of data in relation to membership information, event registration, and survey/research assessments.
1.	Update to Operating Policies and Procedures –
	a.	Privacy – ASCA strives to protect the privacy of ASCA member information while also understanding that some data is accessible, based on membership type, to supervisors or by institutional administrative staff.
	b.	Demographics – Much of the information that ASCA collects is US-centric and often fails to fully comprehend the complexity of globalization. Additionally, many demographic questions and answers fail to acknowledge the intersectionality of social and personal identities. ASCA strives to understand this limitation and continues to add perspectives, knowledge, and experiences to better recognize and appreciate the multiple lens of research and data collection.
	c.	Data Integrity – ASCA strives for accuracy in its data collection methods, yet also understanding the constant and continually changing nature of personal and social identity. There is a need for balance in consistency and maintaining accurate self-reported information.
	d.	Data Storage – ASCA endeavors to store personal and professional information of members in the most secure means necessary through a third-party vendor. The information is password protected both through the membership side as well as the staff side. The organization makes every effort to enumerate the purpose of any and all data collected and how the information will be used. Finally, ASCA is the owner of all data collected by association surveys and strives to ensure the professionalism of all the information collected and utilized.
2.	Update type of information collected

Membership Data

Current	Recommended
Contact Information	Contact Information
Prefix	• Prefix
First Name	• First Name
Middle Name	• Last/Family Name
Last Name	
	Professional Information
Professional Information	• Professional Work Title
Work Place	• College/University/Organization
Title	• College/University/Organization State
	• College/University/Organization Country
Additional Information	• Institution/Organization Size
Gender	• Institution/Organization Type
Ethnicity	• Years in the Field
Region	• Highest Educational Degree Completed
	• Position Level

Event Registration

Current	Recommended
All the above Preferred Name for my Nametag Preferred Gender Pronoun Dietary Restrictions	All the above • **Personal Pronoun** – Free response space • **Dietary Restrictions** • **Access** - All ASCA event registration forms should display the following statement and response option and/or contact information for getting in touch with the Central Office: *"Please indicate any special services, accommodations, or needs which may be necessary during the program (e.g., Sign Language interpreting, accessible materials): _____ "*

Survey Research

Current	Recommended
ASCA Region Varies by survey	**Gender Identity?** o Male o Transgender o Woman o Gender queer o Prefer not to answer **Racial identity?** o African-American or Black o American Indian or Alaska Native or Indigenous or First Nations o Arab or Middle Eastern o Asian or Asian American or Desi o Hispanic or Latina or Latino or Latinx o Multiracial or Biracial (two or more races, where "multiracial" or "biracial" are explicitly listed) o Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander o White or Caucasian or European American o Prefer not to answer **Sexual identity/Sexuality?** o Asexual

	o Bisexual
	o Fluid
	o Gay
	o Heterosexual
	o Lesbian
	o Pansexual
	o Queer
	o Questioning
	o No response
	o Prefer not to answer

Do you have a long-lasting or chronic condition (physical, visual, auditory, cognitive or mental, emotional, or other) that substantially limits one or more of your major life activities (your ability to see, hear, or speak; to learn, remember, or concentrate)?
o Yes*
o No
o Prefer not to answer

o *If Yes, please indicate the terms that best describe the condition(s) you experience: ▪ Free response: _____
▪ Prefer not to answer

Do you identify as a military veteran or service member?: (select one)
o Yes*
o No
o Prefer not to answer

o *If Yes, please indicate the terms that best describes your experience (select as many as apply): ▪ U.S. military veteran or active duty member
▪ Military veteran or active duty member in a country other than the U.S.
▪ Current or former member of the U.S. National Guard or Reserves
▪ Current or former member of the National Guard or Reserves or similar in a country other than the U.S.
▪ Another identity not listed describes my military veteran or service member status. I identify as:_____ (free response space)
▪ Prefer not to answer

Continuing Work:

Phillip Burns, Regina Curran and Nancy Geist Giacomini are continuing to work on the ASCA Statement of Diversity. They ask the board to discuss several guiding questions related to our organizations values around diversity and inclusion and how this is communicated in our public facing information. The next step will be to develop and finalize a written statement that will be submitted to the Board of Directors in July, 2017.

Conclusion
The issues related to Diversity and Inclusion within ASCA are broad ranging. The work of this task force was a snapshot and the work does not end here. The goal is to make diversity and inclusion a priority in everything we do and we can only do that by doing better every day and not repeating the mistakes of the past.