

Western North Carolina Diversity Engagement Coalition

The Western North Carolina Diversity Engagement Coalition (WNC DEC) brings together local organizations to help create a more diverse workforce in Western North Carolina and to build inclusive work environments.



Congratulations to our Fall 2016 WNC DEC Professional Development Class!

The Coalition's approach was informed by input from the community. Initial priorities were to build social networks, facilitate leadership training, and serve as a resource for local businesses to help them adopt best practices that support a fair and inclusive work environment.

This is the sixth Professional Leadership Series class. The current series focused on helping participants build skill sets that can help them be more competitive as they pursue career opportunities. The series includes hands-on training around identifying your strengths, having difficult conversations, and even a course on how our biology shapes our workplace interactions.

The final class is a simulation of the interview process where each class participant gets to role play interviewing and receives feedback. The leadership series helps people align their talents,

strengths, and relevant experience with future employment goals, setting the stage for better professional success. One participant stated, "I've often sought jobs for other reasons. Having this as my guide (going forward) is a pretty big deal because now that I know about my strengths, I can look for a job that better supports them."

Paulina Mendez, who facilitated the recent WNC DEC Leadership Series stated, "It's been amazing to watch our participants grow more confident in their professional skills and learn about their individual strengths that really set them apart in the workforce. The WNC Diversity Engagement Coalition has done a great job of curating a program that teaches you concrete tools while still encouraging you to go deeper in your understanding of who you are and what you bring to the table. Another important piece of this series was the ability to be in a space where we dis-

cussed implicit bias and other challenges faced by multicultural individuals. I have been thrilled to be a part of this series!"

WNC DEC also invites local employers to adopt best practices that encourage a diverse workforce. This work strengthens the grid of support for local businesses so that they can, in turn, create the conditions where diversity and inclusion can take root in the workplace.

The Coalition is a bridge between people in the community and local businesses, helping each to sharpen their skills to create better opportunities and environments for employees and employers alike. We congratulate the graduating class of the WNC DEC Leadership Series!

Recent Graduates: Shiona Abrams, Turkessa Baten, Tausha

Benjamin, Alyssa Bissett, Lindsey Bnadad, Irene Canivet, Dina Gillespie, Keith Martin, Jean-Jacques Maury, Kia Maybin, Cindy Messer, Tricia Niemczyk, Stephanie Shepherd, Shaketia Simpson, Lynn Smith, Shidonna Smith, Phyllis Utley, and Lillian Woods.

For more information on classes, please visit www.wncdec.com/events

We thank our anchor institutions MAHEC, UNC Asheville, City of Asheville, Buncombe County Health and Human Services, and Mission Health, as well as our supporting partners, McGuire Woods and Bisset, Biltmore Estate, Buncombe County Schools, and Wells Fargo.



The WNC Diversity Engagement Coalition invites you to celebrate the warmth of the holiday season with a **Holiday Party and End of Year Social.**

Wednesday, December 14 • 5:00-6:30 PM

XYZ Lounge, Aloft Hotel, 51 Biltmore Ave., Asheville

Heavy hors d'oeuvres. Bring a friend, co-worker, or significant other!

Questions? Please email or call Paulina Mendez at paulinam364@gmail.com, 828-785-4274. Parking will be reimbursed. *Please RSVP.