

1 Michigan Dental Association

2
3 **Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

4 **Held via Zoom Videoconference**

5 September 13, 2021

6
7 **PRESENT**

8 Tamar Shrikian, DDS Vice Chair

9 Jessica Rickert, DDS, Member

10 Ronald Livingston, DMD, Member

11 Daniel Miller, DDS, Member

12 Prabhjot Singh, DDS, Member

13 Rita Benjamin, Student Member

14
15 **ABSENT**

16 Mehul Patel, DDS, Chair

17 Vincent Lizzio, DDS, Liaison

18 Juan Rodriguez, DDS Member

19 Tazeen Rahman, UM Student

20
21 **GUESTS**

22 Dave Foe, Director of Print and e-Publications

23 Christopher Smiley DDS, Editor-in-Chief

24 Sophie Brenke, Component Relation Coordinator

25
26 **STAFF**

27 Brandy Ryan, MBA, PHR, SHRM-CP, Director of Human Resources

28 Kelly Risley, Human Resources Administrative Assistant

29
30 **CALL TO ORDER**

31 The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Dr. Shrikian, Vice Chair

32
33 **UDM CHECK PRESENTATION – WHO CAN ATTEND?**

34 Dr. Prabhjot Singh will be attending the UDM check presentation on Monday, September 27,

35 2021. The check presentation is for the Summer Enrichment Program grant to support DAT

36 prep and DAT test-taking for Michigan residents

37
38 **JOURNAL IDEAS & DISCUSSION**

39 The committee invited Dr. Smiley, editor-in-chief, and Dave Foe, director of print and e-
40 publications, to share the committee’s ideas for possible journal contributions focusing on DEI.
41 The committee discussed their idea of having a monthly column that focuses on DEI content
42 that the committee would help create content for. Dr. Smiley shared that the goal of the
43 journal is to maintain a clinically relevant message for the members. Dr. Smiley emphasized
44 that the Journal would be a key way for CDEI to connect with members and their peers. Dr.
45 Smiley and committee members discussed some of the previous DEI-focused articles and
46 several committee members complimented Dr. Smiley regarding the noticeable efforts that
47 have been made in creating a more diverse Journal. Committee members recognize that they
48 don’t want to overwhelm readers with this content and want to be sure DEI contributions are
49 relevant.

50
51 The committee recognized the DEI series that was currently running in the journal and Dr.
52 Smiley talked about negative feedback that was received as a result. The committee were
53 interested in hearing how the Journal handles letters to the editor, and the entire process that
54 is involved in these occurrences. Dr. Shrikian complimented the Journal for the intentional
55 efforts that have been made in making diversity a priority.

56
57 Suggestions from the committee included:

- 58 • The committee would like to have more pictures that looks like them and their
59 communities featured.
- 60 • When in-person component meetings are taking place, they suggested having a
61 photographer at those meetings to take pictures. Dr. Smiley suggested that members
62 start taking pictures at their meetings and events to send to the publications
63 department. There is a section that is called “Members in the News”, this is an
64 opportunity for committee members to bring these individuals to the attention of the
65 Journal. This information can be emailed, texted, or faxed to get the information to the
66 Journal. Dr. Smiley shared with the group that stories are a great way to share your
67 experiences and are extremely helpful in telling the story.
- 68 • A committee member noted the importance of having the articles being clinically
69 relevant but also wanting to make sure that the content is compelling so it may be a
70 better idea to only have 3-4 articles a year, so readers aren’t skipping over the column.
71 The group agreed that they would rather produce 3-4 DEI relevant articles per year than
72 to try to create a monthly column that doesn’t engage the reader.

73
74 **LOCAL SOCIETY ACTIVITIES**
75 Sophie Brenke thanked the committee for inviting her to the meeting and shared her
76 appreciation for this collaboration. The committee started the conversation by asking; ‘What

77 can we do? We want to be a part of the solution and we are willing to help.” The committee
78 would like to see the components be more welcoming to members and guests. The first look
79 at leadership is often at the component level. There was general discussion and brainstorming
80 about how to create engagement at the local level and how to encourage components to put
81 forward local leaders to the higher levels to encourage diversity in leadership at the highest
82 levels. The committee would like conversations to occur with leadership at the component
83 societies to encourage more diversity with on their boards. The committee discussed having
84 and highlighting minority speakers at CE events and at the Annual Session.

85

86 Ms. Ryan encouraged the committee to share information with Ms. Brenke regarding things
87 they have seen that are working, as well as things that are not working at the component’s
88 meetings. Understanding what is and isn’t working will assist her in working with component
89 leader who may be struggling to engage members.

90

91 **NEXT MEETING**

92 The committee asked for a poll to be sent out for October and November meetings dates.

93

94 **ADJOURNMENT**

95 The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.