

Attachment A



County JOIN DEI REPORT



DECEMBER 12, 2023

County Human Resources
Authored by: Yvonne Torres

Executive Summary

The County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors, the County Executive, and engaged department leaders pledged their commitment to prioritize workplace equity. In 2020, the Board charged County HR to identify a bold strategy to create an inclusive organizational culture where diversity and equity are embraced, where employees feel safe, valued, and included in all aspects of organizational life, and, where the workforce experiences a strong sense of belonging. Prioritizing workplace equity and inclusion ensures the County can continue to attract and retain diverse employees aligned with the purpose of supporting a safe, healthy and thriving County of Santa Barbara community.

The Crucial Conversation's Course

"It's life-changing- helps with building meaningful relationships".

-Participant

This report is designed to capture the County's diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) journey from its early efforts, to initiatives implemented, to a longer-term look at complementing and supporting departmental DEI efforts through a three-year action plan. The DEI Action Plan is intended to advance DEI concepts and positively impact the workplace culture.



1. The Journey

The County of Santa Barbara has been on a path to build a more equitable workplace. Diversity, equity, and inclusiveness are essential elements of the County’s strategy and the commitment to these ideals can be seen over the past few years. The County acknowledges more work is required and the journey to achieving our DEI objectives is made more secure by building upon the achievements made to date.

2020	2021	2022	2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•GARE Membership•JOIN Framework•DIBE Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Statement of Commitment•JOIN Phases I/II completed•DEI Advisory Council•Leadership Learning Labs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Regional DEI Symposium (2)•Cascading Concepts•Brave Spaces Sessions•JOIN Phases III/IV completed•Equity Survey•DEI Toolkit•JOIN one-year plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Regional DEI Symposium•County Village Connect•Village Voices Newsletter•DEI Speaker Series•Crucial Conversations•Three-year Action Plan

2. The Tools

A. GARE Model: The County sought approaches and techniques for how to think and talk about diversity and inclusion in the workplace setting. Additionally, we needed to provide our leaders with the structure and tools to support equity and inclusion in their departments. The County turned to the GARE Model to frame DEI concepts in a workplace context. The GARE Model was the County’s starting place and it helped set the foundation for strategy.

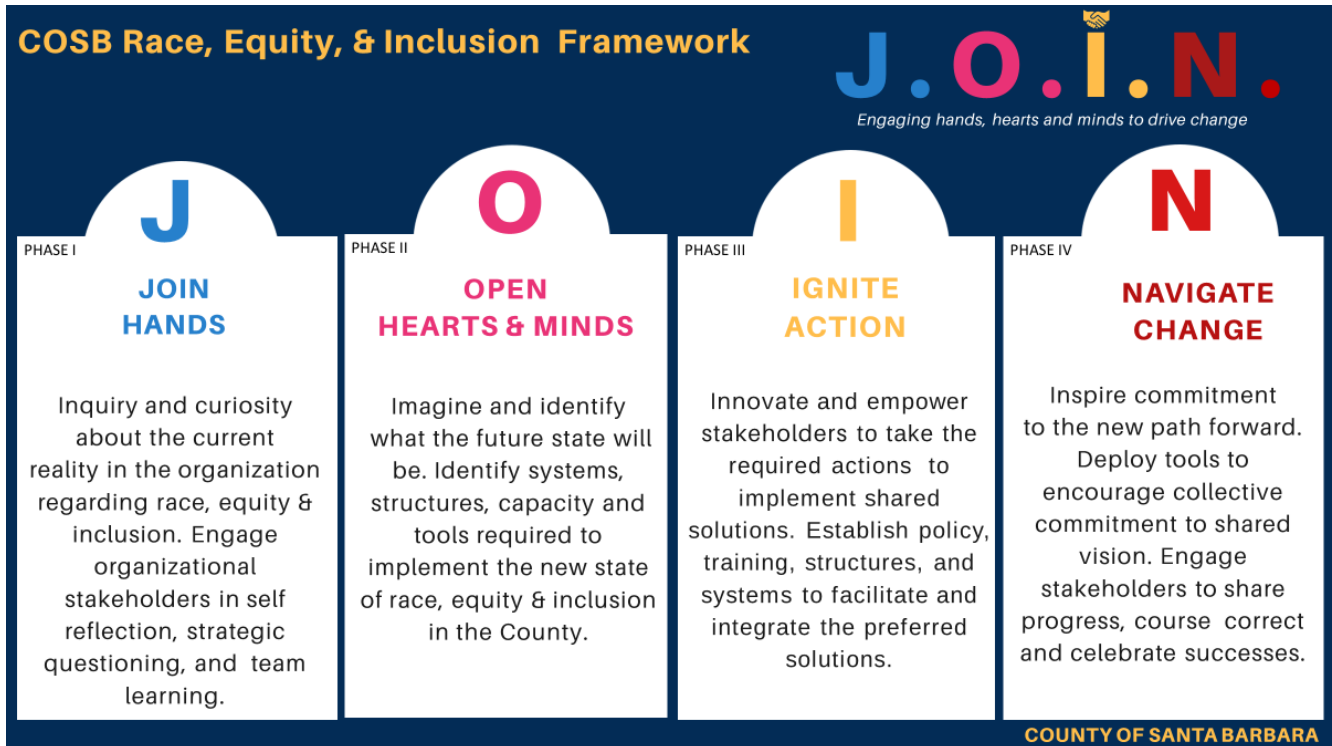
FRAMEWORK



B. JOIN Guiding Principles: In order to set a direction, create alignment, and generate a commitment to DEI in the workplace, a set of guiding principles were identified. These guiding principles have served to ground our strategy and set the tone for the organizational change approach.

- ✓ **It will be a journey** - it is a commitment to roll up our collective sleeves and continually assess, learn, revise, and re-design our structures and systems to make them effective in responding to the ever-changing needs of both community members and employees.
- ✓ **We start with ourselves**- we will continue to assess the organization to determine our strengths and areas of opportunity.
- ✓ **We don't have all the answers** - the County takes a position of humility around this work. We don't have and won't have all the answers. We are willing to listen and learn from others.
- ✓ **We will learn and explore** - workforce Development: Cultural change is an outcome of change at all levels of the organization. It is important to provide the workforce with varied platforms offering opportunities to learn, explore, and express. Employees need the tools and education that allow them to grow.

C. JOIN Framework: In support of the Board’s courageous commitment to creating a more equitable and inclusive organization, staff designed an adaptable strategy for a two-year period. The JOIN Framework was a path forward that allowed us to live up to our guiding principles. The County began educating County leadership, worked with experts in the DEI field, and adjusted efforts along the way.



3. Gaining Momentum

Upon completion of the four phases of the JOIN Framework, CoHR identified a one-year plan to continue the County’s efforts to bolster equity and inclusion more broadly.

With an increased focus on DEI from employees, candidates, and the broader public, the Board continued their investment in driving culture change. The one-year DEI plan identified where resources would be deployed for the greatest impact and help the County progress in our journey to building a better organization.



4. Accelerating the Impact

Putting equity and inclusion into action requires placing DEI as an integral part of our County strategy and working culture. This focus is reinforced by establishing a long-term approach to building a better workplace. Having a long-term plan can act as an accelerator to achieving expected outcomes. From recruiting to internal talent development to engagement and measuring practices, a DEI plan will help guide the County’s DEI journey.

Operationalizing the County JOIN-DEI plan is a collaborative effort. Allies, supporters, and champions exist at all levels and key stakeholders are invited to provide input, feedback and to participate in working collectively toward accelerating and advancing the identified strategies under each DEI Impact area.