PATTERN TASK FORCE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Introductory Statement:

It is important to Pattern that diverse populations within the Hudson Valley are beneficiaries of its mission to enhance the growth and vitality of the region and to improve regional quality of life. Toward that end, Pattern has created this Task Force in response to those key elements of its strategic plan that establish Pattern’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and to make that commitment a key priority of the organization moving forward. Specifically, this Task Force has been directed to generate recommendations as to how Pattern can best focus its work on broad inclusivity and fairness of outcomes.

Pattern views diversity broadly to include populations of individuals of varying gender, religion, race, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, different abilities, economic and other attributes.

The recommendations listed below are for consideration and implementation by Pattern’s Board of Directors and Staff. These recommendations are targeted to ensure that Pattern, as an organization, imbibes and embodies principles of diversity, equity and inclusion and that its work product is the result of broad viewpoint participation that is void of unconscious bias, which leads to unfair outcomes.

The Task Force believes Pattern is uniquely suited to “move the dial” on the integration of issues of inclusivity and fairness into its traditional areas of work including, but not limited to, housing, education, health, community development, economic policy, governmental efficiency and environmental quality. Pattern can do this because of its research capabilities, its broad relationships and ability to convene diverse groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

INVEST TIME AND RESOURCES INTO INCORPORATING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION INTO THE VALUES AND CULTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION

- Build Pattern around its shared organizational values inclusive of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion values.
- Marry Pattern’s traditional work with considerations of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion but do not wander from Pattern’s mission and ensure alignment with Pattern’s mission, vision and goals. Pursue funding opportunities to assist implementation of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts and consider use of Reserve funds if other funding is not available.
- Establish a person (staff, board member or consultant) with responsibility for diversity management in the organization.
- Establish succession plans and leadership paths upon which diverse Board members can be incorporated into leadership positions.
- Incorporate considerations of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion into every Pattern work-product.

CREATE THE MEANS TO ATTRACT PARTICIPATION, MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP OF DIVERSE POPULATIONS TO THE ORGANIZATION

- Build relationships in diverse communities and enlighten those communities about how Pattern can be helpful to them utilizing its specific skill sets. Cultivate interest in Board membership and recruitment to flow organically from this foundation building.
- Recruit and hire qualified consultants, staff and/or vendors being representative/proportional /reflective of the diverse make-up of the region.
- Broaden advertising, outreach and work description/qualifications to have a better chance to recruit diverse candidates and be willing to mentor and train if necessary.
• Implement a plan of Board member recruitment to achieve Board representation that is representative/proportional/reflective of the Region’s diverse population. As part of recruitment, clearly articulate to any potential diverse Board member how he/she would bring value to the organization. Do not recruit to fill an artificial quota.
• Remove barriers to recruitment of diverse Board members such as financial barriers and barriers that detract from effective communication and outreach to diverse communities.
• Use the Fellows Program as a vehicle to recruit diverse Board Members.

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ACHIEVING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION OBJECTIVES

• Issue a year-end report to the Board of Directors on accomplishments/shortfalls with respect to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion objectives and how the organization will continue to move forward to achieve objectives in the coming year.
• Utilize an independent consultant or Board Member to assess the progress Pattern has made with respect to its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts and to make recommendations.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR STAFF AND BOARD

• Educate and train staff and Board members on issues of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
• Training to be delivered by a qualified practitioner who may be a staff member, board member, consultant or other person who has the qualifications and experience to conduct such training.

TWEAK ORGANIZATION’S MISSION STATEMENT TO REFLECT COMMITMENT TO EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

• Adjust mission statement to include the word “equitable” so it now reads “…. provide regional, balanced, sustainable and equitable solutions....”

AMEND BY-LAWS TO CREATE A STANDING COMMITTEE DEVOTED TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

• The standing committee to be chaired by a Board member with participation of staff, Pattern members and ex-officio members at the discretion of the Chairperson.
• The Committee will be responsible for developing specific strategies for implementing the Task Force recommendations and oversight of Pattern’s ongoing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts.
• The Committee will be responsible to develop metrics to assess organizational DEI work and progress toward implementation of the Task Force recommendations.

UTILIZATION OF FELLOWS PROGRAM TO HELP INSTILL DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION VALUES INTO THE PARADIGM FOR CREATING REGIONAL LEADERS

• Leverage relationships within diverse communities such as minority and women-owned small businesses to recruit for Fellows Program.
• Eliminate barriers to recruitment of diverse Fellows such as financial barriers and barriers that detract from effective communication and outreach to potential diverse Fellows candidates. Establish a scholarship fund to recruit Fellows from diverse communities within the Region.