



REACH
healthcare foundation®

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging (DEIAB) Capacity Building Workshops

FINAL REPORT



Overview

In today's challenging environment for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging (DEIAB) initiatives, it is crucial to stay informed about the tools and strategies needed to navigate ongoing obstacles.

The Community Health Commission of Missouri (CHCM) and the REACH Healthcare Foundation partnered to launch the **DEIAB Community-Centered Capacity-Building Workshops** to help nonprofit organizations strengthen organizational capacity through equity-centered, trauma-informed learning. These workshops provided practical strategies to:

- Strengthen organizational DEIAB identity
- Drive meaningful systems change
- Foster healthier, more inclusive workplace cultures

Over the past several months, **more than 100 community members and partners** attended five sessions led by expert facilitators and panelists. At a time when opposition to DEI efforts is growing, these workshops offered essential knowledge, resources, and support to empower organizations to sustain and effectively advance their initiatives. Together, participants explored what it means to lead with equity and build stronger, more inclusive systems.

Capacity-Building Sessions at a Glance

5

sessions delivered
across April–August
2025

114

total attendees from
nonprofit and community
organizations

34

participants completed some
or all of the post-program
evaluation survey

Session 1: Building Resilience and Supporting Well-being for DEIAB Practitioners & Advocates



Wednesday, April 2nd



33 attendees

Facilitated by Kayla Thompson, MEd, CHCM Senior Manager of Training and Technical Assistance

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Explore an equity-centered, trauma-informed care approach for practitioners and advocates.
- ✓ Identify everyday stressors and burnout risks within DEIAB advocacy work.
- ✓ Develop resilience-building strategies for long-term sustainability in advocacy.



Session 2: Policy Check: What Has Changed in the DEIAB Landscape?



Thursday, May 8th



38 attendees

Facilitated by Robert Gibson, MS, MPH, CHCM Director of Policy and Advocacy

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Analyze recent policy shifts impacting nonprofits, philanthropy, and federal grants.
- ✓ Assess funding and strategy implications of DEIAB policy changes.
- ✓ Learn adaptive strategies to sustain DEIAB efforts despite social-political shifts.

Panelists



Kelvin Simmons
Partner, Nexus Group



NaTika Rowles
Executive Director, The Black Community Fund



Aja Owens
Implementation Manager, CHCM



Session 3: Assessing Cultural and Structural Competence in Building a Team



Thursday, June 5th



8 attendees

Facilitated by Dr. Danielle Binion, EdD, CHCM Chief Strategy Officer

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the impact of anti-DEIAB restrictions on workforce development.
- ✓ Identify best practices for retention and recruitment in restrictive policy environments.
- ✓ Develop cultural and structural competence strategies for teams.

Panelists



Nicole Garner
Executive Director,
Center for African
American Health



Jessica Thompson
Deputy Director, Thrive
Allen County and Thrive
Kansas

Session 4: Strategies for Inclusive Community Engagement and Leadership



Thursday, July 10th



23 attendees

Facilitated by Velva Hollimon, LCSW, CHCM Senior Director of Operations

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Define inclusive leadership principles within evolving landscapes.
- ✓ Develop strategies for authentic community engagement.
- ✓ Learn approaches to ensure representation and participation in decision-making.

Panelists



Ms. Rosetta Keeton
Patient Advocate



Tony Davis
Seniors Advisory Board
member

Session 5: Data-Informed and Data-Driven DEIAB Practices



Wednesday, August 8th



12 attendees

Facilitated by Courtney Dowdall, PhD, CHCM Director of Data and Accountability

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the role of data in advancing DEIAB efforts through experiential data and storytelling.
- ✓ Identify effective metrics and evaluation tools.
- ✓ Learn how to leverage data to drive meaningful change.



Panelists



Leah Moser
Planning and Operations
Lead, UMSL Community
Innovation and Action
Center



Risha Frazier
Data Strategy Lead, UMSL
Community Innovation and
Action Center





Summary of Key Findings

At the conclusion of each workshop, participants were invited to complete a short post-session survey. Participants rated several statements on a 5 point scale, where 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree, answered a free-response question, and provided basic demographic information.

Based on the results of these surveys, we noted the following key outcomes:

Increased Knowledge

- **100% agree or strongly agree** that these workshops enhanced their understanding of recent policy shifts impacting DEIAB.
- **85% agree or strongly agree** that these workshops enhanced their understanding of the funding and strategy implications of DEIAB policy changes.
- **100% agree or strongly agree** that these trainings enhanced their understanding of inclusive leadership.
- **57% agree or strongly agree** that this training enhanced their understanding of how experiential data and storytelling can advance DEIAB efforts.

Strengthened confidence in participants' ability to promote DEIAB

- **93% agree or strongly agree** that they feel more confident in their ability to ensure equitable representation.
- **57% agree or strongly agree** that they feel more confident in their ability to leverage data to drive change.

Development of practical skills and strategies

- **100% agree or strongly agree** that they learned at least one strategy to help sustain DEIAB efforts.
- **87% agree or strongly agree** that they learned one skill or strategy to help foster community engagement.
- **87% agree or strongly agree** that they learned one tool or strategy to help support shared decision-making.
- **71% agree or strongly agree** that they learned one skill or strategy that will help me use data to advance DEIAB efforts.

Participants were asked...

What is the most valuable thing you learned today?

"The power of **data**."

"**Hearing from others** about their concerns and strategies."

"Collaboration and the **message of hope**."

"The need to collect the data, **tell the stories** and keep doing the work."

"**Fellowship** matters!"

"Networking — that **we're not alone**."

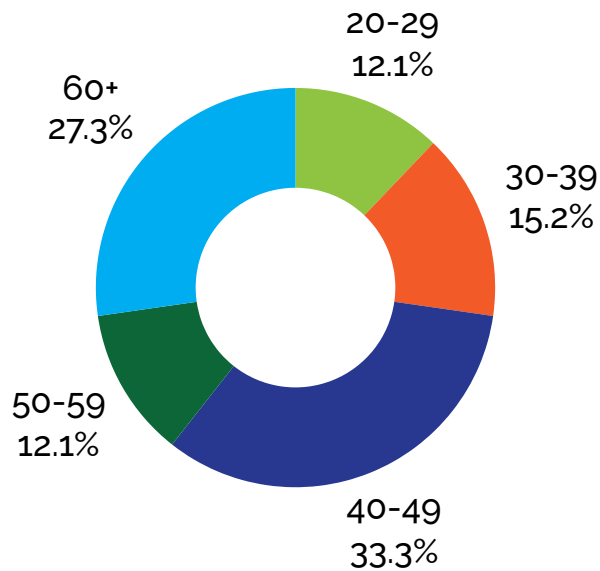
"The importance of **connection**."



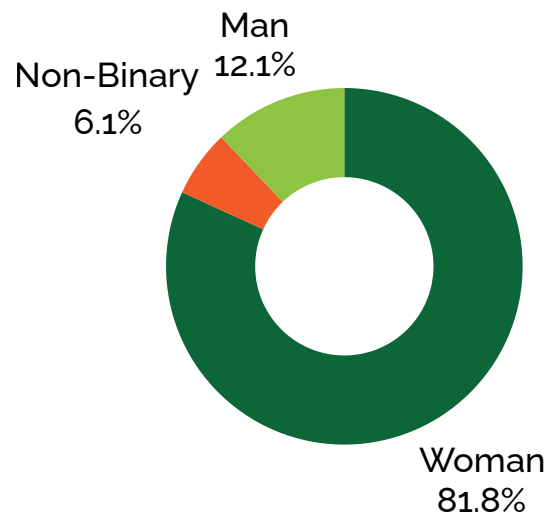
Survey Respondents' Demographic Information

Participants were asked for the following information:

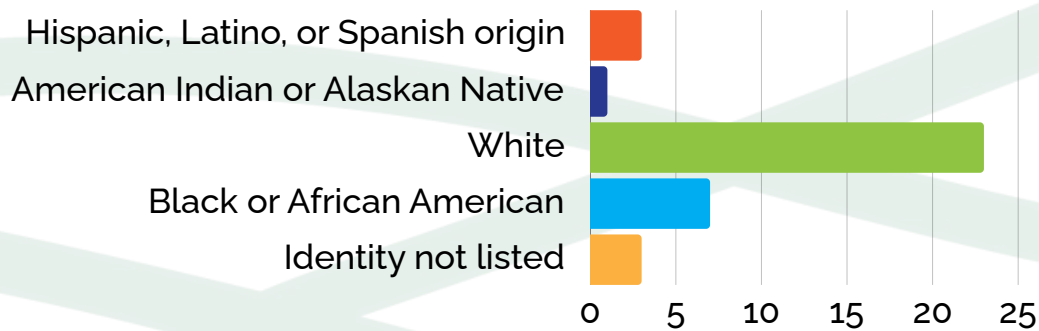
Age



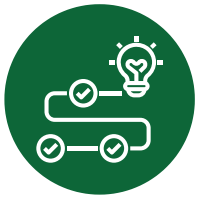
Gender



Race/Ethnicity



*Note: this information applies only to survey respondents and therefore is not representative of all session participants**



Conclusions & Lessons Learned

The partnership between CHCM and the REACH Healthcare Foundation created space for organizations and community members to learn, connect and grow together. Across the five sessions, participants gained practical strategies to sustain DEIAB work in challenging sociopolitical contexts. The workshops reinforced that beyond technical knowledge, the true value of this partnership lies in the connections formed between community members, the shared commitment to equity, and the collective confidence participants gained to carry this work forward.

At the same time, several key lessons emerged to guide future programming:

- **Increase survey engagement:** Explore strategies to increase survey completion, such as brief in-session reminders and follow-up emails with survey links.
- **Explore format flexibility:** Expand virtual or hybrid opportunities to increase accessibility, broaden participation, and improve audience reach.
- **Allow more time for dialogue:** Extend sessions to support richer peer learning, discussion, and reflection.

Continued collaboration between CHCM and REACH will be critical to sustaining the momentum of the partnership. Together, we can build on this strong foundation, applying these lessons to further strengthen organizational capacity, foster inclusive leadership, and sustain inclusive, community-driven change that advances equity and belonging.

