

NOAA Fisheries Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement

For the past several years, NOAA Fisheries has been a strong champion of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. In 2016, a cross-agency workgroup developed the NOAA Fisheries Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan. This plan, which is active and in place until 2021, serves to not only outline our organization's diversity and inclusion goals and priorities, but identifies specific actions offices and staff can implement to support them.

As an organization, one of our focus areas is to match a diverse workforce to mission needs. To do so we must work to eradicate discrimination, identify and reduce barriers, and increase our outreach efforts until measurable outcomes are achieved. Diversity research has shown that a diverse workforce is linked to how well an organization is able to both recruit and retain the best and the brightest. This in turn positively impacts employee engagement and productivity; and reflects our ability to translate value and investment in all employees of NOAA Fisheries, which helps us ingrain a value for diversity at all levels of the organization.

On September 30, 2019, Dr. Neil Jacobs, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce, performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Ocean and Atmosphere, issued NOAA's annual policy statement on diversity and inclusion. Dr. Jacobs said, "*All of us share in the responsibility for creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace.*"

Moving forward into FY2020, I want to again thank you for the diversity and inclusion "all hands on deck" strides that we have made and furthermore encourage you to personally make a commitment to ensuring that as an organization we excel above diversity and inclusion compliance to successfully creating a workplace culture where everyone genuinely feels welcomed, valued and respected regardless of our differences. It is important to understand that diversity and inclusion are not stand alone initiatives, but rather concepts that should be integrated into everything we do to allow us the highest capability to accomplish NOAA's mission of Science, Service, and Stewardship.

If you have any questions or need additional information, reach out to our Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, Melissa A. Johnson via email at Melissa.Johnson@NOAA.gov.

Chris



Chris Oliver
Assistant Administrator
NOAA Fisheries
U.S. Department of Commerce