Cultural Competency Plan

Introduction

Cultural competence is the ability to communicate and function with knowledge and awareness when engaging with individuals or groups of different cultural backgrounds and to enable effective work in cross-cultural situations. CMNH employs and serves a diverse community of individuals. Our museum also exhibits collections and portrays ideas and themes to the public that represent a variety of diverse cultural backgrounds and stories. It is therefore imperative that a plan be initiated to better enable the institution to support, educate, and empower its staff to relate effectively with groups of people from various backgrounds.

This document represents the first draft or initial stage of an institution wide plan to elevate cultural competency within our everyday practice. This plan, like cultural competency itself, is ever evolving. Rather than seek an end point, this process seeks to promote an institutional way of "being."

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that Institution staff and its visitors receive services, enjoy benefits, and exist in an environment that is respectful, inclusive, and productive. Being Culturally Competent means that CMNH will address biases and stereotypes that can be used to discriminate against a person's culture or identity, including but not limited to discrimination based on race, age, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, classism, and religion. CMNH seeks to embrace cultural competence as our standard, on an individual level, as well as more broadly as an institution. This plan will guide our efforts and define our strategy.

Step One: Organizational self-assessment

1) Create a working group that includes individuals from various backgrounds, from all levels of the institutional hierarchy, including members and stakeholders.
2) Evaluate what action plans are currently in place within the institution. In addition, consider what systems may already be in effect in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion section.
3) Gather data, including but not limited to, the current and projected demographics for the city and region that we are situated in, as well as the demographics of the members, partners, visitors, stakeholders, and staff that make up our museum community. Consider how our internal demographics compare with external ones.
4) Locate an outside agency or consultant to help coordinate an internal assessment process. This consultant should be able to inform working group on matters of initial planning, data gathering, surveying and interviews, creating a shared vision, analyzing, and then disseminating data.
5) Establish timeline, logistics, and goals of working group.

Step Two: Needs Identification

Using the collected data from Step One:

1) Compile information into document that outlines strengths, weaknesses and gaps in current policies and services and define goals and objectives
2) Evaluate the physical location and appearance of buildings, events, and exhibits to determine if they are respectful and representative of communities that are served.
3) Determine if message and services reach all members of community.
4) Define the linguistic needs of the institution
5) Define staffing needs with focus towards identified gaps in diversity

Step Three: Action Steps

1) Integrate data from Step One and Two to transform information into formal practice and standards document
2) Hire new personnel
3) Provide staff education and trainings
4) Address language barriers with translation services
5) Create educational programming and events that align with information gathered in Steps One and Two.
6) Update exhibits and appearance of museum with input from community as determined in Steps One and Two
7) Update collections and collection practices as determined by Steps one and Two

Step Four: Evaluation

1) Complete annual evaluations of the effectiveness of Cultural Competency Plan
2) Meet regularly with staff, members, community, and stakeholders to discuss evolving needs.