

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Diversity Section Members:

The time has come to pass the baton to Veena and reflect on this past year. To say it went by fast is an understatement, and to say it was not what I expected is a massive understatement. First and foremost, my deepest thanks to all the officers and chairs of the section who really kept it all going. And special thanks to Shauna and the AAA staff, who do not get enough credit for all they do. I wish there were more I could have done, but as I transition to Past President and chair of the nominations committee, I ask for your help so we can all assist Veena as she steps into the president role and Amelia as she becomes Vice President/President-Elect. Please come forward and volunteer for your section, be it an officer role, chair of the midyear or annual meeting, or another role. Inquire with me!

I think the most impactful way you could help is to prod your department heads and colleagues to join our section. In the current climate of diversity, ask your department to make a statement that diversity is important. Detractors are using the recent supreme court ruling to justify attempts to kill all diversity programming in higher education. The actual ruling is very narrowly focused but feeds a climate opposed to what we fight for in this section. AAA can group bill the section membership for the entire department as they did for us at Oklahoma State when Angela Spencer, Interim Head of the School of Accounting, inquired with AAA and had our entire department join the Diversity Section. Yes, she was supporting me as President, but it was a statement that we value diversity as a unit. We have also completed The Architecture of Inclusion certificates as a faculty, treating each module like a book club where we watched the module and then gathered to discuss.
<https://aaahq.org/education/DEIB>

Last, please check the schedule for the Diversity Section sessions and attend as many as possible at the annual meeting. I look forward to seeing you soon! Two items of business for the section meeting bright and early for breakfast on Tuesday, August 8 (please be there!). I will ask for two motions to be brought to the table, discussed, and voted on.

1. To consider the criteria for the Innovation in Research Award with respect to section membership, with three possible alternatives.
 - Any AAA member is eligible for the award, only Diversity Section members are eligible for the monetary portion of the award (current language).
 - Any AAA member is eligible for the award, including the monetary portion.
 - Only current Diversity Section members (at least one on co-authored papers) at the time of the nomination are eligible for the award.
2. To move forward with the process, to be carried out by the executive team, to amend bylaws, create, and fill a Vice-President-Practice position for the section.
 - Currently, this position does not exist in the Diversity Section but does in others.

I will share a message with those who can attend the meeting on August 8, but for those who are unable, it has been my honor to serve you in this role. I thought my time was going to be spent much differently and I would get more done than I did. I had the honor and privilege of learning from and getting to know Kirsten, whose enthusiasm and care are amazing. And I can't put into proper words both what I learned from the experience and what it meant to me to step in for Sandra on Council. I could never fill her shoes, much less have the fabulous shoes she owned, but just trying to imagine and emulate how she would have handled things improved me as a colleague and as a person. I am certain I did not do it with her grace, but I certainly tried to do it with her heart. I look forward to the days ahead, fighting for what we know to be the best thing for our students and higher education, a world where all are given not just a seat at the table but a voice in the offerings.

Sincerely,

Craig A. Sisneros, Ph.D.
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AAA Diversity Section President 2022-2023

