

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING REPORT



**NAWBO Diversity Statement:** In principle and in practice, NAWBO values and seeks a diverse and inclusive membership. NAWBO seeks full participation in the organization by all business owners who support our mission to empower women entrepreneurs, regardless of race, religion, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability. NAWBO's goal is to effectively represent the full diversity of the women business owner community and to equitably expand access to leadership opportunities for the full spectrum of our membership.

## NAWBO Institute for Entrepreneurship DEI&B Programs

### ▶ NAWBO Institute "Brave Is" National Women's Business Conference Scholarships

AARP and NAWBO partnered to provide 12 scholarships to the 2020 National Women's Business Conference and an additional six scholarships that included a virtual exhibit booth to women business owners of color age 45 or older. The 18 women participated in closed roundtable discussions during the event and were awarded 1-year NAWBO memberships.

### ▶ AARP "Established and Ready to Grow" Accelerator Program

AARP and NAWBO partnered to provide an educational and roundtable discussion series to 40 early-stage women business owners of color over a 6-month period. The participants of the program are aged 45 or older. The program also included a 1-year NAWBO membership.

### ▶ Wells Fargo Grant: Launch Right Program

Through the Wells Fargo Open for Business Grant, NAWBO developed and will execute a start-up program for women who are exiting the workforce, in rural regions, and marginalized socioeconomic communities. The workshop series will have two 6-month cohorts. NAWBO hopes to reach up to 200 under-represented women who are exploring the entrepreneurship.

### ▶ Verizon Small Business Digital Ready

NAWBO partnered with Verizon on its Small Business Digital Ready program that offers businesses support, aiming to enable digital readiness and drive digital transformation through customized curriculum. More than 100,000 small businesses closed due to the pandemic, with a disproportionate impact on Black and Latinx-owned small businesses, and this program reaches those businesses most in need of support within U.S.

### ▶ AARP "Power Your Dream" National Women's Business Conference Scholarships

The "Power Your Dream" Scholarship will be a repeat of the successful 2020 "Brave Is" Scholarship. The AARP collaboration will provide 18 NAWBO memberships, 12 Women's Business Conference registrations and six virtual exhibit booths to women business owners of color age 45 or older.

### ▶ Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Professional Certificate

NAWBO is exploring avenues to provide diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging training to NAWBO members and possibly their staff to build a more inclusive workforce culture. The certificate program will be launched when funding is secured through a grant partner with a common mission of expanding diversity and inclusion education in the small business community. *\*In development*

### ▶ Backing Black Business Small Business Grants from Reimagine Mainstreet

The Backing Black Business Small Business Grants program recognizes the power of women entrepreneurs and wants to keep them thriving. It's made possible through a partnership among Reimagine Main Street and leading organizations serving Black women entrepreneurs with financial support from Meta. The program will provide cash grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 to more than 200 Black women entrepreneurs who either started their businesses during the pandemic or who successfully navigated their businesses through the pandemic.

## National Leadership and Investment in People



### ▶ DEI&B Consultant

The National team has brought on a DEI&B consultant to assist in chapter education, evaluation of diversity initiative progress and national strategy development.

### ▶ Chapter Leader Diversity Education

Diversity education is included as part of the Chapter President Onboarding before installation. The education will continue throughout the year and provide resources, toolkits and best practices to build inclusive chapters and local boards.

### ▶ National Nominating Committee—Board Member Selection

During the National Board selection process, many factors are weighed to ensure that all women business owners' viewpoints are represented in the board room. The board is put together with women from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities and industries. Members of the National Nominating Committee collectively represent the diversity of the woman business owner ecosystem within and outside of NAWBO membership.

### ▶ HQ Team and Training

NAWBO National staff is comprised of women and men from a variety of backgrounds, generations and ethnicities. As the staff grows, careful consideration is made to build a diverse team and model best practices as an organization. NAWBO HQ staff are required to complete sexual harassment training that includes LGBTQ education modules. They also recently participated in three DEI&B training sessions, along with the National Board and Presidents Assembly Steering Committee.



## National and Virtual Events

### ▶ Connect and Learn Speaker Selection

Between the months of March 2020 through December 2021, not including the months of July and December when virtual programming goes dark, have featured 1-2 women of color per month as our featured "Lunch & Learn/Connect & Learn" speakers.

### ▶ Women's Business Conference Keynote and Breakout Speaker Selection

When building the speakers and agenda for national events, such as the National Women's Business Conference, careful consideration is taken to include diverse women and men. The

goal is for all women business owners to be able to connect and identify with the journeys and materials presented at the event. Attendees should not only feel represented but included and valued in the discussions/activities.

### ▶ DEI&B Education and Training Sessions

The DEI&B Initiative team coordinated an Inclusion & Diversity panel discussion session at the February 2021 National Leadership Academy. DEI&B education was also included in 2021 National Women's Business Conference sessions and is the main focus of the January 2022 Leadership Academy.

### ▶ NextGen Initiative

For more than five years NAWBO National has been building strategy to engage and support the next generation of female entrepreneurs.

## Five-Year Strategic Imperative



The Strategic Imperative strives to build an organization that reflects all women business owners in membership and objectives by NAWBO's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

### ▶ DEI&B Committee

The DEI&B Committee assists chapter leaders with the formation and implementation of their DEI&B objectives, strategies and actions.

### ▶ DEI&B Committee Supported Focus Groups

The DEI&B Initiative team recruited participants from every NAWBO chapter to participate in six discussion group sessions held in Q4 2020 around topics including: the effects of COVID and the BLM situations on our members of color, their perspectives on how NAWBO represents all our WBOs politically, ethnically and across religious and age segments. They inquired about additional programming, training and support NAWBO HQ could offer, that would be of value to them personally and to their businesses.

### ▶ Focused Chapter Support

The DEI&B Initiative team also held a session with the Columbus chapter's D&I Committee to hear details, examples and best practices from their team. The team continues to collect and share best practices and connect with chapters to provide support as needed.

## Communication Elements

### ▶ Monthly Communication Theme

February 2021 Theme: "Think Inclusive"—The articles, education and member profiles were focused on highlighting NAWBO's diverse membership and providing DEI&B resources to members. These elements were featured in NAWBO One Articles and Resources, Chapter Leader Communication Toolkit and Chapter Social Media Toolkit.

Topics included: Making your business more inclusive, interviews with WBOs who have experienced the rewards of inclusivity, etc.

### ▶ Pictorial Representation Considerations

There is a standing coordinated effort between the communications team and digital media strategist to use/create images of diverse ages, religious affiliations, ethnicities, cultures and economic backgrounds in national branded collateral. This encompasses all images published on the national website, social media channels, or included in print and digital materials.



These young founders are in the ideation stage, emerging or established and range in age from 10-35 years old. The committee has been able to work in partnership with college business programs to provide membership scholarships. The NextGen Committee produces the NextGen Forum 2-day virtual event that has specific education, resources and networking opportunities for these young women. NAWBO HQ does not withhold resources or community based on any female founder's age. Furthermore, the NextGen Committee goes to lengths to reach this young generation and provide them resources in formats that fit their lifestyle.

### ▶ Multi-Lingual Educational and Translation Services

During the National Women's Business Conference and other national events (as

needed) translation services are provided in Spanish and French. During 2021, NAWBO HQ partnered with Facebook to produce a digital media training in Spanish for non-English speaking Latina WBOs. NAWBO HQ is working with other corporate partners to build a multi-lingual library of resources for members and non-members in the NAWBO Institute.

### ▶ DEI&B Virtual Events to Encourage Dialogue

NAWBO launched a monthly series of DEI&B Circle-format events to encourage CANDID CONVERSATIONS around the DEI&B journey within NAWBO and in member businesses. We are also hosting a DEI&B Open Forum in January 2022 to share how far we've come and where we're headed in our DEI&B commitment and efforts.