

Board of Directors
Ketchikan Area Arts and Humanities Council
330 Main Street
Ketchikan, AK 99901

July 13, 2017

Dear KAAHC Board of Directors,

Enclosed please find recommendations from the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force for changes to the KAAHC Bylaws and Policies and Procedures and a review of our activities.

The Task Force met for the first time in November of 2016 in response to the Diversity and Inclusion resolution passed by you, the Board of the Ketchikan Area Arts and Humanities Council.

Our initial intention was to meet quarterly to complete the tasks set out for us in the resolution, however, by unanimous agreement we decided to meet every month. We began our work by creating a statement for the arts council that expressed the power and importance of diversity and inclusion for the arts council and the community.

We arrived at the following statement:

“The Ketchikan Area Arts and Humanities Council celebrates the diversity of our community, acknowledges our differences as a precious resource and strives to encourage everyone to create and experience the arts.”

Our next step was to understand how the community perceives the arts council and its work. To do that we created a survey to be given to audience members at the 2017 Wearable Art Show, at other KAAHC events and online. In order to encourage participation, Sonya Skan built a drum that Ken Decker painted, which was given away to someone who took the survey. We had very good response to the survey, however flaws were immediately recognized. We quickly understood that the survey was limited in that it was only available at KAAHC programs and no other places. While the survey was disseminated online, it was still through regular KAAHC channels. Even still we were able to glean very important information to determine our next steps:

- A diversity survey needs to be annual to assess improvement
- KAAHC does not touch all incomes or sectors because it always go back to the same people
- Cost is not necessarily a barrier to participation, rather the perception of the arts and whether people grew up with the arts in their homes
- Artists need to be encouraged to think of themselves as being welcome to create art in different mediums that may not be their traditional art forms

- Cultures in which “art” is part of the tradition and is embedded in every aspect of daily life, may not want their cultural expression to be exploited
- For individuals that create outside of their traditional artistic expression, the format of the Arts Council might be helpful
- Understanding the beauty of rich cultural diversity can prevent siloing in Ketchikan
- Diverse populations must be visible and celebrated as role models in order to empower youth community members to aspire to be like them

Keeping in mind the expectation of the Task Force was to affect positive change of the arts council at the policy level, we reached the consensus that the most efficient way to enable a more diverse and inclusive arts council and arts sector in Ketchikan is to focus more effectively on young people.

With that we began evaluating the bylaws and the policies and procedures of the organization. We found many places where a shift in language could make an enormous difference in the intention and results of the governing documents. Those recommendations are outlined in the attached documents.

In addition to the Diversity statement, the changes to the Bylaws and the Policies and Procedures, the Task Force recommends KAAHC implement the following:

- Include the Diversity Statement into all documents of the organization when possible
- Conduct an annual “Diversity Survey” to understand progress in inclusivity and diversity throughout all programming
- Provide more opportunities for diverse youth populations to access diverse art forms
- Celebrate art forms from diverse populations and recognize artists of all cultures as role models for Ketchikan’s youth

It is the hope of the Task Force that the model of our work and efforts are made available to other organizations to help encourage and foster a more diverse and inclusive Ketchikan community.

Sincerely,

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