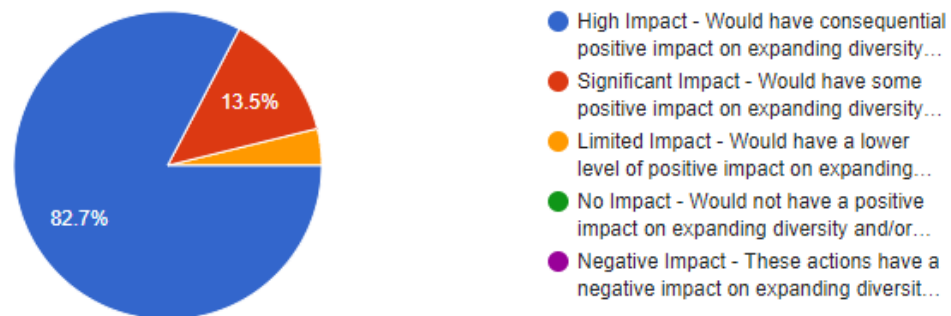


Southern California Genetic Counselors Town Hall- May 25, 2021 (7:00-8:15pm PDT)  
52 respondents to the survey. We had 42 participants in Town Hall meeting. The following represents SCGC membership's comments and suggestions. The topics represent the most important issues to the SCGC membership.

### **Breakout Room 1: Increase Diversity within Leadership (83%)**

#### \* Increase Diversity within Leadership

52 responses



#### Notes:

##### General thoughts/feedback

- Good start, but need more specific action items
- Implicit bias training should be the bare minimum for all leaders. But is implicit bias training going to help attract candidates of diverse backgrounds? Unsure of efficacy/impact...
- Agree with point recruiting diversity in leadership. How can this be measured effectively?
- Does succession planning currently occur? How? There is no transparency in this regard.

##### Ideas/suggestions for NSGC

- For applications to leadership positions
  - Include statements of contribution to DEI efforts
    - DEI contributions can be in various realms (the pt population one serves, advocacy or volunteer work, education efforts, etc.)
    - Agree that these should be weighted equally on resume compared to education, professional experience, etc.
  - Re-evaluate what the minimum requirements are for applicants

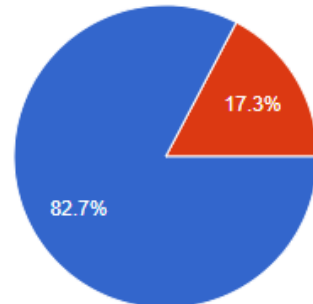
- There may be a bias towards proposing/promoting colleagues known on a personal level to leadership positions, thereby possibly overlooking other qualified and diverse candidates. Plan for how to compensate for this bias.
- There are many barriers to accessing leadership training opportunities. How do people gain the necessary skills/knowledge to be a leader if they cannot access these opportunities?
  - Historically within NSGC, it seems that once someone is identified as a leader, then the training opportunities 'snowball'. This is unfortunate because the same opportunities are not accessible to all.
  - Many 'entry level' and higher leadership opportunities within NSGC are volunteer-based. This disadvantages people who do not have the privilege of extra time/energy/financial security to dedicate for volunteering. Leadership trainings would ideally be made accessible to all
    - How can we evaluate the success of implementing programs like this?
  - Some significant barriers are lack of time/energy/financial stability to dedicate to volunteering. Providers working in certain settings may have more/less time & energy because of their work setting. How can we make this more equal?
    - Can NSGC create a guide to help GCs negotiate for protected time to explore other opportunities outside of their primary role, like volunteering for the NSGC?
    - Can we create financial incentives or compensation for volunteering?
      - Offset membership cost, CEU fees, etc.
      - Stipend for members who are from underrepresented backgrounds or who serve students of underrepresented backgrounds & communities for their volunteer efforts
        - People would have to apply for eligibility for these funds & submit statement about their efforts contributing to JEDI work
- There is bias in what makes constitutes a good leader and what we imagine that person to be
- How do we get more people of diverse backgrounds into the pipeline for leadership?
  - Can we create more pipelines (vs what already exists) to get people into NSGC leadership positions?
  - **Can we equally weigh leadership experiences from outside NSGC in considering candidates for leadership roles?**

- For example, I have not wanted to hold a volunteer leadership role within the NSGC organization b/c I feel like my leadership efforts in smaller, more local community organizations like SCGC or MGPN have a more **meaningful impact**. However, if I were to try and get into the traditional leadership pipeline of NSGC, I fear that I would have to start from the bottom vs. applying for experiences higher up the ladder.
- Create a shadowing program targeted towards individuals who identify as part of a minority group. 1:1 shadowing the current NSGC leadership to understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Who is on the nominating committee? How are they selected?
  - Encourage nominating committee to look outside the traditional pool of leadership candidates by creating new metrics for what defines a 'leader' for NSGC

## Breakout Room 2: Address Barriers to Entry (83%)

\* Address Barriers to Entry

52 responses



- High Impact - Would have consequential positive impact on expanding diversity...
- Significant Impact - Would have some positive impact on expanding diversity...
- Limited Impact - Would have a lower level of positive impact on expanding...
- No Impact - Would not have a positive impact on expanding diversity and/or...
- Negative Impact - These actions have a negative impact on expanding diversit...

### Notes:

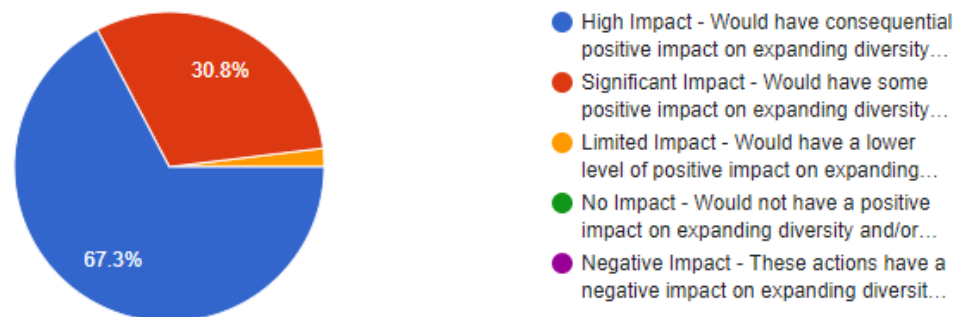
- General thoughts/feedback
  - Cost of certification exams and ABGC dues, not all employers reimburse etc.
  - Application and interview process - providing support for in-person interviews for applicants
  - Doesn't address barriers to applying to GC programs (some steps missing)
  - Holes in where we're going as a community to educate and recruit students
  - Costs of taking GRE and prep, standardized testing may be culturally biased
  - Difficulty finding shadowing opportunities
  - Messaging about needing to be a GCA
  - Mentorship is being done but needs to be more of these groups; be aware of them and we can refer people to them
  - What we post about current students and programs that other prospective students may see; not having individual bios but how you can be a competitive applicants; personality bios instead; show a range of experiences and ways to be competitive in school
  - Rethinking what makes a good applicant - experiences where you would have had to come from a wealthy country to have had. What other life experiences help prepare someone for GC school
  -
- Ideas/suggestions for NSGC
  - Like low or no cost CEUs and requirement about DEI related CEUs (precedent in other fields)

- More options for part time programs for people who need to work during school
- Funding for research during school
- alternatives to shadowing (not always a requirement for program; maybe change messaging about shadowing requirements)
- Do not want GCA to be a barrier/mandate for prospective GC students. NSGC should ask the AGCPD how many GC students are admitted who have been GCA. More transparency is needed.
- NSGC should ask for yearly reports from AGCPD/GC programs regarding GC student demographics.
- Other ways to learn about genetic counseling that is not shadowing. Web series for prospective students, refer prospective students to content
- Work with groups like MGPN since they have a minority medical genetics profession mentorship program
- Culturally tailored toolkits - different ones for different cultures; don't lump minorities together; how to reach out to people in different groups. Concerns about toolkits: knowledge of them (how many are on NSGC's website) Who is expected to deliver these? Are we expecting people to deliver to these communities? More definition of what the toolkit means and what is it intended to be used for?
- Changes to the NSGC website: Making resources available to anyone visiting the website and not just members. Make it easy to find w/o needing to go to the website. Accessibility to content is an issue. Putting content in a place where it is easier to find; make NSGC website more navigable.
- Put more effort in having a presence on other social media apps
- People are not familiar with the "diversity track" - get word out that it is an option
- NSGC to discuss with AGCPD about ways to take a critical eye on types of students apply; selection criteria and examine for implicit biases, make the selection process fairer. Application process is very subjective. At what level of education does a student need a mentor - at different levels. Intimidation about getting specific experiences. Wording we use on program websites, in our conversations with prospective students - let them know skills instead of experiences

### Breakout Room 3: Take Action over Talk (67%)

\* Take Action, Over Talk

52 responses



#### Notes:

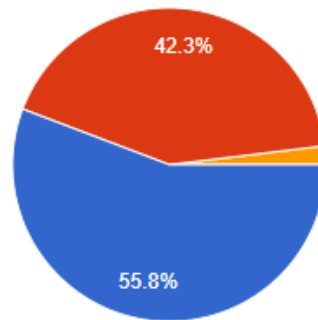
- General thoughts/feedback
  - UCLA and LabCorp (and others) have also taken similar measures, such as hiring a DEI position and forming a JEDI group, which seem to take a step in the right direction
  - Who would the “compensated DEI Lead” be? Genetic counselor preferred
    - What does “compensated” mean - full-time, part-time?
  - Would recommendation of regular communications of DEI-related topics take place in “Perspectives?” This recommendation was considered low-impact.
- Ideas/suggestions
  - Diversity quotas for:
    - NSGC board composition
    - Speakers/presenters at NSGC AEC

- DEI initiatives of regional groups such as SCGC could be highlighted by NSGC (in communications/website)
- NSGC could also encourage and support (with financial and practical resources) regional groups to take action on DEI issues specific to that region (for example, SCGC could choose to outreach specifically to Hispanic/Latinx students since that is a huge population in Southern California that is dramatically underrepresented among GCs)
- Regarding recommendation about DEI updates, these updates could be over town hall/webinar instead of by email/PDF.
- Create JEDI updates like federal advocacy updates.
- Financial and tool-kit resources from NSGC to increase awareness of genetic counseling profession among minority/underprivileged students before college-age
- Funding for scholarships for underprivileged students to attend STEM conferences, camps, field trips, etc
- Create mentorship program between GCs and pre-GC students
- CEU credits for mentoring or speaking at schools and conferences for students high school age and younger
- Empower MGPN or other organized minority groups - increase awareness of MGPN's resources, build on what they have already been working on, consult them on implementation of DEI initiatives, offer these individuals leadership positions in NSGC and in DEI initiatives
- Provide scholarships for minority students to attend GC programs
- SIG or other similar group related to DEI issues should be free of cost and open to non-members of NSGC
- Revisit Code of Ethics, ACGC core competencies, and CEU requirements to encourage and reward action to increase DEI

## Breakout Room 4: Develop DEI Metrics & Communication (56%)

\* Develop DEI Metrics and Communications

52 responses



- High Impact - Would have consequential positive impact on expanding diversity...
- Significant Impact - Would have some positive impact on expanding diversity...
- Limited Impact - Would have a lower level of positive impact on expanding...
- No Impact - Would not have a positive impact on expanding diversity and/or...
- Negative Impact - These actions have a negative impact on expanding diversit...

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### Notes:

- General thoughts/feedback
  - We agreed with the items within this topic. In addition, we have the specific ideas and suggestions below.
- Ideas/suggestions
  - Develop action plan issuing annual reports on DEI initiatives - We agree with having a DEI Advisory Panel within NSGC to provide oversight and guidance to NSGC overall and NSGC's committees and branches. We also believe it is important for each committee and branch of NSGC to embed DEI into their own committee-specific plans, and come up with their own DEI-related goals, and action items.
  - Provide regular awards and recognition- We suggest presenting such recognition/rewards at the annual conference.
  - We believe it is important to collect these data in order to measure progress and impact. We suggest that the types of scholarships NSGC provides should support its DEI goals. We suggest considering providing scholarships to prospective GC students before they enter the profession, in order to increase the diversity of the prospective GC student pool. Once again, we recommend measuring the impact of scholarships on increasing diversity within the genetic counseling profession.
  - Develop definitions - We suggest re-administering the DEI survey annually (similar to the PSS). This may help maintain our momentum and help break down a large project into more manageable and actionable tasks. The cadence of re-administration of the survey can be adjusted as



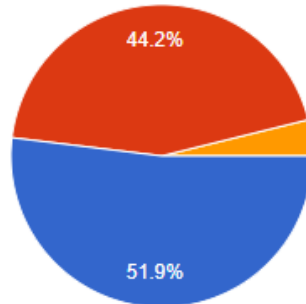
needed. The survey should be adapted over time to reflect changing priorities, and to expand and focus on more urgent and high-impact items.

- Business operations and regular communications - We suggest that NSGC develop specific guidelines on language that is inclusive, and develop lists of language that is appropriate vs. inappropriate to use for each DEI/minority group, as well as encouraging consideration of potential impact of using non-inclusive language. We suggest reaching out to DEI/minority groups for help with development of these guidelines and lists.
- Create a safe and confidential space for lapsed members to discuss their reasons for dropout and barriers to rejoin NSGC. Based on our experience, financial reasons and lack of employer support may be some reasons and these circumstances may impact diverse populations more frequently.

## Breakout Room 5: Provide DEI Training & Resources (52%)

\* Provide DEI Training and Resources

52 responses



- High Impact - Would have consequential positive impact on expanding diversity...
- Significant Impact - Would have some positive impact on expanding diversity...
- Limited Impact - Would have a lower level of positive impact on expanding...
- No Impact - Would not have a positive impact on expanding diversity and/or...
- Negative Impact - These actions have a negative impact on expanding diversit...

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### Notes:

- General thoughts/feedback
  - More collaboration with MGNP in educational breakout sessions.
  - Better partnership/collaboration with MGNP, student justice groups and other scientific groups that are working on DEI issues.
  - Acknowledgement that in the past it has been tough to attract people because of salary issues.
- Ideas/suggestions
  - Use existing resources like Smith Bucklin to incorporate DEI training for NSGC leadership.
  - Need for JEDI plenary session. These sessions might include updates regarding JEDI initiatives.
  - Create resource group that focuses on DEI issues/history a place where members can feel comfortable to discuss these JEDI issues
  - Incoming and existing leadership should have DEI training as part of their tenure. Can be an online course funded by NSGC.
  - Have to start more education programs at HBCU and offer CEUs to GC who make presentations to high schools, community colleges in diverse communities.