

Diversity, Equity,
and Inclusion:
Debunking
Myths and
Creating a
Constructive
Narrative to
Advance the
Environmental
Profession



Moderator

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Speakers

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Introduction

Purpose

- Facilitate opportunities to engage a diverse cross-section of environmental professionals
- Promote equity in the development of environmental professionals and the communities they serve

Goal

- Commit to recognizing inherent biases and commit to fostering and sustaining AEP as a truly inclusive professional organization

Ice Breaker

Getting to Know You

- Organize in groups of 4-6
- Provide each group with oversize post it and markers
- Each group draws a flower with a large center and equal number of petals to people in the group
- List three shared traits in the center
- List one unique attribute for each member on their petal

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Legislative Platform

DEI issues have been a part of AEP's adopted Public Policy Program for many years.

Key policies include:

- We recognize that diversity and inclusion make our organization stronger and AEP welcomes and encourages all environmental professionals to participate in our organization.
- Supporting environmental justice in our practice through the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
- Adoption of our Diversity and Inclusion Initiative to promote diversity and equity in our profession.
- Develop ways to attract people of color to our profession through various means including, but not limited to, participation in career fairs at the high school and college levels, and through offering scholarships and internships.
- AEP supports and promotes inclusive communities offering various transit options and housing opportunities at all income levels.
- Support environmental justice, access to affordable housing, and promotion of economic opportunities within disadvantaged communities.

AEP Commitment / Looking Forward

Goals

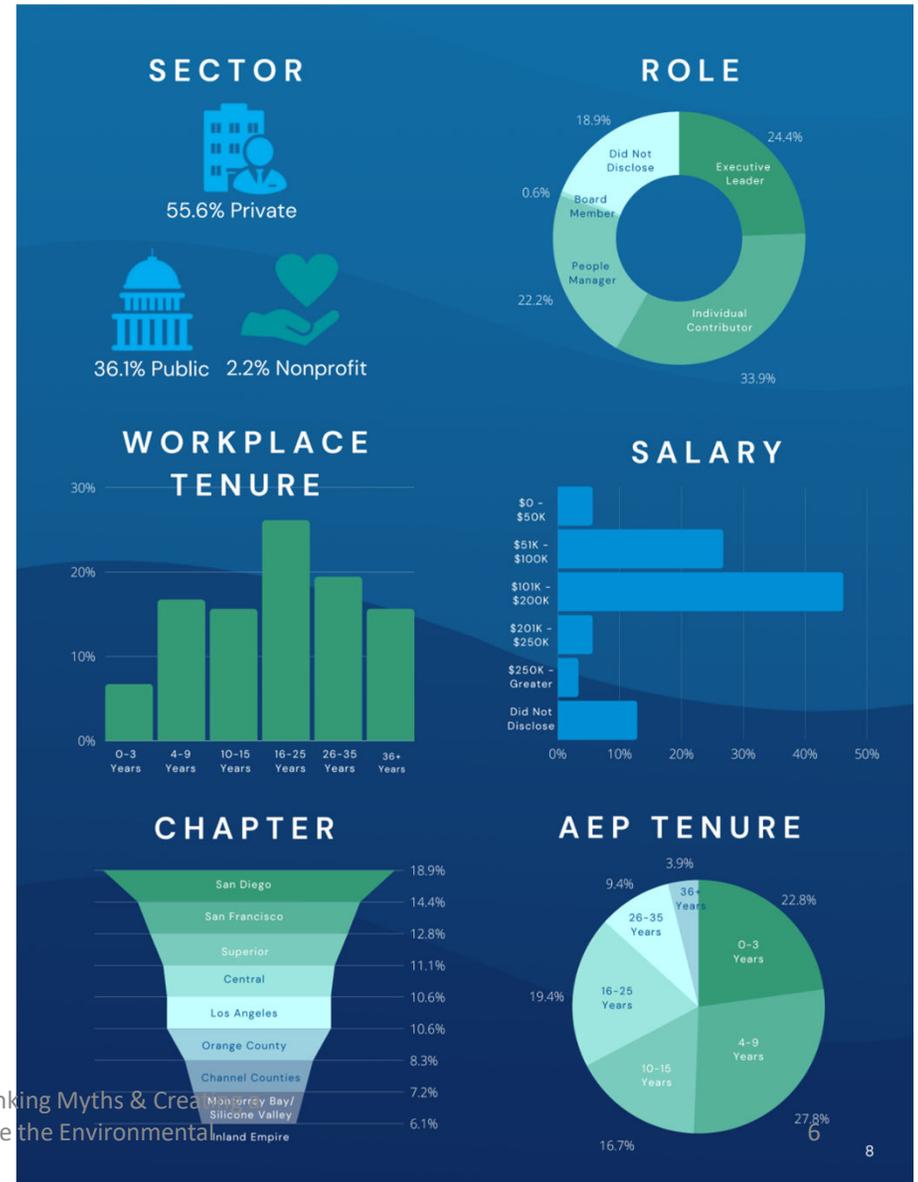
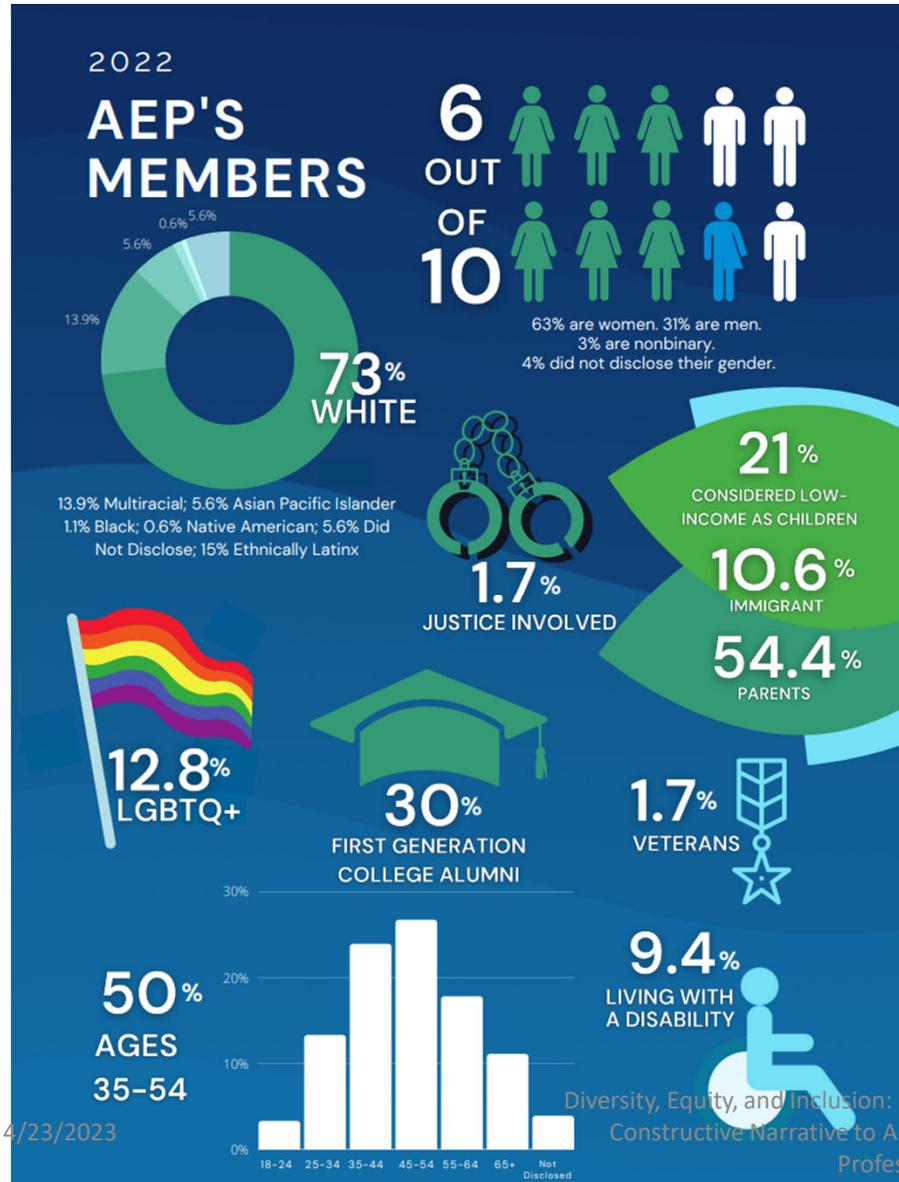
- Engage
- Promote Equity
- Overcome Inherent Bias
- Foster/Sustain an Inclusive AEP

Objectives

- Data Collection
- Training
- Strategic Planning
- Partnerships & Programs
- Numerous Key DEI Initiatives



Survey Results



Survey Key Takeaways

- AEP Members want equity to be prioritized
- Current membership does not reflect the diversity of the state
- BIPOC and younger members don't feel a sense of belonging
- The AEP board and members want to do more targeted outreach
- Members want more diverse perspectives to be represented

What's Next

Continue to work with Castillo Consulting Partners to support and guide DEI initiatives, including:

- Developing a DEI Strategic Plan that includes key performance metrics for measuring success
- Fully incorporate the DEI strategic plan into AEPs overall goals and yearly planning initiatives
- Engaging chapter leaders in student outreach, mentorship, and internship opportunities with DEI in mind

What's Next

Allocate funds for a paid position to monitor plan strategic plan implementation

- Build a database of potential schools/student organizations, government agencies, and community-based organizations to partner with for outreach and recruitment
- Develop a framework for creating affinity/resource groups (organized in a way that works best for members, i.e., could be divided by race/ethnicity such as Black, Latinx, Indigenous, AAPI, etc., or could include all BIPOC in one group), women, LGBTQ+, individuals with disabilities, Environmental Justice, Emerging Professionals, etc.).
- The affinity/resource groups would serve as support for various groups, and will eventually become thought partners as AEP continues to advance its DEI goals.

What's Next

Fund a Fellowship program that includes a cohort experience for BIPOC emerging environmental professionals, providing them with a unique opportunity to learn about the field through continued learning (i.e., a series of workshops as part of learning and development in the fellowship), hands-on experience (i.e., through placements in paid positions in the field), and networking (i.e., through participation in AEP events).



Discussion and Q&A

AEP Membership Survey

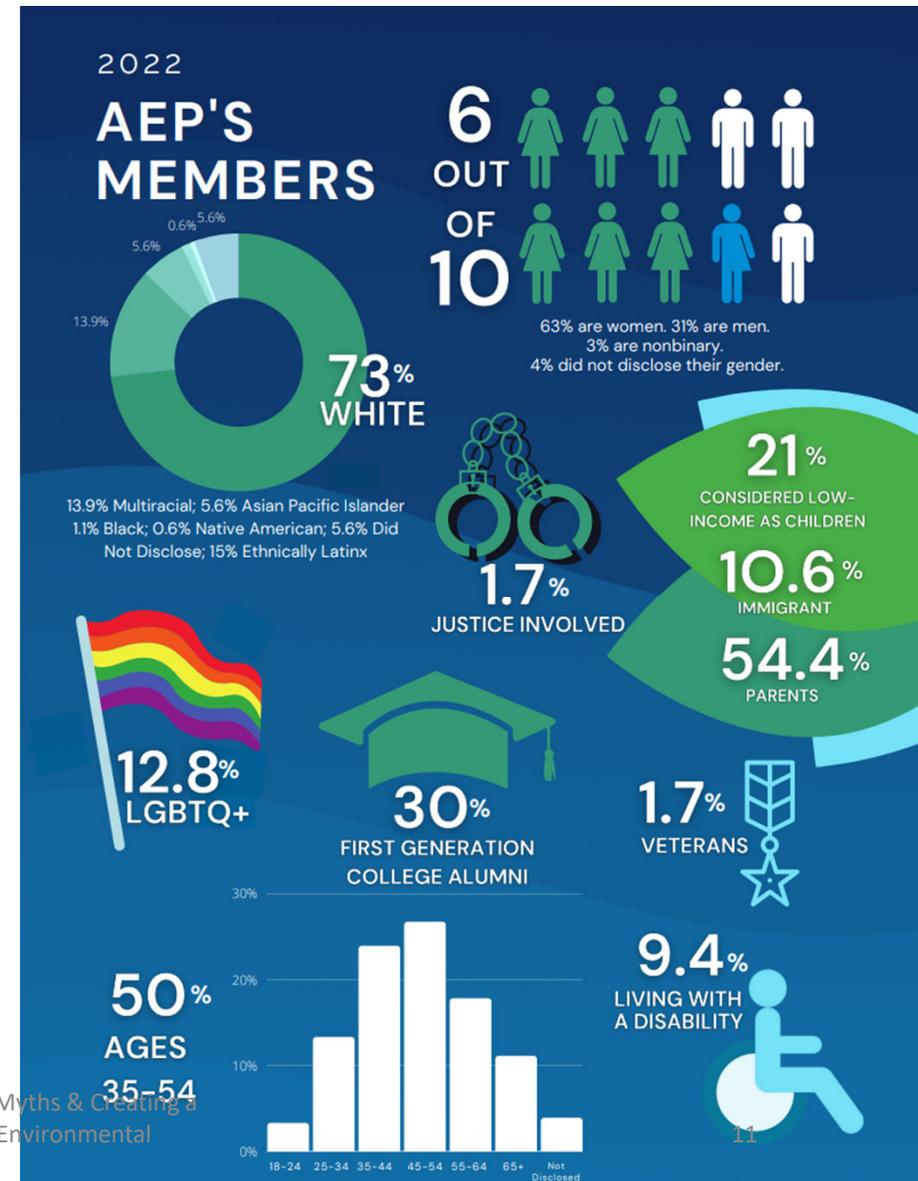
- Were the results surprising?
- What stands out to you?

Breakout Group Discussions

- 2-3 people per group
- 5 minutes each

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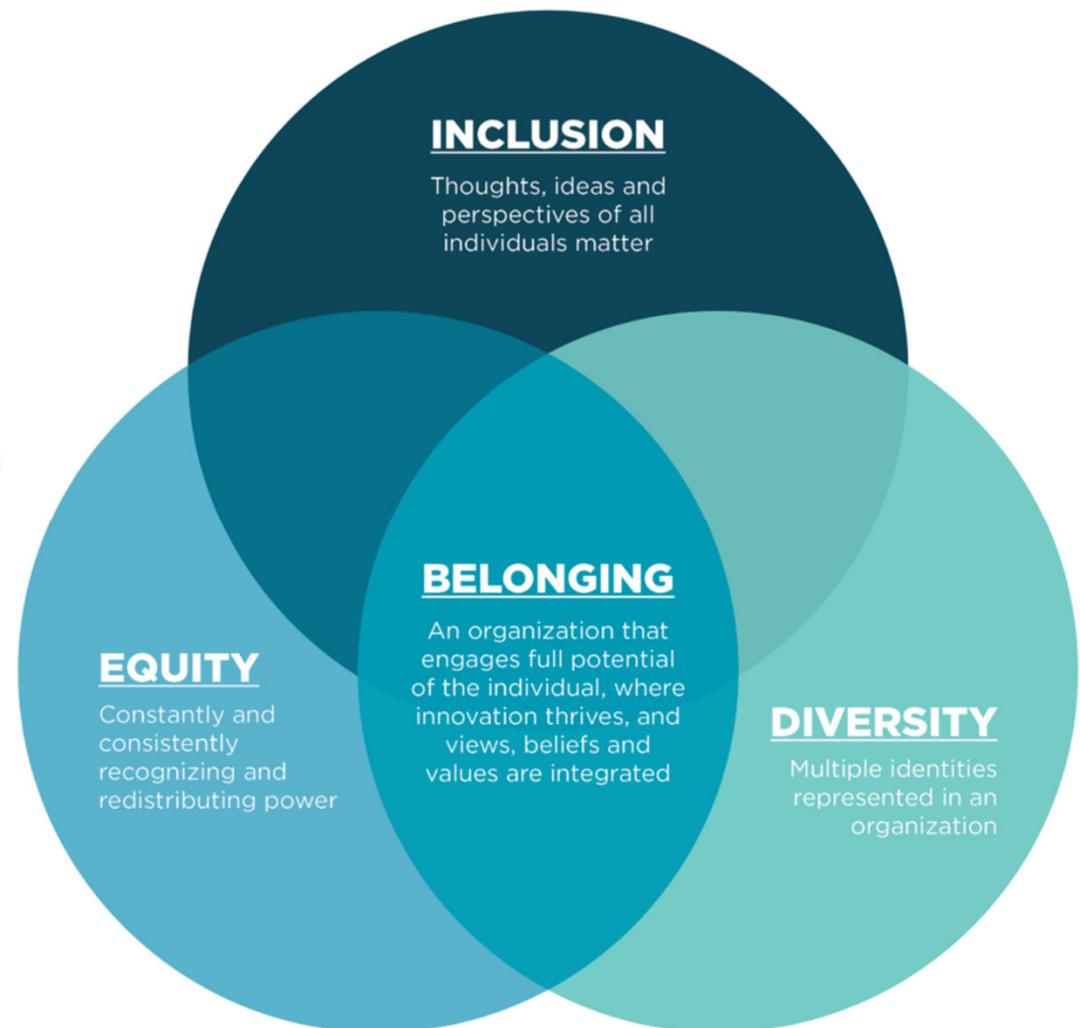
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Discussion and Q&A

Defining DEI(B)

- What does DEI mean to you?
- How does DEI show up in your profession / daily life?



Discussion and Q&A

Consider Your Career Path

- How did you get here?
- What privileges and/or barriers / inequalities have you faced?

What is Privilege?

Privilege is a special right, advantage or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.



Discussion and Q&A

- Fostering Belonging
 - What are ways we can foster belonging in AEP?
 - At Conference
 - Within Local Chapters
 - At State Level



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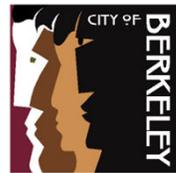
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