
The FAPAC Workforce Diversity Challenge Team: Project Abstract

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The Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Workforce Diversity Challenge Team's challenge was to assess the feasibility to target, recruit and sustain a more diverse federal workforce, with a focus towards increasing participation of Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders (NHPs) in the pipeline to federal careers. The preliminary stage for this challenge was to determine the key aspects to consider in creating a more diverse federal workforce. The team studied federal agency diversity plans and researched information on Pacific Islander Americans. The team also reviewed the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) diversity cube to obtain workforce data on NHPs. Lastly, the team conducted informational interviews to learn what the possible barriers were in increasing participation of NHPs in the federal workforce.

Through interviews and all the information gathered, we learned of barriers that could be preventing NHPs from entering the federal workforce. The team determined that three deliverables would be provided to help increase and retain the number of NHPs in the federal workforce: a database of NHP individuals and NHP community and affinity groups; survey results from a federal worker survey and community survey; and recruitment and retention toolkits.

The first deliverable is a database that consists of two sections. The first section lists NHP individuals that can serve as a resource. The second section lists NHP community and affinity groups that also serves as a resource as well as a recruitment source.

The second deliverable is the results from two surveys assessing the outreach and application process for federal positions. One survey was designed for current federal employees and another survey for community members, specifically targeting NHP and Asian Pacific Islander (API) organizations to distribute to their community members. We received 348 respondents to the federal worker survey and 84 respondents to the community survey. Key findings from the survey results show that 61.25% of community members were interested in seeking federal employment and that 54.29% of community members who applied for a federal job in the past encountered difficulties with the federal application process. The results from both surveys demonstrated that there are barriers to applying to federal positions that might have negatively impacted potential NHP federal applicants from successfully obtaining a position. The analysis of the survey data allowed the team to assess the challenges that NHPs encounter in pursuing employment with the federal government and to provide recommendations on how the federal government and FAPAC could minimize or eliminate some of these barriers.

The third deliverable is a recruitment and retention toolkit. The recruitment toolkit includes templates for: memoranda of understanding, writing cover letters, writing federal resumes, and an agency recruiter database. The retention toolkit includes a flash mentoring template and an onboarding checklist for supervisors. The various tools developed will help NHP individuals interested in becoming federal employees as well as assist federal recruiters.

The team anticipates that the deliverables developed through this challenge project will be utilized by both NHP individuals interested in seeking federal employment and federal agencies interested in actively recruiting NHP individuals. These deliverables and the team's recommendations for future deliverables are only the beginning of what the federal government can do to diversify its workforce. We challenge future cohorts to examine the data collected more carefully to design additional tools that can be used to reach the underserved community of Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.
