



## Minutes (DRAFT) Of the Diversity and Inclusion Liaison (DIL) Annual Meeting July 19, 2023

### 1. Call to Order

Tina Dortch, Program Manager, Nevada Office of Minority and Equity (NOMHE)

Tina Dortch with the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity (NOMHE) called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Tina Dortch stated that there was closed captioning available for attendees. She described herself as a Black woman wearing hair braids. She was wearing a pink, gray, and tan sweater. She was wearing glasses. She introduced herself as Tina Dortch, Program Manager for the Office of Minority Health, and Equity. She was with the Governor's Office for New Americans (ONA) and the Nevada Commission for Minority Affairs. These are the three organizations and, by statute, support the work of the Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons (DILs). These three agencies refer to themselves as the Minority Interagency Collaborative (MIC).

Tina Dortch welcomed everyone to the 2023 annual DIL meeting. It is the only statutorily required meeting for DILs, and it must include stakeholder organizations, specifically representatives from Nevada's minority-serving organizations (MSOs).

Tina Dortch asked DILs to have their camera engaged throughout the meeting and update their names within Microsoft TEAMS. She asked other attendees to drop their names, titles, and organizations/affiliations into the chat box.

Tina Dortch asked Angie Rojas to continue with the roll call.

### 2. Roll Call and Opening Statement

Angie Rojas, Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs

Angie Rojas introduced herself as the Management Analyst for the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs, referred to as CMA. She represents one of the three agencies that support the work of the DILs.

Angie Rojas stated that this meeting was following Nevada's open meeting law. She stated that the theme for this meeting was "Communication Across Communities". She stated that the MIC team was happy to have several presenters as part of the meeting including a minority-serving organization representative, and one Diversity and Inclusion Liaison from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Angie Rojas indicated that the meeting represented an opportunity for DILs and minority-serving organizations to come together and brainstorm on how to improve services for minorities. She specified that the roll call was specifically for Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons. She advised DILs to indicate their presence when being called. Also, she reminded everyone that the material for this meeting is housed at the Office of New Americans website at [ona.inb.gov](http://ona.inb.gov).

Angie Rojas started roll call:

- Present: Alan Vance with the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources “Division of State Lands”, Bachera Washington with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) “Division of Aging and Disability Services”, Brettani Thomas with the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority, Charvez Foger with the Department of Business and Industry, Denise Castillo with the Governor’s Finance Office, Dominique Etchegoyhen with the Nevada Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Erika Hernandez with Public Utilities Commission of Nevada, Esmeralda Chavez with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) “Division of Public and Behavioral Health”, Evelyn Castro with the Nevada State Treasurers Office, Felicia Gonzales with the Department of Education, Janice Keillor with the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources “Division of State Parks”, John Guillory with the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources “Division of Water Resources”, Jose Sepulveda with the Department of Sentencing Policy, Kaleb Hall with the Colorado River Commission, Kathleen Douglas with the Department of Taxation, Kelly Benoit with the Department of Tourism & Cultural Affairs, Michael Baltz with the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR), Mikhaela Lockett with the Nevada Gaming Control Board, Michelle Sibley with the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, Niani Cooper with the Department of Health and Human Services “Division of Welfare and Supportive Services”, Nicholas R. Wilhelm with the Department of Taxation, Peter P. Handy with the Department of Indigent Defense Services, Sandy Lopez with the Department of Agriculture, Sheena Childers with the Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation (DETR), Stephanie Simpson with the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources “Division of Environmental Protection”, Tiana Bohner with the Nevada Cannabis Compliance Board, Tim Lindley with the Nevada Public Employees Benefits Program (PEBP), Trevor Jones with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) “Division of Health Care Financing and Policy”, Tricia Bookhart with the Nevada Gaming Control Board, Vickie C. Coll with the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Viki Windfeldt with the Nevada State Board of accountancy, and Vincent Nava with the Governor’s Office for New Americans (ONA).
- Also present: Abad Piza, Adele Victorio, Aileen Pastor, Amanda Sandoval, Amy Clark, Ana Estrada, Angelica Villarta, Angie Rojas, Arcelia Barajas, Ariana Morales, Ashley Cooper, Ashley Floyd, Caitlin Firestone, Camila Rios, Charina De Asis, Dave Marlon, Eleanor A. Strand, Fernanda Heki, Gabby Everett, Gabi Muna, Gabriela Wyatt, Godwin Nwando, Greg Zegas, Guy Girardin, Harriet Barlow, Itzayana Montoya, Jessica Rosas, Jessica, Sandy Johnson, Elizabeth Jourdin Kay, Juan Diaz, Julia Peek, Leiandra, Eva Leon, Leslie Balzer, Lissette Montoya, Lourdes Orestano, Marcel Schaerrer, Marcela Rodriguez-Campo, Maria, Maria Obrien, Matthew Weintraub, Mayra Gonzalez, , Mona Lisa Paulo, Natalie E. Mazzullo, Nayelli Rico, Nolga Valadez, Pearl Paulo, Shelly, Sonny Vinuya, Tamera Travis, Tina Dortch, Vanessa Buensalida, Victoria Martinez, Xavier Foster, Kapreace Young, and Zuly Terrazas.
- Absent: Blanche Dieket with the Department of Veteran Services, Carol Shelton with the Commission on Mineral Resources “Division of Minerals”, Colin Roberston with the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources “Division of Outdoor Recreation”, Eric Antel with the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources “Division of Forestry”, Fred C. Dilger with the Department of Nuclear Projects, Jorja Powers with the Department of Sentencing Policy, Kaitlyn Blagen with the Silver State Health Insurance Exchange, Kenneth R. Dupree with the Office of Military Nevada National Guard, Kristin Szabo with the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (Division of Natural Heritage), Lauren Karp with the Department of Health and Human Services “Division of Child and Family Services”, Melissa Spears with the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources “Division of Natural Heritage”, Rebecca Lynn Palmer with the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Rhonda Vivor with the Division of Human Resource Management “Department of Administration”, Ross E. Armstrong with the Nevada Commission on Ethnics, Sarah A. Bradley with the Nevada State of Board

of Medical Examiners, Sharla Bennett with the Department of Correction, Shelley Pope with the Nevada Department of Agriculture “Division of Administrative Services”, Sonnie A. Braih with the Department of Transportation, Tammy Smith with the Department of Administration “Division of Human Resources Management”

### 3. [Approval of November 16, 2022, Minutes \(For Possible Action\)](#)

Tina Dortch

Tina Dorch stated that the minutes for the November 16, 2023, DIL meeting were shared in the meeting reminder email and have been posted to the website as well. She requested a motion for their approval.

Stephanie Simpson with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection made a motion to approve the minutes as drafted.

Tina Dorch asked for a second motion.

Vincent Nava from the Governor’s Office of New Americans seconded the motion.

Tina Dorch passed the approved minutes for November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022. She stated that the minutes would be available on the ONA website.

### 4. [Public Comment](#)

Charina De Asis, Director, Governor’s Office for New Americans (ONA)

Charina de Asis thanked Tina Dorch and introduced herself as the Executive Director of the Governor’s Office for New Americans. As this meeting is under Open Meeting Law...

Public Comment will be taken during this agenda item. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this item until the matter is included on an agenda as an item on which action may be taken. The Facilitator will place a two (2) minute time limit on the time individuals may address the Governor’s Office for New Americans, Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity, and Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs. The facilitator may elect to allow public comment on a specific agenda item when that item is being considered. To provide public comment telephonically, dial (775) 321-6111 any time after the facilitator announces the period of public comment. When prompted to provide the Meeting ID, enter 992 209 183#.

Charina De Asis acknowledged that there were no Public Comments.

### 5. [Annual DIL Meeting “Collaboration Across Communities” Presentations on the Power of Working Together](#)

Charina De Asis, Tina Dortch, and Angie Rojas

Charina De Asis stated that the theme for this year’s meeting was “Collaboration Across Communities.” She stated that the speakers for this meeting would talk about what Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is in action, especially at work; how state agencies can engage better with minority-serving and community-based organizations; and how internal work on DEI can help their external and frontline work. The Nevada Clean Energy Fund was also a speaker.

#### [A. Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion through Action](#)

Dr. Marcela Rodriguez-Campo, Director of the Office for Community, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion - Nevada State College

Tina Dortch presented Dr. Marcela Rodriguez-Campo. She is the director of the Office for Community Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Nevada State College. She's formerly an undocumented Colombian immigrant and 1st Generation College graduate. She is an integrated interdisciplinary immigration Education committee scholar. Her scholarship uses a Latina feminist approach to examine the relationship between Latin ex-immigrant experiences with family separation and their educational trajectories. Her work seeks to develop and support school climates for immigrant students and students of color and LGBTQIA+ students. Previously, she served as the academic success coach for the School of Education Title 5 HSI grant team. Prior to joining Nevada State College, she trained pre-service and in-service teachers on culturally responsive and anti-racist practices. As an educator, she also served as a secondary English teacher and a speech and debate coach at the Clark County School District. A fun fact about Doctor Rodriguez-Campo; she skates, gardens, and is a poet.

Dr. Marcela Rodriguez-Campo started her presentation and said the following:

- She is very familiar with the specific issues that the student experience in the community.
- Her experience as a documented immigrant influences the work she does.
- The diversity, equity, and inclusion term is often used as an umbrella term and it can become watered down.
- She believes that diversity, equity, and inclusion are the “who”, the “why”, and the “how”.
- Often people think that diversity means diverse populations. Diversity is the “who” and refers to everyone. The “who” is multidimensional, which means that it is referring to not just one experience, but the plethora and spectrum of identities that people may encompass.
- Diversity drives innovation when having diverse perspectives, whether that's an experience, an identity, or an expertise. That allows better design experiences, whether that's for a client, a community member, a student perhaps, or an organization.
- When talking about equity, individuals will be looking at the disparities. They look at what experiences people are having and from there, the disparities will rise.
- Equity is not the same as quality. Equality is when everyone gets the same thing. For example, if a person has been walking 10 miles in the desert and hasn't had a drink of water. This is very different from someone who has been walking around the mall all day. This person may not need a bottle of water compared to the one who has been walking in the desert.
- Equality is centered on identifying what are the specific needs that a person or community may have.
- Unfortunately, because there has been such unequal access to resources historically, like access to education, access to financial resources, and healthcare, the inequities persist.
- Agencies or institutions are coming in, acting like they know what's best for the community when in reality, who knows best is the person closest to the problem.

Dr. Marcela Ramirez-Campo spoke about some of the main principles that she uses in her work. But before she showed some data points related to the experiences of historically minoritized communities.

- During the global pandemic, Black, Indigenous, and people of color were two times as likely to die from COVID, and that was in large part because of a lack of access to healthcare, lack of access to resources, as well as other historical traumas and factors that continue to perpetuate harm in the communities.
- By the same token, Black and Indigenous communities are four times as likely to live in poverty. They are half as likely to earn a bachelor's degree and ultimately, earn a higher education degree that enables social mobility and changes the trajectory of their family. Not having access to higher education or to healthcare has these long-term consequences beyond the individual but extends into the community.
- One example of this would be that Native American Indigenous women are 10 times more likely to be murdered or go missing, than their white counterparts.

- Black women's mortality rate regardless of whether they have access to good health care or finance or pretty good finances. They have three times the mortality rate of their white counterparts. A perfect example will be the case of Serena Williams.
- Even having access to those resources is not changing the outcomes because the processes that they're experiencing in the healthcare systems continue to not be responsive to their needs.
- White family wealth is about 8 times the amount of Black and Hispanic families. Those things are tied to education and healthcare. They are tied to intergenerational wealth, and many of these communities have not had access to it.
- When thinking about diversity, equity, and inclusion, think about the bigger picture.
- When talking about sharing power, people should think about their background and stories. This information then should be shared with the ones making the decisions about their futures.
- People should pass the microphone around so everyone has the chance to speak up about their identity and experiences. This is how power should be shared.
- Synergy means that instead of having to work harder and replicating different approaches or processes, or finding a way to make sure that everyone is operating as an ecosystem so everyone benefits. It is about having a mutual relationship.
- It is about figuring out the needs that exist and how people can ensure that they complement and supplement each other. Synergy is not about working harder; it is about working smarter.
- If everyone cooperates with the ecosystem concept, that means that everyone is co-dependent on one another and that everyone has a support system.

Dr. Marcela Rodriguez-Campo stated that her team partnered with Make the Road Nevada which is connected to the needs of the community. They were able to provide translation services. This collaboration allows for the identification of the community's needs. People were given the microphone to speak up about what they need. Around 109 people stood up and spoke. Being just present can be a sign of support to the community. A takeaway from her presentation is that the people who are closest to the problem also need to be closest to the solution.

Tina Dortch thanked Dr. Marcela Ramirez-Campo and stated that her takeaway was very powerful. Tina Dortch advised attendees to write down their questions for the time being.

## B. Fostering Unity: Advancing Equity and Inclusion in Historically Marginalized Communities

Guy Girardin, President – Puentes

Charina De Asis introduced the next speaker, Guy Girardin who is the President of Puentes, a non-profit community-based organization focused on reducing systemic and structural inequities. Puentes does this by developing sustainable support and services which can help improve the social determinants of health in the communities the organization serves. Last year alone, Puentes conducted 785 outreach events within the most vulnerable communities in Southern Nevada. Their outreach methods are designed to provide service with the cultural and conditional knowledge necessary to overcome fear, distrust, and other barriers that have contributed to the longstanding inequities within marginalized populations.

Guy Girardin thanked Charina De Asis for the great introduction. He thanked everyone on the call for everything that they do. He stated that he would be talking about working with the populations that are hesitant to come forth for assistance. He touched on the following points:

- It is important to recognize that there is a difference when people are working with populations that are fearful, hesitant, and distrustful as opposed to other people that may be from the same culture but haven't experienced the challenges and aren't living in the same circumstances that a lot of these folks

are. The first step is to recognize that there's a difference. The traditional ways of doing outreach reaching these populations really don't work in these communities for a lot of different reasons.

- First, individuals need to build trust. It is crucial to get to people on a street level, developing relationships to the point where people will start to engage because they have trust.
- Having patience is important as well. One of the problems that people run into when working with these communities. Something that ends up happening is that when organizations don't notice participation from the community, they give up without trying further. Due to grant funding, organizations may need to notice a lot of participation from the community to keep engaging them. As a result of the lack of further engagement, two problems arise. First, those communities then never get assistance, and that just perpetuates the systemic and structural inequality that goes on in those communities. And secondly, what happens is that when the next organization tries to engage, there is a lack of trust. They never saw the first organization do anything, so now they don't trust it.
- QR codes have been popular recently, but often the community doesn't understand how it works. They are not digitally literate. They don't have the technology they are using flip phones still.
- There was a situation at a Mobile Home Park a little while ago where Puentes was trying to enroll people in the lottery for housing. They couldn't because people had no way of receiving the notification, which only came by email.
- During the pandemic something similar happened, the National Guard had to provide aid with mobilizing vaccines. But this could have a negative impact. For example, if someone comes from Venezuela where this may not seem normal. It would create some hesitancy about getting vaccinated. In some instances, pharmacies were asking for Social Security numbers. When people saw that they left. When things changed, people started to get tested and vaccinated.
- The Metro area for quite some time had very high gang violence. It took months for the community to trust Metro officers. They couldn't get the trust until they entered the community. Now, they can walk around, and the community engages with them. Gang violence went down. It took a long time.
- Funding agencies think about how metrics and evidence-based practices can perpetuate equity. Surveys are a great example. The people in the communities that have the greatest needs do not respond to surveys. The problem that happens with that is that a lot of surveys are sent out, collecting data, and collecting information that subsequently becomes a representation of the needs of those communities that don't really need the assistance. It's representing, what people that had the time to fill them out and their opinions, but then that information becomes the basis of funding and the basis of programs and its ill-conceived right from the beginning.
- It is important to embrace different beliefs and values, that's difficult to do because it's frightening in some cases for a lot of people to do that. Developing natural curiosity can go a long way.

Guy Girardin ended his presentation with the following message. Just recognize that one approach doesn't fit all communities. Listen to what goes on in the community. Everyone has the tendency to be saviors and to have solutions without really talking to the people. Take the time to understand. Sit back and then develop solutions based on what their needs are.

Charina De Asis thanked Guy Girardin for sharing those best practices on how to engage neglected communities in the state of Nevada.

Angie Rojas introduced the next speaker.

### C. Manifesting Internal DEI Initiatives into External Service Delivery/Diversity Equity and Inclusion Liaison (DIL)

Niani Cooper, Social Services Manager I - Division of Welfare and Supportive Services

Angie Rojas introduced Niani Cooper. She is the Diversity and Inclusion Liaison for the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services at the Department of Health and Human Services. The mission of the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services is to engage clients, staff, and the community to provide public assistance benefits to all who qualify and reasonable support for children with absentee parents to help Nevadans achieve safe, stable, and healthy lives.

Niani Cooper stated she is a DEI Liaison. She spoke about the Core Value Assessment project, especially a survey that 687 took from the welfare division, which has approximately 2,000 staff members. Something that the survey revealed is that a lot of employees didn't know as much as they thought. Even though the division has resources for employees about dealing with diverse populations' language barriers, they didn't know where to get the information. Some of the data collected came as a surprise but it gave them the opportunity to reach out to their employees for training opportunities and give them the information that they need to serve the public. Something that came out of the 2020 legislation was a proclamation that declared racism as a public health crisis. As a result of that DEI Advisory Groups were created which have been working on a DEI Action Plan. These groups have been meeting for over two years. The goal of these two strategies is to hopefully make some systematic changes to change the culture in the agency. She is also part of the Advisory Group. Staff members from all different levels are also part of this group which gives unique perspectives.

Niani Cooper stated that the Advisory Groups along with other groups are helping her agency and others change some things to change the culture of their department. She hopes that all the DEI-related activities will somehow manifest into external services.

Furthermore, Niani Cooper stated that some of the managers in her agency went through training coordinated by NOMHE. This training was uncomfortable at times. It happened for approximately 2 ½ days or 1 day and a half. Leadership took this training as well and everyone was able to learn about DEI. They were also able to learn about their biases and how those can affect how they lead and supervise their employees. Sometimes her agency does other things such as providing DEI messages in their newsletter. Other times, they provide resources where employees can reach out and go if they are having problems inside their homes.

She also spoke about how she assists clients as well. For example, someone may reach out to her to indicate that they were denied benefits. She gets asks to look at the case. She ensures that the denial was reasonable and there were no other reasons at play. Something that the agency is trying to do is to help staff members see things through a DEI lens. This is very important as staff members see customers, especially from marginalized groups. People sometimes may feel that they are getting denied because the employee spoke down on them, or they had an attitude due to their race, religion, or sexual orientation. It is crucial that the staff members are aware of their unintentional biases.

Niani Cooper stated that their main goal is to train staff on cultural competency with positive messaging for diversity, equity, and inclusion. They have a targeted outreach team. They are at 183 sites; some engage in person or virtual. They are training individuals to be on board with community-based centers, hospitals, and prisons. They want to be everywhere where they can reach people in order to provide services. Sometimes they can approve people for certain benefits instantly. Another program that they have is the Recovery Friendly Workforce. This workforce works with people who are coming out of prison or are addicted to drugs or other substances and are trying to get to work. There is also a homeless housing unit that is trying to help people experiencing homeless in the state of Nevada.

Niani Cooper stated that they must train all state employees because the DEI world is rapidly changing. They want to keep people up to date with current information. This will ensure that as they work with the communities, they

know how to serve the public in a better way. Regardless of the laws in place, policies can be created that are community-based. More people need to be invited around the table.

As a DIL at DWSS, Niani Cooper stated that it has been difficult. She recognizes that she has been doing some things incorrectly, but she has also made some changes. It is crucial to understand the importance of DEI for the advancement of individuals and the community, especially for her division which provides services for the vulnerable people in the community. If people are too wrapped up behind the desk and just checking boxes, they are not serving the community. Everybody deserves dignity and respect.

#### 6. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Related Initiatives with Statewide Impact

Presentation on the Nevada Clean Energy Fund (NCEF) by Kirsten Stasio, Chief Executive Officer

Tina Dortch stated that this section of the agenda included information that DILs; regardless of their respective state Departments could find value. The following presenter was Kirsten Stasio. Tina Dortch introduced Kirsten Stasio as the CEO of the Nevada Clean Energy Fund (NCEF); a nonprofit organization established by state legislation in 2017. The non-profit organization supports a thriving, affordable, and accessible clean energy economy by providing financial and technical resources to Nevadans. Kirsten Stasio has over a decade of experience in the clean energy field across the investment, policy, education, and nonprofit sectors. Driven by a passion for achieving a more sustainable climate and society, Kirsten's career began in Washington DC where she worked with international policymakers to advance ambitious and equitable climate action, to Silicon Valley where she scaled investments in renewable energy across the US. Kirsten holds MBA and MS degrees from Stanford University and a BA from the University of California, Davis. In her free time, she serves as Adjunct Lecturer at Stanford University where she teaches an energy course to over 200 students each year.

Kirsten Stasio started her presentation and spoke about currently being in a historic moment where the federal government is channeling hundreds of billions of dollars. Also, currently, an unprecedented level of federal funds to advance climate and clean energy solutions is trendy, and at the same time, the federal government is also seeking to center equity. This moment and help Nevada's communities take advantage of and benefit from these significant federal clean energy and climate funds.

Kirsten Stasio talked about her organization and stated that they are a nonprofit organization that supports a thriving, affordable, and accessible clean energy economy, and even though they are nonprofit, they have close government ties. They were created by state legislation in 2017. Nevadans lacked the resources necessary to access cleanup, energy opportunities, and the many benefits that are involved, including reducing energy costs and living in a healthy environment and climate. This is supposed to address the need by providing access to affordable capital and technical assistance to a wide range of stakeholders in Nevada, from residents and affordable housing developers to schools and nonprofits, and small businesses.

Kirsten Stasio shared that clean energy can mean everything from weatherization and more efficient air conditioning and buildings to electric vehicles and charging stations to rooftop and community utility-scale or community scale. Solar projects and the ultimate impact that her organization is seeking to achieve with their work includes tackling climate change, reducing energy costs, and advancing energy. Even though her agency is a nonprofit organization, they work closely with state and local governments, and they have formal ties through their amazing board of directors. The board includes a combination of state officials and folks nominated by local governments and labeled labor organizations and appointed by the governor. States over the past decade and green banks, they've fill market gaps to catalyze capital into clean energy and climate projects. They fill gaps where traditional lenders don't operate, either because there's a lack of capacity, creditworthiness standards aren't being met or the deal sizes are too small. Customer acquisition costs are too high, and these gaps and challenges are greatest and typically chronic and historically underserved and disenfranchised communities. Green banks



develop innovative financial solutions and approaches to address these gaps and access to affordable capital that prevent households and small businesses and other entities from taking advantage of these clean energy solutions. A good indicator of access to capital in general, not just clean energy specific for underserved communities in a region is the presence of what are called federally certified Community development, financial institutions (CDFs). Nevada has two CDFs, which is really a stark contrast with other states like Arizona or Colorado which each have 20 CDFs. So not only is access to capital a chronic issue for underserved communities across the US, it's a particular issue in Nevada that her agency is trying to address.

Kirsten Stasio spoke about how inequity presents itself in the context of energy. That concept is referred to as energy justice. Overall, energy plays an important role in the community, it fuels many activities in everyone's lives. Energy is one of the largest operating expenses and the most unpredictable for households. They spend an average in Nevada at least \$12,500 on energy in 2021. And this cost burden is often disproportionately borne by underserved communities, particularly low-income communities, and people of color. Low-income households in Nevada spend over 20% of their income on energy between electricity and natural gas, with utilities and also gasoline for their cars. That doesn't even account for maintenance costs for vehicles and over 1/5 of the population faces the hard choice between turning on their air conditioning and buying food, which is unacceptable. Low-income and disadvantaged communities, people of color, are also most exposed to air pollution from energy use because of where their homes and jobs are located relative to sources of air pollution like highways or industrial facilities. Kirsten Stasio wanted to connect this back to something that Doctor Rodriguez-Campo said earlier about the fact that Black, Indigenous, and people of color are twice as likely to die from COVID-19. COVID is a respiratory illness and many studies have shown a strong link between exposure to air pollution and COVID mortality rates. These energy security challenges in terms of the cost burden, they're only getting worse. The temperature has risen in the last few decades in the city of Las Vegas and the City of Reno. Both are the fastest-warming cities in the US which exacerbate the need for more efficient air conditioning and weatherization. The good news is that there are cost-effective clean energy measures that people can take today to save money on their utility and gasoline bills and also increase comfort and indoor and local air quality. These measures range from better insulation and homes to more efficient air conditioning and heating, LED lighting, and electric vehicles. The current cost of gasoline in Nevada is about \$4.20 a gallon. The equivalent cost for fueling a vehicle with electricity is about a dollar a gallon. So significant savings, but one of the big challenges is that these clean energy measures have historically been taken advantage of by higher income portions of the population who have better access to capital that are access to the infrastructure and their homes to install EV charging infrastructure etcetera to take advantage of these opportunities. According to Kirsten Stasio, there are challenges to taking advantage of this opportunity. For example, a residence's air conditioning broke in the middle of summer. They may not have or know what the most efficient replacement product is, or have the time to research it, and they may not be able to find a trusted contractor to install the more efficient product, and the contractor isn't the one who pays the utility bill. The contractor may not necessarily have an incentive to install them more efficient product unless they are given one. Finally, the resident may not have the cash to pay to replace the air conditioning. It is not an easy process to navigate and there are a lot of barriers that need to be overcome. The clean energy fund is working to address those barriers.

They are designing and building a program to address especially for single-family homes. They have been working closely with affordable housing developers, and affordable multifamily housing developers in Nevada. This is happening to educate individuals and prepare them for accessing the significant federal clean energy funds that are becoming available with commercial building vehicle fleets. Also, they are currently working with school districts on electric school buses and then also thinking about deploying solar and storage, particularly in remote rural areas and on tribal lands to help boost energy resilience. The infrastructure investment, the JOBS Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act collectively are making those federal funds available. The federal government is really

prioritizing the needs of communities and in particular, underserved communities, throughout the kind design and administration of these funds. The federal government implemented the Justice 40 initiative by executive Order of President Biden that set the goal of at least 40% of the benefits of certain federal funds flowing to disadvantaged communities. A portion of the population that's considered disadvantaged by federal definitions, is about 40% of the population. The energy justice outcomes when seeking different ways to address these chronic barriers for underserved communities. Kirsten Stasio's organization is developing a green home loan program focused on serving low and moderate-income communities. They are partnering with a CDF that uses the ability to pay rather than a credit score to assess borrowers' eligibility for the capital, for loan capital. They also have been working closely and speaking to build the capacity of communities to access these federal funds and implement clean energy opportunities. They are a relatively new organization, so many of these efforts are still unfolding, but they have engaged many with the affordable housing community. They are also seeking to incorporate meaningful engagement from underserved communities and program design and implementation. Again, this is the early days of designing and launching. In the past year, they have really focused on building partnerships and sharing this story about the organization and what they are trying to do, and listening to key points from the stakeholders.

Tina Dortch thanked Kirsten Stasio and stated that energy burden costs are almost exclusively disproportionately experienced by underserved communities.

#### 7. Facilitated Discussion between Diversity Inclusion Liaisons (DILs) and Minority Serving Organizations (MSOs)

Vincent Nava, Senior Advisor, Governor's Office for New Americans (ONA)

Vincent Nava acknowledged that Kathleen Taylor had her hand raised.

Kathleen Taylor stated that her question was for Dr. Marcella regarding the DRI. She asked if Dr. Marcela could educate or provide more clarification on the differences between DEI, work culture and cancel culture as it related to sharing power synergy.

Dr. Marcela Rodriguez-Campo stated that she has been hearing the term woke lately. She advised that everyone should ground themselves in the historical context and look at any specific disparities that impact any community. If people look close enough and follow that thread people will find the origins of reality, what caused it, what are the different aspects that form reality. Historically there are specific groups of people that have been minoritized and marginalized, and many instances have been intentional. Time has evolved even though maybe policy has changed the realities and the outcomes haven't changed significantly and equities for those communities still exist. When talking about DEI, historical events need to be considered. When folks are talking about woke culture or cancel culture or even political correctness, oftentimes, those conversations are devoid of the historical context. Dr. Marcela was an undocumented immigrant. She works with undocumented students at her institution. They have a large scholarship program that is designed specifically to make higher education more accessible for undocumented students and in the present day, the criminality of immigrants is often spoken about. Something that is not talked about is how being an immigrant was criminalized in the 80s and 90s. Policies were passed that now made it illegal for an undocumented person to work for a person and to cross the border.

Vincent Nava acknowledged Abad Piza for a question.

Abad Piza stated that as someone who wants to follow his dreams around medical marijuana, mushrooms, and psychedelics; he has noticed how this process has been evolving. He helped initially in the legalization process

that took place in 2001. He understands the justice system and it is like a meat-grinding machine that never ends. As a medical patient, they recently cut down to six plants from 12. Mr. Piza expressed his concern about getting a license to cultivate marijuana. Due to his past and current relationship with marijuana. He has been affected by certain policies.

Vincent Nava stated that Mr. Piza had a very specific question and advised him to email the question to the ONA team. He acknowledged that Angelica Villarta had her hand up.

Angelica Villarta stated that she was attending on behalf of the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs. She is the vice chairwoman of this organization. She agreed with Tina Dorch and Dr. Marcela Ramirez-Campo. Leveraging the power of cooperation is so important. The commitment to engaging, listening, and considering learning more about the importance of diverse representation is of great significance, and for MSOs, their diverse backgrounds and experiences combined with the shared vision create such a powerful opportunity that brings about change for those who have been marginalized and underrepresented. Kirsten Stasio demonstrated how something like disparities and energy impacts communities. Guy as boots on the ground shared about communities who suffer from systemic inequities, communities that are typically overlooked, resulting in that type of insecurity and cynicism. And Marcella was gracious enough to also share some really important information. Niani shared how her agency started to address the DEI concerns by creating agency action plans for employees and the public. The challenges faced by minority communities are often complex and multifaceted. And it is central to address these with empathy, compassion, understanding, and dedication, internally and externally, to make those differences. The role that the liaisons play really gives a unique platform to shape those policies and drive initiatives that can uplift all communities, and ensure that all voices are not only heard but also valued in acted upon.

Vincent Nava thanked Angelica Villarta for her comment and stated that there was still time for one more question.

Niani Cooper encouraged people to get out to the community, listen, and communicate. Also, she emphasized transparency and showing compassion.

Vincent Nava thanked Niani Cooper and acknowledged Dr. Marcela for comment.

Dr. Marcela Ramirez-Campo stated that communities can save themselves. They need access to the resources.

Vincent Nava thanked Dr. Marcela and acknowledged Guy Girardin for comment.

Guy Girardin stated that he would like to echo the first comment that was made about just getting out there and putting prejudices aside.

Vincent Nava thanked Guy Girardin and acknowledged Kirsten Stasio.

Kirsten Stasio stated that organizations should not expect the community to come to them, but organizations should go to them.

Vincent Nava stated that the speakers had the chance to speak as experts in their own fields.

## 8. Public Comment

Charina De Asis

Charina De Asis thanked everyone for participating in the discussion. She hoped that the Diversity and Inclusion Liaisons and the Minority Serving Organizations take away important lessons and best practices that they can apply in their own work.

Public Comment will be taken during this agenda item. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this item until the matter is included on an agenda as an item on which action may be taken. The Facilitator will place a two (2) minute time limit on the time individuals may address the Governor’s Office for New Americans, Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity, and Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs. The Facilitator may elect to allow public comment on a specific agenda item when that item is being considered. To provide public comment telephonically, dial (775) 321-6111 any time after the facilitator announces the period of public comment. When prompted to provide the Meeting ID, enter 992 209 183#.

Kathleen Taylor stated that she was with the Nevada Women’s Business Center, Nevada Business Opportunity Fund. She wanted to comment on the excellent work of diversity and inclusion in the state of Nevada. She stated that her organization works with minorities for business development. They recently collaborated with the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs on a program within a board at the Nevada Department of Business and Industry. Her organization was a community sponsor for their newly launched CMA Academy, and it was an excellent event where people talked about the legislative perspective, and how advocacy plays an important role for minority-owned women-owned veteran-owned communities that are underserved.

Charina De Asis thanked Kathleen Taylor and asked if anyone would like to make a public comment.

Abad Piza asked for all the emails reference in the meeting.

Vincent Nava stated that those would be put on the chat.

## 9. Next Steps

Tina Dortch

Tina Dorch stated that the next meeting will be on November 8, 2023, at 2 pm. This meeting will not require MSO participation. She pointed out that any state agency that has a DIL, needs to make sure that they permanently feature the DIL’s name and contact information on their website so the community can easily access that information. This will ensure that the MSOs find that information as well. Tina Dorch also shared that a TEAMS’ channel will be created to advance this work. This will be an internal platform for people who are of state government and the purpose will be to house the annual reports and the meeting materials.

Tina Dorch advised participants to enter their names and contact information in the chat if they have not done it already.

## 10. Adjournment

Tina Dortch

Tina Dorch called the adjournment at 3:49 p.m.

**This meeting will be held via conference video and call only. Notice of this meeting was faxed, emailed, or hand delivered for posting to the following locations:**

- Governor’s Office for New Americans, 555 Washington Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89101
- NV Commission on Minority Affairs, 3300 W Sahara Ave Las Vegas, NV 89102
- Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity 3320 W Sahara Ave, Ste 100, Las Vegas, NV 89102

**Agenda and meeting materials may also be viewed on the internet at:**

the Department of Administration's website: <https://notice.nv.gov/>

OR

the Governor's Office for New American's website: [Diversity and Inclusion \(nv.gov\)](https://diversityandinclusion.nv.gov/)

*Please submit written comments (consisting of more than one typed page) for agenda items that require a vote to the Governor's Office for New Americans by emailing [ONAINFO@ona.nv.gov](mailto:ONAINFO@ona.nv.gov) (3) calendar days prior to the meeting to ensure that adequate consideration is given to the material. We are pleased to provide reasonable accommodations for members of the public who have a disability. Copies of the meeting materials can be made available. Requests for accommodations or meeting materials should be directed to the Governor's Office for New Americans by emailing [ONAINFO@ona.nv.gov](mailto:ONAINFO@ona.nv.gov) or by calling 702-486-0800 no later than three (3) working days prior to the meeting date.*