

2019

## ISU Library Annual Report on Diversity and Inclusion, FY2019

Susan A. Vega García

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## ISU Library Annual Report on Diversity and Inclusion, FY2019

### Abstract

The Iowa State University Library strives to be inclusive in our collections, services, programming, policies, procedures, and environment. This report to the ISU Senior VP and Provost provides a brief summary of the library's major diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives and achievements in FY19.

### Disciplines

Library and Information Science

## FY19 Diversity and Inclusion Report

The Iowa State University Library strives to be inclusive in our collections, services, programming, policies, procedures, and environment. This report to the ISU Senior VP and Provost provides a brief summary of the library's major diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives and achievements in FY19.

### New Initiatives

The Library's major DEI focus in FY19 was to provide educational opportunities for library staff, with the goal of raising and strengthening DEI awareness, understanding, and cultural competency skills. The ISU Strategic Plan, the ISU Campus Climate survey, and the library's own surveys and other data all point toward the need for the campus community to engage in DEI learning. Toward this end, the Library provided and hosted a number of DEI workshops, open discussion forums, and training opportunities for Library staff to become more conversant with DEI issues and put that learning into action.

#### 1. DEI Learning Sessions for Library Staff

Five DEI learning sessions featuring local or regional speakers were brought to the University Library during FY19. Three of these sessions were intended for all library staff. Dean Beth McNeil emphasized to all library staff that attendance was strongly encouraged and expected. Two additional DEI sessions were developed for specific library units and targeted topics relevant to their work, though in some cases staff from other units could attend if interested. Attendance was strong and learning outcomes positive for these sessions.

One key finding for the ISU Library has been the effectiveness of establishing an iterative process of bringing targeted DEI programming directly to library staff, followed by assessment and development of online guides for further learning, followed by sharing assessment summaries and the online guides with staff. Through this process, staff are kept better informed on overall learning outcomes as well as the value and purpose of DEI learning and its relevance to everyone's work.

#### 2. Strengthening Library Staff DEI Communication Skills: White Fragility

During FY19 the Library began creating a culture of talking about difficult issues rather than avoiding or keeping silent, and has emphasized learning to reflect and speak effectively with others. In particular, an extended series of facilitated discussions of the book *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism* represented an important achievement for library staff in advancing deep learning and awareness of systemic racism and working toward social justice.

#### 3. Personnel: DEI on Library Staff Evaluations

In FY19, the library implemented the requirement for all permanent library staff to report their DEI activities on their annual review materials, along with the requirement that staff supervisors will comment on employee DEI activities in their supervisory reviews. This change emphasizes that DEI work is part of everyone's work responsibilities.

## Highlights

- **DEI Learning Sessions for Library Staff**

Five DEI learning sessions featuring local or regional speakers were brought to the University Library during FY19. Three sessions were intended for all library staff. Dean Beth McNeil emphasized to all library staff that attendance was strongly encouraged and expected. Two additional DEI sessions were developed for specific library units. Approximately 70 staff (roughly two-thirds of permanent staff) attended the all-staff sessions, with roughly 15-30 staff attending the more targeted sessions.

- **White Fragility: Book Discussion Series for Library Staff**

The library's AD for Inclusion & Equity developed and led four library staff groups in month- to semester-long facilitated readings and discussions of the book *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism*, by Robin DiAngelo. The book defines and examines systemic racism, and deconstructs the presumed neutrality and default position of whiteness. The book emphasizes critical thinking skills, self-reflection, and taking action in dismantling racism, beginning with ourselves. In all, 54 library staff (roughly 50% of permanent staff) will have participated in one of these extended discussion series in FY19.

- **Strengthening the Library's DEI Committee**

The Library's DEI Committee was reconfigured in May 2019 by the AD for Inclusion & Equity. A new charge emphasizing action over a more passive construct of celebrating was developed and approved; regular term appointments were shortened to two years rather than four, and committee membership was increased. All committee members are now charged to get involved in various committee activities over the year. To increase understanding and build a learning community of practice, the committee read and discussed the book *Is Everyone Really Equal* during Fall 2018 to ensure that all committee members were conversant with various DEI topics and research. This training served as a foundation for the committee's subsequent work.

- **Library Facilities: Creating ADA-Compliant Men's Restrooms**

In May 2019, the second phase of library restroom renovations began, which will create five fully ADA-compliant men's restrooms on the Lower Level, Floor 1, Floor 2, Floor 3, and Floor 4. These restrooms are expected to be completed by the start of Fall 2019.

- **Library Residency Program: Diversifying the Library Profession**

In May 2018, the University Library began assessing its new Residency Program after the departure of the first Resident Librarian. After assessment and strengthening program design and coordination, in Spring 2019 the Library began advertising for a new resident. As of early June, search results are not yet announced but are expected to be positive.

- **Personnel: DEI on Staff Evaluations**

In Spring 2019, the library implemented the requirement for all permanent library staff to report their DEI activities on their annual review materials, along with the requirement that staff supervisors will comment on employee DEI activities in their supervisory reviews. This change emphasizes that DEI work is part of everyone's work responsibilities. The requirement may also encourage staff's continued attendance at the library's DEI Learning Sessions, promote increased awareness and involvement in library and campus DEI activities, as well as seeking out other DEI engagement opportunities.

## Expanded Descriptions

### 1. DEI Learning Sessions for Library Staff

Five DEI learning sessions featuring local or regional speakers were brought to the University Library during FY19. Three of these sessions were intended for all library staff. Dean Beth McNeil emphasized to all library staff that attendance was strongly encouraged and expected. Two additional DEI sessions were developed for specific library units and targeted topics relevant to their work, though in some cases staff from other units could attend if interested. Approximately 70 staff (roughly two-thirds of permanent staff) attended the all-staff sessions, with roughly 15-30 staff attending the more targeted sessions. DEI session topics and their presenters are listed below.

- **Valuing Identities in the Workplace**, Ma Purdy, ISU Human Sciences, Nov 2018; All library staff. Sponsored by ISU Library Administration.
  - Topic: Active-learning introduction to and reflections on intersectionality and privilege.
- **Decolonizing Description**, Hannah Buckland, Univ. Minnesota Libraries, Nov 2018. Sponsored by ISU Library Collections & Technical Services & Curation Services Divisions.
  - Topic: Workshop and lecture on recognizing bias in subject headings and descriptors, and moving toward solutions.
- **DisAbility Rights**, Daniel Van Sant, DisAbility Rights Iowa, Des Moines, Jan. 2019; All library staff. Sponsored by ISU Library Administration.
  - Topic: Introduction to ableism, disability rights, disability culture, and resources.
- **Real Colors**: Stephanie Downs, ISU Human Resources, Jan 2019. Sponsored by ISU Library Curation Services & Library IT Services Divisions.
  - Topic: Hands-on activity introducing the Real Colors method for understanding temperaments and getting along with others.
- **Microaggressions**, Isaiah McGee, ISU Equal Opportunity, March 2019; All library staff. Sponsored by ISU Library Administration.
  - Topic: Defining, recognizing, and deterring microaggressions.

Four of these DEI sessions were assessed via anonymous Qualtrics feedback surveys with questions focused on learning outcomes, as well as soliciting feedback on future DEI topics of interest. Results show that these sessions have been effective in advancing DEI awareness and learning, and helping staff become more conversant with relevant DEI topics, definitions, resources, and skills. The AD for Inclusion & Equity and members of the library's DEI Committee developed an online resource guide called [DEI Read and Learn](#) to provide further resources on selected session topics for all staff to continue learning at their own pace. This guide is available online to all members of the ISU community and open to anyone. The Library will continue to provide DEI sessions for library staff in FY20.

### 2. Strengthening Library Staff DEI Communication Skills

During FY19 the Library began creating a culture of talking about difficult issues rather than avoiding or keeping silent, and has emphasized learning to reflect and speak effectively with others.

- **Crucial Conversations**, FY19 workshop series led by the head of library Human Resources. All library staff were involved in small group discussions throughout the year, using the Crucial Conversations method and its companion book, videos, and learning materials. Although not focused on DEI, the methods learned can be applied to many situations.

- **White Fragility: Book Discussion Series for Library Staff**, Fall 2018, Spring 2019, and June 2019. The library's AD for Inclusion & Equity, developed and led four library staff groups in month- to semester-long facilitated readings and discussions of the book *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism*, by Robin DiAngelo. The book defines and examines systemic racism, and deconstructs the presumed neutrality and default position of whiteness. The book emphasizes critical thinking skills, self-reflection, and taking action in dismantling racism, beginning with ourselves. Discussion series participants included all members of the Library's management team of administrators and department heads; all librarians of color; and 31 additional library staff volunteering to participate in sessions sponsored by the library's DEI Committee. In all, 54 library staff (roughly 50% of permanent staff) will have participated in one of these extended discussion series in FY19. All groups read and discussed the entire book. It is noteworthy that the University Library embarked on this important series in Fall 2018, before it was announced that author Robin DiAngelo would visit ISU in Spring 2019. The library helped co-sponsor her visit, and several librarians who had completed the book discussion series participated in DiAngelo's subsequent workshop, and met with the author privately.

The White Fragility discussion series sponsored by the library's DEI Committee in Spring 2019 was assessed via an anonymous Qualtrics feedback survey with questions focused on learning outcomes and attitudes toward the effectiveness of the series. Resulting data show that the book discussion format was very effective in advancing deep learning and awareness of systemic racism and working toward social justice. The assessment will be repeated for the June 2019 group upon completion of that iteration of the discussion series.

An online resource guide called [White Fragility Book Discussion Series](#) was developed to support these discussion groups, with additional resources being added during Summer 2019. This guide is open to anyone interested in learning more about the library's discussion series, to benefit from the additional resources, or wishing to develop their discussion series.

- **Racism at American Library Association Midwinter Conference**, Jan. 2019. Discussion led by Dean Beth McNeil, Jan. 2019. All librarians. Incidents of racism occurred at one of the library profession's largest national conferences. Days later, the Dean and the AD for Inclusion & Equity organized an informal local discussion and invited all ISU librarians to gather and reflect. Although many librarians were still on holiday break, the prevailing sentiment was that it was best to meet at once to voice concerns and acknowledge the incidents, as well as discuss the wider implications locally and nationally. Approximately 15 librarians were able to attend.

### **3. Strengthening the Library's DEI Committee**

The Library's DEI Committee was reconfigured in May 2019 by the AD for Inclusion & Equity. A new charge emphasizing action over a more passive construct of celebrating was developed and approved; regular term appointments were shortened to two years rather than four, and committee membership was increased. All committee members are now charged to get involved in various committee activities over the year. To increase understanding and build a learning community of practice, the committee read and discussed the book *Is Everyone Really Equal* during Fall 2018 to ensure that all committee members were conversant with various DEI topics and research. The DEI Committee was engaged in a number of significant projects in FY19, including the following:

- **Online Resource Guides:** The DEI Committee developed and maintain a number of online guides that offer opportunities for staff to continue their learning after a DEI session or program. In addition, the guides are available and accessible to the ISU community and beyond.
  - [DEI Read & Learn](#) - guide for library staff and others listing resources on topics including cultural competence, microaggressions, responding to racism, and more. Accessed 297 times since release in Jan. 2019.
  - [Is Everyone Really Equal](#) - companion guide with resources for learning more about the topics covered in the book, including culture and socialization, privilege and oppression, ableism, sexism, racism, and more. Accessed 2648 times since release in Oct. 2018.
  - [White Fragility](#) – companion for the library’s book discussion series. Accessed 1701 times since release in Jan. 2019.
- **Heritage Month Book Exhibits & Film Nights:** The DEI Committee took on responsibility for developing DEI-relevant book exhibits in Parks Library. Exhibits help the ISU community appreciate the strength and breadth of the library’s diverse collections, which they otherwise might not encounter. Exhibits included Latinx Heritage Month, Sept.-Oct. 2018; Indigenous Heritage Month, Nov. 2018; Black History Month, Jan. 2019; AAPIDA Heritage Month, April 2019; Arab American Heritage Month, April 2019. In FY19, the DEI Committee also extended the library’s Heritage Month activities to include a film night for four of the Heritage Months. Working in collaboration with ISU Multicultural Student Affairs, relevant films were selected and shown in the library; post-film discussions were led by MSA staff members Torrell Foree and Trishell Copeland. Assessment shows that Film Nights were popular with student attendees; the DEI Committee plans to continue these in FY20.
- **ISU 4U Success Program** – Several DEI Committee members actively participated in this pre-collegiate college-bound program, representing the University Library and attending school resource fairs and other events.
- **Other Book Exhibits:** Green Dot week, Fall 2018; Stand Against Racism, a book exhibit in conjunction with YWCA’s national Stand Against Racism week, Spring 2019, and a book exhibit for LGBTQIA+ Pride month, June 2019.
- **Recruiting a More Diverse Workforce:** The Committee is currently engaged in two projects that will help the library widen its applicant pools: the compilation of a list of campus offices and partners that may help the library recruit and retain a more diverse student employee workforce, and the compilation of an annotated list of national DEI-related library organizations and groups that may help library search committees advertise positions more broadly and with groups relevant to librarians of color and other marginalized groups in the profession. Both should be completed in June 2019, with roll-out and follow-up to continue in FY20.

#### 4. Library Facilities & Services

In FY19, the Library planned and implemented a number of changes to enhance accessibility and inclusion in the Parks Library building.

- **Creating ADA-compliant Men’s Restrooms:** In May 2019, the second phase of library restroom renovations began, which will create five fully ADA-compliant men's restrooms on the Lower Level, Floor 1, Floor 2, Floor 3, and Floor 4. These restrooms are expected to be completed by the start of Fall 2019. These restrooms will complete the project that began in Summer 2018,

resulting in the creation of five gender-inclusive and fully-ADA compliant single user restrooms, as well as five new and spacious fully-ADA compliant women's restrooms.

- **Lactation room:** The Library is one of several campus sites that has created dedicated space for nursing mothers. Construction on a new and improved lactation room was completed in Sept. 2018. The new room provides a clean and conveniently located private space that features comfortable seating and a sink.

## 5. Library Residency Program

In May 2018, the University Library began assessing and reshaping its new Residency Program after the departure of the program's first Resident Librarian.

- **Search for New Resident:** After assessment and strengthening the program design and coordination, in late Spring 2019, the Library began advertising for a new resident. As of this writing, the search results are not yet announced but are expected to be positive.
- **About the Program:** The Residency Program has been designed as a 3-year professional experience that focuses on developing relevant professional work experience, opportunities for professional development, mentoring, and exploration of other library units through rotations. The third year is dedicated toward the completion of a meaningful professional practice or research project. This three-year program allows the University Library to play an active part in diversifying the profession and mentoring new professionals. The University Library is a member of the national Association of Colleges & Research Libraries (ACRL) Diversity Alliance.

## 6. Personnel

- **Project Search:** During FY19, several library units participated in this ISU program for young adults with disabilities, and hosted several workers. The goal of the program is to provide participants with relevant work experience and skills that may assist them in securing jobs. The library worked with three Project Search participants, and hopes to continue in FY20.
- **Student Employees:** During FY19, the library's Student Employee Handbook was updated to better inform student employees on reporting any grievances or harassment with patrons or staff. The Handbook now includes easy reporting steps and contact information for library Human Resources and ISU EO staff; it also emphasizes the non-retaliation mandate that protects employees who report. This update is an important step in improving campus climate, and helps student employees understand their rights should a problematic situation arise.
- **Library Staff Employees:** In early Spring 2019, the library implemented the requirement for all permanent library staff to report their DEI activities on their annual review materials, along with the requirement that staff supervisors will comment on employee DEI activities in supervisory reviews. This change emphasizes that DEI work is part of everyone's work responsibilities. All evaluation forms used in Merit, P&S, Academic Librarian, and Faculty Librarian evaluations have been updated to reflect this important change. This change aligns the University Library with the ISU Strategic Plan 2017-2022, Goal 4, Action and Metric 4.4.

## 7. Collections

The University Library continues to strengthen its robust collections related to race and ethnic studies; women's and gender studies; LGBTQ+ studies, and related areas in support of ISU academic programs,

the ISU Diversity and Internationalization requirements, and other community needs. Significant FY19 additions to the library's collections included:

- **Streaming videos and DVD documentaries:** In response to course needs and interests, the library acquired a number of new titles, including: two films by Guatemalan director Luis Argueta: "Abrazos" (2014) and "The U-Turn / La Vuelta en U" (2017), completing his trilogy of films that began with "AbUSed: The Postville Tragedy" (2010), a documentary on the 2008 ICE raid that took place in Postville, Iowa; "Manos a la Obra: The Story of Operation Bootstrap" (2005); "Plena: Canto y trabajo / Plena is Work, Plena is Song" (2002), and "Palenque: Un Canto" (2011); "100 Years: One Woman's Fight for Justice for Native Americans" (2016); "Young Lakota" (2013); "Dolores" (2018); "Hip Hop Beyond Beats and Rhymes" (2006); "The Last Colony: Puerto Rico's Unique Relationship with the United States" (2015); "Sin País" (2015).

The ISU Library is on the forefront of creating and publishing new scholarly works through a number of new initiatives, as well as working toward more equitable access to information:

- **Transforming Scholarly Communication:** The library is helping transform scholarly communication through entering into several open access agreements with scholarly publishers that will expand access to many Iowa State research articles to anyone in the world with an internet connection. In addition, the Associate University Librarian for Scholarly Communication and Collections serves on an international working group examining the impact of APC-based open access agreements on authors in low- and middle-income countries; APCs, or article processing charges, pass publication fees onto authors or their institutions, which may prohibit some authors from publishing.
- **Data Repository:** The information architecture of DataShare, the library's new data repository, has intentionally been designed by the Data Services Librarian to increase the visibility and representation of disciplines that are often obscured in traditional models, including research on and by members of underrepresented and marginalized communities.
- **Digital Press:** The library's Scholarly Publishing Librarian has centered DEI in the policies and mission / vision statement of the new Digital Press, making ISU the first library publishing program to have a diversity statement and include diversifying the voices, identities, and perspectives represented in the scholarly record as part of the Digital Press's mission.
- **Open Education Resources:** The library's collaborative OER Miller Grant program is supporting the development of two DEI-relevant OERs. One project is in American Indian Studies, and focused on improving student empathy for modern indigenous populations by engaging with depictions of Native Americans in modern American culture; the second OER project will examine inclusive and accessible design for an Interior Design course.

## 8. Instruction, Outreach, Programming and Services

Several librarians were engaged with providing DEI-relevant instruction, outreach, programming and services, in the Library and across campus.

- **Human Library: DEI Storytelling Event:** Librarian Jasmine Kirby coordinated and led Iowa State's first-ever iteration of this international and well-known storytelling DEI event, working with a number of library and campus staff, March 2019. Assessment data shows attendees thought the event was effective in helping them learn about the impact of DEI issues on themselves and others; attendees also recommended that the ISU Library offer this event again.

- **Outreach Programs & Workshops:** In FY19, ISU library staff developed and/or participated in a number of library and ISU programs and workshops including 4-H Ujima / AAPI Pre-Collegiate Student Workshop; Activist Agriculture: Farm Protest in Iowa, 1929-1969; Story County Blast Back to School Fair & Passion Academy, sponsored by Black Faculty & Staff Association; Brain Awareness Week Film Night; Green Dot Week Film Night & Panel; LGBT+ life at ISU: Special Collections & University Archives pop-up exhibit & class session; LBGTQIPA+ Community Welcome; ISU Library Monday Monologues: Daily Dialogue: Truth, A Live Storytelling Event, and Iowa Odyssey, or How We Got to Here; Library research orientation for visiting Veterinarians from Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.
  
- **Library research instruction sessions for DEI-focused courses or with DEI themes included:**
  - BIOL / WS 307: Women in Science and Engineering
  - CI 601: Foundations of Educational Inquiry (*with some multicultural themes*)
  - HDFS 581C: Lessons from Denmark: Exploring Life-Satisfaction, Happiness, and Hygge in the Happiest Nation on Earth
  - HPC 582: History of Education in the United States
  - Human Sciences 150: Dialogues in Diversity
  - JL MC 201: Reporting and Writing for the Mass Media
  - JL MC 302: Intermediate Reporting & Writing for the Mass Media
  - Res Ev 550: Introduction to Educational Research (*with some multicultural themes*)
  - Res Ev 615: Current Topics in Research and Evaluation (*with some multicultural themes*)
  - Sp Ed 330: Introduction to Instruction for Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities
  - SPAN 445: Latinx Memoirs
  - US LS 325: Iowa Latinos and the Immigration Experience
  - UST 100: International Student First Year Experience
  - UST 105: Carver Scholars
  - UST 301: Introduction to Academic Research (McNair Scholars)
  - UST 321: Construction of Race & Ethnicity in the US (ISCORE Scholars)
  - WGS 402 / 502: Feminist Research