



ASEE Commission on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
2020-2021 Annual Report to the ASEE Board of Directors

Commission Objectives:

The work of CDEI fits within the ASEE Board's objective on Access, Diversity, and Inclusion: “ASEE will catalyze open and thoughtful dialogue to identify and acknowledge underserved constituencies and advocate for their enhanced participation, inclusion and success. ASEE will promote promising practices of inclusiveness and model public accountability.” We continue to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and build on the commission’s foundational objectives, which are to: 1) increase visibility and discussion of DEI issues; 2) develop guidance to foster inclusive environments in which all engineers thrive; and 3) facilitate and encourage adaptation of strategies to promote the empowerment of all through the work of the Commission guided by the CDEI Strategic Framework. We have worked to add more active engagement strategies into our initiatives so members are well-informed of the support and resources CDEI provides and can build capacity to take action within their own spheres of influence.

Under the leadership of our 2020 – 2021 Chair, Liz Litzer, we had an additional focus on increased communication to our membership and the larger engineering community, greater transparency in the work of CDEI, and continued momentum on racial justice.

Specific new objectives for the 2020 – 2021 year articulated during our virtual Annual Committee Meeting, June 2020 included:	2020-2021 Activities & Outcomes
1) Establish monthly update Chair’s blog to increase transparency of CDEI activities <i>(chair)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 7 Blogs written in September, October, November, January, March, April, May ● ASEE Hub used to communicate with members, with 14 “News” posts this year
2) Enhance communications with regular updates and expanded content across multiple avenues (e.g., website, blog, Twitter, email, all-hands calls) <i>(communications and chairs)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 20 total blog posts since May 1, 2020 ● 4 Guest Blog posts ● 5 Scholar Spotlight Blog posts

<p>3) Launch pilot initiatives that cultivate action-oriented relationships (e.g., DEI-related work-in-progress feedback sessions; community-of-practice groups) as part of professional development offerings (<i>professional development</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pilot Cultivating Inclusive Communities group launched with 118 who signed up ● Work in Progress Virtual Feedback sessions
<p>4) Launch ASEE Constituent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion award to promote DEI work of groups within ASEE (<i>awards</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Award was launched this year. ● One application was submitted, reviewed, and awarded. ● Inaugural award went to Black in Engineering: https://youtu.be/fw3cnVYfIGM
<p>5) Develop commission bylaws and strategic plan (<i>strategic planning and assessment</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bylaws drafted and sent to the ASEE board for approval (Approved May 14, 2021) ● Strategic Plan still in progress
<p>On-going objectives included:</p>	<p>2020-2021 Activities & Outcomes</p>
<p>6) Plan for the 2021 Annual Conference CDEI engagement activities (<i>conference planning</i>)</p>	<p>2020 Virtual conference had 174 total attendees at the CDEI division mixer “booth” and the exhibit hall “booth”</p>
<p>7) Maintain regular communication on CDEI’s and community members’ work via CDEI website and blog (<i>communications</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and planning Summer 2021 All Hands Quarterly calls. ● Blog updates related to Best DEI Paper Award ● Twitter activity
<p>8) Award the Best DEI Paper award for 2021 Annual Conference (<i>awards</i>)</p>	<p>Review is in progress and will be completed after the conference.</p>
<p>9) Plan for special session programming in the 2021 Annual Conference (<i>chairs and professional development</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proposed and had accepted a distinguished lecture panel called “Black In Engineering: A Social Justice Movement for the Academy” ● 13 special interactive sessions submitted by ASEE members or organized by CDEI ● CDEI participating in the 2021 Annual Conference Roundtables

<p>10) Provide position statements on DEI issues as they arise in the community or at the request of the Board (<i>policy & letters and chairs</i>)</p>	<p>Policy Statements or ASEE Guidance written on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ASEE Bylaws Template DEI language ● The Executive Order On Combating Race And Sex Stereotyping ● Guidance for groups ASEE can partner with in the Long Beach community for social justice ● Guidance on demographic questions for ASEE membership system
<p>11) Host year-round virtual workshops for continued professional development of ASEE members in DEI-related topics (<i>professional development</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 24 virtual workshops, serving over 300 unduplicated individuals
<p>12) Recognize DEI work within the community via awards and communications (<i>communications, awards, chairs</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scholar Spotlights on the Blog ● Guest Blogs ● Tweets and re-tweets ● Blogs/Hub/Emails to support DEI efforts in the community ● Best DEI Paper award in progress

Highlighted Accomplishments

In spite of challenges faced in members’ lives due to the continued impact of the coronavirus pandemic, CDEI continues to make progress in its charge with a focus on impact areas outlined in the strategic framework: a) communications, b) opportunities presented by the annual conference, c) building community, d) awards that reinforce DEI goals, e) Bylaws creation and f) new initiatives.

Communcations: We have improved communications with regular blog posts (<https://diversity.asee.org/deicommittee/category/blog/>) summarizing the work of the Commission including monthly update blog posts from the chair as well as promoting the work of our colleagues through Scholar Spotlight Series and guest blogs. Position statements that affirm our commitment to policies and initiatives that promote equitable outcomes and highlight individual actions we can take continue to be shared (e.g., rejection of content of Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping). These additional resources supplement the programmatic arm of CDEI which includes year-round professional development virtual workshops in addition to the valuable content provided at the annual conference. The professional development committee continues to successfully recruit volunteers to support the demand for education efforts like the virtual workshop series and cultivates an environment that supports the continued development of similar initiatives.

The team is very passionate about the work and compassionate towards those who aren't quite there yet but want to be involved. I find it really refreshing. -- Jeremy Waisome

Annual Conference: The annual conference session content remains a core focus of CDEI and now boasts an established professional development curriculum (e.g., DEI 100, 200, 300 series, safe zone ally workshops) and relevant special sessions that seek to both broaden understanding and help members identify actions to take to promote systemic change.

Thank you for organizing the session on "Do You See Me? Hypervisible Invisibility" at the ASEE 2020. It was authentic, mesmerizing and very well done. I deeply appreciated the opportunity to hear [the session leaders'] stories, and I very much agree that we need to create more spaces to hear more stories. -- Policymaker

Through these and additional avenues, members have had increased opportunities to engage with the work of CDEI and the varying perspectives and experiences of our diverse ASEE membership.

Building Community: We continue to explore avenues to empower individuals to build relationships among colleagues and play active roles in advocating DEI efforts within their sphere of influence. Pilot initiatives like the "Cultivating Inclusive Communities Program" as part of our professional development offerings showed that there is member need and interest in community-of-practice type efforts:

The CIC Program has been a great opportunity. I've been able to meet new people, make connections and collaborate in new ways. It provides a safe space to find support, build camaraderie, and share stories. My group helps me reflect on my past experience through a DEI lens which then inspires me to take action towards building equity and inclusion in my daily life. --Jennifer Alviso, Strandberg Engineering

Awards: In addition, the ASEE Constituent Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Award was launched to encourage broader ASEE participation in furthering the strategic goals of our commission and increase visibility of impactful initiatives by ASEE constituent groups.

Bylaws: Over this year, CDEI had focused discussions on the management and organization of the Commission with its new designation. We revisited our organizational structure and description as part of the bylaws development and our new bylaws were submitted for approval. Discussions also included how CDEI can best partner with other ASEE constituent groups such as divisions and sections to further promote DEI action across ASEE; the new bylaws now invite ASEE sections to provide delegates to the Commission.

New Initiatives: The proposal and approval of the Year of Impact on Racial Equity (2021-2022) will set the stage for CDEI to support organizational change by empowering engineering students, faculty, and administrators to engage in equitable policies and practices that promote inclusion and expand access to engineering education for all with strategic partnership with the P-12 Commission. We will continue to promote and encourage participation in the Year of Impact on Racial Equity and have had more than 40 people sign up for the taskforce to date.

By subcommittee, specific accomplishments include:

Awards

The Awards Committee worked to make the CDEI awards more visible to the entire ASEE community. We updated the 2021 Award websites and the 2021 Call for Paper award nominations for clarity. Additionally, we sent four emails to all 67 Division Chairs and Section Conference Chairs about the ASEE Best DEI paper and the Constituent award (October and December 2020, February and April 2021). We provided a Focus Friday interview with the 2020 Best DEI Paper Award winners. That conversation also resulted in a DEI Hot Tip drafted for the Chair's newsletter. Finally, we received and reviewed one nomination for the ASEE Constituent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award. The inaugural award went to Black in Engineering: <https://youtu.be/fw3cnVYflGM>.

Communications

The Communications Committee focused on expanding the resources on our website, especially as it relates to our blog. As of May 1st, we have had over 20 blog posts including 3 guest blog posts on topics ranging from examining diversity through an inclusion lens to socially just engineering. We have also instituted a new scholar spotlight series where we feature colleagues from a range of institutions who share their sense of belonging stories. As a part of this work, we have created branding to highlight these special blogs and the chair's monthly update blog posts. We are also working with CDEI committees to amplify the work of the awards and professional development committees through tweets and blogs. New this year, we worked with ASEE Headquarters to promote the virtual workshop series as a part of the ASEE monthly Connections' email communication. As a committee we are investigating the best approach for organizing our committee and developing a communications plan to promote the work for our commission and build a pipeline of content for dissemination.

Conference Planning

Prior to the announcement that the 2020 ASEE Annual Conference would be virtual, the Conference Planning Committee completed initial artwork for the "on the ground" conference planned for Montreal. This committee is taking a similar approach to the 2021 conference, since it will also be virtual.

For the 2020 Annual Conference we hosted a CDEI Division Mixer/Virtual Showcase and virtual exhibit hall booth with CDEI new member orientation topics and opportunities to learn more how to get involved in CDEI programming or divisions with similar foci including the newly formed Equity, Culture, and Social Justice in Education division. The virtual exhibit hall was staffed by CDEI leaders and volunteers from the conference planning committee as well as from WIED and MIND. Materials of interest/reference were uploaded to the virtual spaces (Newsletter, CDEI conference schedule, "CDEI bookmark") and a CDEI welcome video. We had 174 total attendees at these events (37 to the Division Mixer + 137 to the CDEI Virtual Booth) with varied traffic throughout.

Policy & Letters

This committee provided feedback on the DEI language in a Bylaws Template that ASEE was working on for divisions and sections. We forwarded our feedback to the ASEE President and Executive Director for them to take to the ASEE Board of Directors.

Many Policy and Letters committee members also worked on a response to the Executive Order extending the ban on ‘sensitivity training’ to federal contractors. The CDEI chairs team utilized all that work to create something shorter and more targeted that was published on our website and blog and was also published in ASEE Prism.

Finally, many on the committee have been discussing how to better partner with local communities where our conference is located, to create more justice for those communities. Thank you to everyone from CDEI who provided ideas for non-profits in the Long Beach area. In line with our desire to improve justice in that area, the chairs reviewed and selected organizations for which we ask ASEE members to support.

Partnerships

The Partnerships Committee met over the course of the year to initiate the development of a resource toolkit to support CDEI’s efforts in building capacity for DEI across ASEE divisions. The subcommittee reviewed a number of example resources from across different sectors to identify a format that would be suitable and carry utility for intended users. Work outstanding includes finalizing content and organizing a draft template for the CDEI chairs to review. Then the toolkit can be tested by a target audience to collect feedback to inform revisions/modifications.

This committee has struggled over the past few years as a result of a lack of clarity around goals and resources. The original operating procedures, which have a focus on external organizations, reads wonderful in theory. However, building and sustaining partnerships is time and resource intensive, which has been difficult for volunteers to do in a consistent way. In addition, it has not been clear how our partnership work aligns with the work of ASEE Headquarters. As a result of these persistent concerns, we decided to remove the Partnerships Committee from CDEI; this change is reflected in the new Bylaws. When there is a larger partnership strategy in place with ASEE and CDEI, we will consider creating a taskforce to focus on this area.

Strategic Planning & Assessment

The Strategic Planning & Assessment committee supported the development of bylaws for the newly designated Commission, and continued discussions on the alignment between the Commission’s strategic plan/strategic framework and transformative justice principles. Members of the subcommittee focused on developing the strategic plan proposed a contextual listening session for the annual conference with the Equity, Culture and Social Justice in Education Division to further explore avenues to support conversations and initiatives aligned with transformative justice efforts. Insights gained from this session will inform the development of the 2021 strategic plan as we continue to discuss how best to frame a living document that is useful to both committee leadership and general membership. The committee aims to present a

strategic plan for review and feedback in Fall 2021. Members of the committee also provided DEI Hot Tips aligned with the Chair's focus on anti-racism efforts.

Professional Development

The Professional Development Committee operates with four teams: virtual workshops, programs, conference, and community teams. In an effort to collectively establish our goals for the year, we sent out a feedback survey and 47 people contributed. We had about 35 volunteers of varying capacities throughout the year. The PD committee hosted 24 virtual workshops, serving over 300 unique individuals, and all recordings are available on our website and youtube. Our programs team completely revamped our 2019 DEI 100 and 200 workshops, making tremendous improvements and adapting them to a virtual setting. For the 2020 virtual conference, we hosted a distinguished lecture, a panel discussion, two community conversations, six professional development workshops, three of which were native curriculum to the PD committee. The virtual setting proved to be a great opportunity for us to reach a broader audience. For the DEI 100, 200, and 300 sessions, we had about 115 people in attendance for each, and a very positive response from the community. This is a tremendous increase from the average of 15 people per in-person session in 2019. Through our pilot community-of-practice program, we had 118 people sign up to participate and gained 20 more people throughout the year. We strategically connected our participants into 21 small groups and assisted them in an eight-month intentional journey of learning and growing together, starting in October 2020. Our primary objective was to facilitate connections and foster a community of practitioners with a shared goal of improving access, equity, and diversity within engineering. With less than three years of existence, we have accomplished some great things, and we are looking forward to continuing our efforts to promote equity, access, and diversity in engineering education!

CDEI's Future Objectives (2021 – 2022):

- 1) All CDEI/Chairs: Kick-off the Year of Impact on Racial Equity at the 2021 Conference and the taskforce groups that will lead efforts focused on the three pillars of impact
- 2) All CDEI: Support the Year of Impact on Racial Equity through committee programming and communications
- 3) Conference Committee: Organize special events for the culmination of the Year of Impact on Racial Equity at the 2022 Annual Conference, in addition to recurring programming and community submitted sessions
- 4) Professional Development Committee: Increase participation in CDEI professional development workshops (virtual and annual conference) and scale up static and dynamic resources available to members (e.g., downloadable guides, virtual workshop recordings, community-of-practice.)
- 5) Communications Committee: Maintain CDEI communications via website, blog, social media and other ASEE media (e.g., Prism) and track media use to inform future integrated communication plans
- 6) Awards Committee: Increase awareness of and applications for ASEE Constituent Award

- 7) Strategic Planning & Assessment Committee: Finalize CDEI Strategic Plan to determine priorities and develop action plans that include identifying and dismantling policies and practices that perpetuate systemic inequities faced in ASEE and the organizational cultures in which our engineering education stakeholders work.
- 8) Policy and Letters Committee: Support ASEE and the Chairs team with drafting policy statements to emergent social justice issues.