



2020 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE DIVERSITY COUNCIL is a cooperative industry group comprised of diverse Big “I” member agents and leading companies including Allstate, Amerisure, AmTrust North America, Chubb, Church Mutual, CNA, Encompass, The Hartford, Liberty Mutual, Nationwide, MetLife, Progressive, Safeco, Selective, Travelers, Vertafore and Westfield.

MISSION

The Diversity Council seeks to engage and develop a sustainable diverse independent agency network by partnering with state associations, carriers, and industry affinity groups.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

1. Connect with Big “I” state associations on engagement, focus areas and needs pertaining to diversity and inclusion.
2. Continue to identify diverse independent agency owners countrywide to enhance state associations recruitment and retention efforts.
3. Become a resource center for agents, association leaders and industry partners to access information relative to increasing diverse markets within the independent agency channel and populations served.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Diversity Council provided ongoing support in the planning and implementation of the inaugural [Big “I” Level Up Agent \(Diversity\) Summit](#) which took place in New Orleans January 14-15, 2020, in conjunction with the Big “I” Winter Board Meetings. The summit, focused on business and inclusion, brought independent agents, association leaders, carrier executives and other industry representatives from across the country together to learn key business strategies with a heightened focus on sales, marketing, agency operations, leadership and technology. The goal? Agency growth, as well as increased innovation and sustainability through diversity and inclusion.
- The Diversity Council has actively worked to become a leading change agent within our industry and has been nationally recognized as [one of the top 25 US organizations](#) implementing exemplary work in diversity and inclusion initiatives. This recognition has been awarded by the Association of ERGS (Employee Resource Groups) & Councils and will be received alongside Fortune 100 including American Airlines, Coca-Cola and Mass Mutual.

Updated January 2020



- The council recently launched the Right Start Training Series that focuses on helping up-and-coming developing agency owners attract top-rated carriers with a focus on minority owners. The series provides essential best practices beneficial for agency owners looking to get and retain appointments with top carriers. The council has also launched a mentorship pilot for underrepresented independent agency owners as a supplementary component to the Right Start Training Series.
- The council continues to work closely with InVEST and jointly put together the PriSim College Agency Management Challenge inclusive of 8 colleges across the country. The top three winning college teams – Indiana State University, Ohio State University and the University of North Texas – were provided with sponsorships to attend the 2019 Big “I” Legislative Conference featuring a special Future Leaders track with education and professional development workshops put together exclusively for them.
- The Diversity Council continues to engage association leaders in diversity and inclusion education and initiatives. In 2019, with the support of the national chair and executive committee, the council hosted an inclusive leadership and unconscious bias training for the entire national board. The executive committee were also provided specialized facilitation training to later lead roundtable discussions and activities on becoming an articulate advocate of diversity.
- The council continues to develop a greater online presence through independentagent.com/diversity in an effort to serve as a leading resource for current and prospective member agents, state association staff and carrier partners. Tools are available for those interested in enhancing their agency value, attracting diverse markets and learning about emerging markets. The page also includes an events calendar noting industry events focused on diversity and inclusion.

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Bennie Jones, *Risk Management Solution of America, Chicago, IL*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LIAISON: Joe Leahy, *Leahy and Brown Insurance, Springfield, MA*

IIABA STAFF LIAISONS: [Whitnee Dillard](#) and [Madelyn Flannagan](#)