



Office of Human Resources

## The Inclusion Council

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Dear Colleague,

Welcome to our August Inclusion Council newsletter! This month we are discussing how gender identity affects our everyday lives. Gender identity is a topic of joy and pain for many of us, and we must approach one another and ourselves with grace. All of us are on a journey of self-discovery and acceptance. Many of us come from families and communities that have perpetuated a strict framework for gender that emphasized conforming to norms over being true to one's internal identity. Learning more from the resources below can help us recognize our unconscious biases and approach the topic from a spirit of love, understanding, and acceptance.

### Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Definitions



Language is a gateway to understanding and community. The Inclusion Council sometimes gets requests to explain key terms and definitions to help reduce offensive language and clarify misunderstandings. This [Human Rights Campaign glossary](#) is a great resource for those unfamiliar with what terms are appropriate in talking about sexual orientation and gender identity.

### Facts and Action Steps to Advance Gender Equity



Advancing gender equity is everyone's responsibility. While some progress has been made, there are still great deficiencies in our local communities and more broadly around the world. This [resource](#), created by the University of Minnesota's Women's Center, is a great starting point in taking personal responsibility for creating a more equitable environment for everyone.

## Understanding the Uniqueness of Two-Spirit in Indigenous LGBTQ+ Communities



Most Indigenous communities have specific terms in their own languages for the gender-variant members of their communities and the social and spiritual roles they fulfill. With more than 500 surviving Native American cultures, attitudes about sex and gender can be very diverse. Even with the modern adoption of pan-Indian terms like *two-spirit*, not all cultures will perceive two-spirit people the same way or welcome a pan-Indian term to replace ones already in use by their cultures. This [article](#) offers a general introduction to the

two-spirit concept. Here is one expression of it by Geo Soctomah Neptune, a two-spirit member of the Passamaquoddy Tribe in Maine: "If the sun is male and the moon is female, then Two-Spirits are the dusk, Two-Spirits are the dawn, and Two-Spirits are the time in which the sun and moon occupy the sky at the same time."

## Legislation Affecting LGBT Rights Across the Country



LGBTQIA2s+ rights are being attacked across the country as an unprecedented number of states have legislation moving forward to enact anti-LGBTQ measures into law. Despite the perceived progress we see in media outlets, discrimination is on the rise, and it is important that we work to prevent the legal harassment of our neighbors and colleagues. At the current pace, 2021 is on track to become the worst year for anti-LGBTQIA2s+ in recent history. This [resource](#) provides a list of efforts by state and topic.

## Links to More Resources

- ["The Future of Women's Sports Includes Transgender Women and Girls"](#) (article, Athlete Ally)
- [Our Voices: Indigenous Women and Women of Color](#) (web page, U of M Women's Center)
- ["U of Minnesota Women's Center Involves Male Allies"](#) (article, U of M Women's Center)
- [How Do I Talk With My Preschooler About Identity?](#) (web page, Planned Parenthood)
- ["Intersectional Feminism: What It Means and Why It Matters Right Now"](#) (article, UN Women)
- [Nonbinary Gender Pronouns Writing Tips](#) (web page, U of M Center for Writing)
- ["The Safe Space Kit: A Guide to Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Students in Your School"](#) (PDF article, GLSEN.org)
- ["Rainbow Wave" of LGBTQ Candidates Run and Win in 2020 Election](#) (article, TheConversation.com)
- ["Alok Vaid-Menon: The Urgent Need for Compassion"](#) (The Man Enough Podcast)
- ["Things Not to Say to a Non-Binary Person"](#) (YouTube video)

## Questions to Consider and Share on the OHR Inclusion Council Slack Channel

- Who do you welcome into your circle of friends and community?
- How can I move beyond passive support to active allyship?

- I identify as straight. How can I help change my community to be a safe space for others?
- How do I support my work community when the teachings of my religious community don't support LGBTQIA2s+ people?

### Current Events

- ["Minnesota Governor Restricts 'Conversion Therapy' for Minors"](#) (PBS NewsHour)
- ["Enbridge Takes Water as Minnesota Dries and Burns"](#) (Indigenous Environmental Network)
- ["Critical Race Theory Under Attack"](#) (Insight Into Diversity)
- ["Minneapolis Ranks Near the Bottom for Racial Equality"](#) (MPR News)
- ["PoseStar Breaks Ground as First Transgender Actress With Lead Emmy Nod"](#) (CBS Los Angeles)

Sincerely,

Josh Iniguez and Sondang Cornelia  
OHR Inclusion Council Co-Chairs

### THE LAND

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities is built within the traditional homelands of the Dakota people. Minnesota comes from the Dakota name for this region, Mni Sota Makoce—the land where the waters reflect the skies. Each day, the students, faculty, staff, and community members who traverse this campus engage with Dakota territory and should reflect on the ongoing relationship that Dakota people have to this area.

—Adapted from a statement by Iyekiyaipiwiŋ Darlene St. Clair, Bdewakaŋtuŋwaŋ Dakota

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This email was sent to OHR staff on behalf of Josh Iniguez and Sondang Cornelia on August 2, 2021, by the Office of Human Resources, 100 Donhowe Building, 319 15th Ave SE, Minneapolis, MN, 55455, USA. The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer. [Read our privacy statement.](#)

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