

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility Working Group

A Year in Review
2025



Office of
Executive Inspector General
for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor

Introduction

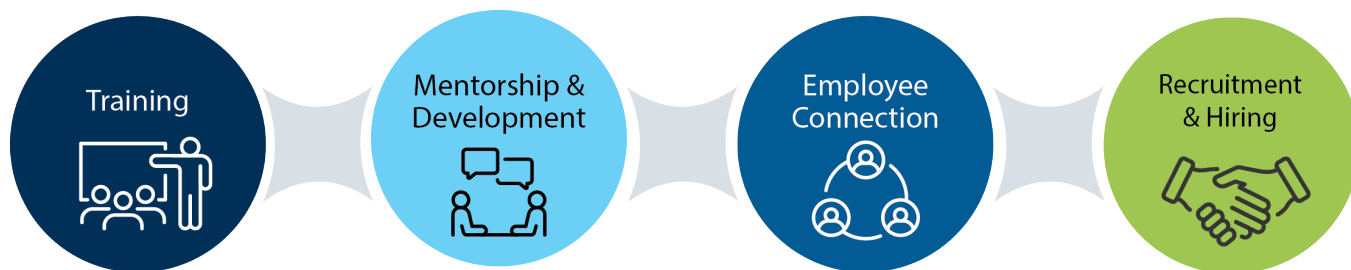


The OEIG maintains an active internal Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility (DEIA) Working Group. This Working Group is comprised of OEIG employee volunteers from each division who work together to brainstorm, research, and implement steps to make the OEIG a more inclusive and equitable working environment that celebrates differences. The DEIA Working Group's focus areas include:

- training;
- mentorship & development;
- employee connection; and
- recruitment and hiring.

Although the OEIG has a DEIA Coordinator, the structure of the group is open to allow all members to share in the leadership and development of the Working Group. In this collaborative environment, we work to ensure that our methods for implementing our goals are thoughtful, grounded in research, and have been discussed and agreed upon by the group. While we continuously work towards setting and meeting goals, our accomplishments in 2025 are noteworthy.

For more information about the DEIA Working Group, please see the OEIG website: oeig.illinois.gov/about/equal. It contains the DEIA Working Group's previous year-end reports, among other information.



Highlights of the DEIA Working Group



Updated OEIG position descriptions to ensure they are written with a focus on inclusivity.



Established an internal mentorship program that is open to all OEIG employees.



Standardized onboarding procedures for new employees to ensure inclusive connection in a hybrid work environment.



Developed OEIG Connect – a discussion group open to all employees that meets to discuss issues related to marginalized groups.



Attended job fairs and expanded where the OEIG posts employment opportunities.



Researched best practices for accessibility and made updates to our website, employment application, and processes.



Hosted events that allow staff to share more of their identity and connect with each other. For example, an office heritage potluck.



Provided leadership training to managers. This training included breakout rooms and thoughtful discussions about how we lead.



Created strategic plans for the DEIA Working Group to effectively align our resources with our goals.



Developed a New Employee Day to allow connections with senior staff and colleagues, and learn more about the OEIG's history.



Established a monthly internal newsletter featuring holidays, cultural events, and important dates of recognition.




Coordinated DEIA training workshops led by external experts for all staff.


DEIA Training

In 2025, the Working Group researched and facilitated training opportunities available through the Illinois Department of Human Rights. In 2025, the Illinois Department of Human Rights conducted the following trainings for the OEIG:

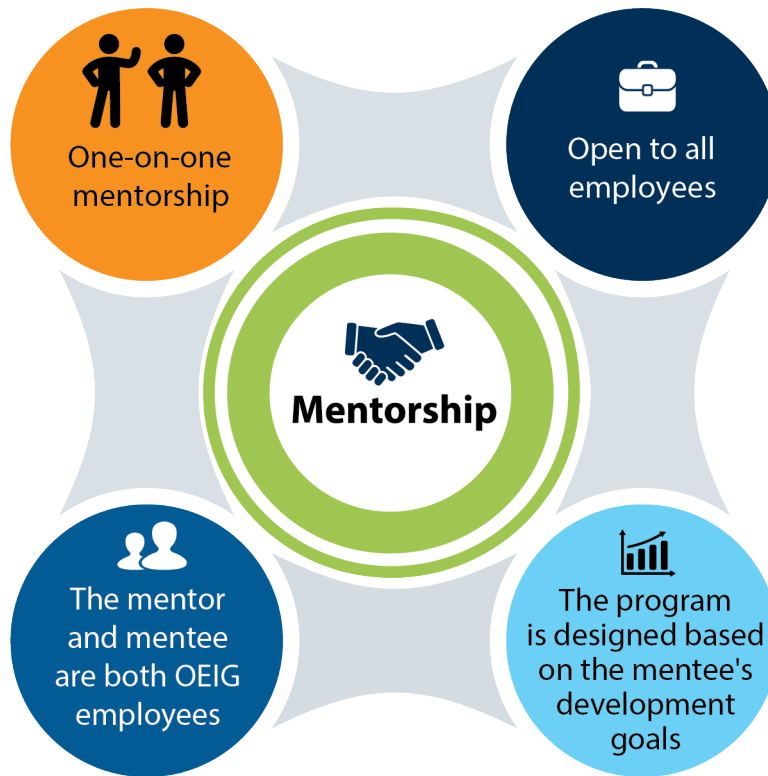
- January 20, 2025. Two-hour training course for managers titled “Motivating Your Employees.” This course discussed strategies for motivating employees and understanding their strengths and weaknesses.
- March 17, 2025. Two-hour training course for managers titled “Delivering Constructive Criticism.” This course provided tools for providing constructive feedback in a way that demonstrates a commitment to the development of staff and their careers.

On October 15, 2025, all OEIG staff participated in an in-person training titled, “Building Stronger Multi-Generational Teams” facilitated by Catherine Popowitz. This training included an overview of communication styles, methods for resolving conflicts, and socialization and values across multiple generations. The training included paired discussion, large group discussion, and lecture. The topic of generational diversity is especially relevant because our office is fortunate to have representation from four generations.

January 20, 2025
Motivating Your Employees


March 17, 2025
Delivering Constructive Criticism


October 15, 2025
Building Stronger Multi-Generational Teams

Mentorship & Development

The DEIA Working Group continued to maintain an internal mentorship program available to all OEIG employees. This internal, voluntary program works to provide support, guidance, development, leadership, and community for both mentees and mentors through one-on-one and group mentorship activities. The mentorship program is mentee driven and designed to allow mentees to establish their own uniquely tailored developmental goals that can be achieved through one-on-one mentorship. The mentee and mentor are paired for a period lasting between six and nine months, depending on the goals and plan they develop. The feedback from end-of-program surveys is overwhelmingly positive. Each year, new staff have participated and reported that it was a very beneficial and productive use of their time.

“I have grown tremendously.”

“It was so helpful to talk to someone who could provide a sounding board and offer advice.”

“It helped me gain more confidence.”



Employee Connection

The DEIA Working Group also continued to facilitate OEIG Connect— an internally-led voluntary discussion focused on issues relating to marginalized groups and identities, such as race, gender, and ability. OEIG Connect was developed to create an open forum for employees to share their identities, hear from others, and be seen as their whole selves. OEIG Connect is part of the DEIA Working Group’s mission to build a community that talks openly and listens to other voices discussing topics related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. All OEIG employees are invited to participate by listening or sharing and come together with the goal of connecting on a personal level with colleagues.

This year we held four OEIG Connects: 1) Neurodiversity; 2) The Name Story; 3) Intersectionality; and 4) Generations at Work. Here is a brief description of each Connect:



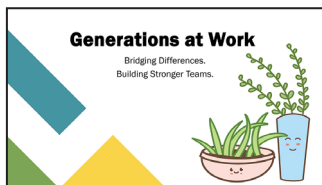
- In January 2025, the DEIA Working Group held a Connect session about neurodiversity. The goals of that session were to: define neurodiversity and explain how it impacts the workplace; demonstrate how to support neurodiversity in the workplace; and encourage further discussion and generate awareness of neurodiversity.



- In May 2025, the DEIA Working Group held a Connect session titled “The Name Story.” The goals of this discussion were to: understand how names shape personal and professional identities; explore the connection names have to DEIA; and discuss practical steps for respectful name use in the workplace.



- In September 2025, the DEIA Working Group held a Connect session about intersectionality. The facilitators discussed intersectionality as a framework used to understand how different identities, such as race, gender, class, and ability, intersect and overlap. This Connect discussed that people are not defined by a single social category, but multiple interconnected aspects of their identity.



- In December 2025, the DEIA Working Group held a Connect session about generational diversity in the workplace. The facilitator shared research and statistics about generations at work and issues and strategies for embracing differences. The Connect also included breakout sessions with discussion topics.

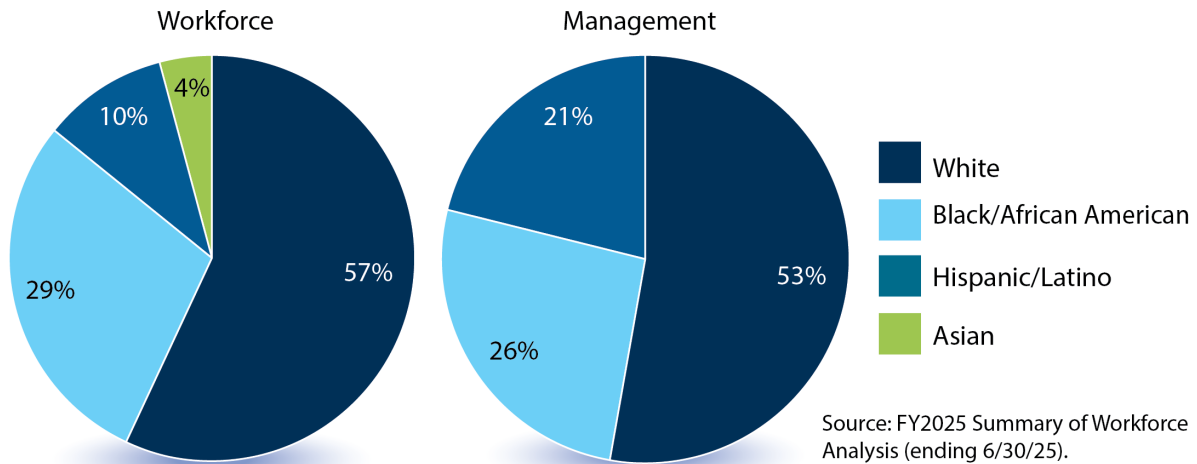
Another way the Working Group fosters connection is through a monthly email. Each month, the DEIA Working Group circulates information regarding holidays, cultural events, and important dates of recognition. The goal of this distribution is to ensure our employees are seen and heard by recognizing and celebrating the diversity that makes our Office great.

On June 24, 2025, the DEIA Working Group hosted a Celebration of Holidays Potluck Luncheon. We invited staff to bring in a food or non-alcoholic beverage that is enjoyed on a cultural holiday or event that their family celebrates. At the event we welcomed participants to share stories about the holiday and foods that matter to them and their family. Some of the holidays represented were Día de los Muertos, Juneteenth, Diwali, Hmong Summer Festival, and birthday traditions.

Recruitment & Hiring

In 2025, the Working Group continued to bring DEIA best practices to recruitment and hiring efforts. We continued to implement our inclusive onboarding plan, expanded recruitment efforts, and hiring process plan.

OEIG Ethnicity Report



This limited information is compiled for purposes of complying with state, federal, and equal employment opportunity laws. The OEIG acknowledges that these categories are not inclusive of all identities, including, but not limited to, where employees identify with one or more races.

Conclusion

The DEIA Working Group is proud of its work over this past year. As we move forward, we will continue to work collaboratively to foster diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.