

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-A032
Title: Hire a Chief Equity Officer
Proposer: Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism & Reconciliation
Topic: DFMS/PECUSA, Racism

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A130 Develop Model Practices to Increase Equitable Hiring and Cultural Competency
2022-C058 Take Action in Response to TEC's Racial Audit

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2022-A052 Revise Mandate for Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism and Reconciliation
2018-C029 Collect Data on Clergy Compensation by Race

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).

A032 - Hire a Chief Equity Officer

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism & Reconciliation

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: Yes

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: No House Assigned

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: No Committee Assigned

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

That the 81st General Convention of The Episcopal Church (“TEC”) hereby acknowledge that the work of dismantling racism and achieving racial justice and healing toward racial reconciliation is equity work requiring a constant focus regardless of who is in leadership positions of the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That TEC hire a Chief Equity Officer to assist in the establishment of greater representation and retention of PoC in all church positions and advise church leadership on equitable operational practices; and be it further Resolved, that, this Chief Equity Officer report to the Presiding Bishop; and be it further

Resolved, that TEC compensate this Chief Equity Officer on par with the compensation for Chief Equity Officers of organizations of similar size.

Explanation

In an era marked by increasing globalization, social awareness, and recognition of the intrinsic value of diversity, it is imperative that organizations reflect these principles in their leadership structure and operational strategies. The Episcopal Church, as a prominent institution with a rich history and significant influence, should proactively address the pressing need to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within its ranks. To achieve this goal, hiring a Chief Equity Officer (CEO) is not just a forwardthinking move; it's a strategic necessity for several compelling reasons.

The proposal is for a Chief Equity Officer rather than just a Chief Diversity Officer to reflect the learning that diversity itself is not the goal and in and of itself is not sufficient. Equitable treatment and outcomes across diversity is the goal. Upholding Christian Values of Love and Inclusivity: Central to the teachings of the Episcopal Church is the message of love, compassion, and inclusivity that Christ exemplified.

A CEO would play a pivotal role in ensuring that these core values are not only preached but also genuinely practiced within the Church's operations, policies, and interactions. This alignment between values and actions would resonate strongly with the Church's members and the wider community, fostering a more vibrant and welcoming spiritual community.

Sending a Significant Signal: Having a Chief Diversity Officer reporting to the head of the organization sends a signal to those inside and outside the church that TEC believes and practices the commitment to respect the dignity of every human being as described in the Baptismal Covenant.

Reflecting the Congregations and Society We Serve: As a diverse body of believers with a presence across different communities and regions, the Episcopal Church has a responsibility to be reflective of the varied backgrounds and experiences of its congregants. By hiring a CDO, the Church can ensure that its leadership composition better mirrors the diversity it serves, thereby making it more relatable and accessible to all members. This approach enhances credibility and fosters a sense of belonging among all parishioners.

Addressing Systemic Inequities: The presence of a CDO can help the Episcopal Church identify and address historical and systemic inequities that might exist within its structure. By conducting thorough assessments, implementing tailored diversity initiatives, and monitoring progress, the CDO can help dismantle barriers that hinder full participation and representation of marginalized groups within the Church. This commitment to rectifying past wrongs aligns with the principles of justice and reconciliation.

Driving the Work: Best practices in successful anti-racism and diversity initiatives call for the assignment of someone to drive efforts on a daily basis rather than assuming that everyone will see the work as a priority compared to all their other daily work. This resolution provides for someone who will ensure a daily focus at the highest levels that signify that the work is of the highest priority.

Enhancing Decision-Making and Innovation: Diversity has consistently fostered creativity, innovation, and more effective decision-making. When a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and voices are considered, the outcomes are richer and more well-rounded. A CDO can guide the Church in embracing this diversity-driven approach to strategic planning, program development, and problem-solving, leading to better outcomes and a more adaptable organization.

Responding to Contemporary Challenges: In a rapidly evolving world, issues related to diversity and inclusivity are at the forefront of societal discourse. By appointing a CDO, the Episcopal Church demonstrates its willingness to engage with these issues thoughtfully and proactively. This not only aligns with the Church's commitment to social justice but also

positions it as a thought leader who can contribute constructively to broader conversations on these topics.

Strengthening Outreach and Evangelism: A diverse leadership team, championed by a CDO, can significantly impact outreach efforts. Diverse leadership reflects the diverse world we live in, making the Church's message more relatable and its outreach efforts more effective. A CDO can offer insights into how different communities perceive the Church, helping tailor messages and approaches to resonate with a broader audience.

Conclusion: In a time when diversity, equity, and inclusion are not just aspirational goals but essential components of a just and thriving society, the Episcopal Church must take a leading role. Hiring a Chief Diversity Officer is a strategic investment that aligns with the Church's values, enriches its leadership, and positions it as a beacon of inclusivity in a world hungry for meaningful connections and genuine acceptance. By taking this step, the Episcopal Church reaffirms its commitment to walking the path of love and unity that Christ exemplified.



Resolution Number: 2022-A130
Title: Develop Model Practices to Increase Equitable Hiring and Cultural Competency
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention direct Executive Council to develop model hiring, workplace, and Committee/Commission/Board practices that intentionally increase equitable hiring and access to leadership positions for People of Color and that promote healthy work environments within the church; and be it further

Resolved, That as the Executive Council implements this resolution, it seeks the wisdom and leadership of the Communities of Color within our church, professional associations, and external expert advisors as needed; and be it further

Resolved, That once developed and approved by Executive Council, those policies be implemented within the human resources department of Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society; and be it further

Resolved, That each diocese and congregation be encouraged to actively engage in addressing the ways that white supremacy culture has shaped its own structures, policies, and practices and work toward deepening their cultural competency, including, but not limited to the following:

- 1. Seeking out external coaching where necessary to help leaders address their own biases and to help examine the culture of the diocese and its leadership.**
- 2. Ensuring Search Committees at every level of the church complete Dismantling Racism Training.**
- 3. Seeking out or creating support systems for clergy and leadership of Color to address the challenges and stress of being the first or the only Person of Color doing this work in a mostly White context, especially when and where the deeper work of cultural transformation has not yet begun or is in its early stages.**
- 4. Committing to intentionally sharing open positions across the networks of People of Color that already exist across the Church.**
- 5. Providing professional development money for diocesan Transition Officers to continue to develop their understanding of structural and systemic racism, including the expansive gifts of underrepresented groups derived from non-traditional systems of learning.**
- 6. Working towards equity in evaluating, hiring, and compensating candidates formed outside of traditional residential seminaries.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 844-845.



Resolution Number: 2022-C058
Title: Take Action in Response to TEC's Racial Audit
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church hereby direct the Executive Council to take the following action:

1. **Investigate what is causing The Episcopal Church's leadership positions not to be more representative of people of color and report back to the 81st General Convention a plan for overcoming those obstacles;**
2. **Encourage the creation of a leadership position in each diocesan administration whose specific role is to address the societal issues that disproportionately affect black and brown people;**
3. **Encourage such diocesan actions to ensure that people of color who dedicate their time, finances, and energy to sustain local parishes earn that recognition and a pathway to leadership;**
4. **Encourage that all dioceses budget resources for and audit the adequacy of anti-racism training for all clergy, lay leaders, and staff;**
5. **Explore how the Diocese of Maryland Truth and Reconciliation Commission can serve as a model in other dioceses;**
6. **Examine discernment and ordination processes and require participation by black and brown people on nominating committees, commissions on ministry, discernment committees and any other entity involved in identifying, affirming and overseeing the diocesan process for ordination;**
7. **Mandate that anti-racism training must openly address what white privilege and white supremacy means and the impact they have had on people of color.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 857-858.