

Six Ways AACUC Helps Credit Unions Be People Helping People

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Renee Sattiewhite 00:14

AACUC ... continues to receive many inquiries on how we can assist organizations in their DEI efforts, and then in their journey. So what what I would, what I would love to see more of is people understanding that DEI is not a four-letter word. It is about belonging. It is about being inclusive. Diversity, equity inclusion, right now, in the United States, it can be troublesome to some as you, as we've discussed, but for me, I believe that, especially the credit union industry, the credit union industry, to me is, it's an a whole class of a class of being all by itself. And our mantra, "people helping people," really sets us on mission, what's mission. So what's mission critical for for, for credit unions is to make sure that people are have the right products and services that are going to help them have great financial lives. And having a great financial life life makes you helps you to have a really good life. And so I think that it's important that we will come together and see how we can how we can work together in terms of making sure that the the model of the credit union industry is as looked at. So long as credit unions look at that model, they won't be behind. If you if you will, they won't be behind in DEI or showing inclusion and belonging, they will be ahead of it. Because that's what we do. That's what our industry strives for. And so I think that if it looks like the credit unions, or the credit union movement is behind in that, I think that it's because sometimes we're slow to market on some things. But I think that, for the most part, I think that there's a really huge effort in wanting to be fair and inclusive. And so that's the side that I look at how can how can credit unions continue to be inclusive, and with how we were started and formed, I think that gives us a leg up. And, and quite frankly, I think it gives us the responsibility of leading this nation, and changing some of how we do business with other people.

Renee Sattiewhite 02:43

So AACUC enjoys, just really going in and helping with needs assessments for people who are organizations that are looking to broaden their DEI journey and to and to really become more inclusive in their products and services with not just their members, but also their staff. We also I got tired of hearing people say things like, well, we can't find any Black people to put into senior management, or the C-suite. And so what we've done is we've we've created different mentorship programs that will help people of color learn what they need to know to be in the C-suite, to be part of that, to be included, to be trained to sit in the C-suite. And thanks to CUES for being our corporate partner, and providing scholarships for individual memberships for our mentoring program mentees. That that's been huge. And we're so grateful.

Renee Sattiewhite 03:41

Part of what AACUC also does is we have a commitment to change call. And what that is, is a commitment to change Friday call. We started in 2020 with the unfortunate murder of George Floyd

when there needed to be difficult conversations. And what does that look like? And how do we unpack some things? And so we have every third Friday of the month, we have a call that has critical information that you can hear about through panelists and discussions of... They last one hour they've been very poignant. I always wonder how can each call get better and better? They're wonderful calls that give you great information. We've had topics like what does it feel like for Black mothers and Black fathers to be able to have to have the talk with their children about when you're stopped by police officers or how to conduct themselves in business? Because because we know that the playing field is not fair. And there are things that other colored colored majority must do in order to compete. Not saying it's bad; not saying is good. It is what it is.

Renee Sattiewhite 04:50

One of the other things AACUC does is we have a fabulous conference and in this educational conference, especially if you're a person of color, you can see people who look like you who have jobs that you might want to have. One of the things that we do in our, in our conferences lately is we have a panel discussion with billion dollar credit union presidents. So if we have over 4,500 credit unions in the United States, there are 13 credit union presidents of billion dollar asset credit unions that are African-American. And so when we when we can, we have a few of those African-Americans on panel that gives the people who come to the conference something to strive for, something to look at, because sometimes we don't know that these people have these positions that they that they exist for people of color.

Renee Sattiewhite 05:42

One of the other things that AACUC does, what I think really, really well is a cross-cultural exchange program. And that program was brought to me by Dan McCue and Tony Hernandez. And they both said to me that they wanted to see if we could bring people together and talk about real cultural issues. And so that's what that program does. We, we, we pair people up with white senior leaders, preferably in the C-suite with people of color, and we give we sometimes it's a 90-day program or a six-month program. But what happens is people are paired up, and they have conversations over this period of time, along with a big group. We hold meetings with the big group, and then we ask you to partner with your person and have different conversations throughout this timeframe.

Renee Sattiewhite 06:35

So when I tell you we have a plethora of information and and we're starting back up our job posting program, which which really helps people to see other organizations in the industry who are looking for people, when people are advertising their jobs to AACUC, that's a really good sign to me that's letting me know that they're looking for diverse candidates. And so I have talked a long time about that. But truly AACUC has a plethora of things that we do that will help you in your DEI journey but also help you as a leader.