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United States Air Force Diversity Strategic Roadmap

A Journey to Excellence

Air Force Diversity Operations, AF/A1DV

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Vision: Be a leading competitor in the search for talent

Mission: Enable the Air Force to attract, recruit, develop and retain a high-quality, diverse Total Force

“Across the service, we represent a broad range of diverse missions, family situations, ethnicities, faiths, races and educational backgrounds. Yet, together, this rich tapestry forms the world’s finest Air Force, drawn from the best talent that America has to offer.”

-- Michael B. Donley, Secretary of the Air Force
Air Force’s Chief Diversity Officer

“Diversity is a strategic imperative for our Nation, and something that we must pursue together. Our Commander-In-Chief has rightly sounded the clarion call for service and sacrifice- in or out of uniform...”

-- General Norton A. Schwartz, Air Force Chief of Staff

“All of our Airmen bring strengths to our team no matter what their background. Our diversity is what makes our Air Force as strong as it is and ensures we are capable of winning not only today's fight but future fights.”

-- James A. Roy, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

Introduction

Diversity is a military necessity. Air Force decision-making and operational capabilities are enhanced by diversity among its Airmen, uniformed and civilian, helping make the Air Force more agile, innovative and effective. It opens the door to creative solutions to complex problems and provides our Air Force a competitive edge in air, space and cyberspace. Diversity includes and involves all of us. It is one of the strengths of the United States of America and gives the United States Air Force a decisive advantage as we engage globally.

The Air Force broadly defines diversity as a composite of individual characteristics, experiences and abilities consistent with the Air Force Core Values and the Air Force Mission. Air Force diversity includes but is not limited to: personal life experiences, geographic background, socioeconomic background, cultural knowledge, educational background, work background, language abilities, physical abilities, philosophical and spiritual perspectives, age, race, ethnicity and gender. This concept of diversity is to be tailored as specific circumstances and the law require. Diversity encompasses demographic, cognitive/behavioral, organizational/structural and global diversity.



Diversity is an imperative in order for the Air Force to remain competitive for America's best talent. Moreover, diversity is critical for successful operations in the international community. With a force interacting with people around the globe, cross-culturally competent Airmen (including capabilities in foreign languages) are critical to building partnerships and conducting the full range of military operations.

The Air Force has a legacy of leading the way in removing barriers to opportunity. However, we recognize this work is ongoing, and we must continue to analyze our processes to ensure we do not perpetuate barriers to success for any qualified individual. Woven through two of our core values of service and excellence is mutual respect, the hallmark of diversity and inclusion. Service, excellence, along with a tradition of innovation, compels us to insure that diversity remains a priority.

The Air Force Diversity Roadmap is an action plan for the Air Force directly supporting diversity objectives of the Air Force Strategic Plan and implementing AAFP 36-70, Air Force Diversity. AF/A1D is charged with responsibility for assisting the Air Force-at-

large in execution of this roadmap. We will develop metrics to define successes and track progress. This roadmap identifies actions and measures to enhance the diversity of the United States Air Force. Additionally, the roadmap frames involvement of the Secretary (SecAF) and Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF), as the owners of the plan, as well as the Headquarters Air Force two-letters, Major Commands and others, who are essential for sustainment and accountability. The Roadmap includes five priorities and corresponding goals with actions to: **institutionalize** diversity throughout the Air Force and allow us to **attract, recruit, develop** and **retain** a high quality, talented Total Force. We intend to achieve these goals as a meritocracy using a level playing field for all. While commanders at all levels have a lead role in advancing these priorities, goals and actions, every Airman is a participant and shares responsibility for ensuring the talents and capabilities of each individual are recognized, valued and used towards enhancing mission accomplishment.

This document is intended to serve as a living document. Periodic adjustments will be made to capture progress and improvements, new or updated information and to ensure a definitive course towards developing and sustaining a high-quality, diverse and inclusive Total Force.

Policy

The Air Force will develop and maintain comprehensive diversity initiatives to enhance the all volunteer Total Force, to include active duty, Guard, Reserve, and civilians.

The initiatives will:

- Ensure all qualified personnel are welcome in America's Air Force
- Educate and train all personnel on the importance of diversity, including mutual respect, thus promoting an Air Force culture that values inclusion of all personnel in the Total Force and views diversity and inclusion throughout the workforce as a force multiplier in accomplishing the mission of the Air Force
- Ensure that all personnel in the Total Force understand they are valued and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential while contributing to the mission of the Air Force
- Establish effective diversity training, mentoring, and professional development that provide the tools for personnel to navigate career progression
- Provide cultural awareness training to enhance organizational capabilities
- Assess and report progress on these initiatives

Roles and Responsibilities

Implementation of this strategic roadmap is the responsibility of every Air Force leader.

The Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF) establishes diversity policy.

The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (SAF/MR) is responsible for diversity at all levels of the Air Force and will:

- Provide strategic direction, oversight and guidance for attracting, recruiting, developing, leading, and retaining a diverse Total Force to leverage the unique qualities of the citizenry we serve and to achieve mission excellence.
- Establish and lead the Air Force Diversity Committee (AFDC). The AFDC will offer advice on major diversity policy issues and long-term strategic oversight and perspectives. The committee will be made up of representatives from functions responsible to implement this roadmap.

The Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower, Personnel and Services (AF/A1) provides guidance, resource advocacy, and implements diversity strategy, guidance, outreach and will:

- Publish the strategic roadmap and Air Force instructions pertaining to diversity
- Be responsible for providing assessment and analysis of diversity initiatives. This assessment will include identification and analysis of any barriers to diversity within the Total Force (barrier analysis)
- Through SAF/MR, provide SECAF and Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) periodic updates and an annual report on Air Force diversity
- AF/A1 will co-chair the AFDC

Air Force General Counsel (SAF/GC) and The Judge Advocate General (AF/JA) will advise the SECAF, SAF/MR, and AF/A1 in all matters covered by this roadmap.

Major Commands (MAJCOMs), National Guard Bureau (NGB), Field Operation Agencies (FOAs), and Direct Reporting Units (DRUs) will develop diversity initiatives and procedures which implement departmental policy and guidance.

All leaders will be directly engaged in and accountable for all aspects of diversity initiatives and their implementation, including barrier analysis.

All supervisors and managers are responsible for evaluating and strengthening their subordinates' opportunities for success.

All personnel are expected to understand the importance of diversity, including mutual respect, thereby helping to promote and strengthen an Air Force culture that values inclusion of all personnel in the Total Force and views diversity throughout the workforce as a force multiplier in accomplishing the mission of the Air Force.

Air Force Priorities

Priority: INSTITUTIONALIZE...Diversity as Necessary to Mission Success

Develop structures and strategies to equip leaders with the ability to manage diversity, be accountable, measure results and engender a culture of inclusion

Goal: Establish a framework to sustain diversity

Actions:

Demonstrate leadership commitment, involvement and accountability regarding diversity in the workplace

- Create an organizational environment to include sustainable processes to cultivate diversity, mutual respect and inclusion
- Establish the Air Force Diversity Committee (AFDC), an oversight committee of Air Force senior leaders

Highlight diversity, mutual respect and inclusion as inherent in our Core Values

- Engage in continuing discussions and illustrations of diversity as a means of strengthening our Air Force

Incorporate Diversity and Inclusion module into the Air Force Strategic Plan

- Partner with research institutions and in-house organizations such as the Air Force Audit Agency to evaluate and monitor the status of diversity in the United States Air Force and use the AFDC and Air Force personnel community functions to do the same

Goal: Conduct annual review of Air Force policies, programs and practices involving and affecting diversity

Actions:

Assess the extent to which the goals in the roadmap have been met and the action items completed and highlight those in need of attention

- Analytical assessments will encompass all aspects of the Air Force definition of diversity

Assess and brief SecAF and CSAF semiannually on key issues, indicators, individual and organizational barriers, and initiatives

Goal: The Air Force corporate structure will ensure adequate resources for sustained and effective Air Force-wide diversity outreach plans and initiatives

Actions:

The SecAF and CSAF will certify on an annual basis that, in the context of other Air Force commitments, resources for diversity initiatives in the Air Force POM submission are sufficient

Create advocacy strategies to move diversity resource requirements successfully through the POM process

Goal: Involve every Airman as a participant and responsible agent of diversity, mutual respect and inclusion

Actions:

Develop and implement meaningful and demonstrably effective Air Force-wide diversity training for all levels of accession, technical training and PME

Ensure all Airmen know how the Air Force defines diversity and are able to talk about it

Goal: Identify and, where appropriate, remove or ameliorate barriers which inhibit achievement and sustainment of a diverse, inclusive Air Force, while ensuring a level playing field

Actions:

Review results of currently required civilian barrier analyses and develop action plans

Undertake a barrier analysis of military personnel processes (recruitment, development, promotion, retention) similar to that required of civilian personnel systems

Review climate assessments and develop action plans

Implement exit surveys in order to identify and remove barriers to retention or advancement

Goal: Ensure Air Force-wide diversity outreach plans and initiatives produce maximum return on investment

Actions:

Develop annual outreach strategy

Analyze, assess and advocate for diversity outreach plans and budgets for the Air Force Academy, Air Force Recruiting Service, The Holm Center, Functional Deputy Chiefs of Staff offices, Air Force Civilian Service and Major Commands to identify overlaps and/or gaps of target populations

- Synchronize engagements and streamline resource usage
- Identify best practices across DoD, in other federal agencies, and in the private sector
- Assess whether all elements of a diverse Air Force are being captured by the outreach activities
- Assess whether the outreach activities are having any measurable impact and propose remedies where appropriate

Priority: ATTRACT high-quality, talented, diverse individuals to consider service in the United States Air Force

Air Force role models create a positive influence in the community specifically with regard to encouraging skills and habits consistent with Air Force service such as STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), foreign language, and physical fitness

Goal: Engage parents, educators, community influencers and leaders to attract and motivate young people to be citizens of character dedicated to serving their nation and community

Actions:

Form Diversity Outreach Teams at installations as a cadre for all outreach activities

- Establish a pool of astute, high quality Airmen representatives including award winners to plan and conduct outreach to local communities
- Identify talent centers and untapped geographic areas and communities for engagement and outreach

Activate “Air Force in the Community,” a nation-wide awareness and outreach initiative

Identify the variety of means Air Force organizations and individuals use to interact with youth, community members and influencers (i.e., tutoring programs, STARBASE (DoD youth program), co-commander programs, base orientation visits, civic leader initiatives, participation in community activities, etc.)

- Conduct analysis to determine what prevents influencers from recommending the Air Force as a career

Engage civic and social leaders (youth counselors, spiritual advisors, coaches, etc) with effective, age-appropriate information

Engage with public and private school systems at all levels

- Provide effective, age-appropriate information to guidance counselors; Engage with parents, Parent Teacher Student Associations, and Parent Teacher Associations

Develop STEM educational initiatives at USAFA, JROTC and ROTC detachments, CAP units, Air Force Research Laboratories and Air Force bases that target Title I middle schools

Goal: Develop an outreach plan that targets all facets of diversity with emphasis on strategic capabilities such as language skills and STEM competencies

Actions:

Evaluate effectiveness of engagement to include return on investment with SecAF/CSAF’s guidance

Identify gaps in communications, marketing and advertising to improve society’s awareness of the range and diversity of opportunities available to United States Air Force uniformed and civilian members

Goal: Intertwine diversity and STEM outreach programs to strengthen Air Force war-fighting capabilities

Actions:

Establish a working group of stakeholders in STEM to analyze ongoing actions in this area, i.e., the FY11 Audit Agency analysis of diversity outreach

Identify role models in AF STEM who will represent the Air Force in various outreach capacities

Goal: Build partnerships with district and state offices of Members of Congress to expose youth, families and community influencers in their respective districts to opportunities in the Air Force

Actions:

Develop a prioritized Congressional Engagement Plan for respective Congressional districts to highlight opportunities available for service in the Air Force, including the Air Force Academy

In coordination with legislative liaison offices for Authorizations and Appropriations, establish partnerships with Congressional offices to implement a Cadet Congressional Internship initiative

Priority: RECRUIT high-quality, diverse individuals to serve with the United States Air Force in uniform or as a civilian employee

Increase the Air Force's ability to hire a high quality, diverse workforce

Goal: Together with accession sources (AFRS, USAFA, ROTC, OTS, AFRL, PALACE ACQUIRE, SCEP, SEEP, Air Force Civilian Service, etc.) partner to review their plans to advocate public service in all its forms to a diverse audience and hire future leaders for the Air Force of the 21st century

Actions:

Identify and synchronize recruiting strategies, messaging, marketing and advertising, engagements, initiatives, and expenditure of funds for diversity enhancement

Conduct barrier analysis of recruiting processes to reveal any obstacles that impede recruiting a diverse workforce

Modify recruiter paradigm, if necessary, to refer potential applicants to other Air Force opportunities and civilian vacancies when interested individuals do not meet the qualifications the recruiter currently requires

Ensure accession sources are aware of special recruitment authorities available to non-competitively hire individuals with severe disabilities and disabled veterans

Goal: Evaluate all programs at accession sources that expose young people who are unaware of the opportunities in the Air Force and convey that the Air Force is welcoming to all people

Actions:

Assess programs such as the Diversity Visitation Program to the Air Force Academy for effectiveness, best practices, and return on investment

Partner with AF organizations for “Academy Days” and ROTC equivalent

Synchronize Gold Bar recruiting program efforts with all accession sources

Goal: Identify talent centers, untapped geographic areas and communities

Actions:

Identify primary recruiting regions and determine “gaps”

Cross-talk with US Military Academy Admissions, United States Naval Academy, and United States Coast Guard to identify highly-ranked schools/districts from which educators are selected

Increase number of educators participating in USAFA diversity initiatives aimed at exposure to the Air Force Academy

Identify appropriate HAF/A1-approved recruiting goals

Priority: DEVELOP a high-quality, talented and diverse Total Force—officers, enlisted and civilians

Ensure effective training, education, mentoring, and professional development to provide tools for personnel to navigate career progression while nurturing innovation, service and leadership

Goal: Develop a formidable, culturally-aware Air Force team to effectively operate in a global environment

Actions:

Increase cultural and cross-cultural understanding

Increase foreign language proficiency

Ensure Airmen receive appropriate diversity education and training

Goal: Establish effective mentoring and professional development to provide tools to maximize individual potential and opportunity for leadership for all

Actions:

Assess diversity of developmental teams (DTs) (including all aspects of the definition of diversity)

Assess diversity of attendees of professional military education (including whether civilians are receiving comparable education opportunities to military members)

Determine missed “gates” that will hinder advancement (i.e., assignments, key jobs, training opportunities)

Assess areas which may require senior leader attention, such as functional communities, school/professional military education attendance, leadership positions, First Sergeant and Command Chief Master Sergeant selections, intern and other special program selections

Goal: Ensure diverse and inclusive mentorship programs are available to all Airmen to help them prepare to be competitive for opportunities throughout the Air Force

Actions:

Assess current mentorship programs in the Air Force in their many forms

Identify gaps where AF members are not receiving (or are not asking for) meaningful mentorship

Enhance Air Force members’ awareness of the multiple types of mentoring available

Educate Airmen on the potential value of mentoring and being mentored by someone different from themselves (i.e., outside one’s career field, someone with a different perspective and experiences)

Assess key intervention points in an individual’s career where they may need personal attention (i.e., mentoring, career counseling) to assist their career decisions and development to reach their full potential

Hold Airmen accountable for seeking out mentorship and immediate supervisors for providing it

Priority: RETAIN a high-quality, diverse Total Force

Achieve an inclusive environment that provides the total force with the opportunity to realize their full potential, and the ability to apply it in their service

Goal: Assess diversity/inclusion climate throughout the Air Force

Action:

Review questions for and results of Air Force Unit Climate Assessments and take appropriate action on results

Goal: Assess factors and policies that influence talented individuals' decisions to stay or leave

Actions:

Analyze results of Career Decision Survey. Take appropriate actions based on results

Employ Transition Assistance Program (TAP) classes as mini-focus groups to understand individuals' decisions/reasons for leaving Air Force service

Survey retirement-eligible individuals to gain insight into their career decisions

Assess exit surveys to determine and remove barriers to retention

Goal: Evaluate, implement and enhance work-life flexibilities

Actions:

Benchmark government and industry work-life flexibilities best practices

Enhance opportunities for workplace flexibility, when the mission allows, based on Airmen, military and civilian, feedback from across the Air Force

Goal: Understand and address factors that catalyze higher female attrition, military and civilian

Actions:

Host an annual "Women in the Air Force" symposium

Evaluate the impact of mandatory mobility requirements in civilian positions and training programs on retention

Assess other Air Force policies that may impact female retention

Lead Air Force discussions and recommendations from DACOWITS to determine if any information needs to be provided or action taken

Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

Acronyms

AFRL—Air Force Research Lab

AFRS—Air Force Recruiting Service

DACOWITS—Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

OTS—Officer Training School

PME—Professional Military Education

POM—Program Objective Memorandum

ROTC—Reserve Officer Training Corps

SCEP—Student Career Experience Program

SEEP—Student Educational Employment Program

STEM—Science, technology, engineering and mathematics

TAP—Transition Assistance Program

USAFA—United States Air Force Academy

Terms

Air Force Civilian Service—Civilian support service component of Total Force who are not active duty military, but work side by side to accomplish the Air Force’s mission

Airman—Any US Air Force member (officer or enlisted, active, reserve, or guard, along with Department of the Air Force civilians) who supports and defends the US constitution and serves our country. Air Force Airmen are those people who formally belong to the US Air Force and employ or support some aspect of the US Air Force’s air and space power capabilities. The term Airman is often used in a very narrow sense to mean pilot. An Airman is any person who understands and appreciates the full range of air and space power capabilities and can employ or support some aspect of air and space power capabilities.

Barrier Analysis—An investigation of anomalies found in workplace policies, procedures, and practices that limit or tend to limit employment opportunities for individuals based on any of the characteristics, experiences and abilities found in the

definition of diversity (including members of any race or national origin, either sex, or based on an individual's disability status). Barrier analysis identifies the root causes of those anomalies and, if necessary, eliminates them.

Diversity—Broadly defined as a composite of individual characteristics, experiences and abilities consistent with the Air Force Core Values and the Air Force Mission. Air Force diversity includes but is not limited to: personal life experiences, geographic background, socioeconomic background, cultural knowledge, educational background, work background, language abilities, physical abilities, philosophical/spiritual perspectives, age, race, ethnicity and gender. The concept of diversity is to be tailored as specific circumstances and the law require.

Demographic Diversity - Inherent or socially defined personal characteristics, including age, race/ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, family status, disability, and geographic origin.

Cognitive/Behavioral Diversity - Differences in styles of work, thinking, learning and personality.

Organizational/Structural Diversity - Organizational/institutional background characteristics affecting interaction, including Service, component, and occupation/career field.

Global Diversity - Intimate knowledge of and experience with foreign languages and cultures, inclusive of both citizen and non-citizen personnel, exchange officers, coalition partners, and foreign nationals with whom we interact as part of a globally engaged Air Force.

Diversity Outreach Teams—A pool of astute, high quality Airman representatives, including award winners, who plan and conduct outreach to local communities

Gold Bar Recruiter Program—A recruiting program that uses second lieutenants in recruiting roles at select schools with a high percentage of minority students

Inclusion—Encompasses providing individuals in an organization challenging tasks, responsibility within their span of control, and support to grow and develop. It involves extending consideration to all qualified candidates. Inclusion provides an opportunity for individuals to be a part of “the team,” thus, motivating them to employ their talents and contribute to the organization and mission. Potential returns on investment include member/employee development, improved performance, increased productivity, reduced attrition and making the Air Force more attractive to potential applicants, thus, enhancing the Air Force’s ability to be a leading competitor in the search for talent. *To be considered is to be included...*in the organization, in the pool of candidates, etc.

Coupled with Diversity, Inclusion is essential for the Air Force to expand its competitive advantage.

Palace Acquire Intern Program—Provides full-time employment with a structured 2-3 year training program. This program provides expedited, performance-based promotions in approximately 20 diverse occupations.

STEM Programs—Programs that encourage youth to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Talent Centers—Geographic areas or institutions that cultivate skills and diverse views from across the country. Specifically, areas or institutions with highly talented individuals who have not traditionally been exposed to or recruited by the Air Force. Talent centers should facilitate accessions with skills necessary to fill operational needs and facilitate mission readiness. Examples include large cities, rural areas, Ivy League schools and technical schools.

Title I—Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.). Programs under Title I provide financial assistance to schools with high numbers or high percentages of poor children to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. Federal funds are currently allocated through four statutory formulas that are based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state.

Total Force—In this document, refers to officers, enlisted, and civilians; active duty, guard, and reserve