

## **Orange County (OCPRSA)**

PRSA Chapter Diversity and Inclusion Award Summary

2022 Second Place

OCPRSA knew it was important to create a 2021-22 program year that did not place the sole responsibility of creating belonging among its membership on the DE&I committee. Like many corporations are discovering, DE&I is the entire organization's responsibility. You will see that our initiatives span committees and are a collective effort amongst the entire Board.

DE&I Objective #1: Partner with the membership committee to recruit and retain OCPRSA members who are representative of our diverse community.

Initiative(s):

- To grow our membership base, we knew we needed to highlight the unique backgrounds of our colleagues. OCPRSA launched a Membership Spotlight series on social media, our website and newsletters to build familiarity amongst the business community. These channels carry a collective reach of 5,000.

DE&I Objective #2: Educate members on DE&I issues so that they become better at their work.

Initiative(s):

- 80% of our members wished to continue engaging with our organization virtually during this last year. Knowing the importance of remaining active participants in the DE&I conversation, a virtual series called "An Eye of DE&I" was created. These five- to 10-minute conversations were recorded between our Program Committee and communication professionals to discuss various topics of DE&I and the intersection with the MarCom industry. They were shared across our social, website and email channels with a collective reach of nearly 5,000.
- OCPRSA participated in the national conversation around female equality in the workplace. In April 2022, Immediate Past President Justine Mrsich sat on a panel with PRSA National Diversity & Inclusion Committee for Women's History Month. Justine brought personal stories of how to show up as a female in the workplace and how she approaches inclusivity when working with international clients who do not necessarily align with the U.S.'s diversity values. Justine's participation generated interest in OCPRSA's diversity efforts and invitation to draft an op-ed on the national PRSay blog.
- OCPRSA is laying the groundwork for a DE&I summit. This event was originally going to take place within the timeframe of this award period, but due to shifting COVID-19 precautions it was postponed until Nov. 3. You can read about our plans for this worthwhile event below.

DE&I Objective #3: Seek diversity in the next generation of public relations practitioners so that our profession will ensure its relevance.

Initiative(s)

- OCPRSA believes we can make an impact on the DE&I conversation outside of Orange County because all boats float with the tide. OCPRSA Diversity Chair Nathan Lammers penned a national op-ed in April 2022 detailing the value of mentoring the next generation and young female professionals, which was shared on PRSay and tweeted/retweeted by several chapters.

- To weave DE&I into our DNA and inspire the belonging everyone seeks, the YoPro committee and PRSSA committees have been hard at work mentoring the next generation to ensure we continue to create a talented group of communication professionals to serve in OC's strong business community. A few key highlights of these accomplishments include launching a Speaker Database designed to provide an "open door" approach to collaborate with our PRSSA counterparts. This database allows OCPRSA members to provide mentoring, lectureship and speaking opportunities at PRSSA chapters in Los Angeles, San Diego and OC. In addition, the YoPro committee has held a series of events, one of which was titled "Network like a Pro." This event was designed to help YoPro members overcome the anxiety of attending business events with more seasoned professionals by breaking the stigma of ageism in networking and creating a sense they do, in fact, belong in the room. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and attendees left feeling energized.