



EWRI President's Message on Diversity and Inclusion –To a peaceful, tolerant, and loving future –

Scott Struck, Ph.D, ENV SP, F.EWRI
2019-2020 President, ASCE-EWRI

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We would like our members, friends, and associates to know that we recognize our need and role to support each other and to prevent racial discrimination and injustice toward Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). The tragic loss of precious lives at the hands of fellow Americans and the subsequent outcry around the world for the elimination of racial discrimination and violence has highlighted the need for us to embrace and value inclusion. We do this as a universal human virtue and because it is as much recognizing and celebrating our differences as it is our similarities. This brings us together and makes a stronger organization.

We, at EWRI, value diversity and inclusion. This can be observed in our Staff, our Board of Governors, and our many committees. In upholding our integrity, honor, and dignity of the profession, we regard Canon 8 of the ASCE Code of Ethics, which states that in matters related to our profession we shall “treat ALL persons fairly and encourage equitable participation without regard to gender or gender identity, race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, disability, political affiliation, or family, marital, or economic status,” as paramount. This is more than a professional Code of Conduct but also words to live by. We must always consider our responsibility to eliminate behaviors that perpetuate racism and inequality and try to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion.

We must think about the capacity that we have in our personal and professional lives to make the necessary changes that impact the communities in which we live and work. One of the most poignant areas in which our professional lives can and often impact others is the area of environmental justice. I find myself, along with many of our members, engaged in projects that must consider the potential impacts of tangible and sometimes unintended social consequences of implementation. Always with the intent to improve infrastructure that will result in better living, travel, recreation, or other environmental conditions, we sometimes realize inadvertent outcomes may also result from project completion. As we work to deliver sustainable solutions, we must take into consideration the triple bottom line: social, economic, and environmental goals. Attempts to capture and understand the consequences through community involvement and outreach are a principal goal of nearly all projects. But we occasionally find that outcomes are challenging to predict. For me, this has happened through the implementation of green stormwater infrastructure and drainage improvements. The projects often improve the frequency of flood occurrences, water quality, and the resiliency of communities in which they are placed. However, I have observed that, over time, these infrastructure upgrades do not always culminate in only the positive goals intended.

Therefore as professionals we must strive within our academic institutions, agencies, and firms, and with our clients, students, peers, and colleagues to engage individually and as a collective body to bring about real and lasting change to end racism and to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion especially with our friends, neighbors, and colleagues that represent the BIPOC community. In these uncertain times, I ask that you please join me in coming together to tackle this history of discrimination. Stand up and be heard as a voice for change and commit to accountability and acceptance for one another, placing respect as an individual responsibility and core value to lead us into the future.