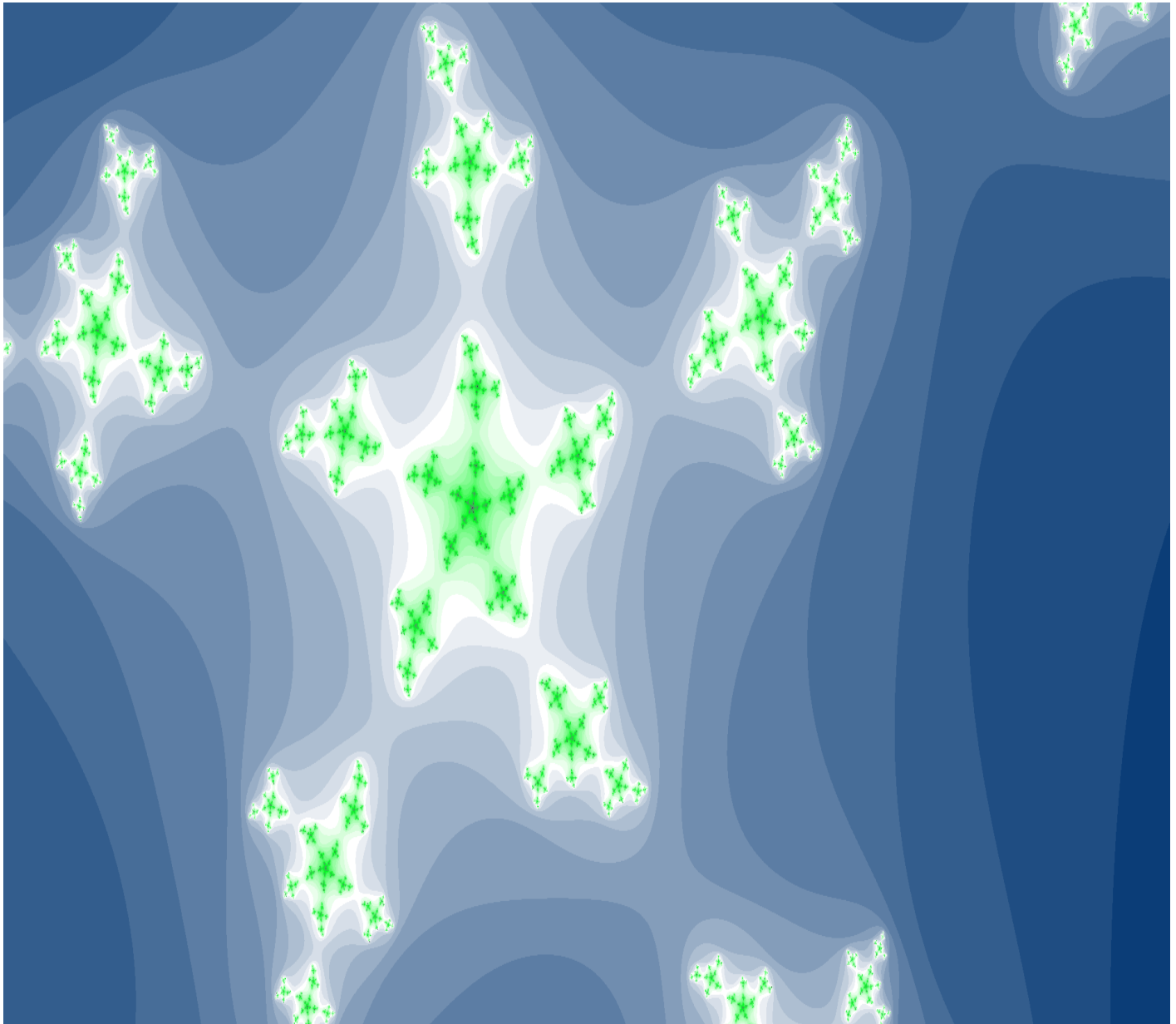


Student Diversity in Educational Programs and Institutions



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American Society of Radiologic Technologists

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Executive Summary

One of the presidential initiatives developed by ASRT President Daniel Gonzales, MSRS, R.T.(R), FASRT, was to survey medical imaging and radiation therapy programs to identify the demographics and trends of student populations, as well as best practices to enhance the diversity of educational programs and the profession. To ensure the highest response rate possible, it was decided to add these questions to the annual Enrollment Snapshot of Radiography, Radiation Therapy, and Nuclear Medicine Technology Programs. The survey included several questions about the diversity of the student body of both programs and institutions. This report summarizes those results and provides several best practices to support recruitment and diversity efforts in educational programs (see **Appendix A**).

In late September 2022, an invitation to complete the *Enrollment Snapshot 2022* was sent via email to 1,197 program directors of radiography, radiation therapy, nuclear medicine technology, sonography, and magnetic resonance imaging programs approved by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT).

At the close of the survey in November 2022, a total of 247 responses had been received. This yields an overall response rate of 20.6%. Based upon the known population parameter, the margin of error with the finite population correction factor is $\pm 5.6\%$ at its widest at the 95% confidence level.

Institutional Diversity

A noticeable majority (69.0%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the ethnic makeup of the student body matches the community/patient population in their area.

Asked how the diversity of the student body at their program has changed over the last five years:

- 49.3% of respondents said it had become somewhat or significantly more diverse.
- 49.0% said it had remained the same.
- 1.6% said it had become somewhat less diverse.

A majority (53.0%) of respondents said their institution has a plan to increase the diversity of the student body.

- Of those, 63.3% somewhat or strongly agreed that the plan had been effective

Program Diversity

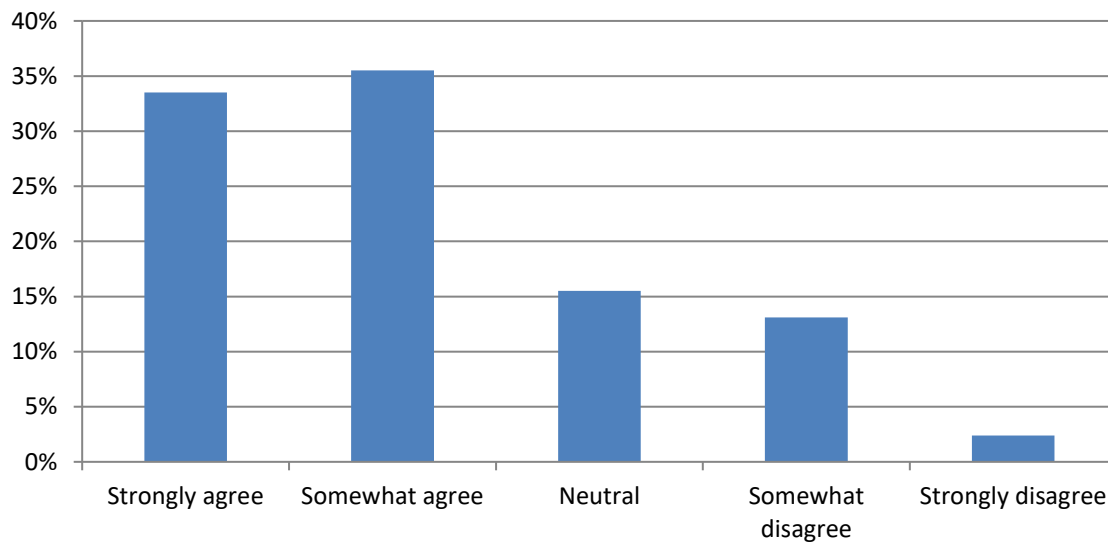
A plurality (47.8%) of respondents said their program has no plan to increase the diversity of the student body. Among the respondents who said their program does have a plan to increase diversity, 59.3% somewhat or strongly agreed that the plan had been effective.

Institutional Diversity

The ethnic makeup of the student body matches that of the community/patient population.

	N	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	82	33.5%	33.5%
Somewhat agree	87	35.5%	69.0%
Neutral	38	15.5%	84.5%
Somewhat disagree	32	13.1%	97.6%
Strongly disagree	6	2.4%	100.0%
Total	245	100.0%	

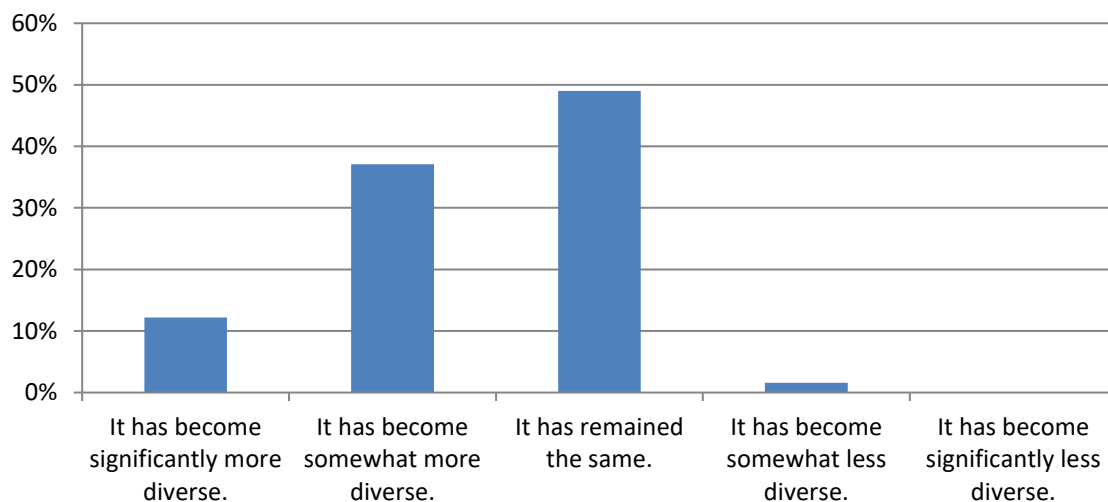
The ethnic makeup of the student body matches that of the community/patient population.



In the past 5 years, how would you say that the diversity of the student body has changed at the program where you are employed?

	N	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
It has become significantly more diverse.	30	12.2%	12.2%
It has become somewhat more diverse.	91	37.1%	49.3%
It has remained the same.	120	49.0%	98.3%
It has become somewhat less diverse.	4	1.6%	100.0%
It has become significantly less diverse.	0	0.0%	
Total	245	100.0%	

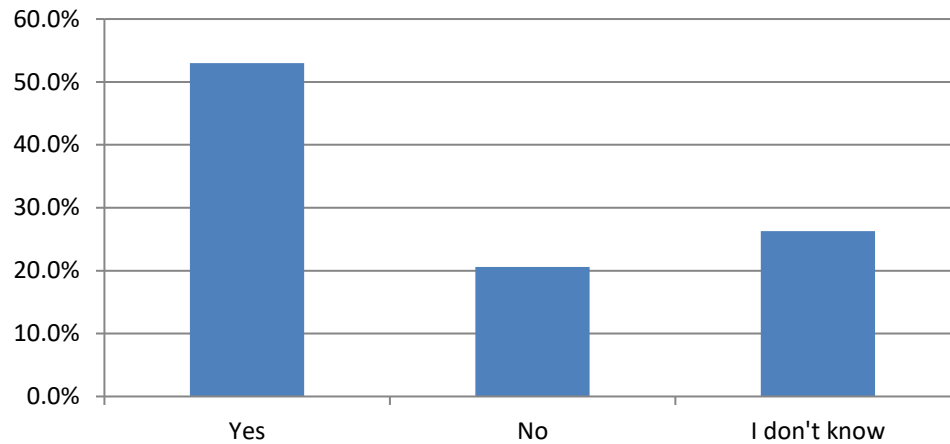
In the past 5 years, how would you say that the diversity of the student body has changed at the program where you are employed?



Does your institution have a plan in place to increase the diversity of the student body?

	N	Valid Percent
Yes	131	53.0%
No	51	20.6%
I don't know	65	26.3%
Total	247	100.0%

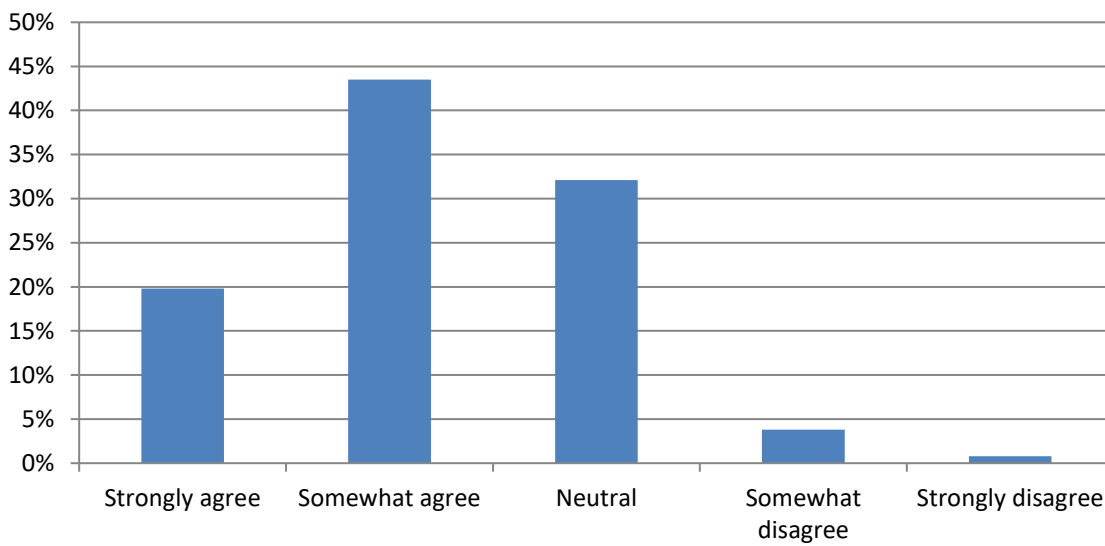
Does your institution have a plan in place to increase the diversity of the student body?



The institution’s plan has been successful in increasing the diversity of the student body.

	N	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	26	19.8%	19.8%
Somewhat agree	57	43.5%	63.3%
Neutral	42	32.1%	95.4%
Somewhat disagree	5	3.8%	99.2%
Strongly disagree	1	0.8%	100.0%
Total	131	100.0%	

The institution’s plan has been successful in increasing the diversity of the student body.

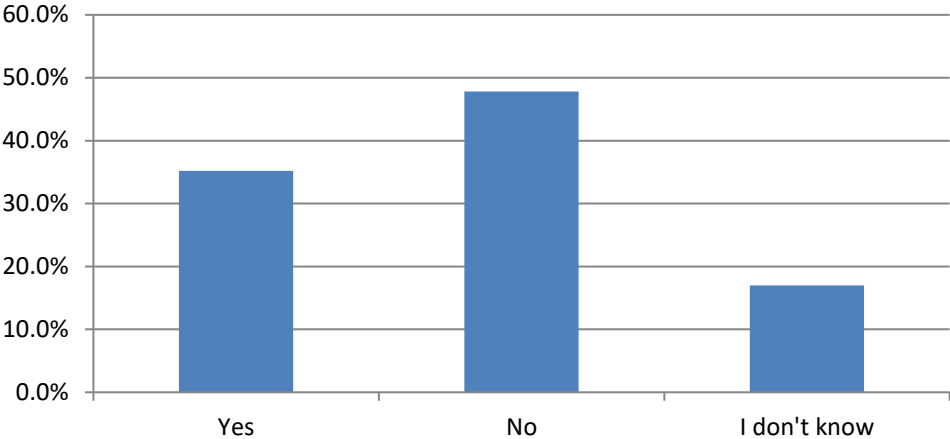


Program Diversity

Does your program have a plan in place to increase the diversity of the student body?

	N	Valid Percent
Yes	87	35.2%
No	118	47.8%
I don't know	42	17.0%
Total	247	100.0%

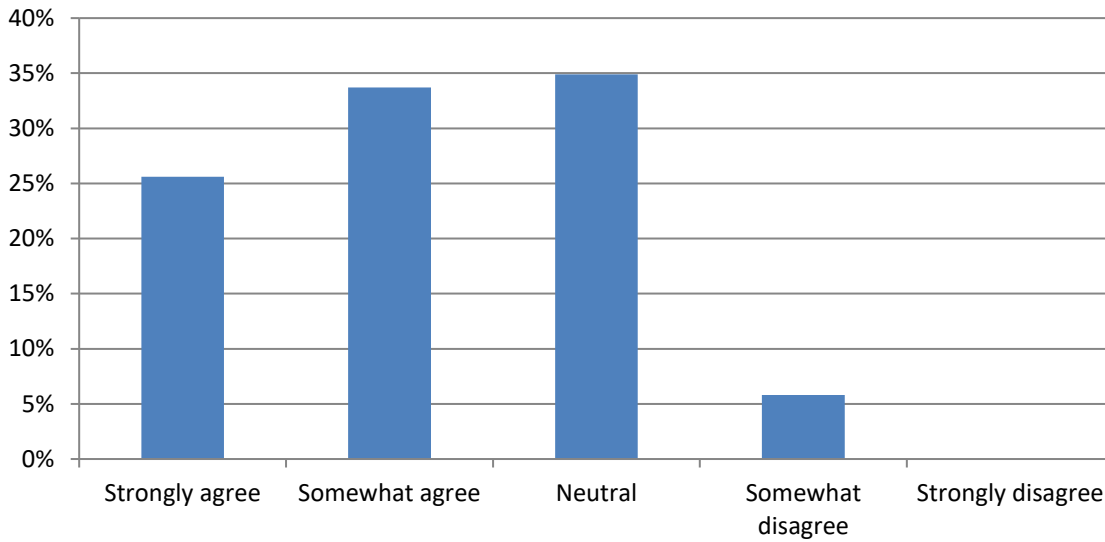
Does your program have a plan in place to increase the diversity of the student body?



The program’s plan has been successful in increasing the diversity of the student body.

	N	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	22	25.6%	25.6%
Somewhat agree	29	33.7%	59.3%
Neutral	30	34.9%	94.2%
Somewhat disagree	5	5.8%	100.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	86	100.0%	

The program’s plan has been successful in increasing the diversity of the student body.



Appendix A

Guidance for Programs in Enhancing Student Diversity

Several distinct trends for improving diversity in educational recruitment efforts were identified based on the data provided, comments left in response to open-ended questions, and additional examples provided via email. The following practical steps have been used by educational programs to recruit and retain a diverse student body and contribute to an increasingly diverse workforce in the radiologic sciences.

1. Investigate institution-wide diversity initiatives.

Existing diversity improvement plans are more widely available at the institutional (53%) than programmatic level (35.2%). This means that additional effort in developing diversity plans is likely better invested in enhancing or expanding implementation of existing institutional plans, rather than duplicating effort in developing redundant program-level diversity plans. However, a notable proportion of respondents (26.3%) did not know if their institution had a diversity plan available, which indicates these plans may need to be promoted more extensively within organizations. If program directors are not aware of the diversity plans or policies in place at their institution, the plan is unlikely to be adequately accessible to achieve the intended benefit.

The University of Nevada at Las Vegas is an example of an institution that has a strong focus on diversity and a wealth of information regarding diversity initiatives. Their Division of Diversity¹ and Office of Student Diversity Programs² are excellent places to start.

2. Create a plan to increase student diversity if one does not exist.

If no institution-wide diversity plan is available, a program-level diversity plan may be a necessary step that can later be integrated, or even serve as a pilot program for the institution. While plans to increase diversity are more common at the institutional rather than programmatic level, they are not yet universal. Developing a governance committee dedicated to equality issues and diversity is a good first step in building up a student diversity plan, to help guide the development of the plan, bring diverse voices to the process, and ensure that responsibility for the plan does not fall on the shoulders of one individual.

If your institution or program does not have a diversity plan, there are several online resources available to help you get started. *Inside Higher Ed* has an informative article on their website for “Creating and Publicizing a Diversity Plan³”.

Many colleges and universities also post their diversity plan on their website, and a simple search will result in many examples that can be tailored to your needs. Here are a few examples:

- Brooklyn College Diversity and Inclusion Plan⁴
- Penn State College of Agricultural Studies Diversity Strategic Plan⁵
- UPUI School/Unit Diversity Strategic Planning Resource Guide⁶
- Hobart and William Smith Colleges Strategic Diversity Plan⁷

3. Evaluate the current admissions process.

As the primary access point for students from diverse backgrounds into educational programs, the admissions process is exceptionally important and should be a major focus of any diversity improvement plan. As part of new diversity plans, and periodically thereafter, the admissions process should be re-evaluated to remove areas where conscious or unconscious biases and systemic barriers could restrict access for non-traditional or minority students. Systemic barriers that may disproportionately affect some populations include:

- a. narrow educational requirements.
- b. requirements for electronic devices or the internet.
- c. specific forms of identification or proof of address.
- d. restrictive forms of payment or fees.
- e. access to convenient transport.

A full assessment of potential systemic barriers is a necessary step in improving accessibility and therefore diversity. Many respondents to the survey reported success in using holistic approaches to the admissions process rather than traditional measures such as high school GPA and standardized test scores. The Brookings Institute published a short article titled “Can better information on applicants’ backgrounds increase socioeconomic diversity at selective colleges?⁸” that looks at one alternative to the traditional admissions process and includes links to other resources related to the admissions process.

4. **Revise recruitment practices.**

A good way to set preliminary goals for recruitment is evaluating the data related to the residents served by your institution, to determine which populations may be underrepresented in your existing recruitment processes. Implementing specific initiatives to recognize and promote underrepresented populations on campus is likely to be productive and can be enhanced by focusing outreach efforts on geographical areas with higher concentrations of those populations. Soliciting the help of current students or recent graduates from diverse backgrounds in the recruitment process can also help identify areas for improvement.

Patience is key to diversity recruitment efforts. Several educators commented that it took several years of sustained recruitment efforts in diverse communities before these efforts resulted in candidates. Direct follow-up with people who demonstrated an interest in the program was identified as the most effective strategy.

The University of North Carolina – Charlotte’s Diversity Plan⁹ contains an extensive list of recruitment strategies to attract a diverse student population.

If you are unsure about the demographics of the residents in the area served by your institution, the US Census Bureau provides a wealth of information. Census data¹⁰ can be easily searched by zip code, city, county, or state.

5. **Sustain diversity efforts.**

Efforts to increase student diversity are not singular events that occur once in the life of an educational program, nor do student diversity efforts end once a student is appointed to a program. Students must be supported throughout the program to ensure that they receive the support they need to graduate, begin working in the community, and even assist the program in its ongoing recruitment efforts. Some ideas presented by educators for ongoing recruitment efforts include:

- a. offering professional development opportunities to faculty to foster more inclusive teaching methods.
- b. enhancing scholarship programs and developing communications to inform students about these programs.
- c. providing time and support for students to participate in institutional diversity programs.
- d. maintaining a governance committee to continue refining the diversity plan.

Edgecombe Community College’s¹¹ partnership with the Rural Opportunity Institute is an example of an innovative approach to identifying specific barriers to education. This partnership led to weekly,

educator-led peer mentoring groups for single-parent students and other students to reduce barriers to academic achievement.

Your institution likely has a pathway for educators to access professional development related to diversity. If not, opportunities are plentiful online. Here are some free sites to help get you started:

- College Board: Access and Diversity Collaborative¹²
- Association of American Medical Colleges Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit Resources¹³
- University of Michigan: Leading for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education¹⁴
- University of Glasgow: Diversity and Inclusion in Education¹⁵

Links

1. The University of Nevada at Las Vegas Division of Diversity. <https://www.unlv.edu/diversity>.
2. The University of Nevada at Las Vegas Office of Student Diversity Programs. <https://www.unlv.edu/student-diversity>.
3. Inside Higher Ed. *Creating and Publicizing a Diversity Plan*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2019/11/20/how-effectively-develop-update-and-share-diversity-plan-opinion>.
4. Brooklyn College Diversity and Inclusion Plan. http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/abo_initiatives/080101_Plans_DiversityPlan.pdf.
5. Penn State College of Agricultural Studies Diversity Strategic Plan. <https://agsci.psu.edu/diversity/framework/college-diversity-strategic-plan-2015-2019>.
6. UPI School/Unit Diversity Strategic Planning Resource Guide. https://diversity.iupui.edu/about/School_and_Unit_Diversity_Strategic_Planning_Resource_Guide.pdf.
7. Hobart and William Smith Colleges Strategic Diversity Plan. <https://www.hws.edu/about/dei/strategic-diversity-plan-2/default.aspx>.
8. Brookings Institute. *Can better information on applicants' backgrounds increase socioeconomic diversity at selective colleges?* <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2022/08/22/can-better-information-on-applicants-backgrounds-increase-socioeconomic-diversity-at-selective-colleges/>.
9. University of North Carolina – Charlotte Diversity Plan. <https://diversity.charlotte.edu/sites/diversity.charlotte.edu/files/media/CampusDiversityPlanAppendices.pdf>.
10. US Census Bureau – Explore Census Data. <https://data.census.gov/>.
11. Edgecombe Community College Partnership with the Rural Opportunity Institute. <https://edgecombe.edu/news/ecc-division-partners-with-regional-organization-to-support-students/>.
12. College Board: Access and Diversity Collaborative <https://professionals.collegeboard.org/higher-ed/access-and-diversity-collaborative/guidance-resources/webinars-trainings-tools>.
13. Association of American Medical Colleges Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit Resources. <https://www.aamc.org/professional-development/affinity-groups/cfas/diversity-inclusion-toolkit/resources>.
14. University of Michigan: Leading for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education. <https://www.coursera.org/learn/leading-for-equity-diversity-inclusion>.
15. University of Glasgow: Diversity and Inclusion in Education. <https://www.coursera.org/learn/diversity-and-inclusion-education>.