

Mesa's Diversity & Inclusion

Human Relations Advisory Board

Recommendations Overview

City Council
March 26, 2015

Background

- As part of their mission, Mesa's Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) engaged in process to assess how well Mesa is doing in promoting diversity awareness and respect.
- A four-step, data-driven study process was completed:
 1. Reviewed demographics
 2. Conducted telephone survey (statistically valid)
 3. Convened community dialogues
 4. Reviewed existing laws

Data-Driven Findings

- Majority of Mesa residents enjoy living in Mesa and feel valued and accepted.
- Certain subgroups (some without existing legal protections) reported higher levels of exclusion, discrimination.
- City's commitment to support diversity should be active and more visible.
- Residents enjoy living in a multi-cultural community, and believe more education about cultural inclusion and awareness is important.

HRAB Recommendations

Seven categories of recommendations, each with specific tasks (25 total) suggested.

1. Expand communication to population subgroups with the highest percentages of limited English proficiency.
2. Make the City's commitment to welcoming and serving its diverse populations more transparent.
3. Engage and learn more about the needs of those population subgroups most alienated from the community:
 - a) Hispanic/Latino
 - b) People with disabilities
 - c) LGBT people

HRAB Recommendations

4. Create ways to bring the community together to learn about and celebrate Mesa's diversity.
5. Create legal protection from discrimination for those subgroups not protected in Federal or State law.
6. Educate the public about the cultural diversity within Mesa to break down barriers and misunderstandings between population subgroups that can lead to discrimination.
7. Expand the City's visible recognition of veterans.

Activities (to date)

- Of the 25 tasks– Mesa has responded to 22 in whole or in part. Recent examples:
 - **‘One Mesa’ community pledge:** available to help community demonstrate that Mesa is a welcoming and respectful place to live, work and visit.
 - **Title VI Implementation:** planning is underway
 - All recipient of federal financial assistance are required to comply with various nondiscrimination laws and regulations.

Activities (to date)

- **Hometown Heroes Banner Program** - Honors Mesa residents serving today or who are Veterans who have served in the United States Armed Forces.
- **Latino Diversity Strategic Plan** – A review of Mesa's efforts towards inclusivity and communication with its Latino population, and a new model for outreach to diverse populations.
 - Example: Downtown Vision Committee Outreach (Literacy Classes)

Activities (to date)

Outstanding tasks to consider:

- Purchase a braille embosser and associated software to print documents in braille.
- Create a gender identity management policy for current and future transgender employees and update existing management policies to include those subgroups currently not protected via state or federal laws.
- Enact an anti-discrimination ordinance (legal protections for all subgroups).

Mesa's Diversity & Inclusion Questions & Discussion

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