

## *Strategy: Focus on racial equity to address the ongoing underrepresentation of BIPOC across the field and EdTA*

### GOAL

For theatre education to reflect the diversity of the population – the teachers who teach, the students who participate, the stories we tell.

### WHY

The Educational Theatre Association exists so that theatre education will be an essential part of every student's education and preparation for success in life. Diversity in the Association will help provide cultural knowledge, raise cultural awareness, encourage cultural sensitivity, and build cultural competence. Theatre has the power to change hearts and minds in the work toward social justice. Diverse organizations are more productive and impactful.

### ACTIONS

#### Teachers

- *(short term)* Create cultural competence for member teachers. Identify and create resources (e.g. BIPOC school-appropriate curated list of plays). Share knowledge and tips from teachers who have succeeded in creating diverse programs and replicate that success model.
- *(short term)* Create opportunities for affinity groups to connect with each other.
- *(med term)* Encourage theatre professionals to become educators. Promote legislation and policies that foster career transition. Support with fellowships and residency programs.
- *(long term)* Identify and foster a new generation of pre-service teachers who are racially diverse through programs, education, and financial support in high schools and pre-service training programs.

#### Students

- *(short term)* Attract diverse students into established theatre programs (path of least resistance).
  - Define the qualities of a theatre program that fosters diversity
  - Ensure that material reflects the diversity that we want to see in the program
  - Identify and broaden perception of who is a “theatre kid” to include more students
  - Emphasize the various roles that are part of theatre
- *(short term)* Attract diverse students to EdTA.
  - Make programming more accessible through funding support and elimination of barriers to participate
  - Expand proactive recruiting and networking
  - Open access to student membership beyond Thespian Troupe structure through a “World Drama Club”
- *(long term)* Build theatre programs where they don't exist in diverse communities (e.g. JumpStart Theatre).

## Organizational Capacity

Achieve representation of BIPOC in every area. Understand and grow feeder networks to encourage involvement.

- Selection processes: Examine our criteria to level the playing field
  - EdTA Staff – identify how to encourage more BIPOC candidates to apply
  - EdTA Board – determine how qualified candidates currently less known to the organization can experience a level playing field with those with name recognition
  - Chapter boards – invite BIPOC members into leadership positions that fit their skills
  - Student leadership – identify how to encourage more BIPOC candidates to apply; re-examine election process
  - Scholarships – support BIPOC students in pursuing theatre education degrees
- Educational programs: Maintain and expand BIPOC representation on the Education Steering Committee (currently 40%) and webinars presented by BIPOC presenters (currently 30%). Increase number of event workshops presented by BIPOC presenters at international and chapter events.
- Thespian Programs (main stage, Thespys, scholarships, etc.): Review rubrics for cultural sensitivity and inclusion. Reserve main stage slots for BIPOC stories and participants.
- Adjudicators: Adjudicators in all areas undergo cultural sensitivity training; include BIPOC representation in selecting main stage shows, Thespys, and scholarships.

## External Partnerships

- Build connections to theatre and entertainment industry networks of BIPOC artists.
- Build connections to other national arts and arts education organizations invested in BIPOC outreach and training.
- Seek funder and university partnerships to support diverse students who want to become theatre teachers.
  - Work with HBCUs, Hispanic Colleges and Universities (e.g. NEA grant)
  - Connect to teacher pipeline programs and union programs with a theatre education angle
- Pathway program – build connections to regional foundations and professional theatres to fund artists of color to mentor and support high schools with high populations of BIPOC students.