



State of Wisconsin State Council on Affirmative Action Report

Calendar Year 2023

*Summary and highlights of the Council's activities during 2023,
including the annual diversity awards.*

Division of Personnel Management

Contact:
Department of Administration,
Division of Personnel Management
101 East Wilson Street, 4th Floor
PO Box 7855
Madison, WI 53707-7855

Website: <http://dpm.wi.gov>
Email: DOADPM@wisconsin.gov



STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Tony Evers, Governor
Kathy Blumenfeld, Secretary
Jen Fogel, Division Administrator

April 12, 2024

The Honorable Tony Evers
Governor, State of Wisconsin

Chief Clerk Lindsay Hale
Wisconsin State Senate

Chief Clerk Edward Blazel
Wisconsin State Assembly

Dear Governor Evers, Chief Clerk Hale, and Chief Clerk Blazel:

On behalf of the Division of Personnel Management (DPM), I am pleased to present the January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023, annual report for the State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA), as directed by s. 15.107(3) Wis. Stats. and s. 230.46 Wis. Stats.

This year's report summarizes SCAA's activities and highlights the annual diversity awards, which recognize exemplary individuals, programs, and initiatives.

The Council's mission is to foster measurable progress toward an equitable, inclusive, and diverse workforce in state government. Its efforts complement the mission of DPM and the Bureau of Equity and Inclusion (BEI) to promote innovative, diverse, and inclusive equal employment opportunities along with strategic human resources leadership and direction.

I look forward to a productive relationship with the SCAA as we continue to serve the residents of our great State. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jen Fogel".

Jen Fogel
DPM Administrator

Message from SCAA Chair Adin Palau

April 12, 2024

The Honorable Tony Evers
Governor, State of Wisconsin

Chief Clerk Linsay Hale
Wisconsin State Senate

Chief Clerk Edward Blazel
Wisconsin State Assembly

Dear Governor Evers, Senator Kapenga, and Speaker Vos:

I am pleased to present the 2024 annual report for the State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA).

The role of the SCAA is to evaluate the progress of affirmative action programs throughout the civil service system, seek compliance with state and federal regulations, and recommend improvements in the State's affirmative action efforts as an employer.

At the 24th Annual Diversity Awards, we had the opportunity to hear about the multiple advancements achieved by state agencies in promoting diversity and inclusion, emulating promising practices for others to follow. We also learned about the innovative ways our institutions of higher learning are implementing to increase access to education for students from marginalized communities.

I want to extend a welcome to a newly elected Chair, Angela Nash. I have the utmost confidence in the work of the Council to recommend improvements in the State's affirmative action efforts as an employer of choice for all.

It has been an honor to serve as Chair of the State Council on Affirmative Action for close to a decade and to witness how our State continues to move forward to achieve equality for all Wisconsinites.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adin Palau', is positioned above the typed name and title.

Adin Palau
Chair of the State Council on Affirmative Action

Table of Contents

Message from SCAA Chair Adin Palau	4
State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA) Mission	4
SCAA Membership	5
SCAA Activity Highlights	6
Council Meeting – January 11, 2023	6
Council Meeting – April 12, 2023	6
Council Meeting – July 12, 2023.....	6
Council Meeting – October 11, 2023.....	6
24th Annual Diversity Awards Ceremony	7
SCAA 2024 Recommended Goals	7
Staff Services for the SCAA	7

State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA) Mission

The State Council on Affirmative Action was created by Chapter 196, Laws of 1977, s. 230.46, Wis. Stats., and describes the duties of the Council as follows:

"The Council on Affirmative Action shall serve in a direct advisory capacity to the Administrator and, as part of that relationship, shall evaluate the progress of affirmative action programs throughout the civil service system, seek compliance with state and federal regulations, and recommend improvements in the State's affirmative action efforts as an employer. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Council may recommend legislation, consult with agency personnel and other interested persons, conduct hearings, and take other appropriate action to promote affirmative action. The Council shall report at least once per year to the governor and the legislature."

The Council's overall purpose is to recommend strategic initiatives and foster measurable progress toward an equitable, inclusive, and diverse workforce in state government.

SCAA Membership

“There is created in the division of personnel management in the department of administration a council on affirmative action consisting of 15 members appointed for 3-year terms. A majority of members shall be public members, and a majority of members shall be minority persons, women, or persons with disabilities, appointed with consideration to the appropriate representation of each group. The president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly, the minority leader of the senate, and the minority leader of the assembly each shall appoint one member and the remaining members shall be appointed by the governor.” s. 15.107(3) Wis. Stats.

Members of the State Council on Affirmative Action from January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023:

Angela Nash – Chair

Equity, Inclusion, & Wellness Program Director
State of WI Department of Justice

Corinda Rainey Moore – Vice-Chair

Community Engagement Manager
Unity Point Health Meriter

Ankita Bharadwaj – Secretary

Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)
Employee Retention Specialist
UW-Madison

Adin Palau – Member-At-Large

Diversity Outreach and Engagement Specialist
State of WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and
Consumer Protection

Yee Leng Xiong – Member-At-Large

Executive Director
Hmong American Center, Inc

Carlene Bechen

Volunteer Progressive Community Organizer
Oregon Area Progressives

Alenka Dries

Employment Relations Specialist
State of WI Department of Administration

Ebony Grice

Assistant Superintendent
Elementary Level (K-6)
Appleton Area School District

Fabiola Hamdan

Department of Human Services Immigration Affairs
Supervisor
Dane County

Christopher Kilgour

Outreach Manager
Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies
UW-Madison and Founder/Director Color in the
Outdoors

Shakita LaGrant-McClain

Executive Director
Milwaukee County Department of Health & Human
Services

Dominic Ledesma, PhD

Assistant Vice Provost for Culture, Climate and
Engagement
Division of Information Technology UW Madison

DeVon Wilson

Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
College of Letters and Science, UW-Madison

SCAA Activity Highlights

Council Meeting – January 11, 2023

The Council did not reach a quorum for this meeting; the meeting was canceled.

Council Meeting – April 12, 2023

The Council heard updates on the BEI 2022 initiatives, including the wrap-up of the state agency Equity and Inclusion Plan monitoring visits. The director of the DPM Bureau of Equity and Inclusion (BEI) suggested several ways the Council could engage with this information and with state agencies, including direct conversations with agency leadership about recruitment concerns and creating focus groups around issues in recruitment. The director also provided an update on the 2022 State of Wisconsin Student Diversity Internship Program (SWSDIP). Council Chair Adin Palau presented workforce data from the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 State Classified Workforce Report. The BEI director notified council members that the FY 2022 report would be ready for publication soon. The timeline for the 2023 Diversity Awards was discussed. Council meeting dates were confirmed for the rest of the year.

Council Meeting – July 12, 2023

New Council Members were recognized, and re-appointments were announced. BEI staff reviewed the description of the executive committee roles, positions, duties, and next steps for the October election. The BEI Director provided an update on the 2023 SWSDIP program numbers, which showed increased participation in all areas of the program. A discussion was held regarding court decisions within the area of the Council's focus. The DPM Administrator provided updates on the DPM leadership structure, its guiding principles, shared services background, the tHRive initiative, and DPM's commitment to state agencies. Recruitment and selection were mentioned as being priorities for DPM. Council members were given an opportunity to hear from a few of the SWSDIP interns about their experience as interns; the Council was afforded an opportunity to ask questions of them.

Council Meeting – October 11, 2023

SCAA Executive Committee elections took place. Angela Nash was elected as Chair, Corinda Rainey Moore was elected as Vice-Chair, Antika Bharadwaj as Secretary, and Yee Leng Xiong and Adin Palau as Members At-Large. One of the DPM Deputy Administrators provided an overview of project tHRive and an update on available data reports. The Council received an update on the Diversity Awards. The BEI Director provided an update on Bureau affairs, including the 2023-2024 SWSDIP program, and confirmed meeting dates for 2024.

24th Annual Diversity Awards Ceremony

In conjunction with the 40th Virginia Hart Special Recognition Award, the Council celebrated the 2023 Diversity Award winners on October 27, 2023, in the Wisconsin State Capitol Assembly Chambers. The winners were:

Sheralynn Stach, Department of Natural Resources, received the Virginia Hart Award for their dedication to serving the people of Wisconsin and going above and beyond to help others.

The Office of the Commissioner of Insurance received the 2023 Diversity Award for their Workplace Well-being Initiative. The Office is creating a more supportive, respectful, and healthy workplace by using the US Surgeon General's article, "New Framework for Mental Health & Well-being in the Workplace," as the basis for the initiative. This Workforce Well-being initiative addresses issues affecting employee retention.

The University of Wisconsin-Stout received the Ann Lydecker Educational Diversity Award for the Fostering Success Program. This initiative embodies UW Stout's commitment to equity and inclusion. The program also showcases the dedication to offering a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic experience for students at all levels of academic pursuit. Programs such as this make a difference in student success and make possible options that might not otherwise be attainable.

Dr. Alison Lukowski, UW Stout, received the Outstanding Leadership Award. Dr. Lukowski's leadership as director of UW Stout's First Year Composition program has directly contributed to promoting a respectful and inclusive campus environment and increased engagement in equity, diversity, and inclusivity programming that has helped to produce and retain a diverse workforce and student body.

Glendali Rodriguez, UW Stout, received the Lifetime of Service Award. Glendali Rodriguez's work to raise workplace diversity's visibility is impressive. Their active contribution to equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts throughout the university, local community, and beyond indicated that they have dedicated their 18+ year career at UW-Stout to championing DEI initiatives.

SCAA 2024 Recommended Goals

Goal 1: Update the SCAA bylaws and thoroughly review the SCAA roles and responsibilities.

Goal 2: Assess DPM published reports for relevance and practical application in agency HR decision-making.

Goal 3: Develop a process map for agencies to solicit council engagement on affirmative action matters.

Staff Services for the SCAA

The Bureau of Equity and Inclusion provides staff services to the Council, 101 East Wilson Street, 4th Floor, Madison, Wisconsin, 53707-7855. Inquiries regarding this report can be addressed to:

DOADPMBEI@wisconsin.gov