

My Fellow CREW Members, as the 2023 DEI Officer of CREW Chicago, it is my honor and privilege to report CREW Chicago's E&I accomplishments and goals of 2023, highlight the DEI activities and programs undertaking this year and lastly, outline our 2024 Goals!

This year has been filled with great strides in our Equity & Inclusion (E&I) Goals with the help of so many of my fellow CREW Members. I want to thank both our E&I Committee and our 2023 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Working Group (DEIWG) for their tremendous efforts throughout the year.

First, I want to thank the E&I Committee, led by committee Chair Bridgette S. Battle and Co-Chairs, Helen J. Kessler and Megan Watson. This committee has provided a wide variety of programs throughout the year as well as working on initiatives to enhance CREW Chicago's E&I Mission. To highlight a few items, CREW Chicago had its first ever Pride Event, assisted the Programs committee with two DEI Luncheon Programs and most recently a viewing party. I look forward to seeing all the exciting programs the E&I Committee will provide for us in 2024 and invite you to attend a few E&I events in the upcoming year!

Second, I want to outline the steps CREW Chicago took to work on our strategic plan to assess our Engagement and Inclusivity. At the end of 2022, the CREW Chicago Board engaged an outside DEI Consultant company, Working River Leadership and Development. This company through the direction of Damaris Patterson Price guided us in a year of learning, discovery, and strategy. If you remember, at the end of 2022, we had a call for volunteers to be part of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Working Group (DEIWG). Twenty-Seven (27) members applied for the DEIWG.

The DEIWG began Phase in January of 2023 and completed 12 hours of advanced Organizational DEI Education- in addition to this time, the DEIWG meet independently and had assignments after the sessions. These sessions were emotionally draining but week after week the members of the DEIWG continued to show up. In the Spring of 2023, DEIWG entered Phase two. The task during this time was to create a Mission, Vision and Values and Guiding Principles that would guide the DEIWG for their continued work.

In June of 2023, the DEIWG launched CREW Chicago's Inaugural Member Engagement & Inclusion Survey. We had 123 CREW Members take this survey. I just need to say this again- 123 members (43.4%) took this survey! *This is amazing and yes, applause to each of you who took the survey.* Why is this important? Having such a large sampling of our members makes the survey data far more compelling and enriched the insights of the survey. The results of the survey were gathered by Damaris Price (to keep the answers anonymous, CREW Chicago does not have the raw data). Damaris analyzed the survey results and presented a report to both the DEIWG and the Board. The DEIWG promised each of you that we would not do this work in a vacuum and now that the survey has been analyzed, we are happy to post the results of this survey on our CREW Website's Governance Page-[Governance CREW Chicago \(crewnetwork.org\)](https://www.crewnetwork.org/governance)

I invite all members to review the data and if you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or any member of the DEIWG to discuss.

Lastly for 2023, the Working Group used the data to develop 9 recommendations for CREW Chicago. We understand that it would be impossible to launch all 9 together, so the group voted on the top three

that they wanted to start working on at the end of 2023 into 2024. I also want to make sure that all CREW Members know that this is not the end, but only the beginning.

You can review the full survey along with the Mission, Vision and Values and Guiding Principles on our website, [Governance CREW Chicago \(crewnetwork.org\)](https://crewnetwork.org), but I wanted to give you two highlights below.

1. The number one item that DEIWG will work on for 2024 is a proactive DEI Remediation process. From our survey, we learned that 11% of our non-arch members\* experienced or witnessed discrimination within CREW. As the DEI Officer and a Board member, we cannot let this be the experience of our CREW Members.
2. Another item that stood out was that committee service matters. Members who are a committee member feel a higher engagement in CREW Chicago. We invite all members to join a committee in 2024 and are striving for ways to make this an easy and seamless goal for all members. If you were an active member in the past, we invite you to rejoin a committee! If you have never been a committee member, please join! We also invite all members to join CREW Chicago for our 2024 Committee Showcase, please check CREW Chicago's Web site for dates and times!

Finally, what will 2024 look like? As we did in 2022, we are asking members who would like to be part of these initiatives in 2024 to apply on our web site, we are taking applications starting on December 5<sup>th</sup> up to January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. We will have a 2024 kick off meeting in January and then periodically throughout 2024 with the emphasis of working on the recommendations created in 2023. Who can join? Any member of CREW! What is the time commitment? We will have roles that will take just a few minutes a week to more involved roles. We will not have the formal learning process as we did in 2023, but we will still meet with Damaris Price as she guides us through another year.

I am excited to Thank our 2023 DEIWG at the annual meeting on December 5<sup>th</sup> and hope that each of you can also join us that evening. I am grateful for the knowledge I have gained throughout this process and am committed to keep an open dialogue with our members in 2024 and beyond. I invite anyone with thoughts, comments, concerns, questions to reach out to me, please find me on CREWBiz!

Thank you,



Lisa Sweeney

2024 DEI Officer for CREW Chicago.

non-arch members\*- Members that do not fall within the majority across all profile questions on our Engagement Survey.