



“Emergency management will never meet the mission without diversity. True Diversity – in all forms, is not just a snapshot of individuals from various backgrounds co-existing and contributing in any organization, but rather the opportunity for active engagement with varying ideas, approaches, and solutions to problems. This is a complex field and we need the greatest collaboration possible to face and address these problems. We make significant improvements in the lives of people every day and we need to be able to relate to our diverse communities.”

—Vilma Milmoie, Senior Policy Advisor, Emergency Management Institute

January 1, 2017

Dear IAEM Member:

The IAEM Diversity Ad Hoc Committee seeks additional members who are interested in learning about how to better serve our diverse communities. The purpose of the Ad Hoc Diversity Committee is to inform IAEM members about research and best practices about diversity and inclusion to help improve the delivery of concepts, communications and services to diverse populations. The Committee defines diversity as a broad representation of culture, religion, values, ethnicity, gender, education, life experience, professional experience, access and functional needs and other qualities that make us individually unique.

A Fritz Institute study of 1,000 people affected by Hurricane Katrina found that 28 percent of those who did not evacuate did not do so because of limited means; 71 percent said they had nowhere else to go; 37 percent did not have a car and needed assistance to leave their homes. Of the 28 percent of those with limited means, 84 percent had household incomes of less than \$50,000; 66 percent were women; 58 percent were African-American; 32 percent had a physical disability. Clearly, if we do not understand the social, cultural and economic diversity that make up the communities we serve, we cannot effectively prepare for, mitigate, respond to, or recover from disasters.

As emergency management evolves as a profession, it becomes increasingly important to advocate for more diversity in its practitioners, trainings and skills, so that we can better serve our equally diverse communities. This requires open minds and discussion throughout the field.

The Ad Hoc Committee works together with subject matter experts to provide cross-national research and trainings to foster awareness, competency and skills to better address community needs and concerns.

We invite you to join us and help us accomplish this goal. To join the Diversity Ad Hoc, please email the Diversity Ad Hoc Chair, Mr. Leslie Luke at lluke@ceooem.lacounty.gov. For more information about the Committee, visit our page on the IAEM website at <http://www.iaem.com/page.cfm?p=groups/us-ad-hoc-committees/diversity>

Sincerely,
IAEM Diversity Ad Hoc Committee