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## NESA Committees that Make a Difference

### Diversity & Inclusion Committee

NESA has several busy committees that are supporting the Board in ensuring that our organization continues to serve the needs of our members and the broader community. One of these committees is the Diversity & Inclusion Committee which was formed to help the Board, staff, and volunteers to continue to build and support a diverse and inclusive community.

Seniors are not a homogeneous group. There are many differences within the senior population that affect when and how seniors participate in programs and activities, and the degree to which they feel welcomed in senior serving organizations. NESA is very aware of the need to build on our diversity and to ensure that current and new members feel welcomed, included, and connected.

So what do we mean by 'diversity' and 'inclusion'? **Diversity** is often thought of in terms of race and/or culture but it is far broader than that. Diversity is defined as the variety of unique dimensions, qualities and characteristics possessed by all people and includes such areas as age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, economic circumstances, education and physical and mental abilities. **Inclusion** is defined as "the action or state of being included within a group or structure". How welcome to members feel when they attend programs or social events at NESA? Do our volunteers feel appreciated and respected? The NESA Diversity & Inclusion Committee's mandate is to identify and explore opportunities to increase diversity and improve inclusion throughout the organization, and to ensure these practices reflect NESA's commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion within our organization.

At this time, due to the building closure, the Committee and staff are limited on what can be done in the immediate future. At this time, you will see the monthly recognition of various cultural celebrations in our social media. Future events include conducting building assessment to identify potential mobility, visual/sight, and hearing impairment barriers. Other ideas include creating diversity awareness through programming, social events, and our clubs. The Committee is also researching external partnerships and relationships with diverse senior serving organizations with the intent to build bridges with these organizations and sharing opportunities. Plans are being developed to seek ways that create a more inclusive place, particularly for new members. When new members build new connections, we are all winners.

The Diversity & Inclusion Committee is volunteer based, and the strength of the committee comes from our members. If you are interested in helping build diversity and inclusion within NESA, and enjoy working with energetic and passionate fellow members, please join us. It's easy – just call NESA at 780-496-6969 and ask for Kathe, the Volunteer Coordinator or email her at [volunteer@nesa1.ca](mailto:volunteer@nesa1.ca)

If you are currently registered as a volunteer, you will be referred to the Committee. If you are not currently registered as a volunteer, you can register and then join our committee.

**"When we listen and celebrate what is both common and different, we become wiser, more inclusive, and better as an organization."** – Pat Wadors (Chief Talent Officer at Procore Technologies)