



Multicultural Center

Encourage, Empower & Equip

Equity Minded Practitioners

Canyons Completes Workgroup & LEAP Solution team 2019

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With student Success as central to our mission, and Equity as the foundation, it becomes imperative that we, at College of the Canyons (COC) invest in serving students whose needs have not been fully addressed, and whose opportunities have been limited. A multicultural center is part of the efforts to rectifying historical structural/practices that have disadvantaged some students and advantaged others, and serves as undeniable evidence of the college's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

I. Introduction

On many campuses, the struggle to gain institutional support for a Multicultural center—in terms of space, resources, budget, release time, director position etc.—itself has become a test of the institution’s commitment to women’s and cultural equity issues in the college. While COC offers Women’s Studies and gender/LGBTQ+ courses, those specific courses enroll students interested in particular programs of study (e.g. Sociology). But campus Multicultural centers are open to all students. Many campus Multicultural centers augment the social justice curriculum by educating the collective student body on how to identify and confront inequity, starting with the campus and then looking out, benefitting the classroom, the campus, and the community. Multicultural centers provide students a formal space to practice leadership and peer mentoring. Students take this valuable experience with them when they go out into the world and apply for jobs.

The Multicultural Center (MCC) will serve *as a resource* for the entire campus community while placing the experiences of diverse and historically marginalized groups at the center. This space would also serve as a dynamic *learning space* while coordinating deliberate programming and opportunities to support all members of COC regarding gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality and intersectional identities, with the goal of promoting an inclusive and equitable campus community. When there isn’t structured programming, this space is envisioned to be an informal place to meet, build community, and serve as *another access point/bridge* to existing resources. This center is in addition to, not in place of existing programs and services.

Alignment with College’s Mission and Principles of Guided Pathway, “Canyons Completes”

A Multicultural center aligns with the college’s Mission of providing “access” to all students to attain their educational goal through “embracing diversity and *engaging* students” and the strategic goals of Access, Success, and Engagement, founded on Equity.

Following the guiding principles of Guided Pathways and Canyons Completes, the Multicultural Center aligns with creating and designing a welcoming environment through highlighting experiences of marginalized groups, making the student experience less fragmented by serving as a bridge of empowerment that helps students access and utilize resources, and supporting students to address broader life challenges that can include to feelings of exclusion/isolation and discrimination that hinder their journey toward academic success.

The Multicultural Center has at its core the following missions:

- To *Encourage, Empower, and Equip* students to achieve their educational goals.
- Promotes a respect for, and understanding of cultural diversity
- Provides a multitude of resources that supports first-generation students, students of color and students with a variety of gender identities and sexual orientations to reach their highest potential while at College of the Canyons.
- Provides a vibrant place for students, staff and faculty to create community.

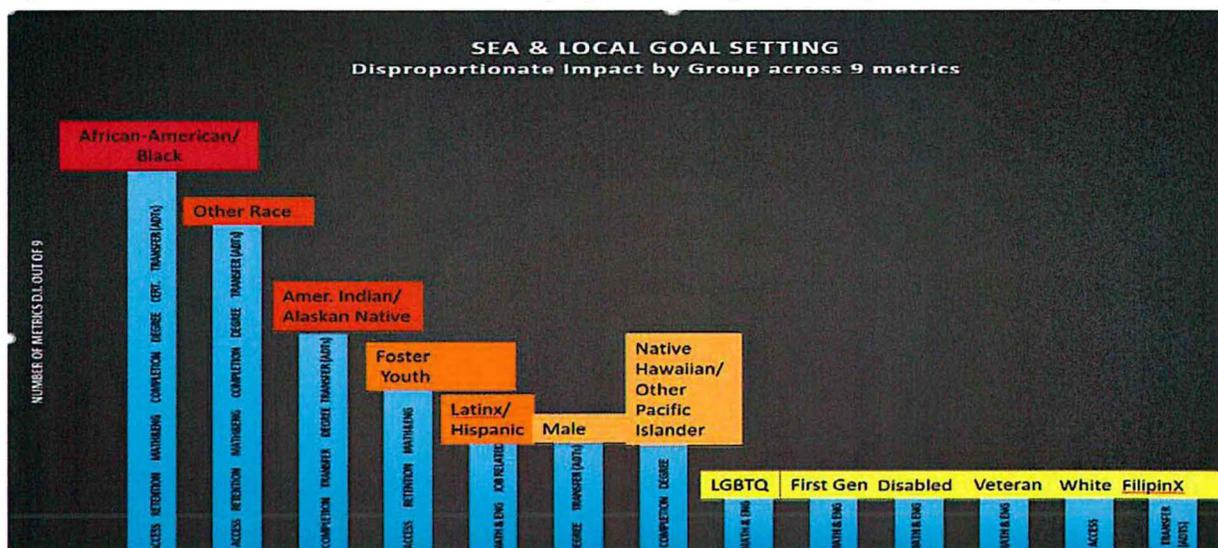
- Provides a platform for continued partnership with all areas on campus .
- Provides students and employees an environment in which to feel safe and brave (holistically).
- Is a “destination” for students and campus community to go to for informal support, a friend, and a Champion, a home away from home.

II. Statement of the Problem

At COC we have a 45% Hispanic population that is still 10% below White student population in a 6-year completion of a degree or transfer for College Prepared and 7% below for unprepared (College of the Canyons Institutional research, 2017). This center could provide resources to support the emotional support needs of Hispanic students and Dreamers, in particular, and faculty who understand and respond to the unique needs of our multi-racial/multi-ethnic student population. In a time where undocumented students across college campuses have been anticipating federal changes, this center would highlight how COC is providing resources to continue the academic and career goals of these students.

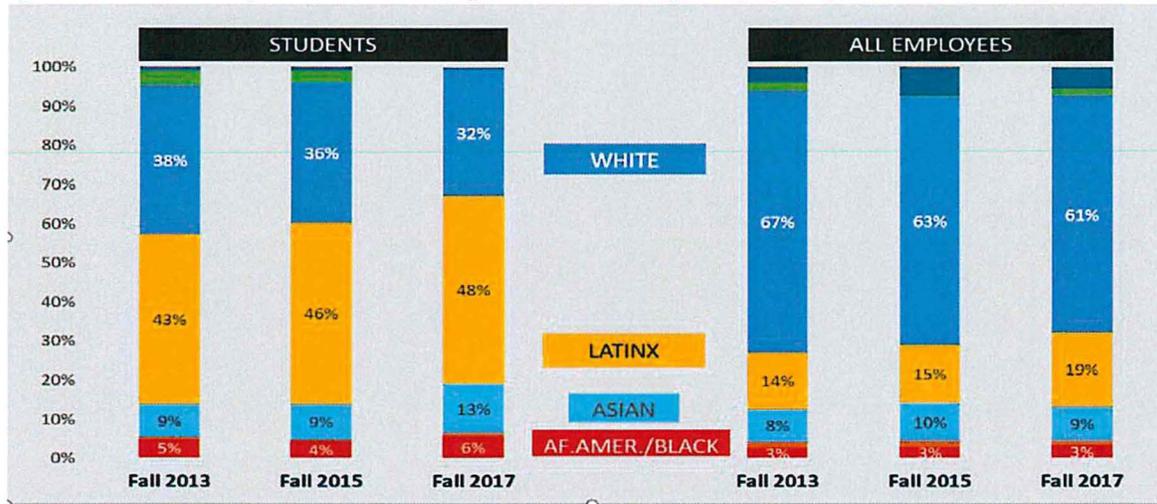
Student equity data analyses indicate that students who are identified as African-American/Black, Latinx, Filipinx, Foster youth, First-generation, LGBTQ, Veteran, Disabled students are disproportionately impacted with regard to the various success measures that are traditionally tracked in community colleges (Persistence, Degree/Certificate completion etc.) Disproportionate impact when outcomes of subgroups are compared to other groups or the overall group and achievement gaps are found. Figure 1. presents the number of measures each student group faces an achievement gap in (i.e. Disproportionate Impact). For instance, African-American/Black students are disproportionately impacted in 7 out of the total of 9 outcomes assessed.

Figure 1. Number of outcome Measures where disproportionate impact exists by Social Identity group.



Demographic comparisons (Figure 2) between college employees and students indicate that with regard to race/ethnicity, two-thirds of employees identify as white and conversely one-third of students identify as white.

Figure 2. Race/Ethnicity of Students in comparison to all college Employees (Fall 2013-Fall 2017)



Implications of these data relate to the body of research that alludes to the importance of role models that represent one’s background. One student expressed this sentiment in an Equity Minded Practitioners.

“It took me 4 years to get up the courage to ask for help and go and find resources outside the classroom. **I feel like this system was not built for me**, everything is about being this independent person, but for me culturally, I was not used to that. It is hard and it feels sometimes like it is working against me but I am going to try my hardest to navigate it.”—EMP participant 2018

III. History of, and Evidence for Multicultural Centers

Multicultural centers emerged after race-specific centers, such as Black Cultural Center,, multicultural centers started to appear on college campuses in the 1980s and 1990s as the the racial and ethnic demographics of students became increasingly diverse (Castillo-Cullather & Stuart, 2002; Hefner, 2002; Princes, 1994; Stennis-Williams, Terrell, & Haynes, 1988). Prior to the 1980s, very few multicultural centers existed at universities in the United States, but the rapid diversification of the student population also lead to growth in multicultural centers (Sanders, *A review of Pertinent Literature on Black Culture Centers*).

Multicultural centers have been shown to increase a sense of belonging, community building, and promote empathy. Multiple examinations have supported the positive outcomes of community formed in identity centers¹. Additionally, research supports the notion that students of color are more likely to persist if they feel as though they have built a community at their institutions². Having a community to return to and feel comfortable with is integral in students' sense of belonging to a campus community and thus positively affects their success at the institution³.

Existing Centers

Our research into the Multicultural/Diversity Centers in surrounding colleges (See Appendix X for list of institutions included in our research) indicated that:

- The personnel structure of diversity centers ranged from having offices with one or two administrators and groups of 4-5 student workers to offices having an administrative cluster that included a director, assistant director, support staff and up to 22 student workers.
- Most diversity centers were created in response to social justice issues (i.e. discrimination) on campus that were often the result of a campus-wide event.
- Collaboration on programming is a common theme among all diversity centers. Targeted student populations include: African Americans, Latinx populations, LGBTQIA, Women's Studies, Asian Americans, International Students
- Diversity centers have dedicated physical space, as well as literature and resources for students. The majority of the diversity centers also have shared space for the use of both faculty and staff for providing professional development opportunities within these centers.
- One college campus dedicated a multicultural center for students; but also had a separate equity center for faculty and staff
- A common goal amongst the center is that the physical layout and atmosphere provides a "home away from home" for all students.
- All diversity centers were under the auspices of a student affairs/student services division within the college organizational structure.
- One diversity center had an established governing board who oversaw all programming and center activities.

IV. Needs Assessment

¹ (Bourke, 2011; Loranzo, 2010; Liu et al., 2010; Patton, 2010; Renn, 2011; Shotton et al., 2010)

² (Hausman, Schofield, & Woods, 2007; Patton, 2006, 2010; Renn, 2011)

³ (Johnson et al, 2007; Patton, 2006; Yosso & Lopez, 2010).

The LEAP solution team administered a survey to students inquiring about support for a multicultural center at College of the Canyons. Out of the 98 students who responded, 95% indicated that they would be in support of a Multicultural Center on campus.

69% agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “I would use this space to meet other students like me” (with 22% indicating being neutral).

Results from Survey in Student Development and Results from Resource Fair Survey
Focus group with the Inter Club Council, LatinX Alliance, and student representation at Equity Minded Practitioners workgroup meetings yielded the following themes in responses/comments.

After a discussion about experiences as a Latinx student, one student indicated that a space like this “is very necessary, in order for other students to have the opportunity to have conversations similar to ours”. Another student said, “I’ve never wanted to be a part of anything on campus, but that would be a place I would really want to go”.

Additional comments included the following:

- “After class, we can just hang out at the spot rather than just sitting around waiting”
- “ I have a 2-hour gap between classes so I can utilize that space”
- “As a Latina, I’ve never had the social capital to know some of the informal pieces of knowledge that matter, “write a Thank you after a job interview” Sometimes you need that helping hand, I want that community space, for students to know that there are people like you here.”

Some students asked questions about how this space was different from existing resources, and about how this space would be relevant for students who may not identify as having a ‘culture’ or minority social identity. Others raised the issue of its relevance to students’ academic success.

A faculty/staff survey was also administered to assess the views of a proposed multicultural center on campus in which 75% of the respondents agreed/strongly agree with the statement, “I support this type of space as a valuable resource for our campus”.

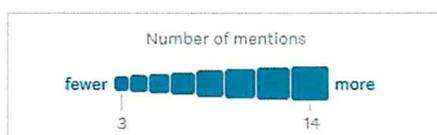
Types of Services

Students suggested that the space provide FAFSA workshops for immigrant, dual-language learners and first-generation students and mental health counseling services.

“I’ve had support from a teacher in HS, but past that I have no help anywhere. As a first-generation student, my mom’s involvement ends with a credit card to pay for classes. I had to make all of the decisions, my mom doesn’t know the system, she didn’t know how to help.”

The survey included an open-ended question on the types of services/programs students would like to see at the center and a word-cloud analysis presented the following terms as the most common words used in the responses.

meet maybe food celebrations events activities
Cultural workshops cultures dance games
Community different Learn students



What's in a Name?

Besides assessment of support, the survey and focus group questions included an item of naming of the center. Among students, the most commonly selected name was “Multicultural Center”, followed by “Diversity Center” and one name that frequently emerged through write-ins and focus group discussions was “Unity center”

The following guiding principles were used in discussion around the naming of the center. The name should be: Meaningful, Accessible, Distinctive, Future-proof - (can grow with us), Visual, Welcoming, Feeling Safe & Brave.

V. The Center

The Multicultural center as envisioned by the LEAP solution team contributes to students’ academic enrichment and promotes student engagement which have been linked to academic success. Below are examples of how the center would address these indicators.

Academic Enrichment

- Lending Library with hundreds of books on topics including LGBTQ Studies, Asian American Studies, Black Studies, Critical Race Studies, Indigenous Studies, Latinx Studies, Whiteness, and more
- Links to national multicultural and diversity programs (GSA Network, National Society of Black Engineers, etc.; See Appendix B for detailed list)
- Scholarship information related to various Identity groups
- Integration with course curriculum to provide opportunities outside of the classroom

Student Engagement

- A space for students to hang out, build community, study, eat, host meetings, and engage in dialogue.
- Student workers manage the space, plan programming and facilitate conversation and education.
- Opportunities for students to volunteer and learn about racial/sexuality/gender justice work (partner with Civic Engagement).
- Support for student affinity groups and student leaders
- Mentorship Programs
- Bridge to Crisis Intervention, Counseling and Health Center

In addition to assessing how we are addressing issues affecting minoritized⁴ students, the center allows for engagement of students in a multicultural campus through programming, diversified faculty/staff, diversified curriculum and/or multicultural centers.

A space where professional development around cultural humility for various employee groups on campus (e.g. Culturally Relevant Counseling workshops/trainings, culturally responsive Tutoring/Advising)

- Identity Development
- Cultural Competency: Special guest speakers and films
- Race, racism, racial identity, and social justice
- Dual language learners, Bilingual Services
- Educational programs to expose the wider community to different ideas or cultures.
- Gender experiences (e.g. women's issues)

⁴ Minoritized. Taken from Benitez (2010), this term is used instead of "minority" to describe student populations that are not of the majoritized. This is done purposefully in reference to the act of being treated as a minority as opposed to the labeled identity of being a minority. Used interchangeably with "marginalized."

We understand that effective and lasting change takes time, and the needs for the center will also change with time. With that understanding and based on our research of other institutions with spaces similar to the one we are proposing, it was recommended we build our space in phases. Below are proposed phases. See Student Development's 2018 Program View for more details.

Phase I: Year 1-2

- Secure a physical space on the Valencia campus for a the center.
- Secure funding for remodeling of the space to meet its needs.
- Secure funding for personnel.
- Secure funding for college assistants.
- Develop a budget that will support the financial needs of the center.
- Develop a programming model that will focus on students, faculty and staff needs.

Phase II: Year 2-3

- Secure a physical space on the Canyon Country campus for a the center.
- Secure funding for remodeling of the space to meet its needs.
- Secure funding for a full time classified staff person.
- Secure funding for college assistants.
- Develop a budget that will support the financial needs of the center.
- Develop a programming model that will focus on students, faculty and staff needs

Staffing

Our research into existing Multicultural centers yielded the piece of advice that when hiring, ensure that the person is an ally of the center and an advocate of supporting marginalized students; ensure that that they have knowledge on the function of the center and why it's there. One resources for networking, professional development and recruitment is the California Council of Cultural Centers in Higher Education (CACCCHE) listserv; a statewide organization on campus multicultural center.

The table below provides a proposed staffing structure for the center. College Assistants can be recruited from cultural student involvement coordinators who are already engaged in creating and implementing cultural-based programs.

Table 2. Proposed Staffing Structure

		Annual	Fringe		Total
Operational Team	Salary Scale	Base Comp	Benefits	H&W	
MCC Director/Faculty Lead (@ 30% Release Time)	Schedule 2-Blended	\$35,137.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$35,137.00
Student Services Coordinator V (Lead)/Programming	Classified Schedule-B40	\$91,380.00	\$15,531.00	\$13,000.00	\$119,911.00
Administrative Asst (MCC)	Classified Schedule-B20	\$65,460.00	\$16,365.00	\$13,000.00	\$94,825.00
Academic Advisor	Classified Schedule-B30	\$78,372.00	\$19,593.00	\$13,000.00	\$110,965.00
Graphics Designer IV	Classified Schedule-B35	\$84,972.00	\$21,243.00	\$13,000.00	\$119,215.00
College Assistant (10)	N/A	0	0	0	0
				Total	
				Staff Cost	\$480,053.00

VI. Integration/Partnerships

Since this center is in addition to, not in place of existing programs and services, integration of this center into various departments and divisions on campus is key. Specifically we envision the following direct partnerships:

- Serve as a resource for Student Development Clubs & Organization (e.g. ASG, Gender & Sexuality Alliance, Latinx Alliance, Black Student Union, American Association of University Women (AAUW))
- Partnership with Student Services programs will be key in connecting students to existing resources and providing “warm hand-offs”. These services include and are not limited to: Financial Aid, EOPS, CalWorks, Career Center, The Learning Center, DSPS, Community Education, and Student Health Center.
- Partner with Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to coordinate activities and workshops with the Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Course
- Promote OER/ZTC programs as they are directly related to making higher education more accessible for all students
- Civic and Community Engagement partnership to co-facilitate events and workshops particularly in participatory democracy and deliberative dialogue.
- Partnership with Human Resources/Office of Diversity & Inclusion, the multicultural center would help host, promote and coordinate on-going equity-minded/implicit bias/macroaggressions trainings for all interventionists on campus (e.g. faculty, administrators, staff, peer advisers, retention advisers, TLC tutors).

The Multicultural Center would enhance Guided Pathways efforts in connecting more students to programs and by increasing persistence among students who would not have otherwise continued on their educational pathway.

VII. Evaluation Plan

The center's effectiveness in meeting the broader desired outcomes of closing equity gaps, and increasing student engagement will be periodically evaluated. On-going satisfaction survey through links and QR-codes will allow for 'live' feedback as students come in to use the space and have feedback to share. After the launch of the center, a 3-year and 5-year impact assessment will be conducted to identify strengths and weaknesses of the center in order to make improvements as needed. This evaluation will include an assessment of student experience as well as student success outcomes particularly among students who have been identified as disproportionately impacted (i.e. African-American/Black students, Latinx Male students, LGBT students, First-generation students etc.)

V. Concluding Remarks

The ultimate goal of a multicultural center is to move from creating a "safe space" to becoming a safe campus that encourages, empowers and equips students who have been marginalized have faced barriers in accessing and achieving educational goals. College of the Canyons has been deservedly recognized for various awards and excellence, including a recent 2015 CCCCO Student Success Award. Launching a multicultural center will further the college's success in promoting and increasing student persistence and completion.

F.A.Qs

1)How will this space include White students who may not perceive themselves as having culture?

A multicultural center, although highlights experiences of under-represented, minoritized groups, can also be a valued resources for White students from privileged backgrounds who have benefited from opportunities that have not been granted to other students. The model adopted here aims for White students to engage in identity discussions that can help them with “understanding culture, learning about other cultures, recognizing and deconstructing white culture, recognizing the legitimacy of other cultures and developing a multicultural outlook” (Ortiz & Rhoads p. 211).

2)How will this space help me achieve my Academic/educational goals?

This space serves as a bridge to existing resources that include tutoring services, workshops and library services. In addition, academic success is dependent on a student’s holistic well-being, this center will support the aspects of student needs that if unmet can hinder their academic performance.

3)How is this center different from other centers/resources that we have on-campus?

This space is in addition to, and not in-place of. As a Latinx, female student recently expressed that, “it took me 4 years to get up the courage to ask for help”, this center can serve to empower and encourage students to seek support and navigate the various valuable services available on campus. Other examples of the need for this centralized, inviting space that connects and engages students with the larger campus is when another student expressed that when they were homeless and needed assistance, they only found help from another student because they were told to “go over there”.

4)Does this type of space promote separatism and if students are only building community in this space, don't they are miss out on connecting to the broader campus community?

To date there hasn’t been empirical evidence that supports these claims, and creating a space for students to build community encourages and empowers them to further interact with the larger campus community without the barrier of feeling invalidated or isolated. A multitude of studies have found evidence for the positive outcomes of community formed in identity centers (Bourke, 2011; Loranzo, 2010; Liu et al., 2010; Patton, 2010; Renn, 2011; Shotton et al., 2010). Having a community to return to and feel comfortable with is integral in students’ sense of belonging to a campus community and thus positively affects their success at the institution (Johnson et al, 2007; Patton, 2006; Yosso & Lopez, 2010).

Acknowledgements

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Surrounding institutions that we contacted were tremendously helpful in guiding us and providing valuable feedback on their experiences, namely U.C Santa Barbara, Skyline, Glendale Community College, and Foothill–De Anza Community College

We would like to acknowledge Dr. Diane Fierro for allowing us the freedom to explore, and for supporting our ideas.

We thank the LEAP Planning & Guided Pathways Steering Committee for the platform to share our mission and proposal as well as for the effective trainings and inspiring speakers that were part of the LEAP program.

We would like to thank Dr. Diane Van Hook for providing us the opportunity to connect with colleagues in a different capacity than would have been possible without LEAP.

APPENDIX A.

Research on Existing Multicultural Centers in Higher Education

Our LEAP Solution Team members targeted its outreach to institutions with centers of diversity/inclusion/multicultural centers in California.

Institution Information							Method of Contact	
Institution Name	Location	Enrollment	Type of Institution	College Est.	Center Est.	Contact	Date	Method
Skyline CC	San Bruno, CA	16,000	Community College	1969	2011	Angelica Garcia, VP-Student Svcs	12/7/18	Phone
De Anza CC	Cupertino, CA	24,000	Community College	1967	2011	Veronica Keiffer Lewis (Neal)-Faculty and Consultant	1/22/19	Phone
Glendale CC	Glendale, CA	27,700	Community College	1926	1994	Hoover Zariani, Program Coordinator	1/22/19	Phone
UC, Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara, CA	24,300	Part of University of CA system	1891	1988	Afiya Browne Associate Director	3/8/19	In-Person

LEADERSHIP BREAKDOWN

Institution Name	Title/Position Lead
Skyline CC	Division Dean
De Anza CC	Division Dean
Glendale CC	Program Coordinator
UC, Santa Barbara	Director, Assistance Director, BOG

APPENDIX B:

Sample List of Professional Organizations focusing on historically underrepresented groups that will be made available and presented to students using Multicultural Center

Organization	Website	Target Group	Focus
Diversity Partners	http://www.buildingdiversitypartners.org/	All minorities	
National Association of Health Services Executives	www.nahse.org	All minorities	Health
Asian Women in Business	www.awib.org	Asian Am	Entrepreneurs
Asians in Education	www.asiansinhighered.com	Asian Am	Higher Ed
American Association of Blacks in Higher Education	www.aabhe.education/	Black/Af Am	Higher Ed
Association of Black Psychologists	www.abpsi.org	Black/Af Am	Psychologists
Black Career Women	www.bcwnetwork.com	Black/Af Am	Women
National Association of Black Accountants, Inc.	www.nabainc.org	Black/Af Am	Accountants
National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice	www.nabcj.org	Black/Af Am	Criminal Justice
National Association of Blacks Journalists	www.nabj.org	Black/Af Am	Journalists
National Black for Speech-Lang and Hearing	https://www.nbaslh.org/	Black/Af Am	Lang, Speech & Hearing
National Black Nurses Association	www.nbna.org	Black/Af Am	Health
National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers	www.nobcche.org	Black/Af Am	Science
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives	www.noblenational.org	Black/Af Am	Law Enforcement
National Society of Black Engineers	www.nsbse.org	Black/Af Am	Engineering/Technology
National Urban League	www.nuljobsnetwork.com	Black/Af Am	all sectors
The Organization of Black Designers	www.obd.org	Black/Af Am	Designers
Ability Jobs	www.career.abilityjobs.com	Disabilities	
American Association of People with Disabilities	www.aapd.com	Disabilities	All sectors
Easter Seals Disability Services: Training	www.easterseals.com	Disabilities	All sectors
The Council on Quality and Leadership	www.c-q-l.org	Disabilities	
Hispanic Association of College and Univ (HACU)	www.hacu.net	Hisp/Latinx	Higher Ed
Hispanic Bilingual Recruitment	www.latpro.com	Hisp/Latinx	All sectors
Hispanics in Higher Education	www.hispanicsinhighered.com	Hisp/Latinx	Higher Ed
Latinos in Information Science and Technology Association	www.listacareercenter.com	Hisp/Latinx	STEM
Los Angeles Latino Chamber of Commerce	www.lalcc.org	Hisp/Latinx	Entrepreneurs
National Hispanic Medical Association	www.jobs.nhmamd.org	Hisp/Latinx	Medical
National Latinx Psychological Association	www.nlpa.ws	Hisp/Latinx	Psychologists
National Society of Hispanic Engineers	www.shpe.org	Hisp/Latinx	Engineering/Technology
National Society of Hispanic Professionals	www.nshmba.org	Hisp/Latinx	All sectors
National Society of the Hispanic MBA's	www.prospanica.org	Hisp/Latinx	All sectors
National Association of LGBTQ Journalists	www.nlgja.org	LGBTQIA	Journalists
National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientist & Technical Professionals Inc.	www.noglstp.org	LGBTQIA	
American Association of University Women (AAUW)	www.aauw.org	Women	Higher Ed
American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)	www.amwa-doc.org	Women	Medical
California Women Lawyers	www.cwl.org	Women	
Women in Biology		Women	Biology