Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the IT Workforce, 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AUGUST 2019

Key Findings

- **The higher education IT community is split on whether the IT workforce reflects the community's diversity.** A plurality (47%) of respondents said that their IT organization reflects the diversity of their campus community and the community in which the campus is located, but nearly a third disagreed. Millennials and individuals with disabilities reported higher rates of disagreement, and more women than men said the diversity in their central IT organizations was not reflective of their on- and off-campus communities.

- **DEI workshops and/or training works.** Employees who are *encouraged* to participate in and/or *do* actually participate in DEI workshops are more likely to see DEI as an important contributor to their professional development in their current position. The more that employees think DEI training contributes to their professional development, the more likely they are to consider DEI to be a priority for themselves and their colleagues, supervisors, units, IT organizations, institutions, and communities.

- **Over half of IT professionals in higher education have participated in a DEI workshop or training program in the past two years.** However, participation is not being widely promoted from the top down. Only about a third of respondents reported that their supervisors encouraged them to participate in a DEI workshop or training program.

- **Most respondents believe participating in a DEI workshop or training program would contribute to their professional growth.** Women, nonwhites, and LGBQ members of the higher education IT workforce are even more likely to feel this way. These results align with other studies that have shown that members of underrepresented groups are more supportive of diversity programs than their counterparts.

EDUCAUSE

Recommendations

- **Offer DEI training programs to address unconscious bias or other diversity "blind spots" to better align employee perceptions of diversity with organizational realities.** Track data related to underrepresented groups across ranks, and share these metrics with the workforce to raise awareness and promote accountability.

- **Make DEI education a priority by dedicating time and space for employees to engage in training, and communicate the benefits of these programs.** Offer employees multiple opportunities to attend, and plan workshops at various times to accommodate different schedules.

- **Allow participation in training to be voluntary to decrease resistance and increase the receptiveness to the importance of DEI messages.** IT leadership and managers can lead by example by participating in DEI training themselves and sharing widely the advantages of this professional development opportunity within and across units.

- **Encourage and support DEI training as a continuing, ongoing pursuit.** A one-time DEI workshop or training program is not a silver bullet. Combine training with additional initiatives that foster awareness of and sensitivity to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and offer opportunities to develop skills in these areas to deepen the impact of the initiative. Pairing training with periodic assessment of the impact of DEI programs on staff attitudes and behaviors could help sustain these efforts.